

## **CITY OF ROCKY RIVER**

**December 6, 2021**

The meeting of the Committee-of-the-Whole was called to order by Mr. Moran, President, immediately following the Public Hearing.

Council Members Present: Mr. Hunt, Mr. Shepherd, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Furry, Mrs. Morris,  
Mr. Klym, Mr. Moran

Administration: Mayor Bobst, Mr. Thomas

Assistant Law Director: Mr. O'Shea

### **MAYOR'S REPORT:**

The Mayor began with a large thank you from the administration and directors for the Budget process on Friday and they are very pleased with Council's kind words about their work and their effort. They are all available if there are any additional questions or clarification needed.

The weekend's events were wonderful. All A Glow worked out very well. Thank you to the following staff: Rich Snyder, Bob Holub, Dave Arendec, Mike Balla and his staff, Fred Hobson, Jim Umerley and Dan Gibson did all the lighting and took care of all the electrical needs. Everyone did a great job. A huge thank you to the Rocky River Community Chorus that performed Friday evening with beautiful voices and enjoyed by everyone. Thank you to Angela Barth from the Chamber of Commerce for all her work with Chamber Lights that was started by Councilman Chris Klym. The Mayor thanked Mr. Klym for the gift to the community of celebrating together and a gift of a tradition that everyone is enjoying. There have been so many positive comments with moving the trees out front.

- Mr. Klym said it is a great spot, but the trees are going to need more support from the winds today and the last windstorm. Having All A Glow in front of the new entrance of City Hall was beautiful and a wonderful location to have this celebration.

The Mayor said that Santa arrived on the beautifully decorated firetruck and the children were so excited that they were all shaking. Mr. and Mrs. Claus were followed by the children while they looked at the trees. The drive-in movie went well with a lot of popcorn. Thank you to everyone that was involved with the Friday night celebration.

The Saturday Holiday Walk was a huge success. A huge thank to Richard Marquard. In past years, it was Bill Brink but this year Richard stepped up to the plate and said he could get it done. In future years, the Chamber may be engaged even more. Everything went very well, with lots of people and the weather was great. A big thank you to the Green Team for having a presence there discussing how to have a sustainable Christmas with all sorts of ideas. Unfortunately, the car parade did not pull off. Only one community car registered but hopefully the next year will have a larger participation. Residents could see the safety forces escort for Santa heading down Detroit Road with very excited children on Detroit Road. Santa danced for about 30 minutes and the music was great. The merchants stayed open which was very much appreciated and they said it was well worth their while to stay open. Thank you to everyone that participated especially the merchants and Richard Marquard.

The Mayor said that the railing was replaced on the Gazebo at City Hall and lights will be added along with lights at the Clock Tower, the Pavilion at Rocky River Park with lights scalloped along the chain around Rocky River

Park.

The Mayor shared COVID numbers. From the County. On November 29<sup>th</sup> the 7-day report showed 50 new cases of COVID in Rocky River. Today, the report showed 111 new cases in Rocky River. That increase is probably caused from the Thanksgiving Holiday. The report showed that 63.5% of the population are vaccinated in Cuyahoga County. The number of COVID cases continue to grow and the vaccination rate continues to grow. This was discussed this morning at the Director's meeting and the administration will watch these numbers and watch what is happening in the state towards the holidays. Currently the city is not anticipating any adjustments. People are wearing masks in the buildings except when exercising. The numbers will continue to be monitored.

The Building Permit Numbers through November 30<sup>th</sup> compared to November 30<sup>th</sup> a year ago:

- The number of permits are up: 1,752 permits have been issued as compared to 1,583 last year
- The valuation is at \$39.5 million in added valuation compared to \$59 million this time last year. The biggest piece of that is 700 Lake along with projects at private schools that added to the elevated valuation level last year.

The city is still strong and at the same numbers as 2019, well above 2017 and 2018, with the last bump in 2013 when Brighton Chase came on board.

Play Readers at the Senior Center will have three performances later this week. Wednesday and Friday are matinees beginning at 1:30 p.m. and a Thursday evening performance at 7:00 p.m. Please call to make a reservation so there can be appropriate spacing. The performances will be in the auditorium at the Senior Center.

- President Moran said that over the last decade there have been more and more programs pulling the residents of Rocky River together. As these events happen, the residents have enjoyed their time. The Chamber helped push things over the top and it helps all the businesses in downtown Rocky River.
- The Mayor said that the residents love to gather and love traditions. Rocky River is a community of traditions and traditions keep getting bigger every year. Traditions might change over the years and it is fun to plan things like this. It was great to see the community enjoying one another.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** President Moran congratulated Councilman O'Donnell for the Finance Committee Meeting last Friday morning. Council received some of the best information that has ever been provided in the past. Council becomes more and more educated every year as far as finances and programs that are available. This year the Directors could have each used a couple more hours to present. They are very committed to their departments.

**COMMUNICATION: NONE**

**ASSISTANT LAW DIRECTOR:** Mr. O'Shea updated Council regarding a pending criminal case.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**ORDINANCE NO. 71-21:** Councilwoman Morris said this has been referred to the Planning Commission for review regarding the driveway situation and is on hold. Mr. Bemer and Mr. Reich are working on the amended language.

**RESOLUTION NO. 87-21:** Mr. Shepherd stated that this resolution authorizes the city to apply for funding of \$13,000 in a matching grant to plant trees to improve the urban forestry on public property in the areas of Dale, Carmen, Forestview and Northview. There have not been any objections to this ordinance and is scheduled for a

third read and will be placed on the consent agenda.

**ORDINANCE NO. 88-21:** Mr. O'Donnell stated that Council was here on Friday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> from 8:00 a.m. to almost 1:00 p.m. for the Finance Committee Meeting to discuss the 2022 Budget. Mr. O'Donnell would echo the comments the Mayor stated in her report that Council enjoyed the process as well and Council appreciated the time, effort and energy the Directors put in. Please pass that along. Thank you also to Director Thomas, all Mr. O'Donnell's colleagues, as it was a very good meeting. The Public Hearing for the Budget was held earlier this evening. This ordinance will be moved for passage within the next two weeks.

- Mr. Furry agrees that it should not be placed on the consent agenda. Mr. Furry has been on Council for 16 years and feels the most comfortable he has felt with the budget. It is a footpath for the coming year and can be adjusted based on good or bad conditions.

**ORDINANCE NO. 89-21, 90-21 and 91-21:** Mr. Shepherd spoke about all three ordinances. Currently Mr. Shepherd is concerned about the uninsured motorist coverage that Safety Service is looking into and getting quotes for different levels for that type of coverage. The city currently has \$25,000 in coverage, but Mr. Shepherd is not sure what the limit is. Quotes have been received at \$250,000 and \$500,000 and Mr. Shepherd has requested a quote at \$1,000,000. It is relatively cheap insurance. The difference between the \$250,000 and the \$500,000 is about \$3,100. The increase up to \$1 million might not be that much also and he has requested that quote. This coverage protects the city's employees. The contract for each of these ordinances is not attached to the ordinance so there may need to be an amendment. The Mayor stated that there will be a new exhibit because the crime coverage and the cyber security have to be added also. The administration is waiting for the decision on the uninsured underinsured. The supporting documentation will be added. The city needs the insurance and it needs to be in place by January 1, 2022. Because this was put out to public bid, the rates will still be lower even with the added insurances. These will not be placed on the consent agenda.

- Mr. Furry asked if Crain Langner agreed with Mr. Shepherd's thoughts on the uninsured motorists. In discussions with Mr. Shepherd, they raised some points and Mr. Shepherd would raise some counterpoints. Some cities object to it and look at it as double dipping and have not done it, but there are cities that go in for the larger limits. Mr. Shepherd considers himself a frugal person and he does not think this insurance is expensive.
- The Mayor added that there are three separate policies. Employees drive for the city and the WWTP. The administration is trying to determine if employees in the court drive their personal cars for work. This number will be spread across the contracts and it may or may not include the court. This is the global number, but part of the cost will go to the WWTP and part of the cost to the city.

**ORDINANCE NO. 92-21:** Mr. O'Donnell stated this is the ordinance for the salaries and wage increases for 2022 and amends Ordinance No. 74-21. Below is part of what is reflected in the ordinance.

- A Director of Planning and Community Development was added
- An Assistant Finance Director was added to the Finance Department
- Additional Seasonal CDL and Summer Seasonal Employees
- The minimum wage increased to \$9.30 (State of Ohio)

This will be amended within the next two weeks delineating the jailers and part-time IT for the city and the court and will not be on the consent agenda.

**ORDINANCE NO. 93-21:** Mr. Shepherd said this has been read twice and is the Health Insurance coverage for full time employees. The Health Insurance is close to a 0% increase with one cost that changed slightly to increase the premium to .32%. Mr. Shepherd's research shows this is well below rates anywhere. There were no plan design changes and no increase to employee premiums. This will be on the consent agenda.

**ORDINANCE NO. 94-21:** Mr. Shepherd said this renewal is a 1.5% increase for 2022 and the second year has zero increase with no plan design changes and no increase in employee premiums. This will be on the consent agenda also.

**ORDINANCE NO. 96-21:** Mr. Shepherd stated that this ordinance is for the city's professional engineering services as needed. This agreement has an increase that mirrors the increase the city employees received. The contract itself has a 30 day out clause to both the engineer and the city. MacKay has done a good job for the city with a historical and institutional knowledge of the city.

- Mr. Furry stated that this is a cost-of-living adjustment for the independent contractors.

**ORDINANCE NO. 97-21:** This is for the purchase of three 2021 Ford Hybrid Explorer Interceptors. Two of these vehicles will be for the police department and one vehicle for the Service Director. This is a great deal as the cars are available now and ordering this year will be less expensive.

**ORDINANCE NO. 98-21:** Mr. Shepherd stated that this is for an easement to the City of Cleveland to improve the waterline on Beaconsfield Blvd., as the pressure is too low for the fire hydrants. It will be done fully at the cost to the Cleveland Water Department.

**RESOLUTION NO. 99-21:** Mr. Moran explained that this provides the Mayor the opportunity to receive the funds from the opioid settlement against Johnson and Johnson going on in the State of Ohio. With this resolution, the city can receive funds from the National Opioid Settlement Agreement.

**ORDINANCE NO. 100-21:** Mr. Klym said this is a semi-annual review of municipal fees and this is for an increase of fees at the outdoor pool. The last increase was in 2019. Mr. Holub addressed this last Friday. Mr. Moran raised a question about General Admission prices compared to the Guest Punch Pass prices. Mr. Klym will clarify this with Mr. Holub.

**RESOLUTION NO. 102-21:** Mr. Shepherd said this authorizes the Mayor to submit a program partner agreement with NOACA for the installation of an electrical charging station that will consist of two dual port charges and one fast charging station on the eastside of the Civic Center. The cost of installing these will be 100% covered by NOACA. One issue is whether the city should charge for this. Mr. Shepherd wants to clarify his comments from last meeting stating he thinks the city should charge only for the cost of the electricity used.

- Mr. Klym explained that the city pulls power regularly out of the grid. If suddenly the demand is higher than usual, the utility could increase the demand charges. Sometimes electric charging stations charge for electricity and sometimes for the amount of time that you are parked there.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

**ORDINANCE NO. 103-21:** Mrs. Morris said this is a change in mailing in the revised code. The Mayor said this is to make the language in Chapter 1101 in the Code consistent with the language change in the Charter.

- Mrs. Morris asked if the next to last line regarding failure of delivery of certified mail should still be included in this paragraph.
- Mr. Shepherd asked about the Certificate of Mailing and would like clarification what type of mail is being discussed. The Mayor will clarify this with Mr. Bemer.

**MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:** Mr. Moran said that the BZA will have a Public Hearing this Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. regarding the Krueger Group Project at 22655 Center Ridge Road for 54 apartments. This meeting will

be held in Council Chambers.

As there was no further business by members of Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:57p.m. The next Legislative meeting will be held on Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup> in Council Chambers. City Council will have a Special Meeting and a Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting on December 20<sup>th</sup>.

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James W. Moran  
President of Council

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Susan G. Pease  
Clerk of Council