Charter Review Committee
Agenda

September 25, 2024	6:00 PM	City Hall

Call to Order

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes

Presentation of Different Forms of Government

Review of Research & Documents:

Presentation	Grove City Governance Retreat Report - Feb., 2024
Presentation	Council Comments from 5/15/24 - Zimomra Presenttion
Presentation	Council Comments from 6/10/24 - Different Forms of Government
Presentation	Council Comments from 7/8/24 - Timeline to City Manager

General Discussion

Adjourn

Grove City, Ohio

Governance Retreat Report

February 2024

RAFTELIS

Background

The City of Grove City, OH (City) engaged Raftelis to facilitate a governance retreat February 24, 2024. Participants included the Mayor and Council, the City Administrator, and members of City staff:

- Christine Houk, President of Council – Ward 3
- Melissa Anderson, Council Member – Ward 4
- Ted Berry, Council Member – Ward 1
- Jodi Burroughs, Council Member – At-Large
- Rodney Dew, Council Member – Ward 5
- Randy Holt, Council Member – Ward 2
- Mark Sigrist, Council Member – At-Large
- Tami Kelly, Clerk of Council
- Richard "Ike" Stage, Mayor
- Chuck Boso, City Administrator
- Bill Vedra, Deputy City Administrator
- Kim Conrad, Parks and Recreation Director
- Cindi Fitzpatrick, Public Service Director
- Kyle Ruach, Development Director
- Kevin Teaford, Public Safety Director
- Mike Turner, Finance Director

Setting the Stage

The Council President opened the retreat by welcoming participants and sharing the goals of the session. The facilitator discussed the norms for the day.

Retreat Goals

- Creating space for members of City Council and the Administration to get to know one another better
- Developing shared ideas to support effective and efficient collaboration between the Council and Administration and identifying opportunities to update the adopted Rules of Council
- Identify shared priorities and areas of focus for the City

Norms

- Listen with respect
    - Let others finish before you start talking
    - Be attentive to the speaker
    - Disagree agreeably
- Be:
    - **BOLD**
    - Positive and realistic
    - Candid and honest
    - Patient and self-aware
    - Engaged and fully present
- Strive for consensus
    - Look for opportunities to agree
    - Remember the power of "if" and "and"
- Have fun!

Introductions - Three Questions

Retreat participants were asked to introduce themselves by way of answering three questions:

1. **Who are you?** Tell us your preferred name and how long you've been involved in Grove City's government?
2. **What is your personal motivation for and commitment to serving the City?** How can you contribute to the success of the City?
3. **What do you want to have happen today?** What are your expectations for the day's conversations?

The facilitator recorded participants expectations for the retreat, as summarized below:

- Better understanding; communicate and build relationships
- Make ourselves and our community better; develop joint goals
- Here to listen
- Become more comfortable with Council and Grove City government
- Engage in honest and open dialogue
- Identify new ways to work efficiently and effectively
- Listen and learn how my department can support Council's goals
- Have a positive experience and identify expectations for the future
- Work better together to move us all forward
- Build consensus; learn how to move forward together
- This is the start of working together toward big things
- Learn about leadership's priorities and how to support them
- Listen to the priorities of leadership and how my department plays a role
- Listen and learn what can we do to get stuff done
- Hear how we can improve and move forward
- Get charter clarity; update rules and City priorities; determine how we update them and stay on track

Visioning – True Today, True in 10 Years

The facilitator asked each participant to respond to the questions:

- What is true about Grove City TODAY that you hope will STILL BE TRUE 10 years from now?
- What is NOT TRUE about Grove City today that you hope WILL BE TRUE 10 years from now?

The following table includes participants' responses as recorded on individual post-it notes.

What is true about Grove City TODAY that you hope will STILL BE TRUE 10 years from now?	What is NOT TRUE about Grove City today that you hope WILL BE TRUE 10 years from now?
• Fun events and prosperous community • Vibrant downtown gathering environment • Town Center • Great health care systems • Clean (2) • Clean/well-maintained	• Community Center (3) • Amenities galore and we never need to leave Grove City • Increased community activities • Community swimming pool • Swimming pool

What is true about Grove City TODAY that you hope will STILL BE TRUE 10 years from now?	What is NOT TRUE about Grove City today that you hope WILL BE TRUE 10 years from now?
• Clean – community pride • Positive perception of care of roads, parks, commitment to safety • Strong sense of community (2) • Feels small but is large – hometown • Small town "feel" • Hometown feel (2) • Small hometown values • Hometown • Citizens love their community! Loyal • Best hometown • Welcoming place to live and work • Desirable community to live/work • Desirable • Welcoming community • Open to all • We are truly a community – we care for our neighbors • Kind and generous people • Personal service for residents • Passionate and committed City staff • Financially sound • Growing • City continues to grow – bringing new people and new perspectives • Lots of potential • Local businesses for community to enjoy • Smart growth • Great Police and Fire departments • Low crime overall • Safe (4) • Safe place to live, work, and visit • Safe place to live! • Much appreciated and professional Police force • Low crime city • Safe community	• Real basketball court • Action/results on long-term parks/trails/amenities plan • Improved leisure activities • Expand pickleball • We will have a community center that is comparable to Westerville and a valued community asset • Increased cultural opportunities • #1 in greenspace or parks • Sense of sophistication • We know who we are as a community • It is a destination location • We will have a City Manager model of government • Different form of government • Better relationships with Township • More diverse and vibrant city that attracts business to keep future generations living here • Diversity • Diverse housing opportunities • More acceptance and inclusivity of diverse people • More diverse community (demographic and housing type) • Greater diversity • Town center as a vibrant destination • Better restaurants • Invest in community center and other epic developments – go big or go home • We will be a City known for high citizen expectations for motor vehicle safety and residential property upkeep • Increased mobility • Traffic relief

Following the read out of each participants' ideas, the facilitator led a discussion about the common themes they contained.

The overall **sense of safety** in Grove City, the **hometown feel** and **sense of community,** and the City's reputation for being **clean and well-maintained** were identified as common themes that are true today and participants hope will still be true in 10 years.

Enhanced **community amenities**, a desire for **greater diversity and inclusion**, and continued **growth and development** were identified as common themes that are not yet true today, but participants hope will be true in 10 years.

Governing Together: Structure & Process

The facilitator led participants through a series of discussion prompts aimed at identifying and supporting effective and efficient governance practices. Participant responses were captured on flip charts and are transcribed in following table.

What does Good Governance look like to you?	How do you distinguish between Policy and Administration?
• Looking forward • Residents are happy • Doing the best with the most • Including the community in decision making • Consensus building • Serving the best we can with the resources we have • Compromise • Transparency • Data-driven when possible • Using data - not assuming there's a problem if it's a political agenda • Accountability • Robust business planning cycle • Able to listen to the vocal minority but make decisions for the larger community	• I ask Chuck • "The struggle is real" • Policy = decision; Administration = implementation • Policy = consensus; Administration = enacted • We struggle with it • Developing relationships helps distinguish between them • Like being on the board of directors for a company, we set the direction and administration should make it happen and check in • In Grove City the administration works for the Mayor • The key is communication – this is a challenge for us; if everyone doesn't have the same information, our communication is ineffective • We modeled this at the last meeting with the alcohol policy for events • Policies coming from the Mayor are more about how and why the work is done (i.e., the philosophy)
What strategies promote open communication and constructive dialogue?	**What do you hope this governing body will be known for?**
• The issue – public meeting rules: no serial meetings, no group emails • The system created constraints • Need more time for effective communication • We're lacking a regular cadence of work sessions to discuss big issues • Committees create focus and get more done • No surprises • Build trust through transparency • Our current system doesn't support trust – it creates a block unless people are really intentional • Concerned about the future – the loss of institutional knowledge • Current administration has not had issues with gatekeeping between directors and Council • Be careful about interpretation and perception • What works	• Giving residents a voice • Being patient • Managing expectations – projects take time, priorities shift, and the community doesn't understand the nuance • Educating residents on how City government works • We improved the health, safety, and welfare of this community • We're effective at this (above) (2) • We're following through • We visibly show our plans • We're forward thinking • We have a reputation for next level communication and collaboration • BOLD and visionary • Residents view the City as "we" not "they" • Leveraging technology • High presence – we're representing the City – people expect us to be there

Following this discussion, the facilitator asked each participant to brainstorm improvement opportunities in response to the following prompt: **How could the Rules of Council be updated to support good governance?** The following table includes participants' responses as recorded on individual post-it notes and grouped thematically by the facilitator.

Response Theme	How could the Rules of Council be updated to support good governance?
Council Committees	• Three-member committees – lands/finance/safety/service • Creation of committee work sessions on upcoming legislation • Establish "Committee of the Whole" meetings • Have true committee meetings on off-Mondays • More committee work • Committee that departments can report to – Greater Council involvement • Expand committees to include the two non-committee members • Committee Chair must be informed of each piece of legislation
Work Sessions/ Special Meetings	• Work sessions (regular) • Informational meetings scheduled between Council sessions – and allow Zoom • Quarterly work session – hear from each department and have a question and answer period • Be empowered to call more special meetings when big topics need to be discussed • Increase time for caucus or determine a committee meeting schedule to talk through topics
Planning and Progress Tracking	• Periodically check progress – e.g., "June" to perform a "check" process and realign priorities/resources • Create a strategic plan several years out to avoid surprises • Monthly written department report – bullet point style
General	• Clearly define and enforce participation rules and decorum

Following the read out of each participants' ideas, the facilitator led a discussion about the opportunity to update the Rules of Council. Summary notes were captured on flip charts and are provided below.

General Considerations

- With a new body of seven members, we need to consider a change, update structure of Council Rules
- There is more work to be done – and it will require more time together
- With the additional time requirements – if I can't come it's not because I don't care
- Could increase the time spent in caucus before meetings (prior Councils have met for one hour)
- Look to other communities and how they operate
  - Committee structures
  - Consent agenda
- Think about a transition plan or phasing
  - Staff time commitment
  - Community notifications/involvement
  - Possibility for remote participation
- Remember that Council can always table or postpone legislation if they need more information before they can proceed

Next Steps

- Convene a work group to update the rules
  - Circulate to all members
  - Will require legislation to adopt
- Advocate for remote participation in committee meetings in statehouse

Governing Body Priorities

Members of Council were asked to identify their top three individual priorities – the important initiatives or priorities that they would like to see happen during their time in office. The full list of priorities is captured in the table below, by theme. Following the initial discussion of these priorities, members of Council were each given stickers to identify their top two priority areas. The number of stickers assigned to each priority area is included in parentheses.

Priority Identification

Priority Area Theme	Governing Body Priorities
Form of Government (6)	• Create a citizen taskforce to review the City form of government • Evaluate current form of government vs. City Manager • Move to a City Manager model of government • Charter review – form of government • Transition to City Manager-Council form of government
Community Center and Amenities (5)	• More amenities (Community center and economic development) for our community • New giant multi-generational community center • Citizen connector amenities such as a "bold Westerville-like" community center and something for downtown like "Broadway Live"
Future Planning (2)	• Develop and maintain shared five-year strategic plan • City taxes to be 2.5% – no disadvantage comparable • Safe, healthy, thriving community
Amphitheater (1)	• Amphitheater at Beulah
Parks: Land, Connectivity, and Planning	• Bike path connectivity to Columbus and Camp Chase • Redo Brookpark School • Land acquisition – 100 acres for open space, hiking, walking, etc. • Comprehensive parks plan (not just community center) • Bike/pedestrian bridge over I-71 connecting east/west sides of Grove City
Traffic	• Alternative truck route around downtown • Ensure smart growth and infrastructure – roads and connectivity for better navigation
Economic Development	• Review planning/zoning/signage policies, etc. so City can be viewed as easier to do business with (time frames, resources, business toolkit); create jobs; attract businesses

The Mayor was also asked to identify his top three priorities. These included:

- Amphitheater at Beulah
- Community Center
- Bridge the gap between east and west: enhanced traffic flow, community development

The facilitator led a group discussion of the top two priorities identified by Council, in order to create clarity about the group's desired outcomes and identify next steps.

Form of Government

General Considerations

- Refer to Charter section 105

- Want to efficiently develop a process for pursuing this priority; concerned about how slowly a committee may work
- Community involvement is important since it's the community that will be voting on whether to change the Charter

What Needs to Happen?

- Pass a resolution or ordinance to form a Charter revision committee for a special charter review
- Determine whether their scope is broad or narrow; make sure it includes all the trickle-down sections of Charter that would need to be changed if the form of government were changed
- Council and the community need education on the pros and cons of alternative forms of government and how to go about enacting them
- May pursue engaging outside counsel for support

Next Steps

- Council will hold a special meeting to discuss this further, including the education process and options for the legal process of amending the Charter

Community Center

How Does Council Define "Community Center"?

- Multi-generational
- Incorporates wellness
- It's a gathering place
- There are lots of amenities
- $$$ – EPIC
- The funding for a center could be tied to a dedicated tax increase

What Needs to Happen

- Parks and Recreation is currently moving forward on a stakeholder engagement process with stakeholder meetings and surveys
- Develop consensus on the scope of the initiative:
    - Location
    - Funding
    - Partners – sensitive to relationship with the Y
    - What amenities
    - Equity – connection between east and west

Next Steps

- Parks and Recreation will make a formal presentation to Council describing the current status and results from stakeholder input

Closing and Next Steps

Action Items

To close out the retreat, the facilitator prompted participants to identify their next steps and action items based on the day's conversations. These included:

Community Survey

- Council will review the Community Survey results to identify the similarities and differences with the priorities identified by Council

Council Rules Update

- Convene a work group to update the rules
- Advocate for remote participation in committee meetings in statehouse

Form of Government

- Council will hold a special meeting to discuss this further, including the education process and options for the legal process of amending the Charter

Community Center

- Parks and Recreation will make a formal presentation to Council describing the current status and results from stakeholder input

Reflections

To end the retreat, participants were each asked to share a brief statement (six words or less) that summarized their reflections on the retreat. These included:

- We all care – a lot of work
- Open conversations and achieving consensus
- Good information – positive and constructive
- Keep lines of communication open and positive
- Energized, optimistic, excited, teamwork, positive outcomes
- Organic consensus came from differing viewpoints
- Good – need more work on myself
- Successful first step
- Good – open communication with common goal
- Uplifting gathering, reflecting, respect to all
- Good stuff
- Let's stay focused on this
- Communicate, participate, and decision-make
- All here for a bright future
- Big decisions, be patient, walk cautiously
- Great start, follow through!

Council Member’s

City Model Reflection -2024

1.

Overall Assessment: Our city has grown to a point where the mayor's role, effectively a CEO role, should not be part time. I also believe the role as scripted has too much power for the good of a 43,000 population city, with a $100m budget. I believe that a switch to a Council Manager Model would promote more collaboration in Business Strategy Planning and Execution. This is not a reflection on the effort or performance of our current city officials and staff. I just feel we have a model that is not best for our city, especially for the future. I am concerned for our city if this much power were to be given to a future mayor who might not be city-centric.

Issue #	Charter Section No.	Charter Section	Issue	Concern	Potential Countermeasure
1	Section 3.05	Mayor Powers and Duties	Appointments to Boards and Commissions are done by the mayor.	Board/Commission assignments can be biased. Board members can be changed out because of their political alliances in an election year. Perception is that there is too much bias to the mayor's priorities.	Change approval/review roles of Board and Commission Members to Council or change form of government to Council Manager form where a City Manager reports to a 7 member Council
2	Section 3.07	Duties of Administrative Asst.	Key Duties like budget preparation, which is a result of priority setting coming from deep analysis, are prepared by the Administrator Assistant, subject to the authority of the Mayor, and then submitted late in the year for council approval.	The budget submission then is the priority of one elected official. And although it needs approved by council, there is so much work involved in it, and council joins at the last hour, that it lacks consensus-building or a collaborative approach.	Change form of government to Council Manager form where a City Manager reports to a 7 member Council
3	Section 3.08	Administrative Departments and Directors	Department Heads and Directors are appointed by the Mayor. The current priorities for the city are largely formulated by City Directors and approved by one elected official, a part time mayor. Every four years there is a heightened anxiety that there may be a shifting of priorities with a new mayor. Employees may feel obliged to publicly support the mayor through donations or yard signage. This cannot be good for staff and thus staff retention. Although there are checks and balances provided by a part time council, there is so much energy and work done ahead of council involvement, largely based on the prioritization by one elected official.	It would be better if the business priorities of the city were built with a more robust planning process and had more than just one person significantly influencing the priorities for our city.	Change form of government to Council Manager form where a City Manager reports to a 7 member Council

2. Disrupt the influence a single elected person has when the entire administration reports to this same single elected person.

3. Should Council be asked to sit in on all appointments to Directors, Commissions or Boards. Also, Council should have final say in who is confirmed.

   If we want to change the form of government, who are we going to sell it to the public?

4. Needs reviewed/updated to be more in line with the growth that we are experiencing here in Grove City.

   Although City Council currently can approve/disapprove the budget, number of employees/funding, legislation, etc., ultimately having one part-time elected person in charge of appointments to high level positions and commissions is not in the best interest of our community and lacks transparency of the process. Harter to terminate/discipline an elected official when job is not getting done. Creates too much conflict. Consensus should to the goal.

   Boards/Commissions – Restructure this process to accept applications from residents seems logical.

   Budget – Allow more involvement earlier in the process and also long-term process for planning purposes. Keep the City on track and not shift priorities, allows for a bigger picture to happen and not delayed.

   With a $100m operating budget, we need to operate more like a business with a business structure (TBD)

   Ultimately, I feel that a "Council-City Manager" government encourages community input into the political process, diffuses the power of special interests, and eliminates partisan politics from municipal hiring, firing and contracting decisions. The council-manager form encourages open communication between citizens and their government.

5.

Charter Section No.	**Charter Section**	**Concern**
Section 1.05	Form of Government	Although the Strong Mayor-Council-Administrative Assistant Plan is often described as a balance of power and I would agree that it may, in concept, be better than a strict Strong Mayor-Council government, there is clear evidence demonstrated by how this form of government actually functions in Grove City, that Council should consider giving voters the opportunity to choose the Council-Manager form. 1. A part-time elected official should not have undue influence over day-to-day operations. 2. City staff members should all be hired based on their background, education, knowledge and experience. No position in the city should be left to the discretion of a single elected official. No position other than the hiring of a professional City Manager should be left to the discretion of elected officials. 3. Politics should have no place in the business operations of the city. No staff member should be asked to make a political contribution or display a campaign yard sign. 4. City Council should be seen as a seven member body rather than "four votes".
Section 3.05	Mayor Powers and Duties	1. An elected official can be anyone with any background and may not be equipped to provide Chief Executive leadership nor to hear misdemeanor cases. 2. Appointments to Boards and Commissions should occur through a public facing process. The city should have a list of desired credentials for members of each body, should announce the positions up for renewal

		at the end of each term, and the seven member Council should vote to approve the members bought forth by the City Manager using this process. Article IV of the Charter should be amended to reflect this methodology. Additionally, no boards or commission member should be solicited for campaign contributions nor informed that their role is to vote in support of a single elected official. (We have nothing but untapped potential in our city of 42K+ residents, while we continue to fill seats at the pleasure of the Mayor.) 3. The budget process should be participatory. Our Charter gives Council the authority to "adopt the municipal tax budget and annual appropriation ordinance", but the budget is treated like something that belongs solely to the Mayor. This has opened a door for the budget to include grant dollars to keep supporters in line, to reward political allegiance, or to fulfill campaign promises. City staff members should all be hired based on their background, education, knowledge and experience
Section 3.06	Administrative Asst.	"The Administrative Assistant is under the supervision and direction of the Mayor" … and "serves at the pleasure of the Mayor." See my initial statement re: Forms of Gov't. (Section 1.05) This explains why there is truly no balance of power.
Section 3.08	Administrative Departments and Directors	"Each department shall be headed by a full-time or part-time director, appointed by the Mayor". See previous concern (Section 1.05). Also note that a City Manager model would approach hiring in a businesslike, merit-based fashion as compared to the appointment process, which leaves a door open for nepotism and political favors. 1. Organizational culture created by leadership entrusted to a part-time elected official. 2. Professional service contracts and employment tied to personal relationships versus benefit to the city. 3. Disruption of continuity inherent to the political process. Strategies planning suffers on all fronts. 4. Personalities may be destructive to the communication between city operations (staff) and city policy making (Council). 5. Council-Manager model allows for representative decision making, lessening the impact of special interests (developers, PACs, wealthy campaign donors, etc.)

6. Appointments of Committees

How department heads are selected.

How City Administrator is selected.

7. <u>Article III - The Mayor</u>

Section 3.01 - Election, Term

Term does not list a limit. Consider limit to number of terms able to be served by mayor

Consideration for Election: change from Mayor to City Manager. City Manager to be appointed by Council. Eliminate Mayor (Election) role from Charter.

Section 3.05 - Powers and Duties

Too many appointees allowed by the Mayor, without checks and balances. Could create a strong majority of influence.

Considerations - Council making appointments to boards and commissions.

Section 3.06 - 3.08

Adjustments to title of Administrative Assistant (of the Mayor) to City Manager, if form of Gov't is changed, to be concise with language and duties of said City Manager.

Article IV - Boards and Commissions

Section 4.05 - Qualifications

Consideration to update regarding how members are appointed as noted in the charter, if changed from Mayor to Council.

Article V - Finance

Section 5.05 Appropriation Ordinance

Adjustment to timing of annual appropriation ordinance to council, with an earlier date in July. Consideration of additional time for Council to prepare / bring additional goals forward for budget considerations.

Article VI - Taxation and Borrowing

(Where is it listed in the Charter about income tax of 2%?)

Consideration - to increase income tax allotment to 2.5% which is in alignment with other cities, including Columbus. Consideration to have the entire 0.5% increase dedicated to Parks and Rec for consideration of community center facilities and amenities.

Article VII - Nominations and Elections

Section 7.05 - Nominations

Remove language for sponsoring committee of five registered voters. (This is not adopted in most other cities around Franklin County and is confusing as Board of Elections defers to City Charter for explanation and no further details are included in standard directions from Board of Elections.)

Article IX - General Provisions

Section 9.04 - Amendments to the Charter

Consideration to date of 2031 and every ten years thereafter for a Charter Review Committee.
If a Charter change happens earlier, consideration to change this 2031 date. If the Form of Govt changes, consideration for appropriate date timeframe to review the charter, and update who would make these selections for committee members.

Throughout entire Charter - update any / all language that references “Councilman, Councilmen, or his” etc. that is gender-specific to be Council Member or their.

The special meeting of Council was called to order by President Houk at 5:30 p.m. in City Hall, 4035 Broadway – Lower Level.

Roll was called and the following members were present:

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

1. Ms. Houk began by thanking community members for their presence at the meeting. She believes this participation is key for Council Members to make good decisions for the community. She introduced Mr. Castle, the new Parks and Recreations Director. She also thanked the YMCA, PROS Consulting, and members of the Park Board for their presence. She asked Council to save their questions for the end of each presentation provided by PROS Consulting and the YMCA.

2. Mr. Leon Younger and Mr. Parnin, PROS Consulting, went through their slideshow presentation on the Community Center Feasibility Study findings. After reading through the presentation Council was asked to share any questions they had.

   Mr. Holt asked if guests of the Community Center would be residents, or if anyone was eligible. Mr. Parnin, PROS Consulting, explained that when they talk about guests in their presentation, it is in general, but if the City wanted, they could charge different fees for Grove City residents and non-residents.

   Mr. Berry asked if they had already done a study on the location. Mr. Parnin stated that they have only provided the City with site selection criteria and a scoring system thus far. Mr. Berry also asked if they have done a value proposition on whether one large facility or two smaller facilities is better. Mr. Parnin stated that most communities they have worked with focus on one feasibility study and facility rather than multiple.

   Ms. Anderson asked if the square footage of this facility would be enough to sustain the future. How do we know 88,000 square feet will be enough? Mr. Younger explained that the national average is - two square feet per population served. While considering the amount of people the YMCA can serve, Grove City should have enough space for residents and future generations.

   Ms. Burroughs asked if a Senior Center in the new community facility would be considered. Mr. Parnin stated that there is no designated Senior Center in their plan. He said that it is not about dedicating a space for one specific age group but maximizing the use of the space. Ms. Burroughs also stated that there are lots of people coming from outside of Grove City with memberships to these facilities. Mr. Younger stated that there is indeed a strong appetite from the community and will serve a bigger audience than just Grove City. He also suggested building a field house as well as a community facility to serve as many people as possible.

   Mr. Sigrist was apprehensive of the word fieldhouse and believed that it held stigma. Mr. Younger explained that a fieldhouse uses sport as an economic tool and serves a wider level of sports tourism and the community as a whole. He gave the example of Sports Ohio in Dublin.

   Mr. Holt asked if they had a full time equivalent or ratio by square foot. Mr. Younger said they will figure that out once the City nails down their wants. They are waiting for the City to approve the second part of their study.

3. Mr. Chad Frush, speaker for the YMCA, began their presentation on the Community Center discussion with impact stories, a 2023 Impact Report, and a Market Study. After reading through the presentation Council was asked to share any questions they had.

   Ms. Anderson asked if there was any current transportation for senior citizens to the YMCA. Mr. Hughes said that there is crossover with the Senior Center but currently there is no direct transportation besides the COTA+ system.

   Mr. Berry asked if they have discussed expanding the OSU Rehabilitation Center or if there are any other wellness programs that have looked at the YMCA for the building space. Mr. Frush explained that they have been in contact with OSU and they would like to explore the idea of expansion in Grove City. In terms of partnerships and programs, he said that they have begun other pilot programs with other YMCAs in Ohio and wants to bring them to Grove City.

   Ms. Burroughs asked if the Y has done a feasibility study themselves in terms of expansion in Grove City. Mr. Frush explained that the Market Study showed them a lot of information in terms of parking issues and overcrowding at certain times in the day because of the population they are serving.

   Mr. Holt asked how many employees they have that are part-time and full-time. Mr. Frush said that there are between 80-100 total employees and of those 8-10 are full-time employees. Mr. Berry asked if there a specific educational requirement for those full-time employees? Mr. Frush explained that education is related to the Department they work in.

   Mr. Dew asked if there was any possibility that the Y would get back into the Urbancrest community. The YMCA CEO explained that they would not. Trying to operate multiple facilities costs multiple dollars. Unfortunately, there was not enough of the population to do so.

   Ms. Anderson asked if other YMCAs in central Ohio have done expansions and if so, what it took for them to get there. Mr. Frush explained that yes there have been multiple expansions and the Market Study that was done for Grove City, they have done that for 6 other Ys as well. They are currently looking at a reinvestment strategy for their Association as a whole.

4. Ms. Houk opened the floor for roundtable discussion of both presentations. She began by recognizing the common thread of both presentations of evolution and what a fortunate position we as a city are in. She stated that she wants to keep the focus out of finance and see what the community as a whole wants.

   Mr. Berry asked how much land is needed for a new Community Center. Mr. Younger said around 10 acres of land will be needed. Mr. Berry also asked what types of pools they would put into the center. Mr. Younger explained there are 4 levels of pools; play water, lazy river/resistant water, warm water/therapy water, and cold water or competition/fitness water. Mr. Berry wants more than 9 lanes of exercise swimming.

   Ms. Zelenak, Park Board, brought up a point she heard in park land acquisition meetings, people want to ensure that we are not building this Center or expanding the YMCA by leveling park land that we currently have.

   Ms. Anderson stated that she wants the City to continue with the next steps and not stop. Mr. Sigrist agreed and doesn't want to see this issue put back on a shelf and forgotten about. Commitment to the community is key.

Mr. Berry worries that the northern part of the community may be left out. He is worried about the accessibility for all people. He wants to strategically place the Community Center to help all citizens.

Mayor Stage expressed that they will be moving to the next steps and wants to make sure that we have availability of infrastructure, parking, etc. Mr. Castle, Parks and Recreation Director, expressed that he is overwhelmed with joy that we are taking steps to get this done.

Ms. Houk asked how we can keep the lines of communication open. Council will eventually be asked to approve a concept plan and how to accomplish financially, so the more communication, the better off they will be. It is not about votes, it is about building consensus. She wants to set a time for regular reporting and work sessions. Mayor Stage suggested September. Ms. Houk agreed and stated that they would meet on a quarterly basis as of now. She let community members know that this item will be on the agenda for a Council meeting in September.

After a quick recess, Council came back for the second topic of the night regarding discussion of different forms of government.

Mayor Stage began the meeting by going through his presentation discussing our current form of government versus a City Manager form of government. Following the presentation Mayor Stage made two suggestions, bring the 5-year Capital Improvement Plan to Council as a resolution, as well as the 10-year Forecast to discuss in an open meeting; and create two new committees for Council, a human resources committee and a parks committee.

Ms. Houk stated that committees and committee chairs should line up with the workload. She stated that she does not believe that this aligns with the conversation at hand. She feels that what they are suggesting with this year's budget are things they have done before. She believes it is good to have discussion of the budget opposed to a resolution without discussion. She believes that part of the problem is not enough communication and education for Council members. She suggested implementing a formal process for grant dollars. She thinks it is better for four individuals to give out grant dollars in the City Manager form of government than one individual we currently have.

Mr. Berry said you have to give the executive branch some flexibility to sell their goods to Council to approve. Seven members of Council forces a compromise. You cannot control the Mayor, he wants Administration to bring Council on board to work together.

Ms. Anderson stated that this is all about growth and our growing city. She said other cities with a City Manager form of government still have a process. She asked how the current Mayor manages that process part-time. She brought up another common theme of appointments to Boards and Commissions. She said leaving their previous meeting they had three thoughts in mind which were City Manager, hybrid, or no change. From what she is hearing, they can get rid of no change due to lack of feedback.

Mayor Stage responded to the comment about the Mayor being part-time by explaining that this is set in the City Charter. They did not want the Mayor playing the role of City Administrator, the City Administrator is in charge. He said his door is always open for discussion of appointments and suggestions. Ms. Anderson asked if the City Administrator is in charge then why does the Mayor appoint all heads of departments, boards and commissions. Mayor Stage said that after appointments are made according to the Charter, the City Administrator is their boss.

Discussion ensued about certain caveats of both forms of government. Ms. Houk asked members what next steps they wish to take for this issue, understanding that the consensus is to exclude no change. Mr. Holt said there are positives and negatives to both, he asked if we should look at tweaking our current Charter. Ms. Houk decided that three of the most senior members of Council, Mr. Berry, Mr. Holt, and herself will read through the Charter and see what/if they can change things to move towards a hybrid or full City Manager form of government. They have thirty days to do so and will report back at the July 15th regular meeting of Council during caucus.

Adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

________________________________	________________________________
Shaina Rowe	Christine Houk
Asst. to Clerk of Council	President of Council

CITY OF GROVE CITY, OHIO

COUNCIL MINUTES

July 08, 2024 Special Meeting

The special meeting of Council was called to order by President Houk at 5:30 p.m. in City Hall, 4035 Broadway – Lower Level.

Roll was called and the following members were present:

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

1. Ms. Burroughs recognized Mr. Rauch and Ms. Shields, Dev. Dept., who shared slides about the development process – from the preliminary plan to the current development plan. Ms. Shields provided the historical background. She explained the two deviations recommended for the current development plan: 1. Allows Hawthorne Parkway to be 26 feet wide rather than 28 feet wide, so that the street will match the existing width of the street; 2. The other infringes on the setback so there can be more parking in the rear of the townhouses. However, the townhomes will still be 32 – 35 feet from Hawthorne Parkway. She also reviewed the Traffic Study that was evaluated by ODOT and Franklin County.

   Mr. Rauch explained that there will be a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) plan with two (2) components – one for Epcon and one for Ciminello. This will be a 30-year exemption on the improved value of the property only. The single-family lots have levies that are protected from a TIF, such as fire, EMS, library. This is also a non-school TIF. He then explained the infrastructure improvements that Epcon will complete; that Ciminello will complete, and that the City will complete - all of which will be coordinated together. It was also shared that every homeowner will pay the exact amount of property tax as if there was no TIF. The only difference is that some of the tax dollars are diverted to a fund to pay for the infrastructure improvements and only the City will be reimbursed for their cost in this Agreement.

   Ms. Burroughs expressed appreciation for the changes and lower density in the project. She shared concerns for the traffic issues, but feels they will be addressed through the TIF. She asked about a right turn lane into the development when traveling west. Mr. Rauch said the traffic study did not warrant it and noted that the study was conducted when the density was proposed to be higher.

   Mr. Berry asked if the Township will be contributing to the road improvements. Mayor Stage said no, not directly. He noted that one of the improvements the City would like to do as part of the TIF is North Borror Road, which is all in the Township. Mr. Boso, City Admin, pointed out that there are protected levies that will give the Township $4.5 million in revenue from this project. Non-protected levies will contribute about $5 million toward improvements to this area.

   Ms. Anderson asked about the age-targeted units and the effect that will have on the schools. Representatives from Epcon and Mr. Ciminello explained that they anticipate generating one (1) child in the age-targeted units. There are only 88 townhomes, so the impact should be low with these units. Mr. Holt noted that the School District will get $41 million more just by building this project.

   Mr. Sigrist asked what projects the City aspires to do with the TIF funds. He feels it would be beneficial to have them listed in the TIF agreement. Mr. Smith, Dir. of Law, said the TIF agreement is written broadly so it does not limit the projects that could be done with the TIF. Any project will come before Council for approval. He said the way it is written now is the best for the City. Adding an aspirational list could limit Council's ability to approve projects.

Ms. Houk said she believes it is important to have a public conversation about what types of projects may come from the TIF dollars. She reiterated that only the City will be reimbursed for their improvement costs from the TIF.

2. President Houk moved to the topic of Different Forms of Government. She explained that she, Mr. Berry and Mr. Holt met after the last work session to discuss Council's comments. She turned the floor over to Mr. Holt, who shared a Draft timeline of moving to a City Manager form of government by the end of the current mayoral term. He said one of the transitional pieces would be to form three new committees of Council to begin acting like a City Manager form; change the Rules of Council to accommodate these committees; and form a Charter Review Committee.

   Mr. Smith explained the Open Meetings Act, as it would pertain to these new committees regardless of the number of council members on them.

   Ms. Houk said that they sat down to discuss what could be tweaked in the Charter, but it became clear that changing the form of government could improve so many of their concerns. She said Mr. Holt put down their thoughts and drafted a hypothetical timeline of how this could get to a change.

   Council and Administration shared their thoughts on the Draft. Mayor Stage commented that a number of the suggestions could be implemented now. It was stated that this is not about current personnel – it's about what is the best form of government for a growing community. If the voters were to approve a change, the idea would be to transition at the end of the mayoral term.

   Mr. Berry asked if Council was in agreement with moving forward with a resolution to create a Charter Review Committee and adding the three new committees. All members shared their support for moving forward with these items.

Adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

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Tami K. Kelly, mmc	Christine Houk
Clerk of Council	President of Council