

**MINUTES FOR THE SPECIAL SESSION OF COUNCIL**  
**Monday, October 27, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.**  
**Downtown Ashland**

---

---

Council President Stephen Stuart called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**ROLL CALL**

|                               |                     |         |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------|
| Council-at-Large & President: | Stephen L. Stuart   | Present |
| Ward 1:                       | Duane R. Fishpaw    | Present |
| Ward 2:                       | Robert M. Valentine | Present |
| Ward 3:                       | Ruth Detrow         | Present |
| Ward 4:                       | Sandra Tunnell      | Present |

Mayor Stewart and City Council turned the meeting over to Rob Ward, board member of Ashland Main Street, who began the meeting with a brief synopsis of the day's meeting would entail.

Mr. Ward explained that he would like to give a tour of the downtown area and explain some of the beautification plans for particular areas; however, he placed emphasis on the fact that there are some projects the committee has in mind that he realizes will take numerous years to complete.

Mr. Ward also stated that he is fully aware of the City's limited funding for projects throughout town and commented that the board is working on holding a fundraiser, which should be held around fall of next year.

On the first stop of the tour, Mr. Ward showed Council a mostly unused courtyard located on South Street West.

Mr. Ward discussed how the board is interested in turning the courtyard into an amphitheater, which would encourage community involvement in the downtown area.

Mr. Ward continued the tour and led the Mayor and City Council members to the public parking lot located off Luther Street next to the City Income Tax building.

Mr. Ward shared information on the importance of creating a kind of parking infrastructure that better supports public spaces, and noted the City would benefit if employees and the public utilized public parking lots throughout town instead of parking on the main streets downtown.

Another idea Mr. Ward brought forward during the meeting was possibly damming Town Run Creek to create a more aesthetically pleasing body of water in the downtown area.

Mr. Valentine informed everyone that the Department of Natural Resources will most likely not approve of such an idea as it could introduce risk to the surrounding area.

Mr. Ward guided everyone down to the corner of Luther Street and South Street West before arriving at their next stop, where they would discuss potential improvements to the numerous alley ways throughout downtown.

Mr. Ward stated that closing the alleys to traffic, improving the lighting, and installing grass and/or brick would help make the area more pedestrian friendly and ultimately encourage the public to walk more around the downtown area.

The next stop on the tour was Main Street, where Council walked westward and observed the condition sidewalks, lamp posts, electrical wiring within the sidewalk, areas where trees were recently removed, and various building facades.

Mr. Ward shared that numerous property owners have already repainted their facades, but noted that the fundraiser tentatively planned for next year will come in handy as there are also owners who cannot afford to repaint their businesses.

As the meeting traveled westbound down Main Street towards Claremont Avenue, Mr. Ward explained that there is an excessive amount of metal signs along the streets, and noted that the streets would appear more welcoming to visitors if some of the signs were removed.

The meeting continued across Main Street and down Church Street before Mr. Ward guided everyone to walk eastward on West 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

As the meeting continued down West 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Mr. Ward pointed out a privately owned park, maintained by PNC bank, and how nice it looked.

Mr. Ward also shared with Council that the board prefers updating some of the signs around town to a format similar to those used by Ashland University.

Mr. Ward pointed out the importance to find volunteers, perhaps individuals who are retired, to help keep the costs of maintaining downtown to a minimum.

Mr. Ward stated there are numerous opportunities for volunteers to contribute to the beautification of the City, such as spraying weeds, removing snow from sidewalks, watering plants, and much more.

As the meeting walked past some of the parking lots, Mr. Ward inquired about the number of private parking spaces around town that are provided by the City.

Mayor Stewart responded that he knows the City has an agreement with Ashland Essex House and he would be happy to get back to him about the exact number of parking spaces the City provides them.

Mr. Ward shared that the number one complaint he has received, on a real estate standpoint, is the perception that there isn't enough parking available for patrons.

Mr. Ward stated that there is actually a lot of parking available, but that it just isn't easily accessible.

Mr. Ward expressed that the City's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary is a terrific time to make improvements to the downtown area and that the community is ready to make changes.

Mr. Ward restated the importance of leaders of the community to help coordinate with Ashland Main Street and the Bicentennial Committee, and lead the charge in improving and making Ashland a more beautiful place.

Mr. Ward closed the meeting by stating his desire to keep an open dialogue with one another and to con-

tinue to look for businesses and people who would be interested in joining Ashland in the quest to revitalize and improve the downtown area.

Mayor Stewart and City Council thanked Mr. Ward as well as the rest of the Main Street Ashland board for all of their help and hard work.

**ADJOURNMENT FROM SPECIAL SESSION: 10:36 a.m.**

**Moved** by Mr. Fishpaw and seconded by Mrs. Detrow to adjourn.

Ayes: Mr. Fishpaw, Mr. Valentine, Mrs. Detrow, Mrs. Tunnell, Dr. Stuart,

Respectfully Submitted by  
Lindsey M. Gardiner, Clerk of Council

(Mins-SS-10-27-14.doc)