

WOOSTER CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
3/18/2024

I. ROLL CALL & ORDERING OF AGENDA

President Craig Sanders called the regular meeting of Wooster City Council to order at 7:40 p.m. Clerk Amy Hamilton called the roll with the following members present: Mike Abernathy, Lukas Gaffey, Steven Huszai, Chris Malta, and Jen Warden. Barb Knapic and Scott Myers were absent.

City Administration present: Mayor Bob Reynolds, Director of Administration Joel Montgomery, Deputy Director of Administration Phil Turske, Finance Director Andrei Dordea, and Law Director John Scavelli.

City Managers present: Police Chief Matt Fisher, Economic Development Coordinator Jonathan Millea, and City Engineer John Rice.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Abernathy moved to approve the minutes of the March 4, 2024 regular meeting, seconded by Mr. Gaffey. Upon voice vote, the minutes were approved.

III. COMMUNICATIONS FROM MAYOR/ADMINISTRATION

Mayor Reynolds provided updates to council on meetings he attended since the previous council meeting.

In a preview of agenda items, Director Montgomery explained the cooperative agreement for ODOT and the other Engineering projects. Director Dordea explained the pieces of bond legislation on the agenda.

Mayor Reynolds informed council that the City Administration would not be promoting a plan for legislation on recreational marijuana usage, but would work with council members on what they would like to do. He suggested using the previous medical marijuana legislation as a template. Mayor Reynolds said the City Administration would, however, advocate for the safety of the Police Department. Mayor Reynolds also said council would receive a new draft of legislation to increase the bidding threshold for city contracts. The new version would require council approval for any contract \$50,000 or higher but would not require bidding unless the contract price exceeds \$75,000.

IV. PETITIONS/COMMUNICATIONS FROM PUBLIC

None.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS; PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. First Reading – ORDINANCE NO. 2024-06 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE AND ALLOWING FOR IMMEDIATE ENACTMENT (Abernathy)

Mr. Abernathy asked if all of the money referred to in the legislation was grant money. Director Dordea replied, yes, it is all grant money. The legislation was left on first reading.

2. First Reading - RESOLUTION NO. 2024-23 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION TO ENTER INTO A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR RESURFACING-URBAN PAVING WITHIN THE CITY OF WOOSTER, AND ALLOWING FOR IMMEDIATE ENACTMENT (Warden)

Ms. Warden said this legislation would give ODOT permission to resurface portions of US Route 30 through Wooster. The legislation was left on first reading.

3. First Reading - RESOLUTION NO. 2024-24 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION TO ADVERTISE ACCORDING TO LAW AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE LOWEST AND BEST BIDDER FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE STONE CULVERT ON EAST BOWMAN NEAR THE WASHINGTON STREET INTERSECTION AND ALLOWING FOR IMMEDIATE ENACTMENT (Warden)

Ms. Warden this legislation is to grant permission to the Engineering Division to solicit bids to replace a stone culvert on East Bowman Street.

Ms. Warden moved, seconded by Mr. Malta, to adopt. Upon roll call, motion to adopt passed 5-0 (Abernathy - yes, Gaffey – yes, Huszai – yes, Malta-yes, and Warden – yes)

4. First Reading - RESOLUTION NO. 2024-25 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION TO ADVERTISE ACCORDING TO LAW AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE LOWEST AND BEST BIDDER FOR PAVEMENT REPLACEMENT, AND ALLOWING FOR IMMEDIATE ENACTMENT (Warden)

Ms. Warden explained this legislation is a request to go out for bids for pavement replacement along portions of streets in the Meadows and Willoughby Hills Allotment, and Timber Lane and Hartzler Drive. She said the replacement is selective, which means only those sections that are in poor condition will be replaced. President Sanders asked how well the patches hold up. Mr. Rice said these streets are not that old and there is enough life left that selective replacement is the best option.

Ms. Warden moved, seconded by Mr. Huszai, to adopt. Upon roll call, motion to adopt passed 5-0 (Abernathy - yes, Gaffey – yes, Huszai – yes, Malta-yes, and Warden – yes)

5. First Reading - RESOLUTION NO. 2024-26 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION TO ADVERTISE ACCORDING TO LAW AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE LOWEST AND BEST BIDDER FOR THE RESURFACING OF SOUTH BUCKEYE AND NORTH BUCKEYE STREET PARKING LOTS, WITHIN THE CITY OF WOOSTER AND PROVIDING FOR IMMEDIATE ENACTMENT (Warden)

Ms. Warden said repaving these parking lots would reduce operating costs and risk of vehicle damage. Mr. Huszai asked about the timeframe for the work and how the City plans to work around drivers who usually park there. Director Montgomery said the contractor would work in sections to minimize disruptions. Mr. Rice added the benefit of using a contractor instead of a City crew is the contractor has the equipment to do the job from start to finish whereas the City would have to hire a contractor to mill the pavement before the City crew could do the paving, making the process take longer.

Ms. Warden moved, seconded by Mr. Huszai, to adopt. Upon roll call, motion to adopt passed 5-0 (Abernathy - yes, Gaffey – yes, Huszai – yes, Malta-yes, and Warden – yes)

6. First Reading - RESOLUTION NO. 2024-27 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE LOWEST AND BEST BIDDER FOR THE SANITARY SEWER LINING PROJECT AND ALLOWING FOR IMMEDIATE ENACTMENT (Malta)

Mr. Malta noted this project will be partially funded with an OPWC grant. Mr. Gaffey asked about the lifespan for this type of project. Mr. Rice said it's a structural lining that is installed, so the lifespan should be around 40-50 years.

Mr. Malta moved, seconded by Mr. Gaffey, to adopt. Upon roll call, motion to adopt passed 5-0 (Abernathy - yes, Gaffey – yes, Huszai – yes, Malta-yes, and Warden – yes)

7. First Reading - ORDINANCE NO. 2024-07 AN ORDINANCE LEVYING SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF MELROSE DRIVE BETWEEN CERTAIN TERMINI BY GRADING, DRAINING, WIDENING, PAVING, RESURFACING, CONSTRUCTING CURBS, GUTTERS, A MULTI-USE PATH, SIDEWALKS AND DRIVEWAY APPROACHES, INSTALLING STORM SEWERS, CATCH BASINS, MANHOLES, WATER MAINS, FIRE HYDRANTS, AND TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNS AND DEVICES, AND ACQUIRING ANY REAL ESTATE AND INTERESTS, ALL TOGETHER WITH THE NECESSARY APPURTENANCES, AND ALLOWING FOR IMMEDIATE ENACTMENT (Warden)

Ms. Warden explained the legislation is to levy assessments for the improvements made to Melrose Drive between E. Milltown and E. Smithville-Western Roads. She explained that council had previously passed the Resolution of Necessity for the improvements and an Equalization Board had met to hear objections. Ms. Warden noted the project came in under budget and a portion of the project was paid for with a grant. Mr. Abernathy asked why the property owners are assessed. Director Montgomery explained the City is permitted to assess up to 98% of a project, but does not. Instead, the City typically calculates the portion of the roadway improvements in front of a property for a reconstruction project,

excluding intersections, for the assessments. Director Montgomery said the assessments allow the City to put what it would have paid on one project into another one, which means more improvements for the residents overall. This is not done for resurfacing projects. Ms. Warden added the property owners are given options for paying the assessments; they can pay all, part, or nothing when they receive the final amount due. Whatever is not paid is then sent to the Wayne County Auditor's office for collection with property taxes and remitted back to the City. Mr. Rice also noted the City used a trip generation method to calculate the assessments instead of front footage. The result was most of the assessments are around \$1,000 each because they were single-family residential properties.

8. First Reading - RESOLUTION NO. 2024-28 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION TO ENTER INTO CONTRACTS FOR RIGHT OF WAY ACQUISITION RELATED TO THE WOOSTER LOOP PHASE 3 BIKE TRAIL PROJECT, AND ALLOWING FOR IMMEDIATE ENACTMENT (Warden)

Ms. Warden said this is a request to authorize the purchase of permanent and temporary easements in order to construct Phase 3 of the City's bike path. She noted the project will be partially funded by a grant from ODOT and the estimated cost of the easements is \$70,000. Mr. Huszai asked where this section of the bike path will be located. Mayor Reynolds said it will run along the north side of Milltown Road from Melrose to Friendsville Road. Mr. Rice said a small portion will be constructed on Melrose to join the existing paths.

Ms. Warden moved, seconded by Mr. Huszai, to adopt. Upon roll call, motion to adopt passed 5-0 (Abernathy - yes, Gaffey - yes, Huszai - yes, Malta - yes, and Warden - yes)

9. First Reading - ORDINANCE NO. 2024-09 AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF BONDS IN THE MAXIMUM PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF \$4,030,000 FOR THE PURPOSE OF PAYING COSTS OF IMPROVING AND EXPANDING THE CITY'S SANITARY SEWERAGE SYSTEM BY CONSTRUCTING AND RECONSTRUCTING SANITARY SEWERS, FORCE MAINS AND LIFT STATIONS, TOGETHER WITH ALL NECESSARY APPURTENANCES THERETO, AND ALLOWING FOR IMMEDIATE ENACTMENT (Abernathy)

Mr. Abernathy said the funds are budgeted. Director Dordea said TIF funds would be used to pay the debt service on the bonds. Mayor Reynolds said TIF is "tax increment funding," which means tax dollars are used to pay for the improvements in the TIF area. Director Montgomery said the City anticipated the issuance of the debt when council passed the TIF legislation in 2023. Mayor Reynolds said the City was able to open up that area for development by providing sewer and improving the roads. The development will add to the tax base, and the additional tax revenue is going to be specifically earmarked to pay for the improvements. The bonds are to bridge the gap until the tax revenues come in to pay it off. The legislation was left on first reading.

10. First Reading - ORDINANCE NO. 2024-10 AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF BONDS IN THE MAXIMUM PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF \$565,000 TO PAY THE PROPERTY OWNERS' PORTION, IN ANTICIPATION OF THE COLLECTION OF SPECIAL

ASSESSMENTS HERETOFORE LEVIED, OF THE COSTS OF IMPROVING MELROSE DRIVE BETWEEN CERTAIN TERMINI BY GRADING, DRAINING, WIDENING, PAVING, RESURFACING, CONSTRUCTING CURBS, GUTTERS, A MULTI-USE PATH, SIDEWALKS AND DRIVEWAY APPROACHES, INSTALLING STORM SEWERS, CATCH BASINS, MANHOLES, WATER MAINS, FIRE HYDRANTS, AND TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNS, AND ACQUIRING ANY REAL ESTATE AND INTERESTS THEREIN REQUIRED THEREBY, ALL TOGETHER WITH THE NECESSARY APPURTENANCES THERETO, AND ALLOWING FOR IMMEDIATE ENACTMENT (Abernathy)

Mr. Abernathy asked how this legislation works with the previous resolution levying assessments. Director Dordea explained that whatever portion of the assessments is not paid up front, the City will issue bonds for the remainder. The legislation was left on first reading.

11. First Reading - ORDINANCE NO. 2024-11 AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF BONDS IN THE MAXIMUM PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF \$5,500,000 FOR THE PURPOSE OF PAYING COSTS OF CONSTRUCTING, FURNISHING, EQUIPPING AND OTHERWISE IMPROVING A MUNICIPAL SWIMMING POOL AND RELATED RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND IMPROVING THE SITE THEREOF, AND TOGETHER WITH NECESSARY AND INCIDENTAL APPURTENANCES THERETO, AND ALLOWING FOR IMMEDIATE ENACTMENT (Abernathy)

Mr. Abernathy asked if the project for which these bonds would be issued is a complete re-do of Christmas Run Pool. Director Montgomery replied it would be for the parking lot, pool, pumphouse and equipment room, filter, etc. Mr. Abernathy said that is a lot of money for a pool. Director Montgomery replied the Comprehensive Plan responses indicated that residents wanted to have a new pool and the City has kept it in the budget for planning purposes. Ms. Warden added the pool has been extensively discussed during previous council meetings and there is a large group of residents who would like the pool to remain open and accessible. President Sanders asked what happens if council passes the bond legislation but does not pass legislation approving the construction of the pool. Director Dordea explained the money would still need to be paid back annually in a specific way so as not to earn more on the investments than the rate of the bonds. President Sanders asked if it was correct to say passing the bond legislation before approving the expenditure of the pool is a low risk. Director Dordea said that is correct. Mr. Gaffey asked where the new council members could find more information about what was previously discussed and added that the residents who live in the area of town the pool serves do not have easy access to Freedlander Pool on the north end. Director Montgomery said the information can be found on the City's website, including the Comprehensive Plan, and he will send a link to council members. The legislation was left on first reading.

12. First Reading - ORDINANCE NO. 2024-12 AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF BONDS IN THE MAXIMUM PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF \$4,655,000 FOR THE PURPOSE OF PAYING COSTS OF IMPROVING STREETS AND ROADS IN THE CITY INCLUDING OAK HILL ROAD, MILLTOWN ROAD AND COMMERCE PARKWAY BY PURCHASING A RIGHT OF WAY, CONSTRUCTING, RECONSTRUCTING, WIDENING, GRADING, DRAINING, PAVING, CREATING A ROUNDABOUT AND OTHERWISE

IMPROVING, TOGETHER WITH ALL NECESSARY RELATED IMPROVEMENTS AND APPURTENANCES THERETO, AND ALLOWING FOR IMMEDIATE ENACTMENT (Abernathy)

Mr. Abernathy asked Mr. Rice if he wanted to share anything with council members regarding the roundabout construction. Mr. Rice said the Engineering Division has been in communication with the residents in the area, the school, the church, and the Board of Elections since the church serves as a polling location on election day, about access in and out of the area during construction. Director Dordea said these bonds would also be repaid using TIF money. The legislation was left on first reading.

13. First Reading - ORDINANCE NO. 2024-13 AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF BONDS IN THE MAXIMUM PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF \$3,100,000 FOR THE PURPOSE OF PAYING COSTS OF IMPROVING AND MAINTAINING THE CITY'S SANITARY SEWERAGE SYSTEM PLANT INCLUDING UPGRADES TO THE BIOSOLIDS, BIOGAS AND HEADWORKS SYSTEMS, TOGETHER WITH ALL NECESSARY IMPROVEMENTS AND APPURTENANCES THERETO, AND ALLOWING FOR IMMEDIATE ENACTMENT (Abernathy)

Mr. Abernathy asked Director Dordea if he wanted to speak to this legislation. Director Dordea said the bonds would be paid for by wastewater treatment plant revenues. Director Montgomery added these particular improvements will allow the City to start accepting third-party waste, which means additional revenue for the City that can also be put toward the cost of repaying the bonds. The legislation was left on first reading.

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS

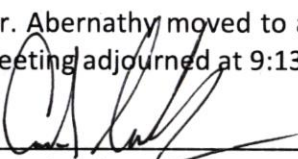
All Council Members expressed condolences to Ms. Knapic on the passing of her brother.

President Sanders wanted to inform the public that the City's website Contact tab has instructions and contact information for reporting street lights that are not working. Mr. Malta added the contact information for Omni Fiber is also on the City website if residents need to contact them about property repairs after the fiber optic lines are installed.


Mayor Reynolds reminded everyone that the following day is Election Day and he encouraged everyone to vote.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Abernathy moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Malta. Upon voice vote, the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m.



Craig Sanders
President of Council



Amy Hamilton
Clerk of Council