



**RAVENNA CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES
May 20, 2024, 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, Rob Kairis.

Council present: Council President Rob Kairis, Amy Michael, Rob Kairis, Tim Calfee, Christina West, Cheryl Wood, Matt Harper, Tyler Marovich.

Also in attendance: Mayor Frank Seman; Service Director, Tim Contant; City Engineer, Bob Finney; Finance Director, Tami Lorence; Finance Controller, Brian Huff; Council Clerk, Chelsea Gregor; Cliff Soudil, Larry Silenius, Bill Barber

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

The first item on the agenda was to approve the Committee of the Whole meeting minutes from April 22, 2024

- Motion to approve the April 22, 2024, Committee of the Whole minutes by Ms. Michael, 2nd by Mr. Moskun- **All Ayes**

The second item was an ordinance to accept a \$3,000 donation from an anonymous donor for the Police K-9 Fund.

Ms. Michael stated that the item is to accept a generous donation from an anonymous donor for the Police K-9 Fund and there is no match required.

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

The third item was an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract for the School Resource Officer (SRO).

Ms. Michael stated that the item was discussed and not much has changed. She said that the officer will receive their usual union raise and that the item will be addressed at the school board meeting that evening.

Mr. Moskun asked if Ravenna Township was contacted to see if they could participate in providing compensation since there are lot of kids that come from the township.

Mr. Calfee stated that the Township had been asked in the past and that he has not heard why they are not involved.

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

The fourth item was an ordinance authorizing a contract with an attorney to review the library project.

Mr. Harper stated that it seems like Council is in favor of an attorney reviewing the policies and procedures regarding the concerns raised.

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Mr. Kairis presented a legal case and a photo of an approved project that another City Council had wanted to prevent. He explained that the case went to court and the judge ultimately determined that the City cannot determine what another Commission can do, adding that hiring an attorney can open a can of worms.

Ms. Wood said that Council is not trying to change the project but to make sure everything was done correctly in 2004. She explained that since neighbors are being affected, that she would like to see the conflict addressed as a way to keep the city safe and protected.

Ms. Michael agreed that the conflict that has arisen does not sit right with her.

Mr. Harper stated that the item is to ensure that everything has been done correctly, and that an attorney can review past ordinances, leases and paperwork.

Mayor Seman noted that the Millers had 30 days to file an appeal to the project and they did not.

Mr. Harper noted that 20 years ago decisions were made and altered, and he would like to clarify the situation.

Mr. Marovich said that he has tried to understand the situation and noted that traffic laws are regulated.

Mr. Moskun noted that there is no access to the parking lot anymore.

Ms. Wood stated that the original intention of the area was to leave the parking lot entrance open to flow through from the book drop.

Mr. Kairis said that proceeding with the attorney could interfere with the project and open the doors to litigation.

Mr. Calfee said that he is conflicted bringing in an attorney but thinks it's wise since there are so many questions regarding various documents.

Mayor Seman asked who would hire an attorney.

Mr. Kairis said that Council can consult with the Portage County Prosecutors Office in order to receive a referral to take on the case.

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

The fifth item was an ordinance to approve the Tax Incentive Review Council (TIRC) meeting minutes.

Ms. Wood stated that the item is an annual housekeeping ordinance which is required by the State of Ohio to review the minutes of the Tax Incentive Review Council.

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

The sixth item was an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to apply for the 2024 CHIP grant.

Ms. Wood explained that the item is a group application to apply for the 2024 CHIP grant that includes Streetsboro, Portage County and Ravenna. She stated that Ravenna is applying for \$300,000, Streetsboro is applying for \$350,000 and the County will be applying for \$400,000.

Ms. Wood stated that the funds will be used towards single-family, owner-occupied home repairs.

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

The seventh item was a discussion regarding a Council Retreat.

Mr. Kairis stated that he has contemplated hosting a Council retreat and wanted input on whether Council was interested or not. He explained what a retreat looks like in terms of length,

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discussion, team building, brainstorming and homework to discuss items important to Council members.

Ms. West said that retreats are good for professional development and offered the use of the Board of Developmental Disabilities boardroom to hold the session that is not Council Chambers.

Ms. Michael said that a full day retreat would be hard to do with her schedule and suggested that smaller work sessions would be more appropriate.

Mr. Kairis noted that the public would be invited and that there are many examples of Council's holding retreats.

Mr. Harper said that holding an all-day retreat would be difficult during the summer and suggested late fall or during the winter.

Mr. Marovich stated his support of the retreat and said that it improves personal connections as well as addressing different Council items.

Mr. Kairis noted that fun ice breakers are included to help offset the important discussions that would take place.

Ms. West suggested splitting the retreat into two days to alleviate the longevity of one day.

Ms. Michael explained that she would prefer work sessions with administration and department heads.

Ms. Wood agreed that her time is limited during the summer and said that fall or winter is better.

Mr. Calfee said that he is open to a retreat to discuss procedures.

Mr. Moskun said that late fall or winter would work for him, and that Council can clarify a lot of structural issues and communication.

Mr. Kairis stated that since there is a reluctance to have a long retreat that he will bring the item back around that time for consideration.

Mr. Silenius asked if the meeting would be open to the public and if the retreat would be a violation of sunshine laws.

Mr. Kairis said that the retreat would be open to the public and that by doing so it would not violate sunshine laws.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.
- Motion to adjourn at 6:48 pm by Ms. Wood, 2nd Ms. West- **All Ayes**

There being no further business before Council, the meeting adjourned at 6:48 pm

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

Council President