

CITY OF ROCKY RIVER

July 1, 2024

The Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting of Council was called to order by Mr. Furry, President of Council, at 7:00 p.m. in the David J. Cook Council Chambers.

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

Council Members Absent: Mr. Shipp

Administration: Mayor Bobst, Director Snyder

Assistant Law Director: Mr. Dever

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

The Mayor stated that Thursday is the Fourth of July. A television station reached out to the city requesting answers to the following questions:

1. Are consumer grade fireworks legal to possess in your municipality? No, fireworks are only legal to possess by a Fireworks Exhibitor licensed by the State of Ohio.
2. Are fireworks legal to discharge in your municipality? No, fireworks may only be discharged by a Fireworks Exhibitor licensed by the State. However, there are some exceptions including children's cap guns, wire sparklers and blank cartridges for sporting events, etc.
3. Basically, residents of Rocky River cannot discharge fireworks within the city as it is a very dense community. Legislation was passed to outlaw fireworks in the city.

The Mayor has received letters regarding the Heritage Home Loan Program. This program is sponsored by the Cleveland Restoration Society. It is a program for homes that are 50+ years old. If the municipality that you live in participates residents can receive technical assistance regarding the colors your house may have been painted to architectural details to how do you replace windows that would be consistent to what is there now. They do consider energy efficiency, but they do provide a lot of technical assistance. In addition, if there is a project undertaken, they have a loan product through Key Bank and one other bank with an interest rate at about 3-4% making them highly competitive if people want to invest in their homes. This Program has been available over the years and the City did participate at one time. The City of Rocky River was an early adapter in the program. Residents were not taking advantage of the program and the interest rate was not competitive as it is today so it did not make sense to continue. The Mayor has reached out to them and asked them what the cost would be to join in 2025. That cost is \$14,482.00. What concerns the Mayor is what if only two residents take advantage of the program, the city has used taxpayer dollars to the extent of \$7,000 on two loans that were taken out. If the city joined in September 2024 through 2025, the cost would be \$19,500. The Mayor will get more information, including their marketing plan and what it would include. The Mayor would like them to meet with the Historical Society and have an informational program at the Library and at the Civic Center. The Mayor will be working on this and will circle around at about the time the

budget will be presented to Council. If residents reach out to their Councilmembers, please let the Mayor know.

- Mr. O'Boyle asked if this is a federally funded program. The Mayor said no, it started with the banks and the Cleveland Restoration Society. The Society wanted people that have older homes to honor the architecture of the period although the program does pay attention to things like energy efficiency, etc. They saw this as an important investment for property taxes that residents were investing in their homes.
- Mrs. Morris said that it is beneficial to preserve what Rocky River looks like and to increase affordability because prices are so high in Rocky River. The Mayor agreed, pointing out that it is for renovation and there are some limits that are put on depending on the scope of the project.
- Mrs. Gallagher asked who markets it? The Mayor responded that the program does and the city can through the Building Department and other ways, but she wants their credibility promoting it from their end as well. They have been very responsive in the last couple of weeks.
- Mr. Snyder asked if these loans would cover improvements to downspouts and sewer laterals? The Mayor said potentially yes because you can do plumbing, wiring and exterior is included. The Mayor will ask specifically.

The Mayor discussed the Sidewalk Program. Last Friday 400 letters were mailed and the city has received several phone calls. The letters went to homes between Hilliard Blvd. and Center Ridge Road. If Council receives any calls, please forward them to the city.

The Mayor wished everyone a Happy Fourth of July, without fireworks.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: NONE

COMMUNICATIONS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS: President Furry announced that City Council received a petition from residents regarding community policing methods that was forwarded to Chief Lichman and he acknowledged.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

RESOLUTION NO. 30-24: Mr. Furry said that historically City Council has taken recess during the month of August to spend time with their families. This will be placed on the consent agenda for next week.

ORDINANCE NO. 31-24: Mr. Furry said that the City of Lakewood has been treating sanitary sewage in the ValleyView Sewer District for Rocky River since 1956. It comprises approximately 102 single family homes. Mr. Furry stated that it is more cost effective to send it to Lakewood. Lakewood's sewer rates are higher than the City of Rocky River, so the City of Rocky subsidizes these rates and all Rocky River residents pay the same mcf. This will also be on the consent agenda.

ORDINANCE NO. 32-24: Mr. O'Boyle said this has been referred to the Planning Commission and is on hold.

AMENDED ORDINANCE NO. 33-24: Mrs. Gallagher said this has been discussed a few times. It is to relocate and replace two boilers in the Civic Center. The lowest proposal received unfavorable

references so the city went with the second lowest and best proposal from S. A. Comunale to replace these two boilers. This will also be placed on the consent agenda.

RESOLUTION NO. 34-24: Mr. Furry said this was discussed a while ago and thanks to Director Kerber for commemorating and getting this to honor the Semiquincentennial. As time gets closer, more information will follow concerning what the plans are and what all it entails. This will be placed on the consent agenda.

RESOLUTION NO. 35-24: Mr. Furry said this is a very brief first pass of the 2025 Budget in a summary and required form. It is based on information by making projections using what if scenarios but also includes known costs that will be part of the 2025 Budget. It is not the final budget that Council will address in December 2024. This will be on the consent agenda.

RESOLUTION NO. 36-24: Mr. Furry said this is a companion piece to Resolution No. 35-24 and is another step in the 2025 Budget process. Resolution No. 36-24 authorizes the levying of property tax millage. The total city millage will be set at 9.9 mills which is a reduction of .65 mills from the current 10.55 mills. This reduction is from the Civic Center Bonds being retired. Other city activities included in the millage figure are the Senior Center, Refuse and Recycling, the Recreation Center, Fire Pension, Police Pension and other Capital Improvements. This will be placed on the consent agenda.

RESOLUTION NO. 37-24: Mr. Furry said this is requesting that the Cuyahoga County Fiscal Officer advance pay property taxes collected from the various city levies to the city prior to the final reconciliation settlement and disbursement. By making this request, the City will receive the 2024 property taxes, for the first half collection cycle and the monies will be paid first in mid-January with a second payment in February 2025, instead of waiting until the final reconciliation disbursement in late March or early April. This also applies to the second half of the collection cycle; two disbursements will be received in July versus one in August. This will be read for a second time next week.

RESOLUTION NO. 38-24: Mr. Furry stated that this is to certify special assessments to the County Fiscal Officer for unpaid delinquent balances due on sanitary sewer accounts as of December 31, 2023. These charges have been billed throughout 2023 and in March and June of 2024 and represent unpaid usage charges and accrued penalties. The attached exhibit is expected to be amended at the July 22nd Legislative Meeting as there is a good portion that will be paid in full. The County adds a 1% fee to the assessment which is retained by the County for their collection process. Historically, the number of accounts drop anywhere from 150 to 200 accounts and a corresponding decrease about 30% in the dollar amount.

ORDINANCE NO. 39-24: Mrs. Morris stated that the WWTP needs a new digester mixer. Councilwoman Morris forwarded photos of a digester to City Council. Currently there are four mixers that have a life span each of four years before needing to be rebuilt. The WWTP schedules to rebuild one every two years. This one is overdue, but at its last inspection it was doing well. It is now showing signs of age. The lead times are too long to rebuild, currently at 3-4 months versus 2-3 weeks which it has been in the past. With the new mixer the WWTP will pull out the one that is being replaced and rebuild if possible, keeping it on the shelf as a backup. The lead time to purchase is 34 weeks and Superintendent Barille feels the current one will last that long. The mixer is a custom and sole source purchase from Bissnuss and manufactured by WesTech and will cost \$155,000 with a padding of \$10,000 for installation and set up if needed.

ORDINANCE NO. 41-24: Mr. Sindelar said this was introduced last week. It is an ordinance to authorize entering into a contract with Angelo Benedetti, Inc. Asphalt for the recycling resurface of Inglewood and the alley between Struhar and Wooster for about \$126,874. This came in almost \$8,000

under the Engineer's Estimate of \$135,000 and they have done work in Rocky River before. This new product did not work exactly as they thought and they repaired it free of charge. Angelo Benedetti is one of the only companies in the area that uses this recycling product. They have been in business for a very long-time doing asphalt in general. Mr. Sindelar thinks they are worth a shot as it will help in reducing costs and help environmentally by recycling these materials. This will have two more reads.

ORDINANCE NO. 42-24: Mr. Sindelar said this ordinance is to enter into a contract with Quality Control Inspection for the Senior Center addition, construction management and inspection services. Director Balla said that of the contract price of \$316,370, \$3,500 is reimbursable expenses for office expenses and travel. This contract still gives the city control with the construction manager. The contract provides that the city will provide oversight, design, inspections and constructability review throughout the project. Also, Mr. Balla recommends them as the city has done work with them in the past and have been happy with Quality Control Inspection. This will have two more reads.

ORDINANCE NO. 43-24: Mr. Sindelar said this is a continuing ongoing effort for infrastructure in a quality city with the best streets in Cuyahoga County if not the state. This ordinance is an authorization to enter into a contract with CrossRoads Asphalt for Phase II of the 2024 Street Repair Program. The matrix of streets is ranked yearly to decide which streets are repaved. There were two bids received and the bid by CrossRoads was \$45,000 less than the other bid but it was greater than the Engineer's Estimate but still within the 20% threshold for allowance in this contract.

NEW BUSINESS:

ORDINANCE NO. 44-24: Mr. Sindelar said this ordinance enters into a contract with SmithGroup for the Development of Rocky River Park Master Plan not to exceed \$99,996.00. Mr. Snyder said there will be a scope of work along with a Stakeholder Process in this too, to go through and evaluate Rocky River Park to help develop a Master Plan so the city can move forward. This is most valuable as it gives the city the opportunity to seek outside funding for implementation of this project. SmithGroup will also provide recommendations for outside grant funding. The Mayor said that funding sources want to know that the city completed the public planning with not only the engineering but also engaging the public. This will supplement the Master Plan.

- Mrs. Morris asked if there was anything on the city's wish list for Rocky River Park. The Mayor stated erosion control under the main deck off the parking lot. There is a sewer line running through there and there is a real opportunity to have a concrete deck that will serve as erosion control with more seating and enjoyment of the lakefront. Mr. Snyder said this is valuable as this helps the city to create a calculated approach for moving forward and evaluate the resources there, receive the input from the public on what they would like to see and that helps the city to prioritize improvements. Shook Construction is redoing the steps from the playground equipment to the upper hill free of charge as a volunteer experience this summer. The Mayor feels that the three things that the city cares the most about now could be addressed with one comprehensive approach. Mr. Snyder stated that what a lot of people believe is a pier in the water on the east end of Rocky River Park is a storm sewer outfall and it is in a state of decline.
- Mr. Furry asked about the submerged land lease lapse. Director Snyder said there was a previous submerged land lease in place for the stones in the lake and that did lapse. Mr. Snyder did not know there was a submerged land lease in place for that. The SmithGroup identified that as part of their study.
- Mr. Furry asked if there would need to be a Rules Suspension to pass it before the August Recess.

Mr. Snyder said that would be great. The Mayor said the sooner it is passed, the sooner it can begin.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS: NONE

President Furry said the next City Council meeting will be held on Monday, July 8th beginning at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

David W. Furry
President of Council

Susan G. Pease
Clerk of Council