



**MINUTES REGULAR MEETING
REYNOLDSBURG CITY COUNCIL
July 22, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Meredith Lawson-Rowe called the meeting to order at 6:30PM.

INVOCATION - Pastor Renee Russell of City Church of Reynoldsburg

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Baker, Johnson, Lawson-Rowe, Strickland, Salvati, Pyakurel, Hill

ABSENT: Cother

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting Minutes of June 24, 2024

The regular meeting minutes of June 24, 2024 were approved as submitted.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

**Sharon Montgomery
572 Bonnington Way**

Ms. Montgomery stated that she is here to request stronger penalties for when a distracted driver causes serious injury or death. She stated that she understands that Ms. Hooker from Grove City has already been here to discuss this issue as well and thanks Council for listening to her. The new state law left out what the governor, traffic safety advocates, and victims wanted, and ODOT's distracted driving task force specifically recommended. She realizes that Reynoldsburg has already begun working towards harsher penalties at the local level. She stated that the state law classifies this as an unclassified misdemeanor; the fine for violating the law, causing serious injury by

violating the law, causing death by violating the law, and littering, are all the same fine. She stated that there is no justice for the victim in this situation. She thanked Council again for listening to Ms. Hooker and planning to do something about this issue.

Ryan Naylor
Reynoldsburg Dental Center
6504 East Main Street

Dr. Naylor stated that he is excited to bring a new event to the residents of Reynoldsburg. He explained that he comes from a family that likes to give back to the community whenever possible and wanted to carry that tradition into his professional life. He stated that he is partnering with Councilmember Strickland to host a Wellness Expo for Reynoldsburg residents on Friday, August 16 at the YMCA. They hope to have a free and open dialogue with medical professionals to educate and give information about different options in our community.

Mayor Begeny

Mayor Begeny thanked everyone that came out to Food Truck Friday and stated that there is a Concert on the Lawn this upcoming weekend and the Tomato Festival coming up as well. He also explained that the flood mitigation town hall was canceled due to some issues with traffic and has now been rescheduled for September 4 at the Reynoldsburg Library.

Presentation by Hamid Mukhtar, President of Star Consultants

Mr. Mukhtar stated that the City hired Star Consultants two years ago to do assessments and evaluation of some of our facilities. Part of that was estimating the growth of the City and our departments as well as estimating our future needs. They projected the current facilities would not be able to keep up with our future needs and updating those facilities would be ineffective. They were able to create a comprehensive plan to better show what Star Consultants believed was the best option for our future needs. This new complex would include an administrative building, a dry storage building, a maintenance facility, a fueling station, unconditioned space, and other features. He stated that there was a lot of uncertainty in the construction market right now and the cost of building materials had gone up. They anticipated that this project would be around \$30 million dollars and take between eighteen and twenty-four months. They had already begun communicating with different construction groups and received constructive feedback. They planned to be able to send this project out to bid within thirty to forty days.

Councilmember Strickland asked what kind of contingencies were in place for this project. Mr. Mukhtar stated that with any project there were unknowns. Star was

trying to create alternates that would provide us with the ability to have some construction contingencies. Mayor Begeny stated that there was a base plan.

Following the opening of the bids and available funding, alternative items would then be added. Councilmember Strickland asked about the office space and if it would also allow for the departments housed there to expand, if needed. Mayor Begeny stated that staff discussed this issue and all departments were represented and advocated for it based on what needs were now and what expected needs could be in the future. Councilmember Strickland asked if they considered any outdoor seating for this project. Mr. Mukhtar stated that they had not planned for any outdoor seating, but there were green spaces included. They could look into adding any requested sitting. Mayor Begeny stated that Pine Quarry Park was next door, if people wanted to enjoy the outdoors on a break.

Presentation Regarding the Rise Up Program - Anna Teye-Kasongo and Netta Whitman

Ms. Anna Teye-Kasongo, Director of Community Partnerships at the Affordable Housing Alliance of Central Ohio, and Ms. Netta Whitman, Director of Housing Advisory Services for Homeport spoke about the Affordable Housing Alliance of Central Ohio. They are a coalition of about 40 members and housing stakeholders committed to addressing the affordable housing challenges and providing economic mobility for the residents of Central Ohio, as well as looking at avenues for homeownership. As part of the homeownership initiative, there is Convergence Columbus, which is a coalition of about 120 lenders, real estate agents, housing counselors, and everything in between. They are committed to addressing the black and minority homeownership gap we are experiencing.

Ms. Whitman explained that the Rise Up program is with the Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati, and they have given \$5 million dollars in down payment and closing cost assistance for first generation, first time home buyers. She stated that they understand that with the high interest rates and rising home costs, it has been a struggle for families to meet their own day-to-day needs and save additional funds to try to get to homeownership. She stated that there are some lenders offering down payment assistance as well to help people with extra costs that come with purchasing a home. The Rise Up program will give \$25,000 in assistance and will be combined with other offers from lenders if the buyers are qualified. They do have a specific Franklin County down payment assistance as well for those in Reynoldsburg purchasing in that county. This information can be found at homeportlearning.org and gives all the details for both of these programs.

Ms. Teye-Kasongo explained that home buyer education is a key component to making sure that individuals who have never had an example of homeownership, have the resources of a housing counselor. She also wanted to share another resource - bloom614.org. This is Convergence Columbus' public-facing website for



those in Franklin County. This helps potential home buyers visual the whole process and connect them with resources that may assist them throughout their journey.

Ms. Teye-Kasongo thanked Councilmember Pyakurel for inviting them to give this presentation.

COMMUNICATIONS

Ohio Public Employees Retirement System Audit Report

MOTIONS

A Motion to Recess the Reynoldsburg City Council for the Month of August

This motion was a housekeeping item to address Council's August recess.

Councilmember Strickland made a motion to approve this motion. Second by Councilmember Salvati. Motion carried.

A Motion Authorizing the Clerk of Council to Return Any Liquor Permit Requests Received During the August Recess, to Mark "Without a Request for Hearing," as Long as the Reynoldsburg Police Department Finds No Reason for a Hearing While Council is in Recess for the Month of August 2024. Should the Chief Indicate that a Hearing is Needed, the Clerk of Council will Confirm Requesting a Hearing with the City Attorney and forward the request to the Liquor Control Board. Council will be Advised at the Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting.

Councilmember Salvati made a motion to approve this motion. Second by Councilmember Strickland. Motion carried.

REPORTS

Liquor Permit - Taylor Square Hotel Group

Lieutenant Jackson stated that this investigation was completed for a new liquor

permit for Taylor Square Hotel Group LLC located at 2426 Taylor Square Dr. The business would be operated as a hotel with a bar area. The business is owned by three different individuals - Kush Patel, Atul Patel, and Samir Patel. The liquor permit is a D5/D6 class, which is for spirituous liquor on premises consumption only, beer and wine on premises, and off premises in original containers and sale of intoxicating liquor on Sunday. This was a new hotel, so there are no calls for service at this location. They did not recommend that the City request a hearing for this permit application.

West Licking Fire District Report

Councilmember Baker stated that reports were included in the packet about what services were being provided in our district.

There is no Development, Parks & Recreation Committee meeting.

Public Safety, Law & Courts Committee

This is the Public Safety, Law & Courts Committee meeting for July 22, 2024.

Members in attendance are: Councilmember Hill, Councilmember Johnson, Chair Pyakurel, and President Lawson-Rowe.

An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 3 Traffic Code, Sections 303.99 General Traffic Code Penalties and 371.01 Right-of-Way in Crosswalk to Increase the Penalties for Distracted Driving and Violations in a Crosswalk that Result in Harm to a Person in the Codified Ordinances for the City of Reynoldsburg, Ohio

Macy Thompson stated that these amendments were brought to the Council by Grove City activist, Ms. Hooker. She expressed to Council regarding safety concerns and violations resulting in physical harm to those in crosswalks. There were currently no state laws regarding pedestrians struck by vehicles in crosswalks. Ms. Thompson would like that issue addressed at the local level to increase public safety. She stated that Ms. Hooker's son, Mr. James Alston, was struck by a car while crossing the street in a pedestrian crosswalk. After numerous surgeries and physical therapy, Mr. Alston was still left completely paralyzed. The driver was given the maximum penalty for failing to yield to a traffic device, which was a minor misdemeanor and fined only \$150. This new amendment would increase penalties for distracted driving that causes physical injury to a person. This legislation would increase the penalty to a misdemeanor in the second degree, which would come with a penalty of up to 90 days in jail and a \$750 fine. If



a distracted driver caused death to a person using a crosswalk, they would be guilty of a misdemeanor in the first degree, which would come with a penalty of up to 6 months in jail and a \$1000 fine.

Attorney Shook introduced Macy Thompson stating that she was a graduate of Reynoldsburg High School and a recent graduate of Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. She would be going to law school at American University in Washington D.C. next year and spent this past summer as an intern in the Attorney's Office.

President Lawson-Rowe thanked her for her detail on this legislation.

Councilmember Salvati stated that he recently saw a situation on Taylor Road where the crosswalk sign was lit up and flashing as a family waited on the side of the road to cross while four cars continued to drive right through the crosswalk, completely ignoring the lights. He stated the next day after this situation, he saw the story about the incident in Grove City so he was happy to see this legislation brought to Council.

Councilmember Pyakurel moved to forward this Ordinance to Council for a first reading. Second by Councilmember Johnson. Motion carried.

A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract with the City of Gahanna, Ohio, the City of Grandview Heights, Ohio, the City of Bexley, Ohio, the City of Whitehall, Ohio, and the City of Reynoldsburg, Ohio, on Behalf of Its Public Safety Departments for Records Management Software

Director Boller stated that this software was for the 911 dispatch center and record management software. Funding for this software was in the 2024 IT budget. The total cost to the City was \$242,344.51 with the total cost of the project being \$804,943. This breakdown was based upon population size, officer count, and MDTs, which are the cruiser computers. They expect this software to hopefully go live around April 2025.

Councilmember Pyakurel asked why we were entering into a contract with so many other municipalities. Attorney Shook explained that it was part of the relationship the City of Gahanna cultivated with the vendor and with the partnering cities. Gahanna would be the point entity for invoicing purposes and then Gahanna would invoice its partners.

Councilmember Pyakurel moved to forward this Resolution to Council for approval. Second by Councilmember Hill. Motion carried.

Public Service & Transportation Committee



This is the Public Service & Transportation Committee meeting for July 22, 2024.

Members in attendance are: Councilmember Hill, Councilmember Johnson, Chair Strickland, and President Lawson-Rowe.

An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 1335 Flood Damage Prevention of the Codified Ordinances for the City of Reynoldsburg, and Declaring an Emergency

Director Dorman explained that FEMA and ODNR regularly updated the flood plain maps. The City wanted to make sure our policies were consistent with updated information. These rules and regulations also apply to City standards when it comes to building. Attorney Shook clarified that this legislation needs to be in place by July 31st and that it was requested as an emergency approval. They originally presented this issue earlier in the year, but ODNR had further comments and changes they requested be made.

Councilmember Strickland moved to forward this Ordinance to Council for a first reading and emergency approval. Second by Councilmember Johnson. Motion carried.

A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into an Inter-Governmental Agreement with the Franklin County Board of Commissioners and the Franklin County Engineer for Phase II of the Waggoner Road Improvements

Director Dorman stated this legislation was needed for Phase 1 of the Waggoner Road project since it crossed into some unincorporated land. They had an agreement that Franklin County would provide some financial assistance for Phase 1 and were requesting approval to enter into an agreement for the same thing for Phase 2.

Councilmember Strickland moved to forward this Resolution to Council for approval. Second by Councilmember Hill. Motion carried.

A Resolution Authorizing the City Auditor To Remove Equipment from the City's Fixed Asset List for the Maintenance Department

Director Dorman stated that this legislation was for a UTV for the police department, since they can no longer buy parts or service this particular asset.

Councilmember Strickland moved to forward this Resolution to Council for approval. Second by Councilmember Johnson. Motion carried.

A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract with EMH&T for

Engineering Design Services for Various City Alleyways, a Crosswalk Improvement, and Pavement Rejuvenation

Director Dorman stated that these alleys were in need of repair and were located behind Prost. They would come in and overlay these areas and rejuvenate the pavement. This project was considered preventative maintenance that would prolong the life of these roads. They would also add a crosswalk with beacons on Rodebaugh for the park entrance.

Councilmember Strickland moved to forward this Resolution to Council for approval. Second by Councilmember Hill. Motion carried.

Finance & Administration Committee

This is the Finance & Administration Committee meeting for July 22, 2024.

Members in attendance are: Councilmember Salvati, Councilmember Pyakurel, Councilmember Strickland, Chair Baker, and President Lawson-Rowe.

An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 160, Section 160.02 Authorized Positions, Personnel, Classifications, and Pay Grades (a) Administration for the City of Reynoldsburg, Ohio

Director Boller stated that this Ordinance would change the pay grade of the Deputy Auditor. There was much discussion about this position, and she did send a recommendation to Council in April regarding this position. This legislation recommends that this position be set as a 15a after review of the job description and duties.

Councilmember Baker moved to forward this Ordinance to Council for a first reading. Second by Councilmember Pyakurel. Motion carried.

An Ordinance Appropriating Funds from the Unappropriated General Fund to Accounts in the Communications/Events Department

Ms. Clemens stated that the amount listed in the Ordinance was money received from the Diwali Festival in 2023. These funds were deposited into the General Fund. Staff was now requesting that these monies be deposited into the Communications and Events budget for future events.

Councilmember Baker moved to forward this Ordinance to Council for a first reading. Second by Councilmember Salvati. Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS - CONSENT AGENDA

RESULT:	PASSED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Strickland
SECONDER:	Salvati
AYES:	Baker, Johnson, Lawson-Rowe, Strickland, Salvati, Pyakurel, Hill

A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract with the City of Gahanna, Ohio, the City of Grandview Heights, Ohio, the City of Bexley, Ohio, the City of Whitehall, Ohio, and the City of Reynoldsburg, Ohio, on Behalf of Its Public Safety Departments for Records Management Software

A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into an Inter-Governmental Agreement with the Franklin County Board of Commissioners and the Franklin County Engineer for Phase II of the Waggoner Road Improvements

A Resolution Authorizing the City Auditor To Remove Equipment from the City's Fixed Asset List for the Maintenance Department

A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract with EMH&T for Engineering Design Services for Various City Alleyways, a Crosswalk Improvement, and Pavement Rejuvenation

CONSENT AGENDA FOR EMERGENCY ADOPTION

RESULT:	PASSED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Salvati
SECONDER:	Strickland
AYES:	Baker, Johnson, Lawson-Rowe, Strickland, Salvati, Pyakurel, Hill

An Ordinance Authorizing and Directing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract with the Stonehenge Company for the Sale of Real Property, and Declaring an Emergency

An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 1335 Flood Damage Prevention of the Codified Ordinances for the City of Reynoldsburg, and Declaring an



Emergency

An Ordinance Appropriating Funds Between Various Accounts within the Street Department, and Declaring an Emergency

CONSENT AGENDA FOR FIRST READING

An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 3 Traffic Code, Sections 303.99 General Traffic Code Penalties and 371.01 Right-of-Way in Crosswalk to Increase the Penalties for Distracted Driving and Violations in a Crosswalk that Result in Harm to a Person in the Codified Ordinances for the City of Reynoldsburg, Ohio

An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 160, Section 160.02 Authorized Positions, Personnel, Classifications, and Pay Grades (a) Administration for the City of Reynoldsburg, Ohio

An Ordinance Appropriating Funds from the Unappropriated General Fund to Accounts in the Communications/Events Department

CONSENT AGENDA FOR SECOND READING

An Ordinance Appropriating Disbursement and Fees from the City's TIF Funds to Allow for Payment to the Reynoldsburg City School District and to Account for County Treasurer Fees

CONSENT AGENDA FOR THIRD READING

RESULT:	PASSED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Baker

SECONDER: Salvati

AYES: Baker, Johnson, Lawson-Rowe, Strickland, Salvati, Pyakurel, Hill

An Ordinance to Amend Chapter Eleven - Planning and Zoning Code for the City of Reynoldsburg, Ohio

An Ordinance to Amend Section 331.42 Texting While Driving Prohibited in the Codified Ordinances for the City of Reynoldsburg

An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance No. 07-2013 Concerning the Contribution Amounts to the Water and Sewer Capital Improvement Project (CIP) Funds for the City of Reynoldsburg, Ohio

An Ordinance Appropriating Funds from the Unappropriated General Fund (110) to the Federal Emergency Management Association Fund (FEMA) (201)

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into an Agreement with EMH&T for Engineering Design Services for a Future Public Alley North of East Main Street

OTHER COUNCIL MATTERS

Councilmember Baker stated that the African American Wellness Walk would be on August 10th, and would be a great event for anyone to attend. He also wanted to shout out to the Reynoldsburg High School football team as they prepared for their upcoming season. He thanked RPD, doctors, nurses, and teachers.

Councilmember Hill stated that she and President Lawson-Rowe would be at the Reynoldsburg Library having a meet and greet on August 13th from 5:30 to 7:30. They encouraged everyone to come out and see the new library.

UPCOMING MEETINGS



**Council is in recess during the month of August.
August 1, 2024 Planning & Zoning Board
August 8 - 10, 2024 Tomato Festival
August 15, 2024 Planning & Zoning Board
September 5, 2024 Planning & Zoning Board
September 9, 2024 Council**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22(G)(3) "to conference with an attorney concerning disputes involving the public body that are the subject of pending or imminent court action."

President Lawson- Rowe indicated that Council was going into Executive Session and would not conduct any business following the end of the Executive Session.

Councilmember Strickland made a motion to enter into Executive Session pursuant to ORC Section 121.22 (G)(1) "to conference with an attorney concerning disputes involving the public body that are the subject of pending or imminent court action." Second by Councilmember Johnson.

Councilmember Baker - yes; Councilmember Johnson - yes; Councilmember Strickland - yes; Councilmember Salvati - yes; Councilmember Pyakurel - yes; Councilmember Hill - yes; President Lawson-Rowe - yes.

Motion carried.

Council invited Mayor Begeny, Attorney Shook, Attorney Gary Batke, Director Boller, and Clerk Prasher to remain in the session.

Councilmember Salvati made a motion to leave Executive Session. Second by Councilmember Johnson.

Councilmember Baker - yes; Councilmember Johnson - yes; Councilmember Strickland - yes; Councilmember Salvati - yes; Councilmember Pyakurel - yes; Councilmember Hill - yes; President Lawson-Rowe - yes.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT



As there was no further business, Council President Lawson-Rowe adjourned the meeting.

Meredith Lawson-Rowe, President of
Council

Mollie Prasher, Clerk of Council