



**MINUTES REGULAR MEETING
REYNOLDSBURG CITY COUNCIL
November 12, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Lawson-Rower called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

INVOCATION - President Meredith Lawson-Rowe

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

President Lawson-Rowe advised that the property purchase legislation under Consent Agenda for Second Reading (12f) would also be added as an agenda item to the Finance Committee. The agenda was approved as amended.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting Minutes for the October 28, 2024

The regular meeting minutes of October 28, 2024 were approved as submitted.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

**Angela Abram
1075 Starlight drive**

Ms. Abrams stated that she is here on behalf of the Reynoldsburg Board of Education in her role as the Board President and thanked the staff, community, Councilmembers, and everyone who voiced their support for students and staff. As a result of the election in which the \$6.6 million emergency school levy did not pass, the district's senior

leadership team and school board will work together to reduce expenditures by \$8.5 million. As the district navigates this difficult time, they will invite all community members to listen and engage with them in this process. Please check the district website for dates and times for these engagement opportunities. The reductions will be in effect for the 2025-2026 school year and no decisions are final until the board votes on the reductions. These are difficult and challenging times for everyone involved and thanked them for their patience at this time.

Tanya Dexter
7255 Sorrelwood court

Ms. Dexter stated that she would like the regulations regarding chicken ownership to be reversed. Currently, the regulations prohibit chicken ownership in residential areas of our city. In our city, cats, dogs, and various breeds of birds, aquatic animals, and reptiles are allowed, however chickens are not allowed. Chickens do not pose any threat that is more threatening or harmful than the type of animals previously listed. Another concern is that chickens bring disease. There are medicines and vaccines to treat disease in chickens too. Noise levels are a concern when considering chicken ownership. Roosters are noisy but that is part of their purpose. Roosters are the protectors of other chickens, however, for residential flocks, she suggested prohibiting them. Chickens can be trained just like other pets. Chickens can be useful for gardeners, their excrement can be used as fertilizer, and they provide great pest control. Hens, female chickens, depending on the breed can lay between 20-300 eggs per year without the presence of a rooster. She explained that she is aware that addressing this task is more involved than it may appear at first glance. She requests that the Council take the time to carefully negotiate this matter. She, along with other community members, would appreciate having the capability to provide a small portion of our food without relying on the national food supply.

Mayor Begeny

Mayor Begeny thanked everyone who attended the Veteran's Day ceremony and explained that this has been our first opportunity to partner with the VFW located on Waggoner Road but they hope to continue this partnership in the future. Mayor Begeny also explained that we have a certain amount of money left in the America Recovers Act that has to be used by the end of this year so there will be a few new initiatives coming to Council over the next few weeks. He also noted that the tree lighting ceremony will be the first Friday in December at the Senior Center.

REPORTS

Development, Parks & Recreation Committee



A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into an Agreement with OHM Advisors (OHM) for General Engineering Consulting and Professional Design Services

Director Meyer explained that our contact at DLZ passed away, causing the City to need a new design services engineering contractor. The contract with DLZ was due to expire at the end of 2025. This legislation would appoint OHM Advisors as the City's new back-up design services engineer to fulfill the existing contract.

Councilmember Strickland asked about the scoresheets and recommendations from the engineering review process from 2022. She wanted to know who the back-up and next design engineer were from the scoresheets. Director Meyer said he did not remember who was the next engineer on the list. OHM was also working on other projects for the City and are familiar with our processes.

Councilmember Baker asked how OHM's services would be paid. Director Meyer indicated that OHM billed us on an hourly basis. There might be some projects that had a set fee. OHM also collected fees for plan reviews from the residents based on the City's fee schedule.

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

There is no Public Safety, Law & Courts Committee meeting.

Public Service & Transportation Committee

An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 945 Sewer Charges, Section 945.02(c) Rate Schedule of the Code of Ordinances for the City of Reynoldsburg, an Declaring and Emergency

Mayor Begeny explained that Columbus had again raised their rates for water, sewer, and stormwater. This legislation requested a 7% increase in the sewer rates. This rate increase came directly from Columbus. Reynoldsburg would not be adding any additional increase for City services. Columbus indicated that these increased rates were due to population increases and the demand put on the utility system by business development.

Councilmember Baker expressed serious concerns about the continued increases in water and sewer rates from Columbus. Columbus has increased rates every year for at least the past ten years. It was not fair to our residents, especially people on a fixed income. He stated that he had mentioned these increases every year and the costs would continue to escalate. He would like to a better explanation beyond increased population (which should provide additional revenue) and EPA requirements. At what point would costs level out.

Chair Strickland 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 an Intergovernmental Working Agreement with Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District to Support the Big Walnut Watershed Coordinator Program Administered by Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District in Coordination with and Support from MORPC and the State Watershed Programs with ODNR and Ohio EPA

Mayor Begeny stated that this agreement will extend so that we can continue our agreement with MORPC, the Ohio EPA, and ODNR. Including work like educational resources for community members, rain barrels, monitoring storm water, and cleaning out invasive species.

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

Finance & Administration Committee

An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 160 Employee Compensation, Section 160.02 Authorized Positions, Personnel, Classifications and Pay Grades, Section 160.03 Salary Schedule, Section 160.04 Other Compensation, Section 160.05 Overtime Eligibility, Section 160.07 Longevity, and Section 160.10 Educational Assistance for the City of Reynoldsburg, Ohio, and Declaring an Emergency

Director Cornell stated that they have changed the language to include collective bargaining units, stating that they need to refer to their contracts, they will also be adjusting pay steps, they have included new positions as the City continues to grow, and they have increased the educational assistance by \$500.

Councilmember Strickland asked about the new positions. Mayor Begeny stated that they are still working through some of these positions. He explained that the

Main Street streetscraping program that is normally bid on, received no bids this year, so this will now become an in-house project, so they would like to request increased staff for these projects. There are a few other positions that directors can discuss when they attend the meeting to discuss their budgets. These employees will be in the parks, streets, and events departments. Councilmember Strickland asked about the new accountant position and why this position had been brought forward. Director Cornell stated that it was a new position in the Auditor's department.

Councilmember Salvati asked for some clarification on not receiving a bid for that project. Mayor Begeny explained that they did not receive a bid for the traditional routes or a new express bid route online, so now they are looking into what it would entail to hire new staff to complete this project in house. This staff could also help cover other services in the service department as well.

Councilmember Strickland asked why they are discussing new positions for next year when they still have not received a budget for 2025. Mayor Begeny stated that their intent was to present the budget tonight as well, but they were not able to get that in on time, and they will discuss it at length at the next meeting.

Councilmember Strickland stated that she would like to hear why these positions are potentially being added and ensure that we are fiscally responsible. Auditor Cicak stated that the addition of the accountant position came at the request of the finance manager who met with Director Cornell. He stated that our profits and projects have increased so much over the years that they would like to increase the staff that handle these issues. Councilmember Strickland asked if Director Cornell agreed that this position was needed and included in the budget. Director Cornell stated that it was in the budget.

Chair Baker requested the job description of this new position. Director Cornell stated that she would email him that information. Chair Baker stated that he believes some of these positions are a no-brainer, like the new director position for the events department. Mayor Begeny stated that Ms. Clemens was already doing the work of a director, so they believed they should move the position up. They are also adding a special events coordinator to try to bring some of that work in-house.

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

An Ordinance to Amend the Personnel Procedure Manual Regarding Educational Assistance Incentive Program, Vacation Leave, Holidays, and Sections Relative to the CBA Collective Bargaining Agreement, and Declaring an Emergency

Director Cornell advised Council that there were minor changes being made to the

Educational assistance Incentive Program, vacation leave pay-outs, holidays (specifically improving the language regarding the extra personal day available for employees who work the Tomato Festival. There was also language added to sections relative to the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Councilmember Salvati asked why language regarding the Collective Bargaining Agreement needed both the written form and the acronyms. Director Cornell indicated that the duplicated could be removed.

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

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into an Agreement with Kirch Group Technologies, LLC, for Information Technology Services for the Period of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025, Waive Competitive Bidding, and Declaring an Emergency

Director Cornell stated that this legislation was an annual housekeeping item to review the contract with the City's IT provider, Kirch Group Technologies. This contractor has handled the City's IT services for the past several years. The cost of the contract remained the same for 2025.

Chair Baker made a motion to forward this Ordinance to Council for a first reading. Second by Councilmember Strickland. Motion carried.

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract for City Cyber Insurance for 2025, Waive Competitive Bidding, and Declaring an Emergency

Director Cornell advised that this legislation was also an annual renewal of the City's cyber insurance. The cost of this insurance for 2025 would be \$28,500, a slight increase over 2024's premium.

Chair Baker made a motion to forward this Ordinance to Council for a first reading. Second by Councilmember Strickland. Motion carried.

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract with OHM Advisors for Design Services and Appropriate Remaining ARPA Funds to Upgrade City Hall and Council Chambers, Appropriating Funds, and Declaring an Emergency

Mayor Begeny advised that he was proposing contracting with OHM Advisors to provide design services for the front receptionist area, Council Chambers and the second floor conference room. The cost of these services would be paid for using the remaining ARPA funds.

Chair Baker made a motion to forward this Ordinance to Council for a first reading and emergency approval. Second by Councilmember Salvati. Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS - CONSENT AGENDA

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

A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into an Agreement with OHM Advisors (OHM) for General Engineering Consulting and Professional Design Services

A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into an Intergovernmental Working Agreement with Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District to Support the Big Walnut Watershed Coordinator Program Administered by Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District in Coordination with and Support from MORPC and the State Watershed Programs with ODNR and Ohio EPA

CONSENT AGENDA FOR EMERGENCY APPROVAL

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

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract with OHM Advisors for Design Services and Appropriate Remaining ARPA Funds to Upgrade City Hall and Council Chambers, Appropriating Funds, and Declaring an Emergency

CONSENT AGENDA FOR FIRST READING



An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 945 Sewer Charges, Section 945.02(c) Rate Schedule of the Code of Ordinances for the City of Reynoldsburg, and Declaring an Emergency

An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 160 Employee Compensation, Section 160.02 Authorized Positions, Personnel, Classifications and Pay Grades, Section 160.03 Salary Schedule, Section 160.04 Other Compensation, Section 160.05 Overtime Eligibility, Section 160.07 Longevity, and Section 160.10 Educational Assistance for the City of Reynoldsburg, Ohio, and Declaring an Emergency

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An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract for City Cyber Insurance for 2025, Waive Competitive Bidding, and Declaring an Emergency

CONSENT AGENDA FOR SECOND READING

An Ordinance Creating the Summit Crossing Tax Increment Financing Incentive Districts by Declaring Improvements to the Parcels within Each Incentive District to be a Public Purpose and Exempt from Real Property Taxation; Requiring the Owners of Those Parcels to Make Service Payments in Lieu of Taxes; Establishing a Municipal Public Improvement Tax Increment Equivalent Fund for the Deposit of Those Service Payments; and Specifying the Public Infrastructure Improvements that Benefit or Serve Parcels in the



Incentive District, and Declaring an Emergency

An Ordinance Declaring the Improvements to Certain Parcels Along Summit Road in the City of Reynoldsburg to be a Public Purpose and Exempt from Taxation Pursuant to ORC 5709.40(B) Providing for the Collection and Deposit of Service Payments and Specifying the Purposes for Which Those Service Payments May be Expended; and Authorizing School Compensation Payments, and Declaring an Emergency

An Ordinance to Establish Section 337.31 Loud Noise From a Motor Vehicle as Part of Chapter 337 Safety and Equipment of the Codified Ordinances for the City of Reynoldsburg

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Accept Public Infrastructure Associated with the Maplewood Subdivision

An Ordinance Appropriating Funds from the Future Bonds for the Construction of the City's Parks and Public Service Facility Project Fund (Owners Contingency)

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter Into a Purchase and Sale Agreement for Real Property Located at 7148 East Main Street, Reynoldsburg, Ohio

This legislation was returned to committee for further comment,

Mayor Begeny stated that they now plan to use the America Recovers Act funding to purchase this property, and they are also working on gathering quotes for the demolition project.

Chair Baker made a motion to forward this Ordinance to Council for a second reading. Second by Councilmember Salvati. Motion carried.

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into an Agreement with Media Promotion Enterprises (MPE) for the 2025 Tomato Festival

OTHER COUNCIL MATTERS

Discuss Procedure to Fill Council President Position

President Lawson-Rowe announced that she was recently elected as a representative to the Ohio House of Representatives. Because of this election, she would be resigning from her position as Council President effective December 31, 2024. She wanted to have a discussion of Council as to how they would like to handle the appointment of a new Council President for the remaining portion of her three-year term.

Councilmember Baker suggested that this appointment be handled as previous open Council positions were handled. The position should be advertised, resumes and letters of interest requested, an open interview of potential candidates, and then vote and selection by Council.

Clerk Prasher suggested that a new President would best be selected during Council's last meeting of 2024 (December 16th) so that the incoming President would have time to make appointments for the orientation meeting of Council on January 13th.

Attorney Shook advised that a new Council President could not be voted on until the position was vacant. If President Lawson-Rowe resigned on December 31st, then Council could not vote for a new Council President until the first meeting in 2025.

After further discussion, Council directed Clerk Prasher to advertise the position immediately with a submission deadline of November 29, 2025. Once all applications are received, those applications should be forwarded to Council for review. Council asked President Lawson-Rowe if she could set the effective date of her resignation as December 15, 2025. Council would interview applicants and select a new Council President during the December 16th Council meeting.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

November 21, 2024 Planning & Zoning Board

November 25, 2024 Council

November 28 & 29, 2024 Thanksgiving Holiday (City Offices Closed)



December 5, 2024 Planning & Zoning Board
December 9, 2024 Council
December 16, 2024 Council (note meeting date change)
December 19, 2024 Planning & Zoning Board
December 24 & 25, 2024 Christmas (City Offices Closed)
December 31, 2024 New Year's Eve (City Offices Closed)
January 1, 2025 New Year's Day (City Offices Closed)

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meredith Lawson-Rowe, Council President

Mollie Prasher, Clerk of Council