

Council Chambers
Regular Meeting
October 25, 2021
7:00 p.m.

Council met in regular session with eight of the nine members present: Phillips, Payne, Nickerson, Tatman, Lewis, Gillum, Fairrow, and Corcoran. Mr. Proehl was absent from the meeting. Also, in attendance were a few visitors in the audience, in addition to Mayor Feeney, Auditor Spetnagel and Law Director Villarreal.

Ms. Lewis moved and Ms. Nickerson seconded that Mr. Proehl be excused from this Council meeting. All members present voted “yea”, and President Arnold declared the motion adopted.

President Arnold led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Ms. Nickerson moved and Ms. Payne seconded that the minutes of the regular meeting of October 11, 2021 be accepted and approved, as submitted by the Clerk. All members present voted “yea”, and President Arnold declared the motion adopted.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Community Affairs Committee:

Mr. Phillips stated that the Community Affairs Committee had Item #1 on the agenda, which is the second reading of an Ordinance appropriating \$7,500.00 for the Ross County Reentry Coalition and declaring an emergency. He said he has a committee request they are still working on and are close to calling another committee meeting. He doesn't have a date and time yet, because he is still wrapping up some numbers before they can move forward with that.

Human Resources Committee:

Ms. Payne stated that the Human Resources Committee did not have an item on the agenda and that that they did not have any new information to report on.

Development Committee:

Ms. Nickerson stated that the Development Committee had nothing on the agenda tonight. However, she would like to thank everybody involved in the 2nd Street 2-way transition. She said she thinks they did a great job, and it seemed to go effortlessly; knock on wood it continues to go that smoothly. She said she really appreciates it.

Parks & Recreation Committee:

Ms. Corcoran stated that the Parks & Recreation Committee had nothing on the agenda.

President Arnold asked Mr. Fairrow if he had anything to report. Mr. Fairrow stated that on behalf of the Terrell Fairrow Committee, he had nothing to report.

Safety Service Committee:

Ms. Gillum stated that the Safety Service Committee had one item on the agenda, Item #1 which is an Ordinance appropriating \$4,886 for the purchase of replacement chairs for the Chillicothe Police Department.

City Services / Transit Committee:

Ms. Lewis stated that the City Services Committee had no items on the agenda and that she had nothing new to report.

Utilities Committee:

Mr. Tatman stated that the Utilities Committee did not have anything on the agenda tonight.

Engineering Committee:

Mr. Tatman stated that the Engineering Committee had nothing on the agenda, but that he had received a request regarding a structure on 2nd Street from Ed Kunzelman. He said it had already been approved by the Design Review Board. He said he thinks Council should have at least one meeting on this to iron out any questions. He requested a committee meeting on Monday, November 8th at 6:30 p.m. prior to the next Council meeting. He mentioned that they could invite Mr. Kunzelman as well.

REPORTS OF OFFICIALS

Report of Mayor Feeney:

Mayor Feeney stated that at the last meeting he failed to mention a retirement; our City Engineer, Dean Carroll, retired at the end of September. He said he just wanted to publicly thank him for the work he put in and the time he was with the City. He said in particular, he thinks his experience both on the side as a contractor and with his special engineering experience was essential to getting the work done we needed to get done in the City. He said sometimes it can be difficult to do things in an absolutely perfect manner the way an engineer would draw it up in a textbook. He said Dean often adjusted and ran with a project and was a good advisor, and he just wanted to thank him. He said he would also like to announce that Dave Fishel, who had been the City Utilities Director, was offered and he accepted the job of City Engineer. He said he was also going to announce that for the past several years the City has been looking internally at structure and trying to make the City more efficient and the City services more efficient. He said what he discovered over time is that there were some pressure points, particularly between the Engineering and Utilities department, in areas such as wastewater and permitting approvals. He said what they are going to do moving forward is a slightly different structure moving towards what he thinks will ultimately be a Public Works Department. He said many cities have this instead of having Utilities, Engineering, and Building Department separate, they have one Public Works Director with all of these things housed underneath. He said moving forward, Dave Fishel as City Engineer, will have a direct report, and that direct report will be the Utilities Director. Instead of the Utilities Director and the City Engineer being next to each other on an organizational chart, one will report up to the other. We think that will really help the departments in working together. He said nothing changes with the City's ordinances or pay scale, but it is more for information flow. He said additionally in similar fashion as we look at Transportation and Planning & Development, the Transit Director position will report up through Planning & Development. He said thank you to Dean Carroll for his service to the City and community, and congratulations to Dave Fishel on his new role.

Mayor Feeney said thank you to Council members, ODOT District 9, and everybody who attended last week's public information meeting regarding the upcoming changes to Bridge Street. He said District 9 has done a nice job at getting that information out to the public and letting us on this side have ample time not only to hear proposals, but he gets the sincere feeling that they are looking to the community for guidance and recommendations on some of these proposals. He said thank you to everybody who attended and to District 9 as well.

Mayor Feeney said we are two weeks into leaf pick up. He said we are a little behind on leaves falling down; but nevertheless, we are out picking up leaves. The schedule is based on your trash day as to what week your leaf pick up is. He added to also remember that we still do on-demand yard waste pick up and to call the Service Department for this service.

Mayor Feeney said Thursday is Trick-or-Treat from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., and he said it will rain he can almost assure you. He said we will trick-or-treat rain or shine unless there is an advisory from the National Weather Service, which has happened in the past. He said that if you have children that do not want to go out in the rain to just assure them that if they don't go, all of the other kids are going to get their share of the candy. He said rainy days are actually the best days to go out for candy.

Report of Auditor Spetnagel:

Auditor Spetnagel stated that she did not have anything on the agenda, but she wanted to announce they she will be holding a budget meeting on Monday, November 8th at 5:30 p.m. prior to the committee meeting. She said then there will also be another one on Wednesday, October 10th at 6:00 p.m.

Report of Law Director Villarreal:

Law Director Villarreal stated her office would like to thank Council for supporting the ordinance that provided funds to increase the Assistant Law Director's hours. She said one of their current prosecutors has accepted that position and immediately began covering the arraignments in Municipal Court, and it has instantly relieved and taken the heat off of the other Assistant Law Directors. She said she is thrilled that Council has gotten the chance to get to know some of the new Assistant Law Directors, like Mr. Miller, and said now they can appreciate why they are so happy to have him. She said he is one of the new prosecutors that is helping to protect the City.

Report of President Arnold:

President Arnold said that he would like to wish for everybody to have a safe and Happy Halloween and added that the parade is coming up this Saturday night. He also said he would like to welcome back Councilwoman Nancy Ames who was in the audience.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Melody Young of 230 N. Plaza Boulevard. She said she is the Director of the Visitor's Bureau in Ross County. She said she wanted to give some good news of the things that are going on in Chillicothe. She stated that Chillicothe has been awarded the "Best Hometown" for 2021/2022, which is a designation that comes from Ohio Magazine. She said she is thrilled that they are able to represent not just Southeastern Ohio but all of Ohio, as we are one of five best hometowns. This will be officially announced to the public at the tree lighting ceremony on November 19th. She said as they celebrate this whole year it will be on all of their advertising around the state, and locally they will be providing window clings to businesses to show support in the celebration of Chillicothe's Downtown. Ms. Young stated that they will also be having a Christmas Church Walk on December 4th starting at 6:30 p.m. She said each church is going to do a 10-12 minute program that will vary from musicals to praise, to dance, to bells, to bluegrass, to gospel music and will end at St. Mary's Church with a celebration. She said the tickets for the event are \$10.00. She stated that she also wanted to plant a seed that the City of Chillicothe should revisit the allocation of bed tax to one room or more in the City limits. She said in 1998 Ohio changed their code from collecting bed tax on five or more rooms down to one or more rooms. She said that in 2013 Ross County enacted collecting the bed tax on one or more rooms, and as Airbnb's become a big deal she thinks it is a opportunity. She said visitors expect to pay a bed tax when they come to town. She ended with she wanted to thank everyone on Council for their service, dedication, and support over the last few years and that she wished everyone lots of luck. She also said she wanted to thank Nancy Ames who is the President of her Board.

Ms. Corcoran thanked Ms. Young for all of her hard work with the Visitor's Bureau.

Melody Lapczynski of 355 Brennan Road. She said she was there for the Purple Heart dedication and memorial. She said they are moving full steam ahead. She said Gary Gillum laid the concrete in the Veterans Park and did an amazing job. Ms. Lapczynski said it has really become a labor of love, and she had copies of what the monument will look like. She reminded everyone that the dedication will be November 11th at 1:00 p.m. at the Veterans Park.

Melissa Compher 1667 Stone Road, Lot #30. She said she just bought a business at 295 E. 2nd Street and was wondering how she is to ask the City to assist her with the fact that every time she goes to the business she is literally cussed out, relatives have been jumped, and so on. She said she is trying to open a business there, but the homeless and drug addicts that are all through there refuse to allow her to do so. She said she has called the Police and they say it is the City's fault because the City doesn't want them arresting these people. She said she has asked around and was told to maybe see if the City Council could help her resolve this issue.

President Arnold said that Council is a legislative branch, and not an enforcement branch, but that Council can definitely receive her complaints.

Ms. Compher said that Ms. Gillum has assisted her with the building beside her that feeds the homeless by sending a complaint. They then removed the benches that were there and hung up a sign. However, the people are still hanging out there, and no one is enforcing the signs on the building. She said the enforcers (Police) are unable to enforce because the City of Chillicothe (judges and elected officials) are not allowing them to do so. She said she is there to see if anybody on City Council would like to help a citizen who put her money back into the City to open a business, and no one is backing her up at all. She said she is single mother, has a 7-year-old, and

homeschools her. She asked isn't her public safety important to anybody.

Mayor Feeney said that this is a legislative body here, but he is here as part of the Administration, along the Safety Service Director. He asked her to hang out after the meeting. He said it is the first he is hearing about her particular issue, and it sounds incredibly frustrating. He said he appreciates her investment. He asked her to hang out after the meeting, and Jeff and he would talk with her, get some information, and see if they can't work together for a solution.

President Arnold said that what she has said does not fall on deaf ears. He said he thinks he can speak for all of Council that they have concerns for what she has going on. He said obviously with the problems she has going on, it will not just stop here with this room

COUNCIL ASSIGNMENTS AND CALENDAR

President Arnold announced that the next Council meeting will be Monday, November 8th at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

Prior to the City Council meeting, there will be a budget review Monday, November 8th at 5:30 p.m., followed by an Engineering Committee meeting at 6:30 p.m. There will also be another budget meeting on Wednesday, November 10th at 6:00 p.m.

President Arnold announced that there are new committee assignments since the last meeting for inclusion in the Journal of Council:

Parks & Recreation: Request for legislation to appropriate \$1,900 for survey of 89 Riverside to meet requirement to purchase said property by a grant from ODNR.

Safety Service: Request for legislation to accept donation and appropriate \$200 from Anytime Fitness to Chillicothe Fire Department.

Engineering: Request for legislation to allow a covered entry at 14-16 East Second Street to encroach onto the sidewalk and right-of-way and relocating a streetlight and sign.

READING AND PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION

An Ordinance appropriating \$7,500.00 for the Ross County Reentry Coalition and declaring an emergency was read for the second time by title only.

An Ordinance appropriating \$4,886.00 for the purchase of replacement chairs for the Chillicothe Police Department and declaring an emergency was read for the second time by title only.

President Arnold inquired if there was a motion to adjourn.

Ms. Lewis moved and Ms. Payne seconded that the regular meeting be adjourned. All eight members present voted "yea" and President Arnold declared the motion adopted. Adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Clerk of Council

President of Council