# MINUTES
# OCTOBER 28, 2024
# COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
# 7:00 P.M.

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|---|---|
| Council Members in Attendance: | Beth Clodfelter<br>Micah McCarey<br>Jeff Risner<br>Solveig Spjeldnes<br>Alan Swank<br>Jessica Thomas<br>Michael Wood |
| Administrators and/or<br>Other Elected Officials: | President Crowl<br>Mayor Patterson<br>Auditor Hecht<br>Treasurer Thomas |

## **Items Discussed**:

- Credit Card Compliance Officer (appointment)
  -Thomas – provided a brief overview – duties include at least a quarterly review of the number of cards and accounts issued, the number of active cards and accounts issued, expiration dates and credit limits – this is a provision pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code – The City Auditor would like to appoint Jason Schroer to this voluntary position

  -Clodfelter – asked if the appointee would be working from the Auditor's office
  -Thomas – explained this is a non-City role

  -Auditor – noted that the Compliance Officer does not have a City credit card, nor will they have access to one

## ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Appointment

# MINUTES
# OCTOBER 28, 2024
# FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

| | |
|---|---|
| Members in Attendance: | Jeff Risner, Chair<br>Beth Clodfelter, Member<br>Micah McCarey, Member<br>Michael Wood, Member |
| Administrators and/or<br>Other Elected Officials: | President Crowl<br>Mayor Patterson<br>Auditor Hecht<br>Treasurer Thomas |

## ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia (ORCA agreement)
  -Mayor – shared that, under recently adopted bylaws, the annual membership fee is being changed to $1.00 for each resident of the City, based on current Census population data – this will be a substantial decrease from $90,000 to $24,673 for current year, 2024 – pointed out that Athens County will pay only for county residents who reside in the county, but outside the following paying members consisting of Athens City, Nelsonville City, Chauncey, Buchtel, and York Township

  -Auditor – believes the new payment structure of per capita is fair – however, the City signed an ORCA agreement five years ago, and again this year the Council approved an ordinance to pay $90,000, if the City's General Fund reserve balance is at 9% or higher – the Law Director has suggested repealing both these prior agreements, 0-110-19 and 0-45-24, and entering into a new agreement

  -Alan Swank, Townsend Place – asked about in-kind contributions in lieu of a cash payment
  -Mayor – in-kind contributions are designed for trailhead communities, those that have touch points with the physical trail, like the Villages of Chauncey and Buchtel and York Township, whose contributions are in-kind – the City of Athens does not touch the trail, so not sure what an in-kind contribution might look like

  -Clodfelter – asked how the decreasing membership fee will affect ORCA
  -Mayor – ORCA is slowly growing – the Executive Director is working closely with surrounding counties

  -Wood – noted that the Bailey's is a great asset and has improved these trailhead communities – this is an excellent example of what this kind of investment can do

  -McCarey – asked, after our 2024 payment is made, when the next payment would be made

-Mayor – indicated the 2025 payment and thereafter the payment will be due by the end of the first quarter of each calendar year

-President – asked whether the Auditor will be making a recommendation that the cash reserve balance be included as part of the new agreement
-Auditor – believes consideration of the cash reserve balance should continue
-Mayor – is in full agreement with the Auditor's concern regarding the City's future General Fund revenue

- Appropriations (for transfer to Medical Fund)
  -Risner – the committee members have received a list of the appropriations being requested

  -Auditor – earlier this year additional money ($300,000) was transferred into the Medical Fund from these Fund lines to cover a larger than expected January invoice for medical expenses – financial reports now indicate that some of these personnel lines need to be adjusted to meet year-end expenses

  -Clodfelter – asked if these transfers, tightening this year's budget even more, will lead to another cash flow concern next year
  -Auditor – that shouldn't happen – the City's Medical Fund was bolstered earlier this year by increasing the amount being transferred for each employe's medical coverage, and an additional percentage was added to the tax mix – this is another fund that needs to have a cash reserve balance of six (6) months of operating expenses on hand, which it didn't at the end of last year

- Mayor's 2024 Staffing Levels (amend to restructure)
  -Risner – this is a request to remove the position of Receptionist and to add an Executive Assistant (Mayor) in pay grade 3
  -Mayor – his Chief of Staff and Grants Administrator (Patricia Witmer) will be retiring at the end of this year – would like the Council to consider Suspension of the Rules in order to allow training of a new Executive Assistant which is critical – in 2025 the Grants Administrator position will be removed, and its responsibilities will be migrated to the various department heads that have ongoing grants, with an external third party source managing some of the grants, in particular, the complex Armory renovation – the Executive Assistant (SSD) will move to pay grade 4
  -McCarey – supports this overlap – institutional transference of knowledge and memory is important
  -Risner – agrees, the institutional memory is invaluable, and training should begin as early as possible

- 2025 Budget (appropriations)
  -Risner – the committee members have received a 2025 draft document, as well as past 2023 and 2024 budget information

  -Mayor – provided the attached graph

  -Alan Swank, Townsend Place – reported that the City's personnel costs from 2023 to 2024 went up 11.56% – the General Fund budget went up 11.44% – this year personnel costs fell to 10.81%, and the General Fund increase dropped to

7.41% -- questioned why the overall Fire budget increased 22.87% from this year to next, and Code Enforcement increased from 17.46% in the personnel line
-Mayor – there have been personnel changes in the Code Enforcement office – a Code Inspector has moved into the position of Assistant Code Director that came with a pay increase, but also created a vacant position that has been budgeted for 2025

-Auditor – aside from annual COLA raises increasing personnel costs, BWC costs have increased personnel lines, and a 3-year review of administrative (supports IT, computers and vehicles per department) and internal service (when General Fund services proprietary funds) costs added to the overall personnel line costs
-Clodfelter – asked if these costs, BWC and administrative and internal service costs will continue to increase annually
-Auditor – believes the BWC will continue to increase, however, the administrative and internal service costs are only reviewed every 2-3 years

-McCarey – asked how next year's budget reflects priorities expressed from the public, including ORCA commitment (recreation long-term goals), and recent requests from the Commission on Disabilities (infrastructure repairs to improve accessibility and funding of the small grants program that was previously in place)
-Mayor – cited numerous ADA improvements throughout the community since 2016, to include the construction of new sidewalk on East State Street (one of many sidewalks), a lift was installed on the first-floor stairs of the City Building leading to the Mayor's office, zero degree entry at our new pool facility, stamped brick concrete at the intersection of Court/Carpenter, Southside Park small tots ADA accessible play area, a $1.8 million grant received from ODOT for the construction of Citywide curb ramp repairs and construction, and the Uptown Improvement Project, that will include the correction of the Court/Union intersection with stamped brick concrete, making it ADA accessible – his Administration has been managing a lot of the present challenges and will continue to do so – audible crosswalks are critical (also part of the Uptown Improvement Project) and, looking forward, a Transition Plan – doing what we need and can do to make us the best accessible community that we can possibly be
-McCarey – would like clarification as to whether the City's accessibility grant supporting businesses as a match rate will be carried into the 2025 budget
-Mayor – has budgeted money into the line for the Commission on Disabilities, and the Commission can decide how they choose to use the funding

- 2025 Non-Union Compensation
  -Mayor – committee members received a spreadsheet noting the COLA increase that will be detailed in the legislation to be presented next week

- 2025 Non-Union Benefits
  -Risner – committee members received the highlighted changes that will be detailed in the legislation to be presented next week

- Public Defender (2025 contract)
  -Risner – this is an annual contract – the 2025 first half invoice amount is $49,877.52 – the second half amount is not known at this time – suggest

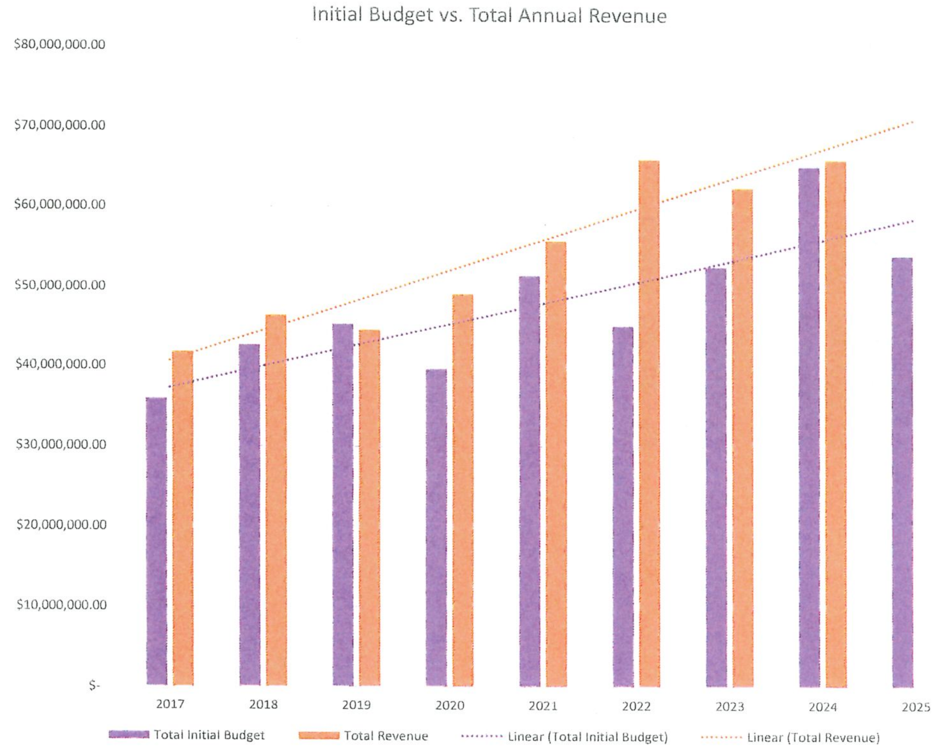
appropriating $120,000 for full year 2025 – indicated the cost of this State contract is split with the County

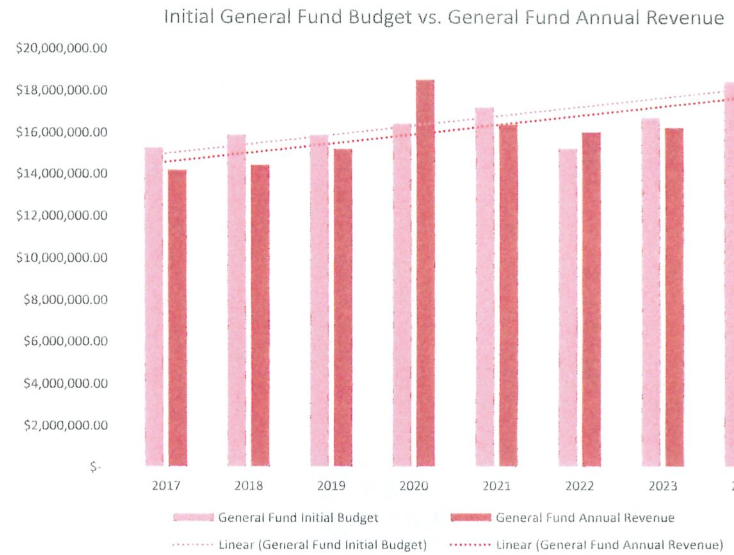
-McCarey – noted that the contract spreadsheet indicates there was no legislation required for 2024, as the amount was under $75,000 – clarified that next year legislation authorizing the contract will be necessary as it is above that amount

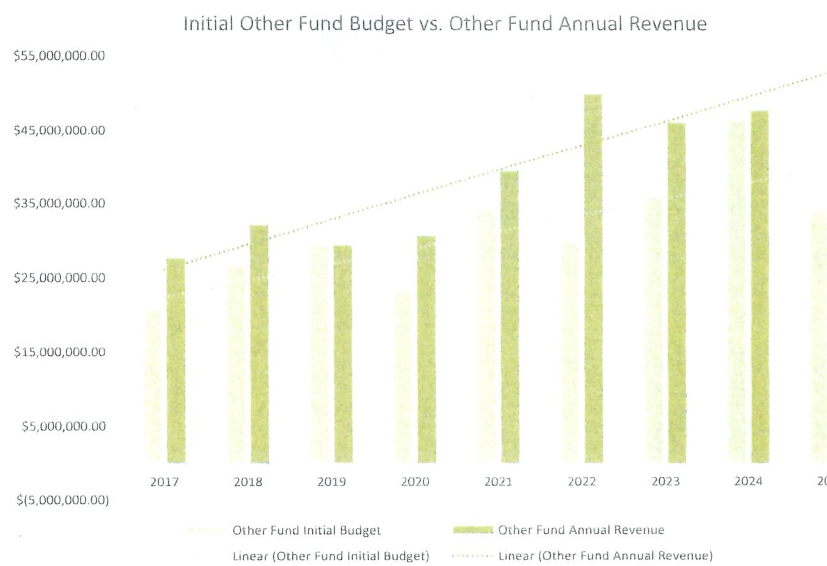
## ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. ORCA
2. Appropriations/Transfers
3. 2024 Mayor's Staffing Levels
4. 2025 Budget
5. 2025 Non-Union Compensation
6. 2025 Non-Union Benefits
7. Public Defender (2025 contract)

| Year | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| General Fund Initial Budget | $ 15,279,001.00 | $ 15,900,183.00 | $ 15,888,554.00 | $ 16,421,322.00 | $ 17,217,125.00 | $ 15,237,228.00 | $ 16,723,552.00 | $ 18,461,191.72 | $ 19,926,256.00 |
| Other Fund Initial Budget | $ 20,665,380.00 | $ 26,701,312.00 | $ 29,383,195.00 | $ 23,192,607.00 | $ 34,178,841.00 | $ 29,803,797.00 | $ 35,787,727.00 | $ 46,560,640.59 | $ 33,982,400.40 |
| Total Initial Budget | $ 35,944,381.00 | $ 42,601,495.00 | $ 45,271,749.00 | $ 39,613,929.00 | $ 51,395,966.00 | $ 45,041,025.00 | $ 52,511,279.00 | $ 65,021,832.31 | $ 53,908,656.40 |
| General Fund Annual Revenue | $ 14,173,178.00 | $ 14,423,085.00 | $ 15,205,353.00 | $ 18,513,336.00 | $ 16,383,957.00 | $ 16,027,504.00 | $ 16,245,387.19 | $ 18,181,018.48 | |
| Other Fund Annual Revenue | $ 27,549,111.00 | $ 31,983,591.00 | $ 29,305,907.00 | $ 30,552,405.00 | $ 39,311,436.00 | $ 49,886,683.00 | $ 46,077,170.93 | $ 47,691,690.94 | |
| Total Revenue | $ 41,722,289.00 | $ 46,406,676.00 | $ 44,511,260.00 | $ 49,065,741.00 | $ 55,695,393.00 | $ 65,914,187.00 | $ 62,322,558.12 | $ 65,872,709.42 | |



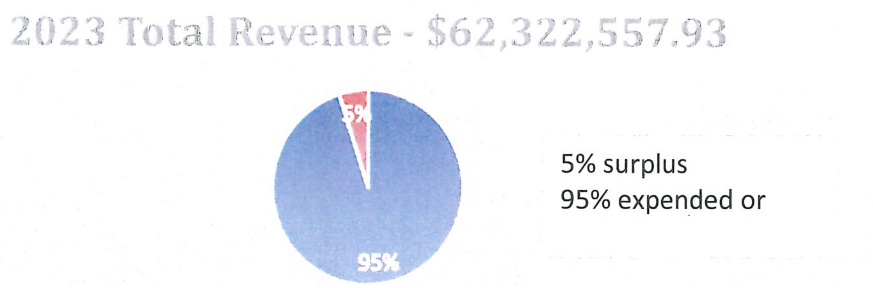




Notes and Assumptions:

2024 revenue is projection - shows current revenue after 8 months divided by 0.67
Other fund revenue includes bond and loan proceeds
Other fund budget includes debt payment appropriations
2020 General Fund revenue includes Cares Act Funding

| **EXAMPLE - 2023 Snapshot - last year with full year of data** | | |
|---|---|---|
| Revenue | $ | 62,322,557.93 |
| Revised appropriations | $ | 76,430,201.41 |
| Actual expenditures and year-end encumberences | $ | 67,057,808.80 |
| Deficit (note, year includes AFD HQ bond proceeds from previous year) | $ | (4,735,250.87) |
| Adjustment (previous year bond revenue included in 2023 exenditures and encumberences ) | $ | 8,200,000.00 |
| Surplus | $ | 3,464,749.13 |




<u>Some Expected Future Appropriations not included in annual budget:</u>

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Annual Paving | $600,000 | |
| SW sewer project | $10,000,000 | (note 0% interest loan) |
| Cols Rd. MUP | $1,000,000 | (grant) |
| Ramps/Walks citywide | $1,000,000 | |
| ACG Round 2 | $6,500,000 | (grant) |
| Columbus Rd. Liftstations | $2,000,000 | (partial grant) |
| SR682/SR56 Intersection | $3,200,000 | (partial grant) |
| Stimson Bridge | $3,500,000 | (grant) |

# MINUTES
# PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
# OCTOBER 28, 2024

| | |
|---|---|
| Members in Attendance: | Alan Swank, Chair<br>Solveig Spjeldnes, Member<br>Jessica Thomas, Member<br>Michael Wood, Member |
| Administrators and/or Other Elected Officials: | President Crowl<br>Mayor Patterson<br>Auditor Hecht<br>Treasurer Thomas |

**Items Discussed**:

- Permit fees for Accessory Energy System, and Roof-mounted Residential Solar, as per 0-16-23
  -Swank – the following fees will be added to City Code Title 1, effective January 1, 2025:

  23.03.11. Accessory structures and accessory energy systems
  - o (D) -- $100, plus $1.50 per thousand dollars of improvement or portion thereof
  - ■ this fee will align with the City's other structure improvement fees – will encourage roof mounted solar over ground solar installations as they are more problematic with their space utilization – these fee changes will collect more revenue for the high-end accessory structures, while not over-penalizing the small accessory structure improvements.

  23.03.12. Principal renewable energy systems
  - o (B) Permit Fees -- $150 for roof mounted residential solar
  - ■ this fee also includes inspection – with the SolSmart Platinum designation, the City is required to do post construction inspections of solar

  -The Mayor indicated that Athens will be one of the few cities in the nation that has achieved the SolSmart Platinum level to actively encourage solar in our residential neighborhoods and businesses

  -Jeff Risner, Carroll Road – asked if this would be an annual inspection or whether it is a one-time inspection
  -Swank – one-time post construction, unless there are modifications made to the project that would require a reinspection

## ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Title 1 Amend