

CUYAHOGA FALLS CITY COUNCIL
Minutes of the Council Meeting

March 11, 2024

Call to Order: Mr. Balthis at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call: Mr. Ashton, present; Mr. Balthis, present; Mr. Brillhart, present; Mr. DeRemer, present; Mr. James, present; Ms. Loza, present; Ms. Nichols-Rhodes, present; Mrs. Penta, present; Mr. Siegfert, present; Mrs. Spinner, present; Mr. Stams, absent.

Invocation: Mrs. Spinner

Pledge of Allegiance: Mrs. Spinner

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the February 26, 2024 Council meeting were approved as written.

Reports and Communications: A Notice from the Ohio Division of Liquor Control regarding New Permit Number 1512035 to City of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, dba Brookledge Golf Club & Clubhouse & Golf Course, 1621 & 1667 East Bailey Road, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, 44221.

A Notice from the Ohio Division of Liquor Control regarding Transfer Permit Number 24948570010 to El Papas, Inc. 2467 State Road & Patio, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, 44223 from Domenic's Pub, LLC, dba Mario's Bar & Grille, 2467 State Road, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, 44223.

A letter from Mayor Walters dated March 1, 2024, regarding the appointment of Matt Weiss to the Civil Service Commission.

A letter from Mayor Walters dated March 1, 2024, regarding the appointment of Colleen B. Kelly to the Planning Commission.

New Legislation
(First Reading)

Temp. Ord. A-36 (Finance)

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, without competitive bidding, with The Cope Salt Company for bulk salt used in the water treatment process, and declaring an emergency.

Temp. Res. A-37 (Public Affairs)

A resolution declaring the month of March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in the City of Cuyahoga Falls, and declaring an emergency.

Temp. Ord. A-38 (Public Affairs)

An ordinance amending the Traffic Control File by reducing the speed limit on Bailey Road from Erie to Front Street, and declaring an emergency.

Temp. Ord. A-39 (Community Development)

An ordinance approving and authorizing the Mayor to execute a Community Development Block Grant Agreement with Polymeric, Inc. for an economic development project, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. James moved to recess Council to conduct a meeting of the Committee-of-the-Whole, second by Mr. Brillhart. Motion passed, voice vote (11-0). Council recessed at 6:34 p.m. and reconvened at 6:38 p.m.

Reports of Special Committees

Mr. James moved to confirm Mayor Walter's appointment of Matt Weiss to the Civil Service Commission and Colleen B. Kelly to the Planning Commission, second by Mr. James. Motion passed, voice vote (10-0).

Reports of Council's Standing Committees

(Third Reading)

Sustainability, Energy & Environment:

Temp. Ord. A-27

An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a NOPEC Energized Community Grant Agreement with Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council, Inc. for energy efficiency or energy infrastructure projects, and declaring an emergency.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes moved to adopt Temp. Ord. A-27, second by Mrs. Spinner. Motion passed, voice vote (10-0).

Planning & Zoning:

Temp. Ord. A-35

An ordinance accepting the recommendation of the Planning Commission for the construction of a medical office building for Pediatrics of Akron, partnering with Akron Children's Hospital, located at 1625 Portage Trail, and declaring an emergency.

Mrs. Spinner moved to adopt Temp. Ord. A-35, second by Mr. Siegferth. Motion passed, voice vote (10-0).

Finance & Appropriations:

Temp. Ord. A-32

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, for the purchase of a new electric department line truck, and declaring an emergency.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes moved to adopt Temp. Ord. A-32, second by Mr. Brillhart. Motion passed, voice vote (10-0).

Temp. Ord. A-33

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, for the purchase of furniture for the new electric department building and declaring an emergency.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes moved to adopt Temp. Ord. A-33, second by Mr. Brillhart. Motion passed, voice vote (10-0).

Public Improvements:

Temp. Ord. A-29

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, for the construction of on-site utility pole storage at the new electric department building and warehouse, and declaring an emergency.

Mrs. Penta moved to adopt Temp. Ord. A-29, second by Mr. James. Motion passed, voice vote (10-0).

Temp. Ord. A-30

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, with DLZ Ohio, Inc., for professional engineering services related to the design and relocation of the main trunk sewer located within the Gorge Metro Park, and declaring an emergency.

Mrs. Penta moved to adopt Temp. Ord. A-30, second by Mr. James. Motion passed, voice vote (10-0).

Temp. Ord. A-34

An ordinance authorizing the Parks and Recreation Board to enter into a contract or contracts, without competitive bidding, with Dan Guardo Contracting, Inc., for the Water Works Family Aquatic Center pool surface refinish project, and declaring an emergency.

Mrs. Penta moved to adopt Temp. Ord. A-34, second by Mr. James. Motion passed, voice vote (10-0).

Public Affairs:

No Report.

Community Development:

Temp. Res. A-28

A resolution authorizing the Mayor to apply for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Clean Ohio Trails Fund Grant and to obligate funds for the required match to construct phase II of the Mud Brook Greenway, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Siegferth moved to adopt Temp. Res. A-28, second by Mr. Ashton. Motion passed, voice vote (10-0).

Temp. Ord. A-31

An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a permit agreement with Front & Center LTD to use a portion of city property for the purpose of constructing and maintaining a deck at property located at 2225 Front Street, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Siegferth moved to adopt Temp. Ord. A-31, second by Mr. Ashton. Motion passed, voice vote (10-0).

Schedule of Committee Meetings

Planning & Zoning:	Subject to Call.
Finance:	March 18, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.
Public Improvements:	Subject to Call.
Public Affairs:	March 18, 2024, at 6:35 p.m.
Community Development:	March 18, 2024, at 6:40 p.m.

Miscellaneous Business

Mayor Walters stated that the City has been planning for the better part of a year for this once-in-a-lifetime solar eclipse event. There will be an influx of visitors, but if the weather is like today, they know the population can double or triple. He then discussed some problems with gridlock, lack of parking, cell phone outages, gas station shortages and no food at stores with the staples gone. The City has planned for the worst case scenario when it comes to public safety. They are prepared and ready.

Ms. Sara Kline, Parks and Recreation Superintendent, and Ms. Tara Bartek from the Parks and Recreation Department presented a PowerPoint presentation about the upcoming eclipse event.

Mr. Balthis asked if there has been coordination with area hospitals to address of influx of people and potential issues. Fire Chief Martin stated that they have been in communication with the hospitals and any agencies they depend on. Everyone is extra staffing and ready.

Ms. Pamela M. Pinkney, also known as Apostlett, address withheld, asked about their biggest concern. Chief Martin stated that the biggest concern is crowd surge and emergency access with major arteries of travel being clogged and being able to get to incidents as they occur. Whether it is people or vehicles, they have to be on top of making sure that those are clear. Ms. Pinkney asked how they can help. Chief Martin stated by just following the laws. The City plan is good as long as people are following the plan and not stepping out of bounds.

Police Chief Norfolk stated that the thing that would help the City and infrastructure is to prepare ahead of time. This is an interesting challenge is don't know where people are going to land, but they will be ready if they land here. Talking to the County EMA and the Visitors Bureau, the bureaus are reporting 100 percent capacity. They are scaling up leading into the event. They are doubling staff the day of the event. They have prepared for police officers to get to the city via patrol cars, bicycles and on foot. Throughout the rest of the city, they are planning on doubling the amount of police out on the road that day. They have a couple communication plans ready and are working with the Fire Department and others to handle anything that comes up.

Mr. Mark Wilkerson, 2467 6th Street, Cuyahoga Falls, stated that the high school practice field is in his backyard and they have a parking lot. He asked if they have taken that into consideration if people are going to plan their own parties and go out there. Chief Norfolk stated that they anticipate parking in the high school parking lot for those coming from out of town and coming into the city last minute. If they have crowds forming, they will be there, but they cannot anticipate where people are going to set up. That's a problem and something they don't know for sure. If there is a problem, they will make their way there and have their eyes on it. Downtown is the concern with the eclipse festival going on.

Ms. Pinkney asked if they are expecting overcrowding and an influx of crowds, what provisions are they making for a disabled senior citizens and young people. Chief Norfolk stated that they are not anticipating a stampede of crowds. From what they have seen from other communities that have been through this before, people treat this almost like a parade. They come up early and they set up their spot. The eclipse is only four minutes long, but the event is a four-hour event. They will take people with special needs into consideration.

Mr. Balthis appreciates the work the Administration is going to prepare for this. Council has their meeting scheduled for April 8th, the day of the eclipse. Council does have the ability to cancel that meeting pursuant to Council Rule 111.03(a). It requires a two-thirds vote of Council to do that. If Council were to choose to cancel the meeting on April 8th, an option that would be available is that Council could notice a meeting on the following Monday, which would be a committee day, so that they would hold the Council meeting, introduce legislation, assign it to committee, and then be voted on the following week. Scheduling that to cancel the meeting would require a motion and the passage by two-thirds of Council.

Mr. James moved to cancel Council's previously-noticed meeting for Monday, April 8th at 6:30 p.m., pursuant to Council Rule 111.03(a), second by Ms. Nichols-Rhodes. Motion passed, voice vote (10-0). The Council Meeting scheduled for Monday, April 8th, has been canceled.

Ms. Pamela M. Pinkney addressed Council announcing her intention to run for President of the United States of America.

Ms. Nichols-Rhode commented on the amazing presentation and the more than a year of planning for safety for science and for fun. She thanked those involved and stated that this is a great city and it just amazes her more and more every day.

Mr. James moved to excuse the absence of Mr. Stams, second by Mr. Brillhart. Motion passed, voice vote (10-0).

Mr. James moved to adjourn, second by Mr. Brillhart. Motion passed, voice vote (10-0).

Meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Russ Balthis, Council President

Dana M. Capriulo, Clerk of Council