

# CITY OF GROVE CITY, OHIO

## COUNCIL MINUTES

August 05, 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, Mark Sigrist, Christine Houk, Ted Berry, Rodney Dew*

1. Ms. Houk moved to approve the minutes of the 7/15 meeting and approve as written; seconded by Ms. Burroughs.

|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| Ms. Anderson  | Yes |
| Mr. Sigrist   | Yes |
| Ms. Houk      | Yes |
| Mr. Holt      | Yes |
| Mr. Berry     | Yes |
| Mr. Dew       | Yes |
| Ms. Burroughs | Yes |

2. The Chair recognized Mayor Stage who administered the Oath of Office to Cortney Riley and Perri Caldwell - Communications Supervisors.

3. 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-20-24 (Accept the Annexation of 0.897+ acres located at 2232 Edwards Road in Jackson Township to the City of Grove City, Ohio) was given its second reading and public hearing.

Mr. Steve Reinhardt, property owner, was present to explain and answer questions regarding the annexation. He explained that the property has accumulated three violations from Jackson Township, two new ones at the beginning of the year and one that was already in place for running the business. He says that he has resolved the lighting condition violation, but Jackson Township has not and cannot resolve it. The property also has two accessory buildings in the back and Mr. Reinhart says that this is not out of the ordinary for that street as two other properties on the street have accessory buildings as well. Regarding the business that was operating on that property, they have been bought out and they understand that they are no longer allowed to conduct business on the property.

Ms. Beth Vance, adjacent property owner, voiced her opposition to this annexation. She and other adjacent property owners have signed a petition opposing this annexation. She shared various reasons for objecting, such as: the company operating on the property knew they were not supposed to be; the only access to this property is from their street; there was another house at the end of the street zoned commercial that Grove City voted to change back to residential. A large concern is the traffic and speeding inflicted on their road from the previous business which resulted in an accident harming a young girl.

Nancy Weaton, another adjacent property owner, voiced her opposition with the concern that the commercial business might be brought back against the will of the people.

Kevin Teaford, Safety Director, read a letter received by the City's Building Division stating the violations against the property are still outstanding with no evidence that they have been remedied. It is their recommendation that the annexation be denied because it does not fit with our current zoning code.

Chair Burroughs agreed that there is no proof of violation resolve but that she appreciates the due diligence from the owner.

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

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|---------------|----|
| Mr. Sigrist   | No |
| Ms. Houk      | No |
| Mr. Holt      | No |
| Mr. Berry     | No |
| Mr. Dew       | No |
| Ms. Burroughs | No |
| Ms. Anderson  | No |

2. Ordinance C-25-24 (Rezone 0.1893+ acres located North of Rose Ave. and West of Broadway from R-2 to PUD-R with Zoning Text) was given its second reading and public hearing.

Mr. Patrick Castro, applicant, was present to answer any questions and provide background for the project. He explained that the first time he reached out to Council about this project, the density was too high. Taking that into account he reduced the number of bedrooms from 3 to 2 and eliminated the apartment above the garage. He also moved all parking to the rear of the building and exceeded the number of parking spaces required by having 3 spaces per unit. Mr. Castro explained that he has done a lot of work with the City and hopes to continue to offset the housing crisis.

Ms. Shields, Development Dept., explained that the original Preliminary Development Plan for this project was denied in 2022. She said that Mr. Castro was very good at working with the department to make sure that his architectural features and structure captured the essence of the street. Her staff recommended approval to Planning Commission because the Grove City 2050 Plan encourages different housing types and sizes in this area and they feel this zoning text would result in conformance with that Plan.

Mr. Scott Hoy, resident, spoke in opposition of the rezoning. He does not feel this project is necessary. He feels that the duplex and carriage house are too large for the lot size. He said that the other duplexes on the street were built on double lots and built before the 1975 zoning code change. According to the neighbors, no for sale sign was put in the yard while it was vacant, and the lot has never had the chance to be developed as intended.

Ms. Shields spoke to the size of the lot. It is currently zoned R-2, our smallest residential zoning, but the zoning standards that are in our zoning code right now do not have a lot size that is reflective of the Historic Town Center lot size. It is difficult to develop anything on these lots that would comply with the R-2 standards. Any structure built here would need variances.

Mr. Smith, Dir. of Law, explained that this was part of a city-wide rezoning and made into a classification that would be very hard to build in. Putting PUD zoning in our code allows us to get

creative when we have a lot that doesn't match the conditions you would find in other areas. PUD gives Council more control over zoning rather than trying to develop and obtaining a lot of variances. He added that all correspondence the Clerk's office received regarding this meeting's legislation has been shared with Council ahead of time.

Mr. Sigrist spoke about the issue of this street not having any sidewalks and he is troubled by that. He is happy that Mr. Castro is making this project affordable.

Ms. Anderson stated she appreciated the feedback received from residents. This project is a difficult one to vote on because she sees it is an issue that is not agreeable among community members, but she asked that we look toward the future and think about what is being planned.

Mr. Berry stated that his issue with the property is that it is landlocked. When mentioning sidewalks, there is nowhere for a sidewalk to go. It can only go towards Broadway; it cannot go across the railroad tracks and is essentially a dead-end. He also worries that this project will create a PUD trend on the street and every home becomes a multi-family unit and there is only one way in and one way out of this street.

Ms. Houk expressed that she appreciated the commentary from the neighborhood. She said she understands that with the current housing market it is impossible to move, and she wants to focus on balancing the various types of housing that we provide. Also, Mr. Castro has been open and listened to the community. If you are going to have a rental duplex in your neighborhood, you want to have a good owner.

Mayor Stage added that this property has high density apartments behind it and it is within 1,000 ft. of an existing PUD-R, stating that this project is not that radical.

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

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|---------------|-----|
| Ms. Houk      | Yes |
| Mr. Holt      | Yes |
| Mr. Berry     | No  |
| Mr. Dew       | Yes |
| Ms. Burroughs | Yes |
| Ms. Anderson  | Yes |
| Mr. Sigrist   | Yes |

3. Resolution CR-24-24 (Approve the Development Plan for Rose Castro Duplex with Detached Garage located North of Rose Ave. and West of Broadway) was given its reading and public hearing.

Mr. Smith, Dir. of Law, explained that this project got a 2-2 vote in Planning Commission that wasn't necessarily fair due to litigations between Mr. Castro and one of our Planning Commission members. He is not saying that the member acted inappropriately, however, it was not fair to Mr. Castro. Council should not take Planning Commission's recommendation but simply consider it based on the criteria used to consider any development plan.

Mr. Castro, applicant, touched on the issue of no sidewalks. He has no curb cuts and moved all parking to the rear of the property to alleviate people driving on the street but there is only so much he can do. The house is designed for mostly first floor living on both sides for downsizing or multi-generational families. He reiterated that there will be no carriage house.

Mr. Sigrist asked if they could require Mr. Castro to put sidewalk in. Mr. Smith stated that Council decides where and when sidewalks are necessary so it is in their purview to mandate sidewalks be built at the homeowner's expense.

Mr. Berry suggested Council meet with homeowners and neighbors on this street to gauge their wants for sidewalks.

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

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|---------------|-----|
| Mr. Holt      | Yes |
| Mr. Berry     | No  |
| Mr. Dew       | Yes |
| Ms. Burroughs | Yes |
| Ms. Anderson  | Yes |
| Mr. Sigrist   | Yes |
| Ms. Houk      | Yes |

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

1. Resolution CR-32-24 (Support the Ohio Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial – America 250-OH) was given its reading and public hearing.

Mayor Stage explained that this is for the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States and the State is sponsoring a program where we can focus in on a more encompassing celebration.

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

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|---------------|-----|
| Mr. Berry     | Yes |
| Mr. Dew       | Yes |
| Ms. Burroughs | Yes |
| Ms. Anderson  | Yes |
| Mr. Sigrist   | Yes |
| Ms. Houk      | Yes |
| Mr. Holt      | Yes |

2. Resolution CR-33-24 (Establish a Charter Review Committee for the express purpose of reviewing the City's Form of Government) was given its reading and public hearing.

Mayor Stage commented on the resolution and provided Council with written commentary, which is attached hereto.

Ms. Anderson stated that we need a successful succession plan and believes they need to open this up to residents.

Ms. Houk explained that it is important for Council to build consensus and get away from the 4-vote mindset. She wants to future-proof the community and do what is best for citizens.

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

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|---------------|-----|
| Mr. Dew       | No  |
| Ms. Burroughs | Yes |

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|--------------|-----|
| Ms. Anderson | Yes |
| Mr. Sigrist  | Yes |
| Ms. Houk     | Yes |
| Mr. Holt     | Yes |
| Mr. Berry    | Yes |

**The Chair recognized Mr. Sigrist, Chair of Finance, for discussion and voting under said Committee.**

1. Ordinance C-28-24 (Approve the Purchase Contract for 3387 White Place and appropriate 320,000.00 from the General Fund for said purchase and declaring an emergency) was given its first reading.

Mayor Stage explained that this property compliments parking for the entryway into Beulah and strategically makes sense.

Mr. Holt noted that this will add 47 additional parking spots for the Town Center area.

Mr. Sigrist moved that the Rules of Council be suspended and the Waiting Period waived; seconded by Ms. Houk.

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|---------------|-----|
| Ms. Burroughs | Yes |
| Ms. Anderson  | Yes |
| Mr. Sigrist   | Yes |
| Ms. Houk      | Yes |
| Mr. Holt      | Yes |
| Mr. Berry     | Yes |
| Mr. Dew       | Yes |

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Sigrist moved it be approved as an emergency measure; seconded by Mr. Holt.

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|---------------|-----|
| Ms. Anderson  | Yes |
| Mr. Sigrist   | Yes |
| Ms. Houk      | Yes |
| Mr. Holt      | Yes |
| Mr. Berry     | Yes |
| Mr. Dew       | Yes |
| Ms. Burroughs | Yes |

2. Ordinance C-29-24 (Authorize the City Administrator to convey Excess Personal Property that is no longer needed for City business) was given its first reading. Second reading and public hearing will be held on 08/19/24.
3. Mr. Smith explained that annually, the County holds a meeting to ensure the incentives we use for businesses to locate here are going well. The law requires Council to approve the recommendations that the body makes. We have never received any recommendations but this year we need to approve the recommendations that we did not get.

There being no additional questions or comments, Ms. Houk moved to approve the recommendations of the County for the TIRC; seconded by Mr. Berry.

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| Mr. Sigrist | Yes |
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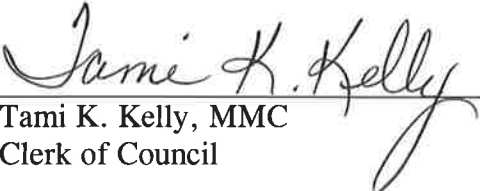
|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| Ms. Houk      | Yes |
| Mr. Holt      | Yes |
| Mr. Berry     | Yes |
| Mr. Dew       | Yes |
| Ms. Burroughs | Yes |
| Ms. Anderson  | Yes |

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

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

1. Mayor Stage mentioned that the convention for the Ohio Association of POWS will be held on Friday 08/09 at the Drury Inn; the Purple Heart Recognition will be Wednesday 08/06; They are working on regulations for the Special Use Permit for marijuana; National Night Out with the Police Dept. is 08/06; addressing the Income Tax Analysis, we are \$1 million behind our forecast with zero growth which is not a good trend; Bourbon Festival is this weekend 08/10.
2. Mr. Smith explained the work the City has been doing on Special Use Permits for marijuana. Both medical and recreational is permitted in the City but he is drafting requirements to ensure they are compatible with the neighboring businesses. They are mirroring some of the State laws regarding proximity to things and no drive-thru's, no food trucks, and no audible noise.
3. Mr. Hurley, IS, gave an update on the progress with the cell towers. Jackson Township is providing Arcadia Towers with a lease for one of their properties. Arcadia has also executed leases with two other private properties. They are continuing discussions with AT&T. Mr. Berry asked where these cell towers are located. Mr. Hurley stated the current leases are here in Town Center, one on Stringtown Rd. and the other west of the railroad tracks by the cemetery. They are looking at a space on Buckeye Pkwy. as well.
4. After closing comments from Council and Administrative staff members, a motion to adjourn was approved by unanimous consent.

Adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

  
 Tami K. Kelly, MMC  
 Clerk of Council

  
 Christine Houk  
 President of Council

## Observations regarding Resolution CR-33-24

“Charter Review Committee for the Express purpose of reviewing the City’s Form of Government”

1. The City completes a statistically sound community survey biennially. The latest survey of November 2023 included open-ended questions to get broader feedback. In analyzing the more than 400 comments only one referenced the form of government as a challenge. The number 1 concern of our citizens is traffic followed by taxes and schools. Obviously, changing the form of government is not a priority in the eyes of our constituents.
2. A misnomer. “Once a city reaches 40,000+ in population it should go to a City Manager form of government, without an elected mayor.” Data within the state of Ohio does not support that theory. For example, of the 32 cities that are the largest in Ohio and members of the Ohio Mayors Alliance only 8 have a city manager form of government. If you add Hilliard and Westerville, that are not part of the Alliance, it brings the total to 10 out of 34 or 70% have a “strong mayor” form of government. Seven of the 10 still have a city-wide election of the mayor for a four-year term. The elected mayor serves on council as the president. Population is not a determinant.
3. Comments made over the past 6 months have implied the city is not as “effective” and as “efficient” under the current form of government. Again, there is no data to support those observations. The city is quite proud of the Aa1 bond rating it currently holds by Moody’s. The most recent rating sheet from Moody’s includes the following comment:

**Governance: The city’s governance issuer profile score is neutral to-low (G-2). City management maintains stable operations that point to high degrees of budgetary reliability along with continuance of healthy reserves and liquidity. The city’s institutional structure is sound, though it must request voter approval for property or income tax rate increases. The city demonstrates good transparency and disclosure practices that are in-line with sector standards.**

Secondly, The Financial Review Task Force established by Resolution CR-09-19 comprised of 13 citizens issued the Final Report to city council March 2020. The Task Force conclusion included this comment:

**After a thorough and extensive review of the City's short-term and longer-term capital needs, operating expenditures, service levels, revenue streams, and budget, the Task Force was impressed with the current financial state and services provided to the City's residents. The city has been conservative in its spending practices while maintaining a strong, supportive quality of life for Grove City residents.**

pg 21 2019 Citizens Financial Review Task Force final report to City Council March 2020.

4. The office of "Mayor" ranks highest in the minds of our voting citizens as evidenced by the voter pattern over the past 5 mayoral elections. In reviewing voter pattern, the number of votes for the office of Mayor is higher than any other candidates on the ballot. There is heavy falloff of voter responses to the "Council at Large" seat. The only higher voter responses over the past 5 mayoral races were the Issue 1 and Issue 2 question. Removing the opportunity for our citizens to have a direct influence on the management of this city is a step backwards in Governance.

I thank council for this opportunity to share these observations.

\* Distributed to Council by Mayor during 08/05 Meeting.

CITY OF GROVE CITY, OHIO  
COUNCIL CAUCUS NOTES

August 05, 2024

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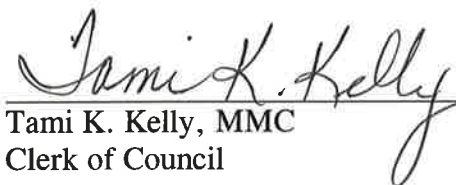
Council met at 6:30 p.m. in City Hall, 4035 Broadway.

Ms. Rowe, Asst. Clerk of Council, asked about the Liquor Permit for Courtyard by Marriott and noted that the Safety Dept. had no objections. Council had no objections and agreed not to request a hearing.

Council Members reviewed the Agenda items.

Mr. Smith, Dir. of Law, explained that Franklin County keeps asking for Council to approve their recommendations for the TIRC, but they have made no recommendations. He suggested that Council make a motion to acknowledge the TIRC findings by Franklin County.

Council retired to the Chambers to begin the Regular meeting.

  
Tami K. Kelly, MMC  
Clerk of Council

  
Christine Houk  
President of Council