



MINUTES
REYNOLDSBURG City Council
May 8, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

INVOCATION - Councilmember Shanette Strickland

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Cotner, Baker, Bryant, Jenkins, Strickland, Salvati, Pyakurel, Lawson
Rowe
ABSENT:

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Item 9 (e)(3) under Public Service and Transportation is being pulled as well as Item 14 (c) from the Consent Agenda for First Reading. The agenda was approved as amended.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from April 24, 2023 Regular Council Meeting

The regular meeting minutes of April 24, 2023 were approved as submitted.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Gregg Trapp
870 Lancaster Avenue

I wish to offer my support for the proposed amendment/ordinance for safe weapon

storage. I would also like to express my support for the tiered fines with the ordinance, rather than a blanket fine/sentencing level for all incidents, to allow for proportionality to apply to specific cases as they may occur.

Mayor Begeny

Mayor Begeny stated that construction has started on Main Street and residents will be seeing stormwater improvements over the next few weeks.

Mayor Begeny stated that events like the farmers market, Juneteenth, the Tomato Festival, and so much more are being planned now that spring is here. He stated there will be music on the cul-de-sac and concerts on the lawn in the summer as well. He explained that this information can be found in Reynoldsburg Connect. He also stated that soon a new interactive calendar called Yodel will be available as well.

Presentation by Beth Fairman Kinney, Director of Community Outreach, Franklin County Auditor's Office

Bethany Sanders stated that she is speaking at Council to give an overview of the 2023 property reappraisal. She stated that in short, they are doing this because they have to. She explained that all auditors have to reappraise all properties every 6 years to reflect property value changes. Ms. Sanders stated that data is collected from multiple sources to establish the updated property values including recent home sales, which is the most significant factor, neighborhood data, visual exterior inspections, and physical characteristics of the house like age, condition, and recent home improvements. They have also launched the Know Your Home Value website to make this information more readily available and it will be updated as new information comes in. They expect most properties in Franklin County to go up in value based on the market. This information can be found on franklincountyauditor.com and their email address is auditorstinziano@franklincountyohio.gov and can also be reached at (614)525-4663.

Councilmember Pyakurel asked if this reappraisal will be good for the residents or not. Ms. Sanders explained that it is both helpful and not helpful. It is helpful when it brings up the value of the home because it is our biggest asset and will allow residents to sell their home for more if they wish to do so. It can also be a negative thing for residents when it causes their property taxes to increase and creates an extra burden.

Presentation by Lew Somogyi, Director of the Reynoldsburg Visitor's Bureau

Les Somogyi thanked Council for allowing him to address them. Mr. Somogyi took the time to recognize the board members and thanked them for their contributions. He explained that with the recent passage of a new ordinance for hotel taxes, it will likely lead to an increase in funds for the Visitor's Bureau. He stated that they now

have a finance and planning committee to better plan for their usage of these funds. He stated that we currently have 3 hotels, with the prospect of 2 more in the future. He stated that Columbus area tourism has rebounded since 2020 and continued to increase. Mr. Somogyi stated that their purpose is to promote visitors, group meetings, and foster economic development, promote historical, cultural, recreational, and natural value activities. Advertise and promote activities, attractions, and tourism. They work closely with local organizations to promote activities and celebrate Reynoldsburg and are dedicated to using all local resources.

PUBLIC HEARING

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

As no one appeared to speak, the Public Hearing for this Ordinance was closed.

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into the Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) and the Execution and Delivery of the Agreement Establishing NOPEC and Approving the Bylaws of NOPEC for an Electric Aggregation Program, and Declaring an Emergency

As no one appeared to speak, the Public Hearing for this Ordinance was closed.

An Ordinance Approving the Plan of Operation and Governance for the NOPEC Electricity Aggregation Program for the Purpose of Jointly Establishing and Implementing an Electricity Aggregation Program, and Declaring an Emergency

As no one appeared to speak, the Public Hearing for this Ordinance was closed.

An Ordinance Authorizing the City to Enter into the Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) Natural Gas Program, and Declaring an Emergency

As no one appeared to speak, the Public Hearing for this Ordinance was closed.

An Ordinance Approving the Plan of Operation and Governance for the NOPEC Natural Gas Aggregation Program for the Purpose of Jointly Establishing and Implementing a Gas Aggregation Program as a NOPEC Member, and Declaring an Emergency

As no one appeared to speak, the Public Hearing for this Ordinance was closed.

PROCLAMATIONS

A Motion to Recognize Kaushila Khanal Karmacharya

Councilmember Pyakurel read the Motion.

Ms. Karmacharya is a former refugee from Bhutan, a woman who has faced numerous challenges in her life. But she is also a forward thinker, a change-maker, a Tae-Kwon-Do Master, Referee USA, Lyricist, choreographer, and an award-winning athlete. But, most importantly she is a change-maker, and currently a Ph.D. student at Dayton University in the field of education. As a change-maker, her goal is to inspire others to believe in themselves and their dreams. She wants people to know that they can achieve anything they put their minds to, no matter where they come from or what their circumstances are.

Growing up as a woman in a refugee camp in Nepal, she faced poverty, societal rejection, and discrimination for being interested in martial arts. These challenges were amplified when she started training in Tae-Kwon-Do, a male-dominated field that was not seen as an acceptable pursuit for a young woman. But she refused to let these obstacles stop her from pursuing her passion. Instead, she became a Tae-Kwon-Do Master and a teacher, earning her first Dan Black belt in 2001 in Nepal. She completed her 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th-degree black belts in the United States of America, where she continued to train and compete. Back in Nepal, she started contributing back to the community as a Tae-Kwon-Do Master and teacher in 2001, helping numerous students achieve their black belts and become successful in martial arts. However, her journey was not an easy one. Financial difficulties and societal norms made it difficult for her to continue to prosper in the field, and she faced criticism from people who did not believe that she could achieve success in a male-dominated field. But she was determined to prove them wrong, and her perseverance paid off. She won many medals, awards, and accolades, becoming a fearless leader and helping many students achieve their goals.

She had the opportunity to meet a student who did their black belt in a refugee camp and left their taekwondo because of financial problems, status problems, and many more. The student was discouraged and left taekwondo but she encouraged them to come back and made them the black belt. Recently, she has done a black belt test for 25-plus students who have been through similar situations and new students who are doing Taekwondo at Sunshine Taekwondo Academy since 2019. Sunshine School has reason to celebrate as 10 of its students recently participated in the Ohio State Championship and emerged victorious, taking first place in their respective categories. Not only that, but these talented students have also been selected to represent their state as part of the national team.

This is a testament to the hard work and dedication of both the students and their teachers at Sunshine Taekwondo Academy. Not only that, Sunshine's goal is to teach discipline, avoid alcoholism, and drug use and build strength in young people. Sunshine believes that the Bhutanese community has been struggling with

these issues and they need support from outside sources in order to change their lives. Sunshine's mission is to help students stay on track and avoid going down the wrong path. It also wants to help them learn how to avoid alcohol and drugs, as well as how to deal with stress. Sunshine will provide its services in schools where children can be taught how to use their time wisely, so they can grow up into productive adults who are able to take care of themselves, without needing assistance from others.

Councilmember Lawson-Rowe congratulated Ms. Karmacharya for her many accolades and awards.

Councilmember Baker also congratulated Ms. Karmacharya.

COMMUNICATIONS

REPORTS

Clerk of Court Report

The Clerk of Court submitted monies collected from the courts held in January, February, and April in the amount of \$55,243. Clerk Prasher indicated that she had questioned the Clerk of Courts about March monies, but had yet to receive a response.

Clerk of Court Report - January

Clerk of Court Report - February

Clerk of Court Report - April

Liquor Permit

J Nepal LLC

Chief Baker stated that this location is going to be operating as Curry and Kabab

restaurant. He stated that the liquor permit is a D 1 which is on premises consumption of beer and original sealed contained carry-out until 1am. This is a new business so there are no police calls associated with it. The Ohio Department of Liquor advised the investigator that the office holder has no other liquor permits and no of nothing that would prevent the liquor permit from being issued at this time. Chief Baker stated that they are not requesting a hearing at this time.

Development, Parks & Recreation Committee

This is the Development, Parks & Recreation Committee meeting for May 8, 2023.

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

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Purchase a Ford Pick-Up Truck for the Reynoldsburg Parks and Recreation Department, Waive Competitive Bidding, Appropriate Funds, and Declare an Emergency

Director Bauman explained that in order to be able to get on the list to purchase a second truck in July, they would like to have the money budgeted so that they are able to purchase the truck once it becomes available. She explained that in order to get on the list in July, they have to have the purchase order ready to go. They are requesting that it not exceed \$35,000.

Councilmember Baker stated that because of the issues they are seeing with situations like this, he asked if it would be beneficial to raise the limit from \$25,000 to something higher to allow departments to make these decisions for themselves rather than having to bring it to Council. Director Bauman stated that something like this would be helpful. Attorney Shook stated that this would be an amendment to chapter 175 and that the charter does not set a specific limit.

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

A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Purchase a Ford Pick-up Truck for the Reynoldsburg Parks and Recreation Department and Waive Competitive Bidding

Director Bauman explained that this Resolution would allow for the City to be placed on the May list to purchase a truck and it was a budgeted item.

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

Public Safety, Law & Courts Committee

This is the Public Safety, Laws & Court Committee meeting for May 8, 2023.

Members in attendance are: Councilmember Cotner, Councilmember Baker, Councilmember Lawson-Rowe, Chair Bryant. and President Jenkins.

An Ordinance to Amend Section 549.07 and to Enact Section 549.09 of the Codified Ordinances for the City of Reynoldsburg for the Safe Storage of Firearms and Child Access Prevention

Attorney Shook stated that this evening he wished they were continuing the discussion about safe storage. However, recent decisions from the Delaware County Court of Common Pleas directed him to advise Council to temporarily pull this legislation. He stated that it is both surprising and disappointing that this decision came out of the Delaware County Court of Common Pleas and that they have to be cautious as a community. He stated that there are currently three lawsuits going in Fairfield County, Franklin County, and Delaware County, involving the City of Columbus, the Ohio Attorney Generals office, and Buckeye Firearms Institute, regarding comprehensive sweeping gun legislation that Columbus had passed late last year. That legislation involved high capacity magazines, bump stocks, and their own version of a safe storage legislation. In Fairfield and Franklin County, so far Columbus has been successful, although there has been an expedited appeal in the 10th district court of appeals right now. Delaware County, which only has a small sliver of Columbus in it, is a forum that Buckeye City Firearms Institute shopped for in the hopes of finding a judge that would be willing to strike down this new gun legislation. Attorney Shook stated that he is very cautious when it comes to bringing legislation to Council on the issues of firearms which is why they limited the proposed Ordinance to safe storage in regards to minors. However, the Delaware County court struck down the entire legislation Columbus had passed, including the safe storage. The safe storage was struck down on the basis that Columbus did not have the home rule authority to pass that law, which is shocking because we know that home rule is what allows local governments to govern their own communities. This allows City Council, which are elected officials, to create laws to govern their communities as they see fit. Up until the last few years this was respected in Ohio, but recently it has been rolled back significantly. Attorney Shook stated the home rule is on life support. They have taken an entire area of potential law and allowed the state legislature to simply declare that they control it and that the local governments do not control it, and they can do this with almost any area of legislation. The court has also extended its interpretation of the 2nd amendment to remove limits that we had always assumed were there. There has always been a line on what we can and cannot possess, there may have been disagreements on where that line was but there was a line and this most recent decision has basically removed that line. He explained that we are now in an era where voters do not have a say, local governments have been stripped of their ability to govern their communities by people who do not live here.

Attorney Shook stated that because of these changes, he is now regretfully asking Council not to pursue this very common sense legislation.

Councilmember Baker asked if this legislation is pulled, will they have to completely start over if they decide to move forward with the legislation after this situation has passed. Attorney Shook stated that according to the charter, legislation has a 6 month life so if they hold it in committee it can still be passed within 6 months if a decision is made. Councilmember Baker stated that it should be a common sense law to keep guns safely stored, he explained that if you are not using your gun to make sure it is safely stored somewhere.

Attorney Shook recommended to table the legislation. Councilmember Bryant agreed to table the legislation.

Public Service & Transportation Committee

This is the Public Service & Transportation Committee meeting for May 8, 2023.

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

An Ordinance Authorizing an Appropriation from the General Fund to the Sidewalk Construction Fund, and Declaring an Emergency

Director Dorman stated that this is the largest sidewalk program they have ever done so the previous sidewalk funds have been depleted. He explained that when residents pay property taxes they are partially paying into programs like this so this money will come back to the general fund eventually, they are just requesting more upfront this year.

Councilmember Strickland moved to forward this Ordinance to Council for emergency approval. Second by Councilmember Baker. Motion carried.

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Appropriate Additional Funds for Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to Resurface State Route 256, and Declaring an Emergency

Director Dorman stated that ODOT requires that projects like these be paid upfront but once the bids came in, they were higher than expected so now they are requesting more funding for the resurfacing project.

Councilmember Strickland moved to forward this Ordinance to Council for a first reading. Second by Councilmember Lawson-Rowe. Motion carried.

A Resolution to Authorize the Purchase of Furniture for Various Departments Within City Hall, Appropriate Funds Therefor, and Waive Competitive Bidding

This item was pulled from the agenda.

Finance & Administration Committee

This is the Finance & Administration Committee meeting for May 8, 2023.

Members in attendance are: Councilmember Pyakurel, Councilmember Strickland, Councilmember Byrant, Chair Salvati, and President Jenkins.

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

Director Boller stated that part of this Ordinance was to clean up some language defining employees as either full time, 3/4 time, or part time. She stated that they are also requesting a restructure in the building department which would allow them to hire a plans examiner. They are also requesting that instead of three people that can do commercial building inspections, they would like to have one person who specializes in residential building inspections.

Mayor Begeny stated that in working with Chief Baker, they have noticed a pattern of increased domestic violence since COVID. They decided to have a meeting to discuss what the City can do about the issue of domestic violence. They decided that in the first phase of a very long program, they will focus on issues like housing, transportation, employment, child support, for victims of abuse. They are requesting a domestic violence victims advocate that would be able to assist new Americans through services available to them to ensure nothing is lost in translation. This person would work with law enforcement and social workers to assist the victims from the time to incident happens to the time that the case is closed.

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

RESOLUTIONS - CONSENT AGENDA

RESULT:	Passed (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Strickland
SECONDER:	Pyakurel
AYES:	Cotner, Baker, Bryant, Jenkins, Strickland, Salvati, Pyakurel, Lawson Rowe

A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Purchase a Ford Pick-Up Truck for the

Reynoldsburg Parks and Recreation Department and Waive Competitive Bidding

2023-37

CONSENT AGENDA FOR EMERGENCY ADOPTION

RESULT:	Passed (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Salvati
SECONDER:	Lawson-Rowe
AYES:	Cotner, Baker, Bryant, Jenkins, Strickland, Salvati, Pyakurel, Lawson Rowe

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into the Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) and the Execution and Delivery of the Agreement Establishing NOPEC and Approving the Bylaws of NOPEC for an Electric Aggregation Program, and Declaring an Emergency

33-2023

An Ordinance Approving the Plan of Operation and Governance for the NOPEC Electricity Aggregation Program for the Purpose of Jointly Establishing and Implementing an Electricity Aggregation Program, and Declaring an Emergency

34-2023

An Ordinance Authorizing the City to Enter into the Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) Natural Gas Program, and Declaring an Emergency

35-2023

An Ordinance Approving the Plan of Operation and Governance for the NOPEC Natural Gas Aggregation Program for the Purpose of Jointly Establishing and Implementing a Gas Aggregation Program as a Nopec Member, and Declaring an Emergency

36-2023

An Ordinance to Repeal and Replace Ordinance No. 15-2023 Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract with EMH&T for Construction Inspection Services Relating to the Eastwood Public Infrastructure Project, Appropriating Funds, and Declaring an Emergency

37-2023

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract with Strawser Paving Company Pertaining to the 2023 Street Improvement Project, Appropriating Funds, and Declaring an Emergency

38-2023

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract with Pavement Technology Inc. Pertaining to the 2023 Street Improvement Project (Preventative Maintenance), Appropriating Funds, and Declaring an Emergency

39-2023

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract with EMH&T Pertaining to Inspection Services for the 2023 Street Improvement Project and Sidewalk Maintenance Program, Appropriating Funds, and Declaring an Emergency

40-2023

An Ordinance Authorizing an Appropriation from the General Fund to the Sidewalk Construction Fund, and Declaring an Emergency

41-2023

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract for the 2023 Sidewalk Program Phase IX, Appropriating Funds, and Declaring an Emergency

42-2023

CONSENT AGENDA FOR FIRST READING

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Purchase a Ford Pick-Up Truck for the Reynoldsburg Parks and Recreation Department, Waive Competitive Bidding, Appropriate Funds, and Declare an Emergency

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Appropriate Additional Funds for Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to Resurface State Route 256, and Declaring an Emergency

An Ordinance to Authorize the Purchase of Furniture for Various Departments Within City Hall, Appropriate Funds Therefor, and Waive Competitive Bidding

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

CONSENT AGENDA FOR SECOND READING

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Accept Public Infrastructure Associated with the Rosehill Townhomes (Woodmont Trace) Project

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Appropriate Additional Funds for Star Consultants for Design Services for the Parks & Recreation/Service Building Project

An Ordinance Authorizing the Director of Public Service to Implement an Annual Sidewalk Inspection, Repair, and Maintenance Program (2023)

CONSENT AGENDA FOR THIRD READING

RESULT:	Passed (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Salvati
SECONDER:	Pyakurel
AYES:	Cotner, Baker, Bryant, Jenkins, Strickland, Salvati, Pyakurel, Lawson Rowe

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

43-2023

An Ordinance to Authorize the Purchase of 2000 MXU Readers from Sensus for the Upgrade Program, Appropriate Funds Therefor, and Waive Competitive Bidding

44-2023

An Ordinance Appropriating Funds from the Unappropriated General Fund to Accounts in the Community Events Department from the 2022 Juneteenth

45-2023

An Ordinance Appropriating Funds from the Unappropriate General Fund to Accounts in the Community Events Department from the 2022 Tomato Festival MPE Contract

46-2023

OTHER COUNCIL MATTERS

Councilmember Pyakurel wanted to thank those who were involved in expanding services and languages that were offered through the City.

Councilmember Baker congratulated recent graduates in the area and thanked everyone who has continued to work through difficult times.

UPCOMING MEETINGS