

MINUTES REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
REYNOLDSBURG CITY COUNCIL
May 23, 2011

President of Council William L. Hills called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Members of Council present: Leslie Kelly, Doug Joseph, Mel Clemens, Barth R. Cotner, Chris Long, Nathan Burd, Fred Deskins, Jr.

The Invocation was given by Mr. Burd. Mr. Hills led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of the special Council meeting held May 9, 2011 were approved without objection.

The agenda was approved.

President Hills: Item No. 7 is Community Comments and Requests. No. 7a is Community Cleanup. I also have two speaker slips we'll do after the Community Cleanup Presentation but No. 7a is Community Cleanup Student Poster Awards which is and here comes Mrs. Hudson. This is always the time and I see this year they've changed it a little bit so we'll actually be able to see.....

Mrs. Hudson: Yes.

Mr. Hills: ...their drawings or paintings as they come up. So that's very nice. Thank you Mary.

Mrs. Hudson: Very good. Good Evening President Hills, Council members, Mayor McCloud. We are here to share what's happening with our 2011 Award winning Community Clean-up Campaign and present our poster contest winners. Our event kicks off Friday, June 3, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. with our 20 minute make over and that's when we hit the streets and clean up around City Hall and the Police Department and hope that all the local businesses do the same thing around their offices during that time in the morning. During the day on June 4th, we will have a full day of activities. We have our residential document shredding which has become very, very popular. We have our red recycling bin exchange, bulk item disposal, the electronics disposal here at City Hall. During that time, we will also be doing fix up throughout the Community. We have had forms available at City Hall and at the Senior Center for disabled Senior residents that are not able to do some of these things. We go out and help them during this time. Also during the week, we have free garage sales. The garage sales are allowed each day of Clean-up week. We also have the trash pickup that's regularly scheduled but extra debris will be picked up at the curbs. We still need volunteers. For anyone that's interested for on June 4th, contact Jason Shamblin at the city. We've got lots of sponsors, we have a, thanks to so many of the businesses in the community, we've got breakfast, lunch, snacks, everything set up for the day. Lots of cool drinks. So we'll be out hitting the streets. As people come in, they will be

assigned an area. We have done sort of litter control, just to see what areas in the community need a little more help than others. So they'll be out scouring the streets. We've got gloves, all the safety things. So it's a great day, we hope that you all will come out and join us. Now most of you do. We see you out there on Saturday helping us go, you know, go around the neighborhoods. I think it's a wonderful campaign here in Reynoldsburg. It has caught on I know in a lot of other communities. I think it really makes people aware on the Green Community and everything else. This year we've also added a component and onsite will be the Habitat for Humanity and they'll have a truck here so they can collect things. We'll also have it close to our trash container so if it's something their volunteers will not take for Habitat, we'll be able to dispose of it onsite so that everything will be cleaned and off the grounds that evening on Saturday. So now, I'm going to turn it over to Jim Miller who's going to present our poster winners; and so that everyone knows, the poster winner is the one that we have on the tee shirts; and, it's so funny, if I look in Dick's closet, I see six or seven years of the tee shirts of all our contest winners. So it's fun when a young student has tee shirts all over Reynoldsburg. So Mr. Miller.

Mr. Miller: Thank you, Mary. President Hills, members of Council, Mayor McCloud.
(See Presentation attached, and made a part of these minutes)

Mr. Hills: And parents, feel free if you want to reposition yourself as they're getting their award to come up and take their picture. Feel free to use wherever on the floor you like.

* *

Mr. Hills: Moving on with Item No. 7, Community Comments and Requests and this is the opportunity that anyone can address Council about whatever's on their mind or any agenda. I have two speaker slips, both regarding chickens and/or domestic hens. First is Dr. Barbara Boone.

Dr. Barbara Boone: That is a fun act to follow. President Hills and members of City Council and Mayor McCloud and my fellow citizens. I guess I'm standing here before you today to ask you to basically make it permissible to own laying hens, female chickens, in Reynoldsburg. My husband, Richard Boone, outlined last week for you, sort of a broader picture of it. Basically, this is a growing hobby in the United States and it's a way that many families are deciding, along with the vegetable garden or the fruit tree, another way that we can kind of produce our own food and kind of be closer to where our food comes from, even in a suburb, is to have a few laying hens much like someone might have a rabbit hutch or a, you know, another outdoor type of pet, but in Reynoldsburg, it's not permissible. I believe it's Ordinance 505.33 Section d. that indicates citizens may have rabbits in a hutch, it actually doesn't say in a hutch. We may own parrot-like birds, but not chicken-like birds. So I guess what I'm asking for I don't think is a huge diversion from what we already allow, but in 2003 when this was written, they didn't foresee that this would be something that Reynoldsburg citizens would desire to do. We have had some calls this week. As you know, we made the paper and we had some calls from other folks who said that they too would like to do that and interestingly,

we had some calls from folks who already have chickens in Reynoldsburg and it was interesting to me because their position was, 'why ask, that's a hassle' and I suppose the reason I'm here before you today is because I feel like you are responsive folks, who are citizens, and I think this is a reasonable and simple request that you can demonstrate your responsiveness to us by seriously considering it and we hope making this allowance. So there were others too that called and said that they would like to own chickens and others, many, who said I do but why ask, and so I ask for you to, because you know, you should ask, and I'm hoping that this one and others are watching and saying this is how it works and this is why we're here. This is how the system works. So I think we have a reasonable and simple request that we put before you. I don't believe any action was taken on your part in the past week since we last met and so what I'm asking today is for you to communicate to us somehow what your commitment is to discuss this, you know, what actions are you willing to take, and then in your future, just sort of bring this discussion forward through City Council.

Mr. Hills: Okay, does anybody have any questions of Dr. Boone? I will note, Dr. Boone, I think my comments last time were that certainly Council would look at this, talk with Administration and I believe, from looking at the minutes, if there's a choice to move forward, it will end up in a Committee somewhere as we work on it and if it gets there, I'm sure that you will be talked to because I mean, you've given every suggestion. I have not personally been contacted saying let's put this in a Committee and talk about it. I don't know whether, how much Administration comments have been, but it has not moved forward as of yet and that's how items get passed into law through legislation is going into the Committee process and I'm not aware of a great number of people lining up for the chickens right now, and I think we're going to hear other comments and I can't tell you what's going to happen yet, but as your husband says, don't count your chickens before they're hatched, so.

Dr. Boone: May I just ask a question?

Mr. Hills: Yes.

Dr. Boone: So how am I to, it's my impression then, if there were many people who were present in the audience at a City Council Meeting, who shared this interest in wanting this sort of hobby.....

Mr. Hills: I only heard from.....

Dr. Boone:would that be persuasive?

Mr. Hills: I only heard Richard.

Dr. Boone: No, no, I am asking, is more numbers of people is what would be more persuasive to Council?

Mr. Hills: No, but I suspect after some of the comments you've made here tonight, the Mayor will be looking to see where the chickens are too. I mean, it, I don't always agree with just go ahead and do it, but it looks like people are doing it and no one's said anything. It certainly is, it can be a question and you know, I see your address and a very substantial lot, you say that's not an issue. I could also see some postage stamp lots we have, if that becomes an issue. So it's not just about chickens, it's if you have them, how do you regulate and then how do you justify no to one and yes to another and that's an issue that is probably not what the law is designed to always address. Equities are a tough thing to deal with but I've had no requests. I'm not aware of it going on to a Committee yet. Certainly, I'm sure you will hear if it does, but I have not seen it added to an agenda yet. Okay?

Dr. Boone: Okay, we will continue to follow up with all of you. Thank you.

Mr. Hills: I thank you Dr. Boone. Second speaker slip I have is Matt Jorgenson. Matt, if you'd give us your name and address for the record please when you come to the stand.

Mr. Jorgenson: Matt Jorgenson, 7412 Bryden Road, Reynoldsburg, Ohio. I read the article about clarity regarding raising chickens. This is something that I'm very interested in. I actually had chickens for two years here in Reynoldsburg. When I first decided to do it, I had similar frustrations trying to figure out in reviewing the ordinances, whether or not they were specifically prohibited or permitted and they don't seem to be either. There are certain types of pets that are listed and there are certain types of farm animals that are prohibited. Chickens weren't mentioned in either of the ordinances as far as I recall. My interest in seeing clarification on this issue is because as it's a growing trend, I would like to work, form a club and be sort of an educational resource for others that might be interested in getting in it because there are unique concerns to doing this in a suburban environment and there are a lot of unique and clever ideas to do this in a responsible manner and I would like to share that information. I wasn't doing it yet because of its lack of clarity. If we had some clarity at something, I could get involved.

Mr. Hills: Got any questions for Mr. Jorgenson? Did I catch you right? You had chickens, you don't have chickens?

Mr. Jorgenson: I currently do not have them. I had four chickens for two years.

Mr. Hills: Mr. Clemens.

Mr. Clemens: What road, what was your address?

Mr. Jorgenson: It was 7412 Bryden Road.

Mr. Clemens: Bryden Road.

Mr. Hills: Any other questions or comments? We thank you very much for your statement. We really appreciate it.

Mr. Jorgenson: Thank you.

Clerk read report from Clerk of Court- -total monies collected from courts held during April, 2011 - \$49,899.50. Total monies also collected during that same period pursuant to Ordinance Numbers 146-94 and 104-02- - \$3,280 for the Computerization Needs Fund; and \$50 for the Enforcement and Education Fund.

Mr. Hills: Okay, any questions on the Communications? Seeing none, thank you Ms. Cochran. We'll move to Item No. 9 Reports. We have two. The Auditor's going to give a first report. I have a second report. City Auditor Harris has a report both on the Subpoena Program and then a second report on the Funds for the City/Tax Budget.

Mr. Harris: Thank you President Hills, members of Council. Back on the week of February 14 and February 21st, the city had it's bi-annual Subpoena Program. For those of you who have not been here or are not familiar with it, it is part of our ongoing collection to get people who did not file income taxes to file and pay income taxes. This year, because of the problems with the computer systems in the City Building, we had it at the RITA Office in Worthington. The program was very successful. There were eight people there who could help people rather than the normal three that we have here and there was a couple of complaints about having to go to Worthington but most people actually found it more convenient in the fact that they didn't have to wait longer. The program was a success. There was 8,634 delinquent letters mailed, 64% of the accounts were updated as a result of that. There was 5,586 subpoenas mailed, 68% of the accounts were updated as a result and just to explain what that is, when RITA finds out that someone has not complied with City Ordinance and hasn't filed an income tax, they make every attempt to deliver letters to them asking them to come in and to update the account and get their past due taxes filed. After three attempts and they do not comply, they get a subpoena requesting, requiring them to come in and have their taxes taken care of. This year the cost of the program to the city was \$44,688. The amount of money collected was, \$184,983 was collected so that was an increase over the cost of about \$140,000. Just as a note on what Brenda does during tax season, on average every year, between January 15th and April 15th, she sees about 460 taxpayers of that she files about 425 tax forms on average. This year, 433 forms for the 2010 Season were actually filed through our office out of 18,500 or so for the entire city so it's a pretty substantial number that's actually being done by one person. Any questions on that one?

Mr. Hills: Questions, anybody on Council? No, Sir.

Mr. Harris: The second one is also considered on the Tax Budget. Everybody got a copy of the Tax Budget in their packet. That will be on the next Committee Meeting. I think everybody's also very aware of what's going on in downtown Columbus with the State Legislature. The city with the

changes that have been discussed in the budget down there, we'll lose approximately \$1,750, 000 over the next four years. Considering the problems we've already had, it was my suggestion on the Tax Budget that we move \$2,000,000 out of the CIP back to the General Fund in order to make an adequate ending balance at the end of 2012 for the city expenditures. We need to find a long-term solution for this problem. Mr. Hills, Mayor McCloud and myself have met several times and we have asked that City Council appoint a Committee in order to look at the city's long-term budget problems and come up with some fixes for those particular problems and Mr. Hills is going to speak on that here in a few minutes. We'll certainly answer any questions if anybody has any.

Mr. Hills: Questions and comments from anyone? Dick, I'm going to ask some clarification questions because, if I understand what you've just said, what we're doing on the Tax Budget is taking \$2,000,000 out of a Capital Improvements Fund or what may be a savings account or a fund that's used to fix roads, build buildings, different things like that.

Mr. Harris: Take care of parks, a number of different things.

Mr. Hills: Parks, recs and we're moving that into the General Fund to cover our day-to-day operating expenses.

Mr. Harris: That would be correct.

Mr. Hills: And maybe that's not bad if the balance is \$20,000,000 in the CIP Fund but what will that leave as the remaining balance in the CIP?

Mr. Harris: About \$1,250,000 will be left in the CIP.

Mr. Hills: When it's 2013 you're not going to be able to transfer \$2,000,000.

Mr. Harris: No, and at this point, we're only putting on average \$200,000 a year in the CIP. If you look at other cities about our size are putting in, we're putting in 2% of the income tax money. Hilliard put's in thirty per cent of their income tax money and as you look around, people are talking about putting in a Rec Center, doing improvements on the Senior Citizen Center, more road work, other types of things. We can't do it because we don't have the money.

Mr. Hills: We used to, and we're to be commended on what we've done over the last ten years. Because we have reduced the amount going into the CIP and yet still been able to maintain fairly substantial road improvements and buildings. So we get a lot of credit for that but it only stretches so far and we've stretched that excess savings account dollars about to the point, we can't stretch them any more.

Mr. Harris: Realistically Mr. Hills and you and the Mayor were around for this and Mel and a few

others, when Abercrombie and Fitch left town back in 2000 and 2001, they took between \$1,500,000 and \$2,000,000 a year with them when they left and went to New Albany. We have never really recovered from that. Also the fact that _____ and I did a report for the Mayor several weeks ago, our cost of Medical Insurance in the last ten years has gone up \$1,200,000. When you only have a \$13,000,000 General Budget, General Fund Budget, it's a substantial rate. The last time the city had a tax increase was January 1, 1982, gasoline was \$.56 a gallon. Today, gasoline's almost \$4.00 a gallon. I would say this city has done, over the last 30 years, has made the tough decisions they talk about downtown. We have gone out and not hired people. You look at what we take in and you'll see these numbers, as we get into this Committee, you'll find out that Whitehall takes in between the property tax and income tax, Whitehall takes in \$6,000,000 a year more than we do; Grove City, Hilliard take in \$9,000,000 more than we do. Basically double what we take in and yet we provide a very safe city with a good standard of living, but what's happened with the State Legislature and the moves they're making, our chances of holding on to that without doing, making major cuts, is not likely. Back in 2006, when the city asked the citizens for a tax increase, it was a choice between doing something and doing nothing. With these changes that the State has made, it's now a choice between finding additional sources of revenue or cutting out the entire Parks Department or laying off ten or twelve police officers. There's going to be major cuts made. Very tough decisions are going to have to be made as to whether, which direction we want to go and I think that having a Committee who are not involved with the day-to-day operations of the city and if you look at the people who have been suggested, they are investment people, they are bankers, they are business people, they're numbers people who will give us an honest appraisal of how we're doing and what we have to do to fix the problem, but we've kicked this can down the road for ten years. We've come to the end of the road and something's going to have to be done one way or the other.

Mr. Hills: Any other questions of Mr. Harris? I thank you, well, I appreciate the fact that you've expressed the position we're in. I'm not sure I could thank you, it's not your fault.

Mr. Harris: It's not very pleasant from my end either, frankly. Thank you.

Mr. Hills: Thank you very much and move to Item b - President of Council Hills and Ad Hoc Committee. This is just what was referenced to, by the Auditor. This was in your packet and the Mayor and the Auditor talked to me last week about an Ad Hoc Committee which is done with the recommendation of the President of Council of picking some individuals who have expertise in a number of different areas and if I could, I would like to read this so we're sure it's in the record: "At the request of the Mayor and the Auditor of the City of Reynoldsburg, the Council of Reynoldsburg does hereby appoint the following five individuals with expertise in banking, investment, finance and business ownership to an Ad Hoc Committee to review budgetary issues facing the City of Reynoldsburg: 1) Brad Sprague (Temporary Chairman); 2) David Reidel; 3) Linda Smith; 4) Bill Shorthill; 5) Larry McGrath. The purpose of the committee meetings will be to review, evaluate and discuss the existing Reynoldsburg City Budget, including all known or anticipated modifications to expenses and revenues, and to recommend short-term and long-term solutions to the budgetary issues

faced by the City. The Committee shall report back to Council at the first Council meeting in July, 2011 as to the status and recommendations of their special purpose.” For those who haven’t been here long, remember we did this with the Ad Hoc Committee between the City and the Schools and produced a number of ways to look at a situation and resolve some issues, but after reading that, are there any questions or comments as to what we’re doing? Again, anything that this Committee would recommend can’t go anywhere until it comes back for approval by Council anyway. So it’s, Council always will have the last say, but what we’re doing here is getting people who are competent and qualified to look at projections, look at budgets, and say is there, here’s something you may want to think about trying; and sometimes you get out of the middle of the forest, you don’t see as many trees, and maybe we’re able to have somebody independent come in and look and make some recommendations, but any questions or comments and if not.....yes.....

Mr. Deskins: President Hills, I’m just curious as to who recommended these folks?

Mr. Hills: These folks?

Mr. Deskins: These people.

Mr. Hills: The names were submitted and there were other names, but the names were submitted by the Mayor and the Auditor and I think I put one on, I suggested one also. I’m not aware of the input coming from anybody but the Mayor and the Auditor and myself. Is that correct Brad?

Mayor McCloud: Yes, yes.

Mr. Deskins: Thank you.

Mr. Hills: Further questions? If not, could we have a motion to approve this Ad Hoc Committee? So moved by Councilman Clemens. Seconded by Mr. Cotner.

With the roll called, members voted: Mrs. Kelly “Yea”; Mr. Joseph “Yea”; Mr. Clemens “Yea”; Mr. Cotner “Yea”; Mr. Long “Yea”; Mr. Burd “Yea”; Mr. Deskins “Yea”. Motion passed.

Mr. Hills: And I will note that these meetings will be public noticed and there’ll be someone there taking notes and everything so they are open for public participation, okay and that schedule will be devised I’m sure between Administration and the Clerk’s Office fairly shortly. Okay, I thank you for that and any other reports anybody wants to make or give? If not, we’ll move to Item No. 10.

Clerk read Motion: That the Council of the City of Reynoldsburg does hereby appoint Robert Cook to serve an unexpired term on the Reynoldsburg Planning Commission; term will end January 14, 2014.- -Mr. Deskins moved adoption; Mrs. Kelly seconded. With the roll called, members voted: Mrs. Kelly “Yea”; Mr. Joseph “Nay”; Mr. Clemens “Yea”; Mr. Cotner “Yea”; Mr. Long “Yea”; Mr.

Burd “Yea”; Mr. Deskins “Nay”.

Mr. Hills: Okay, Mr. Cook has received the necessary four votes. The Motion is adopted. Congratulations, Mr. Cook, and I hope you’ll enjoy your time on the Planning Commission. Any one have any other comments? (None)

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

William L. Hills, President of Council

Sally Cochran, Assistant Clerk of Council