Monroe Council Minutes
Regular Meeting of Council
November 24, 2020 – 6:30 p.m.
233 South Main Street, Monroe, Ohio

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Frentzel opened the regular meeting of Council at 6:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Council members present: Jason Frentzel, Keith Funk, Anna Hale, Todd Hickman, and Christina McElfresh.

Mr. Funk moved to excuse Mr. Callahan and Mr. Routson; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Funk moved to approve the Council Minutes of November 10, 2020; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Visitors

None.

Committee Reports

None.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Emergency Resolution No. 77-2020. A Resolution honoring the dedication of Steve Wood as a member of the Planning Commission and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Funk moved to suspend the rule requiring the reading of Emergency Resolution No. 77-2020 on two separate days and authorize its adoption on the first reading; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Mayor Frentzel read Emergency Resolution No. 77-2020 in its entirety and presented a framed copy of the Resolution to Steve Wood for his many years of service on the Planning Commission.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Emergency Resolution No. 77-2020; seconded by Mr. Hickman. Roll call vote: five ayes. Motion carried.

Mayor Frentzel then presented the framed Resolution to Mr. Wood.

Mr. Wood thanked Mr. Brock and Mrs. Wasson as they were here when he was appointed to the Planning Commission and we have been through things large and small.

Emergency Resolution No. 78-2020. A Resolution accepting a small business relief grant, authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement by and between the City of Monroe and the Board of County Commissioners of Butler County for the implementation of said relief grant, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Brock advised this is related to the small business relief grant funds that Butler County has set aside as part of their CARES Act funds. They elected to work through the local jurisdictions to distribute these funds.

Mr. Funk moved to suspend the rule requiring the reading of Emergency Resolution No. 78-2020 on two separate days, authorize its adoption on the first reading, and have it read by title only; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Emergency Resolution No. 78-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Emergency Resolution No. 78-2020; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Roll call vote: five ayes. Motion carried.

Emergency Resolution No. 79-2020. A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to accept the proposal from CT Consultants for professional engineering services in connection with the State Route 63 at Lawton Avenue improvement project and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Brock explained in looking closer at the Lawton Road/State Route 63 project it was found there is a failing culvert and this will allow the design changes to correct this.

Mr. Funk moved to suspend the rule requiring the reading of Emergency Resolution No. 79-2020 on two separate days, authorize its adoption on the first reading, and have it read by title only; seconded by Mr. Hickman. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Emergency Resolution No. 79-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Emergency Resolution No. 79-2020; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Roll call vote: five ayes. Motion carried.

Emergency Resolution No. 80-2020. A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement by and between the City of Monroe and Vanguard Cleaning Systems for the cleaning of City-owned facilities and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Brock explained that this will be one agreement with our current cleaning service to include the new police facility. In response to Mr. Hickman's inquiry, Mr. Brock advised that it is for one year.

Mr. Funk moved to suspend the rule requiring the reading of Emergency Resolution No. 80-2020 on two separate days, authorize its adoption on the first reading, and have it read by title only; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Emergency Resolution No. 80-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Emergency Resolution No. 80-2020; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Roll call vote: five ayes. Motion carried.

Emergency Resolution No. 81-2020. A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to implement a Health Savings Account for calendar year 2021.

Mr. Brock reported this is a resolution passed annually so we can start open enrollment for our employees. We have been working with Horan over the last several months to get health insurance. The health insurance initially came back 36% higher after receiving a 0% increase over the last two years. This is due to some high claims this year. Through reworking those plans they came down as initially it was going to cost the City $315,000 and now it will cost the City $269,470 for the 2021 budget year.

Mr. Brock is recommending that our policy be set to specify that contributions is based on 50% of the IRS contributions. We recommend that the amounts remain the same as last year.

Mr. Hickman asked about the comparison from last year to this year for health insurance and Mr. Brock advised that the cost to the City increased by $269,470.

Mr. Funk moved to suspend the rule requiring the reading of Emergency Resolution No. 81-2020 on two separate days, authorize its adoption on the first reading, and have it read by title only; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Emergency Resolution No. 81-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Emergency Resolution No. 81-2020; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Roll call vote: five ayes. Motion carried.

Resolution No. 82-2020. A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract by and between the City of Monroe and Hurst Kelly and Co. LLC for services related to the completion of the City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for fiscal year ending December 31, 2020.

Mr. Brock stated this is an annual contract dealing with the 2020 CAFR, which is related to grant funding, CARES, and FEMA. There is an increase in the contract from $22,000 to $24,000. This increase is due to additional rules and an upcoming audit of the CARES Act funding.
Mr. Funk moved to consider this the first reading of Resolution No. 82-2020 and have it read by title only; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Resolution No. 82-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to approve the first reading of Resolution No. 82-2020; seconded by Mr. Hickman. Roll call vote: five ayes. Motion carried.

Resolution No. 83-2020. A Resolution adopting the October 16, 2020, Strategic Planning Retreat Report, Vision Statement, and Strategic Priorities.

Mr. Brock advised this would approve the vision statement that has been reviewed several times: "Monroe is a family-friendly small town with quality amenities, well-managed public services, and a connected and engaged community." It will also accept the strategic priorities: well managed services and infrastructure, strategic growth and development, communication and interpersonal connections, and park connectivity."

Mr. Brock informed Council that adopting the statement and priorities will allow staff to develop plans and operations around those official priorities as set by Council.

Mrs. McElfresh asked if this information was shared with the group that is working on the Comprehensive Plan and Mr. Brock replied that it was.

Mr. Funk moved to consider this the first reading of Resolution No. 83-2020 and have it read by title only; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Resolution No. 83-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to approve the first reading of Resolution No. 83-2020; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Roll call vote: five ayes. Motion carried.

Consideration of Motion authorizing the expenditure of $233,277.29 to Motorola Solutions for 800 MHZ radios and accessories for the Department of Fire.

Mr. Brock advised funds were set aside to match a requested grant. The grant was denied and the Department would like to utilize the funds set aside to replace the radios at a discounted price. Mrs. McElfresh asked when the last time radios were replaced. Chief Centers replied a regional grant with the County was entered into approximately 13 years ago to have all the police and fire systems replaced with the new 800 systems. The life expectancy depends on the use and due to the age of the radios they no longer make the parts for them and when they do the upgrades some of the radios may not operate correctly. He does not anticipate any further cost for the radios.

Mayor Frentzel read some other jurisdictions use CARES Act funding for these. Chief Centers noted that each employee needs to be assigned their own radio as they have a panic button that will come up with the name.

Mr. Funk moved to authorize the expenditure of $233,277.29 to Motorola Solutions for 800 MHz radios and accessories for the Department of Fire; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Consideration of Motion to cancel the December 22, 2020, Council meeting.

Mr. Funk moved to cancel the December 22, 2020, Council meeting; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Administrative Reports

Mr. Brock gave a presentation related to the budget. You all received information on the temporary appropriations. In the 2021 budget we took the strategic priorities and trying to develop budget around those. What you are going to see is those four areas and specific items that we want to hit. Last week Mr. Brock sent to Council a draft Management Plan that listed each of those strategic priorities and, underneath them, priorities within each of those areas. He would like to make sure they are aligned with what Council wants as priorities and report on the progress quarterly at a Council meeting.

Well Managed Services and Infrastructure

- Performance based budgeting is an item that we need to move to as best practices. Council will be very involved in 2021 and Council can make better decisions on what you want to fund out into the future.
- Improve internal administrative services and processes goes along with the internal HR systems, the management systems, and make sure we are keeping up with the progress of those other departments as well.
- An ADA transition plan deals with capital planning under the Federal guidelines. Some of the money towards resurfacing must go towards bringing the ramps into compliance. We want to make sure we can utilize RID funds in the residential areas to meet the resurfacing needs and do not have to rely on the General Fund.
- With board and commission training we want to make sure they are all aligned and on task and make sure everyone is trained. When the Comprehensive Plan is done and the strategic initiatives are done we want to make sure everyone understands that is aligned.

Strategic Growth and Development

- In the retreat we talked about the GIS position and how that is important and we would like to fund that within this budget.
- We are on task to complete the Comprehensive Plan.

- We would like to plan for growth in Public Works. They have traditionally not seen the same growth as in other departments, we have seen a lot of aging infrastructure that need to be addressed. Most of all the facility they are in needs to be upgraded.
- Increase utilization of CIC in the economic development process and to support small business/economic development strategic plan was one of the important roles talked about in the retreat.
- There is a need and would like to continue to move forward with citywide fiber optic. Fiber to the home is important.

Communication and Interpersonal Connections

- Looking into the future we want to make sure we are analyzing and refreshing all communication platforms. Whether that is this platform here, our website, social media, welcome packets, newsletters, and any type of communication tools we need to have a fresh and consistent platform to do that on. We need to reflect on that and move forward. Website and social media policies are needed and it is about consistency and keeping that message out there and where these messages need to go and how we get it out there. If we continue to work on developing those policies and whomever is putting that out on social media, the website, and into the public domain it has a consistent look, feel, and message.
- We want to reflect on partnering with community groups to engage the residents in the board and commission process. We should stream all of our public meetings so we broaden our communication

Parks and Connectivity

- Bicentennial Commons Phase 1b construction will be underway and is targeted to be completed and open by next summer.
- We need to expand upon the Comprehensive Plan and create the trails and connectivity plan to see where we want to see these trails across the City.
- Baker Park had plans for a dog park and Council did not fund that, so we need to look at what we want to do with that park and how we want to move forward.
- Engage with sports organizations and schools to understand needs. We have heard from the sports organizations and the school that they have needs and want the City to expand those parks and where we can do that and how we can partner with the schools because a lot of those services are going there and utilizing their facilities. Need to look at how we can coordinate that so overall we are planning our parks and putting things out there that people want to see.

Mr. Brock presented the five-year forecast that reflects we are doing really well. We are very close to our target numbers that we projected at the beginning of the year. He noted we are very conservative in our revenue numbers and hope to see that growth, but we are not going to say that right now and put in this document. This is a planning document to make sure we are budgeting appropriately. As you look at the expenditure line from 2021 to 2022 there is a significant jump and that is the public safety portion of that new income tax. What we put in there are the seven firefighters and the additional police officers. This fund was meant to cover

their costs. Those revenues we budgeted are very flat. Previously, we have seen good growth in there. Not knowing what net profit taxes are going to be next year and not knowing what kind of growth we will see next year you don't want to overestimate the revenue in there. From 2021 to 2022 the amounts that is available for those positions is a lot less, so we have to depend on the General Fund to fund that. Right now we are down three firefighters, three officers, and one dispatcher. We are holding off filling those positions so we can continue to support the level of employees in those departments that this budget was intended to be.
For personnel budget highlights we talked about the increase in health insurance costs that we are seeing. It effects both the City and the employees. We did see the increases in the union contracts and in the recent compensation study and that is included in the budget going forward. In the General Fund we are proposing the three new positions of Human Resources Manager, Planning and Zoning Specialist, and GIS Coordinator. We removed the City Engineer from the personnel budget, but you will see it in the operational area as a contracted service. We are holding the positions in police, fire, and dispatch until we can see the public safety income tax revenues stabilize.

On the operational side you will see the increase in economic development due incentive payments allocated to the CIC. There is no particular planned spending at this time. There are operational needs in the Finance Department as we move to renovate facilities downstairs and improve services to the citizens. In building and grounds you will see the biggest increase as we have the new police facility to maintain, a new phone system as the present one is dying, and the cost of aging facilities. Finally, increased costs to maintain and improve parks.

Overall the administration portion of the budget is $4,133,017; public works is $4,328.050 and is on the General Fund portion and does not include the water or storm water; fire and EMS is $5,696,273, and police and dispatch is $5,785,225.

Other Funds

- TIF and RID funds we talked about the ability to use those for capital needs. They are for one time expenditures and we need to develop a policy on where those needs are.
- The water fund operational needs are increasing and there are maintenance needs and capital design work that is needed. Several years ago there was a master plan put together.
- There were water department personnel requests, but we will need to wait until the water rate study is completed.
- Storm sewer fund capital and personnel needs to be analyzed in the rate study.

Mayor Frentzel asked about going from a City Engineer to a contract service, day-to-day what does that take off of your plate and help you accomplish as City Manager. Mr. Brock replied the intent would be not to have me be City Engineer anymore. We attempted to hire for that position and we were unsuccessful as the market for engineers is very tight. We are exploring a consultant to be the engineer of record and that would allow that individual to do the work themselves, but as there are additional needs it would lessen our needs to contact out those items that can be handled within the firm. We are going through that process right now. If we get to the point where Council does not want to approve that contractual service we will have to wrap back around to see how we provide that service.

Hopefully, you had a chance to review the Comprehensive Plan meeting that was out on Facebook and reviewed his report that was provided. We should be able to start to finalize a lot of those things and really solidify the finalization of that plan. There will need to be public hearings, so it is not an easy finish.

Referencing the proposal submitted by the Girl Scouts to provide recycle bins at the park, Mr. Brock asked them to quantify the number of trash cans we had and they indicated there were 17 trash cans at Monroe Community Park. They wanted to provide recycle bins and we will need to identify what they look like and how they are secured before we determine what their donation is going to want to be. I assume after they are done they were specifically looking at Community Park and it may be something that we want to consider at other parks and make it a continuing program. He asked if Council would like to move forward with this.

Mrs. McElfresh thought it was a great idea, but questioned how would they be picked up and if you have individual recycling bins does that fall on City staff. Mr. Brock advised right now we have staff that routinely goes around and empty trash cans.

Mr. Morton advised we empty them at least twice a week and in the summer more often. One thing they Girl Scouts didn’t take into account are the trash cans around the disc golf course and that would be a good place to put recycle bins.

Mayor Frentzel asked if we have someplace in the City for recycling and is that something Rumpke would take care of now or do we need to add it. Mr. Morton replied there used to be recycling containers at Monroe Crossings Park provided by PAWS, but they were recently removed because they were not being cared for. Rumpke was not emptying them and PAWS was not really making enough money off of them. Currently we do not have any recycling facilities in the City.

Recapping, Mr. Funk stated there is no real cost, no barrier to do this. Mr. Brock indicated we would have to analyze the cost of the bins and then look at what Rumpke would charge for that recycling. They anticipated donating a few of the bins. Mrs. McElfresh just wants to fully understand what is involved in it. Mr. Morton stated it would double our time and thinks it is a good idea, but will add additional time. Mayor Frentzel suggested to perhaps start off small and grow from there. Mr. Brock noted we will work on putting costs together and the type of bin and recognize the Girl Scouts donation with a plaque or something.

Mr. Hickman questioned the City recycling as he recalled it being a big discussion before and the residents are doing a good job recycling and the City is not recycling. Mr. Brock we do not provide that out in the community, but we do recycling within the buildings and bins inside all of the buildings.

Mr. Brock reported we received a request for a flashing yellow light at Britton Lane and Capital Electric provided a quote of $5,500 for the physical changes. What we have to do first is making sure we are coordinating those signals because we want to address the other issue the accidents that are occurring there. We believe we can correct that with better signal timing rather than any other physical issue. As well as the State Route 4 accidents and the Chief is pulling the data as well as his enforcement efforts.

Mr. Hickman pointed out there used to be a lot of accidents at Britton and State Route 63 before the turn lane signals were put in. He wants to make sure we do not go back to that. Mayor Frentzel added there is frustration of that signal turning right on Britton Lane and noticed if someone's light doesn't change they are way out in the intersection. Perhaps a sign advising to stop here to activate the signal.

- **Executive Session** – To consider the employment and compensation of public employees.

Mr. Funk moved to adjourn into executive session to consider the employment and compensation of public employees; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Roll call vote: five ayes. Motion carried.

Council adjourned into executive session at 7:46 p.m.

Mr. Funk moved to reconvene into regular session; seconded by Mr. Hickman. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Council reconvened into regular session at 8:54 p.m.

Adjournment

Mr. Funk moved to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Hickman. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The regular meeting of Council adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela S. Wasson, MMC
Clerk of Council