

**Rittman City Council Met in a
REGULAR MEETING
November 22, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.**

Members Present: Amanda Nelson, Dave Williams, Leah Weirick, Philip Decker, Josh Carey and Melissa Shows
Members Absent: None
Presiding: Mayor William Robertson

The invocation was given by Philip Decker, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes – November 8, 2021

Shows moved to approve, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried.**

Citizens Forum

Greg Tekautz – 244 Baker Street; Pam Wolfe – 145 W. Sunset Drive; Dave Collins – Pop’s Shake Shack; Ron Woodward – 9 McElwee Ct.; Tina McMillen – 243 Ritter Drive; Mark Hill – 83 Pinewood Avenue. All attended the meeting to voice their concerns over the sign violation which Pop’s Shake Shack received. The discussion went on to include the Nature Preserve volunteers, Property Maintenance issues, changing the outdated ordinances, parking in front yards when there is no where else to park. Ron Tisher – 924 Winkler Drive. attended the meeting as a member of the Board of Zoning. He indicated that that the Property Maintenance Officer issues citations for violations and no follow up is made to ensure compliance. He feels he is “spinning his wheels”.

Old Business

a. **Ord. No. 8258 An Ordinance of the Council of the City of Rittman, Wayne and Medina Counties and State of Ohio, to make Appropriations for Current Expenses and other Expenditures of the City of Rittman, State of Ohio, During the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2022, and Declaring an Emergency. Third Reading.** Ord. No. 8258 was read on third reading. Weirick moved to adopt, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried.**

b. **Ord. No. 8259 An Ordinance of the Council of the City of Rittman, Wayne and Medina Counties and State of Ohio, Amending Emergency Medical Services Section 993.01 (a) (1) and (2), (b), (c) and (d) – Rates of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Rittman. Third Reading.** Ord. No. 8259 was read on third reading. Shows moved to adopt, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried.**

c. **Ord No. 8260 An Ordinance of the Council of the City of Rittman, Wayne and Medina Counties and State of Ohio, Providing for the Compensation of Certain City Employees, Effective Date and Declaring an Emergency. Second Reading.** Ord. No. 8260 was read on second reading. Nelson moved to place on third. Williams inquired about the Recruitment and Retention Officer position, this originally came to Council with a grant, we ended up paying this position more than what the grant afforded us. Typically, when we get grants, it is to save the city money, not to cost the city money. Do we need to make an adjustment to stay within the grant limits for this particular salary? Also, with this position being open, should we think creatively to maybe look at it differently if the grant allows us to look at saving the city money, can it be a part time position?

Sweigert responded that the amount has been adjusted to match the grant. We did look at part time, but one of the issues with part time staffing is bringing in multiple people to fill that slot. We came to the conclusion that we need to go with full time. Shows inquired what will happen with that position in December of 2022? Bubp stated that it may or may not continue to be a Recruitment and Retention Coordinator position but I don't think we can necessarily afford to reduce staffing at the station. When the residents call 911, someone needs to show up as soon as possible. Every second counts. Even if we cease to call it that and call it a full-time staff. Bubp stated we may have to revisit the ordinance next year to change the title. Williams inquired has that job been worth it's salary? Have we prospered through Recruitment Retention from that position? Sweigert responded that Andy while in that position wrote a number of grants that we were awarded. Not just for the fire department but also for other departments in the city that we were awarded. Andy did go out on all of the calls during the day. I think that that position over the last three years did pay for itself. All Yeas on roll call and **motion carried**.

New Business

a. **Res. No. 8262 A Resolution of the Council of the City of Rittman, Wayne and Medina Counties and State of Ohio, Certifying that when a Municipal Obligation was Incurred Sums were Lawfully Appropriated in the Funds to Satisfy the Obligation and Sufficient Sums Currently Exist to Satisfy this Obligation According to the Attached Sheets and Declaring an Emergency. Three Readings.** Res. No. 8262 was read on first reading. Weirick moved to suspend the rules, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried**. Nelson moved to adopt, all Yeas and **motion carried**.

b. **Ord. No. 8263 An Ordinance of the Council of the City of Rittman, Wayne and Medina Counties and State of Ohio, Amending the Annual Appropriation Ordinance No. 8200, as Amended According to the Attached Sheet(s) and Declaring an Emergency. Three Readings.** Ord. No. 8263 was read on first reading. Weirick moved to suspend the rules, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried**. Shows moved to adopt, all Yeas and **motion carried**.

c. **Res. No. 8264 A Resolution of the Council of the City of Rittman, Wayne and Medina Counties and State of Ohio, Authorizing the Finance Director to Issue a Twenty Seventh Pay to Employees and Declaring an Emergency. Three Readings.** Res. No. 8264 was read on first reading. Shows moved to suspend the rules, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried**. Weirick moved to adopt. Williams asked for an explanation. Bubp responded that this is a once in eleven years event. What would normally be the first pay of 2022 lands on December 31, 2021. Because we are a municipal government, we need to be clear on our intentions. All Yeas and **motion carried**.

City Manager's Remarks

Rec Center News: CO2 shortage. Garrick has been informed, as well as other Rec Centers, that there is a CO2 shortage. CO2 regulates the PH in our pools and without this chemical, we may have to shut down for a period of time. We would close the small pool first as the large pool is used more regularly but we will keep you updated as supply issues lessen or worsen.

Lot Split Morton Salt: The lot split on the Morton property that the city is purchasing for the driveway into the Nature Preserve has been recorded with the County. The city is waiting on the deed from Morton which is in process, then after that we can close on the property, so that is very good news!

OPWC and West Ohio: The city scored very high on this funding project so if we get this funding, the portion of Ohio between Main and Metzger, should be 100% funded as we received 80% funding from AMATS for this resurfacing project. This is a 2023 project.

Grant Street/Sterling/Erie water replacement line Pre-Construction meeting:

This meeting was held last Monday with our team and the contractor, Hugh Palmer of Palmer and Sons Excavating who won the bid on this project. This project is being funded by a loan for the waterline through OWDA and an OPWC grant for the road resurfacing. The grant covers 100% of the estimated cost. The waterline replacement portion will begin after January 1, 2022 partially due to a delay in the company being able to obtain new water hydrants. The road resurfacing will be completed, we hope, in early spring after the asphalt plants open.

NOPEC: Recently the city signed a contract with NOPEC for gas supply which recently was 0.689 per ccf for four of our buildings (City Hall, Fire/Police, EMS building, Service Department building). With our new contract, gas being supplied by NextEra will reduce that portion of the bill to 0.529 per ccf. This does not include the Waste Water Treatment Plant nor the Water Plant and the Rec Recreation building is also on a separate contract. However, overall, we will be happy to see some additional savings in the supply portion as gas prices continue to climb.

Leadership positions for 2022: I have been appointed as Vice-Chair of the Medway Board of Wayne County and the Northeast Ohio Mayor's and City Managers. I continue to serve as Vice-Chair of the Wayne County Reutilization Corporation. I appreciate the work I do for the city on these committees as I am always looking for ways to enhance and elevate Rittman.

Lastly, I want to thank Philip and Leah, it's been a pleasure with working with you guys, thank you for your confidence in me, in hiring me. I wish you both the best and like you said we are going to keep you guys around and hopefully get you on some boards. Again, I just want to thank you both. It's been really great working with you.

Finance Director's Remarks

I appreciate Council passing the budget for next year. I want to echo what Bobbie said for Leah and Philip. It's been really nice getting to know you.

Council Remarks

Nelson – I just want to remind everyone that our Christmas events are coming up for the Chamber. We are doing Christmas Around the World, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., that includes all of the businesses. We didn't do it last year because of Covid, but we are bringing it back. We are also doing the Christmas Tree Lighting where businesses, citizens and civic groups can purchase a tree, sponsor a tree through the Rittman Chamber and it will be displayed on the hill where the old school used to be. Santa will be here on December 11. Santa and Elves are 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Meet with Santa, the kids can have time with elves decorating Christmas cookies around 5:30 p.m. we will be reading the Night Before Christmas with the Mayor and then the tree lighting.

The only other thing that I have to say in regards to everyone being here, thank you guys for being here by the way and expressing your concerns. I ran for this for this position on a property ordinance platform. That's my thing, to clean up Rittman to get things where they need to be. We went so many years with previous people in charge not following up with things. And not even caring about our property maintenance. If we let one person do something, we have to let everybody do it. Before you know it, we have 4,000 signs downtown, we have four foot grass everywhere and then we can't catch up with it. It may seem like we are picking on people, but we are actually not. Just because you can't see or

hear about other people getting dinged for things doesn't mean it's not happening. It doesn't happen to just one person all of the time. I know somebody said it, if you don't like the speed limit and decide to do 20 over and somebody pulls you over, you can't tell the cop, oh, I don't agree with that, and not pay your ticket. You are going to get in trouble for it. Same here, if you don't like the ordinances, that's fine. There are some that I don't like either and they need to be changed because they are antiquated and we are working on that. The sign ordinance is already being worked on because some of the things are outdated, which we understand that. But until that happens, you are still required to follow the ordinances whether you like it or not, unfortunately. I thank you guys for bringing your concerns. Obviously, we will look into them.

Shows - I want to start by thanking Leah and Philip. This is not an easy job, it's something we are dedicated to doing. I appreciate your service. I look forward to seeing you in the future doing other things, maybe coming back and joining us. I want to welcome the new members that are in our audience today that are going to be joining us next month on December 6th to be sworn in. My usual remark I want to remind anybody in the community that we are really low in numbers with the school and some of the churches in town on our family needs list for the holidays. Where they request assistance for their kids for food baskets or whatever, we are down, as of this morning we have a 1/4th of what normally do in a year. While we would like to say that everyone is prospering and doing great, we are worried about those families that are getting missed. If you know of somebody, contact Erika Galvin at the schools, the information is on the school website. She helps compile the list and gets names out to all organizations. She tries to get as many families covered this holiday season. Sometimes we have families that won't reach out and ask. If you are uncomfortable approaching them, reach out to Erika and she will make a phone call and check on the family and see if there is something we can do to serve them. Shop with a Cop is happening. Last count we were up to almost \$1,200.00 which means we get to take 12 kids. Those tickets are still available through the police department Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Dollar for dollar goes to our kids in Rittman. We pick kids off of that list that I was discussing. Other organizations reach out, but they stay with our Rittman kids. I want to thank everybody in attendance. We do care, we are trying to make things better. Coming here and voicing your concerns and opinions is the most effective way. We see the comments, we read the comments, we're unable to respond there. Reach out to us one on one. We will gladly sit down and talk to you. I want to remind that if you do a group all chat or message, we cannot respond that way because of the Sunshine Laws. Reach out to us individually, send an email separately, don't put us all on the same one and expect to get that feed back right away. Thank you for coming, we are listening and we would love to continue to try to work and find a balance with these things.

Carey – thank you to our Council persons Weirick and Decker. It's been a tumultuous four years between Covid and a lot of other things that we have to deal with. Your service is definitely appreciated. The fire department and EMS are also collecting canned goods and money for the various drives down at IGA parking lot. Keep your eye out for those guys down there. Thank you for doing that. I also want to thank everybody in attendance, we definitely understand the concerns and I think we definitely need to look both into the ordinance and the enforcement of the ordinance. I want to promote the businesses in town and help bring in new businesses in town, not to make them want to leave town. I believe that is everyone's here goal. Hang in there, we are working on it. And I wish everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Williams – I'd like to thank Leah and Philip, I am really going to miss your guidance in what we do with the fiscal knowledge with what Leah brought from other jurisdictions, I've always valued that, so thank you very much. Philip, I always appreciate your independent spirit when it came to things. That's what it takes, is not just a bunch of people all agreeing on things, to be objective and to weigh things out. I have always appreciated that. I'd like to thank everybody here. As I look out into the gallery I just see a lot of volunteers and people with good hearts. Thank you, Ron Tisher, for volunteering for the boards and giving your time and expertise and Donna and Woody and Mark, thank you for the time you spent for the city and at the Server. EMS for taking extra time or fire, just

thanks to everybody for putting their best foot forward for the city. That's what it takes. So, thank you.

Decker - Greg, Ron, Pam, David, Woody, Mark, Tina, I think that was everybody who spoke. Thank you for sharing, for making the effort to be here this evening. Mr. Simpson can you remind me how often is it that we have obligatory review of the charger. Simpson responded ten years. If you are talking about the sign ordinance it's not part of the charter. The charter was reviewed in 2016. Decker stated that in two weeks this council will have its annual organizational meeting, we will all be assigned to, well not me, not you Leah, will take roles on various boards. Taking Pam's comments to heart, I would encourage you to give consideration to whether or not it is possible for there to be some kind of board of Council and citizens that do review ordinances periodically. To review those things that we think might need to be changed. A systematic way of going through that. There are ones that are antiquated. There are ones that are just strange. I personally would love to have chickens, but I realize that that's not everybody, and we went through that, five years ago. It might come up again, who knows. But there are things that cities go through, change, change is a boulder that is hard to get rolling. That said, the people that are currently serving on this Council. Five out of the six if us weren't up here five years ago. We have gone through since I've been here, we have had two city managers, we have a new law director, we have a new finance director. We have a new police chief, the structure of our fire and EMS departments are changed and under new chief leadership there. It is a hard ball to get rolling. It's even harder when people are pushing from opposite sides of the ball and saying it needs to go this way and it needs to go this way. That's why these organized meetings happen in order to keep the momentum going. I second what Councilman Williams has said, the number of people in this room now is more than have been here in four years. The only other time that I saw people this excited was when the Trick or Treat time changed from 6 – 8 to 4 – 6. It's surprising but it is also encouraging. Mr. Collins, I hope you will be here next Council Meeting. The momentum continues when more people are pushing the boulder. Kudo's, thank you for being here. I appreciate being able to be elected four years ago and now I am done.

Weirick – I am just going to say thank you to everybody, thank you for the last four years. I will miss it. It does take a lot of time; people don't realize how much time that we put in. It's not just two meetings a month. My family comes first. That's why I didn't re-run. I will miss this. Thank you.

a. **Motion to Go into Executive Session for the Purpose of Discussing Compensation of an Employee and to Invite the City Manager, Mayor, Finance Director and Law Director – 7:53 p.m.** Weirick so moved. Nelson seconded the motion, all Yeas on roll call and motion carried.

b. **Motion to Come Out of Executive Session – 8:16 p.m. Weirick so moved, all Yeas and motion carried.** Shows so moved, all Yeas on roll call and motion carried.

c. **Motion to Amend the Finance Directors Contract to Reflect Three Weeks of Vacation.** Weirick so moved, all Yeas on roll call and motion carried.

Adjourn: 8:16 p.m. Weirick moved to adjourn, all Yeas upon roll call and **motion carried.**

Mayor

Clerk of Council

