

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES

September 4, 2018

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Rausch at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Rausch.

INVOCATION: The Invocation was given by Mayor Rausch.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Deb Groat, Tracy Richardson, JR Rausch, Alan Seymour, Mark Reams, and Henk Berbee. Nevin Taylor excused.

OTHERS PRESENT: City Manager Terry Emery, Anna Krutowskis, Finance Director Justin Nahvi, Income Tax Administrator Jackie Ward, Law Director Tim Aslaner, Police Chief Floyd Golden, Deputy Chief Tony Brooks, Fire Chief Jay Riley, Public Service Director Mike Andrako, City Engineer Jeremy Hoyt, IT Director Aaron Story, Phillips and Clerk of Council Rebecca Dible.

REPORTERS PRESENT: Will Channel- Journal Tribune

CITIZENS PRESENT:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

AGENDA ITEMS:

1) **Renaming of Fire Station 272**

Mr. Rausch explained the item was more of a “rededication” rather than “renaming.” He stated Bob Parrot had created a packet which was distributed to Council, overviewing why the original downtown fire station had been dedicated to Chief Hyland in October of 1976. When the original fire station was torn down and a new one built in its place 2013, it was not rededicated. Mr. Rausch stated that he had been approached by the Hyland Family, Barb Timmons and Bob Parrot, asking why the new station was not rededicated. He had spoken with Chief Riley, firefighters and some retired firefighters and no one had strong opinions either way. Chief Riley explained the firefighters reference their stations by station number, so not much would change. He did state the Hyland family had lived in original fire station. Mr. Rausch stated he was for the rededication and asked for other’s opinions. Mr. Seymour was in favor of the idea as Mr. Hyland had served the City for 29 years, although he also stated he was probably biased. Mrs. Groat questioned what new information had surfaced to bring up this request again, as it had originally gone to the Public Affairs Committee 5 years ago and failed with a 2-1 vote. Mr. Reams stated that he supported the rededication. Mrs. Richardson stated that it was an historic event and “It speaks a lot to preserve our past, as it validates our future,” therefore she was in favor. Mr. Berbee asked if anything physical would happen to the station if it were rededicated. Mr. Rausch said a plaque was placed on the old fire station, so perhaps a plaque on the pillar facing the street with a ceremony would be appropriate. It was questioned if a Resolution had ever passed to this effect or if it had been a proclamation. Ms. Dible will research to see what historic information can be found. Mr. Rausch proposed a Resolution would be created and placed on the September 24th agenda.

2) **MOU with the Ohio Attorney General’s Office for the Collection of Delinquent Income Taxes**

Mr. Nahvi explained the Finance Department recommended using this newer program that had surfaced over the last few years. The OAG would attempt to collect City income tax debt on certified cases for 150 days and charge 10% above the City certified amount in order to pay for their services. He explained

that Mr. Aslaner had looked at the MOU and didn't see any issues. Mr. Aslaner stated the service would be for cases that were stalled out in court because the City could not get service. Mrs. Richardson confirmed this service would not alleviate the workload, rather it was another opportunity to obtain monies due. Mr. Nahvi stated that the Municipal Court used this service and it had worked well. He also stated Ms. Ward had researched the program extensively. Mr. Nahvi stated the plan would be to certify judgement amounts in late fall to turn over to the OAG. Mr. Reams asked the success rates of other cities, to which Ms. Ward replied that Pickerington had 20-30%. Mr. Reams confirmed he did not see a down side to using these collection services. Mr. Berbee asked if everything would be turned over at once, or if it would go to the OAG in batches. Mr. Nahvi explained that batches of judgements would be sent, once cases were stalled out in court. Mrs. Richardson confirmed with Ms. Ward that the income tax cases were for individual returns only, not businesses. Mr. Seymour asked what happened after the 150 day period, to which Ms. Ward replied that the OAG still attempted to collect the debt, however their thought process would change. She also explained the 3 year statute of limitations, stating that uncollected debts had to be written off at a certain point. Mr. Nahvi stated after the 150 days, typically the OAG would turn cases over to a third party for collection, however the OAG had agreed to would work with the City, as they had specifically requested that all collection efforts be handled by public employees for continuity of care.

3) Capital Reserve Fund – Adoption of Legislation Outlining the use of Funds

Mr. Nahvi stated that in the City's Strategic Plan, a financial priority had been adopted to accumulate 4 million in the Capital Reserve Fund (Fund 440). There was currently 1.5 million in the fund and it was anticipated to be at 2 million by the end of 2018. He explained, due to ORC 5705.13(c), legislation needed to be adopted as to the intended use of the 4 million. He mentioned possibilities such as City vehicles, an additional police/fire station, and moving ballfields to the joint recreation center; He encouraged Council to generate ideas of how they believed the monies should be spent. Mrs. Richardson asked if the funds could be designated for infrastructure, to which Mr. Nahvi replied they could. Mr. Reams stated that the original purpose of the fund was to make sure the City had funds needed when grant matching opportunities were available. Mrs. Richardson agreed, as she didn't want the City to miss an opportunity to obtain funds because there was a lack of money. She stated that she would like future legislators to understand the original intent of the fund. Mr. Berbee explained that most financial advisors recommend having 50% of an annual budget on hand as a capital insurance fund. The reason it had been built as it was, was due to the former Finance Director's recommendation. Mr. Rausch asked what would happen if funds were designated for a specific purpose, then it was realized it was more needed for another purpose. Mr. Nahvi explained that fund designations could be amended with legislation, as the intent of the OAG was to avoid slush funds. Mr. Reams asked if the fund could simply be made a part of the annual budgetary review process, to which Mr. Nahvi responded it could. Mrs. Richardson stated she was in favor of Mr. Reams' idea.

4) Initial Review of Income Tax Credit Feasibility Study

Mr. Nahvi presented the same handout entitled "Income Tax Credit Analysis," which had been distributed at the previous Finance Committee meeting, explaining that Ms. Ward and Finance staff had worked tirelessly gathering the captured information from W-2s. He also explained that at the next Finance Committee Meeting, they would be presenting what credits were offered by the cities listed as well as the tax rates in each of the various cities. Mr. Nahvi reviewed the impact of the proposed income tax credit percentages. He recommended that Council take their time reviewing and allowing the Finance Department to continue to research, and if a credit were adopted, he would recommend it be in 2020. Mrs. Richardson thanked the Finance staff for the work put into gathering the data and conversed with Mr. Nahvi regarding the potential impact of House Bill 5. Mr. Rausch confirmed the data that the Finance Department would be compiling for the upcoming Finance Committee Meeting. Mrs. Richardson then asked if a credit were to be given, would it be collected and returned to citizens, or would it never be

collected initially. Mr. Nahvi stated it would depend on the tax tables, as the City would notify the State Department of changes and hopefully employers would update information in their systems for withholdings. Mr. Rausch asked if there was a good way to track the number of residents who work in other municipalities. Ms. Ward explained that because Marysville has not given a credit in the past, they were working with incomplete data. Mrs. Groat stated that the City had looked at giving a similar credit in 2009 as well. At that time it was entitled a "Commuter Tax Credit." She asked what new information had been presented or what had changed that would make this a better time to readdress a tax credit. Mr. Nahvi stated he was looking at this more as offering "partial relief" for residents. Mr. Rausch stated that Marysville did not have enough jobs to employ all Marysville residents, however they still wanted these residents. Mr. Reams stated he believed the true burden to be that people were being taxed in the cities in which they work. Mr. Rausch responded that half of Marysville's tax base is comprised of people who are not residents. Mr. Seymour stated he believed a tax credit would show citizens appreciation and show them recognition they were double hit by taxes. Mrs. Richardson stated that the citizen voice is with the City and they needed to do what they could literally. Mr. Rausch how a revolt had taken place in history due to taxation without representation. Mr. Reams stated there was another way in which the City could offer tax relief to all citizens; He recommended pulling back from services offered outside City limits, specifically Paris Township. He stated that everyone in the City payed for those services whether they worked in the City, outside of the City or they were retired. He said by pulling back, all citizens would be given relief. Mr. Nahvi also stated that at the Finance Committee Meeting the possibility of offering a rebate to homeowners had been introduced. After looking into the idea, he could see it was not feasible.

Strategic Priorities

Mr. Emery announced that the following agenda items would be reviewed briefly and these were merely to update Council on where Administration was in the process of updating the Strategic Workforce Plan. The updates were specifically marked and included in the meeting packet sent to Council the previous week for review, suggestions and notes. Mr. Emery also asked Council to notify him directly if they had any questions or suggestions as they were in the drafting process. His goal was to have the final, compiled document to present at the November Work Session and to move forward with in legislation.

5) Strategic Priority 1 – Finances (Update)

Mr. Nahvi briefed Council on updates as provided in the Meeting Packet. The final draft will be presented in completed form at the November Work Session. Mrs. Richardson asked if the improved bond rating was a loan, to which Mr. Nahvi explained it would save the City long term if money was borrowed. Mr. Seymour asked if having more cash on hand improved the bond rating significantly to which Mr. Nahvi responded it was merely one of numerus things evaluated.

6) Strategic Priority 9 – Community Safety (Fire Division Portion)

Chief Riley briefed Council on updates as provided in the Meeting Packet. The final draft will be presented in completed form at the November Work Session. Mr. Rausch asked if the Community Paramedic Program had a significant impact since it was implemented. Chief Riley gave several examples of how it had positively impacted the community. Mrs. Richardson stated she was enthusiastic about the program and it would be hard to refute; that being said, she stated the key action steps seemed very generic and nothing seemed tied to Council. Chief Riley stated they needed Council to continue to provide the tools needed in order for them to continue offering the referenced services.

7) Strategic Priority 8 – Communication & Branding

Mrs. Krutowskis briefed Council on updates as provided in the Meeting Packet. The final draft will be presented in completed form at the November Work Session. Key topics reviewed were a flag design

contest and review of the City slogan. It was discussed how some citizens believed the tree city flag was the City's flag at one point. Ideas on how to promote and structure the City flag contest were discussed, focusing on City history and community engagement. The motto was also discussed, questioning if it should remain as is, if anything should be added, or if it should be replaced altogether. The historical origin, promoted message, significance and encompassing values were discussed.

8) Strategic Priority 4 – Parks & Recreation (Master Parks & Recreation Plan Update)

Mr. Andrako briefed Council on updates as provided in the Meeting Packet. The final draft will be presented in completed form at the November Work Session. He explained how the majority of the document was taken directly from the Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:28pm.