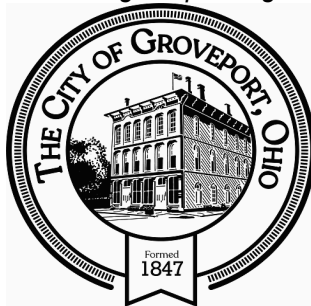


City of Groveport

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Groveport, OH 43125
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Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 17, 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, Kurt Blevins - Police Captain, 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

Captain Blevins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Roll Call

Absent: 1 - Rupp

Present: 5 - Cleary, Dildine, Hilbert, Hutson, and Lockett

V. Approval of Minutes

The June 20, 2023 Committee of the Whole Minutes stand approved as submitted.

[#143-2023](#)

COTW Minutes June 20, 2023

Attachments: [COTW Minutes 6.20.2023.pdf](#)

VI. Business of Guests**A. Madison Township Fire Chief Robinson**

Chief Robinson was excited to report that for the first time since January 2022, we have all of our frontline vehicles in service. We had been battling accident repairs, fortunately none of which were at our fault, as well as mechanical issues with some of the older trucks. We tried to space them out as much as we could so that we didn't have too many trucks out of service. However, some of those repairs were lengthy and had supply and demand issues, taking up to eight months to complete. He thanked all of the local Fire Departments who had loaned

Madison-Township some of their apparatus, and personnel for their patience and understanding through this process. To borrow someone else's truck that doesn't specifically fit our equipment, reorganize and memorize everything about a truck they're not familiar with is no easy task and did not go unnoticed by our administration. We also had to switch the trucks out every so often because the other department needed it back. It's not very easy to take all the equipment and hose off of one truck and put it on another. It can take hours sometimes to make that change. He recognized his staff for their patience, flexibility and cooperation during this long stretch. He then said they are anticipating the arrival of a new fire truck that will go to Station 182. It was originally set to arrive this fall but because of all the delays, it will now be arriving in January. He went on to inform Council that the Madison-Township Fire Department has just been in receipt of a forceable entry door simulator. It's about an \$11,000 piece of equipment that allows our personnel to practice all types of forceable entry through different types of doors and locks both commercial and residential. We've been training with the Groveport and Madison Township Police Departments in the last year with our rescue task force on active shooter and rescue incidents. This simulator will provide hands on training that will benefit both the Fire Departments and Police Departments.

VII. New Business

VIII. Unfinished Business

IX. Ordinances and Resolutions

A. 3rd Readings

B. 2nd Readings

[Ord. 2023-028](#)

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 2023-015 ESTABLISHING THE CITY OF GROVEPORT'S POLICE DEPARTMENT STRENGTH OF STAFF.

Sponsors: Hutson

Administrator King stated that this ordinance represents the additional officer we would need for the SRO, as part of the contract that Council previously approved.

This Ordinance was recommended for approval to the City Council

[Ord. 2023-029](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO PREPARE AND 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 CONJUNCTION WITH THE PORT ROAD RECONSTRUCTION (PHASE II) PROJECT

Sponsors: Lockett

Mr. King said that if approved, this will allow us to submit an application for OPWC funding for phase II of the Port Road project between Spiegel Drive and Rohr Road. There is no guarantee that we will be funded but the sooner we get it on the radar the better.

This Ordinance was recommended for approval to the City Council

[#144-2023](#)

Financial Report

Attachments: [Financial Report.pdf](#)

Finance Director Carr reported that through June 2023 income taxes were 9% higher than June 2022. We've collected 61% of our budget. Our general fund is about \$5.5 million Higher than June 2022, which is driven by higher revenues or \$1.3 Million and lower expenditures of \$187,000. We've taken that additional surplus and invested another million dollars in STAR Ohio, bringing the total amount invested in STAR Ohio to two \$2 million. That interest rate right now is at 4.65%. Recreation Center revenue is flat compared to last year and Golf Course operation is about \$111,000 higher.

X. Financial Report

XI. Other Business

A. Wayne White

Wayne White spoke about Raver Alley and his desire to make it a one-way. He said he had met with Mr. King earlier and that Mr. King had indicated about his report on truck turning radiuses, and how it would be very difficult if not impossible to make Raver Alley one-way heading south. This is because of the trucks entering and being unable to make a left turn onto Hickory Alley when they leave. Mr. White then said that truck traffic is not the concern he is expressing and stated that his main concern is passenger car traffic in general. He then said that according to the truck traffic report, the trucks are physically unable to make that left-hand turn, and if they were in the parking lot they would do damage to

the curb and landscaping. He then said he looked and took pictures and there is no visible damage to any curbing or landscaping either on Hickory Alley or the inside of the parking lot. Regardless of what the engineers say on paper, in real life they are able to make those left-hand turns. He said his neighbor who lives on the corner of College and Hickory Alley told him that trucks do park in the parking lot and exit left onto Hickory Alley. There have been a few trucks that have come northbound straight up Raver Alley. He then inquired that if the City is not going to make Raver Alley a one-way heading south and is concerned with the curbing being destroyed, then why are the trucks allowed to park in the parking lot? If they cannot make the turns without tearing everything up why are they there? He said it's because they can make those turns. They do it every Thursday and Friday. He added that the trash truck either backs up and turns around in the parking lot or makes that left hand turn to exit. He then reiterated that his and his wife's main concern is regular passenger traffic coming up Raver Alley, not the delivery trucks. He said all they want is their quality of life back from the constant traffic up and down the alley from regular passenger vehicles. He said people slow down and gawk at them in their back yard. Before, when Steve's Car Lot was there, they only had about five cars a day drive past, so of course the extra traffic is coming from Little Italy. He stated he's sure people are trying to avoid getting caught at the light by exiting out at Main Street. He went on to say that he was told no traffic study had been conducted, and said he doesn't know how any decisions can be made without someone coming out and seeing what the problem is. Administrator King stated he and Mr. White had a great meeting and although they do not always agree it is always cordial. He then asked Mr. White what his answer in the meeting was when he asked him how many more cars he thought went through the alley daily. Mr. White said estimating Thursday through Sunday from about 5:00pm-9:00pm he's counted about forty. Mr. King said that he had told him ten. Mr. White disagreed and said it comes out to ten an hour. Council Member Dildine said he thought we talked about keeping Raver Alley in Little Italy's side a two-way. If they're still going to maintain a two-way then they will have an access in and out. Mr. King confirmed they had discussed making Raver Alley a one-way southbound up until that point, and keeping it a two-way after. Mr. Dildine said he thought it was also discussed that we would change the directional patterns of some of the streets around that area. He added we just need to come up with something. Mr. King stated that the plans from the truck traffic report contemplate Raver Alley being two-way. Right now, delivery trucks are still coming off of main onto Raver. Raver is still two-way. What this talks about is making Raver north of Hickory one-way going south. Council Member Lockett stated maybe there's an unintended

consequence here and that he's trying to solve Mr. White's problem. He said if we make Raver one-way heading South, the trucks could just come in off of Elm Street, down Raver and exit on main, so he doesn't think this will necessarily solve the problem. Mr. White stated there was no turning radius study done on Elm Street. Mr. Lockett said it seems to him that there is more room coming out on Elm street is you're heading north. Mr. White said there is unless cars are parked there, which there always is. He said they will end up using his and his neighbor's yards to turn on Elm. Mr. Lockett said his guess is that most of the traffic coming from Little Italy is going to be northbound, and anyone else would come out on Main Street. Mr. White said he doesn't know where the people are traveling but noticed that the majority make a right on Elm and a left on College. He said he assumes that those who do make a left one Elm live in the neighborhood but well over 90% of theme are turning right and traveling north. Council Member Hutson stated that the parking lot is pretty tight, especially with bigger vehicles like SUVs and trucks. She stated she has an SUV and when she goes to Little Italy she enters on Hickory Alley and travels south just because the turn is very tight. She said she doesn't know what the issue is with not making that one-way going south. She can get right onto main. She then said she can see how it can get congested at the light but that's just the way she's made herself go in and out. Mr. White stated the delivery trucks are in the parking lot before regular business hours when there's nobody in the parking lot. Mrs. Hutson said she doesn't understand why the deliveries cannot be made at the front of the building. Mr. White stated he asked about these things before the building was ever built and was told that nobody would use the alley to access Little Italy. He said he met with Development Director Jeff Green and City Engineer Steve Farst. Administrator King was not present at that meeting. Mrs. Hutson said the parking lot is certainly not easy to navigate.

B. Michelle Radcliffe

Michelle Radcliffe approached the podium and stated she agrees with most of what Mr. White said. She said it seems the majority of the focus is on Little Italy like the issue is personal against them and it is not. She thinks between the extra homes being built, the extra business, the extra people living and traveling in town, we just generally have more traffic. People don't like traffic lights and don't want to sit at them. They're cutting up Elm and up the alleys. It's not just traffic from Little Italy, it's traffic from everywhere. The traffic has grown and grown and Little Italy is just the icing on the cake. She said we've gone from barely having any traffic on Elm, to now having to have a privacy screen her kitchen window so that people sitting in traffic can't look in. People are cutting around to avoid

the light at Main. She added that whether they are exiting Little Italy or trying to avoid the light, they are coming Raver Alley next to Mr. White's house, across Elm and up behind her house. She said it's a real bad blind spot there and the alley should be one-way. She went on to say that the business behind her has added to the traffic and there is a bus that now parks in the middle of the alley, blocking access to her garage. The whole corner there is a mess from the traffic at that home/business and the traffic coming from Main Street. She said she doesn't think Little Italy is the main cause, but the growth of the City itself. She understands that with the growth comes more traffic, but it's gotten to the point where there are blind spots and people are parking where it's creating issues. She inquired if the trucks could just continue to go down Elm because her garage has been hit and has chunks missing out of it. She said she's even had to fill in the tire tracks in her yard because the trucks cannot make that turn either. She's seen trash trucks trying to back out in every direction because they don't know which way to go and inquired why we can't just force them to go one direction. Mr. White added that the dumpster at the corner of Hickory and Raver creates a blind spot to drivers traveling north on Raver. He said you have to get a quarter of your vehicle out into the intersection before you can see any traffic coming down Hickory from College and it's only a matter of time until someone gets hit there. Mrs. Hilbert inquired if there is a stop sign there. Mr. White said there is a stop sign, however, it gets ignored. Mayor Westcamp asked Mr. White's opinion on if all the pass-through traffic is being caused because there is no left turn arrow at the traffic light at Main Street. The Mayor stated he knows it gets tough when the light changes and you have to wait to turn left, especially when you can hardly see. Mr. Dildine asked if the intersection would be wide enough to be able to accommodate a left turn lane. Administrator King said that is something that needs to be looked into. Mr. Dildine stated we need to come up with some way to direct traffic to main thoroughfares instead of alley ways. We won't get rid of the traffic in residential areas completely but we need to come up with some options. If the intersection cannot accommodate a left turn lane then it's got to be something else. We have talked about traffic over and over enough to do a traffic study and get a better flow of traffic through town. Mayor Westcamp mentioned Mrs. Hutson's idea of Little Italy's deliveries being made in parking spots out front. Mrs. Hutson said if the deliveries are done early in the morning there will be no parking issue. Mr. King said he would talk to Avery Ward to see if there are any challenges to doing such a thing. It could be designated through Council as an unloading zone during certain hours. Mrs. Hutson also suggested the trucks come South down the alley, stay in the alley and unload, then just pull out. Mr. Lockett stated that some of the suggestions

are being dismissed predicated on the fact that trucks cannot make that left hand turn out of Little Italy onto the alley, but Mr. White has seen them do it. He asked Mr. White if they were on his or anyone else's property, to which he replied no. he reiterated that trucks are not coming all the way up Raver, they are making that turn on Hickory. Mrs. Hutson questioned if those trucks are turning onto Hickory and heading west, they get to the main street and it's a tight turn too. How are they even getting out? Mr. White suggested that they may be using the church parking lot to turn and get out. Mrs. Hutson stated it seems the clearest way to get out is to go southbound on raver and possibly make it a right turn only onto Main. Mr. Dildine said if we make raver Alley a one-way southbound instead of a two-way, we need to figure out a way to get people into the parking lot. Mrs. Hutson said the parking lot is tight and if you have two cars trying to pass in opposite directions, someone has to wait. Mrs. Hilbert said she doesn't feel comfortable driving northbound on that alley and that it feels like it should be southbound only. Mr. White said people don't even treat it like an alley but as an extension to the parking lot because they back out and go without even looking for traffic. Mrs. Radcliffe asked if the no parking sign she had previously asked for was part of the truck study. Mr. Dildine explained that the study was only done for turn radiuses of different types and sizes of trucks. Mr. Lockett stated he did see the bus parked in front of Mrs. Radcliffe's garage. Mrs. Hilbert asked if they are parking in front of her garage door. Mrs. Radcliffe said they do park in front of her garage door, in the middle of the street and also in the alley, blocking the entire alley. Mayor Westcamp asked if she has called the police when the bus is parked there. Captain Blevins asked if there's a period of time they usually park there, to which she replied that it could be any time day or night. He explained that blocking a roadway is illegal and to give the Police department a call next time this happens. Mrs. Hilbert suggested putting a no parking sign on her garage. Administrator King said that regardless if a sign is posted or not, it is illegal to block a garage door or driveway. Mrs. Radcliffe said that another vehicle that parks there is the mail truck. Mr. King said the City could let the post office know and have the driver not park there. Law Director Shannon suggested the City call the post office and indicate that we do not want to site a postal truck, but they are not to park there. Mr. Dildine suggested the City call the business behind Mrs. Radcliffe and have them stop parking the bus there as well. Mr. Shannon agreed. Mr. Dildine went on to say that we need to see some options and figure out traffic patterns to reduce traffic in the alley ways and how we use alley ways. It's an older city with a big city problem or traffic flow and parking. Mrs. Hilbert suggested we have options ready by the next Committee of the Whole meeting. Mr. King said that he would speak with Development Director

Steve Farst to see if we can come up with ideas by then. Mr. Cleary added that more police presence is necessary in the area of Elm and College because when they're cutting through there to avoid the light they are not going the speed limit. Mr. King asked Council if we should focus on just this issue or focus on traffic city wide. Council agreed that we need to work this issue out now and then focus city wide because traffic is getting worse city wide. Mr. Dildine said we need to make sure the timing on our traffic lights is correct and if we need to start putting left turn lanes at intersections. Mr. King said we will have to do a traffic study for the entire city and come up with solutions, time frames, and funding options.

XII. Reports

A. Mayor - Lance Westcamp

B. Administrator - BJ King

[#145-2023](#)

Admin Report to Council

Attachments: [Admin Report to Council.pdf](#)

1. Raver Alley

[#158-2023](#)

Raver Alley Truck Turning Analysis

Attachments: [Raver Alley Truck Turning Analysis.pdf](#)

C. Director of Law - Kevin Shannon

D. Director of Finance - Jason Carr

Finance Director Carr stated that if our income tax collections project out we will have another very positive year. He said he and Administrator King discussed how they'd like to address the budget and will be taking the approach of budgeting at a zero level and figure out what we actually need. He added they are trying to continuously focus on the net rating that we have since a lot of our larger projects might be coming to a head, and maybe to shoot debt. A strong debt rating will lower interest costs. Regarding our Utility Funds, continuously looking out it seems that the revenue will match expenditures or we'll be in a deficit spending situation. That will be one area we will need to look into to make sure that we are at least breaking even with our Utility Funds. Mr. Dildine asked Mr. Carr if

he could let Council know when utility rates were last raised and what the percentage was. Mr. Carr explained said water rate was last raised in 2012 at a 20% increase, ending in the first billing cycle of 2017. Sewer is essentially considered a passthrough even though we do own the infrastructure. The billing part of it comes from the City of Columbus, therefore we follow what the City of Columbus does. Our challenge is that some of our maintenances are starting to exceed what some of those increases are. Storm water has not been changed since it was adopted by Council. He said he had spoken with Public Service Director Brian Strayer about issues with storm water lines, funding, and things of that nature and what we've started to do is to not pay those costs out of the Storm Water Fund. We are now budgeting those costs out of our 401 Fund, which is where we allocate income tax money to purchase capital improvements. This way we are able to do the work without raising the rates. Mr. Dildine pointed out that it's been eleven years since we've raised the rates and that might be an issue. Administrator King stated that with storm water, we're taking a more aggressive approach to try to improve and replace the damaged infrastructure that we have. Hickory Alley is a good example of that, but it's just not there in the Storm Water Fund for all things we need. A couple years ago when we started to allocate salary costs for the Utility Department into the Utility Fund but we can't support that moving forward, so it will go back into the General Fund. Mrs. Hilbert inquired if storm water was a dollar a month. Mr. Carr said it is two dollars per ERU. For residents it is twelve ERU's billed twice for a total of twenty-four dollars a year per the ordinance passed in 2012. Mr. Dildine said he wishes we would to minimal increases per year instead of big increases every fifteen years. Mr. King said it certainly allows people to plan if they know it's coming because increase in trash collection and utilities is never going to go well if it's done in one fell swoop. He added that we should break down what it means financially, so instead of saying one percent increase we can say a nickel per month. Mr. Dildine said we also must show that the money's being put too good use and not just sitting there. People need to know what their money's going to. Mr. Dildine then asked Mr. Carr in regards to the anticipation of issuing more debt down the road because of bigger projects, if we take any of our excess and paydown debt more quickly, or do we stick to the repayment cycle that was set up from the beginning. Mr. Carr stated our options to pay down debt faster exists within our bond anticipation notes which we're doing for the Golf Course cart paths. We're going to pay that \$1.5 million down over five years, \$300,000 a year until it's paid off. 2023 was year one of those five payments. Our Ohio Public Works Commission Loans, which are interest rate free, allow an early payoff. Our bonds that we've issued on the open market do not

allow us to pay them off but you can refinance them. Right now, those are the only two areas where we can pay down debt faster. He said this is something that can be discussed in the budget process. Our allocation is 85% general fund 10% capital projects, and 5% debt. If we really wanted to get aggressive and allocate more money to the debt service fund to pay off some debt, we can build the budget to change that allocation to do that. Mr. Carr stated that as we lower our debt service, that allows us to allocate funds elsewhere. Administrator King suggested further looking into the City's debt obligations. Mr. Carr referred Council to the last page of the Mid-Year Forecast for information on the debt service and restrictions. Mrs. Hilbert said she hates to do increases but it's something we ought to be looking at.

[#146-2023](#) 2023 Groveport Mid-Year Forecast

Attachments: [2023 Groveport Mid-Year Forecast.pdf](#)

E. Chief of Police - Casey Adams

[#147-2023](#) PD Council Report

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

F. Economic Development Director - Jeff Green

[#148-2023](#) EDEV Council Report

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

G. Public Services Director - Brian Strayer

[#149-2023](#) PS Council Report

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

H. Chief Building Official - Stephen Moore

[#150-2023](#) B&Z Council Report

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

I. Director of Golf - Tom Walker

[#151-2023](#) GOLF Council Report

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

J. Recreation Director - Seth Bowers

[#152-2023](#) REC Council Report

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

K. Community Affairs Director - Jessica Wyke

[#153-2023](#) CA Council Report

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

L. City Engineer - Steve Farst

[#154-2023](#) ENG Council Report

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

M. Director of Transportation / Senior Services - Bob Dowler

[#155-2023](#) DOT Council Report

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

N. Personnel Director / Human Resources - Joyce Myers

[#156-2023](#) HR Council Report

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

O. Director of Information Technology - Trevor Swackhamer

[#157-2023](#) IT Council Report

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

P. Clerk of Council - Mindy Kay

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

Mr. Cleary inquired about the bank that's in the Kroger parking lot. He said it just seems like such a waste and asked if there's been any movement on it. Administrator King stated he would have Development Director Jeff Green give Council an update tomorrow.

XIII. Adjournment

Council Member Dildine made a motion, seconded by Council Member Cleary, to adjourn at 6:35 p.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.