
Ashland City Council

MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL November 15, 2005

Council President Glen Stewart called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Ward 1:	Bob Valentine	Present
Ward 2:	Bernard Sargent	Present
Ward 3:	Ruth Detrow	Present
Ward 4:	Paul Wertz	Present
At-large:	Glen Stewart	Present

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENTATION OF MINUTES

November 1, 2005 *Regular session*

Moved by Detrow and seconded by Valentine to accept the minutes.

Ayes: Sargent, Detrow, Wertz, Stewart, Valentine

COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

(a) Economic Development Committee: Howard Scanlan

Scanlan asked about the reported restructuring of the Economic Development Department and the City's financial support of this.

Mayor Strine responded that for the past three years, Economic Development has been a department of the City. The City's cost has been about \$280,000 per year including salaries and everything, and the goal has been from the beginning that the department begins in the City but becomes a shared cost with other entities within a few years. Next year the City's appropriation is to be about \$182,500, with the hope that the City's share will go down as the department develops on its own over the next few years.

Scanlan asked if there would be more salaries above the budget, and Mayor Strine said there would not be.

Council-elect of Ward 2, Robert M. Valentine asked further that, since the City still bears the greater burden with the most money involved, shouldn't the City have more people on the board? Mayor Strine told him that, in essence, Council still would have the same control on the money that it has ever had, because Council appropriates.

Stewart added that this department is as others in the City now, with a department head who reports to the Mayor. As it is set up to begin in January, that department would report to a separate entity (board) for which the City will provide \$182,000 of total budget for 2006; in 2007 that figure should diminish another significant amount. What the City diminishes in contribution should be picked up by other entities benefiting by the department's existence. This is still in the proposal process as of now.

Ward 1 Robert L. Valentine suggested a work session be held to answer questions. Mayor Strine stated that this has been the plan from the beginning, setting this department up for three years after which the City slowly pulls out of it. Valentine indicated he was not aware of all the aspects.

Mayor Strine emphasized he'd be willing to have a work session or a discussion of this no later than the next Council meeting. A work session will be set up.

LEGISLATION

Ord. 76-05

Item (a) AN ORDINANCE REPEALING ORDINANCE NO. 68-05; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Moved by Wertz and seconded by Detrow to invoke Section 113.01 of the Codified Ordinances as the distribution of this Ordinance has satisfied the requirements of said Section and that a further reading be dispensed with at this time.

Ayes: Sargent, Detrow, Wertz, Stewart, Valentine

Comments:

Mayor Strine explained that this is due to an inadvertent duplication of the same ordinance; the second one is being repealed.

Moved by Wertz and seconded by Stewart that the Ordinance be passed on the first reading.

Ayes: Sargent, Detrow, Wertz, Stewart, Valentine

Moved by Wertz and seconded by Valentine that the rules requiring the reading on three separate days be suspended and that the Ordinance be passed on the second and third readings.

Ayes: Sargent, Detrow, Wertz, Stewart, Valentine

Moved by Detrow and seconded by Valentine that the Ordinance be passed.

Ayes: Sargent, Detrow, Wertz, Stewart, Valentine

Motion carried.

WARD REPORTS

Ward 1: Bob Valentine

(a) Retention pond maintenance, Oakbrook Condominiums:

Valentine referred to a letter from Oakbrook Condominium Association concerning the retention ponds. Mayor Strine told him the association had just elected new officers; prior to that time, the City had addressed this issue to the basic satisfaction of those involved. The City's commitment is to keep the ponds mowed better than previously, which was one of the problems. In fact, the City has purchased a new mower to use for all the retention basins.

He suggested this resolution of the maintenance problems took place before this individual came into office, and she was not aware of that, consequently sending the letter again. The Mayor stated he has since talked to her.

Stewart asked Engineer Jim Cooper if the City has an easement to get to these ponds; Cooper responded yes.

(b) Traffic congestion, Cottage/Third Streets:

Valentine noticed that there is often blockage of this intersection by backed up traffic on Cottage Street and Third Street, and he wondered if there is a solution to this. Mayor Strine responded they have worked on that problem many times; any suggestions would be welcomed.

Ward 3: Ruth Detrow

(a) Trash pickup questions:

Detrow had questions from a resident about trash pickup and put out requirements, and they also had complaints about trash being put out on the wrong days. She said the City doesn't enforce that apparently, and Law Director Rick Wolfe responded that the City does indeed enforce that. Mayor Strine stated he's sure there are violations the City misses; however, they will be reviewing the sanitation situation in the next month or so, and perhaps they can address that then.

Both Stewart and Wertz noted that the sanitation department does handle specific situations when they are brought to their attention; from there it can go to the law director for en-

forcement if still not in compliance. Wolfe affirmed this process, which they have been implementing for years.

Ward 4: Paul Wertz

(a) Camper residence, 1003 Cottage Street:

Wertz had a question as to a camper being used as a residence behind the Cottage Street address above, and he asked Law Director Rick Wolfe if he would check about this.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS

(a) Request for Change of Zoning: (Westlake Drive)

“M-3” Industrial Park District to “M-1” Light Industrial District

Stewart explained that the public hearing for this change has been scheduled for Tuesday, December 20, 2005, at 7:10 p.m. The reason for the request concerns the pending purchase of the property. The Planning Commission has suggested the purchaser provide a visual barrier between the operation and Westlake Drive. While this is not something the City is responsible for, the buyer understands the problem and has said they would address this issue.

As he was present at the meeting, the current owner of the property, John Ewing of Folding Carton Services, asked about the time frame for the completion of the zoning change process. Wolfe told him that legislation could be prepared for that same evening. It could then be entertained following the hearing, or it could be done at a subsequent meeting.

Stewart requested that legislation be prepared for Council’s consideration that night, but he told Ewing that doesn’t mean it would be passed definitely that same evening.

(b) Liquor permit renewal options:

Stewart noted that Council had received notification from the state liquor control department concerning any permits that the City might consider objections to. This opportunity is offered yearly at this time.

Wolfe stated that there were no problems at this time, and this requires no action.

MAYOR’S COMMENTS

(a) Storm water utility plans:

Mayor Strine asked City Engineer Jim Cooper to make a short presentation on where they are on the storm water utility plans. He went on to say that the City has known for some time that the EPA will be forcing them to repair the storm water lines to keep too much storm water from getting down to the water treatment plant. The fact that the City needs to work on this system has been discussed in the past; however, it will cost money. Most communities along with Ashland are now coming up with plans that will satisfy the EPA and show that they are in fact making progress with fixing these lines so as not to be fined. The Mayor turned the discussion over to Cooper.

Cooper handed out a prepared booklet of information and stated that Assistant Engineer Kurt Brzyszc and Phil Diehm of the engineering department have been doing a lot of work on the storm water utility aspect of this. Brzyszc has been heading this project.

Basically, by next Wednesday, the department plans on having the storm water utility efforts done. Cooper outlined what they have done so far:

- 800 randomly-selected single family houses (from water department records);
- Using Auto CAD they are figuring out the amount of impervious areas (sidewalks, roof area, asphalt pavement);
- The amounts of those 800 houses will all be added together as far as the square footage of impervious area;
- The total amount will be divided by 800 (averaged);
- That will give what they will call one equivalent residential unit (ERU);

- The ERU will be the key that everything else will be based on;
- Each single-family house then will pay a certain amount of money based on these figures.

This then will become a method to collect money strictly for storm water efforts, money that cannot be used for sanitary sewer or anything else. A lot of cities have done this; it's defensible in court, which is one of the reasons the City is doing it this way.

In addition to the single-family equivalent residential unit that Brzyscz is doing, they are also figuring all the commercial and industrial facilities. A lot of these facilities may have twenty times the area of what the one residential unit has.

Once the cost is figured out based on a five-year plan, divided by five to get a yearly expense, they will take that figure, divide it by the total equivalent residential units and commercial units, and then come up with a figure per month that the City will have to charge to cover all the costs to improve the City's storm water system. In a lot of cities, it would be anywhere from \$2.50 to \$3.00 per month. Again, it depends on the equivalent, the number of people, the materials and all that type of thing. But, by the end of next week, they will have all those figures together.

Cooper stated he is hoping to have an ordinance generated for review and then presentation to Council at the first session in December.

The information booklet earlier handed out demonstrates some idea as to how they are approaching the equivalent residential units. For example, if that ERU is 3,000 square feet, a commercial building that has 30,000 square feet will pay ten times as much as a single-family house would pay (\$3.00 and \$30.00 per month). They will develop some controls based on ideas from Council and the Mayor as to how they want to do this, but basically that is what they are doing.

The first of the information booklet addresses that issue, then information is included from Stow, Ohio, as to their efforts for their storm water utility. Cooper and Brzyscz visited with Stow's engineer, and they are patterning their efforts after the Stow program very closely, possibly with modifications for Ashland. Also included is an ordinance from New London, Ohio, who had a consultant help them develop their program.

At the end of the booklet is the Ashland Inflow/Infiltration (I/I) Five-year Reduction Plan, which has been sent to the EPA. For this, they worked with Water Treatment Director Bruce Wisner and his department, discussing projects to be done, efforts to go through. Based on that Plan as well as those discussions, they were able to determine the equipment needed, so they can accomplish what the EPA wants them to do.

This is a result based on the consultant's (URS) five-year study of the City's I/I that was done from 1998 to 2003; all this is coming together, and they are proposing the storm water utility. Cooper stated he and Brzyscz would be available to answer questions anyone has.

Mayor Strine suggested Council take the information, review it and then set up a work session in the next two weeks.

Valentine questioned the time frame, and Mayor Strine responded that it would go on indefinitely. He reminded Council of the storms and flooding and flooded houses they all had to look at earlier, and told them that one huge benefit to this plan is that someday it will hopefully solve all that.

Valentine stated that inflation and other factors would have to be taken into consideration, and Cooper explained they were working with the finance department on the budget, and a factor would be figured into it for inflation.

Stewart questioned the areas to be covered first, noting the times Council members waded through houses where the water was coming in the back door and out the front door, asking if those are being taken into consideration in the reduction plan. Cooper said they will be and are, but the areas are also part of the URS five-year study they worked with when generating their projects. The projects they will be proposing to Council, like the storm line under the railroad and the Clifton Avenue storm extension, are shown at the end of each year in the information booklet.

Another thing they will be doing is working from the sanitary sewer standpoint also, thus approaching this from both avenues: Bruce Wisner's department with the sanitary sewers, as well as crews working on the storm sewers. This gives them something that can be reported every year to the EPA and to Council as to how they're doing. Obviously the EPA will be watching, so discussions have included everyone.

Detrow asked how many additional employees would be needed to do this and where would funding come from for them, and Cooper told her two employees would be paid out of the storm water utility funds.

Stewart asked about whether consideration was given to how much grassy area individual units would have, and Cooper told him that just impervious areas were considered; there are big differences and variations, but there are ways to work this out so it is fair for everybody. Stewart stated this program would be hard to sell.

Valentine asked about churches, schools and such, and Cooper responded that everyone is all in the same ballgame. Those issues can be addressed as everyone here sees fit.

Detrow questioned costs for sizes of properties, such as a half-acre versus an eight-acre property. Cooper said they would be all done in the averages to consider one equivalent residence, and that is what it is based on. All single family units will pay that rate regardless of the size of the acreage. It is based on how much water will run off the impervious areas.

Stewart then asked what would be done with one house that contains three individual apartments, for example, and Cooper said that will be three: each one pays one residence. Stewart asked if that is based on water service? How is it determined that those homes are three-unit homes; is that data available to use? Brzyscz responded that the utility and building departments have a lot of that information. Stewart questioned single-service utilities with multiple apartments on a common meter, and Cooper said they were doing this as the town of Stow set it up: if there are three apartments in a building, each one pays one ERU, even though there may be one utility coming in and feeding out.

(b) Work sessions scheduled:

Stewart reminded Council of a work session scheduled for Tuesday, November 22nd at 6:30 p.m. in the Mayor's Conference Room. Topics for discussion include property maintenance ideas and the keeping of farm animals in town.

Council scheduled a second work session to be held on Wednesday, November 30th at 6:30 p.m. in the Mayor's Conference Room. They will discuss the Economic Development Department potential restructuring and the storm water utility project.

(c) Executive session held:

Mayor Strine asked for an executive session concerning employee benefits. The session was held immediately following the regular session. No action was taken nor announcements made afterward.

Moved by Wertz and seconded by Stewart to move to executive session for the purpose of discussion of employee benefits.

Ayes: Sargent, Detrow, Wertz, Stewart, Valentine

Council moved to executive session at 7:46 p.m. and returned to Council Chambers at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Moved by Sargent and seconded by Detrow to return to regular session.

Ayes: Sargent, Detrow, Wertz, Stewart, Valentine

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Detrow and seconded by Sargent to adjourn the meeting.

Ayes: Sargent, Detrow, Wertz, Stewart, Valentine

Council adjourned the regular session at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by
Elaine C. Bucklew
Clerk of Council