

MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL
Tuesday, June 17, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.
Council Chambers

Council President Stephen Stuart called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENTATION OF MINUTES

Moved by Mrs. Tunnell and seconded by Mr. Fishpaw that the minutes of the **Regular Session** of City Council held Tuesday, June 3, 2014 be accepted as submitted.

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

LEGISLATION

Ordinance Number 40-14

Item a)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE, TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH SIMONSON CONSTRUCTION SERVICES, INC. FOR THE CLAREMONT AVENUE UNDERDRAIN INSTALLATION PROJECT IN THE CITY OF ASHLAND, OHIO; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Moved by Mrs. Tunnell and seconded by Mr. Valentine to invoke Section 113.01 of the Codified Ordinances as the distribution of this Ordinance has satisfied the requirements of said Section and that a further reading be dispensed with at this time.

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

City Engineer, Shane Kremser, provided testimony on behalf of the Ordinance, which will allow the City to repair the section of Claremont Avenue south west of Main Street.

Mr. Kremser stated that when lanes were added to the road over 40 years ago, there was no underdrain installed to help with storm water runoff.

Mr. Kremser shared that this project has been made a priority based on the heavy traffic in the area and because the road is a major thoroughfare for the City.

Mr. Kremser added that the City is hoping to add underdrains along the existing curb and begin the project this coming August.

There were no further questions from City Council.

Moved by Mrs. Tunnell and seconded by Mr. Valentine that the Ordinance be passed on the first reading.

Ayes: Mr. Valentine, Mrs. Detrow, Mrs. Tunnell, Dr. Stuart, Mr. Fishpaw,
Moved by Dr. Stuart and seconded by Mr. Fishpaw that rules requiring the reading on three separate days be suspended and that the Ordinance be passed on the second and third readings.

Ayes: Mrs. Detrow, Mrs. Tunnell, Dr. Stuart, Mr. Fishpaw Mr. Valentine
Moved by Mr. Fishpaw and seconded by Mrs. Detrow that the Ordinance be passed.

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

Ordinance Number 41-14

Item b)

AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT FOR THE PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT FOR THE CITY SERVICES DIVISION OF THE CITY OF ASHLAND, OHIO, OBVIATING FORMAL ADVERTISING AND BIDDING; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Moved by Mrs. Tunnell and seconded by Mr. Valentine to invoke Section 113.01 of the Codified Ordinances as the distribution of this Ordinance has satisfied the requirements of said Section and that a further reading be dispensed with at this time.

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

City Services Director, Jerry Mack, provided testimony on behalf of the Ordinance which would allow the City to purchase a new 2014 L225 Cap HVAC Skid Loader.

Mr. Mack stated that the final cost of the unit after a thirty percent government discount and trade in of the old unit would be 39,900 dollars.

Mr. Mack also mentioned that the proposed unit would be a much needed improvement from the unit purchased in 1996, which will include a cab and help workers avoid any inclement weather during their work.

The Director stated that the City is receiving a good deal for the unit, which would be utilized by various departments within the City, and mentioned that the unit could be available as soon as next week if Council chooses to approve the Ordinance.

Dr. Stuart asked if there were any further questions.

There were none.

Moved by Mrs. Tunnell seconded by Mr. Valentine that the Ordinance be passed on the first reading.

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

Moved by Dr. Stuart and seconded by Mr. Fishpaw that rules requiring the reading on three separate days be suspended and that the Ordinance be passed on the second and third readings.

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

Moved by Mrs. Detrow and seconded by Mr. Fishpaw that the Ordinance be passed.

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

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Sidewalk Extension Request – 464 Township Road

Moved by Dr. Stuart and seconded by Mrs. Tunnell to table the sidewalk extension request until the next City Council meeting held July 1, 2014.

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

Dr. Stuart announced that the reason for tabling this sidewalk extension request was because County Commissioner Michael Welch was not able to attend the meeting this evening, and deferring the discussion until a later date would allow Mr. Welch to be a part of the discussion.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Mr. Fishpaw shared with Council a resident's concern regarding vacancy registration and the proposed 45 day limit to fill a vacancy.

City Engineer, Shane Kremser, responded to Mr. Fishpaw's comment and stated that the City is currently reviewing the vacancy policies within surrounding communities to determine the most appropriate method to handle the City's vacant property issue.

Mr. Kremser emphasized that no Ordinance has been passed by Council and that the City intends to focus on the non-responsive property owners, who own vacant properties and have not done an acceptable job maintaining their property.

Mr. Fishpaw also brought forward another constituent concern regarding high grass.

Mrs. Detrow mentioned a complaint she received from one of her constituents regarding a salesman knocking on doors and speaking in a very loud and almost alarming manner.

Mrs. Detrow stated that she also was subject to the salesman's obnoxious sale tactics, and stated that the salesman claimed to have permission to go door-to-door from the police department.

Mrs. Detrow also shared that the individual was speaking so fast and so aggressively that she never could figure out what the person was selling.

Mrs. Detrow posed the question to Council if it would be appropriate to regulate people who go door-to-door as the City regulates people who leave literature at people's homes.

City Engineer, Shane Kremser, interjected that his office has also received numerous complaints regarding contractors going door-to-door to sell home insurance related to hail damage, and stated that those people are subject to registering with the City to knock on doors.

Mrs. Detrow reiterated that she has no intention to harass those who go door-to-door, but expressed support for enabling the community to be more aware of who is knocking on doors.

Dr. Stuart mentioned that there are so many community groups, such as girl scouts, church groups and school groups, who go door-to-door raising money for noble causes and that adding a requirement for them to register would hinder their efforts.

Mrs. Tunnell commented that requiring people to register to go door-to-door would do little to resolve the issue of identifying individuals who might cause problems knocking on doors.

Mayor Stewart also commented about the issue and stated that his office receives calls about this

problem; however, he disagrees with requiring community groups who knock on doors for a noble cause to register with the City.

Dr. Stuart concurred with the Mayor's comment.

Assistant Law Director, David Stimpert, added that the United States Supreme Court struck down a village Ordinance that required individuals to register for going door-to-door due to violation of citizens' first amendment rights.

There were no further comments from Council.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:

Finance Director, Larry Paxton, shared that he intends to hold a tax budget hearing at the next Council meeting and also added that there is a slight increase in income and expenditures, which will make the tax budget look less promising than past years as the cash carryover will be down.

Director Paxton also shared that his department has completed its 2013 audit and will be scheduling a post audit hearing shortly.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS:

Mayor Stewart commented that he would be particularly interested in the newspaper picking up on his commentary regarding high grass and the problems it causes the community.

Mayor Stewart stated that failure to maintain acceptable lawns is a detriment to the beauty of the community, which the majority of us take great pride in their homes and homes throughout the community.

The Mayor shared that each time the City receives a complaint about high grass the property is visited and the high grass is documented.

The Mayor added that the City submits a letter to the property owner instructing them to mow the grass in seven and if the grass is not mowed, the City will have a contractor go out and mow the property.

The Mayor admitted that it is not the fastest process, but for the most part residents respond well.

The Mayor stated that there have been issues with high grass on properties owned by "absentee lenders", which are usually not even located within the state of Ohio.

Mayor Stewart stated that if the City must hire a contractor to mow the lawns that the cost is not cheap and will be added to the property taxes the homeowner must pay when purchasing the property.

Lastly, Mayor Stewart shared that next year will mark the 200th year the City of Ashland has been around, and that the planning committee is working feverishly to create one of the biggest events and parade the City has ever seen.

The Mayor noted that he looks forward to celebrating the 200th birthday for the City.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE:

Dr. Stuart asked if there were any comments or questions from the audience.

One individual requested further clarification regarding the proposed 45 day vacant property registration requirement and asked if the Ordinance is intended to focus on absentee owners or landlords.

Mr. Kremser responded and stated that the Ordinance has not yet been passed, only introduced in a work session, and is intended to focus on abandoned properties.

Mr. Kremser added that there is a cost to the City with abandoned properties, whether it be following up on complaints, increased arson and crime risks, and negative impact on property values.

Mrs. Tunnell stated that the proposed Ordinance is not intended to punish people who are doing a good job renting, but meant to get the non-responsive vacant property owners to respond.

Dr. Stuart announced that there are two Cub Scouts in attendance of today's City Council meeting.

Dr. Stuart introduced and welcomed Hunter Rickett and Joey Cooke, who were in attendance with their Cub Scout Leader Dennis.

Dr. Stuart stated that Hunter and Joey joined Council today in an effort to obtain their communication badges.

ADJOURNMENT FROM REGULAR SESSION: 7:30 P.M.

Moved by Mrs. Tunnell and seconded by Mr. Valentine to adjourn from Regular Session.

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

Respectfully Submitted by
Lindsey M. Gardiner, Clerk of Council