CITY OF GROVE CITY, OHIO

COUNCIL MINUTES

December 04, 2023 Regular Meeting

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

Roll was called and the following members were present:

Roby Schottke *Mark Sigrist* *Ted Berry* *Randy Holt* *Christine Houk*

1. Ms. Houk moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, as written; seconded by Mr. Schottke.

Mr. Schottke	Yes
Mr. Sigrist	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes

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

The Chair recognized Mr. Holt, Chairman of Finance, for discussion and voting under said Committee.

1. Ordinance C-47-23 (Appropriate $4,710.00 from the East Stringtown Road Tax Incremental Financing Fund and Reduce Appropriation Amounts for Various Funds) was given its first reading. Second reading and public hearing will be held on Dec. 18, 2023.

2. Review of the proposed ordinance to Make Appropriations for Current Expenses and Other expenditures for which the City of Grove City must provide during the twelve months ending December 31, 2024.

Mr. Holt reported that the Mayor gave the Council Members his proposed 2024 budget on Nov. 15. At the last Council Meeting, the Mayor and City Administrator provided an overview of that budget. Since then, Council has had time to review the submitted budget and submit questions for tonight's discussion. Council has the ability to gather additional information and make any changes if needed.

Council reviewed the budget in detail, page by page, and stopped to gather information where there was a question. Those questions submitted ahead of time were:

Pg. 4 A request was submitted to provide an overview of the manpower for the last four years including attrition percentage; headcount; etc.

Mr. Holt indicated that Mr. Turner handed out a spreadsheet to answer this question.

Mr. Sigrist said there is a natural elasticity in the budget, where you cannot hire someone on day one and say that is our headcount. Some of this shows that we are 22 under the headcount now. He feels it is important to understand our workforce and where we have high attrition. This should help us understand the work being done today by a workforce that is less than what is approved.

Pg. 11 What is the reason for the drastic decline in Recreation Development Fee.

Mr. Turner stated that this is a fee of $550.00 per unit for new housing. He said it is inconsistent due to the number of homes being built in the City and hard to predict. *Mr. Berry* asked how apartments are handled. Mr. Turner said each apartment is charged the same $550.00 fee.

Pg. 14 Why is there no money in the Brown's Farm TIF

Mr. Turner explained that the City has not received any money for this yet and money cannot be appropriated until it is received. *Mr. Sigrist* asked if the Improvements to Orders Road are tied to this TIF. Mr. Turner said yes.

What is the position description for the Deputy Clerk of Council position.

Mr. Holt stated that the job descriptions for the Clerk and Deputy Clerk were distributed to Council. This position was in the budget for half of last year and is being fully funded this year. He said there will be more discussion as Council moves forward with bringing this position to fruition. *Mr. Berry* commented that discussions will take place about this when the new Council Members come on board.

Pg. 17 Provide an explanation and justification for a second Deputy Administrator.

Mayor Stage explained that the first Deputy Administrator position was created in 2007 in order to create a hierarchy and the growth of the city. Today, he feels it is time to take the second step for basic good management and succession planning. Institutional knowledge needs to be passed on. The second reason is that the sale of the operation has increased with employees and residents. He said the workload has increased and believes a second person gives additional depth and the workload would be accomplished more timely. *Ms. Houk* asked if this is precipitated by needing to take things on by the City Administrator or other places. Mayor Stage said the mayor's position is not full time. He said with COVID, it was realized that the timeliness of getting things done was exposed and the sharing of knowledge. Ms. Houk said he finds it interesting that Council would not learn of this new position until the budget. She asked about leadership training and noted that the flow of knowledge should already be happening. She said she is trying to get a big picture view for this position. Mayor Stage said this is a different span of management than the training of how to manage people. *Mr. Sigrist* asked about the realignment of work and the succession plan. He asked if the number of deputy's would be reduced. He asked for justification and the workload analysis. Mayor Stage said they are being tactical at this point, not strategic. Council continued to share thoughts on this position and the Mayor noted that we are lower than any other community in manpower.

Pg. 27 Provide detail on increased expenses for Legal Counsel.

Mr. Smith, Dir. of Law, stated that this is for special projects and litigation driven issues. He said his retainer has not changed in years and is not for Frost, Brown Todd. It is for outside legal counsel for specific issues, if needed.

Pg. 29 Provide detail on additional Police Officer.

Mr. Teaford, Dir. of Safety, provided an overview for the need for police officers. He said they used a nationally recognized police model to guide their workforce requirements. He said they look at calls for service; response time; professional efforts and crime prevention. He said they want to be heavy on officers and light on police administrators. Having a window of 47 – 50 officers is their ideal window. The addition of one more officer would give them that window. He said they currently have 43 and are in the process of hiring more. He said they know they need to get better at recruitment and retention of officers. *Mr. Berry* said instead of fighting the number, they should accept the number. Meaning – you may have to hire 10 to keep the 7 needed. He said he would like to see more in the training class without funding more than 50 officers. *Mr. Boso*, City Admin., said the current budget funds 57 officers.

Pg. 31 Explain Background and KEY Program under Police.

Mr. Teaford said background investigations are now being outsourced, so a detective doesn't have to investigate a new employee and the workload is heavier for them now. The KEY Program replaces the DARE Program.

Pg. 33 Mr. Berry asked about the addition of a Dispatcher and if this would alleviate overtime.

Mr. Teaford said they feel the number of Dispatchers is good and have made changes to retain personnel.

Pg. 41 It was explained that there are no new employees being added to the Building Division. There is an existing position that needs to be filled.

Pg. 45 Explain the addition of a Facility Maintenance Technician.

Ms. Fitzpatrick, Dir. of Service, explained that the City contracted with Swim Safe to manage the Big Splash. There were problems with this service, so the Administration would like to bring back a city employee to handle the pool.

Pg. 52 Explain the addition of three (3) Sports Coordinators.

Ms. Conrad, Dir. of Parks & Rec., explained that Council authorized these positions in Chapter 161, and they are requesting funding. She said Grove City Kids Assoc. has asked that the city take over some of their programs; they would like to increase the adaptive programming like Buddy Ball; they would like to increase volunteer opportunities for adults and all ages.

Pg. 61 Explain the $180k reduction in Litter Program

Ms. Fitzpatrick explained the Litter Program and the costs. She said when they budgeted for this new program in 2023, they weren't sure of the cost. Now that they have a contract, they have budgeted for those costs.

Pg. 62 Explain Career Academy Program; provide disbursements and current lists of requirements for Higher Education Program; provide update on utilization and business partners.

Mr. Rauch, Dir. of Dev., explained the Career Academy partnership/program.
Mr. Holt provided information on the Higher Education Investment Program

Mr. Boso provided updates on COTA ridership. He noted that they have not been able to get business owners to assist with paying COTA for this service, but they continue to try.

Mr. Sigrist asked if there was any movement on weekend ridership. Mr. Boso said they are working on the new contract and it is on the list. *Mr. Berry* noted that he would like to see Senior Citizens ride for free.

Pg. 77 Provide update on Grant Program and Rev1/Cultivate agreement.

Mr. Rauch supplied a handout to Council on the Grant Program. He also provided information on the Rev1 contract, explaining that they lead the efforts to get entrepreneurs here and assist Cultivate.

Pg. 95 Provide fund disbursements for all visitors & convention bureau type partners.

Mr. Sigrist asked why there is such as drop in funding for each entity.
Mr. Boso explained that in 2022, there was a carryover balance from the last two months of 2021 that were not appropriated. Those funds were used in in 2023 and there is no carry-over for this budget cycle. In addition, there were some funds taken from Community Development last year and that fund is now depleted. The estimated amount of income for this area is $550,000 and this amount has been allocated to each entity with the same percentage used last year. *Ms. Houk* said she still feels there should be a grant program that each entity would apply for funding from and take the politics out of it.

3. Council reviewed the list of Capital Improvements.

The Sidewalk Program was discussed. Ms. Fitzpatrick said the Mayor would like to move toward a voluntary program – city wide. While this is being developed, they would like to continue to finish the area identified last year. *Mr. Sigrist* said he wants to see an Involuntary Program who have been sent letters but are not fixing their sidewalks. He said the Program needs teeth to accomplish compliance.

The Hawthorne Parkway Extension was discussed and Ms. Houk noted that this is the responsibility of Fisher Homes. She said as much as she wants to see this done, she feels it should be removed from the city's list until we have an agreement with Fisher Homes to guarantee reimbursement.

Pinnacle Park was discussed and Ms. Houk said it is hard for her to imagine that this money will get used. She said she wants to understand how the dollars will be used before appropriating them.

Mr. Berry stated that he wants to see and have input on some of these projects before Administration begins them. He said Council can either remove the appropriations from budget and appropriate them later when a plan is in place or leave in place if the Administration agrees to bring projects to Council before implementation.

Ms. Houk moved to remove $2m for Hawthorne Parkway Extension under Capital Improvements; seconded by Mr. Holt.

Mayor Stage stated that Hawthorne Park needs extended as there are safety issues. He said they have been successful in recouping monies from developers in the past. He said Pinnacle Park could be taken out of the budget. He said Fisher Homes would, essentially, be given a loan to get this much needed extension accomplished in a much quicker time frame or it can be done by assessment.

Ms. Houk said she would take the Administration at their word that they will get the money back from Fisher Homes and withdrew her motion; second withdrawn by Mr. Holt.

Mr. Berry moved to remove from Capital Improvements - Pinnacle TIF the $2m for the Pinnacle Park; seconded by Ms. Houk.

Mr. Sigrist	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Schottke	Yes

Mr. Berry asked that Council be given plans before moving forward with: Gantz Barn; turf at Town Center Park; Hawthorne Parkway Extension agreement; Babbert Way parking lots and courts; Windsor Park expansion; and Gantz Road Bridge. Mr. Boso took note.

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.

4. Mayor Stage reported that last weekend was incredible with the parade, tree lighting, Mistletoe Market, and Cram the Cruiser event.

He submitted the Mayor's Court monthly report and Mr. Berry moved to accept same; seconded by Mr. Schottke.

Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Schottke	Yes
Mr. Sigrist	Yes

5. After closing comments from Council and Administrative staff members, a motion to adjourn was approved by unanimous consent.

Adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

Tami K. Kelly

Tami K. Kelly, MMC
Clerk of Council

Ted A. Berry

Ted A. Berry
President

CITY OF GROVE CITY, OHIO
COUNCIL CAUCUS NOTES

December 04, 2023

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

Council Members reviewed the Agenda items.

Council retired to the Chambers to begin the Regular meeting.

Tami K. Kelly

Tami K. Kelly, MMC
Clerk of Council

Ted A. Berry
President of Council