

City of Groveport

655 Blacklick St.
Groveport, OH 43125
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Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 27, 2023

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

City Council

Mayor Lance Westcamp

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

I. Call to Order

Mayor Lance Westcamp called the City Council meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Staff Present: BJ King - Administrator, Kevin Shannon - Law Director, Jason Carr - Director of Finance, Casey Adams - Chief of Police, Jeff Green - Development Director, Ruthanne Sargus Ross - Clerk of Council

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

II. Moment of Silence

The Mayor asked everyone to join him in a moment of silence.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Chief Adams led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Roll Call

Present: 6 - Shawn M. Cleary, Edward Dildine, Jean Ann Hilbert, Becky Hutson, Scott Lockett, and Jack Rupp

V. Approval of Minutes - February 13, 2023

The February 13, 2023 City Council Minutes stand approved as submitted.

[#043-2023](#) City Council Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [City Council Meeting Minutes 02.13.2023.pdf](#)

VI. Business of Guests**A. Madison Township Administrator Susan Brobst - Introduction of New Trustee Bruce Jarvis**

Madison Township Administrator Susan Brobst introduced herself and thanked Council for placing them on the agenda. Groveport City Council is aware that last fall, former Madison Township Trustee Michelle Reynolds successfully ran for a seat in the Ohio State Senate, creating a vacancy on the Madison Township Board of Trustees. Mrs. Brobst wanted this opportunity to introduce the newly named Madison Township Trustee Bruce Jarvis to Mayor Westcamp and Groveport City Council. Many have already met or have known Mr. Jarvis for a long

time. Still, Susan Brobst wanted to officially introduce him by coming here tonight.

Bruce Jarvis thanked Mrs. Brobst for the introduction. He was glad to be here; it allowed him to talk to everyone and reacquaint himself with people he hadn't seen. Mr. Jarvis may be new to the Township but not to local government. He thanked Council for their support.

B. Paul Smathers - Groveport Madison School District Deputy Superintendent

Deputy Superintendent Paul Smathers, Groveport Madison School District, addressed the conversations about school safety throughout the District and on social media. Mr. Smathers assured everyone that school safety is of utmost importance to the District. He came to share the immediate changes, the mid-range and long-range plans the District would put into place for school safety. The District's Administration welcomes ideas and suggestions and will always look to improve school safety. Mr. Smathers shared items listed on his handout:

- Increased safety drills by practicing the safety drills and doubled the number of safety drills required by the Ohio Safety Commission and the Ohio Department of Education. At the end of Monday's school day, a tornado warning was broadcasted across Franklin County when the District had elementary school students on buses en route to drop off kids at home. The buses were directed to the nearest school building to unload the children to get everyone to a tornado-safe zone. Everything went great.
- The District has increased the tornado, state, lockdown, evacuation, and fire drills training and talking to the staff and students to make sure everyone knows and understands what to do in an emergency drill.
- Procedures to make arrival and departure safer.
- Procedures to make extracurricular and athletic events safer.
- Improving visibility, presence, and supervision in flashpoint areas (lunch rooms, hallways, restrooms, etc.)
- Monitoring social media, adding a reporting system, and talking with kids, families, and parents about reporting any inappropriate threats, bullying, or harassment taking place on any social media.
- Implemented a tip hotline provided by the Ohio Department of Education and the School Safety Commission.
- Talking to families, parents, and students about recognizing peer conflict, anger, signs of suicide, social media issues, harassment, bullying, and intimidation.

- *Establishing partnerships with outside agencies for social, emotional, and mental health and wellbeing.*
- *Focus on decreasing the incidents of violence and fights.*
- *Implementing a "Smart Lab," an area where students can go to relieve anxiety, address anger issues, or talk to someone about their concerns.*
- *Remind students of the "See Something, Say Something."*
- *District safety committees*
- *Improving Communications Systems with all stakeholders.*

Council Member Cleary asked if any government funding was available to help defer the cost of implementing safety procedures. Mr. Smathers stated the District is still looking into all the details of cost and implementation. The Ohio Schools Safety Commission and Governor DeWine have allocated money, and the District has applied for those funds.

C. Wayne White

Wayne and Darlene White, 475 Elm Street, came with two requests to address Council; one was the use variance application that is on Council's agenda for a second reading. Law Director Kevin Shannon informed Mr. White that the applicant had withdrawn his application for the zoning measure related to the counseling center. The appropriate action for Groveport City Council would be to consider a motion to postpone this legislation indefinitely. The move to postpone indefinitely would take the ordinance off of Council's agenda. The matter of the counseling center would be withdrawn at this time and would no longer move forward for Council to consider. Mr. White conceded that 540 Blacklick Street was part of the issue. As some City officials know, two residential homes are used in the same manor near the Certified and a house at 474 Elm Street, directly across from his residence. Their concern is that every time the police get contacted about noise complaints or a squad shows up at the house it makes them wonder if there is a place in this community for those types of residents.

Wayne and Darlene White feel the traffic and parking situation at the new Little Italy location is out of control. City staff assured the Whites that they did not believe vehicles would use the alley along the side of their house. Since Little Italy Ristorante opened, they have seen 15 to 20 cars a night. It is a steady path of people walking, vehicles parking in front of their houses, stopping to look into their yards and point at things. It was Mr. White's understanding that Raver Alley was to be an extension of the restaurant's parking lot. Administrator King stated the City intended to always retain the alleys for carrying traffic. The

development plan made Raver Alley wider to accommodate parking spaces on the west side of the alley. Mr. White said there isn't enough room for parking on Raver Alley; getting large emergency vehicles through the area would be difficult. There is a sign on a telephone pole stating "In one way," but there is no other signage indicating that Raver Alley is one way. Mr. King said the City could make Raver Alley one-way, and Council could authorize the installation of "no parking" signs for areas other than the designated parking spaces. Mr. White commented that the dumpster blocks the view of the alley; he got hit coming through back to his house. One has to be in the alley to see around the dumpster and the shrubs. When Mr. and Mrs. White installed their fence, they did not want a privacy fence. With increased foot and vehicle traffic, they would like the City to consider putting up a privacy fence around their property. The City of Groveport assured the Whites that the new development would not affect their way and quality of life. Mr. White assured Council that it is already heading down that path. Council Member Hutson remarked that no one anticipated the business the restaurant would draw; the hope is that traffic will calm down somewhat. Mr. White added that he and his neighbors could hear the dumpster emptying at 1:00 a.m. Council Member Dildine favors looking into the traffic flow and the City doing everything possible by adding appropriate signage.

Mr. Dildine added that everyone needs to be well informed about what the law says the City of Groveport can and cannot do with owners using residences as counseling facilities.

D. Cheryl Raver Irving

Cheryl Raver Irving, 349 Tallman Street, addressed Council with concerns about the trains that travel through Groveport in light of the derailment in New Palestine, Ohio. Congresswoman Debbie Dingell commented that part of the problem is that a company owns the trains and another owns the rails. Mrs. Irvin knows there are mutual aid agreements between Columbus and Groveport. There is also a hazmat team at Rickenbacker. Mrs. Irvin wanted to know if Groveport had an emergency evacuation plan. Council Member Dildine stated the Township has an emergency plan in place, as well as the City of Groveport and the City of Columbus. All the agencies work together to update and discuss emergency plans. Emergency plans are fluid; there is an umbrella plan that works as a guide for emergency responders to follow but has to adapt to the specific type of emergency. Council Member Rupp added that Groveport, and all of Central Ohio, are very fortunate in that most large municipalities do not participate in

the level of automatic responses that the City of Columbus does. Mr. Rupp mentioned that Franklin County and the City of Columbus Department of Health have an atlas of all hazardous materials that travel the highways and train rails that are continuously updated.

E. Tim Henry

Tim Henry, 139 Church Street, lives across the street from 540 Blacklick Street. Even though they withdrew their request for a use variance, twenty to thirty people with addiction problems live in the apartments on the property. People get dropped off all day and night; it's like a bus station is across the street. He wants to know how long this housing is going to last. He and his neighbor see these residents in their yards at night. Mr. Henry finds it unsettling to take his dog out at 3 am to find four or five people standing in his yard. Not only does he find it disturbing, he thinks the halfway house is bringing down property values. There is a concern for the people and children who live in the area. He has seen the people living there stop and talk to children walking home from school. He wants to know when this matter will stop, how they can operate such housing, and why there are no citations issued daily.

Law Director Kevin Shannon advised that the applicant sought a zoning occupancy permit for the residential facility/apartment. The City turned the application down through the decision issued by the City's Chief Building Official, Stephen Moore, who indicated that the applicant told the City that 12 individuals would reside in the apartments. Groveport cited City Code and Ohio Revised Code, indicating that it was not an appropriate use for a single-family zoning district. City Officials gave them some options; one is to apply for a use variance as they did with the counseling center. They could seek a re-zoning of the area. They sought to file an objection to the decision of Mr. Moore and are seeking the City's Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) to review the zoning officer's decision concerning the denial of the zoning occupation permit.

Mr. Shannon said the City is hearing from the law firm representing the applicant that the Federal Housing Authority and the American Disability Act mandate that cities are required to permit residential care facilities within their borders. The City of Groveport's Zoning Code does not address residential care facilities. The applicant's counsel is saying that it is inherently prejudicial to individuals with disabilities, and they are looking to redress the decision by Mr. Moore relating to the denial of the permit. Groveport's position is that while its zoning code is silent as to residential care facilities, the City is following the Ohio Revised

Code provisions relating to residential care facilities. That code mandates that local jurisdictions allow them within the municipal corporation limits, provided that certain conditions are met. There will be a hearing on Monday, April 3, 2023, before the BZA. Mr. Shannon encourages anyone with concerns to attend that BZA meeting. The Board of Zoning Appeals is a quasi-judicial proceeding, like a court setting, where the Board will take evidence and ultimately review the decision of Chief Building Official Stephen Moore as it relates to that matter. Mr. Shannon advised that this is the current status of the issue. Mr. Henry commented that he assumes the issue will continue through all the proceedings. Mr. Shannon confirmed that the residential care facility will continue operation until the hearing date. Mr. Shannon can't predict what will happen at that hearing. Part of the process is hearing from residents at the BZA hearing.

Mr. Dildine wanted to know if there would be any benefit if the community contacted the police on any littering on private property, loitering, or talking to children because he would like to see a record of such incidents. Mr. Shannon asked Chief Adams for an ongoing report of every incident. Part of the situation is that City officials have only been made aware of the intent to use one facility as a residential care facility. There have been other properties purchased where folks are living. City officials need to sit down with the firm representing the applicant and share the information the speakers are sharing with Council tonight. Things said tonight are contrary to what City officials have been told.

On the request of Mr. Shannon, Chief Casey Adams ran through the run cards, the dispatched Franklin County Sheriff's Office calls, and the City's Police Department's calls going back to 10 days prior. As of now, there has been one dispatched call on Elm Street since October and one dispatched call on Blacklick Street, both within the last 30 to 45 days. Mr. Dildine reiterated the public needs to know they need to call. There needs to be documentation, evidence, and statistics to substantiate the issues and concerns arising out of residential care facilities. Mr. King agreed if someone trespasses on a resident's property, call the police to make a report. On two different occasions, Council Member Lockett had to wait ten minutes behind a bus while eight people from 474 Elm Street boarded the bus. Mr. Shannon stated the City has to address every single residence where this issue is cropping up, and the entire matter needs to go before the appropriate authority. Those wanting to continue operating a residential care facility under the protection of federal law have to notify the City so the City can act accordingly within the law. When asked about the residence behind

Mr. Henry's house, the applicant was very forthcoming, stating that "yes," they have 12 people housed there. There is a significant distinction between a residential care facility and an individual buying a house and leasing it to allow people to live there. Mr. Shannon will find out from the applicant about the other houses; he wants to know if they deem them all residential care facilities. Mayor Westcamp encourages everyone to attend the BZA meeting on April 3, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. Notices will be sent to all the contiguous property owners. Once the City determines the status of the other two residences, if they all fall in line with the same situation, then that is a matter that the BZA can address as well. Anyone who starts providing treatment or service in a residential structure will need to apply for a use variance if the property does not meet the zoning code, which Mr. King presumes these structures probably would not meet.

Ann Raver, 4919 Founders Drive, wanted to know if the property across from Kroger (Forward Health) was a certified, licensed, or accredited group. Mr. Shannon responded that the City is under the impression that the treatment facility is a bona fide counseling center with licensed counselors who are providing the service to individuals covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act due to an addiction issue. She asked who bonded the center. Mr. Shannon could not answer that question but could find the answer. Ms. Raver said if a center provides treatment for opioid addiction, it must meet specific State requirements and standards. Any physician working there would have to be licensed. Council Member Hutson interjected that the question of dispensing medication was addressed at the Planning & Zoning meeting. The center does not dispense any medical pills. There is no medical staff employed at the facility. Mr. Shannon added it is a counseling service to help integrate those individuals with disabilities back into the community.

VII. Ordinances and Resolutions

A. 3rd Readings

None

B. 2nd Readings

[Ord. 2023-003](#)

AN ORDINANCE GRANTING A VARIANCE AS TO THE PERMITTED USES IN THE ESTABLISHED ZONING DISTRICT FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 540 BLACKLICK STREET, PARCEL NO. 185-000254, CURRENTLY ZONED RESIDENTIAL (R-6), ALEX MEDVEC, APPLICANT

Sponsors: Dildine

Attachments: [Ord. 2023-003 Exhibit A.pdf](#)

Law Director Kevin Shannon requested Council Member Dildine to consider making a motion to postpone this Ordinance indefinitely.

Clerk of Council Ross read by title Ordinance No. 2023-003. A motion was made by Council Member Dildine, seconded by Council Member Hilbert, to postpone indefinitely. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

[Ord. 2023-007](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE RESERVATION OF TWO (2) PARKING SPACES FOR THE BIRCH TAVERN IN THE CITY'S PARKING LOT LOCATED BEHIND THE STATED PREMISES

Sponsors: Lockett

Clerk of Council Ross read by title Ordinance No. 2023-003.

C. 1st Readings

[Ord. 2023-008](#)

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2022-035 (ADOPTED 11/14/2022), THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR THE CITY OF GROVEPORT, OHIO, FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2023

Sponsors: Cleary

Attachments: [Ord. 2023 -008 Exhibit A2023 Budget Amendment EXHIBIT A 23-008.pdf](#)

Law Director Kevin Shannon requested Council to consider making a motion to suspend the rules as to the three readings.

Clerk of Council Ross read by title Ordinance No. 2023-008. A motion was made by Council Member Cleary, seconded by Council Member Dildine, to suspend the rules as to the three readings. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Council Member Cleary asked that Finance Director Jason Carr explain to the audience why this legislation that was adopted November 14, 2022 was being amended in 2023. Mr. Carr explained that for the

purpose of Ordinance 2023-008 and Ordinance 2023-009 the amendments are for the City's original budget that was passed November 14, 2022. The original budget assumed a 30% increase to health care premiums when presented for approval. However, based on negotiations with Medical Mutual of Ohio and other changes to our Plan, the actual increase from calendar year 2022 was 5%. Other amendments were related to changes with capital items and the legislation also appropriates the City's actual carryover fund balances from December 2022.

A motion was made by Council Member Cleary, seconded by Council Member Hilbert, to adopt. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

[#041-2023](#)

2023 Budget Memo Amendment

Attachments: [2023 Budget Memo Amendment .pdf](#)

[Ord. 2023-009](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF CASH FUND BALANCES

Sponsors: Dildine

Attachments: [Ord. 2023-009 Attachment 2023 Budget Transfers In Out #23-009.pdf](#)

Law Director Kevin Shannon requested Council to consider making a motion to suspend the rules as to the three readings.

Clerk of Council Ross read by title Ordinance No. 2023-009. A motion was made by Council Member Dildine, seconded by Council Member Lockett, to suspend the rules as to the three readings. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

A motion was made by Council Member Dildine, seconded by Council Member Lockett, to adopt. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

[Ord. 2023-010](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF NOTES IN THE AMOUNT OF NOT TO EXCEED \$1,300,000 IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF DESIGNING, ENGINEERING, AND CONSTRUCTING VARIOUS IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CITY'S MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSE, WITH RELATED SITE IMPROVEMENTS AND APPURTENANCES THERETO; AND APPROVING RELATED MATTERS

Sponsors: Hilbert

Clerk of Council Ross read by title Ordinance No. 2023-010. This Ordinance was referred to the Committee of the Whole.

[Ord. 2023-011](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES IN THE AMOUNT OF NOT TO EXCEED \$200,000 IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACQUIRING VEHICLES AND OTHER RELATED EQUIPMENT FOR MUNICIPAL ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND SERVICING PURPOSES, AND APPROVING RELATED MATTERS

Sponsors: Hilbert

Clerk of Council Ross read by title Ordinance No. 2023-011. This Ordinance was referred to the Committee of the Whole.

[Ord. 2023-012](#)

AN ORDINANCE CONSOLIDATING UP TO TWO BOND ANTICIPATION NOTE ISSUES OF THE CITY OF GROVEPORT, OHIO INTO A CONSOLIDATED NOTE ISSUE, AND ESTABLISHING THE TERMS OF SUCH CONSOLIDATED NOTE ISSUE

Sponsors: Hilbert

Clerk of Council Ross read by title Ordinance No. 2023-011. This Ordinance was referred to the Committee of the Whole.

VIII. Reports

A. Mayor - Lance Westcamp

Mayor Westcamp commended Terri Christensen and the Groveport Madison Area Community Choir for all the hard work that went into Saturday's program. The Mayor personally thanked Mrs. Christensen for all the hard work and organization. Most of the Board members and administration from the Groveport Madison School District were in the audience. It is a great community event.

B. Administrator - BJ King

Administrator BJ King reported Human Resources held open interviews last week with six or seven applicants, possibly resulting in a couple of new hires. Staff was hoping for more participants, but for the first time conducting an open interview platform, the Administration thinks it was a good start. Mr. King thanked the HR Department for putting it together and the Directors who participated in interviews. Mr. King announced that Groveport would host the Tree City USA

banquet in April. The City will also host the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association's annual conference, typically held in Dublin, Ohio, at the Paddock Pub in October. Mr. King will keep Council updated on both events.

C. Chief of Police - Casey Adams

Chief Casey Adams announced the Police Department would be updating the placards for the residential parking on Front Street between Main Street and Elm Street. The original cards, issued in 2013, are broken or cracked. The City will contact residents about receiving a new placard. The new placards will be useful for City-sponsored special events indicating what event and permit dates.

D. Director of Finance - Jason Carr

Finance Director Jason Carr requested that Council consider making a motion to recertify expenditures in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 5705.41(D). The five expenditures are related to two police items, the Recreation Center, Golf Course, and the Water Department listed in his report.

A motion was made by Council Member Hilbert, seconded by Council Member Dildine, to certify. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

[#042-2023](#)

Finance_Director_Report_02_23_2023

Attachments: [Finance_Director_Report_02_23_2023.pdf](#)

E. Director of Law - Kevin Shannon

Law Director Kevin Shannon had nothing further to report.

F. Development Director - Jeff Green

Development Director Jeff Green informed Council he has a follow-up meeting on Tuesday with Mike Bowers, Columbus State Community College, a small business development center. The Center is interested in exploring a partnership with the City of Groveport to provide training services for existing small businesses and, hopefully, start-up businesses.

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

Council Member Jack Rupp commented that Paul Smathers covered anything he would have touched on.

Council Member Becky Hutson commented on the great performance of the Community Choir. It was nice for the community.

Council Member Shawn Cleary mentioned the thunderstorms on the 27th of February that had left 42,000 people without electricity. A few are affected in Groveport, but mainly in Athens, Ohio, with some in Columbus in the Gahanna area.

H. Clerk of Council - Ruthanne Sargus Ross

Clerk of Council Ruthanne Sargus Ross had nothing further to report.

I. Standing Committees

Cemetery Committee

Council Member Cleary will meet with Groveport Messenger Editor Rick Palsgrove on an article about cleaning up the cemeteries and the dates and times for the Groveport and Hendren cemeteries open house.

IX. Other Business

None.

X. Adjournment

A motion was made by Council Member Cleary, seconded by Council Member Hutson, to adjourn at 7:44 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Lance Westcamp, Mayor

Ruthanne Sargus Ross, CMC
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.