

**XENIA CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION
MEETING MINUTES
JULY 25, 2019
6:00 P.M.**

1. CALL TO ORDER: President Engle called the July 25, 2019, Regular Session to order at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, City Administration Building.

2. INVOCATION: JoAnn Tarver, Greater Grace Temple, provided the Invocation.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Councilman Dale Louderback led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. ROLL CALL: Vice President Edgar Wallace, Councilman Will Urschel, Councilman Dale Louderback, Councilman Wesley Smith, Councilman Levi Dean, Mayor Sarah Mays, and President Michael Engle were present.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Councilman Smith, seconded by Vice President Wallace, to approve the July 11, 2019, Regular Session meeting minutes as written. No discussion followed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: Wallace, Urschel, Louderback, Smith, Mays, Engle

Abstain: Dean

Nays: None motion carried.

Motion by Mayor Mays, seconded by Vice President Wallace, to approve the July 11, 2019, Special Session meeting minutes as written. No discussion followed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: Wallace, Urschel, Louderback, Smith, Mays, Engle

Abstain: Dean

Nays: None motion carried.

6. SPECIAL PRESENTATION(S): None.

7. AUDIENCE COMMENTS: President Engle explained the procedures for audience comments and invited anyone who wished to speak to come forward. No one came forward to speak.

8. OLD BUSINESS: None.

9. PUBLIC HEARING(S): None.

10. NEW BUSINESS:

A. RESOLUTION 2019-U AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND/OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS AND TO EXECUTE CONTRACTS, AS REQUIRED, FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020 (PY 34) FOR THE KINSEY ROAD IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT, AND

agencies, such as Greene County Parks and Trails, for this effort. Xenia City Planner Brian Forschner has been assigned as the City's representative. At the group's first meeting, there was concurrence to seek resolutions of support from each participating jurisdiction. At this point, the GCRPCC is merely asking for general support of the endeavor and a willingness to provide assistance. Given City Council's continued support for the trail system and your directive to explore further promotion of our trails and how to leverage them for economic development, staff believes this is a laudable endeavor by the County that the City should support. Support for the resolution does not commit the City to anything more than participation in the planning process at this time. He respectfully recommended introduction of the resolution of support for the Greene County Master Trail Planning Project.

President Engle entertained introduction of the Resolution 2019-V as presented.

Vice President Wallace presented RESOLUTION 2019-V EXPRESSING THE CITY OF XENIA'S SUPPORT FOR THE GREENE COUNTY MASTER TRAIL PLANNING EFFORT, and it was read for the first time.

C. Introduction of Resolution 2019-W Authorizing the Expenditure of \$10,000 in Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund Program Income on the Simon Kenton Bridges of Hope Fire Suppression System Project. Mr. Merriman said through the City's participation in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Small Cities Program, from time to time the City receives money from loans made by the City back into the Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund. These proceeds are commonly referred to as Program Income, and the City is responsible for reinvesting it into other CDBG eligible activities. Recently, the City was asked to contribute toward the Fire Suppression Project at the Simon Kenton Bridges of Hope Homeless Shelter, which would be an eligible use of program income. The project's cost is \$160,000, of which shelter leadership has requested \$10,000 in support from the City's program income, which would be paired with a matching \$10,000 contribution from Greene County, an approximately \$80,000 CDBG Target of Opportunity Grant awarded to the County, and various donations raised by the shelter. The project is necessary for the shelter to obtain a permanent certificate of occupancy to allow it to remain open and serve the community year-round. Staff respectfully requests that City Council consider the contribution and introduce a resolution to facilitate such an action.

President Engle entertained introduction of the Resolution 2019-W as presented.

Councilman Smith presented RESOLUTION 2019-W AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF \$10,000 IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REVOLVING LOAN FUND PROGRAM INCOME ON THE SIMON KENTON BRIDGES OF HOPE FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM PROJECT, and it was read for the first time.

D. Administrative Motion Awarding the Bid and Authorizing the Purchase of De-Icing Salt from Cargill, Inc., through the SWOP4G Program. Mr. Merriman said the City annually participates in the Southwest Ohio Purchasers for Government (SWOP4G) collaborative for the acquisition of de-icing salt for use on City roadways. Staff has found participation in this group bid process yields the best pricing for the commodity purchase. Public Service staff recently obtained the bid results for this year, with the City receiving two bids from Cargill and Compass

Materials. Cargill was the low bidder at \$78.63/ton. Staff recommends award of the bid to Cargill, Inc., as the lowest and best bidder and authorize the purchase of de-icing salt for the 2019-2020 winter season at the awarded bid price.

President Engle entertained a motion.

Motion by Councilman Louderback, seconded by Councilman Smith, to award the de-icing road salt bid for the 2019-2020 winter season to Cargill, Inc., as the lowest and best bid, pursuant to the SWOP4G cooperative bidding program, and further authorize the Public Service Department to purchase de-icing salt from Cargill, Inc., at the awarded bid price of \$78.63 per ton. Brief discussion followed. Councilman Smith said only two bids were received for Xenia and asked if they usually receive more responses. Mr. Merriman said no, and some municipalities only received one bid. He was perplexed by the fact that neighboring jurisdictions received very different bids—sometimes at a 10 to 20 percent difference—and he cannot offer any guidance to explain the bid results. He commented on the Ohio Attorney General’s past actions on collusion. For this round of bids, Xenia did substantively better than surrounding jurisdictions, including Greene County at \$92.31 per ton. He noted that the City’s bid per ton was less last year; therefore, staff purchased salt at last year’s price and both barns are now full. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: Wallace, Urschel, Louderback, Dean, Smith, Mays, Engle

Nays: None motion carried.

E. Administrative Motion Authorizing the City Manager to Enter Into an Agreement for EMS Billing Services with ImageTrend. Mr. Merriman said since 2002, the City has been engaged with the firm Med3000 and its successor entities, now Change Healthcare, for billing of the EMS services provided by the City’s Fire Division. The City voluntarily offers EMS services to residents and is statutorily allowed to bill users for the services rendered. This billing service has been done by outside billing agencies at rates ranging from 5.5%-6.9% over the years. As recently discussed with Council, staff has been pursuing means by which to reduce abuse of emergency medical services and improve the cost efficiency of the service. One strategy among many is improved EMS billing. Staff published an RFP for EMS billing services in April and received seven (7) qualified responses. Following a review and interview process, staff recommends moving forward with ImageTrend for EMS billing services to be provided to the City at a rate of 4.5%. Staff recommends authorization to enter into an agreement with ImageTrend for billing services, which will subsequently allow for notice of cancellation of service with Change Healthcare. If authorized, transition to the new service would start immediately with full change over taking effect on November 1 of this year.

President Engle entertained a motion.

Motion by Vice President Wallace, seconded by Mayor Mays, to authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement with ImageTrend for EMS billing services, upon the terms and conditions as approved by the Law Director. Discussion followed.

Vice President Wallace asked about making changes in the billing process as previously discussed. Mr. Merriman said he and other City staff had a conference call with ImageTrend just that day about the intended policy changes to determine if those changes could be incorporated into their practices. The changes were confirmed and the contract will be amended to reflect those changes

and expectations. In addition, Law Director Donnette Fisher is working on a comprehensive update/rewrite of the entire Fire Division Chapter 242 in the City's Codified Ordinances to update outdated information and amend the billing language. Vice President Wallace said they need to educate citizens and customers about not using EMS as a cab to the hospital. Mr. Merriman agreed; they intend to step up communication with the general public with regard to billing changes and expectations. They will also initiate discussion with various service agencies in the coming weeks about upcoming changes and the need to take a different approach with respect to emergency medical services.

Councilman Louderback said Council and City management have a fiduciary responsibility to tax payers, and they spent several hours discussing emergency medical services. The bottom line is the City is losing money. They need to turn that around while also being sensitive to the poor.

Mr. Merriman said they are only halfway through 2019, and they are on pace to exceed 6,000 calls, which is 6% to 8% over the number of calls in 2018 and is the fourth or fifth year in a row with an increase of 5% or more. He said that pace is not sustainable with a cost that is unaffordable.

Councilman Urschel said Council held a special session two weeks ago and talked about this issue at length. He encouraged the public to attend their special sessions because a lot of useful information is shared and discussed. On this particular subject, he was astounded at the numbers, which included looking back 30 years. The call volume has grown 5% to 6% per year. Eventually, the XFD will have to be sized according to the number of calls, and right now, 90% of the calls for service are EMS calls. The significant drain of over \$1 million worth of write-offs for EMS calls could pave 10 miles of roadway per year, and people wonder why the City does not have the funds needed to take care of its infrastructure. The City's current policy is to soft bill for EMS calls, which means if a customer does not pay the bill, the City will not pursue payment of that bill. However, they will be looking at stepping up that policy. Also, the assisted living and nursing home community make up 25% of the EMS call volume, which is a substantial use of the City's emergency medical services. Regarding this change in the billing provider, the current billing provider is not providing good accountability, and this change is just one component of a whole spectrum of issues, including the fact that many people are not under regular doctor's care or have a "health home," so they call 911 all the time. Therefore, they are looking to partner with various social services and local organizations to assist those in need so they don't call 911 whenever they have a crisis. Mr. Merriman concurred.

The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: Wallace, Urschel, Louderback, Dean, Smith, Mays, Engle

Nays: None motion carried.

F. Administrative Motion Approving the Schedule of Bills in the amount of \$548,720.94.

Mr. Duke requested the payment of bills in the amount of \$548,720.94.

President Engle entertained a motion.

Motion by Councilman Louderback, seconded by Councilman Smith, to approve the schedule of bills in the amount of \$548,720.94. No discussion followed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: Wallace, Urschel, Louderback, Dean, Smith, Mays, Engle
Nays: None motion carried.

11. APPOINTED OFFICIALS REPORTS AND COUNCIL COMMENTS:

A. City Manager, Finance Director, and Law Director:

Mr. Merriman said Council authorized a music festival—which could become an annual event—that was held last Saturday on the hottest day of the year. He was not prepared to provide a full report but noted it was an incident free event. Early attendance was hampered by the heat, but the crowd grew into the evening hours. President Engle entertained comments or questions for Mr. Merriman. Councilman Louderback said Walter Sellers Apartments continues to have issues in the parking lot. There is only one parking lot light and asked if any grants are available to install additional lighting. Mr. Merriman said he discussed this issue with XPD Captain Gary Johnson about this situation today. XPD has been working with the ACE Task Force to pay particular attention that area, they have stepped up daily patrol in that area, etc. He and Community Development Coordinator Ryan Baker are in the process of evaluating options for grant funding for additional lighting. They will continue to work toward a resolution.

Mr. Duke had nothing further to share.

President Engle noted that Ms. Fisher was not present at the meeting due to her attendance and speaking engagement at the Ohio Municipal Attorneys Association 2019 Municipal Law Institute.

B. Mayor and City Council:

Mayor Mays, Councilman Louderback, and Councilman Dean had nothing further to share.

Councilman Smith thanked Council and staff for the flowers following his father's recent passing. It has been a sad time for his family; however, they are rejoicing in his homegoing. He encouraged people to regularly check on their elderly neighbors and to spend time with their families, especially their parents.

Councilman Urschel said Simon Kenton Bridges of Hope (BoH) is now open and averages about 25 people per night. He encouraged Council to support the resolution that was introduced this evening to support installation of the sprinkler system so the center can remain open permanently. He reported that the HVAC system has already been repaired. He thanked Councilman Louderback for taking the initiative to facilitate a discussion that BoH had with the director of Community Action Partnership (CAP) for the Miami Valley Region on ways they could partner together—many good ideas were presented. They will meet again on August 23 with agencies that provide housing and/or housing assistance in the Greene County area. He thanked CAP for their willingness to step up. He noted a tremendous Food Truck Rally was also held in downtown Xenia a few Saturdays ago. He had to wait 45 minutes due to the crowds and the lines—it was a wonderful family event that also included a Jazz band and CSU radio. He encouraged similar events in the future. He thanked Mr. Duke for spending a lot of time with him so he could better understand the over 100 different funding sources from the municipal, county, state, and federal governments. He learned there are many constraints and exceptions to how some of the money can be spent. He and Mr. Merriman, Mr. Duke, and Mr. Holloway have also discussed the future of the City's road

