

CITY OF ROCKY RIVER

May 20, 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. Shipp, Mr. O'Boyle
Mrs. Morris, Mr. Furry

Council Members Absent: Mr. Sindelar

Administration: Mayor Bobst, Mr. Snyder

Law Department: Mr. O'Shea

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

The Mayor thanked everyone who attended the Tree City U.S.A., including Councilmembers and also for their support. It was an incredible event. Director Snyder said a plaque was presented by the Arbor Day Foundation to the City of Rocky River recognizing forty years for Tree City U.S.A. Certification. The city also received a plaque from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry and the Tree City U.S.A. Organization stating "In recognition of their efforts and gracious hospitality, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry and the assembled Tree City U.S.A. communities wish to thank the City of Rocky River for hosting the regional Tree City U.S.A. Awards Program. It was signed by Dan Balser, the State Forester, Carrie Morrow, the Urban Forestry Coordinator and Matt Leiden our Urban Forester. The Mayor said that Director Snyder and Maureen Nakonek did a tremendous job securing all the sponsors from start to finish putting the whole day together. There were so many positive comments. Congratulations! The Mayor said that looking across the room and seeing more than 200 attendees all talking about trees, best practices and learning from each other was a wonderful moment. There was great energy in the room and that is thanks to Director Snyder.

Director Snyder along with Infinity Construction were successful in receiving twelve responses for the RFQ for the Architectural Design Services for the Fire Station. These RFQ's will be reviewed by Infinity and they will select about five and those five will be asked to present proposals. Out of those five the proposals will be reviewed down to two or three and then a decision will be made regarding which architectural firm the city will go with. The Mayor is pleased there was so much interest in the RFQ.

The Mayor said there was an excellent program, sponsored by the State of Ohio, regarding adult use of cannabis dispensaries along with good and important details concerning recreational marijuana. The most important is that the City of Rocky River has saved the city future issues thanks to City Council who in December of 2023 passed Ordinance Nos. 112-23 and 113-23 under the leadership of Councilman Hunt, with a full prohibition on everything from dispensaries, cultivation, processing all across the board. Several other communities opted for moratoriums and they will be struggling with those now due to laws that the State has put in place. The City of Rocky River is in a good position because the City of Rocky River has a full prohibition for both medical and recreational or adult use marijuana. Around June 6th or 7th the state anticipates that they will release their licensing rules,

explaining how their oversight will work and how the licensing criteria will work. Any dispensaries that are now in existence will have the opportunity to be dual dispensaries if they so choose. There will be approximately another 200 dispensaries that will be giving licensure if they apply and qualify. In the City of Rocky River, we have a prohibition that the State will check and of course the Building Department knows that, so nothing would be able to proceed. If at any time Council wants to revisit it once all the laws are in place, that can be done.

The Mayor reported that the Regional Income Tax Agency (R.I.T.A.), that the city is a part of and has a footprint across the state collecting local income tax, has lowered their cost of operations. The city was with C.C.A. who charged a 3% administrative fee along with other costs potentially if the city would have to go to court. The Mayor is happy to report that R.I.T.A. reported that their cost of operations went from 1.15% last year to .89% primarily due to unprecedented interest income but also as they continue to streamline their administrative cost of collection and registration, auditing, compliance and record retention. They have done a great job.

The Mayor shared that the “Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant” that Kathryn Kerber and Director Snyder applied for was awarded in the full amount of \$132,000. Congratulations to Director Snyder and Kathryn Kerber.

The Mayor announced that this week is “Safe Boating Week” and the City of Rocky River strongly supports this campaign and the desire to create awareness by the U.S. Coast Guard and the National Safe Boating Council. The Mayor wrote a proclamation from the Administration and City Council that read: It is encouraging all boaters to explore and enjoy America’s beautiful waters responsibly and safe boating begins with preparation. The Coast Guard estimates that human error accounts for nearly 75% of boating fatalities. Through basic boating safety procedures that include carrying lifesaving emergency distress and communications equipment that is in working order, wearing life jackets, attending safety courses, participating in free boating safety checks, staying sober while navigating, can assure us that safe boating occurs in Lake Erie.

The Mayor shared a story she received a week ago. A woman called the Mayor that had called her several years ago and the Mayor feels this is an illustration of why we serve in the way that we serve. This woman at the time of her first phone call, was a grandmother of some very young boys at the time, 2nd 3rd or 4th graders. They were concerned that the Tri-City Park ballfields were in disarray and were not being maintained. The grandmother called and said the boys were circulating a petition to give to the Mayor so they could play baseball. Very quickly the fields were maintained and are beautiful now and are used primarily for pick-up baseball. These fields are not programmed for use. Those boys are now on the high school varsity baseball team that is doing so well this year. They put those ball fields to good use and now they are the conference champions and ranked very high in the state. They won today as well! This woman’s grandson is one of the pitchers on the team. The city acts today without realizing that several years later what the city does, makes a difference.

Memorial Day is this weekend. Saturday morning, beginning at 8:30 a.m. flag placement at Lakewood Park Cemetery will take place. There are more than 4,000 flags that need to be placed so lots of volunteers are needed. There will be donuts and coffee served.

The Memorial Day Ceremony on Monday will begin at 10:00 a.m. at Lakewood Park Cemetery. There is a new group of Veteran Volunteers who have done a great job streamlining the event. Everyone is invited to attend. The Service will last about an hour with parking available across the street at the Presbyterian Church. Please bring chairs or blankets.

The first Summer Concert is this Sunday, May 26th at Rocky River Park beginning at 7:00 p.m. with the high school Jazz Band performing. There will also be a short dedication beginning at 6:30 p.m. of the Overlook that is in memory of Jody Frost. The donations for the overlook were provided by the Frost Family. Two members of the Frost Family are past councilmembers, Bob and Rob.

- Mrs. Gallagher asked what the “Safe Street Grant Award” is for. Mr. Snyder said it is, in part, for an evaluation of trails throughout the City of Rocky River. The Mayor said it will be like a Master Plan of the trail system. Mr. Snyder will send out more information.
- Mrs. Morris said the Green Team Bike Coalition is also helping with the Safe Street Grant Award.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: NONE

COMMUNICATIONS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mr. Furry announced that City Council will be meeting next Tuesday for the last and second Legislative Meeting for the month of May.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

RESOLUTION NO. 22-24: Mr. Hunt said that both of these resolutions have been discussed for about a month. Both are related to the County’s 9-1-1 Program and the update of the County Plan that was adopted on March 6, 2024. Ohio Revised Code requires that communities like Rocky River pass a resolution signifying approval of the plan. This is simply a step to stay in direction with Section 128.08 of the Ohio Revised Code to ratify the approval of the Plan. Mr. Hunt has not had any questions or comments on this resolution and would like this on the Consent Agenda for next week.

RESOLUTION NO. 23-24: Mr. Hunt said that this is a companion piece to the prior resolution. This simply names a mayoral candidate to be the representative for the communities involved in the County 9-1-1 Program and the approval of the nomination of the Euclid Mayor for that position. Mr. Hunt has not received any comments or questions and would like this on the Consent Agenda.

ORDINANCE NO. 24-24: Mr. Furry said that this has been discussed and is for the 2024 Street Repair Program Phase 1, Sunnyhill Drive. The city received five different bids and RMH’s Concrete and Foundations was significantly under the Engineer’s Estimate. RMH has the required experience and also is not on the Unresolved Findings Database. There was little discussion on this and Mr. Furry would like to add this to the Consent Agenda.

ORDINANCE NO. 25-24: Mr. Furry said this is an ordinance to enter a contract with F. P. Allega Concrete Construction for the 2024 Sidewalk Repair Program. The city received eight different bids ranging anywhere from \$564,000 to \$758,000+. The Engineer’s Estimate was \$640,000, so this is almost \$80,000 below the Engineer’s Estimate. F. P. Allega has done work in the city before and the city is pleased with their work. F. P. Allega is honoring their prices for the individual residents needing to repair their sidewalks. This will also be on the Consent Agenda.

ORDINANCE NO. 26-24: Mr. Furry said this is to enter a contract with Carron Asphalt Paving for the Civic Center and Linden Park Asphalt Path Replacement Project. Once Linden’s pavement is complete, the Storybook Walk will be installed. The city received seven bids on this project ranging from \$168,880 to \$216,200 and the Engineer’s Estimate was \$185,000. The city has worked with Carron before and they have also done work in Solon and Strongsville. They are not on the Unresolved Finding Database. This will be on the Consent Agenda.

RESOLUTION NO. 28-24: Mr. Shipp said this was read by President Furry last week during his absence. This application is for a Natureworks Grant from the ODNR for adding to Elle's Enchanted Forest. The application needs a resolution from City Council authorizing the Mayor to submit this application. This will be read for a second time next week.

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS: NONE

COMMUNICATIONS: NONE

President Furry said the next City Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 28th beginning at 7:00 p.m. Have a safe Memorial Weekend.

David W. Furry
President of Council

Susan G. Pease
Clerk of Council