

Video Conference
Regular Meeting
April 27, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Council met via video conference in regular session with the following seven members present: Phillips, Payne, Tatman, Lewis, Gillum, Shoemaker, and Proehl. Also, in attendance were Mayor Feeney, City Law Director Villarreal, City Auditor Spetnagel, and Safety-Service Director Carman. This meeting was video conferenced due to the COVID-19 pandemic and followed the guidelines of the Ohio Attorney General, Dave Yost, allowing the public to listen to the meeting safely.

Ms. Payne moved and Mr. Proehl seconded that the minutes of the regular meeting of April 13, 2020 be accepted and approved, as submitted by the Clerk. All seven members present voted “yea” and President Arnold declared the motion adopted.

President Arnold requested a motion to excuse Ms. Nickerson, who was unable to attend. He also included Ms. Corcoran, who was experiencing difficulties logging on, from the meeting if unable to join via video conference before the end of the meeting. Mr. Shoemaker moved and Ms. Payne seconded the motion. All seven members present voted “yea” and President Arnold declared the motion adopted.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Human Resources Committee:

Ms. Payne reported on Item #2 establishing the pay scale for part-time seasonal employees within the Parks & Recreation, Parks and Recreation – Swimming Pool, Service and Utilities Departments of the City of Chillicothe for calendar year 2020 and declaring an emergency. Ms. Payne indicated that the funds have already been appropriated in the 2020 budget and at the appropriate time she will request to waive the three-read rule, seeking to pass this item tonight.

Development Committee:

President Arnold reported on Ms. Nickerson’s behalf on Item #1 accepting and appropriating \$150,000.00 from the 2019 CDBG Formula Allocation Grant for South Watt Street sidewalk improvements and declaring an emergency. He said that at the appropriate time a representative of the committee will request to waive the three-read rule, seeking to pass this item tonight.

REPORTS OF OFFICIALS

Report of Mayor Feeney:

Mayor Feeney said that he supports the passage of the two items on the agenda and stated that for the Human Resources item the money has already been appropriated, adding that the legislation is setting a pay scale but at this point it is really unclear what seasonal hiring will look like this year. He commented that he and Auditor Spetnagel have spent many hours over the last month trying to figure out operationally how we would exist and what things are going to look like going into the future.

Mayor Feeney referenced a report by Bookings Institution that had pointed out how cities would be the quickest to be impacted by this downturn and that specifically cities in Ohio and three other states would be dramatically impacted because of our reliance on local income tax.

Next, Mayor Feeney commented on the importance of the next item on the agenda and its value to the City’s development of Watt Street. This item is a part of matching funding that the City has been planning for in the Watt Street Project that looks like it will go forward with this year. He stated that several years ago, the City started looking at projects that it could piece together funding streams in order to have the economies of scale to get bigger projects done than would normally be possible. He stated that essentially they will be patching together three funding sources: Community Development Block Grant money, Ohio Public Works money, and the City’s standard paving money to pull the project off. Watt Street will be a multiphase paving, sidewalk, and storm sewer project. The paving will go from Eastern Avenue to the railroad tracks; the sidewalk will run from Eastern

Avenue to 7th Street, basically connecting the grocery store to the Transit center; and there will also be drainage work done in that area, because that section of town actually does not have storm sewer in place. Mayor Feeney pointed out that the CDBG money that Council would be voting on has already been set aside for this project and that Council would just be going through the process of actually appropriating it.

Mayor Feeney asked for Council's support on both of those votes as they were both done in the past and planned for.

Mayor Feeney stated that he would like to thank the community for its efforts to keep our community safe by wearing masks and respecting social distancing. He also thanked businesses for their tough sacrifices and patience and that he knows it has not been easy. Mayor Feeney said that the Governor made a much-anticipated announcement with regard to reopening things again, and he said that community leaders are going to be discussing things over the coming week to figure out and hopefully come together in a message that is unified as to how government buildings will be opening. He stated that he has reached out to the Health District already to get guidance on how the City buildings could safely reopen to allow the City to still serve the public but also be a leader in social distancing and keeping people safe when they have to enter the building.

Lastly, Mayor Feeney indicated that it has been a very difficult challenge to project where we will be in the future. The 2020 budget will be affected as the City will see a big decrease in revenue; and consequently, the struggle is trying to project where. Mayor Feeney added that Auditor Spetnagel has been working very hard to figure out what the numbers are going to be and that the City will have to make adjustments on expenses as the year goes on. Furthermore, he said he will keep Council abreast of those decisions as they come.

Report of Auditor Spetnagel:

City Auditor Spetnagel stated that she had nothing new to report but that she and Mayor Feeney were working through the finances. Once they get everything together, she will be holding a budget review to discuss all of the information with Council.

Report of Law Director Villarreal:

City Law Director Villarreal stated that she did not have a report but commented that she did receive a couple of legislation requests from Ms. Gillum. One item pertains to the appropriation of funds for the design, survey and costs for the new fire station on Centennial Boulevard. The other item is for accepting and appropriating \$428.00 as reimbursement money for the Fire Department. Ms. Villarreal commented that her office will be looking at these pieces of legislation and will get them to Council as soon as possible.

Ms. Corcoran joined the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Report of President Arnold:

President Arnold stated that he is glad to see that businesses are starting the process of opening up again. It has been a strain on everybody not only monetarily but also in various other ways. He also said that he does not feel that it is quite over yet and would not want for us to get too far forward to the point where we have to go back through this again. President Arnold added the main thing is for everyone to be safe and take precautions, and we will get out of this and hopefully return back to close to normal soon.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

President Arnold provided information during the public participation portion of the Council meeting to enable the public to communicate with City Council if desired. There were no participants.

Ms. Flechtner joined the meeting at 7:24 p.m.

COUNCIL ASSIGNMENTS AND CALENDAR

President Arnold announced that there are four new assignments since the last meeting, two of which are on this meeting's agenda.

Development: Request to accept and appropriate \$150,000.00 from the 2019 CDBG Formula Allocation Grant for South Watt Street sidewalk improvements, and is on this meeting's agenda.

Human Resources: Request to establish the pay scale for part-time seasonal employees within the

Parks & Recreation, Parks and Recreation – Swimming Pool, Service and Utilities Departments of the City of Chillicothe for calendar year 2020 and is on this meeting’s agenda.

Safety-Service: Request to accept and appropriate \$13,293.96 to Municipal Court Computers fund received from a Supreme Court Grant for COVID-19 Relief.

Safety-Service: Request to accept and appropriate \$428.00 to Fire Department funds as reimbursement for expenses related to an emergency squad fuel injector failure.

READING AND PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION

Ord. No. 28-20 accepting and appropriating \$150,000.00 from the 2019 CDBG Formula Allocation Grant for South Watt Street sidewalk improvements and declaring an emergency was read for the first time by title only. Ms. Lewis moved and Mr. Proehl seconded that the three-reading rule be suspended, placing this item on final passage. All eight members present voted “yea” and President Arnold declared the rule suspended. All eight members present then voted “yea” on the item itself, and President Arnold declared Ordinance No. 28-20 adopted.

Ord. No. 29-20 establishing the pay scale for part-time seasonal employees within the Parks & Recreation, Parks and Recreation – Swimming Pool, Service and Utilities Departments of the City of Chillicothe for calendar year 2020 and declaring an emergency was read for the first time by title only. Ms. Payne moved and Mr. Phillips seconded that the three-reading rule be suspended, placing this item on final passage. All eight members present voted “yea” and President Arnold declared the rule suspended. All eight members present then voted “yea” on the item itself, and President Arnold declared Ordinance No. 29-20 adopted.

President Arnold inquired if there was a motion to adjourn.

Ms. Payne moved and Ms. Lewis seconded that the regular meeting be adjourned. All eight members present voted “yea” and Pres. Arnold declared the motion adopted. Adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Clerk of Council

President of Council