

WOOSTER CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
4/1/2024

I. ROLL CALL & ORDERING OF AGENDA

President Craig Sanders called the regular meeting of Wooster City Council to order at 7:30 p.m. Clerk Amy Hamilton called the roll with the following members present: Mike Abernathy, Lukas Gaffey, Steven Huszai, Barb Knapic, Chris Malta, Scott Myers, and Jen Warden.

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, Recreation Manager Ashley Hershberger, Economic Development Coordinator Jonathan Millea, and City Engineer John Rice.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Abernathy moved to approve the minutes of the March 18, 2024 regular meeting, seconded by Mr. Gaffey. Upon voice vote, the minutes were approved.

III. COMMUNICATIONS FROM MAYOR/ADMINISTRATION

Mayor Reynolds shared with council two commendations, one from Governor DeWine and the other from the Ohio Senate, the City has received for its selection as a top micropolitan city. He also said that he, Deputy Director Turske, and Jonathan Millea went to Findlay to take part in an event to recognize the accomplishments of the two Ohio cities.

Mayor Reynolds noted that Kevin Gibbons, the City's Deputy Law Director, has retired and the City is currently conducting interviews for his replacement. He also said he and Wooster Community Hospital are in the process of interviewing for a new CFO to replace Scott Boyes, who has been selected to replace outgoing CEO, Bill Sheron.

The Mayor briefly mentioned the new pieces of legislation on the agenda and explained the bond legislation under unfinished business.

Director Montgomery provided updates to council, including that OHM is currently still working on a design for Christmas Run Pool, soccer fields are getting prepared for the season, and thanked Grace Church volunteers for mulching the flower beds. He also advised the natatorium will be closed in June and the YMCA and City are working together to accommodate those affected by the closure. Director Montgomery said the North End Sanitary Sewer project is nearly complete, the Lyric Theater will soon submit its final drawings, Campbell Oil will be building a new Dairy Queen to replace the existing one in Madisonburg, and the first decorative wraps for downtown utility boxes will be installed soon.

IV. PETITIONS/COMMUNICATIONS FROM PUBLIC

None.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS; PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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

Mr. Abernathy said this ordinance is for appropriating some grant money and asked Mr. Millea to explain it further. Mr. Millea said the City has secured the CHIP grant for all of Wayne County and needs to appropriate the funds so the City can pay future invoices from projects funded by the grant.

Mr. Abernathy moved, seconded by Mr. Malta, to suspend the rules and place the legislation on third and final reading. Upon roll call vote, the motion was approved. (Abernathy – yes, Gaffey – yes, Huszai – yes, Knapic – yes, Malta – yes, Myers – yes, and Warden – yes)

Mr. Abernathy moved, seconded by Mr. Gaffey, to adopt. Upon roll call vote, the motion was approved. (Abernathy – yes, Gaffey – yes, Huszai – yes, Knapic – yes, Malta – yes, Myers – yes, and Warden – yes)

2. Second 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 explained this resolution gives ODOT consent to resurface the pavement on portions of US Route 30 within the City corporation limits. She also noted the project is fully funded by ODOT and will also result in lower operating costs since the City is responsible for routine maintenance on the roadway.

Ms. Warden moved, seconded by Ms. Knapic, to suspend the rules and place the legislation on third and final reading. Upon roll call vote, the motion was approved. (Abernathy – yes, Gaffey – yes, Huszai – yes, Knapic – yes, Malta – yes, Myers – yes, and Warden – yes)

Ms. Warden moved, seconded by Mr. Huszai, to adopt. Upon roll call vote, the motion was approved. (Abernathy – yes, Gaffey – yes, Huszai – yes, Knapic – yes, Malta – yes, Myers – yes, and Warden – yes)

3. Second 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 this ordinance is to levy final assessment for the Melrose Drive reconstruction project. She noted the project came in under budget, so the assessments for the property owners will be less than initially thought.

Ms. Warden moved, seconded by Mr. Myers, to suspend the rules and place the legislation on third and final reading. Upon roll call vote, the motion was approved. (Abernathy – yes, Gaffey – yes, Huszai – yes, Knapic – yes, Malta – yes, Myers – yes, and Warden – yes)

Ms. Warden moved, seconded by Mr. Myers, to adopt. Upon roll call vote, the motion was approved. (Abernathy – yes, Gaffey – yes, Huszai – yes, Knapic – yes, Malta – yes, Myers – yes, and Warden – yes)

4. Second 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 asked Director Dordea to verify the amount of the bonds for this legislation and how it is different from another piece of legislation for other sanitary sewer system improvements. Director Dordea said this legislation is for work done in the area covered by the TIF and is separate from the legislation that would fund improvements at the wastewater treatment plant. TIF funds would be used to reimburse the City for the cost of these bonds. Mr. Myers expressed support for the bonds. The Ordinance was left on second reading.

5. Second 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 OWERNS' 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 said he planned to leave all bond issuance legislation on second reading. The Ordinance was left on second reading.

6. Second 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 noted it is clear the community wants to keep the swimming pool. He expressed concern about issuing the debt before council has seen the plans and votes on whether or not to proceed with reconstructing the pool and suggested council could discuss it. Mr. Abernathy said he understands the perspective of getting a better rate if the City obtains the swimming pool bonds at the same time as the other bonds. President Sanders said his concern remains what would happen if council approves the bonds but does not move forward with the pool. The Ordinance was left on second reading.

7. Second 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 explained these bonds would fund the work underway in the Oak Hill/Milltown area. The Ordinance was left on second reading.

8. Second 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 said he would leave this Ordinance on second reading.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. First Reading – ORDINANCE NO. 2024-08 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 160, BIDDING PROCEDURES AND CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS, OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WOOSTER, OHIO, BY INCREASING THE AMOUNT OF THE LIMIT FOR COMPETITIVE BIDDING (Knapic)

Ms. Knapic said this legislation would increase the bidding threshold from \$50,000 to \$75,000. She asked how this legislation differs from the previous version brought before council in 2023. Director Montgomery explained that City Administration initially brought legislation to council that would increase the bidding requirement threshold from \$50,000 to \$75,000 to match the State of Ohio's statutory change. He said this new version

increases the bidding threshold to \$75,000, but left the council approval requirement at \$50,000. Director Montgomery said the State increased their limit because of rising costs due to inflation. He noted it would save the City time and money because it would reduce the number of projects that have to be prepped and advertised for bid. Mr. Rice added that the time saved in prepping projects for bids could be put into working on other projects. Mr. Myers asked about the price escalation that the State had used and that was in the previous legislation. City Administration replied that the 3% escalation had been removed. Ms. Knapic said council and the City should discuss having a two-tiered system versus a three-tiered system. After a discussion, Ms. Knapic said she would leave the legislation on first reading.

2. First Reading – ORDINANCE NO. 2024-14 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 539.04 LIQUOR PROHIBITED WITHOUT A PERMIT OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WOOSTER, AND ALLOWING FOR IMMEDIATE ENACTMENT (Knapic)

Ms. Knapic explained this legislation would extend the alcohol consumption permit at the Freedlander Chalet to include the new, enclosed patio area. Ms. Hershberger said about 25% of the Chalet rentals obtain a permit to serve and consume alcohol during events. If the codified ordinances stay as they are, no alcohol would be permitted in the patio area and supervisors would need to be vigilant. Ms. Hershberger said the area will be enclosed and signage would be posted at all of the gates warning that no alcohol is permitted past that point. Ms. Warden asked if the rental fees would increase based on the addition of the new patio area. Ms. Hershberger replied there are no plans at this time to increase fees. Mr. Myers asked if the balcony would be included in the permitted area and expressed concerns about safety. Ms. Hershberger said glass is already not allowed and the City can address alcohol on the balcony as part of its policies if the legislation is approved. Mr. Huszai asked about security at events with alcohol. Ms. Hershberger said a supervisor is always there during the rental and the Police Department patrols the parking lot during rentals that have alcohol permits. Ms. Knapic left the legislation on first reading.

3. First Reading – RESOLUTION NO. 2024-29 A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION, PURSUANT TO WOOSTER CODIFIED ORDINANCE SECTION 1105.03, REVIEW AND CONSIDER PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE PLANNING AND ZONING CODE SECTION 1109.02 AND 1135.02 AND ALLOWING FOR IMMEDIATE ENACTMENT (Knapic)

Ms. Knapic said the State has moved forward in their rulemaking process and the City needs to begin the process of amending its Planning and Zoning Code in preparation. Director Scavelli said the proposed changes are in-line with the language previously added for medical marijuana and passage of this legislation would send the proposed text amendments to the Planning Commission for review and recommendations to City Council. Council members discussed the timeline for this legislation and how it would affect the Planning Commission's ability to follow their processes to get a timely recommendation to council. Mr. Gaffey asked about the tax revenues the City might see and how those might compare to tobacco use or alcohol sales. Director Dordea said he would share the tax figures with council. Ms. Kate Ols, an Ohio medical marijuana dispensary owner, spoke to council on the State's timeline, how the application process works, and the potential tax revenues.

Ms. Knapic moved, seconded by Mr. Abernathy, to suspend the rules and place the legislation on third and final reading. Upon roll call vote, the motion was approved. (Abernathy – yes, Gaffey – yes, Huszai – yes, Knapic – yes, Malta – yes, Myers – yes, and Warden – yes)

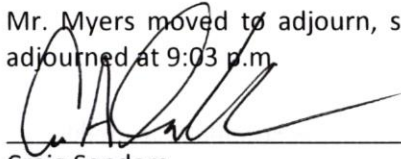
Ms. Knapic moved, seconded by Ms. Warden, to adopt. Upon roll call vote, the motion was approved. (Abernathy – yes, Gaffey – yes, Huszai – yes, Knapic – yes, Malta – yes, Myers – yes, and Warden – yes)

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS

Ms. Warden asked if developers still have a gas station planned for the Madisonburg area. Director Montgomery said his understanding is Campbell Oil will have the Dairy Queen on the east side of the intersection and a gas station is planned for the west side. He added the plans include traffic pattern improvements.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Myers moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Malta. Upon voice vote, the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.



Craig Sanders
President of Council



Amy Hamilton
Clerk of Council