

CITY OF CLEVELAND
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JUNE 7, 2021
MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The City Council Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the City of Cleveland was called to order by Mayor Josh Turner at 6:30 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Nan Bowen, Rebecca Yardley, Kevin Stanley, and Bradley Greene.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion by Bradley Greene, seconded by Kevin Stanley, in favor – Nan Bowen and Rebecca Yardley and carried unanimously, the Mayor and City Council approved the agenda for the June 7, 2021 City Council Meeting.

CHIEF JEFF SHOEMAKER – POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Shoemaker informed the Mayor and City Council of the appointment to Sergeant for two officers. Chief Shoemaker wanted the opportunity to administer the appointments in an official City Council meeting.

Chief Shoemaker called on Officer Wesley Addis. Officer Addis has been in law enforcement for over twenty-years, with the majority of his tenure with the Cleveland Police Department. Officer Addis most recent role was as school resource officer. Chief Shoemaker recognized Officer Addis' wife Sheila and daughter McKenzie who were present to witness the promotion to Sergeant.

Chief Shoemaker next introduced Officer Denton Vaughn. Officer Vaughn also has over twenty-years in law enforcement as well as honorably serving in the United States Marines. Chief Shoemaker served with Officer Vaughn when the two worked together in Gainesville. Chief Shoemaker recognized Officer Vaughn's wife Amy. Chief Shoemaker expressed his appreciation to the families of officers as they also make a daily sacrifice for the job.

Major Aaron Weiland presented the ranking pins to the two officers, officially going from officer to sergeant.

The Sergeants wives pinned each with the rank pin. Chief Shoemaker shared an anecdote of when his wife helped him with all his pins on his uniform. Once at work, other employees were laughing at him and he noticed she had pinned a City of Mayberry badge on to his uniform.

Chief Shoemaker explained the responsibilities of a Sergeant.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING CITY OF CLEVELAND FIRE SERVICES

Mayor Josh Turner read the following announcement:

The City of Cleveland City Council and the White County Board of Commissioners will be entering into discussions regarding the consolidation of Fire Protection Services for the City of Cleveland and White County.

Both the City and County have worked diligently to provide the highest standard of fire protection to the citizens and businesses of Cleveland and White County. Direct improvements such as increasing the number of full-time fire fighters, investment in the water system, and increased training and certification of personnel have resulted in the improvement of both the city and county ISO rating.

While the current mutual aid agreement allows the city and county to work closely with each other on the delivery of fire services, it is important to note that both agencies have an obligation to the taxpayers to operate efficiently as possible and reduce duplication of services.

Mayor Turner informed the City and County will hold public hearings concerning the consolidation of the two fire departments.

On motion by Nan Bowen, seconded by Rebecca Yardley, in favor – Kevin Stanley and Bradley Greene and carried unanimously, the Mayor and City Council voted to enter into negotiations with the White County Board of Commissioners for a possible agreement to consolidate Cleveland Fire Department to the White County Fire Department.

GRANT KEENE – CITY ATTORNEY

Grant Keene, City Attorney, did not have new business to report.

TOM O'BRYANT – CITY ADMINISTRATOR

1. Turner Creek Water Treatment Plant Capital Reserve Contribution (Wheelage Agreement)

- a. The City and the White County Water Authority have a wheelage agreement for the funding and operation of the Turner Creek Water Treatment Plant.
- b. Initially the original contribution to the reserve as 33%. Last the agreement was amended to create a tiered mechanism that places a monetary percentage on top of the set wholesale price of water to help fund the capital reserve account for the plant.
- c. The tiers vary from 10%, 20% and 30% based on the amount of funds held in the capital reserve account at the time of budgeting. Historically the tier had been held at 10%.
- d. At the request of the WCWA, the city voted to pay the 20% rate in early 2018 to help build the capital reserve account through December 31, 2019. The City absorbed the cost of the increase without passing it on to its customers. Last year City Council extended the 20% rate through December 31, 2020. As the last date approached, the Authority requested the City to extend the 20% rate through June 30, 2021. The reason for just the six-month extension was to have the agreement consistent with the fiscal year and where it would expire at the same time as the same type of agreement the

TOM O'BRYANT – CITY ADMINISTRATOR - continued

- e. WCWA has with the City of Helen, and be consistent with the fiscal year budget that the agency follows.
- f. The budgeted wholesale rate (including the current Wheelage) for the cost of water is included in the city's proposed FY22 budget. At the current rate the wheelage produces between \$9,500 - \$11,500 monthly, and the current balance in the capital reserve is \$549,828. The earlier tier agreements would have caused the rate to reduce to 10% due to the reserve exceeding \$500,000.
- g. The plant and the WCWA are anticipating some fairly large capital expenses with replacement/upgrade of the filter system for the plant. At their May 13, 2021 Board meeting the WCWA voted to increase the Wheelage rate to 30%. The increase in the rate is due to the anticipated cost of the filter system upgrade, and the authority would like to reduce the amount that would be needed through a loan to finance the project by continuing to build the capital reserve.
- h. The WCWA is requesting the City consider the 30% wheelage rate to help build the capital reserve and reduce the amount of a loan that would finance the project.
- i. Last year the city voted to increase water rates by 2.5% annually for three years to help with increase costs of operations and to help build funds for the future waste water treatment plant upgrade, which is estimated to cost \$12.6 million. The city has a GEFA loan in place to help finance the construction of the plant upgrade. It is anticipated that additional rate increases will be needed to repay the 25-year loan with GEFA.
- j. City Council may vote to continue funding the capital reserve account at the current 20% tier rate or consider the request made by the WCWA

Mr. O'Bryant informed the White County Water Authority Board voted to approve the increase and instead of creating a proper document, crossed out the amount of the current agreement (signed December 2020). Mr. O'Bryant advised the City Council will need to get with Mr. Keene, City Attorney, for a proper agreement if they wish to contribute more.

Mayor Turner asked about the cost of the treatment plant project. Mr. O'Bryant answered approximately five-million. The wheelage increase would cost the city an additional \$22,000 per year. Bradley Greene expressed his concern of the costs having to be passed on to the users on the Cleveland Water System. Mr. Greene feels this should not be the burden of city customers. Mr. Greene recommended the City keep the agreement as is at twenty-percent.

On motion by Bradley Greene, seconded by Rebecca Yardley, in favor – Nan Bowen and Kevin Stanley and carried unanimously, the Mayor and City Council voted to keep the agreement the same at twenty-percent wheelage and any overages due to the city be paid to the city, and any overages due to Turner Creek Water Plant will be paid by the city and may be used at the discretion of the White County Water Authority Board.

2. Appointment Positions to Serve on the City of Cleveland Building Authority

- a. The legislation to establish the City of Cleveland Building Authority was signed by Governor Brian Kemp on May 3, 2021. The bill became effective the date of the Governor's signature.

TOM O'BRYANT – CITY ADMINISTRATOR - continued

- b. City Council may now appoint members to the Authority. The Authority shall consist of five members as follows: two shall be members of the City of Cleveland City Council; one shall be a member of the City of Cleveland Planning and Zoning Commission; and two shall be residents of the city.
- c. Once appointed the Authority will meet and select a chair and vice chair from among its members. Once established the Authority will organize and operated under state law and the powers defined in the legislation.

Kevin Stanley offered to sit on the board as one of the required council members. Mayor Turner asked if there was an application to apply for the position. Mr. O'Bryant stated one can be created. Mr. O'Bryant advised the Council to solicit those that have a knowledge of finances.

The appointments will be an agenda item for the June 14, 2021 City Council Meeting.

3. ISO Building Code Review Results

- a. The Insurance Services Office (ISO) is an insurer supported organization with the primary mission of providing advisory insurance underwriting and rating information to insurers. Many insurers have adopted the ISO rating program that provides a rating credit to insurance policies in recognition or community efforts to mitigate property damage due to natural disasters.
- b. On major component to the ISO program is the Building Code Effectiveness Grading Classification. The ISO conducted an extensive, detailed review of the city's building permit and inspection program. This included an analysis of the effectiveness of the city's plan review program and administrative procedures, the qualifications and certification of personnel, adopted updates of the most recent building codes and standards, and, public education and awareness of building code and life safety requirements for residential and commercial construction.
- c. The results are an improvement in the City's commercial score from a 56 in 2015 to 71 in 2021. The residential score improved from 44 in 2015 to 55 in 2021. The most important result from the score is the ISO rating for commercial decreased from 5 to 4 for commercial properties. The residential rating will remain at the 99 classification. The lower rating increases the credit property owners receive on their insurance premiums.
- d. This improvement is the result of the standards set by city council and the conscious efforts and actions taken by city staff to ensure that quality construction and life safety codes are implemented and enforced. Staff will continue to work to improve the quality of development within the City of Cleveland.

4. Renewal of Work Detail Agreement with the Georgia Department of Corrections

- e. The City has contracted for several years with the Georgia Department of Corrections to fund a work detail for public works projects and maintenance within the city.
- f. The agreement is with the Department is an annual contract. The proposed contract is for upcoming FY 2022.
- g. The amount of the agreement contract for FY 2021 is for \$49,318. The scope of services under the contract remains the same as in the current and previous years. The expenditure is divided into several departments for the budget year.

TOM O'BRYANT – CITY ADMINISTRATOR - continued

- h. City Council will need to approve the agreement and have the Mayor sign the agreement.

On motion by Bradley Greene, seconded by Kevin Stanley, in favor – Nan Bowen and Rebecca Yardley, and carried unanimously, the Mayor and City Council approved the 2021/2022 Work Detail Agreement with the Department of Corrections.

5. American Rescue Plan

- a. The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021 is a historic \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus bill. Within the ARP, the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund provides \$350 billion for states, municipalities, counties, tribes, and territories, including \$65.1 billion for cities throughout the U.S.
- b. Funds distributed to cities less than 50,000 in population are required to coordinate the application and allocation of funds through the Georgia Office of Planning and Budget. According to the most recent Department of Treasury formula, the City of Cleveland is eligible for up to \$1,312,245.
- c. Allowable uses outlined in the bill are limited to:
 - i. Responding to or mitigate the public health emergency with respect to the COVID-19 emergency or its negative economic impacts;
 - ii. Providing government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue;
 - iii. Make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure; and,
 - iv. Responding to workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency by providing premium pay to eligible workers of the county that are performing such essential work, or by providing grants to eligible employers that have eligible workers who perform essential work
- d. The City's auditor has recommended that the city open a separate banking account to hold and disburse funds as they are utilized.
- e. City Council will need to vote to open a banking account to hold and manage ARP funds received from the US Treasury.

On motion by Nan Bowen, seconded by Rebecca Yardley, in favor – Kevin Stanley and Bradley Greene, and carried unanimously, the Mayor and Council voted to open a separate banking account for the funds that will be received through the American Rescue Plan.

NEW BUSINESS

1. On motion by Nan Bowen, seconded by Kevin Stanley, in favor – Rebecca Yardley and Bradley Greene, and carried unanimously, the Mayor and City Council approved the draft minutes of May 3 and May 10, 2021
2. Public comments – Dean Dyer, WRWH Radio, thanked the City for the work to improve on the ISO rating for businesses and residences. He especially thanked Fire Chief Ricky Pruitt

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Rebecca Yardley, seconded by Bradley Greene, in favor – Nan Bowen and Kevin Stanley and carried unanimously, the Mayor and City Council voted to adjourn the City Council Meeting of June 7, 2021 at 7:07 p.m.

Josh Turner

Josh Turner Mayor

Kevin Stanley

Kevin Stanley Council Member
Ward 3

Nan Bowen

Nan Bowen Council Member
Ward 1
Mayor Pro Tem

Bradley Greene

Bradley Greene Council Member
Ward 4

Rebecca Yardley

Rebecca Yardley Council Member
Ward 2

ATTEST:

Connie Tracas

Connie Tracas City Clerk

