

President Chad Doll called the meeting to order at 7:30pm on April 7, 2025 at 701 Parlette Court with the following members present: Alex Stinebaugh, Jessica Muhlenkamp, Brandon Miller, Alex Greve, John Shepline, Terry Campbell and Chad Dunlap. Law Director Grant Neal, Mayor Dan Lee and Safety Service Director Tyler Price were also present. There were 10 visitors present.

Motion by Shepline, second by Dunlap to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2025 council meeting as submitted. Vote – 7 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

**Parks Committee** – a meeting was held on 03-25-2025 and the following was discussed:

Brandon Miller made a motion to accept the previous meeting minutes with a second by John Shepline. The minutes were approved.

Brandon Miller presented some background information about a problem with an Easement at Veterans Park and Camelot Drive. A gate at this location was being used by resident Peggy Hunter-Bolz to access the park and the property owner is angry that the gate is being opened. There was a verbal altercation between Peggy and the Property Owner and the property owner has threatened to put an additional fence across the gate to block access. There has been no official permit filed to install a fence. Currently, the gate will remain closed and access to open will no longer be provided to the Citizen. She informed the committee that she would discuss her legal options with the Veterans Administration.

There was a brief discussion of City Ordinances and their enforcement in the Parks in regards to golf carts and seat belts.

Tyler Price shared that there was concern from businesses and the school about the Canadian goose population along the riverfront west of Blackhoof Street bridge. Public Works is researching installing a wire along the waterfront as this has helped in the past. A discussion of permits for dispatching the animals was discussed. The Police Chief is not in favor of using firearms but a permit using nitrous to eliminate the animals is being explored. Laser lights have been avoided because erratic behavior from animals after use have caused power outages. Previously ODNR has recommended multi-pronged approaches including both lethal and non-lethal means with a variety of strategies.

Muhlenkamp requested the Parks department explore changing tables at the Parks. Hayzlett confirmed he would look into options that would be more sturdy than typical plastic ones. There was a suggestion for dog bag receptacles at Veterans Park similar to those at the Dog Park.

**Lodging Tax Committee** – a meeting was held on 04-02-2025 and the following was discussed:

It was confirmed that the Flags for Freedom Foundation application was still tabled and would be addressed at a future date.

The St. Joseph Festival Fireworks application was discussed. The committee was requesting \$7000 toward the total cost of this year's display of \$14,500. The project was funded previously in 2023 and 2024. It was noted that this year's application was more organized and written than it had been previously. The committee noted that there was strong descriptions of how the project would be marketed but no data to show that people outside the community attended.

Graf noted that the Lodging Tax fund was not designed to supplant existing revenue streams for projects and that this project had great community support.

There was some discussion about whether supporting the same projects on an annual basis made it harder to support larger more impactful projects that could come up. "We have a large budget this year because of the eclipse but that will not always be the case."

Muhlenkamp asked Mayor Lee to research how surrounding communities spent and structured their Lodging Tax.

The project scored a 17.25 on the rubric and therefore was ineligible for funding.

There was a brief discussion of the PlacerID program and how it could be a great benefit to the committee to show projects that truly brought in out of town guests. The cost for the program, \$20,000 for a three year commitment was steep and there was no guaranteed return on investment. The group was interested in hearing more about how the City might use this program.

Mr. Miller spoke on behalf of the applicants for the St. Joseph Festival Fireworks funding request, noting they approached the Lodging Tax Committee in December 2024 to inquire on how they might improve

their application for funding in 2025. Mr. Miller then reviewed past application examples that were awarded Lodging Tax funding, to compare and contrast with the fireworks application. Mrs. Muhlenkamp explained the point-based system the Lodging Tax Committee uses to determine applicant funding. Mr. Campbell asked how the requested amount of dollars affects the rubric score. Mrs. Muhlenkamp answered that the amount requested does not affect the rubric, and this factor may be a shortcoming and perhaps needs to be reexamined. Mrs. Muhlenkamp also pointed out that the available lodging tax funds are higher this year due to the 2024 solar eclipse event, but last year, one half of the available funds had already been spent within the first quarter of 2024. Mr. Miller pointed out that Council has the power to appropriate funds. Motion by Miller, second by Campbell to fund the community fireworks for the full \$7000 request from the lodging tax funds. Mr. Dunlap asked that the purpose of the lodging tax be read. Mr. Miller noted per 896.11, the lodging tax funds were designed for: a sporting event, a cultural arts and performance, a community service organization, a special event, projects for the restoration, beautification and enhancement of current facilities, structures, and other beautification projects, or any other project or expenditure which would enhance the City's appeal to visitors and tourists. Mr. Stinebaugh asked if St. Joseph Church makes any profit from the 4<sup>th</sup> of July festival. Mr. Greve answered, yes, but the fireworks portion is an expense to them. Mr. Greve added the show has been renamed the 'Wapak Community Fireworks Show' with businesses and organizations donating to help cover the expenses. Vote – 6 yeas, 1 nay (Muhlenkamp). Motion passed.

#### **Communications-**

Clerk McDonald read an annual notice from the Ohio Division of Liquor Control noting that all Class C and D permits to sell alcoholic beverages in our political subdivision will expire June 1, 2025. Should Council wish to object to the renewal of any permit, the objection must be filed as a resolution by May 2, 2025. Council did not voice any objections.

#### **Guest Petitions –**

Mr. Nick Heitz of 12377 Buckland Holden Road spoke to Council regarding Ord 2025-16 regarding a property purchase off of Kelly Drive. Mr. Heitz stated he hopes to see a portion of this property turned into a park geared towards the elderly and those with special needs. Mr. Miller clarified that the proposed purchase of said property is for the Water Reclamation Facility, not for park purposes. Mr. Heitz also asked for help with nuisance geese and groundhog control within the City limits.

Ms. Judy Opperman of 1801 Wildwood Drive also noted that it was mentioned to her that the Kelly Drive property purchase may one day be utilized for park purposes, and she would be willing to be on a committee to assist with these efforts. Ms. Opperman would like the elderly and special needs citizens to benefit from such a space.

President Doll asked Clerk to read Ord 2025-16 for the first time re: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED OFF OF KELLY DRIVE IN DUCHOUQUET TOWNSHIP.

Water Reclamation Facility Superintendent Justin Waid explained the proposed property purchase will tie into the flow augmentation system and meet the needs of permitting processes. Several wells were drilled, some of which were dry or supplied insufficient amounts of water for the plant's needs. Initial design intended to remain on the south side of the Auglaize River, but a more beneficial route to the north was located. Current easements within the Kelly Drive property do not allow for this type of work, so the purchase of property was explored as a possible solution. This purchase price will work within the Water Reclamation Facility Loan and is below estimation. Mr. Campbell asked if an easement extension was discussed. Mr. Waid indicated this was not a viable option. Mr. Campbell noted that with the purchase dollars coming from taxpayer money, he wishes Council to review price per acre and a floodplain map prior to the ordinance's second reading. Mr. Miller clarified the purchase would be made with the contingency of the current loan, and asked if the remaining contingency would be adequate. Mr. Waid and Mayor Lee agreed the remaining contingency would be approximately \$600,000. Mr. Miller asked for Auditor Anderson's input on the purchase. SSD Price stated that Auditor Anderson has reviewed it and was comfortable with the numbers. Mrs. Muhlenkamp pointed out the purchase price is \$18,000 per acre. Mr. Heitz added that there are waterlines that go across said field.

President Doll asked Clerk to read Ord 2025-17 for the first time re: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND SAFETY TO ENTER INTO A 5-YEAR CONTRACT WITH AXON ENTERPRISE INC. FOR SPECIALIZED HARDWARE, SOFTWARE, AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES NECESSARY FOR A BODY WORN CAMERA (BWC) SYSTEM FOR THE WAPAKONETA POLICE DEPARTMENT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

SSD Price explained the current contract has run out, and cost has increased to \$98,698. Mr. Miller asked if this expense was budgeted for in the general fund from the Police Department line item. SSD Price answered, yes.

Motion by Miller, second by Greve to suspend the rules for Ord 2025-17. Vote – 7 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

Motion by Greve, second by Sheipline to adopt Ord 2025-17. Vote – 7 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

### **Mayor Report:**

3.26 Rails to trails

3.27 Air and Space Museum Board meeting

4.1 Convergent Meeting

4.2 Department Head meeting

4.2 Sart Meeting

4.2 Lodging tax Meeting

4.2 Chamber Meeting

### **Upcoming Events**

4.10 State of the City County and School

We have contracted with our Computer Security Company to have a full time employee on site to help our IT department and secure our systems.

Updating City hall

Updating Engineering

Mrs. Muhlenkamp asked Administration for information about charging fees for events that require City services. SSD Price noted that upon discussion with the Wapakoneta Chamber of Commerce about costs for the new event stage, additional labor and security costs were also considered for parades, runs, festivals, etc. Charges are not yet in place, but discussions are ongoing for placing an itemized list of costs upon permit applications. The event permit application will be on the City's website by May 2025.

Mr. Dunlap cautioned administration from charging the Wapakoneta Chamber for hosting events that benefit the entire city. Mr. Miller suggested a Finance meeting be scheduled to discuss the matter.

Mr. Stinebaugh asked for further information about the bike path. Mayor Lee stated the City is exploring grant opportunities to create a trail that would connect Wapakoneta to the City of St. Marys by utilizing an abandoned railroad track.

### **Service Director Report:**

Hoping to have Water Street open by end of April.

Citizens have voiced concerns about inconsistent utility bill amounts. Water and sewer rates increase every January. Other billing fluctuations would be due to usage.

CDBG funds – RLF has \$28,000 in it. Old ordinances need to be looked at to determine uses for these funds.

Mrs. Muhlenkamp asked for an update on the 'baby box' install at the Wapak Fire Station. SSD Price answered this was recently installed.

Mr. Campbell voiced appreciation for the weekly reports being supplied to Council.

President Doll stated there are still community concerns regarding the recycling drop off location and trash pickup needed there. Additionally, there are requests for Monday refuse collection schedule on Auglaize Street to be altered to allow for busy school bus times and the safety of children.

President Doll asked for an update on the City's Comprehensive Plan. Mayor Lee answered that a more detailed report is coming in the next couple of months.

Mayor Lee added that City employees are now wearing Wapakoneta branded shirts and pullovers for unity purposes.

**Law Director Report:**

Was not able to attend a March 21<sup>st</sup> case, leading it to be dismissed. This was a clerical error that will not occur again.

**Scheduling Committee Meetings:**

Finance Committee will be meeting on April 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm at City Hall.

**Miscellaneous Business -**

Mr. Campbell noted the trees damaged by ash borer on Ohio and Court Streets are being flagged for replacement.

Motion by Miller, second by Sheipline to adjourn the meeting at 8:51pm. Vote – 7 yeas, 0 nays. Motion passed.

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President

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Clerk of Council