

City of Groveport

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Groveport, OH 43125
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Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 11, 2022

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, 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

Cam Lindsay 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 - March 28, 2022

The March 28, 2022 City Council Minutes stand approved as submitted.

[#062-2022](#)

City Council Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [City Council Meeting Minutes 3.28.2022.pdf](#)

Approval of Special Meeting Minutes - April 5, 2022

The April 5, 2022 City Council Special Meeting Minutes stand approved as submitted.

[#063-2022](#)

City Council Special Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [City Council Special Meeting Minutes 4.5.2022.pdf](#)

VI. Business of Guests**A. Michele Reynolds - Madison Township Trustee**

Michele Reynolds, Madison Township Trustee, has lived in the District for 21

years in the Canal Winchester area. Her husband is a pastor; she is the proud mom of two boys, James and Noah, a business owner, a nonprofit CEO, a faith leader, and a proud Buckeye. Mrs. Reynolds came to tonight's meeting to announce that she is running for the Ohio Senate District 3. As a Township Trustee, currently serving as Chair, she's helped change how the Township does business. Madison Township is now on Ohio Checkbook, making the entity more transparent. The Madison Township Trustees created a Citizen Advisory Committee to engage with residents. The Committee is to make sure the residents have a voice and get more engaged in their local government. She helped write a grant to benefit the police department to obtain a new server. The Trustees have more patrol officers out on the streets. They make sure the Township is living up to its expectations in Canal Winchester. Mrs. Reynolds is seeking a seat in the State Senate to help local governments meet their needs. It often takes State resources to fill those needs. She wanted Groveport officials to know that she was there to serve the City of Groveport if she won the election.

B. Open Discussion Re: School Zone Signage

Administrator King opened the discussion with the concerns citizens brought to the City's Administration's attention. There are concerns that the signage in the school zone on Main Street and Wirt Road is inefficient for the community's students walking to and from Groveport Elementary and Middle School Central. The damaged school zone flashing sign is out for repairs, and it will get put back in place once the City receives it. Mr. King assured the residents that there are steps that the City can take to increase signage and its visibility during the restricted school zone hours. He also noted the concerns about drivers making U-turns right in front of the schools on Main Street. City Engineer Steve Farst and Public Service Director Brian Strayer were present to weigh in on the issue and answer any questions. The City's options to improve the signage on Main Street and Wirt Road would be many weeks out. Any additional flashing lights and signs would be in place for next school year, not this year.

Diane Holbrook - 185 Walnut Street

Diane Holbrook came before Council to represent the children. She understands that the flashing light signal may be out until next school year, but the City needs to do something now. Mrs. Holbrook noticed the flashing school zone sign going westbound on Main Street flashes during the dismissal of the middle school students but not the elementary school. She would like signage on Wirt Road similar to the bright green signage at the Log House. The crosswalk sign points to the crosswalk, and 100 feet or so before the crosswalk, there is a sign showing a crosswalk ahead. She wants to see the same in the school zones. There is no signage from Cron Drive to Main Street on Wirt Road. There is a "school sign" and "school speed 20 mph" sign in front of the third house down from Cron Drive but on the sidewalk's opposite side (inside). A Groveport officer had to point it out to Mrs. Holbrook since she did not notice the sign. She checked the price; it was \$53 for a green sign with two people walking and \$25 for a sign saying school to go underneath it. She wants to see the bright green painting on Wirt Road before a vehicle gets to the crosswalk. She took a picture of a stopped car, inches

from her granddaughter, who is a crossing guard, with its front end in the crosswalk. She's had discussions on having a police officer available at the crosswalks in the afternoons. Typically, an officer is present in the mornings, which she said helps a lot. Vehicles coming from the east wanting to make a left turn onto Wirt Road see a sign displaying "end school zone," but there is no signage depicting they are in a school zone. She thinks it needs to be marked. Residents know there is a school there, but the warehouses' workers don't.

When an officer sat in front of Ace Hardware, there was one U-turn that day. She wants to see a symbolizing sign showing a driver that they are coming to a school zone before they get to the 20 mph school zone speed limit. She also proposed "no left turns" onto Wirt Road from Main Street. Drivers are watching for a break in traffic, then gun it to get onto Wirt Road. It isn't good when a vehicle turns left onto Main Street from Wirt Road. A car has to pull way up to the stop sign, crossing the crosswalk, to see oncoming traffic around the building that juts out past the corner. Mrs. Holbrook would like the no left turns on both roadways to be at all times, not just during restricted school hours.

Greg Joranko- 624 Elm Street

Greg Joranko walks his three-year-old daughter to Groveport Elementary every Tuesday and Friday. They walk from Elm Street along Front Street to cross Main Street. He is guaranteed to see a vehicle go through the red light in just four trips a week. He agrees with Diane Holbrook about the no-left turns during restricted school hours. Mr. Joranko feels the more signage, the better.

Mayor Westcamp thanked both speakers for giving Council and the City Administration a heads up on the situation. That is why the Public Service Director and the City Engineer are at this meeting tonight.

City Engineer - Steve Farst

City Engineer Steve Farst noted that the City is looking closely at signage. Staff is looking at the Ohio Revised Code and City Code to make sure whatever sign options or interests arise will comply with State and City codes. He understands and respects the desire to have more signage, but the City has to be cautious about over-signing. Over-signing is a real problem. Most people don't understand that such a proliferation of signs can almost make them become invisible or cause enforcement issues. City staff has been looking into options for the placement of the flashing assembly, types of school zone signs, and looking for some more flexible types of energy sources like solar-powered signs. Mr. Farst said the City's code recognizes certain roadway conditions. There might be visual sight-distance issues that could justify putting in a "no U-turn" arrangement. Mr. Farst thinks this warrants a "no U-turn" because Main Street has a high point in front of the middle school just west of Mrs. Hilbert's house at 814 Main Street. Vehicles are parked facing the east in the pickup parking area to load their children, then do a hard left, making a U-turn to go west. It is still a U-turn even though they are making the hard left out of a parking space.

New school zone signs need to follow the O.R.C., which states the placing of school signs is to be on the property line of the school land on either side of the length of the school property. The ODOT Director would need to permit

the City to go beyond those property lines. The limit is 300 feet. You cannot put the signs out as far as anyone may want. There are State laws and guidance, or rules, as to the position of any school zone signs. The existing school zone sign on the east side of Wirt Road is situated a lot and half west of Cron Drive. Per State law, the City needs to place it just east of the intersection at Cron Drive. Mr. Farst and Public Service Director Brian Strayer think that would be a more appropriate spot because the area is more wide open.

Public Service Director - Brian Strayer

There is a sidewalk and bricked right-a-way where the sign is now, making the distance about 8 feet from the edge line of the roadway, placing the sign too far away to see. The City can locate the sign east of Cron Drive; there is grass between the sidewalk and the roadway. That is the typical location for drivers to look for road signs. Mr. Strayer advised that the flashers are on order, but delivery is eight to ten weeks out.

The City does not know if the damage to the flashing signal happened during a hit and run accident. That night, there was a windstorm, but Mr. Strayer said that shouldn't have taken the device out. The Police Department investigated cameras and everything they could exhaust but found nothing. After City staff talked to the insurance company, the City encumbered the money, placed the order, and will pay for the signal once it is delivered. The insurance company will then reimburse the City. The most significant delay is the manufacturing; the signal is not something in stock sitting on a shelf.

The signs on Wirt Road were already in the plans to replace this year. One sign is discolored, and the City will replace the newer 20 mph speed limit sign.

The school signs on Main Street were all replaced in 2021 with the Main Street upgrades. Mr. Strayer and Mr. Farst observed that the signs don't stick out with the shade from the trees and the buildings, even in the daytime. Earlier, there were some issues with the timing of the lights flashing with the computer within the school zone lights. The lights were not keeping time. When the Department noticed the timing was off, they would make adjustments. Anyone seeing the lights not flashing during the restricted school zone hours is encouraged to contact Public Works immediately. Mr. Strayer will get staff out there to try to identify the problem. They could see if it's a computer malfunction or a light malfunction.

Regular signage is readily available, and the City could have them in a few days. The City would need to determine the placement of those signs. Mr. Farst talked about too much signage; drivers do get numb to signs. Studies show that signs lose effectiveness if an area is over signed. Last year, when City staff went along Main Street, a third, or at least 25% if not 33%, of the signs, were removed. There were too many signs.

Mayor Westcamp wants the Cron Drive school zone speed sign installed as soon as possible. Mrs. Hilbert suggested putting a sign underneath to show the restricted hours. Mr. Farst advised that the most effective enforcement method is the flashing lights during restricted hours. Mr. King thinks specific hours posted on the non-flashing signs would make the school zone more clearly enforceable. If the smaller sign stated hours such as 7 am to 8 am and 3 pm to 4 pm., motorists would know when the school zone times are. Mr. Dildine asked how posting the specific hours would help with the late starts

and early dismissals. Mr. Dildine wondered whether the City's crews could add some striping on Wirt Road. Mr. Strayer said the regulations with pavement markings are pretty much the same as signage. Mr. Farst noted that the flashing light systems are programmable. If the City knew ahead of time, it could specify exact times on exact dates. Mr. Rupp asked if there were any differences in the O.R.C. and the City's codes on signage that might need legislative action. Mr. Shannon advised that there was no difference. In the sections Steve Farst mentioned, as far as making sure Groveport's code is up to snuff with O.R.C., the Ohio Revised Code has a cross-reference at the end of the section.

Mr. Lockett raised the matter of "no left turns" from Main Street onto Wirt Road and from Wirt Road onto Main Street. Vehicles have to pull way up across the crosswalk to see around the corner. Mr. Lockett has observed drivers being more interested in their phones than paying attention to children walking around the schools. Another point is the calming effect of police presence during the morning and afternoon restricted hours. Mr. Lockett thanked Chief Adams for his quick response to address the safety concerns with the cruiser, police trailer, speed indicator, and speed zone sign.

Mayor Westcamp knows there are concerns about drivers often running the red light at Front Street and Main Street. The crossing signals work, but cars still try to beat the light. He also noted that when turning off Wirt Road onto Main Street, a driver still has to creep up on the crosswalk to turn right. He would like the "no left turn" signs in place as soon as possible.

Law Director Shannon advised that there is no further legislative action needed from Council for the existing signs in the school zones. The potential "No U-turns" and "No Left Turns" signage would need to be addressed by City Engineer Farst. Once he forms a proposal for Council, it would take legislation for the City to be able to enforce "No U-Turns" and "No Left Turns."

Administrator King would like to see the "No U-turns" signs implemented as soon as possible. Short-term, the City can put up more signs. He also thinks the City can proceed with ordering additional flashing lights to replace the temporary and stagnant signs on Main Street. Then look into paving markings to mark the school zone as much as possible to do all the City can to address the issues. Mr. King suggested doing everything with the school zone signs and getting the "No U-Turns" legislation before Council.

Mrs. Hilbert suggested ripple strips on Wirt Road might slow vehicles down. Chief Adams noted that the roadway between Little Italy and the Birch is a one-way street. People can only make southbound turns onto Crooked Alley. Anyone going north on the alley to turn left on Main Street would violate City code. Mrs. Holbrook suggested installing the sign depicting people crossing with arrows pointing at the crosswalk at the Wirt Road crosswalk. Using bright neon green or yellow signs would be more noticeable. Mr. Strayer advised he would have to check if that type of signage complies with the rules and regulations. Mayor Westcamp reiterated that too many signs create problems. Mrs. Holbrook wanted to know what research says there can be too much signage because she feels that the school zone started having this problem when the City cut out that signage in the last five years. Mr. Strayer reported that the City took no school zones signs down. The City took out the "No Parking" signs; there was a sign every 100 feet. The Federal Highway

Administration did a study years ago that showed that people get numb to the signs when there are too many. The only signs removed were non-regulatory or no parking signs. The point is to bring people's attention to the critical alerts.

Mayor Westcamp thanked everyone for coming.

VII. Ordinances and Resolutions

A. 3rd Readings

None

B. 2nd Readings

[Ord. 2022-015](#)

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE RECODIFICATION, EDITING, AND INCLUSION OF CERTAIN ORDINANCES AS PARTS OF THE VARIOUS COMPONENT CODES OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF GROVEPORT, OHIO AND THE DECLARATION OF AN EMERGENCY

Sponsors: Lockett

Clerk of Council Ross read by title Ordinance No. 2022-15.

C. 1st Readings

[Ord. 2022-017](#)

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING AND DEDICATING AS PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS THE WATER MAIN AND SANITARY SEWER MAIN CONSTRUCTED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE BLUESTONE SUBDIVISION DEVELOPMENT

Sponsors: Cleary

Clerk of Council Ross read by title Ordinance No. 2022-17. This Ordinance was referred to the Committee of the Whole.

[Ord. 2022-018](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF GROVEPORT'S PARTICIPATION IN THE ODOT WINTER CONTRACT (018-23) FOR ROAD SALT AND THE DECLARATION OF AN EMERGENCY

Sponsors: Dildine

Law Director Kevin Shannon advised that staff requested Council to consider making a motion to suspend the rules as to the three readings and the effective date. This legislation is the ODOT winter bid, and the timeliness of this matter is an issue.

Clerk of Council Ross read by title Ordinance No. 2022-18. A motion was made by Council Member Dildine, seconded by Council Member Hilbert, to suspend the rules as to the three readings and the effective date. 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 Hilbert, to adopt as emergency legislation. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

[Ord. 2022-019](#)

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING AND DEDICATING AS PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE THE PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS IN CONJUNCTION WITH HICKORY GROVE SECTION 3B

Sponsors: Hilbert

Clerk of Council Ross read by title Ordinance No. 2022-19. This Ordinance was referred to the Committee of the Whole.

VIII. Reports

A. Mayor - Lance Westcamp

Mayor Lance Westcamp recommended the appointment of Mike Sisco to the Trees & Decorations Committee.

A motion was made by Council Member Cleary, seconded by Council Member Hilbert, to appoint Mike Sisco to the Trees & Decorations Committee. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Mayor Westcamp commented on the Easter Bunny being in town over the weekend but the weather didn't cooperate. This was the first year the event was done with Town Hall and the staff did a good job.

B. Administrator - BJ King

Administrator BJ King echoed the Mayor's sentiments on the weather for the egg hunt but remarked it sure was fun to watch.

Palm Pond will be stocked with fish this Friday anywhere between 8 am and 5 pm. Mr. King will keep everyone updated on when ODNR will be at the pond.

Mr. King commented on the Recreation Center's partnership with the Groveport Madison School District. The Rec Center has a soccer camp scheduled with the Groveport Madison head soccer coach and a basketball camp with the head coach of the girls' basketball team. In conjunction with the GYAA, Groveport is doing a good job building good partnerships with community organizations. The City is looking into installing a football field with goalposts at one of the parks.

[#064-2022](#)

Admin Report to Council

Attachments: [Admin Report to Council April 11, 2022.pdf](#)

C. Chief of Police - Casey Adams

Chief Adams remarked that the Easter Bunny might be making an appearance on Thursday, April 14, to direct traffic. School is letting the children out early for spring break.

Franklin County Sheriff's Department is moving fast on the new computer-automated digital system. The Sheriff's Department will present the project before the Franklin County Commissioners at the end of May. The FCSO hopes to implement the app-based system with Groveport Police Department's computers within twelve months. Groveport's dispatching costs will increase with the cost-sharing for the new system.

The State of Ohio is making grant money available to law enforcement; departments can use one application for curbing violent crime. Chief Adams hopes to obtain equipment with the funds, like cameras in neighborhoods. Groveport would be competing with the bigger cities, which unfortunately experience a lot of violent crime.

Due to his extensive work busting a catalytic converter theft ring operating in Groveport and central Ohio, Detective Josh Gilbert testified at the Ohio State House. He spoke before the Ohio House Criminal Justice Committee about pending legislation that would help regulate the scrapping of catalytic converters in the State of Ohio. Ohio House of Representative Richard Brown has expressed his support for legislation to update the laws. Representative Brown advised the Chief that it will be a long process to achieve the changes concerning regulating the scrapping of catalytic converters.

Council Member Cleary praised the police officers on the patrol of the school zone. Council Member Dildine expressed concerns about the teachers being sent out to act as school crossing guard advisors. The adults are not paying enough attention to the school cross guards (children) manning the crosswalks.

D. Director of Finance - Jason Carr

Finance Director Jason Carr advised that the City's 2021 audit has started. Council and the Mayor should expect the auditors' fraud questionnaire. If there are any questions, reach out to Mr. Carr.

Mayor Westcamp reminded everyone Groveport residents have to file a tax return with RITA (Regional Income Tax Agency), whether or not they owe money.

Councilman Cleary asked for an update on the City's two new buildings. Mr. Carr responded that the City would probably receive two more pay applications on the 1847 Main Project. He estimates that the City has spent approximately 75% of the project budget for both buildings combined. Finance will have a better idea once the next pay applications are received and will provide an update at a future meeting.

[#065-2022](#)

Finance Director Report

Attachments: [Finance Director Report 04 11 2022.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 was not present.

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

Council Member Jack Rupp talked to Administrator BJ King about the development of Area "C." Mr. Rupp thinks development will happen if the people are willing to sell. Council Member Dildine believes the social media comments show how much misinformation or misunderstanding there is on the process of new development. Some people think that a local government will go out to property owners and tell them it wants their land. A developer would buy a neighbor's land, and the other property owners would blame the local government. Administrator King stated that Mr. Dildine was right; cities don't just take people's land to develop. Nor do cities tell people to sell their land. If a private developer approaches someone to sell their land, it could be

good for the property owner. Mr. King would like to discuss the development of Area "C" at the May Committee of the Whole meeting to see where the City sits on the matter. It will be pretty expensive to extend utilities to Area "C." The City needs to discuss its priority list concerning that land.

Council Member Lockett, Mr. Dildine, and Mr. King talked to Warren Motts and Motts Military Museum about some reciprocity for Groveport residents. Motts Military Museum will have its first annual "Groveport Day" on August 6, 2022. Groveport residents can obtain a free ticket at Town Hall by providing proof of residency. Mr. Dildine noted everyone at the Museum was very excited about it. The City of Groveport will advertise the event.

H. Clerk of Council - Ruthanne Sargus Ross

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

I. Standing Committees

Council Member Cleary will contact Administrator King about scheduling the next Cemetery Committee meeting.

IX. Other Business

None.

X. Adjournment

A motion was made by Council Member Hilbert, seconded by Council Member Dildine, to adjourn at 7:51 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.