

The President called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. after the Invocation, given by Mike Meinzer, and the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Clerk, McKenzie Spriggs, called the roll and the following Commissioners responded: Wes Poole, Blake Harris, Dennis Murray, Dick Brady, Naomi Twine, Mike Meinzer and Dave Waddington. Commissioners Blake Harris, Dennis Murray, Dick Brady, Naomi Twine and Mike Meinzer were in attendance via teleconference due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

City staff present: Stuart Hamilton – IT Manager

City staff via teleconference: Eric Wobser – City Manager, John Orzech – Assistant City Manager, Brendan Heil – Law Director, Michelle Reeder – Finance Director, Aaron Klein – Director of Public Works, Jim Green – Acting Fire Chief, Jared Oliver – Police Chief, McKenzie Spriggs – Commission Clerk.

Upon motion of Dave Waddington and second of Dennis Murray, the commission voted to approve the minutes of the December 14 meeting and suspend the formal reading. The President declared the motion passed.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

CURRENT BUSINESS

Upon motion of Dave Waddington and second of Dennis Murray, the commission voted to accept all communications. The President declared the motion passed.

CONSENT AGENDA

The President asked if the commissioners wished to remove any of the items on the Consent Agenda.

The Commissioners wished to leave the Consent Agenda as is.

ITEM A – Submitted by Amanda McClain, Housing Manager

AGREEMENT FOR DEBT COLLECTION SERVICES FOR FIRE AND CODE COMPLIANCE

Budgetary Information: The contract will not negatively impact the City's Budget as this is an attempt to collect debt owed to the City of Sandusky for ambulance services rendered and Code Compliance administrative penalties, rental registration fees, and semi-annual mandatory inspection fees and re-inspection fees. This legislation if passed will generate revenue.

ORDINANCE NO. 21-001: It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and directing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with State Collection and Recovery Services, LLC, (SCRS) of Monroeville, Ohio, for debt collection services for the Sandusky Fire Department and Code Compliance Division for the period of January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

ITEM B – Submitted by Joshua Snyder, Assistant City Engineer

CORRECTION OF SCRIVENER'S ERROR

Budgetary Information: There is no budgetary effect.

ORDINANCE NO. 21-002: It is requested an ordinance be passed amending Ordinance No. 20-195, passed on December 28, 2020, to correct a Scrivener's Error; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Upon motion of Dennis Murray and second of Dave Waddington, the Commission voted to accept the Consent Agenda and declare all ordinances and resolutions as drafted and presented to the City Commission under the Consent Agenda, and shall take effect in full accordance with the Section reflected in the ordinances or resolutions whether they be in accordance with Section 13 or Section 14 of the City Charter.

Roll call on the motion: Mike Meinzer, Dave Waddington, Wes Poole, Blake Harris, Dennis Murray, Dick Brady, Naomi Twine, 7. Roll call on the ordinances and resolutions: Mike Meinzer, Dave Waddington, Wes Poole, Blake Harris, Dennis Murray, Dick Brady, Naomi Twine, 7. The President declared the ordinances and resolutions contained in the Consent Agenda passed in full accordance with the city charter.

REGULAR AGENDA

ITEM #1 – Submitted by Michelle Reeder, Finance Director

ADOPTION OF CY 2021 BUDGET (SECOND READING)

ORDINANCE NO. 21-003: It is requested an ordinance be passed making general appropriations for the fiscal year 2021.

Upon motion of Naomi Twine and second of Blake Harris, the Commission voted to approve this ordinance.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Mike Meinzer, Dave Waddington, Wes Poole, Blake Harris, Dennis Murray, Dick Brady, Naomi Twine, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Mike Meinzer, Dave Waddington, Wes Poole, Blake Harris, Dennis Murray, Dick Brady, Naomi Twine, 7. The President declared the ordinance passed under suspension of the rules and in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

ITEM #2 – Submitted by Jared Oliver, Police Chief and Jim Green, Interim Fire Chief

CONTRACT FOR DISPATCH SERVICES WITH ERIE COUNTY SHERIFF FOR THE SANDUSKY POLICE DEPARTMENT AND SANDUSKY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Budgetary Information: The city agrees to reimburse the Erie County Sheriff's Department in 2021 for the dispatching services at an amount not to exceed \$354,900.38 which \$177,450.19 (50%) will be taken from the 2021 Fire Department Proposed Budget (110-1310-53001 at 22% and 431-1330-53001 at 28%) and \$177,450.19 (50%) will be taken from the 2021 Police Department Proposed Budget, (110-1020-53001).

ORDINANCE NO. 21-004: It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and directing the City Manager to enter into a contract with the Erie County Sheriff for the provision of public safety dispatching services for the city of Sandusky Police, Fire and Service Departments commencing on January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Upon motion of Blake Harris and second of Naomi Twine, the Commission voted to approve this ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Discussion: Dennis Murray wanted to take a moment to recount the long history behind the renewal. This goes back to a committee in which Dick Brady served and Dave Waddington was also persuasive and effective in. It marks 10+ years in which the city has had this cooperation with the Sheriff's department and Perkins Township. This was the beginning of what is now a pretty established history of governments in Erie County getting along and cooperating with each other. It started at the grassroots level, meaning the firefighters and police officers working together cooperatively, across jurisdictions. We should not take this for granted. We are very lucky to be in this place where we are getting along with our neighbors, pull down costs for residents, and improve services. We need to remain open, in his opinion, to every avenue and opportunity for that cooperation going forward. That is the way we can best serve our constituents. Our former colleague and now, city manager of Huron, (Matt Lasko) had an excellent column the other day, where he spoke directly of these opportunities. He is so grateful to have the support of our surrounding communities and neighbors in these efforts, and he is especially pleased to be able to continue this in Sandusky.

Dick Brady said the name of that committee was called the “Police Participation Committee” and he thinks it is interesting looking back on that time, whether it was 2008, 2009, 2010, somewhere in that range. It is interesting that it was called the “Police Participation Committee,” there was one other entity participating at the time, the Erie County Sheriff’s Department, that is where Dispatch was going to be moved to. Since then, we have had great participation from a variety of places, including Huron, Perkins Township, Bayview, etc. So many other entities decided to throw in and come along. That is the best of government, when you can all work together for a common good. One of the common goods is saving each municipality a boat load of money. He thinks it has been successful in that regard and in response time. Looking back on that, it was certainly a worthwhile endeavor.

Mike Meinzer said he was involved in the first initiative for regional dispatch, and automatic aid, etc. He wondered if anyone is still working on automatic aid.

Jim Green said automatic dispatch with Perkins Fire and improving mutual aid with other areas is still a work in progress. They are working to develop the automatic aid. As far as getting dispatch to dispatch the closest vehicle in certain locations, and sending the call to the shift commander, we are hopefully getting to the point where hopefully, we achieve that. Meaning the dispatching will dispatch those appropriate units.

Mike Meinzer said it sounds like the same way that it was done in the 1960s. Progress continues, but he hopes the Sheriff’s department is attempting to make this work. The Fire department bought a lot of equipment and software. He would really like to see that initiative grab foot holding and take off, perhaps over the next four years.

Jim Green said they are working on it. Police Chief, Jared Oliver, was involved when he was employed at the county. He did a lot of work getting dispatchers, Sheriff Sigsworth, and others together. Dispatching has improved but it can always be bettered.

Jared Oliver said they dispatch for 19 different agencies now, between police and fire. Some of that automatic aid that Mike Meinzer spoke of is set up in different entities. Sandusky is the largest entity so it is a process. There is a lot of clerical data that has to go into it. The way it now, it is unwritten automatic aid, so if there is a residential or commercial fire, it is automatic. Perkins Township is called. It is not set up, generated to do it in the system yet, because the system is not working the way we thought it was going to. It is getting buttoned up as it goes. Dispatchers basically have the automatic aid thing down.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Mike Meinzer, Dave Waddington, Wes Poole, Blake Harris, Dennis Murray, Dick Brady, Naomi Twine, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Mike Meinzer, Dave Waddington, Wes Poole, Blake Harris, Dennis Murray, Dick Brady, Naomi Twine, 7. The President declared the resolution passed under suspension of the rules and in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

- **Upon a motion from Naomi Twine and second of Blake Harris, the commission voted to accept \$30 from Kathleen Fitz for the Sandusky Police Department. The President declared the motion passed.**
- **Upon a motion from Dennis Murray and second of Naomi Twine, the commission voted to accept \$1000 from the For Love, With Love Charity for the Sandusky Recreation Department. The President declared the motion passed.**
Discussion: Eric Wobser said the \$1,000 will be used for the 2021 continuation of the Midtown Supper Club program, specifically for staffing and supplies.

- **To help accommodate working individuals and families, start times for numerous boards and commissions have shifted to after work hours.** The boards have been very receptive to changing the start times of their meetings. For the most up-to-date listing of dates and times for boards and commissions, visit the city's website at cityofsandusky.com.
- **The Code Compliance Division has issued the 24 hour boulevard nuisance abatement notification and it has been published in the newspaper for the year of 2021.**
- **Officer Cody Savidge, who previously served as a Reserve Officer, was hired full-time on January 4.** Officer Adam Frost, who also previously served as a Reserve Officer, was hired full-time on January 7.
- **Nicholas Blackford was hired as a Reserve Officer on January 7.**
- **Administrative Assistant Wendy Roach retired on January 6 with over 32 years of service to the Sandusky Police Department.** Thanks Wendy for a job well done!
- **A conditional offer of employment has been made to Daniel Eifel.**
- The next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for January 15th at 8am. Due to COVID-19, the meeting will not be open to the public, it can be viewed on the City's YouTube channel. Any item for the public participation section of the meeting should be emailed to the Finance Director (mreeder@ci.sandusky.oh.us) by 4pm on January 14th.
- **Water and sewer rates for 2021 have increased by 3%. This measure was approved in 2015, and additional information can be found in Codified Ordinances 939.13 and 933.25.**
- **Also effective January 2021, all billing statements will be sent only to the property owner.** Tenants are still welcome to pay the bill. Bills can be paid through the City's free automatic bill pay service. Payments are also accepted online (for a fee), in-person in the city hall lobby or by mailing the payment to the City of Sandusky at 240 Columbus Avenue, Sandusky, Ohio 44870. Payments can also be dropped in the drop box located curbside at the corner of Columbus Avenue and E. Washington Row.
- Property owners are reminded that depositing leaves into the street is considered littering and leads to clogged sewers and possible flooding. Additionally, it is recommended that property owners remove any debris that accumulates on top of neighborhood storm drains and dispose of it. We are extending the leaf drop-off period for those who still have leaves to clean-up. Residents are welcome to drop-off leaves near the Marquette Drive entrance to the City Service Center seven days a week until the end of January.

- Annual Snow Removal Reminders:
 - Many residents rely on walking and transit as their primary way to get around, and without a clear path, it is especially difficult. **Property owners are required to clear their sidewalks and adjacent sidewalk ramps during or immediately following winter storms.** We strongly urge residents to assist their neighbors who may not be physically capable of snow removal.
 - Property owners who handle snow removal of parking lots and driveways are reminded not to push snow into the street or opposing tree lawn.
 - Motorists are asked to pay close attention to Snow Emergency Routes throughout the city. In the event of heavy snowfall, a parking ban may be implemented and any vehicle parked on these streets may be ticketed or towed.
- **A reminder that Christmas tree collection will be performed by Forestry staff this week.** Please refer to the City's website or call 419.627.5829 for further information. Similarly, crews will continue to take down Christmas decorations throughout downtown as weather permits.
- **The Community Development Department has submitted an application to the Ohio CDC Association's VISTA Project to host an AmeriCorps VISTA member.** VISTA members are 18 years or older, and serve full-time for one year. VISTA members focus their efforts on building organizational, administrative, and financial capacity for organizations that fight illiteracy, improve health services, foster economic development, strengthen community groups, and otherwise assist low-income individuals and communities. The program fee is \$1,600 to host a VISTA member. If selected, the Sandusky VISTA member will begin on June 7th, 2021.
- The regular **Arts and Culture Commission** meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 19 has been scheduled for 5:15 PM.
- The January **Landmark Commission** meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 20 at 4:30 PM.
- The January **Board of Zoning Appeals** meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 21 at 4:30 PM.
- The January **Planning Commission** meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 27 at 5:00 PM. There will be a presentation of the Downtown Sandusky Master Plan at 7 PM during this meeting.
- Ralph Chamberlain of Sandusky and Jackie Hamernik of Norwalk are the winners of the prize package for the 2020 #RUNDUSKY Race Series. Their names were drawn from over 40 participants that qualified by participating in more than four race events in 2020. Chamberlain and Hamernik will receive free entry to participating races in 2021 and a \$50 gift card to the North Shore Running Store.
- The #RUNDUSKY Race Series is a partnership with Sandusky Rec and Firelands Regional Health System.

Discussion: Wes Poole asked about the emergency snow ban and clarification. He was under the impression that when there are two inches of snow, there is a snow ban. He would like a clear message to deliver to the public.

Aaron Klein clarified that Wes Poole is correct. When emergency snow ban is in effect, the public works department works in coordination with the police to get the cars removed. He apologizes for that error.

NEW BUSINESS

Dick Brady said Dennis Murray spoke of the need to improve the makeup of the city's volunteer boards and commissions, to a more diverse group. Diverse not just in age, race or gender, but diverse in their skillset, resumes, and connections in this community. The message resonated and the city received application from a variety of individuals. To make these selections, he consulted with staff, McKenzie Spriggs, and Eric Wobser, related to the work of each board and commission. With the goal of recruiting strong, new board members, while increasing the overall representation of the city's boards and commissions.

Those recommendations were shown on the screen and distributed ahead of time. Dick Brady did not read in its entirety, but shared aloud the new, incoming people: Alexis Miller, Finance Committee; Charles Kippie Loughlin, Tree Committee; Gregg Peugeot, Board of Zoning Appeals; Alexandria Esposito, Community Relations Committee; Nick Alexakos, Erie Regional Planning; Ryan Whaley, Landmarks Commission; Devon Johnson, Recreation Board; JaMarcus Hampton, Economic Development Incentive Council; Shawn Daley, Public Arts and Culture; Denis Martin Schmenk, Fire Prevention; Greg Schmid and Greg Zimmerman, Residential Building Code of Appeals.

Upon a motion of Dennis Murray and a second of Naomi Twine, the commission voted to accept all appointments as distributed.

Discussion: Dave Waddington asked when new names surface, which is great to see, could the commission receive a small bio or some background telling what they do and who they are. He would like to see that on city commission selections. That used to be sent out and he had no clue who some of these people were.

Wes Poole said he concurs with Dave Waddington. He saw the information just this morning and he recognized some of the names on the list but for the most part does not know much about them. He has no reason to oppose their appointments but in the future would like the commission to be part of the larger discussion. As he looks at all the applications from other folks, he realized there were a lot of applications, more than he is accustomed to seeing who have a great deal of education and expertise. There was one applicant from Norwalk, when looking at his resume, would have been an asset to us. He would like to consider how we can figure out a way to include the folks that didn't get selected, and incorporate them some way into the city.

Dick Brady said that was an excellent suggestion from Wes Poole and it is his intention to almost immediately, reach out to every person that applied to these position. He would like to express his thanks and encourage them to stay in the game, so to speak, as we do have people moving off boards for a variety of reason—work related, health related, etc. Dennis Murray's lobbying of the commission and the community was extremely successful, we got a host of excellent applications. That bodes well for our city and he is not going to turn a blind eye to any of those people. He is going to personally reach out to them, via phone call, to thank them for applying and to assure them, their talents are valuable to the city, and we hope to use them in the future.

Dennis Murray said over the years he has encountered different people who are very enthusiastic in various areas, and he encourages them to apply. He may get their email address, then ask the commission clerk to send them the application. All of the commissioners are representatives of the community, and he would encourage all the commissioners to do that. If they find someone enthusiastic about recreation or our trees and parks, there are all sorts of different ways to serve, and there is a ton of expertise out there. Sometimes it is a matter of just encouraging people to apply, so when we see that expertise and enthusiasm, we can take advantage of that.

The following appointments were made by the City Commission President:**Civil Service Commission**

Reappointment of James McGookey through December 31, 2026

The following appointments were made by the City Commission President with consent by the City Commission:**Audit/Finance Committee**

Reappointment of Brian Allen through December 31, 2023

New appointment of Alexis Miller through December 31, 2023

ADA/Fair Housing Board

Reappointments of Jeff Berquist and Diane Corso through December 31, 2023

Sandusky Tree Commission

Reappointment of John Parker through December 31, 2023

New appointment of Charles Kippie Loughlin through December 31, 2023

The following appointments were made by the City Commissioners:**Board of Zoning Appeals**

Reappointment of John Feick through December 31, 2023

New appointment of Gregg Peugeot through December 31, 2023

Community Relations Commission

Reappointment of Daniel Williams through December 31, 2023

New appointment of Alexandria Esposito through December 31, 2023

CRA Housing

Reappointment of Dru Meredith through December 31, 2023

New appointment of Jonathan Holody through December 31, 2023

Erie County Economic Development representative

Reappointment of Eric Wobser (Board Member)

Erie County Land Bank Committee representative

New appointment of Jonathan Holody (Board Member)

Erie Regional Planning Commission

New appointments of Nick Alexakos and David Miller (alternate member) through December 31, 2021

Erie County Economic Development Council representative

Reappointment of Eric Wobser

Income Tax Board of Review

Reappointments of David Brink and Bob Runner through December 31, 2022

Landmarks

Reappointment of Jon Lawrence through December 31, 2023

New appointment of Ryan Whaley through December 31, 2023

Oakland Cemetery

Reappointment of Deb Neese Voltz through December 31, 2023

Planning Commission

Reappointments of Mike Zuilhof and David Miller through December 31, 2023

Public Arts & Culture Commission

Reappointments of Robin Lloyd and Cable Steinemann through December 31, 2023

Recreation Board

Reappointment of Barb Rose through December 31, 2023

New appointment of Devon Johnson through December 31, 2023

The following appointments were made by the City Manager with consent of the City Commission:

Bayfront Corridor Committee

Reappointments of Judy Corso and Kevin Zeiher through December 31, 2023

Economic Development Incentive Committee

New appointments of JaMarcus Hampton and Abbey Bemis (ex-officio member) through December 31, 2023

Fire Prevention Code

Reappointments of Dan Shepard, Gary Guendelsberger, Dan Fresch, John Feick, through December 31, 2023

New appointments of Denis Martin Schmenk through December 31, 2023

Housing Board of Appeals

Reappointment of Gary Guendelsberger through December 31, 2023

Public Arts & Culture Commission

New appointment of Shawn Patrick Thomas Daley through December 31, 2023

Residential Building Code of Appeals

Reappointments of Richard Hohler (alternate), Dan Fresch (alternate), Steve Rucker, Dave Stein through December 31, 2022

Reappointments of John Jackson Jr (alternate), and John Feick through December 31, 2023

New appointments of Greg Zimmerman (alternate) and Greg Schmid (alternate) through December 31, 2023

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Mike Meinzer, Dave Waddington, Wes Poole, Blake Harris, Dennis Murray, Dick Brady, Naomi Twine, 7. The President declared those appointments confirmed.

Dick Brady said one additional new appointment to make, he recommended Dennis Murray to serve as the liaison to the planning commission.

Upon a motion from Naomi Twine and second of Dave Waddington, the commission voted to accept the appointment of Dennis Murray to the liaison to the Planning Commission.

Discussion: Dennis Murray said it took a lot of arm twisting.

Dick Brady said he thought we would never get a second, but it finally did work out.

Dennis Murray said the second was not going to come from him, and he is still deciding how to vote on this recommendation.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Mike Meinzer, Dave Waddington, Wes Poole, Blake Harris, Dennis Murray, Dick Brady, Naomi Twine, 7. The President declared that appointment confirmed.

Blake Harris requested some stats in regards to those who applied, especially in regard to years past. He would like to see if the numbers went up, with the social media push and the help of the Sandusky Register. He hopes to layer on in future years.

McKenzie Spriggs said she would send something out to the commissioners.

Eric Wobser said anecdotally, we did see a lot more applications and interest this year. He would like to give a big thanks to all the city commissioners who pushed for that and to McKenzie Spriggs, who did a lot of work rallying internally. The commissioners made good points about getting that information out to the commission ahead of time. This was a broader process that was undertaken this year, and it was urged by the city commission. McKenzie Spriggs did a great job in her first year as commission clerk, coordinating all that. We will of course need to build on it and learn from it every year, but he was excited to see just how much interest was generated and how many applications came in this year.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Tim Schwanger, 362 Sheffield Way, Sandusky

My concerns this evening pertain to how the City Commission conducts Public Hearings under the revised Open Meeting Laws during the Covid-19 pandemic.

On March 3rd 2020, the Ohio Open Meeting Law was amended as, and I quote.

"When it (Public Government body) is conducting a public hearing, the public body also must utilize electronic equipment and technology which is widely available to the general public and which permits the public to converse with witnesses, and to receive documentary testimony and physical evidence".

A search of the City's webpage, the City's social media outlets and previous City Commission meetings do not indicate how the general public can call to join public hearings for verbal comment.

Please rectify this issue.

Discussion: Dick Brady asked Brendan Heil to research that law and make sure we are in compliance. If we are not, let's make a plan to get in compliance.

Brendan Heil said he understood and will do that.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion of Naomi Twine and second of Wes Poole, the commission voted to adjourn at 5:38 p.m. The President declared the motion passed.



McKenzie Spriggs
Commission Clerk



Richard R. Brady
President of the City Commission