

CITY OF GROVE CITY, OHIO
COUNCIL MINUTES

March 04, 2024

Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of Council was called to order by President Houk at 7:00 p.m. in City Hall, 4035 Broadway.

Roll was called and the following members were present:

Jodi Burroughs, Melissa Anderson, Christine Houk, Randy Holt, Ted Berry, Rodney Dew

1. Mr. Berry moved to excuse Mr. Sigrist; seconded by Ms. Burroughs.

Ms. Burroughs	Yes
Ms. Anderson	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Dew	Yes

2. Ms. Houk moved to approve the minutes of the previous meetings of 2/20, 2/24, & 2/27, as written; seconded by Mr. Berry.

Ms. Anderson	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Dew	Yes
Ms. Burroughs	Yes

3. President Houk recognized Mr. Hale, SW Historical Society, for their annual report. Mr. Hale shared highlights from the report that was provided to Council earlier. He said the Society is in their 42nd year and this year the focus will be on membership. They have seen a considerable decrease since 2019. They will be launching a new website; have 16 different publications for sale; and show a 14% increase in Facebook activity. Council and Mr. Hale shared some history about the community and Council thanked him for the report.

4. The Chair read the agenda items and they were approved by unanimous consent.

The Chair recognized Ms. Burroughs, Chair of Lands, for discussion and voting under said Committee.

1. Ordinance C-11-24 (Accept the Transfer of 23.471+ acres from GC Beulah Park Investments LLC.) was given its first reading. Second reading and public hearing will be March 18, 2024.

The Chair recognized Mr. Dew, Chair of Service, for discussion and voting under said Committee.

1. Ordinance C-08-24 (Direct the City Administrator to Cause the Closing of Broadway for Arts-In-The-Alley and the Wine and Arts Festival) was given its second reading and public hearing.

Mr. Holt stated that he submitted this legislation on behalf of the residents and businesses of Grove City. He said when he started the process, he made sure that the Chamber and Heart of Grove City

were supportive. He explained that this is a permissive piece of legislation, which means if the Chamber of Heart of Grove City wish to have events on Broadway, they can. He said Council has heard from many businesses downtown and they have all heard a clear message from the residents. He said he continues to believe that the value of having events on Broadway exceeds the residential inconvenience of a detour.

Mr. Vedra, Deputy City Admin., shared additional slides concerning the challenges with closing Broadway. He said at the public meeting last week, there were references to other community events around the State. He said they don't feel they are a good comparison. He shared a diagram of Circleville, which shows a grid pattern that allows for better detours around the event. He said in addition, the roads are only closed during parades and the overall impact is not as great as it is in Grove City. He also shared information about Bucyrus since they also close a State Route, but said they have some built in road patterns to divert traffic. She shared that there will be improvements made to Columbus Street starting in July and this will force all traffic west on Columbus, through Beulah Park. He said the #1 goal is safety. This is not a matter of difficulty or cost, it is strictly a volume of traffic issue on residential streets not designed for such volume. He said they sat down with the Chamber to discuss how to make the Town Center Park the premiere event space in the future. The bottom line today is that the Administration feels the risks outweigh the benefits. *Mr. Holt* asked if that implied that we have lived with these risks for the last 20 years. Mr. Vedra said yes, but we are a larger community now and the closing of Grant Avenue had a large impact on an alternate truck route. Mr. Holt asked if Circleville had truck violators. Mr. Vedra said he did have those statistics. *Ms. Anderson* asked about the Homecoming Celebration. Mr. Vedra said the plan is to move it this year. *Ms. Burroughs* asked if the routing of cars could be changed for the events while Columbus Street is under improvement. *Ms. Fitzpatrick* responded that changing the flow of traffic for a day would be a recipe for disaster due to conditioning drivers to go one way for 18 months, then changing that pattern for one day.

Mr. Holt commented that Columbus Street has not been bid yet, so the dates are subject to change. Even if construction is underway, he feels this would be a positive for Broadway events because the public and trucks would already be used to being routed away from downtown and driving habits will have changed before the Broadway event. He said if the Administration would spend an equivalent amount of time trying to improve our detour strategy, rather than finding last minute construction items and blockers, we could easily have the same success as Circleville. *Ms. Fitzpatrick* said this project has been in the pipeline for quite some time and the grants we are to receive require that it be under construction and monies encumbered this year. She said even though it hasn't been bid, the timeline could not avoid the events this year.

Mayor Stage said they have been doing this for 40 years and the Administration is not searching for hurdles. He said this was not an easy decision. He said a key detail for moving it off Broadway was the addition of Friday night. He said closing for Friday night is an incredible undertaking. Also, he feels Broadway doesn't have much room to grow. Now, they know there are other alternatives to spread out. He said they have safety protocols for events and agrees it would be an incredible challenge.

A Video was shared about the Circleville Pumpkin Show and their safety protocols.

Ms. Pamela Drone, resident and business owner, said she feels strongly that all events should be on Broadway. She said it is the culture in the Town Center. We are supposed to be a walkable community, yet the events are hidden. Safety should be the top priority, but it is not safe as it is now. She said all they hear is about traffic, but they are missing the point – the uneven ground; everything is smooshed together and is congested; families crossing the street; catastrophic events with no easy refuge. She said it is the recommendation of her contingent that these events be moved back to Broadway and make our events known for fun, quality, safety, and uniqueness.

Ms. Shawn Conrad, Pres. of Chamber of Commerce, said this is a partnership with the City doing something wonderful for the community. She said she appreciates the conversations, honesty and everyone trying to make this the best event possible. She said they want to find ways to expand; a need for larger signage and identifiers for the event; alleviating congestion; and bring people to an amazing, safe event. She said they have discussed a blended event, with some portions being on Broadway. She said they will trust Council to make a wise decision about this issue.

Ms. Anderson commented that she strongly supports safety for the community and believes it is not safe to have a normal volume of Saturday traffic coming down Broadway during Arts-in-Alley. With 30,000 people attending, they will likely park on both sides of the street and attractions are held on both sides of the street. This invites people to cross our roadways. She said what the residents have been asking for, for years, is a pedestrian friendly town. She quoted from the 2050 Plan and the Town Center Framework that included: prioritize attraction efforts to businesses and uses that will generate foot traffic and activity; create an alternative truck route to bypass the Town Center; pedestrian safety and comfort should be given priority over efficient vehicular circulation. She said we want our businesses to thrive. Arts-In-The-Alley is a family specific event, with children in tow. She said if the ultimate goal is to create a premiere event space in the Town Center off Broadway, then we should do it first and have it ready to go.

Ms. Burroughs stated that no matter what is decided, not everyone will be happy. She said this affects residents with mobility issues and business owners. She said everyone she has spoken with wants the events on Broadway and believes this speaks to the desire of our residents – who elect them.

Ms. Houk said she has had a front row seat to this discussion for many years with her different roles in the Town Center – from business owner to Chamber Board Member. She said they don't need to hear from the public because they already know what the public wants, and they want it too. Everyone loves having events on Broadway, but what leads them to this discussion is safety. She doesn't believe that Council should be giving directives to the experts of the City. She applauded Mr. Holt for bringing this topic up. She asked if we wanted to go backwards with the progress that has been made for these events. She said if Council gives this directive, the Council assumes the risk of that decision. She said if the Safety personnel have said not to do this, then she questions how they can go against it. She said Administration saw a tipping point in the safety concerns and risk that made it necessary to make this change.

Mr. Berry said we have spent a lot of money on proposal and studies. He said one thing you can't ignore is the impact this has on the Town Center businesses. He said there are safety concerns with all things. All the studies say Broadway is our living room. Moving events behind buildings doesn't help businesses and if we cannot invite people to our living room safely, we have a problem. He said the legislation doesn't dictate that the events be located on Broadway. It only states that if the event coordinator asks for it there, then the Administration will comply. He said we need to find a way to make this happen. He does not doubt the police, but there is a way to figure this out.

Mr. Dew commented that at the meeting on Tuesday, it was said that the businesses lost 80% of their foot traffic and sales in excess of 90% when events were moved off Broadway. He said Grove City Connect had nothing positive to say about Arts-in-the-Alley last year and many said they would not come back. He said no one doubts the safety concerns, but the people want these moved back to Broadway.

Mayor Stage said there are still terrain issues to contend with on Broadway, with the curbs. Also, the promenade, new library and apartments behind City Hall were all part of addressing the improved mobility and functionality of Downtown. He said this is a big decision and he will support

the people who run the Safety Forces.

Ms. Anderson said this legislation allows for two events, but there isn't legislation that prevents other events from taking place on Broadway. Regardless of this outcome, she wants to make sure other events could take place there – such as Homecoming. Mayor Stage said they have not had enough discussion about Homecoming. Mr. Holt asked Mr. Smith, Dir. of Law, if the ordinance needed to be amended to include Homecoming. Mr. Smith said Homecoming poses an interesting dilemma, as it is a City event and they do not have to apply for a permit. He said the purpose of this legislation was to provide an option and he is hesitant to say he is comfortable without further research.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Dew moved it be approved; seconded by Mr. Holt.

Ms. Houk	No
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Dew	Yes
Ms. Burroughs	Yes
Ms. Anderson	Yes

The Chair recognized Ms. Anderson, Chair of Safety, for discussion and voting under said Committee.

1. Ordinance C-12-24 (Repeal Chapter 732 titled Medical Marijuana and Section 1135.09(b)(15) titled Medical Marijuana Cultivation, Processing, or Retail Dispensing of Medical Marijuana Prohibited in all Districts of the Codified Ordinances of Grove City, Ohio) was given its first reading. Second reading and public hearing will be held on March 18, 2024.

The Chair recognized Mr. Berry, in the absence of Mr. Sigrist, Chair of Finance, for discussion and voting under said Committee.

1. Ordinance C-52-23 (Amend various Sections of the Codified Ordinances to create an additional Deputy City Administrator positions) was given its second reading and at the request of the Administration, Mr. Berry moved it be withdrawn; seconded by Ms. Houk.

Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Dew	Yes
Ms. Burroughs	Yes
Ms. Anderson	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes

2. Ordinance C-09-24 (Authorize the City Administrator to convey Excess Personal Property to the South-Western City School District for use in Educational Programs) was given its second reading and public hearing.

Mr. Boso, City Admin., stated that, this year, there are four (4) vehicles not needed by the City to convey to the School District. He said usually, they go to the Career Center, but some may be used for transportation of student programs this time.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Berry moved it be approved; seconded by Ms. Houk.

Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Dew	Yes
Ms. Burroughs	Yes
Ms. Anderson	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes

3. Ordinance C-10-24 (Levyng Special Assessments for the construction of Various Sidewalks in the City of Grove City) was given its second reading and in order to provide required notice to property owners, Mr. Berry moved it be postponed to 4/1/24; seconded by Mr. Dew.

Mr. Dew	Yes
Ms. Burroughs	Yes
Ms. Anderson	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes

The Chair asked that any new business to be brought before the attention of Council be done so at this time.

1. Ms. Sandra Hooker, resident, shared that her son got hit by a motorist while crossing in the crosswalk in his wheelchair, as he was already handicapped. Now he cannot do anything. She explained that the person only had to pay a fine of \$150.00 and court costs. She said she has been collecting signatures to petition for change. Her purpose is to advocate for the laws to be changed to have: higher penalties, require community service, add points to driver's license. She said she knows that Council cannot change all of these but would like to see blinking lights added. She said wants the pedestrians to have the rights, not the motorists. She said she thought the crosswalk protected pedestrians, but it doesn't. She asked that Grove City pay more attention to its pedestrians.

Mayor Stage said the State has to increase some of those fines, but he suggested a Resolution of support for her efforts. He said the Administration will look at the fines the City could increase.

The Chair recognized members of Administration and Council for closing comments.

1. Mayor Stage submitted the Mayor's Court Report and Ms. Houk moved to accept same; seconded by Mr. Dew.

Ms. Burroughs	Yes
Ms. Anderson	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Dew	Yes

He then reported that ABC World News featured one of our corporate citizens - EE Ward Moving as the oldest consecutive, single minority owned business in the United States. He shared that the City has the opportunity to appoint someone to the COTA Board and Ms. Heather Ulrey from Mt. Carmel has agreed to be named. He noted that we have five police officers in the academy and five more ready to start. He shared condolences to the families of Joe Hull and Dean Potts who passed away this week.

2. Mr. Hurley provided a report on the Cell Tower efforts. He said Arcadia, our contractor, has identified all the sites and shares that list with all the carriers. He said one factor for the lack of movement is the upgrading of equipment by AT&T nationwide. No other carrier has shown interest. He said we are at the mercy of the carriers and what they believe is that they are providing adequate coverage in Grove City. Although we disagree with adequate coverage, that is where we are today.
3. After closing comments from Council and Administrative staff members, a motion to adjourn was approved by unanimous consent.

Adjourned at 8:39 p.m.



Tami K. Kelly, MMC
Clerk of Council



Christine Houk
President of Council

CITY OF GROVE CITY, OHIO
COUNCIL CAUCUS NOTES

March 04, 2024

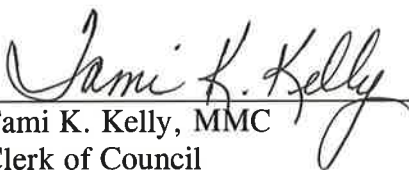
Council met at 6:30 p.m. in City Hall, 4035 Broadway.

Council Members reviewed the Agenda items.

Ms. Houk asked Council Members to let her know if they wanted to be part of the Council Rules subcommittee or Deputy Clerk subcommittee. She would like these groups to get started in March.

Mr. Hurley, Dir. of IS, provided an update on the Cellular coverage efforts we contracted for with Arcadia Towers.

Council retired to the Chambers to begin the Regular meeting.


Tami K. Kelly, MMC
Clerk of Council


Christine Houk
President of Council