

Canal Winchester

*City Hall
Council Chambers
45 East Waterloo Street
Canal Winchester, OH 43110*



Meeting Minutes - FINAL

January 17, 2023

6:00 PM

Council Work Session

*Bob Clark - Chair
Laurie Amick
Jill Amos
Steve Buskirk
Chuck Milliken
Patrick Shea
Mike Walker*

- A. **Call To Order** *Clark called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.*
- B. **Roll Call** *Present 6 – Amick, Amos, Clark, Milliken, Shea, Walker*

A motion was made by Walker, seconded by Amos to excuse Mr. Buskirk from the Work Session meeting. The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes 6 – Walker, Amos, Clark, Milliken, Shea, Amick

C. **Also In Attendance**

Mayor Ebert, Matt Peoples, Lucas Haire, Amanda Jackson

Reports of City Staff – Bill Sims

Discussion started at 5:55 on YouTube Channel

Sims – We’re currently working on the detailed design for the 2023 Street Program with EMH&T. Mr. Spencer is working on that. Most of our typical street work is already prepared. We’re working primarily on Woodsvie Drive and the other streets they’ll be resurfacing in the Dye/Manor subdivision. That work will be primarily in that area following the water line replacement project for the Dye/Manor area, Groveport Road, and Gender Road. We’ll basically have two projects working in that Woodsvie Drive area this year. The water line will go in first, and then we’ll be paving the streets. We hope to have the Street Program out to bid early in February and the water line project out to bid in early March. Hopefully both of those will be under construction by May. We had open proposals for the Three Seasons Shelter. I should say proposal; we only received one. We received a proposal from Ferguson Construction, who had previously provided one last spring. The cost is lower than the last time, but it is still expensive, so we made some plans to deal with it as an open-sided shelter. The open shelter cost \$787,000, while the enclosed structure cost \$862,000. We did save money with our redesign, but some of it was eaten up by increases in other areas, the most notable of which was concrete. Concrete costs are going up dramatically this year. There was actually a very significant increase in the concrete work. There were also some smaller increases in plumbing and electrical work. We’ll evaluate this proposal. The contractor did also provide some value engineering options for us to look at that might allow another \$20,000 or so in savings. We’ll have to look at each of those items and see if it’s something we choose to do. We’ll have to make the decision if we want to leave out the garage doors and add those later. At this point, it doesn’t seem like pricing is trending down, so I don’t know if the best bet is to move forward with the entire structure. We’ll be looking at those, and then I’d probably like to come back to council with trying to move that forward at the next meeting. I don’t know if you all have any initial feelings about doing the open shelter versus the enclosed shelter. Some of that feedback would be good.

Amos – I like the garage-door option. I’ve seen the one in Obetz, and it gives that nice draw to being outside and inside, especially when you’re hosting events. I think we’ll get a lot more events if we can open that up and make it attractive that way as well.

Milliken – I would agree with that.

Sims – Obviously, one of the reasons we wanted it to be enclosed was to basically extend its useful time period.

Shea – How big of a space are you thinking?

Sims – It's like 60x40. It's a pretty big structure.

Haire – It seats over 100.

Amos – The last time we had this conversation you guys compared it and said that it was very close to the Community Center.

Sims – It's not quite that large. Probably lengthwise but not as wide. I think it's 8 picnic tables that fit in there. It has a warming kitchen in it as well.

Clark – Does the design currently have the garage doors?

Sims – Yes.

Clark – And that would be the \$862,000?

Sims – That's correct.

Amick – I know Ferguson has done a lot of work for us. Is it the cost of materials that's keeping any other entity from bidding on the project?

Sims – Tucson Construction, who did McGill Park Phase 1, was looking at it as well. They've been very interested in it. They've been asking continually about it since last spring. Their problem was actually working with a contractor to do the building structure for them. We extended the time by a week to allow them to wrap up, but they could not get numbers from their building contractor. It's not material at this point. It seems like some of the material issues are starting to be alleviated.

Amos – Are we still going to try to find a use for the beams that were in the original Community Center?

Sims – I've mentioned that in the past, but not recently. We have them stored in the pole barn out behind our shop. I'm still very interested in doing something with that. I think we have one really nice piece that we could maybe still incorporate into the library here.

Amos – Would it be possible to form an arch over top of the main door?

Sims – I believe anything we do with them would be aesthetic only. We couldn't use them for anything else. In the Three Seasons Shelter, we could possibly do a mantle or something by the fireplace. That would be a simple way to incorporate something. So, we'll keep moving forward with that. We're working on getting things wrapped up in this building. I don't have a final number, but we were at \$4.295 million, and we're going to come in well under that. Private development work is mostly at Evans Farm. They started into some sanitary sewers but had to stop due to weather conditions. It gets pretty muddy out there.

Amick – How are the discussions going about part three of this building? Are we still continuing those discussions? Is it still a paused conversation? What's the status of that?

Sims – Are you referring to the tenant space?

Amick – Yes.

Sims – I'm not really involved in that discussion to be honest with you. I would assume so if there's some interest out there. I'm not sure what we're pursuing but it'd be a great space for someone to finish.

Amick – It's a shame to see that sitting empty for so long. Hopefully something will come up soon.

Haire – The plan for that space was to look for educational institutions that might want to use it, as well as potential co-working spaces. We've been unable to get anyone interested in those industries. Part of that is due to the costs that we're seeing in construction and finishing those spaces out. The library was spending over a million dollars to finish that space with their design, and they didn't have extensive new walls or anything that was being installed; that was just the infrastructure they needed to do the new lighting, electric for their outlets, flooring, and then they were building out two small offices. The rest of it was going to remain as is with the same ceiling height, and it was over a million dollars to do that. The costs are going to be significant in trying to get someone to finish out that space. I'm happy to hear any ideas or thoughts that you have for the use of that space. It is 7,800 square feet, so it's a significant amount of space. On the far end of the building, there is over 4,000 square feet that could easily be subdivided. It could be easily divided into two spaces. Electric is a bigger issue in terms of having a large electric need, you're going to need to upgrade panels, services, and things like that to serve that space.

Amick – How do we market that space?

Haire – We have not been actively marketing this space. We've contacted a few users who are in the market that council provided direction previously.

Amick – I just hate to see a public facility that our taxpayers paid for sit idle. I get all sides of the equation. The market is still not great; materials are not great; labor is not great. I just hate seeing it sit empty for something that our taxpayers paid for.

Haire – The hurdle is going to be the tenant improvement costs. We can say we have this great space, and we'll lease it to you at a very attractive rate, but you've got to spend \$600,000 building it out. Do we want to do a long-term lease, or do we have the potential to grow into that? If you're going to ask someone to spend a million dollars to finish out the space, they're going to need a long time period to be able to incorporate that. They're going to want a 15-year lease on that, and is that something that we want to do or are we going to have a need for that in the next 10 or 15 years?

Clark – I think it's going to take some sort of public-private effort. Lucas is right. People aren't going to come in and spend a million dollars on a space that they don't have control over. That's a tough sell. It has to be a little sweeter of a deal.

Amick – Agreed.

Sims – The other item we're also working on currently is McGill Park Phase 2. EMH&T has been working on some concept plans, draft plans, and some costing. We did receive some cost estimates here right after the holiday, so we're looking at those. There are a lot of options. Again, nothing is cheap. I guess one of the really good things that has come out of it is that Franklin County has an agreement that we could utilize the existing bridge for a pedestrian pathway, and that's pretty huge. This bridge would be the one

by Old Town Tavern. It's a pretty wide bridge. The existing lanes are wide. It has wide shoulders; it could be narrowed, and a safe pedestrian path could be created with a barrier wall.

Shea – That'd be great. I do have a second question about the street work project. How much inflation, like percentages, are you seeing year over year in terms of materials and labor?

Sims – This year we've had about 25%. Asphalt prices are very high. Concrete is very high.

D. Request for Council Action

RES-23-006

Finance

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE ADMISSION OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA AS A MEMBER IN CORMA SELF-INSURANCE POOL, INC.

- Request to move to full Council

A motion was made by Milliken, seconded by Shea to amend RES-23-006 to read Gahanna in the body of the text. The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes 6 – Milliken, Shea, Walker, Amick, Amos, Clark

A motion was made by Amos, seconded by Milliken to move RES-23-006 to full Council. The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes 6 – Amos, Milliken, Shea, Walker, Amick, Clark

Discussion started at 26:48 on YouTube Channel

Jackson – I'm actually going to speak about Resolution 23-006 and Resolution 23-007 at the same time. They move to do the same thing just for two different municipalities. For those of you that don't know, the City of Canal Winchester is a member of CORMA, the Central Ohio Risk Management Association. CORMA is a risk-sharing pool for insurance purposes; in this case, we're talking property and liability insurance, vehicle coverage, and stuff like that. We joined the pool in October of 2014. There are currently 9 members. The most recent municipality to join was Grandview Heights, which joined in 2020, I believe. We have an insurance broker, and part of their job is to find other municipalities in Central Ohio that they feel would be a good fit to join CORMA. What we find as members of CORMA are a lot of cost savings and value added, not necessarily in dollars but just from experience and learning from one another. It has saved us on our insurance premiums, obviously that's always a bonus when you take a large amount of the same type of object and insure it. You get a better deal. The other municipalities in Central Ohio that are a part of CORMA are listed in the resolutions in your packet. We joined the likes of larger cities like Dublin and Westerville as well as smaller ones such as Grandview Heights and the City of Powell. Our broker has looked at Gahanna and Hilliard. A couple of these we've been pursuing for a number of years now, and some leadership changes at those cities have allowed us the opportunity now to extend an offer to them to join CORMA. I don't have enough information to give you the ins and outs of why they felt they were a good fit other than size, property values, and things like that that fit right in with us. Our bylaws say that two-thirds of the members of city council have to approve the addition of new members, which is why you have these resolutions in front of you today. Some of this is time-sensitive; at least one of these two has a February renewal for their insurance policy. The other has an April renewal for their policy, so that's why we're trying to get this moving. The other member municipality councils will see this on their next agenda assuming the timing works out for them.

Shea – Who is the Board of Trustees for CORMA?

Jackson – They are members of each municipality so myself and Nancy represent Canal Winchester. Every municipality that is a part of CORMA has two members on the board.

RES-23-007

Finance

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE ADMISSION OF THE CITY OF HILLIARD AS A MEMBER IN CORMA SELF-INSURANCE POOL, INC.

- Request to move to full Council

A motion was made by Amick, seconded by Milliken to move RES-23-007 to full Council. The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes 6 – Amick, Milliken, Shea, Walker, Amos, Clark

ORD-23-004

Development

AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A LEASE AGREEMENT WITH JAMES N. STEVENSON FOR A 30 +/- ACRE TRACT OF LAND ON PARKVIEW DRIVE

- Request to move to full Council

A motion was made by Amos, seconded by Shea to move ORD-23-004 to full Council. The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes 6 – Amos, Shea, Walker, Amick, Clark, Milliken

Discussion started at 32:22 on YouTube Channel

Haire – The city currently has a lease with Mr. Stevenson for the 30 acres that are part of Walnut Creek Park. He's been in that arrangement for six years. We've had two terms of this lease so far. We sought out the lease there to help preserve that site, so we had some drainage tiles and other things that had collapsed, and Mr. Stevenson repaired those when he started that farming operation. It was also to help with vegetation management. It was starting to get overgrown. There were plans to do athletic fields there at one time, so the idea was to farm it to keep the vegetation from overtaking it so it would be easier to use for athletic fields in the future. What we would like to do is extend that lease by one additional year. The idea is that we want to further develop that space in three to four years, so we don't want to enter into a long-term arrangement. We've discussed the possibility of establishing a disc golf course in the past. There are currently trails that go around the 30-acre site along Walnut Creek. We'd like to look at further developing that in the future, so we're asking that this lease be extended for an additional year, and we've let Mr. Stevenson know that as well.

E. Old/New Business

OTH-22-021

Pedestrian Safety

Discussion started at 34:57 on YouTube Channel

Peoples – I expect to have an engineering report back by the next council meeting. If you remember, Mr. Shea, I sent you a report that was originally done. They're reviewing that to make sure that all the data is still there and if there needs to be anything updated. That was some years ago.

Shea – Are they bringing in Groveport Road too?

Peoples – We are taking a look at Groveport as well, but our focus right now is on Waterloo and Washington. We've been in contact with Mr. Buskirk and some of his resources in Franklin County to take a look at the intersection. We have discussed the Groveport intersection with Mr. Spencer at EMH&T, but

he's focusing on Waterloo and Washington right now.

OTH-22-022

Police Study

Discussion started at 36:25 on YouTube Channel

Jackson – I was able to touch base with Chief Von Eckartsberg, and he informed me that his report is complete. It is being reviewed by a colleague as part of their internal process, and he anticipates that happening this week. Once that is complete, he will touch base with me about the next step.

Clark – I think it would be really helpful if the timing worked out and he could give us that report at the Committee of the Whole.

Jackson – I will have to ask him and see if he thinks that he can meet that timeline, and some of that might depend on what kind of feedback he gets from his internal review. My only concern would be what else is on the agenda for the Committee of the Whole. I don't want to overburden all of you for that meeting.

OTHER DISCUSSION

Discussion started at 38:47 on YouTube Channel

Amos – The Canal Winchester City Council would like to acknowledge that January is National Human Trafficking Awareness month. From the Ohio Department of State, they've advised that we should celebrate the efforts of foreign governments, international organizations, anti-trafficking entities, law enforcement officials, survivors, advocates, communities of faith, business, and private citizens all around the world to raise awareness about human trafficking. We would like to thank Cornelius McGrady II and the Reynoldsburg Youth Human Trafficking Coalition for bringing this to our attention. And if you think someone is the victim of trafficking, contact the 24-hour National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 1-888-373-7888 or text help to #233733.

Amos – I'd like to just give a shout out and thank you to Mr. McGrady for bringing this awareness. As I read through the letter he had submitted I was shocked to learn that Ohio has the fifth highest human trafficking record in the United States. I did not know that and I was blown away by that.

Discussion started at 40:19 on YouTube Channel

Milliken – On my walk over here I found a DORA sticker laying in someone's yard. Obviously we're all excited about the DORA but I'm not excited about the stickers falling off.

Haire – I'm not excited about it either.

Milliken – I'm guessing that's not the only one.

Haire – No. There are a number that were installed on sidewalks. It was a little wet last week, so they basically torched the sidewalks to get them dry and applied according to the manufacture's specifications.

Milliken – Just of curiosity though, I would be interested to hear of any feedback that anybody's received if any.

Amos – I've only heard positive feedback. I probably had six or seven residents, six on my street alone, saying that it was great to see this and that they look forward to seeing what events happen downtown.

Haire – I did some interviews with 10TV last week. I don't believe any of those made the air. I passed out flyers to the downtown businesses. I went in and talked to all the liquor permit holders, and everyone seems to be excited about it or at least indifferent to it.

Milliken – To your knowledge, has any businesses opted out at this point?

Haire – No. We asked the businesses if they wanted to opt out to let us know, and we'd get them a decal that says, "no DORA drinks." We're going to put them on our buildings. We ordered them for our own use, and we ordered extras so we could have them for the businesses as well.

Discussion started at 44:25 on YouTube Channel

Shea – Mrs. Jackson, last year we said we would talk about the short-term debt that rolls over at the end of May and possibly look at where we ended up on the general fund. I'm just looking at your final numbers in the finance report.

Jackson – I have not officially closed out the year, no. I don't anticipate them changing by anything significant.

Shea – It looks like we've got \$3.3 million in income tax collections over what we budgeted last year. Is that accurate?

Jackson – Yes.

Shea – I think at one point last year I had mentioned rising interest rates and the short-term debts that we just kept refinancing, and you said let's wait until next year. Is that in the plans? We've got a lot of money sitting in the bank, and we've got some short-term debt.

Clark – I mean, if there's enough money out there to cover all the projects we're doing and still pay back some debt, I'm okay with that. I want to make sure we have enough to handle these projects that are coming up.

Jackson – Last Friday and then again today, I think the four directors acknowledged that we need to have a deeper, longer meeting and discuss all these capital projects that we are looking into and figure out a timeline, a funding source, and all of that. We have yet to have that meeting, obviously; we just talked about it, so give us a little bit of time to do that, and then we can come forward with something.

F. Adjournment @ 6:47 p.m.

A motion was made by Amos, seconded by Milliken to adjourn. The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes 6 – Amos, Milliken, Shea, Walker, Amick, Clark