

CITY OF ROCKY RIVER

October 6, 2025

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

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Presentation of the New Fire Department Project

Director Snyder introduced Mr. Peter Bohan from Perspectus Architecture, Mr. Jim Fantozzi the Construction Manager at Risk and Mr. Roger Riachi, the Owners Representative for the project from RFC Contracting. Mr. Bohan presented the existing site plan, which is approximately ten square feet, one story with a basement, has four apparatus bays and an open dorm set up for all the firefighters. Mr. Bohan presented the proposed site plan, floor plans and exterior renderings. Mr. Bohan briefly reviewed the process with the team to date regarding programming and design. Part of the design is to improve the response time so all the vehicles will be able to exit directly to Wagar Road. Mr. Bohan noted that the new building will be parallel to Wagar Road, two stories with six bays, approximately 26,000 square feet, twelve individual rooms with a dorm for two lieutenants and one for the captain, two fire poles and an elevator between City Hall and the Fire Station that links all three floors of City Hall as well as both floors of the new fire station. The first floor includes all six of the apparatus bays exiting to the right to Wagar Road, support spaces for the apparatus bays including two alcoves, EMS storage, all the turnout gear which also doubles as a storm shelter as well as a garage for some of the outdoor equipment. Adjacent to that are all the administrative offices and a large training classroom. The second floor contains the living spaces including locker rooms, changing areas and a physical training room. Adjacent to City Hall is the elevator that is connecting all the levels, the day room, the dining room and the kitchen. In between are offices for the lieutenants as well as their dorms and an office and dorm for the Captain. The exterior of the building matches up closely with the police station on the opposite side of City Hall using a lot of the same materials including the stone, some of the glass and the brick. The watch office is right off the front apron by the bays and is set back. Above the second floor are the dorm rooms.

- Mr. Sindelar asked what other fire stations Perspectus has completed. Mr. Bohan said most recently they completed a new fire station for Lyndhurst, Station One for Shaker Heights and the Hinckley Township Fire Station.
- Mrs. Gallagher asked if they were digging a basement. Mr. Bohan said the existing station has a basement but the new station will be from grade up. They are not creating a new basement. The elevator will go down to the basement to connect to the lower level of City Hall.
- Mr. Furry asked if the limestone or sandstone will match as much as possible. Mr. Bohan said he has original samples from the police station including the stone, the brick and the aluminum. They are looking at picking those up and matching as closely as they can.
- Mr. Furry wants to be sure that there will be sufficient clearance on the doors for the new ladder

truck. Chief Lenart assured Mr. Furry everything will fit.

- Mrs. Morris asked if the large washing machines will fit in the new station. Chief Lenart explained that the Fire Station is designed for health with vestibules that protect the administration from the contamination of the diesel engines
- Mr. Snyder discussed the elevator. The elevator will service City Hall so everybody coming in the main entrance will have access to go upstairs in City Hall or the Fire Station.
- Mr. Bohan discussed the central exhaust system explaining that any of the exhaust that occurs is being sucked out of that space. It is a robust exhaust fan and takes it from low within the space and out across all the vehicles. It is a very thorough system for removing the exhaust fumes.
- Mr. Sindelar extended kudos to the Chief for being involved and letting the employees be involved. What better moral for them to be essentially designing what becomes their home and workspace.
- Chief Lenart extended kudos to City Council. It is very difficult to forecast what Rocky River will look like in fifty years. Through the architects, visiting different fire stations and conferences will bring it all together to allow them to provide the best for the city and its residents.
- Mr. Snyder said it is also a training space that benefits all the WestShore.
- The Mayor said that the design took a long time to get to this point. It needs to function on the interior with a complimentary form on the outside to the Police Department and it balances very nicely. It is not identical but will be a perfect addition.
- Mr. Furry asked about the parking spaces being lost with the expanded footprint. Mr. Bohan said seven parking spaces were lost. The Chief added that they were very cognizant in maintaining parking spaces.

President Furry thanked Mr. Bohan and his associates for attending this evening's meeting.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

The Mayor announced that this Wednesday, the fire department will be moving to the Service Garage and will begin operation out of the Service Garage. A letter has been sent to all the surrounding residents so they are aware of this along with a ReadyNotify to the entire community. The city's mutual aid partners are aware of the need to work more closely with them. WestCom is also aware of the move to the Service Garage. Following the move, the asbestos abatement will commence and should be completed by mid-November with mobilization around November 17th or 20th.

The Mayor discussed bike, pedestrian and vehicle safety. The city is preparing a ReadyNotify that will be going out discussing a shared responsibility with cyclists, ebikes, scooters and the motoring public. The Mayor drafted a series of safety tips for all these groups which is now being looked at by Director Snyder. The Mayor is talking to the League of Women Voters and there may be a Community Meeting with them. The Mayor, Safety-Service Director Rich Snyder and the Chief of Police met with Superintendent Adam Schirg right after the accident on Hilliard in the crosswalk. A series of safety videos and safety messages will be filmed. Individuals have turned to the city about making safer streets, which the city has improved. The administration is not sure why this is happening now as each of these accidents or near misses are

being evaluated and noting the things that could have been done differently. This is a shared responsibility in the community including the city, motoring public, cyclists, ebikes, pedestrians and scooters.

The Mayor received a notification from Cuyahoga County regarding an excess of real estate assessment funds. The cost of collecting property taxes in the County is looked at every six years and any excess is sent back to the various taxing authorities. It could be the MetroParks, the schools, the city or the Port Authority, et cetera. The City of Rocky River will be receiving about \$127,000 and the Rocky River City School District will be receiving approximately \$533,000. There is \$35 million dollars going back into the hands of communities.

Mayors and Managers met with the Board of Health. They discussed the increase of the contract with municipalities. The per capita price was held for several years. This increase is due to the expansion of their Emergency Preparedness at home, continuity for operations planning, community education, neighborhood engagement, gun safety, tick and mosquito control, vermin control, lead poisoning, increasing access points for women's health services, new speaker's bureau, et cetera.

The Tree Lawn Leaf Collection begins on Monday, October 27th. Up until that date, yard waste and leaves should be in brown paper bags to be picked up. On October 27th, leaves can be left on the tree lawn for pick up. There will be a schedule released and posted on the Service Department's Facebook page.

The Mayor announced that the Tree Planting letters were mailed. This is an opt-out program. If your tree lawn can accommodate a tree, the city will plant one unless the homeowner tells the city otherwise and do not want a tree planted. Parklane, east and west of Wooster and Kensington are the streets receiving trees this year.

The Mayor announced that the Westlake Hotel will be celebrating it's 100th anniversary this Friday evening. There is a lot of history at the Westlake Hotel, where the Mayor will be presenting a proclamation in honor and recognition of this incredible achievement. People have made sure that the building stands as beautifully today as 100 years ago.

- Mr. Sindelar commented that he had that feeling too if you don't hear about accidents, there is going to be more accidents. It is shocking, but he is hopeful that with the projects done recently including the bike lanes, speed control bumps, flashing crosswalks and safe routes to school will be helpful. He thinks that with the push for environmental concern and health concern about biking, more kids are biking and more vehicles in general. There are various ages of cyclists and it behooves the city to get out ahead of that and make it safer.
- Mrs. Morris asked about the Senior Center timeline. The Mayor responded that the stone and wood facing is going up on the Senior Center and the interior is almost completed. Before Thanksgiving, there is a thankful dinner and there will be a little ribbon cutting. Everything will be celebrated in the spring when everything is completed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Ordinance No. 49-25: Mr. Hunt said this ordinance proposes to enact a three-foot buffer for parking in front of public or private driveways which was discussed robustly a few weeks prior. Mr. Hunt stated that there have been a lot of complaints and Councilman Shipp provided acknowledgement of that. The CAB reports reflect it with this issue all the time.

- President Furry said he reads the CAD reports and part of him is amazed at the people that call in to

say they cannot get out of their driveway and the police will show up and it is fine. This gives some tools in the toolbox for the police to enforce this parking issue.

- Mr. Shipp added that currently the city does not have a distance contained in the statute. It currently states not to block driveways and this will add an actual distance to the statute.

Ordinance Nos. 50-25 and 51-25: Mr. Hunt stated that this and Ordinance No. 51-25 are essentially companion pieces. There is a meeting scheduled for October 15th with NEOCH and he will report back to Council on the discussions. This was another matter that was discussed a couple of weeks ago. Mr. Hunt's suggestion is to hold off on more substantiate discussion until there is feedback from NEOCH.

- Mr. Sindelar asked if there is any further move to having the Judges here to discuss too. The Mayor said that the Judges will be part of the discussion on the 15th with NEOCH.
- Mr. Furry said there is room for one more Councilperson. He and Mr. Hunt will be attending and based on Sunshine Laws there is room for one more. Mrs. Morris volunteered.

Ordinance No. 52-25: Mr. Hunt said this is the ordinance that proposes amending the code in an act of prohibition for the operation of low-speed and under-speed vehicles. This one was again discussed with audience participation. Mr. Hunt has not had any follow up comments or questions from any residents and/or Council.

- Mr. Furry apologized for missing those meetings, but in his opinion this is something that is an accident waiting to happen. Mr. Furry asked if anyone reviewed the North Ridgeville restrictions that they almost restricted it out between needing a speedometer, a horn, windshield wipers, emergency break and if it does not pass that, you don't get it. Mr. Furry added that conversely, the City of Rocky River is not Put-in-Bay or Kelly's Island which is their primary mode of transport.
- Mr. Sindelar said a lot of the residents spoke and said they had registered with the State, had lighted and licenses. That was their argument as it is a regulated thing already and they were more cautious to traffic because it is low speed or under speed. Mr. Sindelar feels the definitions are a little too broad and there are so many different types of electric things that all seem to go relatively fast that could get somebody hurt. He is not sure how it is interpreted when he looks up the statute and definitions other than hammering on the golf cart.
- Mrs. Gallagher asked if golf carts are legal now. The Mayor responded that under speed vehicles are not allowed by the state statute. This is really talking about low-speed vehicles. The difficulty for the police is they cannot tell the difference between the two.
- Mrs. Morris thought one had an actual license plate and the other did not. The Mayor said the Chief could come back because there are all kinds of things Council could consider. Who is operating it, how many minors are in it, what types of streets can they be on, et cetera.
- Law Director O'Shea said that if a Yugo hits a golf cart, the people in the golf carts are going to be killed. They are that fragile of a machine. They do not have anywhere near the type of crash resistant technology that the average car is required to have. A vast majority of fatal accidents that happen are at speeds under 40 mph. The fact that there is this level of confusion about how and what way these things are to be regulated is proof that the City needs to be doing what they are doing right now by tightening up and making it defined so all residents both in and out of those carts have fare warning about what they are about. Mr. O'Shea stated that if a car hits a golf cart,

the injuries are going to be catastrophic.

- Mr. Sindelar said that if a Yugo hits a scooter, it is the same thing, the ebikes etc. Back to the issue, if you read the definition, we are just going after golf carts. If it is truly about safety, there should be a definition that is more focused on safety.
- Mr. Hunt does not disagree that the ebikes pose the same concerns. He was able to look up definitions and descriptions of different types of bikes that Councilman Sindelar was discussing. That might be helpful for further discussion. By way of clarification, under speed vehicles are illegal and are prohibitive by State Code. An accident with a jeep and a golf cart are two completely different things.
- The Mayor will ask the Chief to check with other jurisdictions regarding what they are doing. This is in the news every night with schools outlawing them.

Ordinance No. 54-25: Mr. Hunt said this is the ordinance that adds some language to prohibit certain solicitation practices. He will have potential tweaks with this as well as the concerns Mr. Shipp discussed. There was a good discussion regarding this a couple of weeks ago. He did notice on a CAD report that on one day there were four or five separate incidents of aggressive solicitation. To Councilman Shipp's point and Councilwoman Morris had some good points about clearing up some of the language and he would like to look at that with the Law Director and revisit it. The "No Solicitation" stickers are still available, but a lot of these occur in public areas and not at homes.

Ordinance No. 58-25: Councilman Furry said this ordinance has been read twice. It will be amended again for next week's legislative meeting. The mid-year budget reviews are done in July and this supplemental is a result of that and has both pluses and minuses. The first is a salary in the Mayor's Office. The previous Executive Assistant, Mary Ellen Umerley basically had a time share with both time and expense with the law department and the mayor's office. With the hiring of Michelle Root, that original appropriation changed. The finance changes came from the addition of the finance manager, which precepted the increase. Parks division relates to overtime, wages and related pension costs. Chief Lenart would like to be prepared for potential vehicle repair costs for the remainder of 2025. Regarding the sequence of events for the Bond interest, Council authorized the Bonds in December 2024, February of 2025 issued the bonds and now have the known interest amounts. There are some meaningful adjustments to certain funds of the Municipal Court as discussed with the court officials. There is a new fund, the Indigent Driver Alcohol Surplus Fund and is authorized by the Ohio Revised Code 4511.91 (H). Because of the provisions of the Ohio Revised Code chapter, there is an interplay between the Courts Indigent Driver Alcohol and the Indigent Driver Alcohol Surplus funds and both need supplemental appropriations.

- Mrs. Morris asked if the Court funds are split between all the city's that use it. Director Thomas said that Court funds collect court costs that are imposed by the Judges and that directs where the monies go. The services provided to indigent drivers, goes to all the court customers as directed by the Probation Department in particular. The City of Rocky River is the appropriating authority for the court costs that come through the city.

Ordinance No. 61-25: Mr. Furry said this has been read once and is the annual true up of the quarterly sewer bills. This could be paid quarterly but it is more fiscally prudent to do annually. Some residents complained. This technically does not need Council's approval based on the dollar amount, but there might be waterline reimbursements later this year which would more than likely need to be authorized by Council.

Resolution No. 62-25: Mr. Furry said this has been read once and is like what was discussed on the supplementals for the Indigent Drivers' Alcohol Surplus Fund. There are several regulatory approvals needed to establish a new city fund and approval action by City Council is one of them. The Indigent Drivers' Alcohol Surplus Fund is stipulated in State Code under the Ohio Revised Code of 4511.191 subsection (H). The city also received an administrative order from the Municipal Court Judges allowing Council to do so. Both the Cuyahoga Budget Commission and the Ohio Auditor of State require action by City Council. Councilwoman Gallagher afforded some grant funds available to the Municipal Court. Thank you for that.

Ordinance No. 63-25: Mr. Furry said this is more of an administrative to allow certain city officials permission to complete and file the declarations of official intent to make an expenditure that the city will reimburse with the proceeds of tax-exempt securities. It should be noted that this does not authorize the issuance of any notes or bonds. That must be done separately in another ordinance by this body. This is laying the groundwork allowing Council to do so.

Ordinance No. 64-25: Mr. Sindelar said this is coming up on a second read and has been discussed a couple of times. Mr. Sindelar went through all the bullet points as covered and the Mayor touched upon some of them this evening. This is really a cornucopia of different services and looking at the cost, the overall effect is greater than what the cost is per capita which stands just under \$9.00 for the upcoming term of 2026 and just a little over \$10.00 in 2027. This has been done previously and there are inflationary costs that have gone up but it is not much more than 2023 and 2025. Previously stated is that the per capita is figured based on the most recent census which is 21,755 residents. It is broken down into three categories of help, which is helping the community themselves which residents can take advantage, City preparedness of various issues for environmental health services that departments can take advantage of and when there are county wide issues and emergency preparedness. This will have a second read next week.

Resolution No. 65-25: This will be coming up on a second read also. It is to prepare and submit an application to NOACA for the TLCI Grant for the Center Ridge Eastern Gateway Project. It is not exactly specific to the point that the city wants to address, but this does exactly what was discussed on the Western Gateway which is it is Liveable Communities and that is what the city is looking to do. To make it more walkable with ADA compliant ramps and boulevards. It is small baby steps because the city works within a tight budget and it is on the taxpayer dollars. The city will be happy once this is completed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: NONE

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS: NONE

COMMUNICATIONS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS: Happy Birthday to Law Director O'Shea who celebrated on September 27th.

As there was not further business, President Furry adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m. The next meeting will be a Legislative Meeting on October 13th.

David W. Furry
President of Council

Susan G. Pease
Clerk of Council