

City of Groveport

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Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 16, 2023

5:30 PM

Council Chambers

Committee of the Whole

Mayor Lance Westcamp

Council Members - Jean Ann Hilbert, Ed Dildine, Shawn Cleary, Becky Hutson, Scott Lockett & Jack Rupp

I. Call to Order

Committee Chair Hilbert called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Staff Present: BJ King - Administrator, Kevin Shannon - Law Director, Jason Carr - Finance Director, Casey Adams - Chief of Police, Steve Farst - City Engineer, Brian Strayer - Public Services Director, Seth Bowers - Recreation Center Director, Bob Dowler - Director of Transportation, Tom Walker - Director of Golf, Trevor Swackhamer - Director of Technology, Mindy Kay - Clerk of Council

Guests Present: The Guest Book is on file with the Clerk of Council.

II. Moment of Silence

Committee Chair Hilbert asked everyone to join her in a moment of silence.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Chief Adams led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Roll Call

Present: 6 - Cleary, Dildine, Hilbert, Hutson, Lockett, and Rupp

V. Approval of Minutes

The September 18, 2023 Committee of the Whole Minutes stand approved as submitted.

[#213-2023](#)

September 18, 2023 COTW Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [COTW Minutes 9.18.2023.pdf](#)

VI. Business of Guests

Administrator King introduced the City's new Mayor's Court Clerk Rachel Ricker. Mrs. Ricker thanked the Mayor for her appointment and expressed how excited she is for the opportunity. Council congratulated her on her new position.

A. Debbie Miller

Debbie Miller congratulated the City on its 50th Apple Butter Day. She

said she and everyone she's spoken to about it enjoyed it a lot. She then said she is here tonight to represent Groveport Madison Human Needs. She informed Council of the gala they are having this Saturday night at the Paddock Pub to celebrate their 15th year anniversary. She said Founder Christine Boucher had a vision 15yrs ago, carried it through, and here we are today. She extended a personal invitation for the Mayor and Council to the gala. Mayor Westcamp is one of our honored guests, along with Madison Township Administrator Susan Brobst. We have a great evening and dinner planned. The Otis Davenport Jazz Trio will be playing and there will be a silent auction going. She said we will also be celebrating Christine Boucher, as she is hanging up her Director hat at the end of the year. We want to applaud her hard work and dedication to the families within the Groveport Madison School District. Mrs. Hilbert mentioned that you can choose to donate to Human Needs through Kroger. A certain percentage of your total will be donated, at no extra cost to you.

B. Madison Township Fire Chief Robinson

[#214-2023](#)

MTFD Monthly Report

Attachments: [MTFD Monthly Report.pdf](#)

C. Groveport Road - Cold Storage Facility Proposal

Nate Green of Montrose Group said he is here tonight to represent Clous Rd Partners and the Sansone Group. We are looking at a development at Groveport Road and Saltzgaber Road. He introduced his Clous Rd colleague Max Davis, Ryan Hodges of Sansone Group, Dave Robinson of Montrose Group, and Brian Burkhart from the CEC. He stated his objective is to gather Council's thoughts on the plan. We've met several times with Administrator BJ King, City Engineer Steve Farst, and Chief Building Official Stephen Moore about the plan. Clous Rd and Sansone have had this group under contract for a while. It is eighteen acres at the corner of Groveport Road and Saltzgaber Road. He said the interested party are Industrial Developers and he would like to talk about the potential for a freezer/cooler facility on the site. He pointed out that it is different from a lot of the other warehouses the City has seen, in that it isn't just a warehouse. It is a true freezer and cooler facility. He then explained the site plans to Council, including the City's Gateway Corridor Plan, which talks about other uses on the corridor. He said they put future retail there, but would like to know if the City would prefer retail or flex space such as smaller manufacturing operations. The total investment just on land and building is \$42 million. We have probably another \$15

million in soft costs and tentative permits. He then went through economic impacts and income taxes with Council. Administrator King stated that in order for us to collect income tax on workers they must work twenty-one days in a row here. Mr. Green said Montrose Group would do their best to make sure the workers are paying income tax to the City. He then said there will be an estimated one hundred jobs in the facility with \$5.6 million in payroll. Freezer/cooler facilities typically pay 25% more than typical warehouses. We estimate that the direct and indirect impact is \$7.3 million in labor and will generate a \$127,000 in sales tax and \$166,000 in income tax per year. He then went into further detail about freezer/cooler facilities and what they entail. They are used for foods, nutritional supplements, biopharmaceuticals, cosmetics, crafts, or medical use. Mr. Cleary inquired if it could be used for hazard materials, to which Mr. Green said no. Mr. Green went on to point out that the market for freezer/cooler facilities is a hot market right now. The annual growth rate between 2022-2030 is 9.2%. There are only three of these facilities in the Central Ohio market right now and all of them are full. Mr. Rupp asked if it would be entirely a freezer facility or if it could be split between freezer and cooler. Ryan Hodges answered that it could be entirely freezer depending on the user. Typically speaking, they are split facilities. Mr. Green presented potential users of the proposed facility. These companies such as Tyson, Mission, Hormel, Post, and other household names use several facilities around the country. He went on to say that two acres of this site is located in Madison-Township and would need to be annexed into Groveport. The site is also currently zoned as Rural and would need to be rezoned to Industrial Park. He said all eighteen acres, including the two to be annexed in, need to be zoned Industrial Park but the City's current policy states that a site must be twenty-five acres in order to be zoned as Industrial Park. We would need to seek a variance to be able to do it at eighteen acres. He concluded by saying the whole eighteen acres would be Industrial Park, and we would have to revisit the other two acres depending if it's retail space or something else. He asked for Council's input on the retail space in front of the proposed building. He added that there will be an abatement on the property taxes. We will need infrastructure on the site as well, so if there's potential to do a tax increment finance district over and above that, that keeps the schools harmless, we will ask for that as well. Administrator King stated we've talked about the economic impact and what could be. He asked if Mr. Green would be able to guarantee that through a development agreement. Mr. Green said he could not give a definite answer but they would be willing to talk about that. Mr. King then said it had been stated that it will not be a distribution site, but what's being stored has to go somewhere. He asked what the plan is for traffic. Mr. Hodges answered

that the traffic is less than at a typical facility and it's not your standard all day tractor trailers coming in and out. Mayor Westcamp referenced the eighteen acres and asked if it was one property owner. Mr. Green said there are two. The Mayor asked if the properties have been purchased yet and was told it's under contract. Mr. Cleary mentioned the construction class at the high school and asked if there is any way they could be involved in the construction of the facility. He said if this does go through, he wants to make sure the schools benefit in any way they can. Mr. Green said that can be discussed with the general contractors. Mr. King stated we have two vacant warehouses right now and asked how Mr. Green can convince Council to build another spec building. Mr. Green said the freezer/cooler facility is a different animal and it's a market that's been emerging in the past ten years, especially since Covid. People are shopping online for produce and groceries and it's changed the need for the freezer/cooler market. It's not just another industrial building, and is an opportunity to get ahead of the market and start servicing the population. Mrs. Hilbert inquired if it'd be more economical to build a new facility or to use a vacant building and outfit it for freezer/cooler needs. Mr. Green said it's very difficult to use an existing facility because you basically have to build a building within the building because the original building hasn't been built with the necessary insulation. Mayor Westcamp asked Mr. Farst how many residential properties are north of the site. Mr. Farst said there's about six or seven. The Mayor stated his other concern is Groveport Road. From 4:00 - 6:00 you can't move on Groveport Road. Mr. Rupp voiced his concerns about crowding the eighteen acres and the shape of the site and what it would do to future developments in the area, as well as how to buffer between the site and residential properties. Mrs. Hilbert stated we have never done any development without a development agreement. Mr. Dildine inquired about the cooling mechanism and Mr. Green said we're looking at rooftop units that use freon. Mr. King recommended that when we look at a development plan to try to have some guarantees for payroll and employment. Council further discussed their traffic concerns with Mr. Green and potentially needed road updates.

D. Wirt Road Discussion - Diane Holbrook

Diane Holbrook spoke about her concerns on traffic at the corner of Wirt Road and Main Street. She said she has discussed the issue with the City's Engineering Department and the schools, and that Mr. Smathers had suggested getting a group together to discuss it further after tonight's meeting. She went on to say it has been almost three years without a solution, and asked for a temporary solution while we figure out a long term one. Chief Adams stated that from August 28th through October 1st

the average speed going outbound on Wirt Road toward Pontius Road was 23mph, the 85th percentile speed was 29mph. Inbound traffic coming from a 45mph zone to 25mph, the average speed was 27mph and the 85th percentile speed was 33mph. He also stated the Wirt Road sign behind the Birch Tavern showed July to August there were 38,000 cars heading out of town. From August to September there were 29,000 and the month of September going into October there were 6,000. So far since October 1st there have been 5,800 cars, so the numbers are coming down going out of town toward Pontius Road. Mr. Rupp asked if there's any way to gauge the traffic with the roundabout going in and Rohr and 317 being closed. Mr. Farst said the data was taken during the time of the roundabout construction and road closures. He added that we talked about doing traffic counts on Wirt Road and Main, Main and Front, Wirt and oak, Wirt and Walnut, and Wirt and College. We have made arrangements for those counts to be taken this Thursday. Our traffic engineer will then look at the data and everything from pedestrians to turning movements for an analysis of possible changes to consider. Before we go to a major change we really need to understand the impact it could have. Council further discussed traffic and accident patterns with Chief Adams. Mrs. Hilbert told Mrs. Holbrook she had witness her trying to get her grandson across the crosswalk and it is a problem. She apologized and said we need to be reactive about this, as we have not done anything on this for three years. This is not going away and there has to be something done in that area. Mrs. Holbrook expressed her concern for the kids who have no adult supervision. She said in her opinion we don't need teachers out there, we need officers. She understands Chief Adams cannot supply them, but suggested the City and schools or even the warehouses come together and pay for a special duty police officer for an hour in the morning and an hour at night for the kids to cross safely. The teacher has done a great job, but there's only so much you can do. She stated that she's been bumped by a vehicle six times in that intersection and speculated what if it was a child and they hadn't stopped. Cars speed up past the sidewalk looking for traffic on Main, not paying attention to the crosswalk. She suggested a walkway over the intersection. Mrs. Hutson said that sounded like a good idea. Mr. Farst said a motion had been made for us to move the signal, which is something our traffic engineer would have to look at. Mr. Dildine added there are a lot of physical barriers we don't want to mess with and we need to look at the bigger picture and cover all bases. Obviously, a hundred years ago, our roads were not designed to handle the amount of traffic we have today. We need to look at Wirt Road in its entirety and both intersections in the traffic study. Mr. King stated we can move traffic but it's still going to be the same amount of traffic, so where does it go?

And what is the impact of where it goes? Mr. Farst said with any study you always want to consider growth, and that's why we have MORPC. They have a team of traffic engineers that help all the cities understand regional growth. Mr. Rupp asked if the study will be inclusive of the entire city. Mr. Farst said this particular one is focused on the intersections he mentioned earlier. Mr. Cleary said the nice thing he noticed about the roundabout is that it gets traffic through without delay. Mr. Farst agreed that is the beauty about that kind of intersection. You can get the same amount of traffic through at a fraction of the time. Mrs. Hilbert and Mrs. Holbrook discussed getting a group together and come up with a temporary solution, including adding police presence and possibly changing start and end time for the schools to stagger it with shift changes at the warehouses. Mr. Smathers approached the podium and talked about getting the group together to discuss everything. He said the school is planning on coming to observe for themselves what happens at the crosswalk during those times, and come up with more safety plans. This intersection is odd to say the least, with the entrance to the school, Wirt, Main, and Front Street. We talked about school safety zone lighting, Chief Adams stated that there has been an officer there in the morning. Mayor Westcamp said their presence means a lot. Mr., Lockett said maybe the warehouses and businesses would be willing to cooperate by doing staggered start times to their shifts. Council and staff continued conversation on the subject and decided to meet to discuss at a later date.

E. Barry Alcock

Barry Alcock spoke about the importance of continuing the \$6.6 million renewal levy for the Groveport-Madison local school district. He stated issue 14 is a renewal levy, and passing this levy guarantees that we will continue to generate \$6.6 million annually to maintain current school operations, including programs, activities, educational opportunities for our children, and to keep the current staff levels. Issue 14 is not an increase in taxes. We are asking our community to allow us to continue to do what we've been doing for the past nine years when voters approved the current levels. There is no reason, good or bad, for any opposition to our levy. If the levy did not pass, we would lose \$6.3 million every year and have to make severe budget cuts and it would take years to overcome those losses. He urged Council and staff to support the school's efforts in the renewal levy, Issue 14, bringing the best possible education to the young people of our community.

VII. New Business

VIII. Unfinished Business**IX. Ordinances and Resolutions****A. 3rd Readings****[Ord. 2023-037](#)**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 2023-028 ESTABLISHING THE CITY OF GROVEPORT'S POLICE DEPARTMENT STRENGTH OF STAFF.

Sponsors: Dildine

Chief Adams stated there was a little miscommunication with this ordinance, in that he is not wanting to increase the strength of staff to twenty-seven but is looking to increase the full time Sergeant staff from four to five. He said instead of promoting one officer to Sergeant, he is looking to promote two and the staff level would remain the same. Law Director Shannon asked if the additional sergeant position would be then taking the place of an existing Patrol position, to which Chief Adams said yes. Mr. Shannon recommended Council postpone this ordinance indefinitely on Monday, and that a new ordinance will also be introduced on Monday to reflect the additional sergeant position. Mr. Rupp asked what the duties of the new sergeant will be. Chief Adams explained that one of the Sergeants duties would be focused on patrol, so that should give us a patrol Sergeant out nearly every shift. The second Sergeant position would be looking more into the investigative bureau, something that could be assisting the agency. Mr. King stated he thinks it's very important to have a sergeant in the detective bureau and recommended Council act on this as Mr. Shannon had suggested.

This Ordinance was read by title

[Ord. 2023-039](#)

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY'S COMPENSATION PLAN ESTABLISHED IN ORDINANCE 2012-010 (ADOPTED 5-9-2012) AND ORDINANCE 2017-002 (ADOPTED 1-23-2017), WHICH AMENDED THE SAME, THEREBY AMENDING THE CURRENT PAY SCALE FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF GROVEPORT

Sponsors: Rupp

Attachments: [Ord. 2023-039 Exhibit A.pdf](#)

Mr. King said every three years we are required to do a compensation study based on the compensation plan that we have. Mr. Rupp inquired if a bonus could be worked into that lump sum. Mr. King stated a bonus is

something that would have to be approved by City Council, but can absolutely be worked in. Mr. King and Council discussed preparing separate legislation to present a bonus option.

A motion was made by Council Member Rupp, seconded by Council Member Dildine, to recommend approval to the City Council. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Cleary, Dildine, Hilbert, Hutson, Lockett, and Rupp

B. 2nd Readings

[Ord. 2023-040](#)

AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF GROVEPORT, OHIO, FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2024

Sponsors: Hilbert

Attachments: [Ord. 2023-040 Exhibit A.pdf](#)

Mr. King thanked the City's Directors for meeting this evening to discuss the budget. He said the City and its directors do a great job of presenting a budget that focuses on what we need. There's nothing extravagant, there's never any fluff, and this budget presents a plan to add amenities to the City for recreation. It also continues to have funding for infrastructure improvements and the replacement of old equipment and vehicles. As we go through the budget you will see that all funds are up by about \$5.8 million, and a lot of that does have to do with capital and benefits. He said when we look at capital, one thing he is proud of is that we've been able to build up the capital fund over the last several years to \$4 million. We will be able to use some of that and still maintain a capital budget of \$1.5 million, which is a comfortable place for the City to be. This certainly achieves goals of being able to invest in our infrastructure, vehicles and amenities. We're looking at investing in the Rec Center as well. We should be at a place where we have things that are adequate and newer. He added that he is very confident in the budget that is being presented to Council tonight and based on revenue projection we can afford it. There will never be a budget presented to Council that is something we cannot afford. Finance Director Carr stated for the purpose of revenue in income taxes, since that is our major funding source, what were projecting is a 6% increase in income tax based on the current year 2023's budget. If you look at our collections year to date, we've collected 90% of our income taxes. Therefore, by the time we get to the end of the year our income tax collection will be over budget. Even though we are increasing it 6% above 2023's budget, it is still conservative enough where we should be able to make this work. With

that said, a lot of what Administrator King spoke about relates to capital funds. We are spending a significant portion of our carryover fund balance related to our capital projects fund. We do have about \$2.8 million in new debt in the budget associated with the Rec Center HVAC unit and improvements to our parking lot in the downtown area which is on top of paying down the Golf Course cart paths and the vehicle we purchased for Public Works. If income tax collections don't come in as projected, we can go to Council and make changes accordingly. Council and Staff then discussed the budget at further length. Mr. King recommended Council recommend the budget as presented.

A motion was made by Council Member Rupp, seconded by Council Member Hutson, to recommend approval to the City Council. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Cleary, Dildine, Hilbert, Hutson, Lockett, and Rupp

[Ord. 2023-041](#)

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE RECREATION CENTER CAPITAL ACCOUNT FUND AND RESCINDING ORDINANCE NO. 2019-047 (ADOPTED 11/12/2019)

Sponsors: Lockett

Mr. Carr stated the purpose of this ordinance to amend when we allocate monthly revenues for the Recreation Center fund, 5% of it goes to fund 402, which is our recreation capital. Part of that calculation, since we're going to issue debt in 2024, he wants to exclude debt related proceeds from that calculation. So basically, it's all revenues except for debt proceeds will then be allocated to fund 402 for capital purposes. This mimics what we've done for our Golf Course capital fund, which has the same methodology.

A motion was made by Council Member Lockett, seconded by Council Member Hutson, to recommend approval to the City Council. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Cleary, Dildine, Hilbert, Hutson, Lockett, and Rupp

X. Financial Report

Mr. Carr reported that actual income taxes are 5% higher than last year at this same time. We've collected 90% of our income tax budget through September. Based on changes to our investment portfolio we've collected \$500,000 in interest income this year to date through September. We do have some negative fund balances that relate to the Rec and Gold Course funds but those will be resolved when we transfer funds at the end of the year.

[#215-2023](#)

Financial Report

Attachments: [Financial Report.pdf](#)

XI. Other Business**XII. Reports****A. Mayor - Lance Westcamp**

Mayor Westcamp thanked Mr. King and Mr. Carr for their hard work on the budget. He said there was a good crowd at Apple Butter Day and it's come a long way in fifty years.

B. Administrator - BJ King**C. Director of Law - Kevin Shannon****D. Director of Finance - Jason Carr**[#225-2023](#)

Finance Director Report

Attachments: [Finance Director Report 9.18.2023.pdf](#)

[#226-2023](#)

2024 Budget Memo

Attachments: [2024 Budget Memo.pdf](#)

E. Chief of Police - Casey Adams

Chief Adams reported that he applied for a grant a year ago for a bulletproof shield. He presented the shield to Council and stated it will be going up to Patrolman Boso at the High School.

[#216-2023](#)

PD Council Report

Attachments: [PD Council Report.pdf](#)

F. Economic Development Director**G. Public Services Director - Brian Strayer**[#217-2023](#)

PS Council Report

Attachments: [PS Council Report.pdf](#)

H. Chief Building Official - Stephen Moore

[#218-2023](#) B&Z Council Report

Attachments: [B&Z Council Report.pdf](#)

I. Director of Golf - Tom Walker

[#219-2023](#) GOLF Council Report

Attachments: [GOLF Council Report.pdf](#)

J. Recreation Director - Seth Bowers

[#220-2023](#) REC Council Report

Attachments: [REC Council Report.pdf](#)

K. Community Affairs Director - Jessica Wyke

[#221-2023](#) CA Council Report

Attachments: [CA Council Report.pdf](#)

L. City Engineer - Steve Farst

[#222-2023](#) ENG Council Report

Attachments: [ENG Council Report.pdf](#)

M. Director of Transportation / Senior Services - Bob Dowler

[#223-2023](#) DOT Council Report

Attachments: [DOT Council Report.pdf](#)

N. Personnel Director / Human Resources - Joyce Myers

[#224-2023](#) HR Council Report

Attachments: [HR Council Report.pdf](#)

O. Director of Information Technology - Trevor Swackhamer

P. Clerk of Council - Mindy Kay

Q. Council Members - Jean Ann Hilbert, Ed Dildine, Shawn Cleary, Becky Hutson, Scott Lockett and Jack Rupp

Mr. Rupp said he had a great time at Apple Butter Day, stirring the pots and jarring the apple butter. He said there are a lot of dedicated people who have been doing it for a long time and it's a great event.

Mrs. Hutson thanked Mr. Carr for the budget and for making it easy to read. She commented on how great Apple Butter Day was. She said there were so many stations and so many projects you could do. You could spend all day there with your kids and learn so much. She gave kudos to Jessica Wyke and the Town Hall staff.

Mr. Cleary stated he also enjoyed Apple Butter Day

Mr. Dildine said he had the honor of sitting on a panel at the Ohio Fire Academy as an elected official. He gave presentations to a Fire Officer Class to bring information back to their municipalities. There were about seven or eight in the class. He said it was interesting and he would do it again.

Mrs. Hilbert commented on how she also enjoyed Apple Butter Day and helping spread the butter.

XIII. Adjournment

Council Member Dildine made a motion, seconded by Council Member Hutson, to adjourn at 7:26p.m. All in favor stated AYE, None Opposed. Motion passed.

Jean Ann Hilbert, President Pro Tem

Mindy Kay
Clerk of Council

PLEASE NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM. A RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE DURING REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS.