



**Ravenna City Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 6, 2023, at 6:00 pm**

The Regular Council Meeting was held in person in Council Chambers.

The Regular Council Meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. November 6, 2023, by Council President, Andrew Kluge

Moment of Meditation & Silence

President Kluge called a moment of meditation and silence.

Pledge to Flag

President Kluge then led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

The following Council Members were present: Council President, Andrew Kluge, Amy Michael, Matt Harper, Rob Kairis, Christina West, Cheryl Wood, and Tim Calfee.

Also in attendance: Mayor Frank Seman; Law Director, Frank Cimino; Police Chief, Jeff Wallis; Fire Chief, Mark Chapple; City Engineer, Bob Finney; Finance Director, Brian Huff; Service Director, Kay Dubinsky; Safety Compliance Officer, Tim Contant; Council Clerk; Chelsea Gregor, Cliff Soudil, John Sferra, Dirk Remley, Arasin Hughes, Crystal Harper, Denise Paulat, Cynthia Miller, Maria Hydell, Amy Adams

- Motion to excuse Mr. Moskun by Ms. Wood, 2nd by Ms. West- **All Ayes**

Approval of the Minutes:

- Motion to approve the October 2, 2023, Regular Council meeting and the October 23, 2023 Special meeting minutes by Ms. Michael, 2nd by Ms. Wood- **All Ayes**

Communications- A letter from the Ohio Division of Liquor Control. Ms. Michael asked Police Chief Wallis if there were any issues at the location requesting the liquor renewal and he responded that the police department has not had issues there. Fire Chief Chapple stated that there will be an ISO rating review and status update in February.

Delegations from the Public- Main Street Ravenna (MSR) Vice President, Dirk Remley, addressed Council to provide them a list of the year's activities and achievements, and stated that they have come to request funding for next year. He explained that MSR has developed a good link with the school district through the Winter Writing Festival (WWF) and the High School Civics Class. Mr. Remley ran through a list of revitalization efforts that included facilitating a downtown mural and the DORA, downtown beautification, assisting businesses, hosting events that create foot traffic, and the soon to be implemented, Ravenna Card, which will be a community gift card. He stated that MSR had 3 Celebrate Portage nominations, generated \$15,000 in grants for the Youth Community Star and the Winter Writing Festival, and has helped to generate \$15,000 through DORA purchases. Mr. Remley stated that MSR volunteer hours are estimated at \$30,000 and that Heritage Ohio's quantifying impact per person is approximately \$10 for each visit downtown. He explained that Covid, and the after affects, have affected fundraising for Main Street Ravenna's \$90,000 budget and that Heritage Ohio, who is the overseeing organization for Main Street's, suggests that Main Street organizations acquire 1/3 of their budget from their city, businesses, and fundraising, adding that MSR is asking for an increased donation of \$30,000 from \$15,000. Mr. Remley stated that MSR has implemented new events and has received in kind donations to help with funding as it maintains an active volunteer board. He explained that MSR functions differently than the Chamber of Commerce and has become an extension of the City's economic development progress downtown. Mr. Remley shared that 71% of entities who have a Main Street also have elected officials who sit on their boards in an official capacity, which he said suggests that others find value in what Main Streets have to offer. Mr. Kluge asked Mr. Remley for the difference between a Main Street and an affiliate program, noting that there are only 21 Main Streets in Ohio and 32 affiliate programs.

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Mr. Remley stated that the main differences are that Main Streets are established, have been accredited, they have a budget, a full-time executive director and have community engagement. Main Street Ravenna Executive Director, Arasin Hughes, explained that Main Street Ravenna is modeled after Main Street programs which implement 4 core committees that are named Organization, Design, Business Vitality and Promotions. She stated that MSR answers to Heritage Ohio which provides guidance and accreditation to be officially designated as a Main Street organization.

Ms. Michael asked if MSR can help with the homeless population downtown.

Ms. Hughes stated that MSR talks with businesses and helps to create foot traffic downtown. She explained that MSR has also spoken with the City administration and State House Representative Gail Pavliga regarding the issue.

Mr. Remley invited Council members to join MSR as a City representative so that they can stay in the loop of MSR's progress.

Mr. Kluge noted the small number of Main Street organizations in Ohio and stated that the city is lucky to have one, adding that no decision regarding a donation would be made that evening.

Cynthia Miller addressed Council regarding an issue that she and her husband are experiencing with the Reed Memorial Library back renovation. She stated that she feels it is a David and Goliath situation and that they are not happy with the library trustees. Ms. Miller explained that she feels that her commercial property, which resides next to the library, will have its property value lowered due to the libraries renovations and would like Council to bring the plans back to the Planning Commission for review for a peaceful resolution. She stated that she does not think that the counsel mediation with the library will work.

Mr. Kluge stated that Council cannot do anything and that there were no decisions that came before Council to make, adding that there would be no Council action that evening.

Ms. Miller stated that she believes there can be a peaceful resolution and that the money could be spent in other ways.

Mr. Kluge stated that the item will need to be discussed further with the Mayor.

Report of Officials:

- Motion to approve the Report of Officials by Ms. Michael, 2nd by Ms. Wood- **All Ayes**

Report of Committees: Committee meetings start at 6:00 PM 11/13/2023.

Utilities: Mr. Moskun stated that a meeting is to be determined.

Information Systems: Ms. West stated that there will be a meeting next week.

Planning: Mr. Kairis stated that there are two items on the agenda and there will be a meeting next week.

Committee of the Whole: Mr. Kluge stated that the next Committee of the Whole meeting is Monday, November 20, 2023, at 6:00 pm.

Public Health & Safety: Ms. Michael stated that there are no items on the agenda but there will be a meeting next week.

Streets & Sidewalks: Mr. Harper stated that there are three items on the agenda and there will be a meeting next week.

Personnel: Mr. Calfee stated that there will be a committee meeting.

Community & Economic Development: Ms. Wood stated that a meeting is to be determined.

Cemetery: Mr. Harper stated that the cemetery is at 100% appropriation and that expenses are down. He explained that the employee health insurance had increased by 17% and that the committee will discuss raises next month.

Parks & Recreation: Mr. Calfee stated that the Parks & Recreation Department had their Halloween Drive Thru on October 28th at City Park. He explained that there were 393 cars that

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drove through with approximately 1,200 children, 600 adults, and 21 vendors and sponsors, adding that it was an outstanding turnout.

First Reading of Ordinances:

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-114 DECLARING THE IMPROVEMENT TO CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED IN THE CITY OF RAVENNA, OHIO TO BE A PUBLIC PURPOSE; DECLARING SUCH IMPROVEMENT TO BE EXEMPT FROM REAL PROPERTY TAXATION PURSUANT TO OHIO REVISED CODE SECTION 5709.40(B); REQUIRING THE OWNERS THEREOF TO MAKE ANNUAL SERVICE PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES; DESCRIBING THE PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS TO BE MADE THAT WILL DIRECTLY BENEFIT THE REAL PROPERTY; ESTABLISHING A MUNICIPAL PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT TAX INCREMENT EQUIVALENT FUND FOR THE DEPOSIT OF SERVICE PAYMENTS, TOGETHER WITH RELATED AUTHORIZATIONS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Ms. Wood stated that the TIF program is for tax reimbursement and that a public hearing was scheduled for November 27th to discuss the item. She asked if Council still wanted to move forward with the public hearing since it was not required.

Mr. Kairis explained that he would still like to give the residents a chance to speak on the subject. There being no further comments or questions.

Ordinance 2023-114 was moved on for second reading.

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-116 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF FOUR (4) SOLAR-POWERED SPEED LIMIT SIGNS FROM RADARSIGN AND APPROPRIATING \$15,240 FROM THE GENERAL FUND, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Harper stated that the signs will be used to deter speeding in certain areas and help promote safety by reminding people of speed limits in certain areas. He said the signs will come out of the General Fund. There being no further comments or questions.

- Motion to waive three separate readings by Ms. West, 2nd by Mr. Kairis- **All Ayes**
- Motion to adopt emergency clause by Ms. West, 2nd by Mr. Kairis- **All Ayes**
- Motion to pass Ordinance No. 2023-116 by Mr. Harper, 2nd Ms. West- **All Ayes**

Ordinance 2023-116 was adopted.

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-117 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF EIGHT (8) BOLLARD BIKE RACKS AND APPROPRIATING \$2,500 FROM THE GENERAL FUND, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Harper stated that the item will help with bike traffic in town and will allow residents and visitors a safe place to lock up their bikes, adding that the locations of the racks are to be determined. There being no further comments or questions.

- Motion to waive three separate readings by Mr. Calfee, 2nd by Mr. Harper- **All Ayes**
- Motion to adopt emergency clause by Mr. Calfee, 2nd by Ms. West- **All Ayes**
- Motion to pass Ordinance No. 2023-117 by Mr. Calfee, 2nd Ms. West- **All Ayes**

Ordinance 2023-117 was adopted.

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-118 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE STATE OF OHIO, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR CRACK SEALING ON STATE ROUTE 5 AND STATE ROUTE 88, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Harper stated that the State will cover the cost of both projects.

There being no further comments or questions.

- Motion to waive three separate readings by Ms. Wood, 2nd by Mr. Harper- **All Ayes**
- Motion to adopt emergency clause by Ms. Michael, 2nd by Mr. Harper- **All Ayes**
- Motion to pass Ordinance No. 2023-118 by Mr. Harper, 2nd Mr. Kairis- **All Ayes**

Ordinance 2023-118 was adopted.

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ORDINANCE NO. 2023-119 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH TANK INDUSTRY CONSULTANTS TO DEVELOP THE PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE DEMOLITION OF THE OLD GE WATER TOWER AND APPROPRIATING \$8,350.00, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

There being no further comments or questions.

- Motion to waive three separate readings by Mr. Calfee, 2nd by Ms. West- **All Ayes**
- Motion to adopt emergency clause by Mr. Calfee, 2nd by Mr. Kairis- **All Ayes**
- Motion to pass Ordinance No. 2023-119 by Mr. Calfee, 2nd Ms. West- **All Ayes**

Ordinance 2023-119 was adopted.

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-120 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH TANK INDUSTRY CONSULTANTS TO DEVELOP THE PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR A NEW ELEVATED WATER TANK AND APPROPRIATING \$31,650.00, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

There being no further comments or questions.

- Motion to waive three separate readings by Ms. Wood, 2nd by Ms. West- **All Ayes**
- Motion to adopt emergency clause by Mr. Kairis, 2nd by Ms. Wood- **All Ayes**
- Motion to pass Ordinance No. 2023-120 by Mr. Harper, 2nd Ms. Wood- **All Ayes**

Ordinance 2023-120 was adopted.

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-121 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THOMPSON ELECTRIC, INC. FOR BACKUP POWER AND ELECTRICAL UPGRADES AT THE FREEDOM ST. LIFT STATION AND APPROPRIATING \$74,900, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

There being no further comments or questions.

- Motion to waive three separate readings by Ms. Wood, 2nd by Mr. Kairis- **All Ayes**
- Motion to adopt emergency clause by Ms. Micheal, 2nd by Ms. Wood- **All Ayes**
- Motion to pass Ordinance No. 2023-121 by Ms. Wood, 2nd Mr. Kairis- **All Ayes**

Ordinance 2023-121 was adopted.

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-122 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DOWNTOWN SIGNAGE, APPROPRIATING THE SUM OF \$4,000 FROM THE 220 FUND AND APPROVING A DOWNTOWN SIGNAGE POLICY, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Kairis explained the policy that had been created and the approval process via the Service Director. He added that the City will pay for and install the downtown signage.

There being no further comments or questions.

- Motion to waive three separate readings by Ms. Michael, 2nd by Mr. Kairis- **All Ayes**
- Motion to adopt emergency clause by Ms. Michael, 2nd by Mr. Kairis- **All Ayes**
- Motion to pass Ordinance No. 2023-122 by Mr. Kairis, 2nd Ms. West- **All Ayes**

Ordinance 2023-122 was adopted.

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-123 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF RAVENNA, PART TWO – ADMINISTRATION CODE; TITLE TWO – GENERAL PROVISIONS; CHAPTER 214 – PURCHASING AND CONTRACTS; SECTION 214.01 – POLICY FOR PURCHASES OVER \$2,000, BY AMENDING THE AMOUNT FOR SETTLEMENT OF SMALL CLAIMS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Kairis stated that he was concerned about paragraph (b) and that the purpose of the item is to free Council from minor contracts and to make the process more efficient. He requested that the item be left on for second reading to amend the language.

Ordinance 2023-123 was left on second reading.

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-124 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF RAVENNA, PART EIGHT – BUSINESS REGULATION AND TAXATION CODE; TITLE FOUR – TAXATION; CHAPTER 881 – INCOME TAX EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2016; BY REVISING THE CODE TO BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH OHIO STATE LAWS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Huff stated that the item was discussed in committee and that municipalities state-wide are required to make the changes and adopt the new language which has been provided by RITA. There being no further comments or questions.

- Motion to waive three separate readings by Ms. Wood, 2nd by Mr. Kairis- **All Ayes**
- Motion to adopt emergency clause by Ms. Michael, 2nd by Mr. Kairis- **All Ayes**
- Motion to pass Ordinance No. 2023-124 by Mr. Harper, 2nd Ms. Wood- **All Ayes**

Ordinance 2023-124 was adopted.

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-125 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH PORTAGE COMMUNITY BANK AS DEPOSITORY FOR THE ACTIVE AND INTERIM FUNDS OF THE CITY OF RAVENNA, OHIO BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2023 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2027, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Huff stated that the item is a new depository agreement that will be retroactive to the beginning of the year and is required for audit compliance.

Mr. Calfee asked if there would be any audit issues with the agreement being retroactive.

Mr. Huff stated that he had sent the question to the auditor but has not heard back yet.

There being no further comments or questions.

- Motion to waive three separate readings by Ms. Micheal, 2nd by Mr. Kairis- **All Ayes**
- Motion to adopt emergency clause by Ms. Michael, 2nd by Ms. Wood- **All Ayes**
- Motion to pass Ordinance No. 2023-125 by Ms. Wood, 2nd Ms. Michael- **All Ayes**

Ordinance 2023-125 was adopted.

Second Reading of Ordinances:

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-111 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN AN EASEMENT TO ALLOW FIRST ENERGY TO RUN ELECTRICAL SERVICES TO LG CHEM AMERICA , AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Finney stated that he met with First Energy and that they moved the poles to the west side of the property and are reworking the easement agreement. He said that the city will be giving ICP monetary compensation and that he hopes to have the agreement by the next meeting.

There being no further comments or questions.

Ordinance 2023-111 was moved on to the third reading.

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-112 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2022-125 BY AMENDING EXHIBIT "A" OF ORDINANCE NO. 2022-125 SECTION V: MAYOR'S DEPARTMENT; SUBSECTION (a) AND SECTION XVIII- SALARY EMPLOYEES-OVERTIME EXEMPT BY ADDING A NEW POSITION, DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION SERVICES, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Calfee stated that the City had the position in the past and the item would be to re-establish it, adding that the Mayor and Finance Director are in support of it.

Mr. Kairis asked about a revised job description.

Mr. Calfee stated that the type of degree and qualifications were discussed with the HR Director and a revised job description can be provided.

Ms. Michael asked how the dual positions would work with an IT Director and an IT company.

Mr. Calfee explained that the topic was discussed at the meeting that she had missed and that a lot of IT will be given to the IT Director to take care of, but that the position will work closely with the IT company.

Ms. Michael expressed her concern for how the position will be managed and wanted to ensure that there would be coverage if the position took time off.

Mr. Calfee stated that it will take some time for everything to be figured out and how the work will flow between the IT Director and the IT company.

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Mr. Kairis stated that it is a good plan but may be missing some things strategically. Mayor Seman added that the position would not be filled until after the first of the year. There being no further comments or questions.

Ordinance 2023-112 was moved on to the third reading.

Third Reading of Ordinances: None

Old Business- None

New Business-

President of Council Remarks- Mr. Kluge stated that he will be sending out an email regarding a Council retreat and has considered using a conference room at NEOMED. He stated that the Parks and Recreation trick or treat drive through was fun.

Council Member Remarks

Mr. Harper- No Comment

Ms. Michael- Ms. Michael thanked Ms. West for organizing the downtown trick-or-treat station for Council at the Halloween Merchant Walk. She reminded Council about walking in the Midnight Madness parade and stated that the paperwork to participate has been submitted.

Mr. Kairis- Mr. Kairis thanked Ms. West for setting up the Council trick-or-treat station and said that they went through a lot of candy.

Mr. Moskun- No Comment

Mr. Calfee- No Comment

Ms. West- Ms. West reminded everyone to vote the following day.

Ms. Wood- No Comment

Mayor's Remarks-

Mayor Seman reiterated Ms. West's reminder to vote the following day.

He thanked Main Street Ravenna for their presentation and addressed their annual evaluation by Heritage Ohio, adding that he supports both Main Street Ravenna and the Chamber of Commerce.

Mayor Seman stated that he will be meeting with LG Chem to go over a list of things that need to be accomplished and stated that there has been an issue with dirt in a waterline that needs to be sorted out. Mayor Seman stated that he will be meeting with the Rootstown JEDD to get things in order to collect at the beginning of the year.

The City will have to decide what it is going to do with the remaining ARPA Funds in 2024 and administration will reach out to department heads to see if they have any project needs.

Mayor Seman explained that there is a property owner in Rootstown that has City property running through it as an old feeder ditch into Muzzy Lake. He stated that the gentleman would like to sell his property that is comprised of separate parcels. Mayor Seman explained that the parcel of City property is in the JEDD and he does not want to mess anything up, so they will discuss the possibility of either giving the property owner an easement or selling them the parcel.

Mayor Seman stated that he will not be at the next meeting because he will be at a conference in Columbus.

The Law Director requested to go into executive session to discuss pending and potential legal matters.

- Motion to go into Executive Session at 7:17 pm by Mr. Kairis, 2nd by Ms. West - All Ayes

Council went into Executive Session to discuss pending and potential legal matters.

- Motion to come out of Executive Session at 7:40 pm by Ms. West, 2nd by Mr. Kairis- All Ayes
- Ms. Michael was unavailable to vote.

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- Motion to adjourn at 7:40 pm by Ms. West, 2nd Ms. Wood- **All Ayes**

The next Regular Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 4, 2023, at 6:00 P.M.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

Council President