



**RAVENNA CITY COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES  
November 20, 2023, at 6:00pm**

**The public meeting was held in person in Council Chambers.**

**The Committee of the Whole Meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by Council President, Andrew Kluge.**

**Council present:** Council President Andrew Kluge, Rob Kairis, Tim Calfee, Christina West, Cheryl Wood, Paul Moskun and Matt Harper.

**Also in attendance:** Mayor Frank Seman; Police Chief, Jeff Wallis; City Engineer, Bob Finney; Finance Director, Brian Huff; Safety Compliance Officer, Tim Contant; Council Clerk, Chelsea Gregor; John Sferra, Cliff Soudil

**The first item on the agenda was to approve the Committee of the Whole meeting minutes from October 23, 2023**

- Motion to approve the October 23, 2023, Committee of the Whole minutes by Mr. Kairis, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Moskun- **All Ayes**

**The second item was a presentation from Perspectus Architecture.**

Mr. Finney stated that the presentation from Perspectus Architecture will be rescheduled next month for the Committee meeting through Zoom to go over their project schedule.

**The third item was an ordinance to accept \$1,200 from the Division of EMS for the fire department.**

Mr. Kluge stated that the item had been discussed and it is a yearly grant that the Fire Department applies for.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

**The fourth item was an ordinance to enter into a contract with CivicReady for emergency notification.**

Mr. Contant explained that he and a few other staff members attended an online demonstration of the emergency notification system and that he was impressed. He stated that he received a quote of \$6,005, which he said is a 25% savings if the City signs before the end of the year. Each year after the cost will be \$6,000 and increase by 3% yearly.

Mr. Kluge asked about FEMA alerts.

Mr. Contant stated that he is hoping the next Safety Compliance Officer can work with that.

Mr. Calfee asked who would have access to use the system.

Mr. Contant listed off personnel in various departments and stated that he would eventually like to add the Parks and Recreation Department to include their updates.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

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**The fifth item was an ordinance to enter into a contract with the Marlboro Township Fire Department.**

Ms. Michael stated that nothing has changed since the last meeting's discussion.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

**The sixth item was an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with the Portage County Public Defender.**

Mr. Kairis stated that the item is an annual contract to assist indigent people with a public defender. He said that the contract is the same as last year and the cost is still \$150.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

**The seventh item was an ordinance appropriating \$30,000 for a donation to Main Street Ravenna.**

Mr. Kairis stated that Council had talked about a donation for Main Street Ravenna and that not everyone is set on the \$30,000.

Mr. Kluge asked the Mayor if there was any suggestion from the administration.

Mayor Seman explained that the \$30,000 is a suggestion from Heritage Ohio and that Council can chose which ever amount they wish. He stated that the recommended fundraising technique for Main Street Ravenna is 1/3 from the City, 1/3 from donations and 1/3 from businesses.

Mr. Kairis stated that he was in support of the amount.

Mr. Kluge asked for a roll call vote to see who was in support of the donation amount.

- Roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Calfee, Ms. West, Mr. Kairis- All Yes

Mr. Moskun, Ms. Wood, Mr. Harper- All No

Mr. Moskun stated his concern that the City would not have enough funding to hire new firefighters, and needed more information.

Ms. Michael was absent so Council President, Mr. Kluge, broke the tie with a yes vote.

- The majority of Council responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

**The eighth item was an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a tax abatement with SpringSeal.**

Ms. Wood stated that the item is a new enterprise zone agreement with SpringSeal for an addition to their existing building.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

**The ninth item was an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a RLF administration agreement.**

Ms. Wood stated that the item is a housekeeping item for economic development and said that it is to renew the RLF administration with the State of Ohio.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

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**The tenth item was an ordinance authorizing the extension of the 2021 CHIP agreement to 12/31/23.**

Ms. Wood stated that the item is to extend the home occupied CHIP program and to continue home rehabs through 2024. She stated that there are 14 homeowners looking for assistance.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

**The eleventh item was an ordinance to renew the contract for Heather Richkowski as the HR Director.**

Mr. Calfee stated that the item is to extend the HR Director contract for one year.

Mayor Seman stated that the contract will roll over annually.

There will be a 5.5% percentage increase in the new contract.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

**The twelfth item was an ordinance to renew the contract for Dennis West as the Economic Development Director.**

Mr. Calfee stated that the Economic Development Director contract has changed from one year to three years and that Ravenna Township will be contributing \$15,000 towards his salary. He stated that Mr. West will also be receiving a 5.5% raise.

Mr. Kairis addressed the subject of an MOU with the Township regarding the contract, and it will be looked into to see if another MOU is necessary.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

**The thirteenth item was an ordinance to re-establish an additional water plant operator.**

Mr. Calfee stated that Ms. Wilson spoke on the need for an additional water plant operator. He explained that there used to be 7 operators and it was changed to 6, adding that Ms. Wilson would like to add the additional operator back into the payroll ordinance to assist with shift coverages. Mr. Calfee stated that the position would be paid for out of the Water Fund.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

**The fourteenth item was an ordinance to approve the Finance Director position qualifications.**

Mr. Calfee explained that the item was to establish the qualifications and that it was discussed that a bachelor's degree in finance with 5 years of experience in government accounting was suggested. He stated that the suggested qualifications felt too limiting and that the administration will go back and look at revising the qualifications.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

**The fifteenth item was an ordinance approving the 2024 Payroll Ordinance update.**

Mr. Huff stated that the administration agreed upon a 2% increase for non-union employees for 2024 and that the IT Director and Water Plant Operator additions have not been updated yet. Mr.

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Huff stated that Section 260 of the codified ordinances still needs to be updated and that the HR Director can attend to speak on the subject.

Mr. Kairis inquired about Finance Department title changes.

Mr. Huff explained the department roles and how they have changed as the new finance employees have settled into their positions. He stated that he would like to keep the discretionary pay scale for another year to keep things flexible.

Mr. Calfee asked about a job description for the new job roles.

Mr. Huff stated that he was unaware that the job titles had changed in the proposed payroll ordinance and said that he can remove the changes.

Mr. Kairis addressed the missing Finance Director position in the payroll ordinance.

Mr. Huff stated that he can update the payroll ordinance again in April when the position changes.

Mr. Kairis inquired about the additions at the end of the payroll ordinance.

Mr. Huff stated that they were absent from the original Section 260.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

**The sixteenth item was an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with Medical Mutual for 2024.**

Mr. Huff stated that the item is a renewal, and that the health plan will only be increasing by .06%. He explained that claims for the year have been good and that a wellness plan has been added for the benefit of all full-time employees. Mr. Huff stated that after receiving complaints from employees, the dental coverage was changed to a different company and said that the HR Director had helped a lot with picking a new provider. He explained that employees who completed the wellness plan were able to be rewarded by not having to pay medical or dental for the month of December, adding that a 2% decrease will also be awarded to next year's benefits.

Mr. Kairis asked how many employees participated.

Mr. Huff stated that there were 30 participants, and that the wellness plan can help prevent large medical costs for the City in the future.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

**The seventeenth item was an ordinance approving the 2024 Temporary Budget.**

Mr. Huff stated that there are no changes from the original budget with appropriations at \$30,558,236.00. He said that the revised budget will come back in either February or March.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

**The eighteenth item was an ordinance accepting the distribution of income taxes collected in 2024.**

Mr. Huff stated that the item is a housekeeping item and that the General Fund is doing well. He explained that he would like to give \$450,000 to the Capital Fund instead of the General Fund.

Mr. Huff stated that the City will be incurring the cost of additional fire fighters in the approximate sum of \$330,000 and an IT Director in the approximate sum of \$100,000, adding that the income tax distribution can be changed at any time.

Mr. Kairis noted that the percentage is not much different and that everything else is the same.

Mr. Huff stated that there were some tweaks made in 2021 to add more to the Park CI Fund.

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- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

Mr. Harper informed Council about a new item that recently come before him from the Service Department. He explained that the Street Department has tried to fix a current truck for over a month and the mechanics cannot diagnose it. Mr. Harper stated that the Service Department would like to purchase a new truck and that it was already planned to be purchased next year. He stated that they are approximately \$10,000 short of purchasing the truck, which would also be used for snow plowing, and that they will have to outfit the truck with snowplow equipment. Mr. Huff stated that the appropriate money can be taken out of the 553 Fund.

- Motion to adjourn at 6:42 pm by Ms. Wood, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mr. Calfee- **All Ayes**

**There being no further business before Council, the meeting adjourned at 6:42 pm**

**ATTEST:**

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**Clerk of Council**

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**Council President**