

The Council of the City of Milford met in Council Chambers at 745 Center Street at 7:00 p.m. on March 3, 2015. Mayor Howland called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence.

Roll Call: Present: Mayor Howland, Vice Mayor Lykins, Mr. Brady, Ms. Brewer, Ms. Evans, Ms. Hinnners, Mr. Pittman.

Proceedings: Mr. Pittman made a motion to adopt the Proceedings of the February 17, 2015 regular City Council Meeting; seconded by Mr. Brady. All voted yes.

Correspondence: There was no correspondence at this time.

Financial Statement: Mr. Pittman made a Motion to receive the January, 2015 Financial Report; seconded by Mr. Lykins. All voted yes.

Public Comments: Karen Wikoff, Director of the Milford/Miami Twp. Chamber of Commerce, came to the podium. Ms. Wikoff announced the annual State of Miami Township/State of the City of Milford on March 19, 2015 at the Miami Township Civic Center between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. She indicated that Dr. Farrell, Superintendent of Milford Exempted Village School would also be present to provide a report on the status of the school district. Ms. Wikoff also provided information on two other scheduled events. A networking event will take place this Thursday 7:15 – 8:30 at their new location. Ms. Wikoff stated that their schedule coincides with Milford Schools and if the schools are closed or delayed the event will be postponed to another date. The First Methodist Church will provide a free home-cooked luncheon on March 26th. If you wish to attend the luncheon, please RSVP to the MMTCC. Ms. Wikoff then stated that Mr. Lykins has resigned from the MMTCC Board of Directors after 28 years. She thanked Mr. Lykins for his years of service and said he has been a great mentor to all and that he will be missed.

Ms. Kokenge came to the podium at this time to announce that a Farmers Market is planned to open this summer in the downtown area. At this time she has an agreement with the American Legion to operate the Farmer's Market in their parking lot. Ms. Kokenge stated that the Market would start on June 15th and will be open every Monday from 3:30–7:00p.m. She said they will open with 10-12 vendors and could possibly increase that number and extend their schedule into October. She is presently looking for residents to volunteer to be on the Board of Directors.

Mr. Mark Ziegenhardt (586 Main Street) came to the podium to suggest that the Old Mill Overlay (OMO) be designated to the downtown area only and wondered who could approve that.

Mr. Wright responded that text amendments are approved by Council after the Planning Commission has approved them; the same as zoning map amendments. He suggested that if Mr. Ziegenhardt would like entertain a motion that something within the zoning code can't be used anywhere else, he could do that through a text amendment to the zoning code.

Ms. Howland asked if that was something that would need to be discussed at BZA or Planning Commission before it's brought to Council.

Mr. Wright indicated that was correct.

Ms. Howland indicated that they would take Mr. Ziegenhardt's recommendation to the right commission and let them discuss it and then go through the proper procedures.

Mr. Ziegenhardt then stated that he read in a newsletter that the City of Blue Ash was recently awarded a grant in the amount of \$1 million dollars from the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association and asked if the City has ever applied for a grant from that association.

Mr. Wright indicated that the City has not in the past 3 years. He went on to say in the past we have received small amounts of money for Nature Works grants. He said although he was not working for the City at the time, he believes the City received money from a Nature Works grant in the late 1990's to build the restroom and concession stand at Riverside I and that grant might have been for \$60,000 or \$70,000. He indicated that the City has a staff member who attends meetings regarding grants from the State Park Association, but we have not been eligible funds.

Ms. Howland stated that grants have to be filed for a specific build or project. She stated that a lot of these grants have very specific criteria and if we didn't fit those criteria, we wouldn't have applied.

Mr. Ziegenhardt then gave the newsletter regarding the Blue Ash grant to the Mayor.

Standing Committee Reports:

Administrative Services: There was no report at this time.

Community Development:

Charlene Hinnners called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

Present: Laurie Howland, Lisa Evans
Staff: Jeff Wright, City Manager; Pam Holbrook, Assistant City Manager; Ed Hackmeister, Service Department Supervisor

Greenlawn Cemetery Mowing Bids

Mr. Hackmeister informed the Committee that the City received bids for the Cemetery Grounds Mowing Project from the following vendors: LTD, A & A, and Lawn Systems. The low bidder was A & A coming in at \$51,315 for a 1 year contract and \$153,945 for a 3 year contract. Mr. Hackmeister stated that A & A held the current contract and has been doing a great job. They communicated well with staff and have kept the contract price the same while increasing the number of cuts per year from 25 to 27.

The Committee agreed to make a motion to draft an Ordinance authorizing the City Manager to enter into a three year contract with A & A in the amount of \$153,945 for the Greenlawn Cemetery Grounds Mowing; seconded by Ms. Evans. All voted yes.

Planning Commission Appointment

The City received two letters of interest for the Planning Commission seat vacated by Bob Wendel. After much discussion the Committee members agreed to recommend Dino Pelle for the vacant seat on the Planning Commission.

Mound Avenue Hillslope Project

Staff informed the Committee that CEC, an engineering firm in Milford, was contracted by the City to do an initial assessment of the City's hillslope and riverbank property located along the Little Miami River, and behind Mound Avenue.

The City will hold an educational session at the next Community Development meeting (date TBD) with the property owners that live on the river side of Mound Avenue. The purpose of the meeting is to inform the property owners of the steps the City is taking to monitor the City's hillslope, and identify activities/disturbances that may aggravate the hillslope instability.

Neighbor Notification

The Committee discussed a variety of ways to increase notification to people who have an interest in planning projects. The Milford Zoning Ordinance requires that a notification be sent to property owners within 200 feet of the subject parcel in the event of a zone change request.

Policy changes include:

1. Increase the notification buffer area from 200 feet to 400 feet.
2. Install Zone Change signs on the subject property.
3. Include an email sign up on the Planning Department web page for people interested in receiving planning project updates.

Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance include:

1. In the event of a zone change request or development of a certain size require the developer to hold a neighborhood meeting prior to the Planning Commission and City Council public hearing.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM.

Ms. Hinnners made a Motion to approve Mr. Pelle's appointment to the Planning Commission; seconded by Mr. Pittman. All voted yes.

Ms. Hinnners made a Motion to adjourn into Executive Session to discuss real estate at the conclusion of the regular City Council Meeting; seconded by Mr. Pittman. All voted yes.

Parks and Recreation: Mr. Pittman stated that the 2015 Eggstravaganza event would be held March 28th at Riverside I between the hours of 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. He said there will be egg hunting opportunities for all ages, face painting, and treats plus a visit from the Easter Bunny himself. Mr. Pittman said the event is always very well done and well attended.

Ms. Howland then brought up various facts about the grant Mr. Ziegenhardt had alluded to earlier in the meeting. She indicated that the City would not be eligible for a grant of that size because it was for an area of 130 acres and incorporated the inclusion of restaurants and similar entities. She said that dollar amount would equate to about \$10,000 for the City because we do not have anything that would qualify for that size and scope of a project.

Mr. Lykins stated that the park location in question was the old Blue Ash Airport site.

Public Services: There was no report at this time.

Safety Services: There was no report at this time.

City Manager's Report: City Manager Jeff Wright presented the following report:

CITY MANAGER

I participated in the Clermont County Economic Opportunity Task Force meeting last Friday morning. Several of us from around the County, including developers, UC Clermont and the vocational schools are working on 3 goals: assembling competitive shovel-ready sites to offer to expanding office and industrial tenants; create a rapid and customized program to provide employee training and recruitment specific to business needs for job creation; and have a robust marketing and branding strategy for Clermont County designed to attract and support companies. The efforts are paying off as Friday I asked Cincinnati Gear Systems in Milford for a flyer for their March 7th job fair that I shared with Live Oaks, Ohio Means Jobs, UC Clermont and local Chambers of Commerce. This is an example whereby an employer wants to expand but has a difficult time finding skilled labor.

Mike Minniear and I worked on the closing preparation for the purchase of the Younginger property. I am incredibly happy to say that we will close on the property this Thursday afternoon.

Mike and I also worked on the purchase agreement for the sale of 308 Main Street to the Redman's and as soon as the final agreement and updated pro forma are perfected we will come back to Council to execute the contract for the sale of the property.

Mr. Justin Bonnell has volunteered to serve on the Parks and Rec Commission. Justin and his wife have three young children and are becoming more active in the community. Staff agrees that Justin would be a great addition to the Commission and is hoping that Council, by a voice vote, will appoint him to Parks and Rec this evening.

Mr. Lykins made a Motion to appoint Justin Bonnell to the Parks and Recreation Commission; seconded by Ms. Evans. All voted yes.

SERVICE DEPARTMENT

Ed Hackmeister, Service Department Supervisor, called the guys in at 2:54 a.m. on 2/21/15 for snow. He reports that they worked 240.25 overtime hours and used 137.5 tons of salt for this event. Out of the 599 tons of salt that we had for our purchase at Clermont County, Redbank Transport delivered the majority to us and we still have 72 tons being stored at the County. We currently have approximately 650 to 700 tons on hand should the weather turn on us again.

When the department wasn't treating the streets for snow and ice they worked on patching potholes which seems to be a never-ending task.

WASTE WATER DEPARTMENT

Dave Walker, Waste Water Department Supervisor, reports that although they certainly don't move the amount of snow that the Service Department does, they are responsible for snow/ice removal from the Parkway, Service Dept. and Signal Hill Lift stations.

Last week Rawdon Myers was at the plant to calibrate gas sensors in the screen room due to alarm faults. Later Beckman Environmental Service was there to pull the pump at the Service Department lift station. The pump seals went out Sunday night and caused a pump fault alarm.

The influent compactor froze due to the extremely cold temperatures we have had causing it to go into 'fault' mode. They were able to clean it and get the compactor back online with no damage.

Dave reports that they dug up a manhole behind Mound Street in the alley to bring it up to street level and gain access to the main sewer line so that they could run the camera in the sewer main that runs along the river bank.

Last Monday the department picked up road plates to start digging on Main Street in front of Baker Heating and Cooling to install a sewer cleanout this week. That project began yesterday with southbound traffic at Garfield detoured down to Water Street and the northbound traffic will continue uninterrupted. They anticipate the work being completed by the end of the week.

WATER DEPARTMENT

Matt Newman, Water Plant Supervisor, reports that they completed 11 work orders, 9 utility locates and changed out 2 frozen meters at Milltown Plaza last week. They also did snow removal at the booster stations and he thanks the Service Department for clearing his parking lot. Later when the weather improved they washed the salt off of two of their utility trucks.

There was an issue with the air stripper on Friday. Apparently ice formed in the air duct and started backing water up into the air handler. They will have to by-pass the stripper until the weather breaks. Well 4 is in service so the stripper isn't needed for the time being.

OTHER

Just a reminder that this is time change weekend and we 'spring forward' an hour.

STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Administrative Services Committee: Not scheduled at this time
Community Development Committee: Not scheduled at this time
Public Services Committee: Not scheduled at this time
Safety Services Committee: Not scheduled at this time

REMINDERS:

Parks & Recreation: 5:30 p.m. Monday, March 9, 2015 in Council Chambers

Planning Commission: 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 11, 2015 in Council Chambers

BZA: 7:00 p.m. Thursday, March 26, 2015 **This meeting has been cancelled.**

Eggstravaganza: 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. March 28, 2015 at Riverside I. Please call 831-4192 or go to the website at ‘milfordohio.org’ to register your children. April 4th is the rain our date for this event. We have already begun receiving registrations for the Eggstravaganza.

Police Department Report: Chief Jamey Mills came forward to present the following report:

Chief Mills stated that the department stayed busy in February with training, most of which was free. Detectives Liming and Rogers attended an 8-hour class at Miami Township Police Department regarding Cyber Crime Investigations. Officer Clark received free public training on detecting fraudulent documents and four officers attended free classes through the Clermont County Prosecutors’ office.

There was one notable crime: on February 24th an armed robbery took place inside an automobile between two known parties. It was an isolated incident and not at all random.

Chief Mills then reminded Council and the public of the tri-annual CALEA accreditation onsite which will take place March 15th - 17th and will include a public meeting which will take place in Council Chambers at 7:00 on March 16th. If you are unable to attend the public meeting, you can call in comments by calling 248-5732 on March 16th between the hours of 1:00 -3:00p.m.

Fire Department Report: Chief John Cooper came to the podium to present the following report:

Chief Cooper urged residents to be mindful of space heaters and other heating sources. He said any wood used in fireplaces or stoves should be well seasoned and the chimneys and flues should be clear.

He said the construction at the fire house is almost entirely completed and that it is a good investment since the fire house had not been updated in almost 30 years. It has also been very popular with the fire fighters.

He stated that he and Lt. Thiel had recently taken a fire engine back to the manufacturer for service. He said that it is a common practice for the Milford Fire Department to take the engines back every 10-12 years for maintenance. Although the cost of the work will be about \$100,000, it is still much less than the cost of a new engine which would be well over \$600,000. This process will be repeated in another 10 years. He indicated that since 10 years is about the life span of an engine so they are saving tax dollars with this preventative maintenance approach.

Lastly, Chief Cooper asked that residents and businesses keep their sidewalks cleared of snow and ice even if it’s only a shovel width not only because there is an Ordinance in place that requires it but for safety reasons.

Mayor Howland suggested that residents ‘like’ the City of Milford and Fire Department on their facebook pages because it is an easy way to stay abreast of activities and events within the City. She then turned the time over to Mr. Minniear for the swearing in of the two new commission members.

Mr. Minniear came forward to swear both men in regarding their new appointments; Mr. Pelle to the Planning Commission and Justin Bonnell to the Parks and Recreation Commission. Ms. Howland thanked both individuals for their desire to serve the public by volunteering to be on these two committees.

Public Comments: Mr. Ziegenhardt again approached the podium and suggested that the City annex properties in surrounding areas to raise the City’s income. He commented that he thought these areas could be transferred into the City without too much difficulty.

Mr. Wright responded that within the current political climate and per the Ohio Revised Code it is much more difficult now than it was several years ago to annex property. He indicated that Mr. Minniear would be more familiar with the process, but it takes a certain percentage of endorsement of the property owners to agree to annexation. Mr. Wright said it is extremely difficult to annex developed property and there is not an opportunity for undeveloped property.

Mr. Ziegenhardt then suggested that the City solicit annexation agreements.

Ms. Hinnars stated that 4 or 5 years ago she and Mr. Pittman had walked through an area speaking to residents house by house about possible annexation into the City and with the exception of one household, no one was interested.

Mr. Ziegenhardt then asked if the City had ever considered applying for Community Block Grants.

Mr. Wright replied that he and Ms. Holbrook had recently attended a meeting regarding those at the County Commissioners office and at this time they don't have the applications available for communities to submit. He said in the past the City has been very competitive in applying for grants and in typical years we have received between \$30,000 and \$35,000. With us only having about 3½ % of the county's population, there's a limit to what we can ask for. He stated that there is a possibility since the County has received a bit more money, that we might be eligible for \$10's of thousands but not \$100's of thousands. Mr. Wright stated that we have to be competitive. He said the City certainly has applied and received Community Block Grants in the past specifically for public safety and ADA enhancements. We have also used the money for park improvements in the past; more specifically 4 years ago we did receive money from Clermont County and we used it for picnic tables, benches, and recycling and trash containers in parks. Mr. Wright stated that these grants can only be used in the parts of the City that are considered LMI (low to moderate income) so while it can be used in some areas of the City it cannot be used in the entire 4 sq. miles the City covers.

Ms. Howland said to apply for grants one must have a very specific project in mind and that the bidding process is very competitive. She indicated that she attended a meeting where a lot of money was available but Milford didn't meet the criteria for any of it. She knew of a community who had been trying for several years to replace a bridge that had washed out and they were unable to procure funding. Ms. Howland stated that the City applies everywhere applicable for available grant money.

Mr. Bonnell came to the podium and asked if the City had reached out to the Milford Board of Education to try to persuade them to keep their offices in the City of Milford for income tax purposes.

Mr. Wright said he has had conversation with Dr. Farrell regarding the South building. He stated that the school district has several options available but has indicated to him the need to downsize not only to produce a savings in utilities but they want a smaller more manageable building. Mr. Wright stated that he doesn't think they have consummated another deal and that he would continue to lobby them.

Council Comments: There were no Council comments at this time.

New Business:

15-1148 An Ordinance rejecting the recommendation of the Milford Planning Commission regarding the application for zone change by Real Estate Ventures Capital, LLC for real property owned by the Milford Exempted Village School District located at and commonly known as 527 Main Street, Milford, Ohio: Ms. Brewer made a motion to suspend the rules and read by title only, seconded by Mr. Pittman. All voted yes. Ms. Brewer made a motion to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Ms. Evans. Mr. Lykins voted no; all others voted yes.

15-1149 An Ordinance authorizing an Agreement with A&A Landscaping for the Greenlawn Cemetery grounds mowing: Ms. Brewer made a motion to suspend the rules and read by title only, seconded by Mr. Pittman. Ms. Hinnners made a motion to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Mr. Pittman. All voted yes.

Old Business: There was no old business to be discussed at this time.

Adjourn:

There being no further business to come before the City Council; the meeting was adjourned into Executive Session at 7:48 p.m. with a Motion from Mr. Pittman; seconded by Mr. Lykins. All voted yes.

At 8:59 p.m. the Executive Session was adjourned with a motion from Ms. Evans; seconded by Mr. Lykins. All voted yes.

Sharon Waldmann, C.P.T.

Laurie Howland, Mayor