

CITY OF READING, OHIO
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – LEGISLATIVE SESSION
NOVEMBER 21, 2023 – 7:30 PM

For the full detail of this evening's Council Meeting, please visit www.watchreadingohio.com

CALL TO ORDER

President Mr. Daum called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Mr. Daum led those in attendance in a prayer and then the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Council Members Present: Mr. Powell, Mr. Bronner, Mr. Bishop, Mr. Boehner, Mr. Thamann, Mrs. Kroeger & Mrs. Eadicicco.

OTHER CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Director Dave Stevenson, Auditor Sabrina Smith & Clerk of Council Carla Kacher.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion to approve the November 7 (Regular) Council Minutes made by Mrs. Kroeger, seconded by Mr. Boehner. Motion carried by a voice vote.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Commissioner, Denise DrieHaus – Gave an update on what is happening in Hamilton County since her last visit in 2017. Presented her “Menu of Opportunity” to Council. Thanked Reading for our partnership and complimented us for reaching out and taking advantage of applying for the available grant dollars. Reading has applied for and received \$159,000.00 in the last three years – most of which are CDGB funds, street improvements, property acquisition, Solid Waste District, recycling incentive program dollars (recycling rate has made a significant jump from 4.6 to 14.9) & small events grants (2023: Holiday Walk received \$8,000). The only way this works is when the City applies for these grant dollars. The Port is also a city county initiative and they have provided money for the Dow Chemical site and some of the activity over there. Not every community takes positive advantage of these dollars, and she thanks the City of Reading for their partnership. She is fairly certain that these programs will survive the budget (certainly the CDGB & Solid Waste will) but there is a chance they’ll see a slight decrease in the small event grant dollars. She believes that if we continue to apply for these grant dollars, we’ll continue to succeed in getting these grant dollars.

COUNCIL QUESTIONS TO COMMISSIONER DRIEHAUS:

Bob Boehner – Asked about Veterans Service Commission (VSC). The County appropriates about a million dollars but why do the VSC not go after State Funds or Federal funds? There are more Veterans in Hamilton County than any other County around us, and they’re spending three to four times more than we are. So, consequently, a lot of Veterans aren’t being taken care of like they are in other Counties. What are the County Commissioners doing about that discrepancy?

Commissioner DrieHaus’ response: The County Commissioners approve of the Veteran Services budget when they bring it to us. They are appointed by the court of common pleas and it’s set up under a state statute. We approve of what they ask us for, we cannot give them more than what they ask us for. That is problematic because even if we wanted to, we can’t do it until they request it. We’ve heard this complaint before and have had a public hearing about it, where the VSC was present. We are looking at things we can do as a County in conjunction with the VSC but also in addition to what they do. For instance, there is a need for transportation, particularly to doctor’s visits into the VA. The other counties have transit for these Veterans and they’re spending quite a bit of

money doing it. If the VSC would ask us for the money for this, I guarantee we would give it to them. She has reached out to SORTA, who has a pretty robust budget, to see if there is a solution and partnership with the VSC available. The real challenge is the funding piece. We would have to find the money, but we would find it. Until they ask, we can do anything other than raise awareness.

Dave Powell – Asked about MSD sewage fees on water bills. Is there talk of trying to separate the conglomeration between the City and MSD?

Commissioner Driehaus' response: Yes, the County owns the utility and the City runs the utility. It's very complicated and there's a real disconnect there. What we were trying to do is give the county more authority, more ability to have the conversation with how the work is being completed. She agrees there is a disconnect in the communication but also says there has to be a willingness on the part of the City of Cincinnati to want to create that change.

Discussion ensued regarding stormwater treatment, sewers, flooding, other water systems & what efforts are being made to prevent untreated sewage ending up in the Mill Creek.

Mrs. Eadicicco – The City of Reading has been discussing possibly partnering with Hamilton County's Building Department and wondered where they are with automation of applying for permits online, etc.

Commissioner Driehaus' response: Does not know the answer to that but can reveal that a bunch of communities are partnering with them for that service.

Mr. Daum – The stadium property tax rollback – where do I find that on my tax bill?

Commissioner Driehaus' response: Not sure where to find it but it is there. The rollback varies from year to year. She thinks it will be about a 12% rollback this year. It was 30% when the agreement first went down. Unfortunately, 30% wasn't a reasonable thing to promise for 30+ years due to economic downturns.

AUDIENCE ASKING PARTICIPATION: NONE

READING OF COMMUNICATIONS: NONE

EXECUTIVE SESSION: NONE

LEGISLATIVE SESSION:

READING OF RESOLUTIONS:

(1) ADOPTION OF THE 2023 HAMILTON COUNTY MULTI-HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN (Third Reading)

Motion made by Mrs. Eadicicco, seconded by Mrs. Kroeger to adopt the resolution.

Motion carried by a 7-0 roll call vote.

RESOLUTION ADOPTED

RESOLUTION NUMBER 2023-39R

Motion to add to the Jurgensen ordinance to the agenda made by Mrs. Eadicicco, seconded by Mrs. Kroeger.

Motion carried by voice vote.

READING OF ORDINANCES:

(1) AN ORDINANCE AWARDED A CONTRACT TO JOHN R. JURGENSEN COMPANY FOR THE FUHRMAN ROAD IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED FOUR HUNDRED THOUSAND (\$400,000.00)

DOLLARS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Motion made by Mrs. Eadicicco, seconded by Mrs. Kroeger to suspend the rule that requires a second and third reading. Motion carried by 6-1 roll call vote (Mr. Powell, Mr. Bronner, Mr. Bishop, Mr. Thamann, Mrs. Kroeger & Mrs. Eadicicco voting “Yes,” Mr. Boehner voting “No.”) Motion made by Mrs. Kroeger, seconded by Mr. Bronner to adopt the ordinance. Motion carried by a 6-1 roll call vote. (Mr. Powell, Mr. Bronner, Mr. Bishop, Mr. Thamann, Mrs. Kroeger & Mrs. Eadicicco voting “Yes,” Mr. Boehner voting “No.”)

ORDINANCE ADOPTED

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2023-40

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

(1) Mr. Boehner – Gave Service Report.

- After the Special Council meeting that was held last year, Mr. Boehner would like to move forward with the Stop sign at Siebenthaler and Dorian. Will be passing on this recommendation to Mayor Bo Bemmes and Safety Service Director.
- Speed bumps on Fuhrman Road – Will be talking with Patrick Ross and Bo Bemmes and will hold a 4th Ward Advisory meeting on January 30, 2024 at 7:00 p.m in Council Chambers. He’ll send notices and have drawings drawn up as to where the speed bumps are going to go.

(2) Mr. Kroeger – Thank you to everyone who came out to the Fire Department for the Annual Turkey Raffle. Friday night was a record night (over 200 turkeys).

(3) Mr. Thamann – Holiday Walk (Benson Street), Saturday, December 2, from 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. beginning with the Tree Lighting at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn came from Mr. Boehner and seconded by Mrs. Kroeger. Motion carried by voice vote. There being no further business, the meeting was declared adjourned at 8:21 pm.

X_____

Carla Kacher
Clerk of Council

X_____

Dwight Daum
President of Council