

UHRICHSVILLE CITY COUNCIL
Thursday, May 28, 2020

Council President Robert Cottrell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL showed the following members present: Mr. Zucal-yes; Mr. Baker-yes; Mr. Miller-yes; Mr. Harmon-yes; Ms. Myers-yes; Mr. Huff-yes; Mr. Fox-yes.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council Clerk Trisha Addison.

Council President Robert Cottrell asked for a motion to accept the Council Meeting Minutes from May 14, 2020. A motion was made by Mr. Harmon, seconded by Ms. Myers. ROLL CALL: Mr. Harmon-yes; Ms. Myers-yes; Mr. Huff-yes; Mr. Fox-yes; Mr. Zucal-yes; Mr. Baker-yes; Mr. Miller-yes.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Mayor Mark Haney:

- Met today with Erin Wright and Jessica from ODOT regarding potential projects for the City and availability of funding. We will be looking to apply for a Small City Grant and applications are due by June 15. Small City Grant pays 95% of construction related fees. Funding would be available in July of 2023. Council would have to make a decision on submitted projects. Looked at a couple. Drove McCauley Drive and took photos regarding potential pedestrian access. We would apply for an ODOT Transportation Alternative Program also known as the TAP Grant. ODOT and Thrasher thought this was a doable project. We would have to get with ODOT to reduce the speed limit from McCauley Drive to the City to 35 mph. We had pictures of people walking, biking and someone even on a motorized wheelchair. We consider this an unsafe area. Another grant that we discussed was the Economic Development Administration Grant, otherwise known as the EDA Grant for North Wardell. So, you know, US Well Services is there and the road is bad. Through the EDA Grant, we could get with the owner of the property and they could prove there is a loss of business that helps us. This would be an opportunity to attract another business through the EDA Grant. We also looked at Trenton Avenue through the Small Cities Program. We have talked about doing Trenton Avenue just like we did N. Water Street and that is a possible project we looked at.
- Issues that we are running into: Swimming pools, high grass, grass clippings being blown into the street, junk vehicles. Had a meeting last night with Council President and Law Director and we discussed some of these items. I am going to ask the police department to start issuing PIN notices and to file charges without going through us. They have the ability to do that and can issue the criminal charges. I saw a lot of signs in the curb strips which we have an Ordinance on.
- Street sweeper is back, but not fixed. It is at DJ Weld with a 4" crack in the hydraulic tank. Dwight is grinding it and fixing it. Everything else is fixed and Dwight should have it back in a week. We have a lot of catch basins that need cleaned out.
- The trailers are gone from the Goodrich property. There are a couple more issues there and hopefully that will be done.
- Circle K was discussed last night and JJ was instructed to send them another letter. They were to grind part of N. Water Street and grind part of E. 11th and they have not honored their obligation. Their contractor told us they would do it and now their contractor is offsite and the only person we can go after is Circle K. In the future on these projects we need something in writing and not have hand shake deals. We need a road usage agreement.

- Lots for sale – we are going to start gathering a list of City properties that we can get rid of. We looked at 501 Holiday Avenue and we have it in the Court system. We are going to mow the grass because one of our police cruisers almost hit a car coming out because they couldn't see. The lot is on the corner of Holiday and Wilcoxon and the owners owe around \$18,000.00 in back taxes. We need to sell some properties and we have money in the Land Reutilization Fund, \$7,500.00. Any money we make would go into that fund. Mr. Harmon has given the Mayor a list of teardown properties which will be reviewed. It was suggested that we use Thrasher to administer this, and he will talk to Erin Wright.
- The mobile home ordinance should be looked at and update the manufacture years, if possible.
- Charles Meese would like to vacate an alley at 215 W. 11th that runs between two houses he owns and goes to the Stillwater Creek. His attorney is Mike Johnson and the Mayor will talk to JJ about it with approval from Council to start that process.
- Everyone received an email regarding closing the Uhrichsville Water Park for the season, which wasn't an easy decision. It's not even a financial issue, it's more of a safety issue for our people. They employees couldn't be in the break room, the food service people were in too small an area, shutting down the slides and playground area, 159 people allowed, we would have to hire more people to run it based on social distancing. They are telling us to social distance in the water and on the deck. I wanted to see it open, but I think it's the best decision for the City and for the employees that work there. It hurts to know that a lot of high school students won't have jobs this summer because of that, but we have to look at the bottom line.
- I have an estimate to fix the fountain. I was told that we had fixed the fountain last year, and that the pump was all that was wrong. There is way more than that, we have a lot of electrical issues. Larry Wood and Keith Pittis looked at it to move the electrical box above ground and put a backup sump pump in, and we are looking at around \$15,000.00 to fix. I have reached out to my friends at the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers to see if they might donate some of that work or some of that money since we are using the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers to do the work and am waiting to hear back. Thinks Larry Wood is giving a fair price compared to a price of \$30,000.00 that was previously given. We need to fix it.
- Mr. Miller told Mayor Haney he is for residents taking care of their property, but felt there is a couple places owned by the City that we need to address. There is a property as you are going up S. Water on the right that the grass is high. Mayor Haney doesn't believe that is our property, but will look into. The property going across Rod Smith's up the hill where the house was torn down. The Court has been mowing. Mr. Haney said it's just like N. Water Street Ext., we haven't been able to do it because he found that the boom mower has been broken for a year. The Mayor will add it to the list and send them up there.
- Called the State Representative Hillyer's Office to discuss a couple of things and he was good enough to send us a flag that flew over the State House. Thanked State Representative Brett Hillyer for sending that along with a certificate. It has not been put up yet, bet we did get all the other flags put up.
- Eastport Avenue Phase II project is finished other than the walk through. They hydroseeded and the striping was done. There are a couple spots that we will have to profile, a spot at E. 11th, and a couple spots at Uhrich. Our guys finished the curbs. It was a good project. We talked to ODOT this week about the Eastport Phase II funding and I have an email that they are reviewing all of the breakdowns to make sure that we didn't pay for something that we shouldn't have. Mayor Haney appreciates everyone's patience on the project, because it has been a long project.
- A motion to apply for the Small City Grant was made by Mr. Zucal, seconded by Mr. Huff. ROLL CALL: Mr. Zucal-yes; Mr. Huff-yes; Mr. Baker-yes; Mr. Miller-yes; Mr. Harmon-yes; Ms. Myers-yes; Mr. Fox-yes.
- Mr. Harmon said he fully agrees with Ron and his great comments. He fully commends the administration on really grappling this blight problem. It's more than just a demolition issue. It's also an enforcement issue. He is very glad to hear that we will producing PIN notices and

thanked the Mayor for getting the Goodrich property taken care of. That has been an ongoing issue since his first year on Council. A lot of residents in that area deserve satisfaction. On April 11, 2019 he wrote a letter and sent it to the administration about the Goodrich property and it is music to his ears that this is finally being taken care of and there is finally some result to it.

- On the Small Cities Grant, Ms. Myers asked if a certain amount was applied for or if you tell them a project you'd like to do. Mayor Haney said you tell them a project and the scope of the project. 95% is a pretty good amount to get. Ms. Myers asked if he had an estimate on the projects and he does not at this point. We will keep looking for funding, even if it is to pave or do sidewalks. Ms. Myers asked how much was spent on the street sweeper so far. Mayor Haney said about \$15,000.00.
- Mr. Fox asked about the Eastport Project. Is there any way the City could look into stop signs at Maple and Eastport because it is the halfway point and would slow traffic down? Mayor Haney talked to Belle about speed limit signs. Mr. Fox would like to see a blinker sign like on N. Water. People fly up and down Eastport. Mayor Haney said the blinker signs aren't worth the money spent on them. Mr. Fox said even a regular sign would do. Mayor Haney said it is up to the discretion of the City Services Director. He has instructed the police department to watch Eastport Avenue. There is only one speed limit sign and the Mayor agreed there needs to be more and that was discussed. He will look into the stop sign issue. If he had his way he'd take the blinking stop sign out at N. Water Street and put regular ones in or do away with it completely. Too many people run them. He felt the stop signs on Uhrich and Main created a bottleneck. Ms. Myers said there wasn't enough traffic there to create a bottleneck and she would not take out the stop signs at N. Water Street.
- Council President asked the Mayor if he had talked to Jeff Galbreath about a tree that they had discussed and Mayor Haney said it is on the list.
- Mr. Harmon talked to a member of the Moose about the problem at the entrance of their parking lot. Mayor Haney said they have estimates for catch basins. There is a plan to replace catch basins before paving and that is the last one on the list because the streets that are paving take priority. There are also estimates for catch basins on Orchard Street, E. 8th Street, and another. Council President Cottrell said there was a meeting with Belle and Jeff said they had the materials to do it and the whole driveway is being wiped out. Mr. Haney said they are getting price comparisons to whether our crew should do it. Council President Cottrell said since it is a business in town he feels the Mayor should look at it.
- Mr. Harmon had a call from a resident on Memorial Day regarding the park pavilions. There are kids riding their bikes and doing things they shouldn't there. The resident suggested we could put tables where the ramp is on the pavilion to keep them from riding their bikes there. Mayor Haney said most of the park pavilions are rented and they can be used with social distance and they will probably move the tables.

City Services Director Belle Everett:

- Absent.

Law Director James J. Ong:

- Absent.

Auditor, Julie Pearch:

- Audit is ongoing.
- Monitoring finances. We are seeing a loss in revenue. The big turnaround will be in July when everyone pays their individual taxes. Just in individual filings, it was down \$15,000.00 for April.
- As a resident of N. Water Street, loves the stop sign on N. Water Street and would hate to see those taken out because of the speeding issue.

- Hinkle General Accounting has been filed on the web and has been filed on the Hinkle system She will be meeting with them.
- Asked the Mayor if they will be billing for recent work and the Mayor didn't believe so at this time, but will find out. She said there is \$10,000.00 allocated for General Engineering so let her know.
- We need to monitor finances. She is doing weekly reports with Judd and department heads about money that is budgeted and what is left on their line items, and what they have on Purchase Orders. At this point you cannot go over the line items. That's why she wants a meeting. We will have to look at what might be in the red. Insurance will definitely be in the red so we will have to find money.
- Mr. Fox asked what cuts have been made or will be made. Auditor Pearch said spending has been cut. She has looked at blanket orders and canceled a few of them. The biggest concern is the General Fund. That is where all police and fire salaries come out of and general operating expenses. We cut items on items that are ordered and asked them not to order things that weren't needed. In two months if the revenue is not coming in you are going to have to look at other things. We've had to raise insurance. We've had to raise Officer Hickman's salary because of K-9 comp time. If he's off that will generate more overtime. We have the money in there for the COPS Grant that we allocated, but we don't know if that is going to come through. She asked if OWDA has their funding in order? Mayor Haney didn't know. She is still making payments to OWDA. OWTA is in limbo.
- Mr. Fox asked about the posting of the Mayor's Secretary. Mayor Haney said they have narrowed the applicants to three possible candidates. Brenda Seibert is on salary and is helping out in the evenings. The plan is to use her through the pandemic in any capacity. She was at the water park recently reviewing pavilion rentals. She will be used in different spots to help out. There are a couple candidates and a lot depend on what happens at Claymont because they'd like to hire someone that lost their job and needs a job. There were 20 some applicants. He has recently interviewed a candidate.

Treasurer, Bob Michels:

- Absent.

Correspondence:

- Received a letter from Ohio Department of Natural Resources regarding a past due Surface Application Annual Report that was due on April 14, 2020. Mayor Haney offered to sign the form and validate that no brine was used.

Committee Reports

Mr. Fox – Nothing to report.

Mr. Huff – Nothing to report.

Ms. Myers- Council was emailed copies of the Finance Committee Minutes of May 9, 2020 and May 26, 2020. A Motion was made by Mr. Fox to approve the Finance Committee Minutes of May 9, 2020, seconded by Mr. Miller. ROLL CALL: Mr. Fox-yes; Mr. Miller-yes; Mr. Zucal-yes; Mr. Baker-yes; Mr. Harmon-yes; Ms. Myers-yes; Mr. Huff-yes. A Motion was made by Mr. Huff to approve the Finance Committee Minutes of May 26, 2020, seconded by Mr. Miller. ROLL CALL: Mr. Huff-yes; Mr. Miller-yes; Mr. Fox-yes; Mr. Zucal-yes; Mr. Baker-yes; Mr. Harmon-yes; Ms. Myers-yes. The next Finance Committee meeting is June 10, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in council chambers.

Mr. Harmon – Economic Development Committee will meet June 4, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in council chambers.

Mr. Miller – Nothing to report.

Mr. Baker- Nothing to report.

Mr. Zucal – Nothing to report.

Old Business:

Mr. Fox – Mayor Haney has addressed that the police department will be issuing PIN notices for properties. There are several properties in his neighborhood around Eastport that are bad. The Elks lot behind needs maintained and addressed. He had not realized how many vacant buildings were in downtown Uhrichsville. There are 18 places vacant downtown with four or five vacant at McCauley Drive. Feels the City needs to look into the landlords that own the buildings and try to get more things accomplished downtown. As a committee it should be looked into and work with the revitalization program. Mr. Haney said it has been addressed and a person has bought three buildings in the City recently. They bought the old building across from the Freightstation, they bought Wheeler's old law office, and the old Unicorn that was the Elks at one point. They have a permit to redo the Wheeler building, can't tell what they are putting in any. There are not many buildings in the downtown area for people to shop. We are working on that and are on that road to attract businesses. There was further discussion.

Mr. Huff – Nothing to report.

Ms. Myers – Reminded everyone to please fill out your census.

Mr. Harmon – He felt that if we're not on Zoom, it would be a good idea to notify the media and asked that the Council Clerk send a copy of the approved minutes to the media. Mayor Haney would like to see us live. Mayor Haney said he'd take the blame for the lack of communication.

Mr. Miller – Nothing to report. Agrees with Mr. Fox on the buildings.

Mr. Baker – Nothing to report.

Mr. Zucal – Thanked the Mayor and Belle for what they do. He's seen interest in the community. Bill Walsh grew up in the community and Amy's a Realtor. He feels if we could get a Citizens Action Committee and those people can help us with pedestrian access at McCauley Drive we might have an influence from business people, administrators, councilors, marketing people, to get people involved that can bring business to the City. He and Eric spent time with Bill Walsh, and feels Amy would be good at it. A Citizen's Action Group would help with grants, the downtown area, and there are folk that want kayaking in the Stillwater. Because of the virus, we may lose as a State up to 35% of our small business that may never reopen. We have to rethink on tightening up, but feels the key is getting the public involved. The census is going to be very important in keeping our City status. We need to keep our youth here. Let's involve the residents in as much as we can. Asked if the Landlord Registration was moving forward. And it is, JJ looked at form letter and will make a couple changes. The letter will be sent with the form. Once back the database would be formed. The goal is to get a key trained person in for that position to enforce it. There was additional discussion.

New Business

Mr. Fox – Nothing to report.

Mr. Huff – Nothing to report.

Ms. Myers – Welcomes a new business on the west side that opened –The Inferno restaurant and 999 Trenton Avenue is the address, with Sierra Knight as the owner. She called her to welcome her o Uhrichsville. They are on Facebook. Whoever coordinated the Claymont Senior Parade, it was awesome. She put it on Facebook. The food drive afterword did a really nice job. Mayor Haney said Nicole Miles, Chassy Brown and Wendy Mann were the ones that came to ask for permission to do it. Tabitha Crashaw and Ms. Wilson and Kim Richard raised a pickup load of food and \$450.00 for the food bank and did a great job. It all went smooth.

Mr. Harmon – Thank you Mr. President. On behalf of several concerned residents and constituents, I am submitting a list of thirty blighted properties located in the City of Uhrichsville. The list includes addresses with property improvement descriptions. Seven of these thirty could potentially be condemned and therefore demolished per our BOCA housing codes. I hope that this list will help assist the administration with their endeavors to tackle this major blight issue. I also hope that this list will be used to end our population problem at a time when we are on the brink of losing our status as a city. With

several stints of economic downturn over previous decades and a sharp decline of over 1,000 residents since the 1970 census, our neighborhoods have been hollowed out invested and in. Dilapidated homes are an impediment to Uhrichsville's revitalization and the quality of life in our community. I have recently testified before the Ohio Senate on the issue of neighborhood blight and I believe it will take an all hands-on deck approach that will need to be tackled in a variety of ways including funding, enforcement, and legislation. We can not turn back the clock on code enforcement and we must protect our neighborhoods, our families, and our future.

Mr. Fox added that he spoke with a neighbor at 1239 Eastport Avenue, they moved out and will let the bank take it. There are garbage bags and the grass is high. 911 N. Water Street has a lady that lives there and rents out room. That is something she would be interested in. N. Water Street is a nice neighborhood and is taken care of. A lot of the blight is in the back alleyways and other places like that. This list of 30 is the beginning. There are more than 30 properties around town. There were good discussions tonight about our blight problem and is glad to see the administration is taking it seriously. Finance Committee did an excellent job this year in recognizing the need and appropriating the \$40,000.00 to demolishing. This is not just a financial thing it is also an enforcement issue. We cannot afford to turn back the clock on code enforcement. Ms. Myers said the lady that moved out on Eastport is still responsible for that property even though she is giving it back to the bank. That could take months. There is a process they go through. She is still technically responsibility. Mr. Fox said they should track her down. Mr. Zucal asked if a contractor could mow it and assess the taxes. He said that has been done.

Mr. Zucal - Mayor Haney would like council to write letters to Judge Hillyer and asks why he gives these people chances numerous times over and over. Why he doesn't cite them. He gives 30 more days or 60 more days. There's too much compassion. Mr. Zucal asked if we at Council could write a letter for better enforcement in motion form that JJ could prepare. He also asked where the community service people are? Mayor Haney didn't believe they were doing anything with the community service workers because of Covid. That could be included in our letter to ask for more community service workers. Mr. Zucal made a motion as a body of council, to write a letter to expedite and strongly enforce the laws on dilapidated structures, high grass, and junk vehicles, and blight and also have a stronger participation from Community Service groups, seconded by Mr. Fox. ROLL CALL: Mr. Zucal-yes; Mr. Fox-yes; Mr. Baker-yes; Mr. Miller-yes; Mr. Harmon-yes; Ms. Myers-yes; Mr. Huff-yes. The letter is to be prepared by the Law Director.

Mr. Miller – Nothing to report.

Mr. Baker – The Ordinance Committee will meet June 1, 2020 at 6:00 pm to discuss a Social Media Policy and look at the Swimming Pool Policy and maybe tweak it. Everyone should have received information about the Ohio Records and Open Meeting Training that is required. It is a three-hour course online. You do not have to take it all at once. There is a test after each module. Councilperson Cottrell thanked him. And, a laptop will be set up at the city building for anyone that would like to take the test there.

Visitors:

Captain Nathan Crouse of the Fire Department introduced new fireman, Sean Luce. Calls have been picking up. There has been training on the W. Third property

ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS:

ORDINANCE 10-20 AN ORDINANCE CREATING A LIEN IN FAVOR OF THE

**CITY OF UHRICHSVILLE, OHIO ON INSURANCE PROCEEDS IN RELATION TO
FIRE DAMAGED STRUCTURES**

Third Reading

A Motion to Adopt was made by Mr. Baker, seconded by Mr. Miller. ROLL CALL: Mr. Baker-yes; Mr. Miller-yes; Mr. Harmon-yes; Ms. Myers-yes; Mr. Huff-yes; Mr. Fox-yes; Mr. Zucal-yes.

**ORDINANCE 13-20
AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE TERMS OF COMPENSATION
AID TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT'S K-9 HANDLER FOR THE HANDLER'S OFF-THE-CLOCK
TIME
SPENT FEEDING, EXERCISING, TRAINING, AND GROOMING
THE K-9, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

A Motion to Suspend was made by Mr. Huff, seconded by Mr. Baker. ROLL CALL: Mr. Huff-yes; Mr. Baker-yes; Mr. Fox-yes; Mr. Zucal-yes; Mr. Miller-yes; Mr. Harmon-yes; Ms. Myers-yes.

A Motion to Adopt was made by Mr. Baker, seconded by Mr. Huff. ROLL CALL: Mr. Baker-yes; Mr. Huff-yes; Mr. Miller-yes; Mr. Harmon-yes; Ms. Myers-yes; Mr. Fox-yes; Mr. Zucal-yes.

**ORDINANCE 14-20
AN ORDINANCE FOR THE PROJECT LOCATED IN MILL TOWNSHIP WITHIN THE
CITY OF UHRICHSVILLE, AT THE OVERPASS OF JOHNSON DRIVE AND US 250.
THE PROJECT WILL REHABILITATE BRIDGE TUS-250-2033
CARRYING JOHNSON DRIVE OVER US 250, BY REPLACING THE
EXISTING SUPERSTRUCTURE AND REPAIRING THE SUBSTRUCTURE UNITS.
INCREASED VERTICAL CLEARANCE WILL BE PROVIDED FOR
OVER HEIGHT VEHICLES TRAVELING ALONG US 250**

A Motion to Suspend was made by Mr. Zucal, seconded by Ms. Myers. ROLL CALL: Mr. Zucal-yes; Ms. Myers-yes; Mr. Baker-yes; Mr. Miller-yes; Mr. Harmon-yes; Mr. Huff-yes; Mr. Fox-yes.

A Motion to Adopt was made by Mr. Zucal, seconded by Mr. Fox. ROLL CALL: Mr. Zucal-yes; Mr. Fox-yes; Mr. Baker-yes; Mr. Miller-yes; Mr. Harmon-yes; Ms. Myers-yes; Mr. Huff-yes.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:

Mayor Haney regarding Charles Meese alley vacation to Tamara Wilson and Zoning Commission. And Jim Zucal and the zoning committee.

Mobile Home Ordinance to Ordinance/Codes Committee

Other Discussions:

Mayor encourages everyone to take the test.

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Council President Cottrell will be getting ahold of all council members for discussion as the chairs of the committee want to meet with every one of you individually. He and JJ will be getting ahold of them.

Council President Cottrell put out a Memo about the agenda being changed. That is in effect now. He would like to have everyone's agenda items by Monday so Tuesday Trish can type it up and you will receive Tuesday or Wednesday and have an agenda. That way we are not coming in on Thursday without an agenda. It is a work in progress. Everyone knows. It just makes sense.

Mr. Zucal asked on Mr. Harmon's list if Mayor Haney and Belle could prioritize the demolition, the top two or three. Mayor Haney said four or five may on the lead program list. Their hands are tied at this time.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Trisha Addison
Clerk of Council

Robert Cottrell
Council President