

President Chad Doll called the meeting to order at 7:30pm on March 6, 2023 at 701 Parlette Court with the following members present: Daniel E. Lee, Brandon Miller, Alex Greve, John Shepline, Terry Campbell and Chad Dunlap. Mayor Steve Henderson, Law Director Grant Neal and Safety Service Director Michael Brillhart were also present. Councilman Ross Kantner was absent. There were 8 visitors present.

Received Income Tax Summary Report for Month Ending 02-28-2023.

Motion by Dunlap, second by Shepline to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2023 Council meeting as submitted. Vote – 6 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

Parks Committee – a meeting was held on 02-21-2023 and the following was discussed:

Update/Old Business:

Walkway to Heritage Park Project and Stage in Heritage Park.

Per Michael, the funding from County for either project is minimal, but there may be potential to apply ARPA funds to either/both projects.

Stage in Heritage Park – Per Michael, he is still looking into portable stages, including a hydraulic portable stage, at approximate cost of \$85,000. Again, ARPA funding is a possibility.

Heritage Park Commission to plan and implement improvements and parking in the Heritage Park and behind town properties – Per Michael, he has been in contact with Garman/Miller who designed the original project in 2008. They in turn have referred him to Choice One to research parking lot core samples, and design possible parking lot options. He has also been in communication with Jackie Martell and Deb Fisher representing the Chamber of Commerce and downtown property owners to begin reviewing and discussing options and opportunities for the parking area behind town.

Flag Project along Heritage Parkway and installation of large flag pole.

Updates – Per Michael, the flags along Heritage Parkway look to be moving forward. The “large flag” placement is still being considered, but Mr. Christianson would like it to be along I-75 for maximum exposure.

Ordinances related to Rec Board

Updates/recommendations from Law Director Neal – Per Michael, Mr. Neal is reviewing several proposals.

Following discussion, Parks Committee opinion is the current ordinances do not address the current situation within the Parks Department, and there are definite discrepancies regarding the Park Rec Board and the Parks Committee functionality and responsibilities.

It is the Parks Committee opinion that legislative changes need to be made to ordinances, but would like to have discussion with Park Rec Board and possibly past Safety Service Director and/or Law Director to review purpose/function of Park Rec Board and how best to proceed with future functions/purpose within the Parks Department.

Request Michael to research Park Rec Levy language to understand if there is any statutory responsibility by Park Rec Board to that levy.

Brandon - combined meeting between Parks Committee and Lands & Buildings Committee to research and create a Public Arts Policy to address future city art projects such murals, sculptures, etc.

Per Brandon – still in the planning stages.

New Business:

Michael shared the Proposed Park and Rec Capital Projects 2023 Budget from the recent Rec Board Meeting.

Park/Rec Department new work/office/storage building.

Per Michael, still in planning stages. This is on the Rec Department Capital Projects list so is a priority. Michael believes the project can/will be started later this year, but may be completed next year. He does feel the building should be done as one project, not splitting into 2 projects (1-shell of building in 2023, 2-concrete, finish office, bathroom, etc. 2024) which had been discussed.

Per Michael, the Full-Time Parks Department position has been posted.

Other:

Ross mentioned he will not be at the next (March 6) City Council meeting.

Next Parks Committee meeting will be scheduled after confirming when members of Rec Board and other related parties are available/invited to attend.

Mr. Lee asked for the status of a possible 'parklet' on Auglaize Street. Service Director Brillhart answered that staff is reviewing this.

Finance Committee – a meeting was held on 02-21-2023 and the following was discussed:

Review of Compensation Study 2022

The city worked with a consulting firm to study our compensation amounts for non-collective bargaining city employees. The committee reviewed the results and accepted the recommendation from Mr. Brillhart to follow a strategy of the following:

A raise equal to the increase suggested by the study for those employees whose difference between their current wage the study-recommended wage was greater than 4%.

A 4% raise for remaining employees in the study

These increases have been budgeted for in consultation with Mr. Wells

Motion by Kantner, Second by Shepline to accept the recommendation from Mr. Brillhart. Motion passed unanimously.

City Refuse and Recycling Service Updates

Mr. Brillhart informed the committee that administration is looking into potentially accepting bids for privatizing refuse and recycling services in the city. This change potentially could reduce refuse costs for citizens through lower rates, lower cost of totes, and elimination the cost of Wapak trash bags. The committee will be informed of the bids when they arrive for review.

Motion by Kantner, Second by Shepline to move forward with request for proposal on this project. Motion passed unanimously.

Status updates on New Water Projects and Financing Updates to Fire Department Building

Mr. Brillhart informed the committee about the status of the new water tower and loop for the city's southwest quadrant. This additional loop and tower are needed for additional expansion of city economic development and will also improve water pressure to the south end of the city. Funding strategies are being discussed, and future discussions with council are required.

Mr. Brillhart informed the committee on updates regarding the expansion of the Fire department building. We specifically reviewed differences in overall costs of financing options, particularly the difference between a quicker cash payoff vs a longer term loan. A future conversation with the auditor is required to confirm which strategy for funding will be utilized.

Proposed Parks and Recreation Capital Project Requests

The committee reviewed requested capital project requests from the parks and recreation department. These include the following:

Recreation Full Time manager

Remodel of Veterans Park Bathrooms

Splashpad Extras

Paint Liner (already approved in lodging tax)

Dugouts at Harmon Field

Veterans Park Playground Updates

New Building at Veterans

Heritage Park movable stage

One of these items is already approved by lodging tax, and others are up for potential ARPA funds. The recreation manager has already been approved by council. Other items would need additional funding, which must be discussed with the auditor and the committee at a future time.

Update on ARPA Funds from 2021

The city has roughly \$1MM in ARPA funds that need to be appropriated. The administration has provided the following suggestions:

Broadband Infrastructure updates: this project is to interconnect city buildings with TSC via a fiberoptic backbone and potentially provide some public Wifi access in the downtown area.

(Total Cost in three phases~ \$300,000)

Revitalization of Public Recreation Spaces

Acquisition of Mobile, Hydraulic Stage: \$100,000

Upgrade Waterpark Boilers: \$100,000

Veterans Park Storage Building: \$100,000

Heritage Parkway Improvements: \$125,000

These discussions continue and will be decided upon in the coming months.

Update on Recreation Manager Position

The committee was provided an update on the cost and status of the new recreation manager position including salary, benefits, duties, etc.

The plan is for this position to be filled this year.

Mr. Dunlap suggested a Committee of the Whole meeting be scheduled once additional information and costs are determined regarding refuse and recycling services.

Communications -

Clerk McDonald read a street closure request from Marlene Froning of 11979 Canning Factory Road for the purpose of a 'Bicycle Safety Day' event on May 13th. Motion by Lee, second by Campbell to approve the request. Vote – 6 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

Guest Petitions -

Mrs. Jessica Muhlenkamp of 508 E. Pearl Street requested Council's permission and support of the 'First Fridays' events for downtown Wapakoneta from April through December 2023. Mrs. Muhlenkamp provided Council with a schedule and theme details for each event. Motion by Campbell, second by Dunlap to approve the request. Vote – 5 yeas, 0 nays, 1 abstain (Miller). Motion passed.

Mr. Mike Borgess of 301 Biscayne Blvd and representing the Wapak VFW Post 8445, requested Council's permission to install an historical plaque at the intersection of 25A and Keller Drive to identify the original location of Fort Auglaize. Mr. Borgess noted the signage work is in conjunction with Mr. Ken Elchert and the data presented in his book, "Wapakoneta: In the Beginning". Mr. Borgess provided Council with the proposed wording for the marker as well as a map of the suggested placement, noting that the VFW will complete the work needed for installation. Mr. Borgess also loaned Clerk McDonald a copy of Elchert's book for review. Motion by Lee, second by Greve to grant the request upon approval of Service Director Brillhart and state roadway guidelines. Vote – 6 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

Mr. Stephen Ambrose of 24 ½ Auglaize Street and Senior Pastor of WapakNaz Church, requested Council's permission for a portion of Benton Street to be closed on April 1st for the annual Easter "Egg" Stravaganza event for the community. Motion by Dunlap, second by Campbell to approve the request. Vote – 6 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

Mrs. Linda Knerr of 312 E. Mechanic Street asked for a status update on the splash pad to be installed at Veterans Park. Service Director Brillhart answered that the equipment has been ordered. Mrs. Knerr also pointed out that center lines still need to be painted on many of the city's streets. Service Director Brillhart clarified that some local streets do not require center lines be painted, but that the City can re-examine these for consideration. Mrs. Knerr asked if the City still has any plans to place a commemorative plaque at the former location of the 'Koneta Hotel'. Mayor Henderson and Service Director Brillhart will review this.

Mr. Miller pointed out a repainting project listed within the 'mill and pave' sheet provided to Council, and asked Service Director Brillhart to determine if this is appropriate.

Unfinished Business -

President Doll provided Council with the Ohio Ethics Commission online e-course link and asked them to complete this prior to the Committee of the Whole meeting, scheduled for March 20th at 6:30pm at City Hall. Mr. Lee agreed to move up the Lodging Tax Committee meeting to March 20th at 6pm to accommodate Committee of the Whole.

New Business -

President Doll noted an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of Mr. Miller, Mr. Greve and Mr. Shepline will review the City's Comprehensive Plan along with WAEDC Logan O'Neill and City Administration. The City of Wapakoneta's Comprehensive Plan is now 15 years old.

Mayor Henderson recommended appointment of Mr. Anthony Brookhart to Waste Minimization Committee. Motion by Lee, second by Miller to appoint Anthony Brookhart to Waste Minimization Committee. Vote – 6 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

President Doll asked Clerk to read Ord 2023-12 for the third time re: ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31ST, 2023 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Miller, second by Shepline to adopt Ord 2023-12. Vote – 6 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

President Doll asked Clerk to read Res 2023-13 for the third time re: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND SAFETY TO ENTER INTO A PURCHASE AGREEMENT FOR A VAC-CON TITAN JET/VACUUM SEWER CLEANER THROUGH BEST EQUIPMENT COMPANY, INC.

Motion by Lee, second by Campbell to adopt Res 2023-13. Vote – 6 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

President Doll asked Clerk to read Ord 2023-14 for the third time re: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 260.16 (C) "GROUP INSURANCE" AND 260.16 (D) "GROUP TERM LIFE INSURANCE" OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF WAPAKONETA, OHIO AND SECTIONS 5.13 (A)(3) "GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE" AND 5.15(A)(1) "OTHER INSURANCES" OF THE PERSONNEL POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR NON-COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UNIT EMPLOYEES.

Motion by Campbell, second by Lee to adopt Ord 2023-14. Vote – 6 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

President Doll asked Clerk to read Res 2023-15 for the third time re: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND SAFETY TO PURCHASE A 2024 INTERNATIONAL MV607 HOOK TRUCK FOR THE CITY OF WAPAKONETA PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Motion by Dunlap, second by Greve to adopt Res 2023-15. Vote – 6 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

President Doll asked Clerk to read Res 2023-16 for the third time re: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND SAFETY TO PURCHASE A BOBCAT COMPACT TRACK LOADER FOR THE CITY OF WAPAKONETA ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT.

Motion by Lee, second by Miller to adopt Res 2023-16. Vote – 6 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

President Doll asked Clerk to read Ord 2023-17 for the first time re: AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING JOB TITLES AND PAY RANGES FOR NON-COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UNIT EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF WAPAKONETA IN COMPLIANCE WITH ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2023.

Mayor report:

Fielded several calls regarding flooding due to heavy rain event on Friday.

Met with Joe Lubin of Pradco.

Opening day for the City Farm is March 20th.

Attended American Public Power Association conference.

Mr. Lee asked if the City Farm could be a free service to residents. Mayor Henderson suggested that the Finance Committee explore this.

Mr. Dunlap stated he was contacted by Mr. John Wehner of 802 Dearbaugh Avenue regarding sewage backup in his basement during the recent heavy rains. Mayor Henderson replied that he has been in contact with Mr. Wehner about the matter.

Mayor Henderson stated that the Clark Gas Station, formerly BP, on Bellefontaine Street had a leak occur that reached the sewer system and nearby creek. EPA and Hazmat is now involved in the matter and the gas station is closed. Councilman Shepline further explained that the pumps recently failed a pressure test, indicating a leak in the tank or lines. Mr. Shepline noted that the leak was traced, tanks have since been drained and pumps have been labeled "condemned" by the county. Mr. Shepline stated that much work will need to be completed and inspected to correct the issue.

Mr. Miller asked City Administration to re-examine methods to deter the geese population along the Auglaize River in town.

Mr. Miller noted the commentary on social media regarding a lack of 'adult swim' hours at the Wapak WaterPark in the upcoming season and asked City Administration to explore the costs or hours of operation needed to remedy this.

Service Director report:

Water Street phase one will go out for bid in July.

Provided Council with estimates for a sound barrier structure for the 24 hour recycling drop off on Harrison Street.

Water line improvements will eventually be needed for the splash pad installation at Veterans Park.

Request a Health & Safety Committee meeting to discuss Police Department equipment needs.

Recreation Manager position has been advertised and funding needs to be discussed with Auditor Wells.

Brownfield funds will be utilized to demolish 210 Lima Street.

Request for executive session regarding the compensation study recently completed.

Mr. Campbell asked about electric outages during the recent heavy rains. Service Director Brillhart answered, none were reported.

Mr. Lee asked for an explanation of how a purchase order runs through the City and how it gets approved. Service Director Brillhart answered, when a department head determines a specific need, they put together a purchase order within the City's finance system, it then goes to the accounts payable and receivable staff, the line item is identified, thereupon it goes to Auditor Wells for final approval. The Safety Service Director then reviews it for any concerns or questions, adding that Mayor Henderson then reviews and signs it as well. The process takes one to six weeks depending on factors of the purchase.

Mr. Lee stated that the wastewater treatment expansion project is over budget and asked how this will affect citizens and their rates. Service Director Brillhart stated that rates will adjust according to the ordinance passed in 2014 regarding rate schedules.

Mr. Lee asked for an update on the new dog park to be installed along the river. Service Director Brillhart answered that cost estimates are being obtained for fencing.

Mr. Campbell noted he is meeting with a police officer and inspector regarding the local mechanic business that has been taking up parking areas on Perry Street.

Law Director report:

Attended records commission meeting.

Will review the refuse and recycling process with regards to joint purchasing programs.

Mr. Campbell asked that Mr. Neal review the Wapak WaterPark fees and charges as provided by Wapak YMCA.

Scheduling Committee Meetings:

Committee of the Whole will meet on March 20th at 6:30pm at City Hall.

Lodging Tax Committee will meet on March 20th at 6:00pm at City Hall.

Ad Hoc Committee meeting – to be announced.

Finance Committee will meet on March 15th at 1pm at City Hall.

Health & Safety Committee will meet on March 8th at 4pm at City Hall.

Streets & Alleys Committee will meet on March 14th at 4pm at City Hall.

Miscellaneous Business -

Motion by Shepline, second by Campbell to appoint Melissa Luthman to the Façade Committee. Vote – 6 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

Motion by Miller, second by Dunlap to enter executive session at 8:49pm concerning compensation of public employees and inviting City Administration. Vote – 6 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

Motion by Miller, second by Campbell to exit executive session at 9:08pm. Vote – 6 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

Motion by Lee, second by Dunlap to adjourn the meeting at 9:08pm. Vote – 6 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

President

Clerk of Council