

MINUTES COMMITTEE MEETING
REYNOLDSBURG PUBLIC SERVICE AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
June 10, 2019

Ward 2 Councilmember Brett Luzader called the meeting to order at 7:58 PM

Call to Order - Roll Call

PRESENT: Luzader, Baker, Bryant, Skinner, Joseph

ABSENT:

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Clemens: I have an item that I would like to talk about in your committee just to bring up whenever you want to give me a chance tonight.

Mr. Luzader: Do we need to add it to the agenda or is it something...

Mr. Clemens: To your committee, I'd like to bring it up yes.

Mr. Luzader: Ok, what would that be?

Mr. Clemens: I can bring it up right now if you want me to. What it is, and it's something that Columbus had in the newspaper and I don't follow that too closely but this was really good. I felt they are coming up with a proposal and I think it leaves a lot to us, a proposal, and other cities in central Ohio have it. That on rezoning that the City has the person that's asking for the rezoning they have them put sign up in that piece of property and it states what the zoning will be for, when it will be before Council and so on. And it will be done by the person that's asking for the rezoning. And Columbus is like us. They send out information to the property owners but the problem has been, and they feel it doesn't get to the, it doesn't get to the people that don't live that close. And what they found out is that they have problems nobody knows, other than the people they send to, knows what it's all about or even that it's up for discussion. And I think that we found that out that some of our rezoning, that people have come to us after we have started our Counseling's and so forth and complained about the traveling issues and the property values, they feel this will cost them and it's too late for them to do anything, that we have already passed through our committees as fast we can and had it approved. Now the last few rezoning we've had, we've had good crowds and they've come back and discussed the issue and so forth. But Columbus felt that they weren't getting the population, really, because they don't get notified of it. So they are requiring the, like I said, the person that's asking for rezoning, to put signs in that piece of property that tells it's up for rezoning, when it's up for rezoning, and who to call, like City Hall and so forth to get the information so they can be here. And I think it's something that's fair and I think it's something that's fair and I think it's something really that we need because we do, do a lot of rezoning and a lot of committee meetings and people don't know anything about them. And I think it would be nice to have people show up. I know that I would like to know about it next year because I am going to be here and have my 3 minutes to say something. But I think that would be good for the public, for us just to think about. Now Columbus is doing it as a pilot program and one of their City Councilman has brought this up for so they are going to do it as a pilot program and see how it works out. So I think it's something to think about, I am not asking you to pass it but I think it's something we should think about. Because I think all the people in Reynoldsburg have a right to know what's going on, on the other side of town not just out my back door.

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I think its important that we get it out and we don't really get much out in the local newspaper, other than what we want to put out there so I think its something we ought to look at.

Mr. Luzader: Well and I know either the Building Department or the Development Department actually posts a sign at the property now that says that its being up for rezoning.

Mr. Clemens: I am asking for a big sign, one that <INAUDIBLE>

Mr. Luzader: Well and that's what I was just going to allude to maybe that...

Mr. Clemens: I think its just something to think about, like I say New Albany does it, Worthington does it.

Mr. Luzader: That's what I said, maybe its something that since were rewriting our zoning code right now that it might be something we could look at and put it into our zoning code.

Mr. Bowsher: I don't necessarily know if its called out in the zoning code but we do three things. One for variances and for rezoning. We do put a sign out, its about a 3 x 4 sign, it says City of Reynoldsburg. We can actually rite the date on it. We do that for the Planning Commission meetings as well as the City Council meetings, we post it in ThisWeek Newspaper and I think just last year we got approval to also do the dispatch, if need to turn around and do it much faster. In an addition we post it online in the agenda and we also send out letters to all of the adjacent property owners.

Ms. Beggerow: It is in the code.

MR. Bowsher: Is it, ok. So that's something that is not going to change, we are going to continue to do that. We have pretty nice signs made out, 3 feet by 4 feet signs and we put the date on them and we stick it in the ground. And we also have the sandwich board sign so if it doesn't have a property we can stick it in, that we can actually send it on or next to it. Its something that we implemented, larger signs that can be seen other than just the little garage sale signs that we used to have, that I wanted to make sure people saw it last year so its something actually that we already do.

Mr. Luzader: And I know that, you know if a property is out here on Taylor Road to be rezoned, a lot of the time the people from Rosehill Road aren't going to drive down Rosehill Road if they wont see it anyway and if they don't read it in the paper, I'm not sure how we would get it across to them. I mean I see where your coming from.

Mr. Clemens: I think its something we ought to look into. And make sure, I don't know why we are putting up the signs to start with when the persons asking for the rezoning should be paying for it. But I think its something we ought to look in to. And not be in a hurry to pass these things really. I think the public needs to know what's going on. So anyhow, that's just something I am bringing up.

Mr. Luzader: Well I think right now we put the sign up but that's what our code says. Like I said, its something that maybe, like you said, were in the middle of rewriting our code now, I might be

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something that Mr. Bowsher could bring up to the guys that are.... Are there any other discussions about the agenda. Are there any other discussions about the agenda? If not then the agenda will stand as submitted.

Approval of Minutes

- a. Public Service and Transportation Committee – Committee Meeting – May 28, 2019

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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NEW LEGISLATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

Discussion: Code Enforcement Officers - held from 5/28/2019

Ms. Bryant: Thank you Chairman Luzader. Sandra Boller has given me some information regarding our abilities to financially support new code officers. Mr. Bowsher has weighed in on his request that one of them be a special permit, forget what the rest of the title was, but somebody to handle special permits and somebody to handle code enforcement. You and I have discussed at length that I think both of us would like to see two new code enforcement officers as opposed to one code enforcement officer and one permit officer. I did want to give Mr. Bowsher an opportunity to make his case for why we should have one of each.

Mr. Bowsher: I think Ms. Boller's legislation actually states that it does have two code enforcement officers but were just funding the one and then funding the permit technician. So we want to leave it open because we didn't want to over staff and then have to lay somebody else off later. We know for certain that we feel that those two positions can be utilized right away. I just kind of want to back up and give you sort of a background of what happened when I took over the two departments. We did sort of an audit on it. We wanted to see sort of what happened from the very beginning, what we were lacking and what we weren't doing. So, I conducted counseling sessions with each employees that are there to sort of do some active listening exercises to find out what they needed what we were lacking, what we needed to fix, what we didn't know. I also did ride a long with each of the employees to include the code enforcement officers to see what they were seeing, to see if there were things that they were missing, things they were trained on properly. What we came to find out within the survey that a lot of the stuff is reactionary. That were missing some of the stuff from improper training over the years, and its no real fault to anybody and were not going to put it on anybody. We just needed to do a better job of training and there were just something we were sort of lacking in. SO one of the things that we did is we reached out to the City Attorney Hood and we had a training session with them that lasted for about 3 hours. Our code enforcement officers learned how to fully do a citation, permits. Which is something that they just didn't know how to do to a tee, to bring a long of the repeat offenders into Mayors Court, to hopefully get a little bit a more teeth for property owners to fix up their properties. As well as we know that we implementing or going to implement online permitting system. So we wanted to create a two kiosk system down in the building and the code enforcement department. Which then would act as intake. A lot of the stuff we want to push forward on to the online, most central Ohio communities have online permitting system or something of that nature. We sort of picked out the solution that we would like to do. Upper

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Arlington and Bexley uses this system, its all sort of web portal based, we have consultants and contractors they can actually log in and you can see things in real time and its really going to help a lot of the code enforcement as well not just the building department. So when they go out there and they have sort of like a tablet and they want to take a picture of maybe a grass violation or something like that they can instantaneously upload into the system. So its not going to require the amount of man power that we would necessarily have just by the sheer technologically advances that we have right now that were not utilizing and I think it would be much better spent money to implement something like that and have less personnel and be able to do more with. And I think just the overall coordination of the department because we are having because we are having a kiosk system and that permit technician, I think with two, not only is going to be great for covering down and be able to do right away permits, we can do garage sale permits, we can do solicitors permits, we could focus in on doing all of that because its one system and we want to be able to tack it geosync through our GIS system and be able to know what that is. Not only is that going to be good but its going to allow for analytics on the back end. So now at the end of the year were going to be able to do fundamental reports and see heat maps of when things are being done, where there at, where are our problem areas, when do we need to put the code enforcement areas in specific spots and I think we can do it with 3 but I want that forth spot just incase, but I don't want to hire for it now and then regret later that we didn't actually need it. But I do think we need the two permit technicians, we have the one now and I think I would like to do the code enforcement officer but leave an additional spot open later to where potentially maybe its a part -time position or a full time position later on down the road. That is sort of my, ho we transition and got here, just sort of doing a full audit and what we, what we truly need.

Mr. Luzader: When do you foresee this online system..

Mr. Bowsher: So we actually have it budgeted out of my budget and its something that the Mayor and I were discussing and its something that could be implemented as soon as this year.

Mr. Luzader: Before the year is over. We are half way through the year now.

Mr. Bowsher: Yes.

Mr. Luzader: That's why I was wondering if maybe, my opinion, maybe go ahead and hire the two code enforcement officers now and maybe figure in the permit technician into the budget for next year. Since we may not have that system up and running and the bugs worked out of it until possibly the end of the year.

Mr. Bowsher: I am just fearful because we have, were going to get that technological advance, that were going to end up over hiring for the code enforcement officers when were not going to actually need it because, they are going to be able to do more violations, more citations, things quicker. They are going to be out there more, because they are not going to have to come back to the office every time that they want to put things back into the system to track it. They are going to be able to do it all on their tablet, be able to take pictures, upload, instantaneous and now they are moving to the next spot. So I don't want to implement a system that cost us and then us also over hire and then during

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the winter time I've got nothing for them to do. So I would rather hire the two that I know I absolutely need right now and then move forward if we do in fact need that other code enforcement officer.

Mr. Luzader: Or maybe suggest go ahead and just hire one code enforcement officer right now, we authorize two code enforcement officers and a permit technician. Maybe not hire a permit technician until later on in the year.

Mr. Bowsher: I think that's a agreeable too. But I would like those three positions. I think that what were asking, Ms. Boller was asking, was to allow for those three positions and then I think after that its a staffing decision for the Mayor on how he wants to staff it.

Mr. Luzader: Budgeting decision. Ms. Bryant.

Ms. Bryant: You mentioned that the two code enforcement officers that we currently have, you had to do some retraining with them. Do you feel like they are where we need them to be now?

Mr. Bowsher: Yea and I think that we will continue to go. The problem with, we worry a lot of time with grass and trash, that's sort of the two major things but I think we are sort of missing the mark on some of these other aspects that were missing that I think we can catch up on during the winter time. And I think it was just a really good refresher. Because I don't think there was ever accurate training sort of when they were brought on board. I think there was a lot of different transitions that was happening and now were actually fully implementing. And not only that, I personally reached out to all of the other central Ohio communities to take a look at their building department and to take a look at their code enforcement to see what they were doing, what worked for them, what they needed and so it took about a month and half to really dig all the information out to find and finalize what I thought we needed moving forward. So its based up on at least some research that we did, I just feel that moving forward this is probably the best course of action, for us at least.

Ms. Bryant: The program your talking about, is that something that would be implemented by current staff or is that something that needs to be farmed out?

Mr. Bowsher: It can be done by current staff. One of the things that we are also taking a look at, Westerville actually offered it to us. They do a cross training. Which what happens is they will send a code enforcement officer that is very seasoned and veteraned out to us and they will work basically for a couple of days here and then we will send one over. And then they will basically be cross trained. See what were doing over here and what works and doesn't work and what they are doing over there and what works and doesn't work. So I think its actually a really great program and I think its something that we should definitely be apart of. It will be important sort of moving forward. I would like to add one more thing. I think one thing that we actually saw while we were out there and doing something, is you will find I think in some of our older communities senior members or senior residents, that necessarily cant take care of their properties as well as maybe they could. Now you want to treat everyone across the board as, you want to see it as black and white but there is a lot of gray when your talking about code enforcement and when your trying to enforce different rules and

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regulations. What I would love to do is to work with some outreach group and some organizations, and this is something that City Attorney Hood and I have discussed in length about working with maybe some church organizations or the boy scouts or the school district for community service hours to be able to have sort of a call team that potentially, you don't want to write violations for seniors that really want to take care of their property but they want to age in place. So we don't want to displace them out of our community, we want them to stay. But we also know that they need a little bit. So it would be really important and I think this is a really good initiative for City Council to sort of take on to be able to formulate some sort of organization that could really help some of these seniors. Its something that I think we are absolutely lacking and I actually think that it was a part of community clean up day back in its inception from what Mr. Hood has said. And I think its something that we should take a look at in trying to bring back.

Mr. Luzader: Well I know we have always been more a long the lines as far as compliance as opposed to violation. And I think if we keep along those lines, like you said, we end up with a better community as a whole.

Mr. Clemens: Yea I think right now we should go with the two new code compliance officers and get the City straightened up a little bit before we do anything else. And if you talk around and you look around and you talk to your neighbors, the big thing is code compliance, its property values no matter how you look at it. You go down the street and see what's happening and what it does to the other people that live on that street. I think you need to straighten that up as your doing the other, as we work as far as the other, your talking about. But I think its important that we have the people to do it. We got over 10,000 houses, two people cant do it. Now you can say they can but they cant. I mean I understand what your talking about, at least some of it. But I think its important that we do get the City straightened up. And I think we need, there is no excuse on a lot of things that's out there. If it means that you have to have more people out doing the job to get it cleaned up. And I think its important for the public to see that were doing a decent job as far as our code compliance. You may not think grass and garbage is something to worry about but believe me it is. And I think that the situation in our city and some of our apartment complexes need to be taken care of. Its, I am just going by what the people want not by what you want or by what I want. I know what the public wants. All you have to do is start knocking on doors. Or go out and see if someone is going to put a house up for sale, and say look at my neighbor. But I mean I think that's important to get your feet on the ground and get out and do it. Two more would help. We could split the time of one to work on Saturday mornings, rotate it or such as that. I mean there is all kind of things we could do. But I think that's important and I think what the Development Director said is important too but I think its more of a time period that he is discussing. I am talking about get things down, getting things started that's cleaned up and then we will be in a better situation. That's all you have to do if you live here, drive around.

Ms. Bryant: Thank you Chairman. What about the idea we hire two code enforcement officers now as Mr. Clemens suggest and to avoid the potential for over hiring or having to let someone go, perhaps one of them be hired on a contract basis or a set term basis that could be reevaluated once we head into the new budget.

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Mr. Bowsher: I think that is a better question for human resources. Yea, yea, sorry.

Mr. Luzader: My opinion is I think we need to move something forward. I don't know if we actually have legislation.

Ms. Beggerow: there is legislation in finance for this.

Mr. Luzader: Is there legislation in fiance?

Mr. Bowsher: It does call for the three positions. And we have enough, I think funded within the Building Department, Code Enforcement to hire two of those three.

Mr. Luzader: So since the legislation is in finance, what do we do with it here. Then since it will be in finance I would like to make a motion that we just remove this from our agenda and it will be on the finance committee agenda. Second by Councilman Skinner, is there any further discussion, all those in favor. Thank you very much Ms. Bryant.

ALL VOTED IN FAVOR BY VOICE

ORDINANCE TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF SERVICES PERFORMED PRIOR TO THE AUDITOR'S CERTIFICATION OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. --- Luzader. Public Service and Transportation Committee.

Mayor McCloud: Thank you Chairman Luzader, members of Council. This is a rising out of the new recycling cart initiative, the carts were delivered before the purchase order was open, \$7900.00 and some change but the funds were on hand at the time, the purchase or was simply not opened at the time of delivery.

RESULT:	REFERRED TO COUNCIL [UNANIMOUS]	Next: 6/10/2019 7:35 PM
MOVER:	Brett Luzader, Ward 2 Councilmember	
SECONDER:	Kristin Bryant, At-Large Councilmember	
AYES:	Luzader, Baker, Bryant, Skinner	

LEGISLATION FOR EMERGENCY ADOPTION

69-19

ORDINANCE TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF SERVICES PERFORMED PRIOR TO THE AUDITOR'S CERTIFICATION OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY --- Luzader. Public Service and Transportation Committee.

RESULT:	REFERRED TO COUNCIL [UNANIMOUS]	Next: 6/10/2019 7:35 PM
MOVER:	Brett Luzader, Ward 2 Councilmember	
SECONDER:	Stacie Baker, At-Large Councilmember	
AYES:	Luzader, Baker, Bryant, Skinner	