



**REGULAR PIQUA CITY COMMISSION MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

Piqua City Commission met at 6:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers located at 201 W. Water Street, Piqua, Ohio.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Lee and Commissioners DeBrosse, Hohman, Simmons and Vetter were present.

REVISED AGENDA

Commissioner Hohman moved to adopt the revised agenda. Commissioner Simmons seconded the motion. Mayor Lee said the revision was to move public comment to the end of the meeting.

PROCLAMATION

Black History Month

PRESENTATION

Power Project - Rebecca Sousek gave an update on the project at Mote Park

PRESENTATION

Planning Commission – Gary Koenig gave an overview of the Planning Commission’s role

REGULAR PIQUA CITY COMMISSION MEETING

CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of the Minutes from the January 16, 2024, Regular City Commission Meeting and the January 29, 2024 Special City Commission Meeting

Commissioner Hohman motioned to strike through all public comments in the minutes and replace with Public Comments were heard. Frank Patrizio questioned whether there at least needed to be a summary of public comments but said he’d have to look into it. Commissioner Hohman said the recommendation they received from the city said each comment did not have to be recorded. Mayor Lee read Roberts Rules of Order which said the minutes are to be an official record of what was done, not what was said. Law Director Patrizio said if the Commission wishes to remove public comments from the minutes, that’s fine. Mayor Lee seconded the motion, and all were in favor of amending the minutes.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hohman to approve the amended minutes and Commissioner Vetter seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

The City Clerk pointed out the following Ordinance should be under Old Business.

ORDINANCE NO. O-1-24 (2nd Reading)

An ordinance to amend Title XV: Land Usage, Piqua Development Code

Introduction: Mr. Schmiesing explained that this ordinance would amend the development code to establish use standards for a newly created hotel and create a "Special Use" standard where permitted. This would provide a means of evaluating a new hotel proposal to ensure it can be supported by the local economy while not negatively impacting existing hotels. The Planning Commission has reviewed the code amendment, has offered some revisions which are in the Ordinance presented before you, then recommended adoption.

Commissioners Comments: Commissioner Hohman confirmed this would protect the market from being flooded all at the same time. Commissioner DeBrosse asked Chris Schmiesing if it tiers them, making them at different levels and Chris Schmiesing acknowledged that it did. Commissioner Hohman asked if there are hard rules for special uses or is it a judgement call based off of market conditions. Chris Schmiesing said there are four rules for special uses. He explained each of them.

Public Comment: Jeff Grimes repeated the concern he brought up at the last meeting about the TIF money being used for this project. He said he thought that TIF money was only supposed to be used for blighted areas. He claimed the City Manager previously said there was other interest in this property, so he asked if TIF money was still going to be used. He said the city shouldn't be involved in the real estate business. Mr. Grimes asked what kind of jobs this was going to create. He asked that the Commission look at the TIF money carefully.

Action Taken: 2nd Reading

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION NO. R-24-24

A resolution to continue Sanitary Sewer Smoke Testing (Phase 3) Services with Fishbeck Engineers

Introduction: Kevin Krejny introduced that beginning in November 2022 (Phase 1) and in Spring of 2023 (Phase 2) Fishbeck Engineering performed sanitary sewer smoke testing to begin to help Piqua Utilities better understand the condition of our underground sewer system and also help identify cross connections and inflow and infiltration points on the wastewater collection system. Phase 3 work will be performed in areas downtown and adjacent to downtown. This was in 2024 Budget or 404.

Commissioners Comments: Commissioner Vetter asked when this phase will be completed, and Commissioner Simmons pointed out that the 3rd phase has the oldest infrastructure. Kevin Krejny responded that we'll find obvious fixes and make repairs.

Commissioner DeBrosse asked when the last time this was done? Then Commissioner DeBrosse said for full disclosure, and as an explanation of why he was asking, he worked for the Wastewater Department when he was in college. He was just curious if there had been anything done since then. Commissioner Hohman commented that he hopes this will help in keeping everyone's rates stable.

Public Comment: None

A motion was made by Commissioner Vetter to approve the resolution and Commissioner Hohman seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. R-25-24

A resolution authorizing the commissioners committee on the fire training facility

Introduction: Commissioner DeBrosse said that the creation of this committee does one big thing and then it also adds some clarification and guidance. The first thing it does is create a committee made up of 5 individuals who live in the City of Piqua, and they'll have two charges. One is to produce reports and recommendations as to the events that happened at the old water treatment plant from the 2017-2023 timeframe. We listed in the resolution several questions, but the committee is not limited to what's listed.

Commissioner DeBrosse read one of the questions but pointed out there are six additional questions. The first question is how the site went from a fire training center to a battery site. The committee will have the ability to engage with a subject matter expert or to seek outside council. The reason we are setting guidelines, that you have to be a resident and you can't be a present or past employee, is that we want the committee to be completely independent and non-biased. We want this committee to address the concerns and questions of the Commissioners,402and the public also. The committee will meet as the Chairman wishes and report back the Commission.

Commissioners Comments: Mayor Lee asked if the Committee will be willing to accept documents from citizens. Commissioner DeBrosse responded that the committee will absolutely accept documents and they will have access to emails and documents.

Commissioner DeBrosse said that he was not aware until recently that the commission has subpoena power, and the committee can ask the commissioners to use this power if they want to interview someone. Commissioner Simmons said he has an issue with the section that says no former employee can be on the committee. He knows one former employee that has been working tirelessly to help get to the bottom of this and he thinks we're doing a disservice to tell that person that they can't serve on the committee.

Commissioner Vetter said that person would have an opportunity to provide information at the request of the committee. Mayor Lee said that he thinks they should be able to go to the committee and present information. Commissioner Hohman said the resolution mandates that there will be monthly public meetings attended by at least one of the commissioners and the commission will give guidance to the committee. It's expected that the committee will be open to receiving information from different sources.

Commissioner Simmons repeated that he still thinks it's a disservice to the Commission, to the City of Piqua and to the person who's been spoken to about this. Commissioner Hohman said without some kind of guideline on restricting the applicant pool he wondered if we could see applicants from employees who were involved in it or former employees and questioned whether there would be grounds for discriminating against them unless there's broad guidelines that says no one could work at the city during that timeframe. Commissioner DeBrosse asked to clear things up and said that the language doesn't have anything to do with an individual person.

Action Taken: Commissioner Simmons made a motion to remove the restriction that former employees could not serve on committee. Mayor Lee seconded the motion. Roll call was taken and Commissioner Simmons and Mayor Lee voted for and Commissioners Vetter, DeBrosse and Hohman voted against the amendment. The motion failed.

Commissioner Comments: Commissioner Hohman said if you truly want an independent committee then it is a conflict of interest to have employees, or former employees, who may have had documents being reviewed cross their desk, serve on the committee. Commissioner DeBrosse asked the Law Director if the provision was eliminated that no previous employee could serve on the committee, then would the former Fire Chief be able to serve, and Frank Patrizio said that he could. Commissioner Hohman asked if current employees could be on the committee. Frank Patrizio said that the commission can appoint anyone that they want to. Frank Patrizio advised that the commission make the committee as objective as they can.

Public Comment: Debbie Stein said that three commissioners approached her about serving on the committee, and she said something has changed. She said it shows their integrity. Debbie said she only saw agreements and resolutions come across her desk. She said the commission is being selective and you're trying to lock out citizens. She said she didn't understand. Commissioner Hohman said it is not intended to question the integrity of any one person. The Commission is looking for a fully independent commission. There is no personal agenda, and no one is questioning any individual's integrity.

Alisha Lange said it's corrupt and she thinks it's funny that the resolution restricts former employees because you said you'd nominate Debbie.

Jeff Lange applauded the commissioner for putting the committee together because this affects not only citizens but residents from outside of the city.

Chuck Starrett said he has a problem with having to be a resident because this affects people from outside of Piqua. He said he doesn't understand the restriction of no former employees being able to service. He thinks all committees are a waste of time.

Adam Seas agreed with Commissioner Simmons. He said he knows Debbie and she is professional and knows how things work. He said he doesn't see how it would not be

beneficial. Commissioner DeBrosse repeated that this is not anti-Debbie Stein. Commissioner DeBrosse did originally think that Debbie Stein would serve the committee well but when he realized her employment overlapped, he couldn't in good consensus put a previous employee on the committee. It has to be independent.

Diane Parke announced that the YouTube feed is down. She said she wanted the public to know that there is a group of people who have formed their own committee.

Susan Speidel thinks the committee is a great idea but thinks there needs to be procedures in place. She suggested that the Commissioners hold the committee accountable and make sure it is structured. She talked about being on the committee for the dam and there are no updates.

Kevin Krejny said the reason there has been no updates is because ODNR has not responded since documents were sent to them in December.

Commissioner Hohman asked the city manager if he sees the lines of communication continuing to improve and Paul Oberdorfer said that we've hired Michelle Perry to help with that.

Jeff Grimes thanked Commissioner DeBrosse for starting the committee. He said all that he wants is the truth. He asked for another town hall with OEPA and RAPCA. He said no one knows how many people were affected, and that is why he asked that the area be a crime scene. Mr. Grimes said no one believes anything they've been told.

Eva Silvers acknowledged that in the start she was part of the battery thing. She said she is also a person with a reasonable amount of seeing outside the box. She can't imagine how we're yelling about \$15,000 of tax money as the EPA says they did not see a reason for testing but we're yelling because the city committed \$15,000 to Water and \$32,000 to land and those answers are not good enough. Eva sees the need for a committee, an independent committee that can look at all sides because that is the way we are going to get the answers. She's heard conversations where the results were a paid off deal. If we're not looking for a conclusion to a problem, then you're not looking for a solution. There is no reason for citizens not to believe.

Dave Smith said that the last commission didn't do jack and didn't care, and we have the same problems with you. He said when you guys (commission) quit representing us, we have no responsibility to listen to you. He claimed that special perks are given to the people who come into this town and hurt us. Mr. Smith said he would choose the people to be on the committee that have already been doing research. He said that no committee is needed, and you need him.

A motion was made by Commissioner Vetter to approve the resolution and Commissioner Hohman seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was carried unanimously.

Commissioner Hohman confirmed that the application will be up tomorrow morning and Paul Oberdorfer answered that it would be. Commissioner Vetter asked if each Commissioner would get to appoint one member and Commissioner Hohman said he wasn't sure if that language made it into the Resolution.

RESOLUTION NO. R-26-24

A resolution authorizing the city manager to sign the program year (PY) 2023 LSO Partnership Agreement by and between the Miami County Board of Commissioners, the City of Piqua, and the City of Troy for the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) Lead Safe Ohio (LSO) Program

Introduction: Chris Schmiesing said this resolution allows the City of Piqua to partner with the Miami County Board of Commissioners, and City of Troy to apply to the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) for funding under the Program Year (PY) 2023 Lead Safe Ohio (LSO) Program. Through this partnership the Miami County Board of Commissioners, City of Troy and the City of Piqua will be applying for \$710,000 LSO Grant comprised of federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The following eligible CHIP activities have been selected for the City of Piqua: Lead Abatement Projects – 1 unit Lead Safe Renovation Projects – 7 units

Commissioners Comments:

Public Comment: Chuck Starrett asked if this included lead in pipes, paint etc. Chris Schmiesing confirmed. Chuck Starrett said that this amount of money won't cover all of that. Mayor Lee said that it is a start, and won't get all, but some. Commissioner Hohman asked if we could track how the grant money is used. Mayor Lee asked if it would be possible for the citizens to see this information.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hohman to approve the resolution and Commissioner Vetter seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was carried unanimously.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT Paul Oberdorfer gave an update on the township contracts with the City. He said the meeting to discuss the Washington township contract was postponed until their accountant meets with the City's Finance Director. Both townships have extended their agreements until March 31.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENT

Commissioner Simmons introduced Marcy as his service dog and explained that he needed his service dog due to surgery. He has a full ham radio class and may have another class if he gets good results from this one.

Commissioner Hohman was thankful that the committee was approved. He said the group will be dedicated to identifying what happened at the Fire Training Center and he is excited for that. He thanked Commissioner DeBrosse for initiating the committee.

Commissioner Vetter stated he checked into the report of a citizen's utilities being shut off for being \$41 short and the statements given were not totally accurate. He talked to the engineering department about

the streets and a team is reviewing them. Commissioner Vetter said that he has received notices about sex offenders staying at cold shelters and he is having discussions with the shelters because he recognizes this is not a good location. He announced the following meetings: 1st time home buyers' program and Hance Pavilion. Commissioner Vetter is trying to get information about the Scenic River Recognition.

Mayor Lee appreciated Commissioner DeBrosse for coming up with the committee. He also announced that the Town Hall is being pushed back a month and the topic will be on Economic Development. He announced Black History Month, and he shares something every day on his Facebook to recognize black history.

PUBLIC COMMENTS WERE HEARD

ADJOURNMENT at 8:46 p.m.

Commissioner Homan made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Vetter seconded the motion.