

MINUTES FOR THE SPECIAL SESSION OF COUNCIL
Monday, August 11, 2014 at 1:00 p.m.
Mayor's Office

Council President Stephen Stuart called the meeting to order at 1:00 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

Dr. Stuart announced that the meeting will dispense with the Pledge of Allegiance and began the meeting by turning it over to Mayor Stewart.

Mayor Stewart thanked Dr. Stuart and announced that he would actually like to go ahead and turn the meeting over to Tom McGhee, who is here today to present a proposal for accessories that can be used in the downtown district.

Mr. McGhee introduced himself along with his counterpart, Scott Young, who are President and Vice President of Main Street Ashland and members of the Ashland Bicentennial Committee.

Mr. McGhee explained to members of the meeting that the City's bicentennial is coming up next year and that the Committee is interested in finding ways to enhance the celebration of the City's 200th birthday.

Mr. McGhee emphasized that the goal of the Committee is to make a difference and a lasting impact on in the beautification of the downtown area.

Mr. McGhee shared that the Committee has been working for a long time and have been focusing on obtaining new benches, trash receptacles, bike racks and hanging planters to scatter around the downtown area.

Mr. McGhee stated that his Committee has found individuals who are willing to pay for these items; however, there haven't been any commitments for trash cans just yet.

Mr. McGhee added that one of the more popular items are the hanging planters, which can obviously have a really great impact in beautifying the City.

Mr. McGhee stated that the Bicentennial Committee is seeking the Mayor and City Council's support for their proposed items as they will require installation and regular maintenance by the City Departments.

Mr. McGhee explained in detail what other communities have done for the installation and maintenance of hanging planters, and went on to add that the City would need about forty planters, which cost ninety dollars each.

Mr. Young mentioned that the Committee has calculated the number of each of the items that the City will need, along with the cost of each individual unit in an effort to try to determine the overall cost and asking prices for sponsors.

Mr. McGhee stated that the City will need about twelve extended-U bike racks, which the Committee found to be the best fit for the community.

Mr. Young added that the bike racks are also an item in particular that will require the help from the City as they are supposed to be installed in the concrete sidewalks.

Mr. McGhee went on to explain the benches the Committee decided would be an ideal fit for the community, which are maintenance free, composed of recycled plastic and will not rust over time.

Mr. McGhee stated the City would need about seventeen benches, which are estimated to cost eight hundred dollars each.

Mr. Young and Mr. McGhee noted that the benches are another item that will require installation by the City.

Mr. Young also shared that there is still work to be done in determining the exact areas where the benches would be installed; however, there are a few particular areas in town where the sidewalk is recessed, which could be a good place for them.

Mayor Stewart questioned whether the benches would be situated against the buildings or towards the curb.

Mr. Young responded and said that it might make more sense to have the benches positioned against buildings.

Mr. McGhee shared that the Bicentennial Committee has not yet finalized what type of trash receptacles to use in their project, but emphasized the need for new and improved models.

Mrs. Tunnell asked what they plan to do with the old trash cans, and Mr. McGhee responded that the best thing to do would be throw them away.

Mr. Young added that the benches and the trash receptacles are most likely going to be models that will include a plaque showing the various sponsors who make the donation of the items possible.

Mrs. Tunnell asked Mr. McGhee if there would be a recycling section within the new trash receptacles.

Mr. McGhee stated that recycling was not originally intended; however, the Committee would be willing to look into it.

Mayor Stewart expressed his concern about the location of the trash receptacles and benches on Main Street and noted that he preferred to have them up against buildings rather than near the curb.

The Mayor also stated that he preferred to keep the trash receptacles and benches grouped together.

Dr. Stuart asked Mr. McGhee and Mr. Young if they had calculated an estimated cost on the labor required to install and maintain the donated items.

Mr. Young stated that the Committee has not yet calculated an estimated cost.

Mr. McGhee began explaining the hanging planters his Committee has proposed in their project, which

have a plastic and coconut liner.

Mr. McGhee did express concern for the need to water the planters on a regular basis, but explained that the City may not need to water them every single day.

Dr. Stuart inquired about the possible difficulties the City may face with watering the planters over the weekends.

Mrs. Tunnell noted that some communities have installed self-watering water lines for their planters.

Mr. McGhee concurred with Mrs. Tunnell's statement and stated that self-watering lines are not too expensive and his Committee could look into finding donations for the lines.

Mrs. Tunnell asked Mr. McGhee if the Committee was still taking donations for benches.

Mr. McGhee stated that the Committee has secured all the necessary donations needed for all of the benches; however, he added that there is still a need for funding for trash receptacles.

Dr. Stuart asked if there has been any expressed support for the Committee's beautification project by the downtown businesses.

Mrs. Tunnell responded and said that businesses have actually have wanted a project like this to happen and are overall very supportive.

Mr. McGhee concurred with Mrs. Tunnell's statement.

Mr. Fishpaw asked if there have ever been any issues with the current trash receptacles with winter snow plowing, and whether or not benches would possibly cause issues with plowing.

Mayor Stewart stated that the current trash receptacles don't cause any significant snow plowing problems, and also stated that as long as the benches are placed against buildings, there shouldn't be any issues with plowing.

Mrs. Tunnell stated that there is a possibility that an organization might adopt the downtown and help with the watering and maintenance of some of the proposed items downtown.

Mr. Young added that the beautification project is a process and he expects businesses and residents will pick up a stronger sense of pride to maintain and keep the downtown beautiful as the City continues to strive towards a nicer looking downtown area.

Mayor Stewart concurred with Mr. Young's statement and added that this opportunity is an excellent time for the City to take on this beautification project, especially since this time only comes every two hundred years.

Dr. Stuart asked the Mayor if it would be possible for the City to make a commitment on the labor to install the bike racks and benches, and Mayor Stewart stated that it was.

Mr. McGhee noted that all donations for the beautification project have been written out to the Ashland County Historical Society, since it is a non-profit organization and is not subject to tax, and because the Committee needs every penny to go as far as possible.

Mayor Stewart requested that the Committee keep the City updated on the delivery of the items so the City can plan ahead and utilize its employees efficiently.

Moved by Dr. Stuart and seconded by Mr. Fishpaw that Council, with much appreciation, accept the proposal for the benches, bike racks, trash receptacles and hanging planters to be donated to the City as part of the Ashland Bicentennial Committee's beautification project.

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

Mr. McGhee and Mr. Young thanked Council and the Mayor for their time and their support for the beautification project.

ADJOURNMENT FROM SPECIAL SESSION: 1:45 p.m.

Moved by Mrs. Tunnell and seconded by Mr. Valentine to adjourn.

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

Respectfully Submitted by
Lindsey M. Gardiner, Clerk of Council

(Mins-SS-08-11-14.doc)