

Regular

January 6, 2021

Ontario City Council met in regular session on January 6, 2021, in the Municipal Building, with Council President Eddie Gallo presiding. The meeting opened at 7:00 p.m.

Present during roll call were Council members Ken Earhart, Dave Rehfeldt, Josh Bradley, Sherry Branham (via phone), Michele Webb, Nathan Sunderland, Council President Eddie Gallo, Mayor Randy Hutchinson, Law Director Andrew Medwid, Service-Safety Director Jeff Wilson and Clerk of Council Cathy VanAuker.

The minutes of the regular Council meeting of December 2, 2020 and the special Council meeting of December 22, 2020 were presented for approval. Hearing no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

Mr. Gallo opened nominations for Council President Pro Tempore. Mr. Earhart nominated Mr. Sunderland. Calling twice and hearing no other nominations, the nominations were closed. A voice vote was taken, all Aye, zero Nay, and the nomination for Mr. Sunderland to be Council President Pro Tempore passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

No Committee Reports

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Hutchinson read his State of the City address.

STATE OF THE CITY Ontario, Ohio

In looking back at 2020, the City of Ontario can be very proud of what was accomplished. Even with all the challenges of COVID-19, the City had a very successful year.

The big success story of the year was the Development Agreement the City reached with Industrial Commercial Properties. They have agreed to develop Ontario Commerce Park (former GM) and they have already signed an agreement with their first tenant. Charter Next Generation Films will be leasing the former Press Prep building and will begin production of trash bags in early spring. We are very excited to have Industrial Commercial Properties and Charter Next Generation Films investing in Ontario. Industrial Commercial Properties will be building a large building for lease or sale as early as June of 2021. We will continue to maintain and clean up the property, while working directly with Industrial Commercial Properties. I want to thank former and current Council Members for working with me on acquiring and marketing the property. I felt confident that if we took possession of the property that we would have success in bringing jobs to Ontario. I want to thank RACER Trust for assisting in marketing the property.

The City received a beautification grant from the Richland County Foundation. We used the grant money to update the landscaping at City Hall. In one of the areas, we incorporated stones from the Rock Road Railroad Bridge that was torn down. We planted pollinator plants and different varieties of bushes. These plants have and will attract several species of butterflies. We also received a bike rack, which was placed at the rear lobby entrance.

The City was very active this year having multiple new businesses moving in to Ontario. With the growth, several new and existing businesses moved into existing store fronts, which includes Lifetouch moving into the former Bookery building. In August Emerson Actuation Technologies held a ribbon cutting at their facility at 2500 Park Avenue West, celebrating their new addition. The new manufacturing space will add approximately 30 jobs. Emerson has been a great community partner for over 60 years.

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City Council approved to use some of the CARES Money to assist small businesses that were affected with loss of revenue due to COVID-19. The City partnered with the Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development and they handled the disbursement of the CARES Money to small businesses. The City is very pleased that we could offer financial assistance to several small business in Ontario, that have faced adversity due to COVID-19.

The Police Department had a very active year. They were able to keep over 85% of the workforce COVID free by cleaning the department 2 times per shift, modified shift assignments, and wearing face coverings on calls. The training simulator is being used by several local law enforcement agencies, including the North Central State College Police Cadet Academy. The Police Department also received their first Re-Accreditation Award, and received specific areas of exceptional, such as their Wellness Program, 1,600 hours of training in 2019, Evidence Room Management, Drone Program, Training Simulator, and the Rescue Task Force Training in cooperation with Springfield Township Fire.

The Toy Waiver program was once again a huge success this year. Springfield Fire Department and Ontario Police worked together on this project. They were able to provide toys to over 90 children from Ontario and Springfield Township. The response from the community and local businesses was overwhelming. Springfield Fire Department and Ontario Police are very proud to be able to provide a wonderful Christmas to local families.

Due to COVID-19 the Miss Ontario Pageant had to be cancelled. Miss Ontario 2019 Maria Caporini agreed to fill in until we can have a pageant in 2021. Ontario Youth Sports and volunteers hosted the "Boom Festival in Marshall Park on July 4th, which was a success. We look forward to continuing the 4th of July Celebration and Miss Ontario Pageant in 2021. These events wouldn't be possible without the help of volunteers and community sponsors. If anyone wishes to volunteer for the Fourth of July Committee or the Miss Ontario Committee, please e-mail me at mayor@ontarioohio.org.

The Recreation Department had a very successful year. Director Heather Hendrix continued to put on activities all year long for the citizens. She continued to offer long standing activities, which she received great reviews. The Haunted Trail at Marshall Park was even a larger success this year. The trail conducted two sessions, the first was when it was still light out, which was kid friendly and then a scarier version after dark. The haunted trail was a success due to the school groups and citizens that helped, without these groups and citizens donating their time and props, the event wouldn't be possible.

Concerts in the Park were scaled way back this year. The partnership with Ontario Youth Sports will continue in 2021. We will continue to provide a wide variety of music. With food vendors available at the concerts and the play scape, the free concerts are a true family event. I want to thank all the community sponsors. Without the community sponsors and Ontario Youth Sports, Director Kenn Spencer, these free concerts wouldn't be possible.

We couldn't hold the Christmas Tree Lighting at Marshall Park this year. Recreation Director Heather Hendrix and the Ontario Lion's Club conducted a virtual coloring contest. The Ontario Lion's Club provided the winners a gift card. The Recreation Department conducted a Christmas Light Contest this year. Interested residents entered online and judging was the week of December 14th. First place went to Grill-Ginger and John Stevens and they received a \$60.00 gift card from Steve's Dakota Grill, second place went to Scott and Kelly Purvis and they received a \$25.00 McDonalds gift card and third place went to Nathan and Libby Kamps and they received a \$15.00 Cove gift card. We look forward to holding the Christmas Tree lighting and coloring contest in 2021.

We were unable to have our annual Litter Clean Up day in April and look forward to having it In 2021. A huge thank you goes out to members of the 179th Air Guard for doing litter pick up on Lexington Springmill Road. They have done this for several years. This was even more important this year, since we couldn't do our spring clean-up.

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I would like to recognize all the employees that work for the City. We have a quality work force, which keeps our City running smoothly, safe, and clean. Ron Eyerly retired after many years of dedicated service. Ron was a vital member of our Service Department.

We had several changes on City Council in 2020. I wish to acknowledge Dan Zeiter, Larry Arnold and Mark Weidemyre for their many years of dedicated service to City Council. City Council welcomed Sherry Branham, Dave Rehfeldt, and Josh Bradley. We also saw the retirement of President James Hellinger, thank you for your dedicated service. With James Hellinger's retirement, Councilman Eddie Gallo was appointed President of Council. My Service Safety Director, Jeff Wilson, and I look forward to working with council in 2021.

Ontario has a Strong Past and a Bright Future.

Respectfully,
Mayor Randy E. Hutchinson

SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Wilson presented his year-end report.

2021 Cemetery Report

Last year there was a total of 11 burials (2 cremations/9 full), which was the same number in 2020. Two lots were sold in 2020, which was one more than in 2019, leaving approximately 437 lots remaining for sale.

There were two requests for foundation lay-out, which is required when someone wants to put up a headstone or change anything with an occupied lot. Twenty old foundations were restored, 10 more than in 2019, at a cost of \$5,579.01. The total income received in 2020 was \$7,197.50.

Costs

56-man hours for burials @ \$75.00/hour (including equipment) = \$4,200
128 Supervisor hours @ \$18.77/hour = \$2,402.56
Net Gain = \$594.94

When I gave this report last year, I stated we were consistently losing money in the cemetery account. We reviewed the fee schedule and revised some of the fees in 2019. Based on the net gain in 2020, I don't see the need to increase any fees at this time.

2020 Contractor's License Report

We issued 44 Contractor License renewals and 65 new licenses in 2020. Compared to 2019, renewals were down slightly from 50, while new licenses were up significantly by 33. One new Sewer License was issued and 16 renewals. These totals are very similar to 2019. Total income generated from the fees was \$9,750, which was up \$3,000 from the previous year.

Stowell Park

Renovation has started in the park. The fencing on the south field is down and the backstop has been removed. The playground equipment arrives tomorrow, installation will be scheduled soon. In the spring, pads for the pickleball courts will be poured, and the nets are being purchased now.

Reminders

Christmas Tree pick up continues through Friday, January 15th. All ornaments and tinsel must be removed, and trees should be placed by the curb.

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The City will be enforcing the 2-inch snow parking ban on all City streets this winter. This is necessary in order to allow the plows to do their job safely and efficiently.

Mr. Wilson wanted to recognize the street crew because he is very proud of them for not missing one phone call on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day to plow.

LAW DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Medwid had no report.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Kim Jones, 144 Hazel Drive, asked questions about Resolution No. 21-02, which pertains to preparing and submitting an application for USDA/Rural Development Funding for the wastewater treatment plant project.

- The project location is on city-owned property off Nussbaum Parkway. The city does not own any property on Home Road.
- A public hearing will be held when COVID restrictions are lifted for large gatherings.
- The letters and flyers distributed to residents had a lot of misinformation and did not come from the city. The city will include a letter in the water bill with the correct information.
- No permanent decision has been made. In preparing the due diligence for this project there are procedures and deadlines to meet with the government agencies.

Craig Hunt, 3680 Park Avenue West, came forward to comment on several items.

(1) He would like a lean-to shelter built to protect the cruisers during the winter months.

(2) The businesses that received CARES funding from the city should use an Ontario address and not a Mansfield address. Mayor Hutchinson said he is in the process of preparing a letter to send to local businesses encouraging them to use their Ontario address. The businesses that received CARES funding from the city are in Ontario. (3) The number of meetings a council member can miss. Law Director Medwid said the ORC states 10 consecutive unexcused absences is cause for removal.

CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 21-01

A RESOLUTION THE INTENT OF THE CITY OF ONTARIO TO SELL PROPERTY NO NEEDED FOR MUNICIPAL PURPOSES THROUGH AN INTERNET AUCTION\SALE DURING CALENDAR YEAR 2021.

Mr. Rehfeldt moved to suspend the reading of Resolution No. 21-01 on three separate days, second by Mr. Earhart. Six members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion passed. Mr. Earhart read Resolution No. 21-01 for the first time, by title only.

Mr. Earhart moved to adopt Resolution No. 21-01, second by Mrs. Webb. Hearing no discussion, six members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Resolution No. 21-01 was adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 21-02

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR USDA/RURAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING FOR THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT PROJECT AND TO EXECUTE APPLICATION DOCUMENTS, AS REQUIRED, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

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Mr. Bradley moved to suspend the reading of Resolution No. 21-02 on three separate days, second by Mrs. Webb. Six members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion passed. Mr. Rehfeldt read Resolution No. 21-02 for the first time, by title only.

Mr. Rehfeldt moved to adopt Resolution No. 21-02, second by Mr. Earhart. Hearing no discussion, six members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Resolution No. 21-02 was adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 21-03

A RESOLUTION AFFIRMING THAT FUNDS FROM THE COUNTY CORONAVIRUS RELIEF DISTRIBUTION FUND MAY BE EXPENDED ONLY TO COVER COSTS OF THE CITY OF ONTARIO CONSISTENT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 5001 OF THE CARES ACT AS DESCRIBED IN 42 U.S.C. 601(D), AND ANY APPLICABLE REGULATIONS BEFORE RECEIVING SAID FUNDS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Earhart moved to suspend the reading of Resolution No. 21-03 on three separate days, second by Mrs. Webb. Six members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion passed. Mr. Bradley read Resolution No. 21-03 for the first time, by title only.

Mr. Bradley moved to adopt Resolution No. 21-03, second by Ms. Branham. Hearing no discussion, six members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Resolution No. 21-03 was adopted.

ORDINANCE NO. 21-01

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR, OR HIS DESIGNEE (THE CHIEF OF POLICE), TO ACCEPT A DONATION FROM LOWE'S HOME CENTERS, LLC TO BE USED TO BUILD A FLOOR FOR THE KENNEL FOR THE CITY'S K-9 FENDER, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mrs. Webb moved to suspend the reading of Ordinance No. 21-01 on three separate days, second by Mr. Bradley. Six members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion passed. Mrs. Webb read Ordinance No. 21-01 for the first time, by title only.

Mrs. Webb moved to adopt Ordinance No. 21-01, second by Mr. Sunderland. Hearing no discussion, six members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Ordinance No. 21-01 was adopted.

ORDINANCE NO. 21-02

AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR SUBMITTING TO THE ELECTORS OF THIS CITY THE QUESTION, "SHALL A COMMISSION BE CHOSEN TO FRAME A CHARTER?", AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Sunderland moved to suspend the reading of Ordinance No. 21-02 on three separate days, second by Mr. Rehfeldt. Six members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and the motion passed. Mr. Sunderland read Ordinance No. 21-01 for the first time, by title only.

Mr. Sunderland moved to adopt Ordinance No. 21-02, second by Mr. Bradley. Hearing no discussion, Six members cast their votes Aye, zero Nay, and Ordinance No. 21-02 was adopted.

At 7:43 p.m., there being no further business to come before the meeting, the same was adjourned upon a motion by Mr. Earhart, second by Ms. Branham, and the motion passed.

Edward J. Gallo, President of Council

Cathy VanAuker, Clerk of Council