



City of Powell, Ohio
City Council

MEETING MINUTES
September 4, 2018

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

A regular meeting of Powell City Council was called to order by Mayor Jon C. Bennehoof on Tuesday, September 4, 2018 at 7:36 p.m. City Council members present included Jon C. Bennehoof, Frank Bertone, Tom Counts, Brian Lorenz, Brendan Newcomb, Melissa Riggins and Daniel Swartwout. Also present were Steve Lutz, City Manager; Thad Boggs, Legal Counsel; Debra Miller, Finance Director; Chris Huber, City Engineer; Megan Canavan, Communications Director, Karen J. Mitchell, City Clerk; and interested parties.

OPEN SESSION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Mayor Bennehoof opened the citizen participation session for items not included on the agenda. Hearing none, he closed the public comment session.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 21, 2018

MOTION: Councilman Counts moved to approve the minutes of August 21, 2018. Councilman Lorenz seconded the motion. By unanimous consent of the remaining members, the minutes were approved.

RESOLUTION: 2018-16: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION ("OPWC") STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND/OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM(S) AND TO EXECUTE CONTRACTS AS REQUIRED.

Steve Lutz, City Manager: This is related to the City's and County's proposed traffic signal improvement on N. Liberty Street and Seldom Seen Road as well as a westbound turn lane installed on N. Liberty Street. Mr. Huber can explain what this Resolution does and authorizes the City to proceed with.

Chris Huber, City Engineer: As you may recall, we are doing engineering for this project. We are getting close to being in our final stages of plan preparation. We anticipate submitting our grant application by early October for a 50/50 split. If we get the grant, the City will have approximately \$300,000 for construction cost. If we do not get the grant, that figure goes up to \$600,000. We are hopeful to be successful with this one. We are working with Delaware County as a joint application on this.

Mayor Bennehoof: Is the county participating in the grant with us or are they just in the project?

Mr. Huber: They are assisting us with the grant preparation. We are the lead agency for the grant and we will be sharing all the costs. They will be doing a lot of the administration once construction starts.

Mayor Bennehoof: What would you say the odds are [of receiving this grant]?

Mr. Huber: I have a good feeling, but I don't know.

Councilman Counts: Didn't we apply for a grant for this before?

Mr. Huber: We applied twice before, in 2013 or 2014, and we reapplied for a safety grant through ODOT and was unsuccessful there. The fact that we have our plans already prepared in the final stages will

hopefully give us a leg up.

Councilman Bertone: Chris, what is your timeline?

Mr. Huber: The grant application is due this October. We will hear the results some time in the Spring of 2019. The earliest we would see construction is 2019 or early 2020.

Mayor Bennehoof opened this item to public comment. Hearing none, he closed the public comment session.

MOTION: Councilman Counts moved to adopt Resolution 2018-16. Councilman Lorenz seconded the motion. Resolution 2018-16 was adopted.

VOTE: Y 7 N 0

SECOND READING: ORDINANCE 2018-40: TO AMEND SECTION 181.12, COLLECTION OF UNPAID TAXES, RELATIVE TO THE INCOME TAX CODE FOR TAX YEARS BEGINNING PRIOR TO JANUARY 1, 2016, AND SECTION 182.096, REFUNDS, RELATIVE TO THE INCOME TAX CODE FOR TAX YEARS BEGINNING ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1, 2016.

Debra Miller, Finance Director: This is the second reading of this amendment to our Tax Code. This has been discussed several times in Finance Committee. It was brought to the Finance Committee from the City's Board of Tax Appeals, so it has the support of all those entities.

Mayor Bennehoof opened this item to public comment. Hearing none, he closed the public comment session.

MOTION: Councilman Lorenz moved to adopt Ordinance 2018-40. Councilman Counts seconded the motion.

VOTE: Y 7 N 0

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Development Committee: *Next Meeting: September 4, 2018, 6:30 p.m.*

Finance Committee: *Next Meeting: September 11, 2018, 7:00 p.m.*

Operations Committee: *Next Meeting: September 18, 2018, 6:30 p.m. We have two, possibly three, agenda items: an update on the broadband initiative; we will be discussing the motorized scooter and how it may affect Powell; and we may have another item.*

Planning & Zoning Commission: *Next Meeting: September 12, 2018, 7:00 p.m. Last month the OSU Ambulatory Center received preliminary plan approval. Since then they have gone back and are redesigning their site. This means that they will be coming back to P&Z for a preliminary plan approval. They wanted to get that on next week's agenda, but do not have their plans in order yet, so that will happen in a later meeting.*

Powell CIC: *Next Meeting: To be determined. We met last Wednesday and had a discussion with the owners of COhatch who are looking at possibly locating a site here in town.*

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

There is just one item. It was an item that was reviewed at the last Finance Committee. Megan is going to provide everyone an update regarding educating the public on our income tax issue which will be on the ballot in November. As some of you are aware, a Pac is active and will be promoting this issue. From the City's standpoint, we can educate and inform the residents, but we cannot advocate. Megan will talk about what's been done so far and what the next two months holds in store for us.

Megan Canavan, Communications Director: Tonight, we were asked to provide a quick update on our contract with MurphyEpson, what's been done so far, and what is to be done going into the fall.

We began working with MurphyEpson earlier this Spring to give some overall public relations strategy as well as to share the findings and recommendations from the Task Force. Toward the back of the memo I passed out to you tonight is an outline of what MurphyEpson's scope was. Those items marked with asterisks are things they are currently working on or will be working on as we get closer to the election.

The education engagement strategy has some background information. This helps set the framework for our communication as we move forward. It has the communication goals that were put together with some members of the Task Force as well as with MurphyEpson's guidance. It outlines the strategy and what we are working on now. We are calling it The Roadshow and we are going to various groups and organizations to present this information. As you can see, there are already some things that are crossed off. Those are places we have already been, such as the Rotary Club and Southern Delaware County Realtors Association.

Mayor Bennehoof and Steve have also done several Coffee with the Mayor and City Manager events discussing this matter with several more scheduled in September, October and November. We have two public forums scheduled at the end of September and the end of October where we will focus on Capital Needs at one meeting and the other meeting will be focused on Revenues and Expenditures. We will be attending some upcoming events. We have a Task Force member helping with the Street Market event this weekend by handing out information, and volunteer signups for other events coming up in the community. We also have media relations, our social media strategy, direct mail where we will be sending a postcard to all residents in late September and again in late October to let them know what the ballot is about, how we got here and so forth, and finally we had a scope of services from MurphyEpson.

The budgeted amount for MurphyEpson initially was \$27,720. Right now we have slightly more than \$7,500 remaining with our contract. That should take us through the remainder of the fall as they work on some of the graphic design and content strategy for our direct mail pieces as well as continued project management and social media strategy for us.

Councilwoman Riggins: My purpose for asking the question initially, and I think you've answered the first part, so \$20,000 has been paid to date to MurphyEpson. What exactly has MurphyEpson done up to this point?

Ms. Canavan: They have provided a lot of our communication strategy and messaging, such as the key messaging in the Fact Sheet. They reviewed the report in detail and helped us build a framework for that. They also did a lot of graphic design work for some of the exhibits that were included in the report and the presentation. These are being used as part of our education strategy through social media. They provided a lot of framework for the public forum and facilitated that meeting. Marie Keister, who has been helping us with this project, was one of the meeting facilitators that was present. Now we are working on more of the second phase of this which is the education and engagement as we approach the election.

Councilwoman Riggins: So the visuals you mentioned, is that what was included in the formal reports?

Ms. Canavan: Yes, as well as those on the website. As you can see, they all have a similar look and feel and that was all done by the MurphyEpson team. They did an income tax comparison visual that wasn't included in the report because they just finished that up. We have had things that have come up, or questions that have come up, through this process and MurphyEpson has been able to take those questions back and put it into the strategy.

Councilwoman Riggins: So the actual report and printing were paid for by the City?

Ms. Canavan: Yes.

Councilwoman Riggins: Basically, what we've paid for is ideas, graphs and guidance?

Ms. Canavan: Yes, guidance, direction, assistance in digging through a lot of this that is finance-related, and helping it come to a term that the general public will understand.

Councilwoman Riggins: As far as the billing, has there been a specific billing that's been submitted to the City that's been paid? Was it paid all at once?

Ms. Miller: It is paid monthly. Megan reviews the invoice before it is paid to make sure that the work has actually been done and she agrees that it was a reasonable amount towards the contract.

Councilman Lorenz: I had a comment. I have a little bit of heartburn reading through this with having the Task Force members going out and representing this at service organizations and meetings. I understand they did what we asked them to do and I'm sure that they won't misrepresent what the message is, but I'd rather see a Councilmember go out to do this work. I'm not going to volunteer because I'm not in favor of the tax increase but that is my two cents. I don't think it's the right approach. I would have thought that it might be something we discussed as a group before it was just decided.

Councilman Counts: If I could respond. I do think you are accusing Council in terms of what the approach is. My view of it is that it is the Task Force members who spent the most time on this. They are the ones who dug through all the material, came up with a recommendation, and can speak most eloquently about the topic. If you look at Council here, that would probably limit it to just a couple of us – probably me. There is going to be a time when you have all these different groups that want people to speak and there's going to be a limited number of people to do it. I don't see it as being a problem and, quite frankly, it had to happen because there's no one better that can speak about it.

OTHER COUNCIL MATTERS

Mayor Bennehoof: I'd like to acknowledge and appreciate Steve and Megan's help with Coffee with the Mayor and Manager. It's going fairly well. We've been having small groups so far and it's been very enlightening for both our constituents and myself.

I'd like to bring everybody's attention to the calendar. We have a couple of things going on. There is Patriot's Day at Veteran's Park on September 11th. We also have Oktoberfest, another great event, put together by Rotary. I am thrilled that we have the quality of events that we have here in the City. The other thing I would point out is the Active Shooter presentation on September 24th which is a repeat of the one we had in May.

Councilman Swartwout: I would invite other members of Council to attend on the 24th. The May presentation was excellent that had a lot of fantastic information. It would be well worth your time to attend.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Councilman Counts moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. Councilman Lorenz seconded the motion. By unanimous consent of the participating members, the meeting was adjourned.

MINUTES APPROVED: September 18, 2018

 Jon C. Bennehoof 9/28/2018 Date
Jon C. Bennehoof Mayor
Karen J. Mitchell 10/2/2018 Date
Karen J. Mitchell City Clerk

Frank Bertone

Tom Counts

Brian Lorenz

Jon C. Bennehoof, Mayor
Brian Lorenz, Councilman

Melissa Riggins

Daniel Swartwout