



**Ravenna City Council  
Planning Committee Meeting Minutes  
December 11, 2023**

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

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

**Also attending the meeting:** Mayor Frank Seman; Police Chief, Jeff Wallis; Finance Director, Brian Huff; Service Director, Tim Contant; City Engineer, Bob Finney; Council Clerk, Chelsea Gregor; Cliff Soudil, Larry Silenius, Judy Watkins, Julie Piccone Beach, Tonya Jefferson

**Planning Committee Meeting was called to order at 6:07 P.M. by Chairperson, Rob Kairis**

**The first item was spending American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.**

Mr. Kairis stated that he had compiled a list of ARPA fund requests in the sum of \$457,000 out of the total \$575,000 available. He explained that the Parks and Recreation Department has requested a total of \$312,000 for the resurfacing of the Chestnut Hills Park playground and the courts at City Park. He said that the Police Department has requested \$108,000, the Fire Department has requested \$31,000 and that City Council has requested to purchase a new podium and audience chairs in the sum of \$5,500.

Ms. Michael asked about purchasing the Resistograph that was suggested and about adding funds for downtown beautification to the list.

Mr. Kairis added both items to the list.

Ms. Michael also suggested that the City use funds to create a mural to honor Fredrick Loudin.

Mr. Moskun suggested cameras for Chestnut Hills Park and Ms. Watkins agreed that they were needed.

Mr. Harper suggested using some funds to restock Lake Hodgson.

Ms. Michael said that doing so is an economic development facet but said that she thinks the water quality had been affected in the past by bringing in fish that were not indigenous.

Mr. Kairis stated that he will have the list ready for January.

- The item was moved forward.

**The second item was moratoriums.**

Mr. Kairis asked what Council wanted to do with self-storage facilities and said that Strongsville bans them, and Parma and Centerville restrict them with zoning restrictions. He explained examples of limiting restrictions and the use of walls and fencing. Mr. Kairis stated that storage facilities do not generate taxes for the city and that the City can model its restrictions on what the other two cities have done.

Ms. Wood suggested extending the moratorium until the comprehensive plan is complete.

Mr. Kairis stated that he will check the current moratorium to extend it.

Mr. Soudil noted a former controversial home-based business that was in a residential area and said restrictions could be covered under zoning so that the situation does not happen again.

- The item was moved forward.

**The third item was safety and city hall buildings.**

Mr. Finney stated that Sean Thompson has been working on getting a floor plan and price tag for a new City Hall, Police Station, and Fire Station. He explained the layout of the departments with the help of color-coded blueprints.

Ms. Michael asked how many municipalities they visited.

Mr. Finney said that he visited a few and that he wanted to get a design started to figure out the space usage of the property and to get a price tag to start planning the funding of the project.

Ms. Michael inquired about the RAC being omitted from the plans and said that the current RAC space is nickel-and-diming the department.

Mr. Finney stated that Council approved the contract to include only Fire, Police and City Hall in the architectural scope.

Mr. Moskun said that he was under the impression that all the departments would be included in the new complex and that it is not practical to leave the RAC at their current building due to the upkeep cost.

Mr. Harper asked if the property could fit everything that the Parks and Recreation Department needs.

Mr. Moskun stated that they could expand down the road.

Ms. Wood suggested that the layout could be two stories to accommodate what the RAC needs.

Mr. Finney stated that parking is being proposed on the property area where Council members suggested the RAC to be placed.

Mr. Kluge asked how much the additional building would be and said that the Parks and Recreation Department could also be housed somewhere else. He said that a wish list needs to be created and then a way to pay for it all.

Mr. Finney stated that the police and fire stations are estimated to cost \$12 million and city hall to cost \$8 million, adding that they would like to break ground in 2026.

Ms. Watkins stated that she has not sat down with the architect to determine a cost estimate to include her department in the new construction.

In response to Mr. Finney's estimated cost to include the RAC, Ms. West agreed that with inflation the addition could add an extra \$6-\$8 million dollars to the project total.

Ms. Watkins stated that she would like the opportunity to sit down with the architect to see if it is feasible to add the department to the new complex.

Ms. Michael stated that the City needs to look at the goal and see what makes sense for economic development.

Ms. Watkins implored Council to visit the RAC to see the aging space.

Mr. Moskun stated that he would like to have it presented to Council with a scope and price tag.

Mr. Finney stated that Council would need to appropriate funds for the architect to do a scope for the RAC.

Mr. Kairis stated that the City needs to get the new construction as right as possible and that it doesn't want to miss an opportunity to incorporate the RAC.

Mr. Huff stated that he had sent out an email giving a financial update and said that the City will need to put a levy on the ballot for the new construction.

Mr. Finney stated that the City will then need two levies, one for the safety forces and one for the parks department.

In response to Mr. Moskun's statement that a new roof on the annex building would cost \$80,000, he suggested adding it to the ARPA funds list.

Mr. Kairis stated that they are long-term planning and that the City can change their mind. He said that they can get a new contract for scope services and prepare to have the levy ready in August for the November election.

Mr. Kluge suggested keeping the item on the agenda.

- The item was for discussion only.

**The fourth item was Chamber of Commerce donation.**

Mr. Kairis explained that the City had given \$15,000 to both the Chamber of Commerce and Main Street Ravenna the year prior, and that the City pays a \$400 membership fee to the Chamber and a \$500 membership fee to Heritage Ohio for Main Street Ravenna. He said that the two organizations are apple to oranges but that they are both an investment to the City. Mr. Kairis stated that he is okay with giving the Chamber \$20,000.

Mr. Calfee noted that the Chamber has over 200 members and that he would like to eventually look at the two different funding models of the two organizations.

Mr. Kairis stated that it is worth discussing in the future and that both organizations do great things.

- The item was moved forward.

**Management Update**

Mr. Finney stated that the City will have to discuss its stance on recreational marijuana and potential sales, adding that the medical marijuana dispensary had talked about incorporating recreational marijuana if it became legal.

Mr. Harper suggested implementing a moratorium until the State has its final ruling on recreational marijuana.

Mr. Soudil stated that the dispensary did not go by all the rules and wanted to make sure the City ensured they did next time.

**There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:25 P.M.**

**ATTEST:**

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**Clerk of Council**

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**Rob Kairis, Chairperson  
Planning Committee**