

MINUTES OF RAVENNA CITY PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
October 16, 2019

The Meeting of the Ravenna City Planning Committee was called to order by Chairman, Rob Kairis at 6:29 P.M. Present were: Present were: Bruce Ribelin, Amy Michael, Scott Rainone, Andrew Kluge and Joe Bica. Also attending the meeting were Mayor Frank Seman; Director of Public Service, Kay Dubinsky; Finance Director, Kimble Cecora; City Engineer, Bob Finney; Christina West of 732 Eastland Avenue, Ravenna, Ohio; Tim Calfee of 910 Murray Avenue, Ravenna, Ohio; Larry Silenius of 123 North Walnut Street, Ravenna, Ohio, and Cliff Soudil of 464 Woodland Avenue, Ravenna, Ohio.

Mr. Kairis said the first item on the agenda is the Heritage Ohio contract. This is an annual contract for Main Street Ravenna. There is a cost of \$500.00. This is a request to authorize the mayor to sign the contract and to appropriate the \$500.00 from the General Fund.

There being no further discussion, it was decided by those present the issue will be forwarded to Committee of the Whole for further action.

Mr. Kairis said the next item is a request to authorize the mayor to apply for two different grants from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife Education. Both Judy and Jill received training from ODNR which qualifies them both to submit the grant. The two different projects are at Chestnut Hills and the other is at City Park. One is for a Pollinator in the Park project at Chestnut Hills and the other is for a Kids Conservation Project outdoor learning lab for the summer camp. The requests will be for \$500.00 each and no match will be required on either of the grants.

There being no further discussion, it was decided by those present the issue will be forwarded to Committee of the Whole for further action.

Mr. Finney said he would like to add an issue. He distributed a list of properties that were turned over to Mr. Cimino for processing. One list is rental properties. These are addresses of properties that refuse to register to get inspections. The other list is violations. There are a lot more violations but these are the ones that they have given up on trying to work with them and passed them on to the law director. His process is to submit a letter first and then file a lawsuit. What is important is that Property Maintenance personnel will continue to send out letters telling them to renew; tell them the city thinks they are rental properties or that there are violations. Usually when it gets to the law director's desk, they have exhausted all possibilities. They continue working with folks as long as they see some progress on the homes. The problem is when they encounter folks who absolutely refuse to do anything. Certain violations in the Code allow for 30 days or seven days, sometimes 72 hours. It depends on what the violation is. Usually the offenders get two or three notices within about 60 days. If the property owner notifies the City they are going to do something about it and then they don't, it could be up to 90 days. Some of these violations could take a very long time. He does intend to continue updating Council on a monthly basis.

Mr. Rainone noted that Mr. Finney redacted the names but he's wondering if there are clusters of property owners.

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Mr. Finney responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Ribelin said he is wondering how many of those are absentee landlords who aren't in the area.

Mr. Finney said they look at the County Auditor website and see where the taxes are going. They see those taxes are being paid. He spoke with a man on the list about a month ago who has a duplex on Meridian Street. It's in horrible condition. A tenant call and wanted the water turned on. He called the landlord and asked who was asking to have the water turned back on. The landlord said it was his tenant and to turn the water on. Mr. Finney said he refused to turn the water back on until the rental inspection was paid and he adheres to the property maintenance items he said he would do. At that point, he said he would do that but he hasn't done that and it was turned over to Mr. Cimino. That is a huge eyesore and it makes his job harder when he might have a neighbor who has a gutter hanging and they tell that neighbor he has to fix the gutter when they have a mess across the street. There are multiple landlords on the list. They are reoccurring landlords.

Mr. Ribelin asked if there is legislation in place to shut these rentals down if they are not signing up for inspections.

Mr. Finney said when the water is shut off, they have a lot of leverage but until that happens, they don't have any, to his knowledge.

Mr. Bica said he thinks a lot of it depends on the law department pursuing these aggressively.

Mr. Finney said the list will continue to grow. They started compiling this list about a month ago. When he spoke with Mr. Cimino about this last week, there was a concern that the cost to file a complaint in court is about \$300.00. He may be coming back next month to appropriate more money so they can file complaints.

Mr. Bica asked how much is the neighborhood going to depreciate compared to the \$300.00.

Mr. Finney said Mr. Cimino explained that the Probate Court then invoices the homeowner. If it gets paid, we get reimbursed. If it doesn't get paid, he's not sure what happens.

Mr. Bica asked if they couldn't put that on the tax duplicate.

Mr. Finney responded that he would think they could.

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Mayor Seman said in looking at the long range plan, portions that have not been completed at this time, one deals with healthy blocks and the other is with rental policies. He thinks Council should be involved in the creation of those two items. When they get into that, they are going to be serving notice that they are going to intensify this and bring people into compliance where they can. Where they have people who do not have funds, they can work with them to get them hooked up with grants. In some cases, they are just hopeless. They got a man approved for a complete remodel of his house. It was in dire shape but they couldn't do a grant because he had no insurance on the house. If they are not willing to carry insurance to get the house remodeled, they are just stuck with it. Eventually, what they are going to have to do is condemn it and then they get into other expenses with that because the City then becomes responsible for the cleanup and demolition. One of the things he wanted to do as they go through this is try to streamline some of this. The process is long. They've got to find a quicker way or getting results.

Mr. Cecora said Ms. Watkins called him this afternoon who is looking at a surveillance camera at Chestnut Hills. There is money in the small capital improvement line. He would like to do a quick appropriation measure for \$6,000.00 to pay for the camera or do they want to spend it out of the small cap. line. The money is appropriated in the small capital improvement. It was decided since there is money available and only two months remaining in the year, to take it from the small capital improvement line.

There being no further business to discuss, this meeting was adjourned at 6:43 PM.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

Robert Kairis, Chairman
Planning Committee