

**NORWALK CITY COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES**

August 30, 2016  
7:30 p.m.

Municipal Court  
Norwalk, Ohio

**WORK SESSION**

---

Council Vice President Chris Mushett called the Work Session to order. The following members were present: Chris Mushett, Kelly Beck, Chris Castle, David Wallace, Deb Lucal, and Samantha Wilhelm. Council members Steve Euton and Steve Schumm were absent.

Mayor Rob Duncan, Law Director Stu O'Hara, Safety Service Director Dan Wendt, Recreation Superintendent Joe Lindenberger, Police Chief Dave Light, and Public Works Director Josh Snyder were also present.

*Item No. 16-078*

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND/OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM(S) AND TO EXECUTE CONTRACTS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH

Mr. Snyder explained that the City has used the Ohio Public Works Commission programs before. He said Phase 1 of this project is being completed this year and this legislation would allow for the Mayor to apply for funds to complete Phase 2 next year. He added that the County will contribute \$100,000.00 to cover the Township portion of the roadway.

Mr. Mushett asked if the territorial issues have been resolved. Mr. Snyder said yes.

Mr. Beck asked if there will be a written agreement with the County. Mr. Snyder replied yes and he has the document in his possession.

Council members agreed to place this item on the agenda for the next regular session.

*Item No. 16-079*

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF REAL PROPERTY NO LONGER NEEDED FOR MUNICIPAL PURPOSES

Mr. Wendt said the property in question was formerly part of the substation. He said it is no longer needed by the City and added that bidding will start at \$10,500.

Council members agreed to place this item on the agenda for the next regular session.

*Item No. 16-080*

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE FINANCE DIRECTOR TO PAY A.J. RILEY, INC., FOR PAVING PERFORMED IN THE CITY OF NORWALK

Mr. Lindenberger explained that the purchase order was not cut prior to the project being invoiced.

Council members agreed to place this item on the agenda for the next regular session.

Item No. 16-081

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2015-056 TO SET THE COMPENSATION FOR PART-TIME LEGAL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Mr. O'Hara said the purpose of this legislation is to amend the pay ordinance for part-time employees. He explained that the full-time Legal Administrative Assistant is looking to go part-time. He said he will then hire a part-time Legal Secretary. He added that the work can be completed at a substantially lower cost to the City.

Mr. Mushett asked how the part-time rates compare to the full-time rates. Mr. O'Hara said they are lower.

Mrs. Wilhelm asked when the change would occur if this legislation is approved. Mr. O'Hara responded November or December.

Mr. Mushett asked what the financial impact will be. Mr. O'Hara said he will have to figure out the dollar amount saved. He said the total administrative expense will be lower.

Mr. Wallace asked if the employee that will be going part-time will continue to receive benefits. Mr. O'Hara said no, that would not apply, but the current Legal Administrative Assistant doesn't have City benefits.

Council members agreed to place this item on the agenda for the next regular session.

Item No. 16-082

A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE CITY'S APPROVAL OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES BIKE ROUTE 30

Mr. Snyder explained that both *Item No. 16-082* and *Item No. 16-083* are resolutions to recognize existing bike routes as larger systems. He said that the Ohio Department of Transportation wants to officially designate them as routes and install signs to give the routes recognition.

Mr. Mushett asked if the City will be responsible to provide any materials. Mr. Snyder said no with the exception of ongoing normal maintenance such as painting curbs green every couple of years. He said he does not anticipate any additional cost to the City.

Council members agreed to place this item on the agenda for the next regular session.

Item No. 16-083

A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE CITY'S APPROVAL OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STATE BIKE ROUTE 65

Council members agreed to place this item on the agenda for the next regular session.

Item No. 16-084

A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE NECESSITY OF CONSTRUCTING OR REPAIRING SIDEWALKS IN THE CITY OF NORWALK, OHIO, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE 2017 SIDEWALK PROGRAM, APPROVING THE PLANS, SPECIFICATIONS AND ESTIMATE OF COSTS THEREFOR, ASSESSING THE COST THEREOF TO THE ABUTTING LOTS OR LANDS, AND DIRECTING NOTICE THEREOF TO BE SERVED UPON AFFECTED PROPERTIES

Mr. Snyder said the focus of the 2017 Sidewalk program is the Northwest quadrant, specifically the Sycamore subdivision. He said the letters will be sent out soon.

Council members agreed to place this item on the agenda for the next regular session.

---

Mr. Mushett opened the discussion up to the audience in reference to *Item No. 16-067*.

Kathy Sickinger, 129 Whittlesey was present and said there are no good paying jobs in Norwalk. She said she already pays 2% tax to Brookpark and doesn't want to pay more tax.

Mary Ellen Hamernick, 15 Valley Park Drive urged Council to bring the issue to a vote of the people.

Phillip Chester, 26 Liberty Street said he would have appreciated more communication with the public surrounding the issue. He suggested sending a post card or putting proposed changes on the water bill to alert the public. He also proposed that the City look into creating three eight-hour shifts at the Fire Station to avoid having to pay the firemen to sleep.

Darr Grodi, 13 East League Street said that he cannot afford more taxes. He said he thinks the legislation is being pushed through too quickly.

Nikki Hotchkiss, 3 Maple Street said that she does most of her shopping and eating at restaurants in the City. She referenced a recent Reflector article submitted by City Administrators and questioned what services she is using but not paying for.

Melanie Robinson, 10 Sara Drive said that she feels proud to live in Norwalk and praised the schools and local events such as Imagine Norwalk. She said that just because other communities are doing it isn't a good enough reason. She urged the Administration and Council to examine the budget and cut non-essential services before taxing the people any further.

Gary Bradt, 52 Chapel Drive said he doesn't think it is right not to let the people vote on this issue. He implored Council to put pressure on the State to get the issue under control.

Chris Jackson, 128 Sycamore Drive said he both lives and works in the City and he thinks this legislation is unjust. He said it is a temporary fix and suggested it be fixed across the State to where you are paying tax to one city or the other, but not two. He also cited his concern with negative media coverage.

Adam Hamernik, 8 Manchester Drive questioned if this legislation is going to be used to pay for the new Fire Station.

Mr. Jackson referred to the bike route legislation and questioned if the bike routes are sharing state routes that were previously deemed unsafe by Council for other vehicles. Mr. Snyder said the routes are already established and are simply being recognized with signage.

Mr. Wendt thanked everyone for attending the meeting and voicing their concerns. He said that the City is facing tough decisions which come down to either increasing revenue or cutting services. He explained that the General Fund covers Police and Fire protection, Parks and Recreation, and some General Services. He said expenditures in the General Fund in 2015 were \$7.1 million which was a decrease of \$1.1 million from 2007. He pointed out that the income tax and reciprocity credit were created by Council in 1969 and said it is difficult for the City to be expected to operate on 1976 property evaluations in a 2016 economy.

In response to comments about property taxes, Mr. Wendt explained that most of that money goes to the schools and the County. He said that Police and Fire alone required \$4.4 million to operate in 2015 and property taxes in 2015 only contributed around \$845,00.00.

Mayor Duncan thanked the audience for shopping local, but he said sales tax goes to the County. In reference to Mr. Jackson's comment about negative media coverage, he said he also doesn't want to see headlines about drugs taking over Norwalk due to the City being forced to cut Police Officers for budgetary reasons. He added that Government funding is complicated and explained that the Sanitation Fund has no correlation to the General Fund.

Mrs. Wilhelm requested that the Administration only present numbers relative to the last five years.

Mr. Castle said he agreed with most of what was said. He pointed out that his wife does work outside of town and said this legislation would affect his family. He commended the audience members for coming out to speak their minds.

Mr. Mushett encouraged the public to get involved and directed them to the City website to access future meeting agendas.

Mr. Beck thanked the audience for coming and said that the issue is not as cut and dry as people may think. He added that the legislation did not originate from Council, but from the Administration. Mr. Wendt said that while the Administration does support this legislation, they also have support from the Finance Committee of Council. Mr. Beck added that the Finance Committee only represents half of Council.

**ADJOURNMENT** There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

---

Steve E. Euton – Council President

---

Jaime L. Peiples – Council Clerk