

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

Minutes of the Vermillion City Council Meeting

Meeting

BARRETT BROTHERS - DAYTON, OHIO

Form 6101

Held

Monday, April 13, 2020

Videos and minutes of council meetings are available to the public to view online at www.cityofvermillion.com under 'meetings' tab (City Meeting Minutes or Videos).

Vermillion City Council: Steve Herron, Council President; Monica Stark, Council at Large; Emily Skahen, Ward One; Frank Loucka, Ward Two; Steve Holovacs, Ward Three; Barb Brady, Ward Four; Brian Holmes, Ward Five; G. Fisher, Certified Municipal Clerk

Administrative Staff: Mayor Jim Forthofer; Amy Hendricks, Finance Director; Chris Howard, City Engineer; Tony Valerius, Service Director, Chris Hartung, Police Chief

CALL TO ORDER:

Steve Herron, President of Council called the Monday, April 13, 2020 Vermillion City Council Meeting to order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The members of Council, administrative staff, and audience participants recited the Pledge of Allegiance; a moment of silence followed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

S. Holovacs MOVED; F. Loucka seconded to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2020 meeting. Roll Call Vote 7 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL'S REPORT:

S. Herron asked everyone to continue their prayers for First Responders and to send positive reflection in that direction. He said it appears they are getting through this, and he thanked everyone for their work and sacrifice in the community. They are trying to work through this information. He said when he has had to go to the store, he has noticed that people are being kind and cordial with others, and he thanked everyone for this. He asked the citizens to continue monitoring the Governor and the CDC orders on how these meetings will proceed moving forward. He asked everyone to keep up to date on this information. He said his number one rule is to be kind and considerate to others. He asked the citizens to continue in supporting local businesses and to remember they're here for us and we need to be there for them when times get tough.

MAYOR/SAFETY DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Forthofer provided his submitted report as read into the record. He highlighted important aspects of the report verbally.

Safety Director's Report

COVID-19 in Vermillion

Saturday night, Erie County Health Commissioner Pete Schade informed me that a case of COVID-19 was confirmed at Kingston Long Term Care in the City of Vermillion. This is particularly concerning considering the close living quarters and ages of the residents. Our first responders have been notified. I am often pressed for the exact number of cases in Vermillion and where they are. I don't find this information useful or even allowed by HIPAA. I am advised that the aggressive contagiousness of this virus demands the same precautions whether we have one case or one hundred. Just assume that everyone in town is a carrier without symptoms and behave accordingly. Stay apart, stay home and wash your hands. I talk to the ECHD every day several times a day. The ECHD, Chief Hartung and I confer regularly on enforcement of State orders regarding Stay at Home, Social Distancing and Essential Businesses.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

Minutes of the Vermilion City Council Meeting

Meeting

BARRETT BROTHERS - DAYTON, OHIO

Form 6101

Held

Monday, April 13, 2020

Dispatch Center Moved

The Vermilion Police and Fire Dispatchers have been moved from the police station to a building in the city services department. The intention is to minimize cross contaminating in case someone contracts COVID-19. Police field personnel have a high degree of exposure to the virus. Dispatch is a smaller unit that needs to continue to operate. The dispatchers will be relocated once the Governor indicates it is safe.

Gratefully, VPD and VFD personnel are healthy at this time. They are operating with precautions as much as is practical.

Mayor's Report

City Government

City government is providing regular services but with a skeleton staff. City Hall is closed to the public and pretty much empty. Departments have been moved to homework to minimize exposure. Only department heads remain in City Hall. Water, wastewater, and streets are on a skeleton staff.

City Business Goes On

City Boards, Commissions will conduct business via remote. We've had a Port Authority meeting Thursday the 9th. It went well. Other board and commissions will continue meeting as building projects need review, variances need review, our parks need to be ready for the public, our docks and waterfront need organization by our Port Authority. With the help of the remote service established by IT Director Pozywak, Amy Hendricks, and Gwen Fisher our boards and commissions will continue to do City business on behalf of the residents. It may be a little rough as we get use to technology, but we will get done what is necessary until things change.

Vermilion's Downtown

Restaurants, bars, and non-essential businesses are closed per the State order though a brisk restaurant take out business was done at the beginning. Our businesses are examining applicable Federal and State assistance. In general, the business owners I talk to are either hanging on, renovating during this shutdown, or planning for an aggressive reopening.

Prime Location Renovation

You may notice demolition activity at the corner of West River and Liberty, the old convenience store. The property owner and I have been in discussions for almost a year about this property being renovated inside and out and made into a much more appealing upscale food retail. It should help brighten up that highly visible entry into downtown from the east.

Vermilion's Eastern Corridor

Vermilion's business growth along the eastern Liberty Avenue corridor continues as planned. Coley's CNC Manufacturing operates as an essential business in its newly expanded facility on Liberty Ave. Defense Soap, in their brand-new headquarters on Liberty, is busy fulfilling an avalanche of orders for its coronavirus killing sanitation products. Vintage Crossing is still looking forward to expansion of its new headquarters this year as does George's Roofing in its new headquarters. Shoreline Village is pushing ahead with approximately 50 new apartments across from the Farm Market and Vintage Crossing. All on Liberty Avenue.

Building Permits Up

YTD +12% residential. +6% commercial.

Fire House #1

Site preparation has begun on Devon and Douglas for the new Fire House #1. A November completion is still expected.

Essential Business

I have daily complaints about essential businesses and why isn't the Mayor cracking down on one business or another. The Erie County Health Department determines which business are essential I am in touch with the Erie County Health Department or the Governor's hotline seven days a week. Each business questioned by the public is currently allowed to operate under guidelines which contain a lot of

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of _____

Minutes of the Vermilion City Council Meeting

Meeting _____

BARRETT BROTHERS - DAYTON, OHIO

Form 6101

Held _____

Monday, April 13, 2020

grey area. The Administration will enforce obvious violations of the Health Department's interpretation of essential.

Response to anticipated revenue shortfall.

Like all governments the City of Vermilion is expecting a revenue short fall because of the crisis impacted economy. Finance Director Hendricks cannot estimate the loss at this time but suggests it will be in the hundreds of thousands of revenue dollars.

As a proactive measure, I have met with the Administrative Departments to review which planned projects will go forward and which are put on hold.

Projects going forward.

- Vermilion Road reconstruction phase II
- Highbridge Road reconstruction.
- Haber Road Bridge replacement
- Sanford Street sidewalk project
- Vermilion Firehouse I construction
- City wide water meter replacement

Some of these projects are partially or wholly funded by grants which we would lose if the project does not proceed. Others are partially or wholly funded by bonds which are already in place.

Projects the Administration has put on hold.

- The Fulper Parking Lot project.
- Decommissioned water tower maintenance
- Road crack sealing

These projects come directly out of City funds. We can always restart these projects once the financial picture comes into focus and the City has the funds.

As Mayor, I believe it is important to take quick proactive measures to minimize the stress on our city budget created by the current crisis. We will continue to look for other cost reduction opportunities. Once our new level of income can be predicted, we will examine restarting those projects that Council has already funded.

Suspended Water Projects

After consultation with the City Engineer, I have suspended two projects due to safety concerns during the current crisis. Replacement of the Sanford Street waterline and the Haber Road Bridge and waterline will be temporarily suspended. While our residents are ordered to shelter in place, children are ordered to stay home and everyone is supposed to wash their hands frequently, I do not want to deprive them of their city water source. When the crisis is over, and our residents can freely move about we will resume these projects.

Bulk Pick Up

Republic Services has informed me and other city executives that there will be no-bulk pick up or yard waste pick up until further notice. There is a clause in Republic contracts that provides for no-penalty suspension of service for several conditions including "Government Order". This means Republic will not be adjusting the bill to the City and the City cannot adjust the bill to residents. The Services Director has an announcement regarding bulk and yard waste.

Telecommunications

Verizon still plans to have major improvement in our city's reception very soon. Friday March 27th the Verizon technical team was on the roof of City Hall doing inspection in preparation for installing a cell.

North Coast Wireless is placing a wireless contact point in Showse Park. This should help those in the VOL area who's are working or schooling from home. My thanks to Vermilion IT Director Richard Pozywak and North Coast wireless for this generous contribution.

F. Loucka asked where the dumpsters will be placed in town. Mayor Forthofer said two dumpsters will be located at Showse and at the Devon Drive Service Center. They will be there Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of this week.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

Minutes of the Vermilion City Council Meeting

Meeting

BARRETT BROTHERS - DAYTON, OHIO

Form 6101

Held

Monday, April 13, 2020

B. Holmes said they are finding that a lot of people are disposing their bulk trash incorrectly. He asked everyone to be patient with Republic. He said open burning or dumping it on a dead-end road is not the proper way to dispose the trash. He is seeing a lot of this in the county. Mayor Forthofer said he spoke with the Fire Chief about this last week and they will be cracking down on these open burning situations and citations will be issued.

B. Brady asked if the WIFI at Showse and McGarvey's is an open network. Mayor Forthofer believed so.

SERVICE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

T. Valerius updated Council on the impact of COVID-19 as it relates to the city service employees. At this time, staffing has been reduced to 50% at all Departments during the day, and the employees are performing all the duties necessary in providing the citizens with essential services. If an emergency arises, certainly all employees would be expected to respond, as any employee who is not at work is on call during normal working hours.

Columbia Gas has been working in the right-of-way on the East end of town. They have been installing new, larger mainline pipe to meet the growing demand. This Thursday, they plan on closing Overlook Road at Liberty for 2 days for installation. If the weather does not cooperate, the closure will be moved to next Tuesday the 21st. Signs will be posted to show the detour route.

He announced that the Building Department will be receiving tablets by months end which will allow them to become more efficient in the way building and property maintenance inspections are processed from the field. This complements the newly launched online portal which allows contractors the ability to register, apply for permits, and request inspections via the Building Department website. Homeowners will also have the same ability in applying for building and zoning permits through the portal as well.

As many know, Republic Services cancelled the bulk garbage pick-up this month due to COVID-19. In lieu of that, the city was able to get four dumpsters a day for three days at no cost to the City for bulk garbage and yard waste. Two dumpsters will be located at the Skate Park parking lot at 5335 Devon Drive, and the other two will be located at Showse Park in the parking lot on the south side of Edgewater Boulevard. The dumpsters will be at these locations for citizens to dispose of their bulk and yard waste items this Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 7:00 am until 4:00pm daily. He asks that everyone please make sure all items are placed in the dumpsters - not beside or around them.

Lastly, he asked Council to consider suspending the rules and passing Resolution 2020R-4, so the City may participate in the ODOT road salt contract. Likewise, he asked Council to consider passing Ordinance 2020-16 related to the sludge hauling contract for the WWTP.

B. Holmes asked if tires will be set aside for disposal. T. Valerius said he had no real discussion on tires, but he will address this with Republic. B. Holmes suggested that residents hold on to their tires until the recycle centers are open.

B. Brady asked if the sludge contract had any changes from the last contract. T. Valerius explained that the low bidder is Browning Ferris and it will be a three-year contract and the cost is down.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Amy Hendricks didn't have additional information to present since her report was given in committee.

G. Fisher asked if the deadline for RITA has been extended. A. Hendricks said yes as it will match the federal government's filing date of July 15 for returns. She said estimated payments for 2020 are also due by July 15.

CITY ENGINEER'S REPORT:

C. Howard reported site work on the new fire station has begun. Additionally, with regards to the Vermillion Road Phase II Project, construction will begin on May 4. The northbound traffic between Jerusalem and Brownhelm Station Road will remain open.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Held _____ Monday, April 13, 2020

NEW BUSINESS:

S. Herron MOVED; F. Loucka seconded to add Resolution 2020R-5 to the agenda as a first reading. Roll Call Vote 7 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Reading of the Ordinances:

First Reading – Ordinance 2020-15: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 2020-5 ADOPTED MARCH 2, 2020 TO MAKE APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES FOR THE CITY OF VERMILION, OHIO FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2020 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

First Reading – Ordinance 2020-16: AN ORDINANCE AWARDED A COMPETITIVE BID CONTRACT TO HAUL SLUDGE FROM THE VERMILION WATER POLLUTION CONTROL PLANT TO LOCATIONS APPROVED BY THE OHIO EPA; AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO MAKE AND ENTER INTO SUCH CONTRACT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF VERMILION, OHIO WITH BROWNING FERRIS INDUSTRIES OF OHIO, INC., DBA REPUBLIC SERVICES OF ELYRIA, PROVIDING SUCH SERVICES BE AVAILABLE FIVE (5) DAYS PER WEEK FOR A PERIOD OF THREE (3) YEARS COMMENCING APRIL 18, 2020 THROUGH APRIL 18, 2023, AND AUTHORIZING THE FINANCE DIRECTOR TO MAKE PAYMENT THEREFORE AS INVOICES ARE APPROVED BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

S. Holovacs MOVED; F. Loucka seconded to suspend the rules. Roll Call Vote 7 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

M. Stark MOVED; F. Loucka seconded to adopt this ordinance by emergency. Roll Call Vote 7 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

First Reading – Ordinance 2020-17: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF VERMILION, OHIO TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT FOR MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR THE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE CITY'S CEMETERIES.

First Reading – Ordinance 2020-18: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF VERMILION, OHIO TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT ON BEHALF OF SAID CITY WITH THE TOWNSHIP OF BROWNHELM, LORAIN COUNTY, OHIO TO PROVIDE FIRE PROTECTION FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2020 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2021 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

First Reading – Resolution 2020R-4: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PARTICIPATION IN THE ODOT ROAD SALT CONTRACTS AWARDED IN 2020.

S. Holovacs MOVED; B. Brady seconded to suspend the rules. Roll Call Vote 7 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

F. Loucka MOVED; M. Stark seconded to adopt this resolution by emergency. Roll Call Vote 7 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

First Reading – Resolution 2020R-5: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF VERMILION TO EXECUTE AND FILE AN APPLICATION WITH THE STATE OF OHIO FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE UNDER THE NATUREWORKS GRANT PROGRAM.

S. Holovacs MOVED; B. Holmes seconded to suspend the rules. Roll Call Vote 7 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

F. Loucka MOVED; B. Brady seconded to adopt this resolution by emergency. Roll Call Vote 7 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Announcement of Meeting Dates:

April 20, 2020 – Vermilion City Council Meeting – 6pm – Zoom Video Meeting

Adjournment:

Upon no further business coming before the body, Steve Herron, President of Council adjourned the Vermilion City Council meeting.

Transcribed by Gwen Fisher, Certified Municipal Clerk