

CITY OF ROCKY RIVER

November 18, 2024

The Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting of Council was called to order by Mr. Furry, President of Council, immediately following the Special Meeting in the David J. Cook Council Chambers.

Council Members Present: Mr. Hunt, Mrs. Gallagher, Mr. O'Boyle, Mr. Shipp,
Mrs. Morris, Mr. Sindelar, Mr. Furry

Administration: Mayor Bobst, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Snyder

Law Director: Mr. O'Shea

MAYOR'S REPORT:

The Mayor said that a video with a companion survey developed by the consultants SmithGroup, will be placed on the city's webpage in order to glean additional information about Rocky River Park. There have been good Stakeholder Meetings with residents that live near the park and at large. This video takes into consideration all the information that has been previously presented along with many of the comments and modifications to the possible infrastructure investment at Rocky River Park. A ReadyNotify will be sent out when the video is live on the website.

Leaf pick up is beginning the third pass through the city. The Service Department travels through the city in a very deliberate way and it is not easy to go to revisit streets they just passed through. If someone misses their day, the crew will be back again. Please do not park in front of leaf piles and do not blow leaves into the street, which makes it more difficult to pick up and causes other hazards. The Service Department is doing a great job. Thank you to Council for supporting all the equipment used to provide a beloved service by the residents.

An additional survey will be on the website which will present ideas and thoughts to glean opinions and perspectives about a multi-use trail on Lake Road. This has been discussed for a long time. It comes out of some of the work being done on the Lake/Clifton Bridge in Lakewood and would eventually be a connector to Bay Village. This is in the very early stages and the city wants the survey out so residents that live in that area and residents who will use this will provide the city with good useful feedback. A ReadyNotify will be sent when this video is live on the website.

The Mayor said that on December 3rd at 6:30 p.m. at the Civic Center, there will be an I/I meeting for residents on Kensington and Frazier Dr. This meeting will discuss connections that are causing inflow into the sanitary system. Director Snyder and AECOM will be leading the meeting and encourages residents in these areas to attend. Invitations will be mailed to all these residents.

The Mayor thanked Director Snyder for submitting a grant to the Ohio EPA for the Recycle Ohio Program in the amount of \$100,000 for the rehabilitation of the ram that is at the Transfer Station. The ram compacts all the garbage that is put in the hole and it needs to be rehabilitated.

The Mayor said that work to install the restrooms at Bradstreet's Landing has begun. The restrooms will be operational by mid-December with landscaping being done in the spring.

The Mayor mentioned that ODOT shared with Director Snyder their evaluation of the Spencer Creek Culvert, from the WWTP down into Bradstreet's Landing. Superintendent Barille also received the evaluation for review.

The Mayor said that the Senior Center received a \$5,000 grant from Giant Eagle for Senior Transportation. This is a critical service the city provides to seniors. It is highly utilized as they provide approximately 10,000 trips yearly for the seniors. Thank you to Giant Eagle for their generosity. This is approximately the 16th year that the city has received this grant from Giant Eagle.

The Mayor announced that the Citizen's Police Academy application process is now open for the 2025 class. The notice is on the website and residents or other interested parties can call the Police Station to get a copy of the application.

The Tree Lawn Tree Planting Program is complete and all the trees have been planted for this year. Director Snyder and the landscapers are turning their attention to the trees that will be planted through the grant Director Snyder received for private property in West River and Christiansen Estates.

The Mayor respectfully requested an Executive Session under Article 10, Section 6, Subsection 4 to discuss the Collective Bargaining Negotiation issue.

Happy Thanksgiving to everyone!

COMMITTEE REPORTS: NONE

COMMUNICATIONS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mr. Furry reminded City Council that the Budget Hearing will be held on December 6th. Mr. Furry is meeting with Director Thomas tomorrow. Please meet prior to December 6th with your respective Director and forward an electronic version of the Budget Summary Sheet to Clerk Pease.

MOTION:

Mr. Furry stated that the Mayor requested an Executive Session under Article 10, Section 6, Subsection 4 to discuss a Collective Bargaining Negotiation issue. This will be held prior to the end of the Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting this evening.

Vote: Hunt – aye	Gallagher – aye	O'Boyle – aye	Shipp – aye
Morris – aye	Sindelar – aye	Furry – aye	
7 – ayes	0 – nays		PASSED

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Ordinance No. 76-24: This is the annual salaries and hourly rates ordinance effective January 1, 2025. Mr. Furry reviewed a summary of what is included:

- State minimum wage increased to \$10.70 per hour.
- Overall positions saw a 3% increase which includes exempts, union members of Fire, union members of Wastewater, and part-time positions. This does NOT include union members of Police and Service as the city is currently negotiating with their CBA.
- The Finance Department renamed existing positions Finance Clerk I and Finance Clerk II and made an equity adjustment to reflect the required experience for these positions.
- There was a small equity adjustment for the Rental Inspector position to reflect the required state credentials needed for the position.

- The Department of Planning and Community Development has moved out of the Building Department and has its own section now.
- There was an equity adjustment for Director of Public Facilities and Maintenance to reflect credentials held for the position.
- The Senior Center added a full-time position for Marketing/Communications and Volunteer Coordinator. This position has not been filled but is in the budget.
- An increase for the Assistant Law Director is also included.

Mr. Furry said this has been read twice and will be read for a third time at the next meeting.

Amended Ordinance No. 77-24: This ordinance was amended during the Special Meeting this evening. The supplemental appropriation was amended with an additional \$100,000 totaling \$1.5 million for the Senior Center Improvements to align with the construction costs and bond ordinance total not to exceed \$4.6 million per the Finance Director's revised recommendation with this covering two fiscal years. This will have three reads.

- Mrs. Morris asked where the \$100,000 came from. Mr. Furry said the total is the same. The Finance Director is moving more into 2024.

Amended Ordinance No. 78-24: Mr. Furry explained that Blake Beachler, Bond Counsel at Calfee, Halter & Griswold, LLP clarified the bottom of the first paragraph of Section 2, adding that the bonds may be issued in calendar year 2024 or 2025. It more clearly states Council's authorizing intent. There is additional language at the beginning of Section 12 regarding the bank qualification language because the Fire Department Project may launch in 2025. This sheds light on potential plans. It authorized the city to issue bonds for the Senior Center Improvement Project and authorizes funding not to exceed \$4.6 million which will pay the construction costs within the bid amount. The city has already incurred some soft costs for planning and design which were paid for by cash flow from Capital Resources and the project will not be 100% debt finance. For those on Council during the Police Station construction, the city did BANS or bond anticipation notes. Before going to market for bonds for the Senior Center, the city is going straight to market retaining the law firm Calfee, Halter as Bond Council. The city is not going to market today. The current general obligation tax exempt rate for a 20-year bond is approximately 3.5%. Director Thomas suspects it has moved as overall rates were lower at the end of October. It has moved favorably.

Ordinance No. 79-24: This is an ordinance authorizing the Finance Director to reimburse the City of Cleveland \$7,669.06. This is a sister piece to 73-24 but this is Oak/Collver. Exhibit "A" explains the costs which were reconciled by City Engineer Kimberly Kerber.

Ordinance No. 80-24: Mrs. Gallagher said this authorizes Director Snyder to purchase gas, fuel, oil and allied products on the open market at the best price possible for the period January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025. The prices fluctuate so the city needs to find the best available price.

Ordinance No. 81-24: Mrs. Gallagher said this is also a yearly ordinance. It allows the mechanic, Frank Sinito to shop for the best prices on the open market for tires for city vehicles. He obtains three bids and purchases with the best price. The city needs to secure tires on the open market with competitive rates to purchase tires for the various departments in the city.

Ordinance No. 82-24: Mr. Sindelar said this is a resolution granting the authority to the Mayor or Director Snyder to represent the city and interest in the work that is going to be done in replacing the Hilliard Blvd. Bridge. The Mayor said that this is a County Project to the extent that the City of Rocky River may add additional infrastructure that the city would want to see and the city would assume those costs.

- Mr. Furry said it says we participate with the County in the cost of the improvement by an

allocation from the County Motor Vehicle. Mr. Furry knows there is a city that this city receives a small fraction from, is that something that we would get our dibs on anyway? The Mayor said that is correct and the City of Rocky River cannot increase ours.

Ordinance No. 84-24: Mr. Sindelar said this is to enter contracts with Medical Mutual of Ohio to provide Healthcare, Prescription Insurance coverage and optional Vision coverage for full-time employees. Mr. Sindelar stated that we have an advantage because of the Mayor's previous experience in the health insurance industry. Medical Mutual has consistently done a good job as the administrator of this. The Mayor said that the design of this plan as well as the utilization of this plan by the employees creates the zero increase. The city is self-insured, minimum premium. The Mayor gives credit to everyone that utilizes the plan and utilizes it so effectively and obviously the city wants a healthy workforce. Mr. Sindelar said that there is a reduction in cost for city employees at the Recreation Center, encouraging healthy lifestyles to keep the costs low. The Mayor stated that this includes an FSA, HSA which is a high deductible plan that many people take advantage of pre-tax dollars, interest bearing and portable. There is a more traditional plan and the premium is split 85/15%. The employees do pay 15% but that has not increased in several years thanks to utilization.

Ordinance No. 85-24: Mrs. Gallagher said this ordinance is to enter a contract with Millstone Management Group for the 2024 Senior Center restoration and addition in an amount not to exceed \$4,551,889.00. There were six bids received on October 18th. The lowest and best bid was from Millstone. The owner's rep from QCI, the principal architect from CPL and Director Snyder agreed to choose Millstone. The funds will be paid out of the Capital Improvement Building Account. Six references were interviewed that have worked with Millstone such as Mentor School District, Visionworks, Chardon Schools and Cuyahoga County Land Bank. They all recommend Millstone because of their attention to detail, quality and excellent communication.

Ordinance No. 86-24: Mrs. Morris said this is a yearly ordinance for grit and screening removal to a municipal landfill for the WWTP. Kimball was the company used last year and they were the only bid this year at a price increase of 12%. The total per year is generally \$35,000 so expect a 3.5-thousand-dollar increase.

- Mr. Furry asked if Mr. Barille said anything about Rumpke not bidding. Mrs. Morris stated that Rumpke is getting out of the transportation business. Mr. Snyder said Rumpke is switching to residential.

Ordinance No. 87-24: Mrs. Morris said there is a language change in Ordinance 915.03 (c)(3) that is required by the Ohio EPA. Exhibit A shows changes in a few areas, but the Selenium concentration of 1.41 has dropped from 1.51. There was an audit done where this was captured and it needs to be changed by all the cities that are part of the WWTP. The change in regulation occurred in 2017 but it was not properly reflected in the local limits. Now it has been caught and they want everybody to change it.

Ordinance No. 88-24: Mr. Furry stated that this was read for the first time at the Special Meeting tonight. Council received their Budget Books last week. This will be discussed further during the Budget Hearing on December 6th.

- Mr. Sindelar asked who gets credit for the photo on the cover of the Budget Book. The Mayor said that Mark Filipic took this photograph but the placement is up to the Director of Finance.

Ordinance No. 89-24, 90-24 and 91-24: Mr. Sindelar said the next three ordinances were read for the first time this evening at the Special Meeting. The city works with Crain Langner as an insurance

consultant. They provide the city with advice and guidance down the right path for these three ordinances which is the city itself, the WWTP and the Court. The city did not seek proposals for insurance services this year on the recommendation of Crain, Langner, & Co. It was explained that if the city goes to the market annually, there is a significant chance that the city will not receive coverage. Mr. Sindelar said the city has had issues with McGowan, one might say they have not been the fairest to us, so why aren't we going out to find someone new. The Mayor said that there are not many insurance companies for municipalities, a lot of traffic, a lot of potential liabilities and a lot of issues, so it is a big deal. The issues were with the insurance company, not necessarily with McGowan, the agent. Mr. Snyder added that McGowan was put on notice when the city hired Crain, Langner to evaluate this. Since that point, McGowan has been exceptional with their communication. The city experienced some delays after the storm when looking at roof damage, but a lot of insurance companies were backed up at that time. They have been exceptional in their service to the city and whenever the city needs something they respond.

- Mr. O'Shea asked if McGowan is servicing claims or does the adjuster for MunichRE service the claim. Mr. Snyder said the city contacts McGowan and McGowan passes through to MunichRE.
- The Mayor added that the guidance received said to let it run for three years and see what the renewals are.
- Mr. Snyder said that what the IT Director Ricky Bycoski has done for cyber security has resulted in the city receiving a discount.

The pricing overall is a 16% increase since last year. Comparable city increases include:

- Euclid and Euclid's WWTP has a 12% increase in a bid year
- Fairview Park has a 44% increase in a bid year
- Bay Village is 14% increase in a non-bid year
- Avon Lake is 41% increase in a bid year
- MetroParks is an 11% increase in a bid year

Mr. Snyder said that the 16% is using the not to exceed amounts and he expects that to lower when final numbers are received.

- Mrs. Morris asked if there is anything new this year that was added or recommended. The Mayor had asked them for some Best Practice Guidelines and the city implemented several things internally and cyber security. It began last year but it was noted this year. Fraud training, de-escalation courses, communication courses, severe weather action plans, maintenance of operation plans, incident investigations and job safety analysis all contribute positively to the renewal. The Mayor said the WWTP is shared between four communities according to the Sewer Flow and Strength Study and the Court as well. In terms of additional coverage, there is nothing new this year but the valuation of equipment continues to rise.

Resolution No. 92-24: Mrs. Morris said Kathryn Kerber submitted a Coastal Management Assistance Grant as a pre-application. She was asked to submit the longer full application that requires City Council to pass this resolution so she can apply for the possible amount of \$150,000. This would be for the Spencer Creek Rehabilitation Project.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS: NONE

MOTION:

Moved by President Furry to move into Executive Session under Article 10, Section 6, Subsection 4 to discuss a Collective Bargaining Negotiation issue at 8:02 p.m.

The Executive Session was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

As there was no more business, Mr. Furry moved to adjourn the Legislative Meeting at 8:38 p.m.

David W. Furry
President of Council

Susan G. Pease
Clerk of Council