

MINUTES
NOVEMBER 14, 2016
CITY & SAFETY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Members in Attendance: Kent Butler, Chair
Jennifer Cochran, Vice-Chair
Peter Kotses, Member

Other Council Members: Chris Fahl
Patrick McGee
Michele Papai
Jeff Risner

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Horan Moseley
Auditor Hecht

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Garbage & Recycling (fee structure)
 - Mayor – this was brought to his attention by the Auditor's office – looking at the fund balance, may want to consider reducing rates – exploring best way to move forward – considering reviewing expenditure/revenue in 2017 before making a decision, after installation of the new Big Belly garbage/recycling containers in the uptown area – would also like to look at the container size language – it is currently 30-gallons – that may be an antiquated volume
 - S-S Director – added that the City has not yet had a full year cycle of having two Solid Waste/Litter Control Officers being paid out of this fund
 - Fahl – citizens are used to having their fees increased – this shows that increased recycling and solid waste reduction efforts can save the City money that can then be passed along to its customers
 - Cochran – it would be a good move for the City to either reduce or even eliminate the recycling fee – goes along well with our commitment to zero waste and move to single-stream mixed recycling, as well as implementation of the new recycling carts – speaks to how much the City has been able to divert from the landfill
 - Mayor – agrees
 - Butler – need to reward those who are generating less waste

-McGee – suggested rental units are charged double the rate of owner-occupied units – would like the Administration to review equalizing that fee

-Mayor – will review

-Papai – need to look at occupancy of rental units, and consider making more equitable

-Butler – appreciates the Administration's consideration in possibly lowering customer fees

- Resolution to Reduce Single-Use Bag Waste

-Cochran – this issue goes along with the City's interest to promote recycling, and reducing waste output by diverting waste away from landfills – this resolution is being introduced as a compromise to the ordinance that proposed a fee for purchasing single-use bags at the time of purchase – this resolution offers some preliminary work that will promote recycling even more, promote the use of reusables in our stores and in our community, encourage retailers to provide incentives to customers who bring in their reusable bags and return their bags for recycling, and support our local efforts to increase our recycling rates for these products – the Resolution also puts forward collecting data on usage and the recycling of single-use bags in the community, both at curbside and in our retail establishments that provide outlets for recycling – this resolution has been reviewed by the Athens Environmental and Sustainability Commission as well as a group of community stakeholders who have gathered on a somewhat regular basis over the last couple of years to talk about this issue in our community that includes representatives from our retail community, the City, Athens Area Chamber of Commerce, and Rural Action (City is signatory to the Zero Waste Plan) – this is a good step forward to help us reduce our environmental footprint

-Fahl – commends Cochran on her follow-through with this issue – it's important, and any steps put forward will be helpful

-Papai – also appreciates her effort – this is a difficult and controversial issue, but important and the right thing to do – believes this is an excellent compromise

-McGee – important move – good to see measures taken toward environmental reform

-Papai – is pleased that plastic bags are now being accepted by our curbside recycling program

-Mayor – need to be sure the plastic bags are loose (not all tied up together), so the MRF's blowers can move them through the system

-Fahl – would be nice to have a presentation on how the MRF works – possibly offer a video that can be broadcast on The Government Channel

-S-S Director – asked about the metrics component in the Resolution
-Cochran – the metrics will be a collaborative effort of organizations such as the City's Environmental & Sustainability Commission as well as Keep Athens Beautiful to get that data from both the retail community and the recycling side

-Mayor – requested this be a 3-reading resolution

-Cochran – pointed out that this is all voluntary action, encouraging behaviors – no mandates

-Butler – added, this resolution will be legally non-binding – was recently shopping in a Kroger in Circleville, Ohio and they incentivize customers who bring in their own reusable bags with a \$.10 rebate on their purchase

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Single-Use Bag Resolution

MINUTES
NOVEMBER 14, 2016
7:00 P.M.

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Members in Attendance: Jeff Risner, Chair
Chris Fahl, Vice-Chair
Kent Butler, Member

Other Council Members: Jennifer Cochran
Peter Kotses
Patrick McGee
Michele Papai

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Horan Moseley
Auditor Hecht

Items Discussed:

- Municipal Pool Bond (presenter – Mike Burns)
 - Mike Burns, Bond Underwriter, Robert W. Baird Investment Banking Firm – shared bond rating analysis (see attached), similar to personal credit score – Mayor and Auditor’s impressive presentation to Moody’s in Chicago added a lot of value – due to excellent management, the City was able to maintain an (Aa2) high quality rating – through insight and knowledge, the City’s team felt it imperative to move forward quickly in selling the bonds – timing in the bond market is important, (see attached AAA MMD tax exempt bond index) – interest rates normally go up after a Presidential election, and it did go up – the City saved almost a half a percent
 - President – questioned how often the City needs to go through this bond rating analysis
 - Burns – City of Athens is very conservative, explores all options, and debt limit is low for the size of the City – is not concerned that the City’s bond rating would go down taking on additional debt – noted that bond ratings can change at any time
- 2017 Budget
 - Mayor – is an ongoing process, on track for presenting to Council no later than December 5th – current YTD Fund Report (see attached) – General Fund in good shape for 2017 carryover – 2015 and 2016 Income Tax Projections (see attached)

-Auditor – explained that major projects can inflate the general revenue, i.e. WWTP improvements and pool construction – she doesn't expect the budget to change drastically outside of the bigger projects

- 2017 Staffing

-Mayor – will be changing some of the part-time, seasonal positions from “as needed” to a fixed number (see attached) – helpful in budgeting

- 2017 Non-Union Compensation

-Mayor – requested a 2% cost of living increase

- 2017 Non-Union Benefits

-Auditor – will review changes with HR Director – would like to include a flex time policy for those exempt from earning overtime and compensatory time – time should be tracked – checks and balances are important

-Papai – noted the salary base increasing from approximately \$23,000 to \$47,000 for exempt employees, effective January 1, 2017, and asked how that will affect the City with regard to paying overtime

-Auditor – it's a huge jump, with more employees qualifying in that exempt status – not sure financially how that will affect the non-union employees, though they do need to know whether or not they will now qualify for that exempt status

-Cochran – asked if the City is considering changing classifications to meet the minimum salary threshold in order to reduce the liability of incurring increased overtime costs

-S-S Director – the newly approved non-union employee compensation plan, effective July 1, of this year is in compliance – doesn't foresee any needed changes, but will do one last check – HR Director has been tasked with coming up with a best practice flex time policy

- 2017 (reallocation of income tax)

-Mayor – considering amending 0-127-12 with a slight change in the distribution due to the recent income tax increase – decreasing the General Fund from 73% to 72%; increasing the Street Fund from 19% to 20% in order to enhance street repairs – may reduce the Recreation Fund by a quarter or half a percent, and adding the Community Center Fund to receive the agreed upon percentage

-Auditor – income tax revenue from the recently approved recreation levy covers more than just the municipal pool – revenue in this new debt fund is much higher than was projected in the beginning of the year (see attached income tax receipts) – as funds are needed for various projects covered by the levy, the money can be moved out of the Debt Fund, 450, and into the

Recreation/Community Center Funds, per City Council transfer approval

- 2017 BWC (payment schedule)
 - Auditor – we are part of a group rating and have received rebates for as much as \$100,000 last year – earlier this year a check was received for \$40,000+ -- these rebates are appropriated and encumbered, and used for our BWC payments – just received another check for about \$49,000, and she is requesting Council appropriate it – would like to make semi-annual payments next year – the premium for the year is approximately \$435,000, with the first payment due on January 3rd and the second one in July
- 2017 Medical Insurance
 - S-S Director – the City hired EBS as a benefit broker earlier this year to assist the City through this process – City is not satisfied with current TPA – can save as much as \$1,000,000 moving to a new third party administrator
 - Auditor – agrees with changing the City's TPA – open enrollment period is upon us and any change will require immediate Council action
 - S-S Director – the City can stay with the current TPA at a projected maximum cost of \$3.8 million this year to \$5.8 million next year, or Council can expedite the process for hiring a new TPA at an approximate cost of \$3.92 million next year – stop-loss will remain at \$110,000 per individual
 - Mayor – EBS has identified savings to the City and our employees
- Tax Credit Change
 - Mayor – this change would affect those who work in the City, but live outside the City – for tax year 2016 the credit cannot exceed 1% of the income subject to the tax of another municipality – that will change in 2017 to 1.25% due to the City's recent .20 increase in income tax next year
 - Auditor – this is a goodwill gesture for those who may be paying taxes in two places
- Appropriations
 - Mayor – requested \$10,000 to widen the driveway to provide accessibility to the City's MHA house at 7055 N. Blackburn Road
 - Auditor – requested the \$7.3 million pool bond money be appropriated to be encumbered for the pool

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Appropriations
2. TPA
3. Stop-Loss
4. Tax Credit

MINUTES
NOVEMBER 14, 2016

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Members in Attendance: Chris Fahl, Chair
Jeff Risner, Member
Patrick McGee, Member

Other Council Members: Kent Butler
Jennifer Cochran
Peter Kotses
Michele Papai

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Horan Moseley
Auditor Hecht

Items Discussed:

- Athens Economic Development Council (presentation)
 - Sara Marrs-Maxfield, Executive Director – presented the attached report

-Butler – curious about what might be out there in the realm of high-tech positions and/or EDC's focus on retaining our highly educated, young populace

-Marrs-Maxfield – there is a lot of talent that would like to stay in Athens – there are challenges to capitalize on that opportunity – Young Athens Professionals was implemented to network jobs, housing information, etc. – she is working with Council Member Papai on affordable housing for professionals with young families – smaller emerging companies they are working with want to stay here if they can find a suitable location with needed infrastructure

Mayor – appreciates EDC's work; it takes a lot of time and energy

- Canaanville Property (sludge land update)
 - S-S Director – City would like to sell the current land as no longer needed for a municipal purpose – the soil is too rich – would like to advertise for sale by sealed bids, and to accept the highest and best bid, with consideration given to monetary remuneration and/or transfer or exchange of other desirable property suitable for sludge disposal, or no bid at all – eventual disposition of the property will be reported back to Council

-Mayor – only other alternative is to belt press our sludge to remove the water and then haul it to the landfill – downsides are increasing the landfill area, and it is very expensive

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. EDC
2. Sludge Land

MINUTES

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE NOVEMBER 14, 2016

Members in Attendance: Michele Papai, Chair
Jennifer Cochran, Vice-Chair
Peter Kotses, Member

Other Council Members: Kent Butler
Chris Fahl
Patrick McGee
Jeff Risner

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Horan Moseley
Auditor Hecht

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Complete Streets Workshop (report – Kotses)
 - Kotses – recently attended a day-long workshop, sponsored by the City-County Health Department, and presided over by the Toole Design Group, a national planning and engineering firm that specializes in multi-modal transportation, vehicles, mass transit buses, bicycles and pedestrians – most current streets were designed in the 1940's and 1950's – for the most part, it works okay – a complete street doesn't take additional space – it looks at the population, how they're interfacing with the street, and re-categorizes the street in terms of its usage today and into the future – the City of Athens is well ahead of the curve compared to a lot of other cities – commends the Administration on working toward complete street projects – sometimes they don't require massive infrastructure, but only paint – complete streets can provide big benefit to users, increase property values, and businesses thrive

- Mayor – noted that the plans for East State Street are for “complete street” improvements

- Kotses –a complete street delineates, designates, and makes sure that everything operates in a safer fashion, speeds go down, and risk is reduced

- Small Vehicle Legislation (update)
 - Mayor – Police Chief Pyle feels that you can always enhance the ORC; you cannot reduce the legislation – after January 1st, if City Council would like to put forward legislation that would affect low-speed vehicles, it can still be done
 - S-S Director – Ohio University does not plan to operate any low-speed vehicles – will request corrective legislative action if needed
 - Papai – so, the Chief does not think it is necessary for Council to be proactive in approving legislation this year
 - S-S Director – that is correct; he is still reviewing it, but any requested changes can be made after January 1st
- Parking Permits (near uptown neighborhoods)
 - Papai – Law Director reviewed the Oxford legislation (a Charter City) as well as legislation from Port Clinton (a Statutory City in Ohio)
 - Joan Kraynanski, West Side Neighborhood Association – one of the Law Director's concerns was the penalty – feels it should not be a minor misdemeanor, but simply a parking violation with an associated fee – Kraynanski pointed out that this legislation will not exempt non-residents from parking on certain streets, but will offer a permit system to exempt residents' vehicles from the 24-hour continuous parking enforcement – enforcement should continue on these streets in order to limit storage parking by non-residents
 - Papai – pointed out that there are other alternatives now for long-term parking, i.e. the Athens County Fairgrounds and parking lots that didn't exist some years ago
 - Fahl – is concerned with equality – needs to be sound reasoning in establishing the permit area
 - Papai – agrees that the problem seems to be in the older parts of the City where houses are close and off-street parking is very limited or even non-existent
 - Fahl – administrative process needs to establish fair criteria
 - McGee – expressed concern with having an unlimited parking permit – it would allow residents to “store” their vehicles on the street and never have to move them

- Kraynanski – clarified that this permit system is not for convenience, but for hardship – possibly an enforcement officer could come up with a system for a longer period than 24-hours
- S-S Director – commented that allowances are made, via a hangtag, for medical issues
- Kraynanski – most residents are not aware that hangtags are available for illness or for residents who will be out of town

- Butler – doesn't believe this is an overly complicated issue – there are permit systems that are working in other communities – could start with a pilot program and analyze the data after a certain time period and make changes, if needed

- S-S Director – feels a survey should be conducted before proceeding with a permit program, as well as holding a public forum – the City Planner is working toward neighborhood planning as part of updating our Comprehensive Plan – this could be a good venue for fleshing out this program

- Papai – pilot could take place of a survey – will discuss further with the Law Director

- McKinley/Stimson (authorization and LPA agreement)
 - Papai – legislation is needed to move forward with the funding stream and approval of acquisition and construction

 - Fahl – questioned whether the acquisition will impact the adjacent house
 - Mayor – it would not – added, the new alignment will correct line of sight issues near Sonic

- Holiday Parking (Municipal Garage)
 - S-S Director – the request for free parking has been requested by AUBA only for their event dates – same as last year

 - Mayor – kickoff event is Thursday, December 1st, the annual holiday tree lighting

- Holiday Parking (Continuous on Street)
 - Papai – suspend 24-hour parking over the holidays – December 12th through January 1st

- Between the Bridges (0-34-16)
 - Papai – need to increase funding to add conduit
 - Mayor – there is also about a \$12,000 cost that will be paid to the contractor for line installation that will then be reimbursed to the City by AEP
- Pedestrian Crosswalk (underneath Richland Avenue)
 - Papai – safety enhancement grant has been received
 - Mayor – this will be a 2018-19 project – cost is estimated at approximately \$2.2 million

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. McKinley Avenue
2. Holiday Parking (garage)
3. Holiday Parking (continuous)
4. Between the Bridges (amend)