

MINUTES OF THE VAN WERT CITY COUNCIL

April 12th, 2021

President Jon Tomlinson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Pastor Keith Stoller gave the invocation.

On call of the roll: Marshall, Kallas, Penton, Agler, Mergy, Hellman, and Davis were present.

Mergy made a motion to approve the agenda for the April 12th Council meeting. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Mergy made a motion to approve the minutes for the March 22nd Council meeting. Agler seconded; all concurred.

COMMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS, & PETITIONS

Tomlinson opened with news that a long-time city employee had recently passed away. A memorial has been set up in her honor, and those wishing to donate to the memorial should contact city administration.

Tomlinson then noted that the city received two application requests for liquor licenses - a transfer and a renewal. The transfer request is from Manon Inc. DBA to Partee Shop LLC. The renewal is also for Partee Shop LLC. The applications must be submitted to the Ohio Division of Liquor Control by May 3, 2021, so any comments or concerns should be directed to City Council prior to that date.

Fleming informed Council of an alley vacation request. The alley in question is located near the corner of Daniel Street and Elson Street, which runs behind four houses near that area and is currently just a grass space. There is a petition to close this alley, and the person who initiated the petition will perform a survey and take care of the legal matters if the vacation would be approved. Fleming also noted that lot split issues would be taken care of after the vacation, if approved. Tomlinson asked Hellman to make a motion during the Streets and Alleys report.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

MAYOR: Markward stated that Bill Walls, the chair of the Sister City Committee, had informed him that the delegation from Sumoto City, Japan, would have to postpone their visit to Van Wert once again. The delegation was originally set to arrive last summer, but was a COVID-related postponement, and then was set to come this July. The Japanese delegation will now tentatively be scheduled to arrive in July of 2022.

Brush pickup is scheduled for Monday, May 3, 2021. Markward reminded the public to have it out for pickup on May 3rd, and not to wait until later in the week.

Additionally, Markward reminded all elected officials that the deadline to file their financial disclosure statements is Monday, May 17, 2021.

Markward also mentioned that a number of local stakeholders had met with Stacy Adam this morning to discuss and review the Strategic Plan that was put into place a few years ago. He noted that preliminary edits were made, and opportunities for feedback will be offered in the future. Markward noted that Davis was present for that meeting, and would share more from his perspective later in the meeting.

Markward then noted that the Law Director would provide additional information on the future steps of the Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA) application and legislation.

SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR: Fleming opened with informing Council that, as part of the Market Street Bridge demolition project, the bridge had been completely demolished as of today.

Fleming also noted that the city is also busy lining diamonds and cutting grass for spring sports.

Fleming referenced an informational public meeting, held prior to the Council meeting, to discuss possible future bike path projects. During that meeting, Fleming discussed grant applications the city would pursue to construct bike paths from the reservoirs to the corner of Shannon Street and Fox Road. This first grant would be a 75/25 match grant, with \$50,000 of the local match already raised. There is a possibility the city could be somewhere between \$20,000 - 30,000 short, but additional funds could be raised once the public is aware of these projects. The other grant application would be for funds to construct a bike path from Van Wert High School to Van Wert-Decatur Road through the Landing at Dickinson Farms, and connect to the path at the corner of Fox Road and Shannon Street. This would be part of a larger project to eventually connect to Smiley Park and the Richey Road bike path. Tomlinson noted that legislation would be presented at tonight's meeting, on an emergency, to authorize the submission of the grant applications this week.

AUDITOR: Balyeat stated that she did not have the March bank reconciliation report for tonight's meeting, but would have it at the April 26, 2021 meeting. She then detailed invoices that she would ask to be approved on a Then and Now, including \$3065.00 to Sedgwick for the workers' compensation group rating, and \$3,311.90 to Clemans Nelson Consulting for services in 2020 that were not billed until this time. She would ask for those invoices to be approved at tonight's meeting.

LAW DIRECTOR: Hatcher opened by detailing the timeline for the DORA application and legislation. He explained that the Mayor has signed an application for a DORA district in the city of Van Wert, and this application was presented to Council on Friday, April 9, 2021. After this application has been signed and presented to Council, a public notice is required to run in the paper of location circulation for two consecutive weeks. This notice has been sent, and will appear in the paper on Wednesday, April 21, and Wednesday, April 28. The application will also appear on the city's website this week, and questions can be directed to the Mayor's office. City Council cannot vote on any DORA legislation, should it be prepared, until 30 days after the application has been signed and presented. The earliest that City Council could vote on DORA legislation is during the May 10, 2021 meeting. City Council must vote on any DORA legislation no later than 60 days after the application was signed and presented, which would be June 9, 2021. If legislation is not approved by that date, then the application is denied by default, and another application process would need to be started over. Hatcher noted that a public hearing is not required, but City Council could schedule one.

Joe Jared asked if the approval of a DORA district would coincide with the liquor license renewal date. Hatcher noted that City Council could do so, but it is not procedurally required by the Ohio Revised Code. He noted that Council has the right to review annually, and set a date for review, but it is not required by law to coincide with the liquor license renewal timeframe.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HEALTH, SERVICE, and SAFETY: Marshall mentioned lawns are growing rapidly, and he reminded the public to make sure lawns are mowed. Additionally, when mowing lawns, he also issued a reminder to avoid blowing grass clippings into the street. He explained this is a hazard for motorcycles and other small craft, and also can clog up the city's drainage system.

Health, Service, and Safety had no additional report for the evening.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Kallas ceded the floor to Davis, who gave an update on the Strategic Plan meeting that Markward had referenced earlier during his report. Davis provided a quick update on a few of the guiding principles from this Plan, as he wasn't sure how many members of Council were aware of the document. Those items involved ideas such as improved walkability throughout the city, identifying increased revenue streams for maintenance of parks, development of a sidewalk improvement plan, implementation of underground utility lines in conjunction with sidewalk projects, improved community appearance, and assessment of collection and disposal of waste.

Stacy Adam added that this document and plan had been paused for a time, but was now being brought back with the intent to get all stakeholders in the community involved. She noted the draft is to be sent to all stakeholders, and they will solicit feedback from all. She continued to explain that this is a living document, they will take feedback from anyone interested, and this will be a guiding document for many organizations and municipalities to use as guidance.

Jared asked if this was primarily business oriented. Adam stated this was more than just a business focus, with health of the community and quality of life as orientation points. She stated business is represented on the committee, but there is also representation from many other sectors.

Economic Development had no additional report for the evening.

PARKS AND RECREATION: Penton stated that all part-time summer help for the Parks Department had been hired, but would not start until the middle of May. He noted that the department is scrambling somewhat for grass mowing right now, but volunteers have been helping, and Central Insurance has also provided help again this year, so they are managing.

Penton made a motion to ask the Law Director to prepare legislation to authorize the Safety Service Director to sign an application to participate in the Ohio Recreational Trail Program, on an emergency. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Penton made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number 21-04-023. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Penton made a motion to suspend statutory rules for Ordinance Number 21-04-023. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Penton made a motion to pass Ordinance Number 21-04-023: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR OF THE CITY OF VAN WERT TO SIGN AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RECREATIONAL TRAIL PROGRAM (RTP) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY, on its first and final reading. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Penton made a motion to ask the Law Director to prepare legislation to authorize the Safety Service Director to sign an application to participate in the Clean Ohio Trails Fund, on an emergency. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Penton made a motion to introduce Ordinance Number 21-04-024. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Penton made a motion to suspend statutory rules for Ordinance Number 21-04-024. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Penton made a motion to pass Ordinance Number 21-04-024: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR OF THE CITY OF VAN WERT TO SIGN AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CLEAN OHIO TRAILS FUND (COTF) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY, on its first and final reading. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Penton also noted that there has been an increase in the number of young players in the T-ball and coach pitch leagues.

Parks and Recreation had no additional report for the evening.

FINANCE: Agler made a motion to approve invoices, to Sedgwick and Clemans Nelson Consulting, on a Then and Now. Mergy seconded; all concurred.

Finance had no additional report for the evening.

JUDICIARY AND ANNEXATION: Mergy reminded Council and the public of a public hearing on April 26, at 6:15 p.m., regarding the requested zoning change on parcels of land on John Brown Road.

Judiciary and Annexation had no additional report for the evening.

STREETS AND ALLEYS: Hellman made a motion to ask the Law Director to prepare legislation to approve an alley vacation near the corner of Daniel Street and Elson Street, on an emergency.

Streets and Alleys had no additional report for the evening.

PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT: Property and Equipment had no report for the evening.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Tomlinson noted that code enforcement would stay in unfinished business.

Tomlinson asked Marshall to inquire on the citywide cleanup, and provide updates at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business brought before Council.

CONSENT AGENDA

There were no items on the Consent agenda.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES

Kallas made a motion to pass Resolution Number 21-02-015: A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE VAN WERT FORWARD DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN., on its third and final reading. Hellman seconded; all concurred.


Second reading advisory for Ordinance Number 21-03-019: AN ORDINANCE TO ENACT VAN WERT CITY ORDINANCE 152.75 (A)(1)(i) AND 152.751 (F), AND TO AMEND VAN WERT CITY ORDINANCE 152.751(G). All concurred; second reading passed.

Second reading advisory for Ordinance Number 21-03-022: AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE FIRST PARKING SPACE NORTH OF THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE INTERSECTION OF EAST CENTRAL AVENUE AND SOUTH MARKET STREET TO A HANDICAP PARKING SPACE. All concurred; second reading passed.

It was noted that DORA legislation would be voted on no earlier than the May 10, 2021 meeting. Penton also shared he had received community feedback on the DORA district, and it was all positive.

ADJOURN

Agler made a motion to adjourn at 7:10 p.m. Mergy seconded; all concurred.



Clerk of Council
Andrew Bittner



Council President
Jon Tomlinson

4/26/21

Date