



**Ravenna City Council  
Planning Committee Meeting Minutes  
March 11, 2024**

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

Council present: 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; Fire Chief, Mark Chapple; Service Director, Tim Contant; City Engineer, Bob Finney; Finance Director, Brian Huff; Assistant Finance Director, Tami Lorence; Council Clerk, Chelsea Gregor; Cliff Soudil, John Sferra, Mike Bogo, Jen Davis, Carmen Laudato

**Planning Committee Meeting was called to order at 6:29 P.M. by Chairperson, Rob Kairis**

**The first item was adult use cannabis.**

Mr. Kairis stated that he would like to keep the item on the agenda so that the City can eventually add adult use cannabis into the codified ordinances.

Mr. Moskun stated that he thinks the dispensaries should be outside of the immediate downtown.

Mr. Kairis stated that medical marijuana is permitted in commercial and industrial zones.

Mr. Finney clarified that sales are permitted in industrial zones but processing and cultivating cannabis would have to be approved for conditional use through the Planning Commission. He explained that a conditional use could be that the business is open all night, for example.

Mr. Kairis explained that conditional use would be permitted in the Central Business District and that he doesn't want to take that option away.

Ms. West suggested matching the rules with medical marijuana and letting the State mandate where dispensaries can be located.

Ms. Michael expressed her concern with public usage.

Mr. Soudil stated that smoking is not allowed in public and that people who purchase items from dispensaries are not allowed to open the packages until they get home.

Ms. Laudato stated that the Planning Commission is an advisory committee and ultimately Council will decide, adding that she does not want to see bright neon cannabis leaves in shop windows. She said that the City can evaluate usage versus the comprehensive plan. Ms. Laudato stated that the Planning Commission is an underutilized advisory panel.

Ms. Michael stated that it could be detrimental to certain clientele downtown and that the City should think of its image.

Ms. West stated that she doesn't see an issue when it is regulated and done properly.

Ms. Wood stated that the City needs to look at the situation like alcohol and cigarettes. She said that she has no problem limiting dispensaries but that she doesn't want to target or discriminate them.

Ms. Michael suggested having the Planning Commission discuss and advise Council.

Mr. Kairis agreed that Council needs help to get direction and that he would like to keep it simple. He asked Council if they would like to take it out of the Central Business District and Mr. Harper, Mr. Moskun, Ms. Michael, Ms. Wood and Ms. West all said yes.

Bob expressed his concern for available parking.

Ms. Michael stated that it should follow the same rules as alcohol.

Mr. Finney explained that the State will take care of sales and said that it would be illegal to consume the product in your car or outside. He said that he does not want a dispensary downtown because he does not think there is enough parking, and the State has not approved anything yet.

Ms. Michael suggested getting input from the safety forces.

Mr. Kairis stated that the City needs to think about what it wants in the long-term.

- The item was for discussion only.

**The second item was safety and City Hall buildings.**

Mr. Moskun explained that the Parks and Recreation Director met with the architect to design a new parks facility and to get a cost. He said that Ms. Watkins would like to have the facility on the same site as City Hall. Mr. Moskun explained that the cost would be approximately \$7 million dollars and that the square footage is not cut and dry.

Ms. West stated that the facility would be realistic with features like a rubber floor, a gym, track and outdoor bathrooms.

Ms. Michael stated that the City will have to look at funding the police and fire buildings.

Mr. Kairis added that the City will have to also look at funding a new city hall.

- The item was for discussion only.

**The third item was accepting a \$4,000 donation from JBL for cornhole courts.**

Mr. Kairis stated that there was a donation to install concrete cornhole courts at Chestnut Hills Park and that there is no match required.

Mr. Calfee said that it is a wonderful gift from JBL to the Parks and Recreation Department.

- The item was moved forward.

**The fourth item was authorization to apply for a Portage County DD Grant.**

Mr. Kairis stated that the item is to apply for a grant to help pay for more accessible playground equipment.

Ms. West explained that she would like to have more playground equipment that people are able to utilize if they have any accessibility needs. She has received quotes for equipment from SourceWell and items include tables and swings. Ms. West said that it is a new grant and that they are encouraging communities to be more inclusive and accessible.

- The item was moved forward.

**The fifth item was the permanent budget.**

Mr. Kairis explained that he sent out the permanent budget to Council on Friday and that there was a Budget Commission meeting on March 5<sup>th</sup>. He said that there were updates to the budget which was increased by \$6.7 million, with \$4.7 million being allocated to the new water tower.

Mr. Huff noted that additional expenditures include the pocket park, the street garage roof, 3 additional fire fighters and a new ambulance.

- The item was moved forward.

**The sixth item was an America 250-OH resolution.**

Mr. Kairis stated that Matt Wunderle from the Ravenna High School Civics Class would like to pursue a grant to help America's 250 Anniversary and he needs a resolution of support to do so.

- The item was moved forward.

**Management Update**

**There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:08 P.M.**

**ATTEST:**

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**Clerk of Council**

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**Rob Kairis, Chairperson  
Planning Committee**