

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING
November 4, 2020

The Regular Meeting of City Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m. with Mayor Barilla presiding. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by Roll Call.

Present were Council members Anyabwile, Dressel, Hahn, Petrella, Timmons, & Villamagna.

Mr. Villamagna made a motion to excuse Mr. Paul from tonight's meeting. Second by Mr. Petrella. Roll Call. All ayes. So moved motion carried declared Mayor Barilla.

Also present; Law Director Costa Mastros, Police Chief/Acting City Manager Bill McCafferty, Linda Harris from the Herald Star, & WTOV9.

APPROVAL/CORRECTION OF MINUTES

Minutes were approved by Mrs. Hahn for October 27, 2020. Second by Mr. Timmons. Roll Call. All ayes. So moved minutes accepted declared Mayor Barilla.

PETITIONS/COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor Barilla – “Petitions and Communications Madame Clerk?”

Mrs. Haley – “Nothing this evening.”

Mayor Barilla – “Thank you Madam Clerk.”

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Mrs. Anyabwile – No Report

Mr. Dressel – “I have four things to sunshine.” Mr. Dressel sun shined four ordinances and the first one was under utilities; an ordinance tentatively awarding the contract or the project known as the Wastewater Treatment Plant Secondary Aeration System Upgrade and Paracetic Acid System replacement project and declaring an emergency. (Awarded to Cattrall). The other three are under Finance. An ordinance authorizing and directing payment to the City Manager for a 27th pay period due to calendar issues in 2020. An ordinance amending Ordinance No. 2019-94 to make appropriations for year ending December 31, 2020 for authorization to appropriate and authorize the expenditure of cares act funds and declaring an emergency. An ordinance amending Ordinance No. 2019-93 to amend the revenue tax budget for the year ending December 31, 2020 to adjust for the change in revenue received from Jefferson County as a result of seeing additional cares act funds and declaring an emergency.

Mrs. Hahn – “Yes okay the only thing under Parks and Recreation is Lori said we need to be watchful; the Governor has his public address and there's a concern that if our county goes to red that the MLK Center will have to close for two weeks. So she needed people to be aware of that. She will post it if it's necessary if it goes to red with COVID she will post it on her Facebook page and I'm assuming we would post it on our overall City website. It's not for sure that our cases have gone up that quickly but they have gone up and she said to be aware of that. There are no ongoing activities at the MLK Center. They are no sports going on it's just opened to the public and it will close to the public for two weeks if we hit red. So just to be aware of that; that probably after the Governor's address then the map will show which counties have been red and that's all I have.”

Mr. Petrella – No Report

Mr. Timmons – No Report

Mr. Villamagna – No Report

REPORT OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS

Mr. Mastros – No Report

MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS

Mayor Barilla – “We'll now move onto miscellaneous reports and signing in this evening is Mrs. Hahn.”

Mrs. Hahn – “Okay so I just wanted to talk briefly about the Cares Act money and I'm assuming that everyone got the email and I did check that it was the right address for you. So there are several things to be aware of first of all there are a number of expenditures that we have found that we should be able to pay for with the Cares

Act funding and before the meeting our Law Director said that it would be best for us to have Jim Mavromatis look over everything. So I believe we pass the ordinance allowing the Cares Act money to be received and so it would be a matter of him signing off on these additional ideas but there are a number of ideas that we have come up with; that we've researched and we're looking into and there's an additional one that came up right as I was driving here so there are; if you hear of ideas of what's being done in other cities please don't hesitate to tell us. One possibility that other cities have done is to have what they call a sub-grant for small businesses and non-profit organizations so I've been trying to find out what's available. Now tomorrow morning I don't want to preamp anything but it's been in the paper that they were going to vote on this and it sounds like the Commissioners support it so they're hoping to earmark a million dollars of the Cares Act funds that have come to the County and initially they were only going to be offering it for small businesses but I was told tonight by the County Auditor they actually decided to open it up for non-profits as well. So that's a million dollars that has to be dispersed to specific amounts. It can't just be a general idea it has to be encumbered by the County like we have to encumber ours by November 20th. So one of the things that we can do is I'd like to suggest that we put this information on our website and on our City Facebook page and then if we can come up with anything that could be passed out I encourage Council Members to go to businesses in your area and I can help too because there's so many downtown and at the mall; I mean I would be happy to help but I think let's get this information into the hands of all the businesses at least in Steubenville (all inaudible) responsibility to go throughout the county but at least in Steubenville make sure they have that information. Now the non-profit I only learned about that an hour ago so I haven't thought about how we could promote that but we can certainly put it on our website in addition the Chamber just has been and I gave all members of Council a copy of that sheet from the website; the Chamber of Commerce has figured out some basic instructions on how small businesses can take advantage of the Ohio money which was only earmarked very recently. It was made available this past Monday for people to sign up but it's over 400 million dollars I think it was 429.5 million so that also is available to all of our small businesses here so for all of those who have really suffered at various levels related to the pandemic and to my understanding is it could cover you know there are challenges covering rent and mortgage which again can affect other businesses downstream. You've got a landlord who owns several businesses and renting out space that the businesses themselves can't afford to pay for them well now they would have the money to be able to pass that on to the landlord so that the landlords can keep the buildings open. I mean it could really help our community a lot so anyway those are two different sources we got State funding and we have local funding through the county so I'm not with the County money they both for profit and non-profit I don't know what the best use of the funding is that we have but we have about 118,000 dollars that we have not yet come up with a good idea for except maybe these electric hand dryers for the various public bathrooms. Most likely I don't know how we're going to spend that and if we don't spend it by November 20th then we have to give it back and I think we agree that we do not want to give this back. One possibility that I thought of and I don't remember if we talked about this but the Visitor's Bureau normally gets; they always get half of our bed tax but the city was hit hard and they were hit hard by not having the hotels in use and so we didn't have that and we can't recoup that for ourselves but we could consider making a grant to the Visitor's Bureau especially if they had any specific ideas in mind and then we got the Grande Theatre which we know down the road is going to be very helpful to us; that may be another non-profit that could apply. So what I was going to suggest is if we could have some members of Council and I would like to volunteer myself and I checked with Willie who has Finance and he said he would be willing to make himself available if we could put the wording together and Costa has already started working on it we would propose something next Tuesday and we can certainly send it to you all ahead of time but I mean the gist of it is it would be; well what we talked about earlier it would be for non-profits. I think there's a lot for small businesses at the moment is how I'm leaning."

Mr. Timmons – "How would we determine who would get it? I mean is there someone; I mean we as Council vote on it?"

Mrs. Hahn – "Yes but presumably we would have the chance to get the information together and see who fits the criteria beforehand but here are some thoughts; if they already have a 501.C3 status so that would already be established from the eyes of the Government they have been acknowledged non-profit. Number 2 serve in the Steubenville community. Number 3 maybe you give a cap up to \$10,000 and that was one of Asantewa's suggestions and Craig said the same thing to me; if we said 10,000 it doesn't mean that they would even request 10,000; it would have to be a specific thing that's being covered but it might be less so if we had a \$10,000 cap we might be able to help more but it would be helping fewer. They would have to be able to spend the money that we encumber of their behalf by December 31st so it can't go into the New Year. It's not this is what we think it'll cover into the future and I think this is what the County Commissioners told me that first come first serve seems like the fairest because if they fit all the criteria then how do you sort through and so we would have to potentially advertise that it's first come first serve."

Mr. Dressel – "Plus we only have three weeks right?"

Mr. Mastro – "No if I may? It's the timeline that's always been the problem here. So we would have to sunshine; just so we can clarify; in the meetings that we've had myself, Dave, and Mrs. Hahn so we would have to sunshine some kind of ordinance tonight authorizing a sub-grant program. I would have to figure out the language and put it together; you would all get it; pass it on the 10th and then between the 10th and the 17th is going to be the application period. We envisioned at least a special committee that would meet prior to the 17th sifting through all of these to make sure that they meet the criteria. For those that meet the criteria we would present it to Council to vote by voice vote whether or not they would receive their monies but we have to sunshine an ordinance tonight authorizing the sub-grant program if we don't we're out of time."

Mr. Timmons – “But would it be first come first service?”

Mr. Mastros – “That’s tough I mean because I think that’s how we’ve ended it up because of the timeframe.”

Mr. Timmons – “I mean imagine some other people that need it and not getting it and coming back at us.”

Mr. Dressel – “Well the State is doing there’s first come first serve.”

Mrs. Hahn – “And the County is as well.”

Mr. Mastros – “It’s a time issue.”

Mr. Timmons – “Absolutely but I think we should do it somehow like that because we’re starting to exclude and picking that’s going to create some hard feelings.”

Mr. Mastros – “Right. Correct. We have to figure out; again we can; I can try to figure this out who was first come first serve. We have to have a time stamp or something with a date and time stamp where they can send it too. The logistics are tough because we are in a time crunch but no we would have; first step if we want to even try to do this is an ordinance has to be sun shined tonight.”

Mrs. Hahn – “My suggestion also might be that we not say that we’re going to designate \$100,000 for this; not even put a total could we put the wording for the funds that remain just in case we come across something that would directly benefit the city in the next three days we wouldn’t be hand strung like we already promised to earmark; in other words can we say the money the remains?”

Mr. Mastros – “I think I understand what you’re saying. But till after when? My concern is say we don’t put a monetary limit on it but then we have; and someone comes up with an issue that they need address here that’s COVID related and needed for issues of COVID and we don’t have enough money because we already pledged it to the non-profit.”

Mr. Dressel – “I have an answer for you. The solution is that ordinance has to be drafted 72 hours before the meeting right?”

Mr. Mastros – “You have to present it. You guys have to receive it.”

Mr. Dressel – “So Friday. So Friday we would have to make a decision by Friday (all inaudible). That solves everything.”

Mr. Mastros – “That or if we get to Tuesday and we realize we put a monetary cap on it and we can amend it. That’s an idea.”

Mrs. Hahn – “Okay so we could do both?”

Mr. Mastros – “We could do both. We can put something on there...”

Mrs. Hahn – “But then amend it as needed?”

Mr. Mastros – “I’m more comfortable putting a dollar amount down so we know exactly what we’re dealing with and the public knows how much money that we have because I don’t want to leave it open ended. That’s just me and looking at it at an application stand point.”

Mr. Villamagna – “I don’t like it open ended either.”

Mr. Petrella – “We could put a dollar amount on it; you were talking about the hand dryers if that is acceptable then we can do it. Wherever we can put those hand dryers whether if it’s in this building, M & R, wastewater because it’s more sanitary.”

Mr. Mastros – “Everyone’s talking about going touchless.”

Mrs. Hahn – “That is a brand new idea as of 30 minutes ago. SO I haven’t researched it but I can research it and we can find out (all inaudible) what we’re working with two different plumbers on their estimates for doing touchless faucets and automatic flushing toilets for the parks and also as a separate contract for this building but we did not think about the dryers and that’s an electrical thing not a plumbing thing so that can be a separate. So if you want to make a suggestion about what electrician would be good to you know or couple to contract...”

Mr. Villamagna – “My question is for Costa I guess; can we do this?”

Mr. Mastros – “Yeah there’s something in the Cares Act where we’re allowed to give sub-grants; businesses and non-profits. It is permissible.”

Mayor Barilla – “I don’t think it can go to wages is that correct?”

Mrs. Hahn – “For the city.”

Mr. Mastros – “There are exceptions for the wages that you can apply it for wages. There are exceptions.”

Mrs. Hahn – “And we actually are going to be able to; can I say that?”

Mr. Mastros – “Well we’re looking at that. We’re making sure that we can do that for certain for our public safety employees and it’s really only going to be public safety. So yeah we are looking into that.”

Mrs. Hahn – “But there are a couple of really great options in terms of our...”

Mr. Petrella – “So let me ask you question. Let’s assume that hand dryers are okay and in short notice about getting (all inaudible) could we be reimbursed if our City Electrician do it?”

Mr. Mastros – “You mean pay ourselves back for that? I don’t think that would be permissible; I think they limit the wages to public; your health and safety employees Police, Fire, EMS because those people come in contact with the public and that’s how they’re looking at it.”

Mr. Dressel – “You can pay for the units though?”

Mr. Mastros – “The units I think we’re okay because of the touchless issue and that’s some specific guidance from OML so I don’t think we’ll be able to reimburse ourselves for that. It’s not a public safety employee but I mean I guess we can save on cost if we can do it in house at least that would help and I don’t know if our electrician can do that but it would save money.”

Mr. Petrella – “What I’m saying is if we’re in a time crunch and I work with electricians all the time and right now they’re busy.”

Mrs. Hahn – “What we would have to have in hand is an actual contract you know that Jim could sign and then they would have to have the work done by the December 31st so there’s more time to do the work but it actually has to be encumbered by the Finance Department for a specific amount.”

Mr. Mastros – “By the 20th.”

Mr. Dressel – “Of November?”

Mr. Mastros – “Yeah. That’s the issue.”

Mrs. Hahn – “I’m sorry we didn’t think; we didn’t know to start this conversation a couple months ago.”

Mr. Dressel – “Do you want me to make up an ordinance?”

Mr. Mastros – “In terms of sun shining?”

Mr. Dressel – “Yes.”

Mr. Mastros – “Yeah that’s fine.”

Mr. Dressel sun shined an ordinance authorizing the creation of a sub-grant program for non-profits for it to be determined by ordinance and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Villamagna – “Scott was there something besides non-profit?”

Mr. Dressel – “Not in this one. Because that’s the one that the County is doing. The State is doing four hundred and some million.”

Mr. Villamagna – “Ours is only for the non-profit?”

Mr. Mastros – “Yeah we only have 118 left.”

Mr. Petrella – “We may not even have 118 because with the hand dryers and that.”

Mr. Mastros – “Correct.”

Mr. Dressel – “So that just needs to be in the ordinance next week to pass it.”

Mr. Mastros – “Correct. And if we need to amend it on the fly...”

Mr. Dressel – “Right.”

PUBLIC FORUM

Mr. Villamagna moved to adjourn. Second by Mr. Timmons. Roll call. All ayes. So moved; meeting adjourned declared Mayor Barilla.

ATTEST: _____
CLERK OF COUNCIL

APPROVED: _____
MAYOR