

## Regular

January 3, 2024

Ontario City Council met in regular session on January 3, 2023, in the Municipal Building with Council President Eddie Gallo presiding. The meeting opened at 7:10 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present during roll call were Council members Dave Rehfeldt, Kyle Webb, Josh Bradley, Rose Feagin, Nathan Sunderland, Council President Eddie Gallo, Mayor Randy Hutchinson, Law Director Andrew Medwid, Service-Safety Director Kris Knapp, and Clerk of Council Cathy VanAuker.

President Gallo opened the floor to nominations for President of Council Pro Tem. Mr. Rehfeldt nominated Mr. Sunderland, second by Mr. Bradley. Hearing no other nominations, four members voted aye, zero nay, one abstain by Mr. Sunderland, and the nomination passed.

The minutes of the regular Council meeting of December 13, 2023 were presented for approval. Hearing no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mr. Rehfeldt said the payroll withholding tax has increased \$75 million in four years due to the growth and development of the city.

Mr. Webb reported on the Utilities Committee meeting held earlier this evening. Two employees of the Sewer Department presented information for sewer rehabilitation in the Spring Village and Home Road areas due to I/I issues. The plan would line the old clay pipes at an estimated cost of \$3 million. There is the possibility of a grant, the city would need a 10% match. An additional \$75,000 would need added to the \$250,000 in the budget. The Committee approved increasing the line item in order to be eligible for the grant. Residents would need to correct unauthorized connections to the sewer line from their downspouts, sump pumps, and replace galvanized lines.

When Mr. Bradley asked if reports were received on the results of the smoke-tests in the neighborhoods being considered for the sewer line improvements, Director Knapp said he would send Council the engineers reports.

Mr. Sunderland reminded everyone of the Safety Committee meeting on January 17, 2024 at 5:45 p.m.

### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Hutchinson reported this spring the Service Department employees will create steps for the pavilion at the band shell that go up the hill, and a sidewalk, so those who park at the Service Building for Concerts in the Park will have easier access.

### **State of the City**

In looking back at 2023, the City of Ontario can be very proud of what was accomplished.

2023 was a very busy year in the City. We continued to see great things in Marshall Park with several updates to our facilities. Ontario Youth Sports hosted numerous soccer, baseball and softball tournaments throughout the year. These tournaments brought people from all over the State of Ohio and other states, which benefited our local businesses.

We are very fortunate to have continued business growth in Ontario. Charter Next Generation Films moved into their additional space in Ontario Commerce Park. The City and the Richland Community Development Group continues to work with Industrial Commercial Properties (ICP) to bring more business to Ontario Commerce Park. We will continue to maintain and

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clean up the property. Avita completed their remodeling of the former Sears' building, which provides a walk-in clinic, lab, doctor offices and pharmacy. Locally owned company Oxyrase continues to grow and expanded into additional space. Several other businesses opened in the City.

The City continued to focus on infrastructure improvements City wide. We received safety funding from ODOT for the installation of a sidewalk on Shelby Ontario Road. The sidewalk connects the Ontario Schools to the area of Shelby Ontario Road and Park Avenue West. The sidewalk makes walking in the area safe and it is heavily used by students and adults. A water line was installed to the Shangri La allotment, which provides a loop in the water system, providing better service for our residents. ODOT installed an updated traffic signal at West Fourth Street and SR 314, at no cost to the City. The City contracted with a company that did a complete analysis of our roads. This information will be used by Council and the Administration to decide what roads are paved each year. A much-needed Salt Storage Shed was installed to store our road salt.

In 2023 the Ontario Division of police responded to 16,907 calls for service. 709 of those calls generated incident reports. Officers had 2,233 self-initiated contacts and issued 1,324 traffic citations. There were 305 misdemeanor arrests in 2023. Fortunately, we were able to maintain adequate staffing, despite a nationwide shortage of Law Enforcement Officers. Our Officers and Dispatchers are working diligently, around the clock to help keep the community safe. The Toy Drive was another huge success this year, the Toy Drive was started in 2014 helping approximately 1,200 children since we began. We are grateful to all the Toy donors that made this possible. Patrols in Marshall Park were increased utilizing the department's new ATV which was approved by Ontario City Council and will continue to increase in 2024 as events and amenities continue to grow. Traffic Enforcement numbers have increased which has led to a corresponding reduction in Traffic Crashes.

The city-wide FLOCK program was set in place and it has been an invaluable asset to help solve major crimes and traffic accidents. The Ontario City Council also approved the upgrading of our Ti Training de-escalation and response simulator which has significantly increased our level of professionalism and our officer's abilities to de-escalate calls. The number of Calls for Service is still trending up and the Division of Police remains dedicated to providing the highest level of service to the Community in 2024.

We were able to have the Miss Ontario Pageant this year and it was a great success.

Congratulations to Miss Ontario Jaslyn Lopez. Jaslyn has been doing a great job representing Ontario at events in the City and County wide. This event wouldn't have been possible without the support of our volunteers and sponsors. The Miss Ontario Pageant Committee added two new competitions to the pageant. Little Miss Ontario was won by Breckelle Miller, a Stingel Elementary 2nd grader. Junior Miss Ontario was won by Rylee Schoonover, a Stingel Elementary 4<sup>th</sup> grader. Rylee and Breckelle attended numerous events, which were coordinated with committee member and chaperone, Miss Ontario 2018 Gianna Gallo.

We were very excited of the success of the Fourth of July Festival. Ontario Community Events, with the help of the Festival Committee worked together to put on a fantastic festival. We had great weather, which contributed to a very large crowd. The parade continues to grow each year with participants and spectators. The updated schedule of events helped in keeping the festival very active all day. The Niss family once again sponsored our excellent fireworks show. With the extra space we were able to have more vendors and activities. The raffle was a huge success and once again the top prize was a car that was donated by New Haven Auto Sales. The Festival wouldn't be possible without the help of volunteers, community sponsors and Ontario Community Events. We added more lighting and extra power pedestals, which will allow the festival to be even bigger in 2024. If anyone wishes to volunteer for the Fourth of July Committee, please e-mail [kspencer.oys@gmail.com](mailto:kspencer.oys@gmail.com).

The Recreation Department had a very busy year. Unfortunately, Director Heather Hendrix decided to step down from the position to spend more time with her family. She worked as the Recreation Director from January 1, 2017 to June 16, 2023. Heather's last event was Summer Recreation, which had a great turnout. Heather was an excellent Recreation Director and will be deeply missed. The Recreation Department activities are now being handled by Ontario Youth Sports/Community Events. All the activities that Heather Hendrix conducted have continued. Ontario Youth Sports Director Kenn Spencer and his team continued conducting

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events, such as the Haunted Trail and Ontario Craft Show. Additional activities were added to the Haunted Trail, such as Pumpkin Chunkin. Unfortunately, the weather didn't cooperate, so it had to be rescheduled. This event wouldn't be possible without the help of school groups and local citizens. The Ontario Craft show had an excellent turnout.

Concerts in the Park were held again and enjoyed by everyone that attended. The partnership with Ontario Youth Sports will continue in 2024. We will continue to provide a wide variety of music. With the new spray park and playgrounds, more families attended the free concerts. I want to thank all the community sponsors. Without the community sponsors, Ontario Youth Sports, and Director Kenn Spencer, these free concerts wouldn't be possible.

We were able to hold our annual Litter Clean Up Day in April in cooperation with the Ontario Schools. High School Students, school staff and City workers did litter pick up on Lexington Springmill Road, North of US30. This is done every year in cooperation with the Richland County Earth Stewardship Steering Committee.

We once again held our annual Christmas Tree lighting at Marshall Park. The children were very excited that Santa Claus made an appearance. Entertainment was provided by the Ontario High School Jazz Band, Show Choir and Band Auxiliary groups, along with Little Miss Ontario Breckelle Miller. Additional lights were added in the area of the band-shell and pavilion. Our 2024 Christmas Tree Lighting will be much brighter. I'm very excited that the City was able to purchase the Haggerman Light display from Beal Road. We will use the lights to line Cal Miller Lane and other areas of Marshall Park for a free drive through display.

It is hard to believe that I have been Mayor for 10 years. Since taking office in 2014 I've had the pleasure of having community minded Council Members to work with. We work as a team in doing what is best for our Citizens. This shows with all the improvements to our Parks. Marshall Park has become a destination, due to our splash pad, playgrounds, Disc Golf Course, Dog Park, Soccer and Baseball/Softball tournaments. Dunlap Drive along with the baseball/softball complex parking lots were paved in 2023.

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. I would like to recognize Kris Knapp my Service Safety Director for everything he did all year.

My Service Safety Director, Kris Knapp, and I look forward to working with council in 2024.

As I say each year, Ontario has a Strong Past and a Bright Future.

Respectfully,  
Mayor Randy E. Hutchinson

#### **SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

No report.

#### **LAW DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Law Director Medwid provided his annual report.

LAW DIRECTOR'S REPORT OF CASES AS OF 12-31-2023

#### **2023 MAYOR'S COURT TOTALS**

2023 Total number of tickets / summons issued = 1356, decrease of 1.67% from 2022

2023 Total number of charges / counts issued = 1723, increase of 4.49% from 2022

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2023 Total OVI charges = 4, decrease of 63.6% from 2022

2023 Total charges heard in Mayors Court = 1754, increase of 2.75% from 2022

2023 Total waivers paid at Clerks office = 930, even with 2022

2023 Open arrest warrants = 340, decrease of 7.6% from 2022

2023 MANSFIELD MUNICIPAL COURT TOTALS

2023 Total traffic = 73, decrease of 8.75% from 2022

2023 Total criminal =51, decrease of 34.42% from 2022

2023 Mayor's Court Revenue \$194,948.80, decrease of 26.57% from 2022

**MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS**

President Gallo announced the summer Council meetings will be held on June 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, and July 17<sup>th</sup>.

**PUBLIC COMMENTARY**

Craig Hunt, 3680 Park Avenue West, asked if the gas station on Lex-Springmill and the project in front of the movie theater are still going forward.

- Demolition for the gas station is planned for the spring. The traffic study for the hotel project was finalized today. Contractor bids are out and they will begin when the weather breaks.

**CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTION**

ORDINANCE NO. 23-27

(SECOND READING) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, OR HIS DESIGNEE THE SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN JOHNNY APPLESEED BASEBALL CLUB AND THE CITY OF ONTARIO FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF AND USE OF A BASEBALL/SOFTBALL FIELD AT MARSHALL PARK, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Rehfeldt read Ordinance 23-27 for the second time, by title only.

RESOLUTION NO. 24-01

A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE INTENT OF THE CITY OF ONTARIO TO SELL PROPERTY NO LONGER NEEDED FOR MUNICIPAL PURPOSES THROUGH AN INTERNET AUCTION\SALE DURING CALENDAR YEAR 2024.

Mr. Webb read Resolution No. 24-01 for the first time, by title only.

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ORDINANCE NO. 24-01

AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING RULES OF COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF ONTARIO, REPEALING ORDINANCE 22-39, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Bradley read Ordinance 24-01 for the first time, by title only.

At 7:53 p.m., there being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Ms. Feagin, second by Mr. Webb.

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Edward J. Gallo, President of Council

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Cathy VanAuker, Clerk of Council