

Monroe Council Minutes
Regular Meeting of Council
August 11, 2020 – 6:30 p.m.
This meeting was held electronically (remotely) pursuant to
Ohio Revised Code Section 121.221

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Frentzel opened the regular meeting of Council with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call

Council members present: Tom Callahan, Jason Frentzel, Keith Funk, Anna Hale, Todd Hickman, Christina McElfresh, and Robert Routson.

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Funk moved to approve the Council Minutes of July 28, 2020 and August 3, 2020; seconded by Mr. Routson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Visitors

The Clerk of Council read the following letter into the record:

“Members of Council:

Please read these comments into the council record.

I am one of the Monroe residents who was offended by Councilman Callahan's remarks regarding the mask-wearing ordinance discussed at the July 14th meeting. In my email to council, I suggested he sincerely apologize for his racially/culturally insensitive remark, or resign. His comments in the Journal-News (July 31, 2020) do not constitute an apology.

Mr. Callahan, I cannot speak for other responders to this issue, but I have not taken your remarks out of context as you claimed in the JN article. Your remarks were made in the context of the council vote on the mask ordinance. I understand as well that you were trying to make a point. Nevertheless, the example you used to make that point was offensive. I believe in second chances, so I have not signed the petition requesting your resignation. You will again have an opportunity to put your sincere apology (and I emphasize sincere) into the public record at the next council meeting. If you admit your error and sincerely show remorse for it without qualification, then Monroe's residents will be able to leave your unfortunate remarks in the past. Only then can you continue your public service with renewed spirit and understanding.

Cordially,
Emilio D. Spinosa

Monroe, Ohio”

Mr. Routson asked if it has been verified this was sent from a citizen of Monroe. He stated that before something is put in the Council minutes as a visitor’s request it should be verified they are from Monroe and, if not, it would be noted where they are from.

Mayor Frentzel acknowledged that there have been visitors appearing before Council that were not Monroe residents. He requested that Mrs. Wasson request their address for the record when these are submitted.

Law Director Callahan advised that if someone wants to speak to City Council, legally they do not have to identify themselves by name, identify their addresses, as it is a public forum. They have every right to speak for three minutes as required by the Rules of Council.

Mrs. McElfresh pointed out this is the second time there has been an email regarding this subject matter and asked Mr. Callahan if he had anything to say. Mr. Callahan did not.

Committee Reports

None.

Old Business

Resolution No. 50-2020. A Resolution adopting a Fund Balance Policy. (Second Reading)

Mr. Brock referenced a spreadsheet he sent to Council showing what the difference is between a target of four months and three months of fund balance. As we start preparing for budgets, it lets Council know what that gap would be as even with a three month fund balance it is still good.

Mayor Frentzel asked if Mr. Brock had a preference between a three-month and four-month fund balance. Mr. Brock advised that the Finance Committee of Council recommended a four-month fund balance.

Mr. Funk moved to consider this the second reading of Resolution No. 50-2020 and have it read by title only; seconded by Mr. Routson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Resolution No. 50-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Resolution No. 50-2020; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Roll call vote: seven ayes. Motion Carried.

Resolution No. 52-2020. A Resolution revoking the tax exemption provided by an existing Community Reinvestment Area Agreement concerning a parcel of commercial real property in the City of Monroe. (Second Reading)

Mr. Routson commented that the article written by Mr. Richter in the *Journal-News* contained a lot of misinformation that makes the City look like the bad guy. He wrote quotes from the

owners, but being a reporter he should report what the facts are. In Mr. Routson's opinion, they were the ones not supporting the City of Monroe.

Mr. Hickman stated that the reporter wasn't given much information from the City and just about everything that was done prior to the vote was in executive session.

Mr. Routson advised that it is public record at the County that he could look at. The City doesn't have to give him all of the information. A lot of the misinformation is available online.

Mayor Frentzel agreed, in part, as it seemed like the article was skewed in one direction. We have had at least one, if not two, years of debate over this and given chances to help out. Unfortunately, all of the things that the City has to go through cannot all be divulged at a certain time.

Mr. Routson emphasized that part of that information was not in executive session it is in the County records.

Mrs. Hale added that Rivertown was to accomplish certain things in the CRA Agreement and they didn't do that. You didn't see that in the newspaper article, but we know in a timely manner. If this is passed it voids all of it.

Mr. Funk stated that Council had opportunities before this where we could have changed the CRA, but he did not feel it was appropriate to change in the middle of a pandemic.

Mr. Hickman believed that Mr. Funk sent an email over one year ago about the lawsuits Rivertown was involved in. Mr. Funk replied that he may have quoted a newspaper article. Mr. Hickman stated that this has been going on for quite a while and Monroe gave them a lot of opportunities. This was happening before COVID even happened in China.

Mr. Funk moved to suspend the rule requiring the reading of Resolution No. 52-2020 on two separate days, authorize its adoption on the second reading, and have it read by title only; seconded by Mr. Hickman. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Resolution No. 52-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Resolution No. 52-2020; seconded by Mr. Hickman. Roll call vote: six ayes; one nay (Funk). Motion carried.

Ordinance No. 2020-24. An Ordinance vacating a certain easement containing 2,750 square feet no longer needed for municipal purposes. (Second Reading)

Mr. Brock reported that this vacates a small parcel previously used by the City as a wellhead.

Mr. Funk moved to consider this the second reading of Ordinance No. 2020-24 and have it read by title only; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Ordinance No. 2020-24 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Ordinance No. 2020-24; seconded by Mr. Routson. Roll call vote: seven ayes. Motion carried.

New Business

Emergency Resolution No. 53-2020. A Resolution ratifying the filing of an individual proof of claim in connection with the bankruptcy cases of *In Re Purdue Pharma. L.P., et al*, Case No. 19023649 (RDD) (Bankr. S.D.N.Y) and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Brock explained that earlier this year Council adopted a resolution joining all of Ohio in the opioid issue. An individual claim in the bankruptcy case was also necessary. The claim amount is based on the time-frame from 2003 through 2040.

Mr. Funk moved to suspend the rule requiring the reading of Emergency Resolution No. 53-2020 on two separate days, authorize its adoption on its first reading, and have it read by title only; seconded by Mr. Routson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Emergency Resolution No. 53-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Emergency Resolution No. 53-2020; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Roll call vote: seven ayes. Motion carried.

Resolution No. 54-2020. A Resolution accepting the lowest and/or best bid submitted for a 2021 Freightliner Chassis with Step Van Upfit and authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement with Fyda Freightliner Cincinnati, Inc. for said vehicle.

Mr. Brock stated this is for the purchase of a step-up van for the water department and was discussed with the Public Works Committee. He noted it was originally budgeted for 2019.

Mr. Funk moved to consider this the first reading of Resolution No. 54-2020 and have it read by title only; seconded by Mr. Routson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Resolution No. 54-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to approve the first reading of Resolution No. 54-2020; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Roll call vote: seven ayes. Motion carried.

Ordinance No. 2020-25. An Ordinance amending and supplementing Ordinance No. 2020-08, otherwise known as the permanent appropriations ordinance, to meet current expenses and other expenditures of the City of Monroe, during fiscal year ending December 31, 2020.

Mr. Brock advised that there are some clean-up areas such as, combining the two fire funds and the CARES Act fund.

Mr. Funk moved to suspend the rule requiring the reading of Ordinance No. 2020-25 on two separate days, authorize its adoption on the first reading, and have it read by title only; seconded by Mr. Routson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Ordinance No. 2020-25 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Ordinance No. 2020-25; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Roll call vote: seven ayes. Motion carried.

Administrative Reports

Mr. Brock sought Council's direction on moving forward with fireworks during the Labor Day weekend.

Mr. Routson was of the opinion that it should move forward as everyone would be outside with their mask on or in an area where they do not need to have a mask on. The community needs something like this.

Mayor Frentzel agreed and asked if the use of the Monroe Bicentennial Commons Park is still an option. Mr. Brock replied that it is not due to all of the construction taking place at this time and recommended that it be held at Monroe Community Park.

Mr. Funk agreed with the location as it is surrounded by several residential areas and people may not have to travel to the location.

Mr. Hickman felt that it should wait until next year and requested a roll call vote.

Mr. Routson moved to have fireworks on Labor Day for the community of Monroe; seconded by Mr. Funk.

Discussion. Mrs. McElfresh asked if the water is back on at Monroe Community Park. Mr. Brock advised that it is on for the restrooms, but not at the drinking fountains.

Mr. Brock requested clarification on the date Council would like this to take place.

Mrs. McElfresh asked the Chief of Police about the parking in the area. Mr. Brock stated that one of the questions he had is how we are going to organize it and if there are volunteers. Chief Buchanan stated that, if approved, we would begin planning and start with the community partners as has been done in the past.

Mr. Brock noted that we need to check with Rozzi to see if they are available for whichever date Council decides.

Mayor Frentzel asked if three to four weeks is enough time to put this together and Mr. Brock indicated that for just fireworks we can get it put together.

Mr. Routson felt that Saturday or Sunday would be best because some citizens have questioned in the past about having fireworks then going to work the next day.

Mayor Frentzel agreed Saturday or Sunday would be the best days.

Mayor Frentzel pointed that there is a motion on the floor to proceed with the fireworks on Labor Day weekend.

Mrs. Wasson reported that Rozzi had a successful drive-in show at Coney and planning another one. Mrs. McElfresh is in favor of that type of event.

Mayor Frentzel indicated that the majority of people practice social distancing and does understand the concerns; however, he feels comfortable with moving forward.

Roll call vote: four ayes; three nays (Callahan, Hickman, and McElfresh). Motion carried.

Mayor Frentzel has not seen a lot of notifications of other boards and commissions for meetings and asked if we are not able to hold them via Zoom. Mr. Brock replied that we have had one Planning Commission meeting and planning for other meetings in the future.

Adjournment

Mr. Hickman moved to adjourn; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The regular meeting of Council adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela S. Wasson, MMC
Clerk of Council