



**MINUTES REGULAR MEETING
REYNOLDSBURG CITY COUNCIL
December 9, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION - Councilmember Stacie Baker

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting Minutes for November 25, 2024

The regular meeting minutes of November 25, 2024 were approved as submitted.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

**Penny Thurmond
1314 Coronado Boulevard**

Ms. Thurmond stated that she is here to address the issues she is having with her neighborhood to Council and to the Mayor. The persistent disturbances caused by her neighbor, including relentless banging on my walls throughout the night, have led to many sleepless nights, and a significant decline in her quality of life. This harassment not only caused emotional distress but has also resulted in damage to her property, including feces thrown onto her porch and her porch light being painted black. Despite my repeated efforts to resolve this matter through appropriate channels, I feel that I have been dismissed and unfairly treated by the court system, which has left me feeling both hurt and unsupported. She explained that she previously worked for the State of

Ohio Department of Criminal Justice for 25 years and only recently stopped working due to a disability. She stated that now that she is home every day, she still is not able to rest because of her neighbor. Ms. Thurmond stated that she has attended Mayor's Court and spoken to Attorney Shook, and she does not feel as though this situation has been appropriately handled. My intention has never been to cause harm but to seek relief from ongoing harassment and to ensure my right to peace and security in my own home. She has recently installed a security system and cameras to try to feel more safe in her home. She stated that the police have told her there is nothing they can do unless she has video evidence.

As a tax-paying resident and a registered voter of this community, she is appealing to Council to ensure that her concerns are given the fair and impartial consideration they warrant. She asked for their assistance in reviewing this matter and to direct her to resources or individuals who can help bring about a fair resolution. She stated that she just wants help and hopes that there will be a resolution to this matter.

Angela Abram

Ms. Abram wanted to thank everyone on behalf of the Reynoldsburg Community Association for attending Christmas on the Town this past Saturday. She stated that they had a great turn out and thanked them for their help advertising this event.

Email Comment

Anthony Steven

On November 3, 2024, I submitted a public records request to the members of the Finance Committee and the City Auditor regarding the individual budgets for various events organized by the city. My inquiry focused on the rationale for employing two teams of staff to manage events, a practice that seems to have developed in recent years. Additionally, I sought budgets for a few individual events and information on the number of paid staff members working at these events regularly and the associated costs. There appears to be a significant increase in staff handling similar responsibilities, which raises concerns about the effective use of taxpayer dollars.

As of today, I have not received any documents related to my requests, only emails from the City Attorney seeking clarification and noting that the request was overly broad. I encourage you to obtain these emails to see if, as laypersons, you can comprehend the inquiry. After several exchanges, the City Attorney acknowledged understanding the request on November 15th. I followed up on December 1, 2024, but I still have not received a response.

While observing the Council meetings, I noted the presentation of budgets and proposals for additional staffing, including the creation of another director position for

events alongside a budget director. Given the apparent reluctance of city leaders to share public documents on this matter, I conducted some research and now have a clearer understanding of the potential reasons for this lack of transparency.

According to the City Charter - SECTION 6.09 - ADDITIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENTS states: "The Council may, by ordinance or resolution: establish new departments, divisions or other subunits thereof; abolish, revise, merge or combine departments, divisions or other subunits thereof, whether created by this Charter or by ordinance or resolution, provided the Council shall not establish, abolish, merge or combine any department which is headed by an official elected by the people of the City; and from time to time may provide for the powers, duties and functions of the administrative departments, divisions, and other subunits thereof, provided such ordinances and resolutions are consistent with this Charter." The Charter addresses the budget director position, however, there has been no discussion on the need for the need on this position. Further, I find no other ordinances indicating that the Reynoldsburg City Council has added any new departments, with the exception of the DEI office in recent years, which appears to be unstaffed at this time. In all other instances where there is a director position, the corresponding departments are established as per the charter. If there is a justification for adding a department and staff, it seems as though the process has been outlined in the Charter that requires Council action and not something at the will of others.

I believe my requests have been clear and specific, and I urge the legislative body to address the questions that we, as residents and taxpayers, have been unable to obtain answers to. I also encourage you to familiarize yourselves with documents such as the City Charter to enhance the system of checks and balances.

Mayor Begeny

Mayor Begeny thanked everyone that attended the tree lighting ceremony and Christmas on the Town.

Mayor Begeny stated that the CIP program for 2025 is being determined at this time, and it will be dependent upon certain aspects of the budget. They are also waiting for results of the Ohio Public Works Commission application which was for the improvements to Summit Road. They are also working on how they will approach the new COTA rapid transit lines and what that will mean for Reynoldsburg.

Mel Clemens Award Recipient

Director Bauman stated that the Mel Clemens Service Award is presented to someone who has displayed outstanding volunteer service in the community within the last year. This is awarded to a Reynoldsburg resident who has had a major impact on promoting the City of Reynoldsburg and their pride in our community is

apparent. They recognize not only their volunteerism for the City, but their compassion, respect, and kindness shown to others and the way they have consistently improved the quality of life of those around them. Director Bauman stated that it is their honor to announce Jen Welday as the 2024 Mel Clemens Community Service Award recipient. Jen has volunteered with the parks and recreation department's superhero sports program for over 6 years. Superhero sports are adaptive sports for children and adults with developmental disabilities. Jen is the head coach and organizer for summer baseball and fall flag football programs. Jen started superhero baseball for her son, Caleb. Caleb wanted to play in the dirt just like everyone else. Jen encourages children to try their hardest, have fun, and be a good teammate. Director Bauman congratulated Jen on the award and introduced Melody to present the award. She is also going to be recognized at the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association conference as the recreation coach of the year.

Melody, Mel Clemens daughter, stated that it is an honor the City continues to recognize her father. She stated that she is honored and blessed that Jen has given so much of her life to better the Reynoldsburg community.

Jen Welday thanked her family, friends, and support system. She also stated that she wanted to thank whoever nominated her and Council for creating this award.

Rob Welday, Jen's husband, stated that they have been married for 26 years and love Reynoldsburg. He stated that even before they came here tonight, she was on the phone trying to arrange things for basketball this year. She has made so many contributions to the City throughout the year and has touched the lives of many people through her work and coaching. She has also taken the time to inspire others to volunteer as well.

COMMUNICATIONS

President Lawson-Rowe asked if there were any questions from Council regarding any of the attached communications.

Resignation of President Lawson-Rowe

November 2024 Treasury Board Minutes

MOTIONS

A Motion to Hereby Affirm the Mayoral Reappointment of Members Amy Barnhart and Toni Kleckley to the Planning and Zoning Board

This motion is a housekeeping issue. The Mayor appoints members to the Planning and Zoning Board, while Council is responsible for affirming those appointments. Ms. Barnhart and Kleckley are being reappointed to the Commission as previously serving members.

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

ROLL CALL: Baker - yes, Johnson - yes, Strickland - yes, Salvati - yes, Pyakurel - yes, Hill - yes, Lawson-Rowe - yes. Motion carried.

REPORTS

Clerk of Courts Report

The Clerk of Court submitted monies collected from the courts held in September and October 2024 in the amount of \$56,078.00.

Clerk of Court Report September 2024

Clerk of Court Report for October 2024

Development, Parks & Recreation Committee

This is the Development, Parks & Recreation Committee meeting for December 9, 2024.

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

An Ordinance Authorizing the Execution of a Tax Increment Financing Agreement in Connection with the Construction of a Sanitary Sewer Line



Improvement for the Summit Crossing Development, and Declaring an Emergency

Director Meyer explained that they are requesting this Ordinance as a two-read emergency. He stated that they have received about \$1.3 million in grant funding, but the entire project is about \$4 million. This Ordinance proposes using TIF money from reimbursements to pay for the difference in what the sewer extension cost is minus the amount they received in grant funding. This sewer line would go from around Taylor and Main to around Summit Crossing developments and the surrounding areas.

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

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

There is no Public Service & Transportation Committee meeting.

Finance & Administration Committee

This is the Finance & Administration Committee meeting for December 9, 2024.

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

An Ordinance to Make Final Appropriations for Expenses and Other Expenditures for the City of Reynoldsburg, State of Ohio, During the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2025, and Declaring an Emergency

This Ordinance has been returned to Committee for further discussion and amending.

Mayor Begeny stated that when it comes to the budget and staffing, there are two different categories of employees: those that are on the step program, and those that are general employees. Steps are generally based on years of service and move up throughout their employment. The general employees are typically established by Chapter 160 and are evaluated through that process. He explained that the projected revenue for the 2025 budget year was \$36,774,718 and the budget they are presenting tonight is at \$34,076,180. The additional funding would go to the general fund.

Director Bauman stated that Mayor Begeny explained most of the parks and recreation budget at the previous meeting. She explained that a large portion of the new items for 2025 is for the streetscape program. They did not receive any bids for this program so they have decided to bring this in house. They stated that they would be able to use these two field operators, and one supervisor, year round to do the streetscaping program, and assist with other services by the service department, like snow plowing, leaf pickup, and anything else. The original contract for this was around \$120,000, but adding these additional employees would be around \$235,000. They were contracted with the previous company for 105 hours per week and these three employees would provide 120 hours a week instead. They believe this is actually better value because they will be able to assist with other programs and services the City provides.

Councilmember Baker asked if the company they had been using explained why they did not bid on it. Director Bauman stated that even if they had bid on it, the City would not have accepted that proposed contract because of poor service.

Chief Baker stated that the 2025 budget is pretty consistent with what they had budgeted in 2024. Their biggest increased expense in 2025 besides staffing, will be the replacement of the air conditioning for the building, which will be about \$300,000. They will also be updating technology in 2025 including new records management systems, e-citation technology, ID swiping technology to transfer information, and online scheduling systems. In 2024, they will be funded for 73 police officers but moving to 75 officers in 2025.

Councilmember Pyakurel asked when they would be able to build a sidewalk from Waggoner to Taylor and asked if that was included in this budget. Mayor Begeny stated that something like that would typically be included in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), they are also working with developers in that area to extend the sidewalk through that area as businesses move onto those properties.

Attorney Shook requested an additional allotment of funds for the Assistant City Attorney position since they are actively trying to hire someone for that position. They are going through the interview process right now and money is always a big question for attorneys looking to work for the City.

Councilmember Baker made a motion to amend this Ordinance to include new updates to the budget. Second by Councilmember Salvati. The Ordinance is now amended.

Councilmember Baker moved to forward this Ordinance as amended for a second reading. Second by Councilmember Pyakurel. Motion carried.

An Ordinance to Transfer Funds Among Various General Fund Accounts, and Declaring an Emergency

Auditor Cicak advised that every year Council reviews legislation that allows the Auditor's Office to transfer funds to accounts to balance fund accounts. This Ordinance was being requested as a two-read emergency.

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

An Ordinance Authorizing the City Auditor to Fund the Health Savings Accounts For 2025, and Declaring an Emergency

Auditor Cicak indicated that this legislation was an annual housekeeping item to seek approval to transfer health savings account dollars to employee accounts in January 2025. These funds were part of the employees' overall benefit package.

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

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

This Ordinance has been returned to Committee for further discussion and to amend the attachments.

Councilmember Salvati stated that Council relies on the HR Department to make sure employees in the step program are assigned to their correct pay grades and make any necessary corrections as needed using various resources such as MORPC. He questioned the request to increase an employee's pay grade from a 10 to a 14A, which requires supervision or a certified skill. He asked what the process was for determining what determined what positions were assigned a specific pay grade.

Mayor Begeny responded that in regard to his Administrative Assistant, she handled a greater work load of reports and access to scheduling, and confidential information including budget and payroll information. Her position held a greater responsibility than other administrative assistants.

Councilmember Baker commented about future impacts on the City's budget based

on state legislation that will likely be forthcoming and the other potential unknowns that could impact the budget. The City's budget has increased over the past ten years, but revenues have stayed steady over the past number of years. Mayor Begeny explained the potential impact of changes that were being discussed regarding police and fire pension changes. The City works to be conservative in revenue projections when putting together the budget. The Administration and the Auditor's office work together to determine the City's fiscal future, while looking at the impact state legislation would have on our revenues. The City also conservatively projects expenditures based on expected revenue, knowing that at any time, we can reduce or stop spending as we did in 2020. I have worked with our Finance Manager Jason Ward on 2025 projections. He projects revenue for 2025 at \$36,774.073. This number is just a projection. However, the City has exceeded the revenue projection for 2024, making this year the fourth-highest revenue year in the City's history.

Councilmember Baker discussed the concerns previously expressed about the increase in payroll for the Payroll Specialist/Administrative Position in the Auditor's Office. He felt this increase was a lot for a full-time 3/4 position. It seemed that this increase was concerning, especially since this position was not a full-time position.

Auditor Cicak stated that the work load in his office had more than doubled along with the City's financial revenues. He added that the payroll back-up person was the Tax Administrator. Since that position has taken on other roles, this position has taken on more responsibility for payroll. He expressed his appreciation for Councilmember Strickland, who met with him to discuss this position. He encouraged other Council members to stop by his office to see this position's work load.

Councilmember Baker expressed his apologies for not being able to meet with Auditor Cicak due to work responsibilities. Councilmember Baker indicated that the former HR Director presented this same information last year regarding this position. He stated that he understood Auditor Cicak's comments regarding the growth in the City, but he was still uncertain as to the need to increase the payroll position to a pay grade 14A and the addition of an additional accounting position. He asked if the new time clock system helped to reduce the work load of the payroll position.

Auditor Cicak stated that he had not asked for additional staff last year, but did ask for a pay grade increase for the Deputy Auditor and Payroll Specialist. Only the Deputy Auditor received the increase in mid-year. The new accounting position would not be filled until someone was hired to fill the currently empty Senior Accountant position and has gained some experience. Seven other department

positions have requested increased pay grades without changes to job descriptions and other administrative assistant positions were rated at a pay grade 13, while the Payroll Specialist position should be at a pay grade 14A. Many of these job descriptions were wrong, as well as the City having a history of these issues. This issue needed to be addressed and corrected.

Councilmember Pyakurel asked why this employee only works 30 hours instead of 40 hours if there is so much work to be done in this department. Auditor Cicak stated he believes we are getting good value with this employee because the payroll was every other week, and there is not enough work to fulfill a 40-hour position. Auditor Cicak stated that the amount she is being paid is already within the range of the 14A position. Councilmember Baker stated that he believes this employee should be moved up to 40 hours if they are going to move up to 14A to make it more consistent across the board with other employees at this pay grade. Auditor Cicak stated that there are other employees who are also only 30 hours.

Councilmember Salvati stated he is not too concerned about the 30 hours because this position would be paid hourly. He is more concerned that this was brought to Council back in the summer, and they decided not to move forward with a pay increase at that time. He explained he wanted further clarification about whether this job's responsibilities are truly rated at the same level of other employees at a 14A pay grade. Auditor Cicak stated that he believes this employee's responsibilities do align with the level of responsibility a 14A typically has.

Councilmember Strickland thanked Auditor Cicak for meeting with her last week to further discuss this proposed change. She explained that even after all the previous discussions, she still had an issue with this employee only working 30 hours. She stated that she understands the City is growing and that they need additional staff, and she agrees, but she wonders why this employee does not work 40 hours to assist with the extra workload and then moves to a 14A. Auditor Cicak stated that he appreciated her time.

Councilmember Hill asked for clarification on whether the main concern was 30 hours instead of 40 hours. She stated that she is not concerned about this because it is an hourly rate so they would not be making the same salary as a 40-hour employee. She stated that she feels that it is hard to compare other administrative positions because they are all so different. Councilmember Baker stated that he believes this employee should be working 40 hours to be equivalent to the other 14A positions, and according to the Auditor, their office is so busy that there is more work that could be done by this employee.

Councilmember Baker suggested that this Ordinance not be passed this evening as there still seems to be a number of questions. He moved to hold the legislation



over until the December 16th Council meeting. Second by Councilmember Salvati.
Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA FOR EMERGENCY ADOPTION

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

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

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract with Signcom for Design Services to Install Two Informational/Welcome to Reynoldsburg Signs, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and Declaring an Emergency

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract with Compton Construction for Design and Installation Service Using America Rescue Plant



Act Funds for a City Hall Entry Vestibule, Appropriating Funds, and Declaring an Emergency

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

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

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 FIRST READING

An Ordinance Authorizing the Execution of a Tax Increment Financing Agreement in Connection with the Construction of a Sanitary Sewer Line Improvement for the Summit Crossing Development, and Declaring an Emergency

An Ordinance to Transfer Funds Among Various General Fund Accounts, and Declaring an Emergency

An Ordinance Authorizing the City Auditor to Fund the Health Savings Accounts For 2025, and Declaring an Emergency

CONSENT AGENDA FOR SECOND READING



An Ordinance to Approve the Final Plat Plan for the M/I Homes Development at Spring Hill Farm Phases 4A, 4B, and 5

An Ordinance to Repeal and Replace Chapter 953 Water Charges of the Code for Ordinances for the City of Reynoldsburg, Ohio, and Declaring an Emergency

An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 958 Stormwater Charges, Section 958.06 Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU) of the Codified Ordinances for the City of Reynoldsburg, and Declaring an Emergency

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Accept Public Infrastructure Associated with the Eastwood Reserve Phase I Subdivision

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Accept the Columbus Metropolitan Library (Reynoldsburg Branch) Project

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Accept Public Infrastructure Associated with Eastwood Drive and Little Jordan Way

An Ordinance to Make Final Appropriations for Expenses and Other Expenditures for the City of Reynoldsburg, State of Ohio, During the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2025, and Declaring an Emergency

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Execute a Contract between the City of Reynoldsburg and the Fraternal Order of Police, Ohio Labor Council, Inc. (Dispatchers) for a Period from January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2027, and Declaring an Emergency



An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Execute a Contract Between the City of Reynoldsburg and the Fraternal Order of Police, Capital City Lodge No. 9, for the Period of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2027, and Declaring an Emergency

OTHER COUNCIL MATTERS

President Lawson-Rowe stated that she had submitted her resignation as Council President effective December 15, 2024 as she was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives. She stated that she was grateful for being able to serve for four years as the Ward 4 representative and for the past year as Council President. I have been stretched and learned a lot from my service to the City of Reynoldsburg. I appreciate and am thankful for all the interactions and experiences with residents and business owners over the past five years.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

December 16, 2024 Council NOTE DATE CHANGE
December 19, 2024 Planning & Zoning Board
December 24, & 25, 2024 Christmas Holiday City Offices Closed
December 31, 2024 New Year's Eve City Office Closed
January 1, 2025 New Year's Day City Offices Closed
January 13, 2025 Council
January 16, 2025 Planning & Zoning Board
January 20, 2025 MLK Day City Offices Closed
January 27, 2025 Council

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meredith Lawson-Rowe, Council President

Mollie Prasher, Clerk of Council