

CITY OF ROCKY RIVER

March 3, 2025

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,
Mr. Shipp, Mr. Sindelar, Mr. Furry

Council Members Absent: Mrs. Morris

Administration: Mayor Bobst, Mr. Snyder

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

The Mayor said the Swim-A-Thon was held yesterday morning at the Recreation Center's indoor pool. There were a lot of wonderful swimmers, donors and Whole Foods put out a delicious spread. This effort is led by Harlan Radford, a retired teacher from Rocky River High School and also a member of the Rotary. The Swim-A-Thon benefits four organizations including the Rocky River and Lakewood Fire Departments, the Rocky River Assistance Program and GiGi's Playhouse in Lakewood. It was a great event yesterday morning with lots of participation. The Mayor extends a huge thank you to Harlan for all the meaningful things he has done with the funds that he has raised including Elle's Enchanted Forest Playground, the detoxifying sauna at the fire department, the cycles for Safety Town (where there is a street named for him) and all of his efforts.

Last week, the Heritage Home Loan Program was presented to a standing room only crowd. Thank you to Councilwomen Gallagher and Morris for attending. There were more than 150 residents in attendance. Director Kathryn Kerber is the contact person for the residents regarding this program. The Cleveland Restoration Society can also be contacted for the Heritage Home Loan Program.

The Mayor shared the Building Department Statistics at the end of February 2025:

- The total added valuation through February is almost \$8.3 million.
- \$5 million of that is in commercial valuation.
- Almost \$3.3 million is in residential valuation.

The Mayor mentioned that at the Heritage Home Loan Program she shared that last year was the city's all-time high in residential investment totaling \$64 million. With the Heritage Home Loan Program, the city may have a new record this year.

The Mayor announced that the Cleveland Yachting Club bridge over the west channel is completely closed. There is no ability to get over to the island until it is fully repaired sometime in April. The city is working closely with their contractors, so if the city needs to get down there to salt or plow, the city can do that. The Service Department already has a dedicated pick-up truck with a salt spreader and a plow so the city can quickly react to any needs they may have.

The Mayor discussed the low water pressure some residents experienced today. There were two water main breaks in Fairview Park that impacted the water pressure. Mr. Shipp noted that a resident in his ward posted a concern on Facebook.

The Mayor gave a shout out to the Rocky River Fire Department for participating in the “Tackle the Tower” yesterday. “Tackle the Tower” consists of climbing 54 stories of stairs in Key Tower with all of their firefighting gear on which adds about sixty pounds. The Rocky River Fire Department came in second. The firefighters who participated were Captain Pettitt, Lieutenants Cunningham and Wallenhorst, retired Firefighter Paul Murray, Firefighters Jake Morad, Tom Pettry, Marty Rehor, Jack Bailey and Dan Wolf. Shelley Sollars, Administrative Assistant at the Fire Department along with Jen Peters, Manager of the Finance Department also participated. It was a good showing yesterday and a great effort by our firefighters shining a positive light on the physical fitness of the city’s firefighters.

The Mayor called Council’s attention to the March Newsletters/Program Guides for both the Senior Center and the Recreation Department filled with important programming, dates and entertainment, et cetera.

The Mayor said that Mary Ellen Umerley’s retirement was Friday. City Hall sent her out in fine fashion. It was hard to see her leave, but happy that she and Jim will have this wonderful retirement. Jim Umerley worked for the city for almost 40 years so the two of them have given a lot of time to public service in our community.

The Mayor said that starting a week from Thursday, Michelle Root, a Rocky River resident, will be the next Executive Assistant in the Mayor’s office with responsibilities in the Law Department.

The Mayor mentioned that a new Superintendent has been selected and his contract will be finalized at a Special Meeting of the Board of Education on Wednesday. His name is Adham Schirg from Fairbanks Local Schools in Milford Center, Ohio. This is a very large footprint of a school system. The Mayor will be in attendance on behalf of the city to welcome him to the community along with many other individuals.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: NONE

COMMUNICATIONS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS: NONE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Resolution No. 4-25: Mr. Sindelar said that this resolution has been discussed for several weeks and will be read for a third time next week. It is an emergency resolution for the authorization to enter into an agreement with the City of Fairview Park to share costs for the Center Ridge Road Gateway Improvement Project. When the city takes on projects, it is a long-term view with a lot of vision. This involves calming traffic with center boulevards and crossing paths and ADA compliance at all the crosswalks. Mr. Sindelar likes that the entrance will be made more welcoming to the community. The total estimated project is about \$4.5 million. A portion of the project will be funded from outside sources including \$1.5 million, \$1.23 from ODOT Urban Paving, \$369,000 from NOACA Transportation for Livability Communities Initiative (TLCI Grant), \$450,000 from NOACA Congested Mitigation Air Quality Grant Program, \$200,000 State Capital Fund from Senator Dolan’s Office and \$72,000 local match for Urban Paving from the City of Fairview Park. The total outside funding for the project comes to about \$2.6 million, which is about 55% of the project. This will be placed on the consent agenda.

Resolution No. 5-25: This is an agreement with Fairview Park for the resurfacing of Higley Road. This is part of the 2025 Paving Program. The city assigns grades to all the streets in the city checking curbs, pavement and manhole covers. The cost will be split accordingly based upon that and include full- depth concrete repairs, curb and apron repairs, ADA compliant crosswalks, curb ramps and asphalt milling. Below are the cost estimates:

The City of Rocky River Engineering and Design - \$32,000
City of Fairview Park Engineering and Design - \$4,000

City of Rocky River Construction - \$400,000
City of Fairview Park Construction - \$50,000

City of Rocky River Construction Administration - \$8,000
City of Fairview Park Construction Administration - \$1,000

This will be placed on the consent agenda.

Ordinance No. 6-25: President Furry said that this is an annual MOU of understanding that allows the city to participate in the Public Involvement Public Education (PIPE Programs) that are required by the current municipal separate storm sewer system where MS4 permit for the City of Rocky River keeps the city in line with the Ohio EPA as part of the MS4 Annual Report. The cost is \$6,000 which does not entail councilmanic action, but since it is a separate governmental entity, the city does this for full disclosure. There has not been much discussion and this will be placed on the consent agenda.

Ordinance No. 7-25: President Furry said that this is a companion piece to Ordinance No. 6-25 that has been read and discussed several times by Councilwoman Morris. This allows the city to participate in an agreement with the Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District regarding storm water pollution prevention technical assistance for a 12-month term at a cost not to exceed \$13,080.00. Cuyahoga SWCD assists the city with inspection of all stormwater control measures for all construction projects with a disturbance greater than 1 acre in size. They will also provide guidance for any projects less than one acre in size as requested by the city. This can be renewed in 2026 at the same rate. Cuyahoga SWCD is helpful with other projects in the city and even though it is less than is needed for councilmanic action, the city is giving full disclosure. This will also be placed on the consent agenda.

Resolution No. 8-25: Mr. Shipp said that this is to authorize the Mayor and her designee to prepare and apply to the ODNR Clean Ohio Trails Fund and/or Recreational Trails Program Grant for a Senior Center Trail. Ms. Kerber presented the information for this grant to this body a few weeks ago. Director Snyder added that this is the connector trail from the existing trail that was resurfaced last year behind the Civic Center and would connect behind the Senior Center, through the Community Garden to Wagar Road. This will provide a loop from Wagar all the way to Hilliard Blvd. The Mayor added that it was presented to the Parks and Recreation Foundation and Seniors Council so they understood the scope of the project. Mr. Snyder added that the hope for the future is to incorporate outdoor exercise equipment along this trail behind the Civic Center. This will be placed on the consent agenda.

Resolution No. 10-25: Mr. Hunt said that this resolution was read for the first time last week. This resolution would authorize the city to receive \$132,000.00 in Federal Grant money for a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan. This would be from the Safe Streets Grant at which point the city would match with \$33,000.00 to make a total project of \$165,000. The city will hire a consulting firm that would create a comprehensive safety action plan for the city. The plan would include projects aimed at roadway fatalities and serious injuries for motorists and pedestrians and those using nonmotorized transportation. There has been a lot of discussion regarding connectors, trails and folks that like to bike in the

community. This will be an important piece of that overall comprehensive plan to make sure the city can be as safe as possible. Director Snyder also indicated that this would be something to be used in conjunction with a similar grant that was received by the County for a countywide safety plan. These funds will be used to get a consulting firm that would collect information and provide evidence-based infrastructure recommendations to address any safety findings. The administration will need to be concerned on what will be available if any from Federal Government. This is certainly worthwhile and anytime the city can get outside funds, the city is happy to do that. This will be read for a second time next week.

Ordinance No. 11-25: Mr. Sindelar said this was introduced last week during his absence. This requests authorization to enter a contract with Fabrizi Trucking and Paving Company for Parklane Drive Water Main Replacement Project in an amount not to exceed \$942,851.00. There is an alternative option in this plan totaling \$29,280.00 for additional catch basin replacements. Fabrizi has been used in the city and they have the wherewithal, know-how and the equipment to do it and they are also responsive to the community and have done a good job. Four bids were received on January 31, 2025, and the bid by Fabrizi was \$41,772.50 lower than the second lowest bid including Alternate 1. This bid is greater than the Engineer's Estimate but less than 1% greater. Mr. Furry would like the ordinance to say that the city is receiving \$401,160.00 from Cleveland Water as a condition of this ordinance. There will be an amendment by substitution at the next Legislative Meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ordinance No. 12-25: Mr. Sindelar said this will be read for the first time next week. This is an agreement with Fabrizi Trucking and Paving for emergency repair of storm and sanitary sewers not to exceed \$150,000. The funds were appropriated in the 2025 Budget that Council passed before the holidays. This proposal was publicly bid as Ordinance No. 11-25 was. In this instance the city received bids from Fabrizi and Terrace Construction. The overall pricing from Fabrizi was more favorable than that of Terrace especially regarding the sewer repair which is the main crux of this ordinance. Pricing by Terrace was less for the street repair but not enough to offset the cost of the increase of the sewer work which is the main purpose of this ordinance. The city plans to utilize Fabrizi, if necessary. The Mayor added that this may or may not be used. This is for emergency need only. Mr. Snyder added that last year the ordinance was in the amount of \$300,000. This year is less due to the improved infrastructure and more capabilities within the Service Department. Mr. Snyder also looked at the historical usage of the past couple of years to determine where the city should be now. This will have three full reads.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS: NONE

President Furry said that the next meeting will be a Legislative Meeting on Monday, March 10, 2025, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

David W. Furry
President of Council

Susan G. Pease
Clerk of Council