

**SPECIAL CITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Piqua City Commission met at 5:00 p.m. in the Municipal Government Complex Commission Chambers located at 201 W. Water Street, Piqua, Ohio.

**ROLL CALL**

Mayor Lee and Commissioners Vetter, and Hohman were present. A motion to excuse Commissioner Simmons was made by Mayor Lee and seconded by Commissioner Hohman. All were in favor and the motion passed. A motion was made by Commissioner Hohman to excuse Commissioner DeBrosse and seconded by Mayor Lee. All were in favor and the motion passed.

**REGULAR PIQUA CITY COMMISSION MEETING**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**RESOLUTION NO. R-37-24**

A resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a management agreement with Hampton Golf for Fort Piqua Plaza Banquet Center

Introduction: Paul Oberdorfer pointed out that Commission approval was not required for this contract, but he wanted to be clear and give a perception of transparency. This resolution is only giving authorization to enter into the contract.

Commissioners Comments:

Kris Lee said there are a lot of errors in the contract.

Commissioner Hohman acknowledged that the commission is only giving authorization for Paul Oberdorfer to enter into a contract and not approving the contract.

Frank Patrizio said minor changes can be made to the contract as long as it doesn't affect contract language. Commissioner Hohman said it is standard to correct minor errors.

Commissioner Vetter asked if what was being considered is the same as what was presented Tuesday.

Commissioner Lee said he thinks the citizens should have a say and we'll get their input as well.

Commissioner Hohman said because of the sense of urgency and not having enough time to look into questions that were raised, he'd like to make a motion to amend the resolution. Commissioner Hohman made a motion to amend the language to say the City Manager should report to the commission once a year on the performance of Hampton Golf. He said this would make up for not having time to review the

proposal to have Hampton Golf manage the banquet center. Commissioner Lee said this would give transparency to the public too. Commissioner Hohman said this would give us the ability to have an ongoing review. Frank Patrizio said this does not have to be in the resolution and this request can be made to the city manager at any time. Paul Oberdorfer said he could work on a report into the third quarter and tie it to the budget each year.

Commissioner Hohman made a motion to add a line to the Resolution stating that the City Manager should report at least once per year during the third quarter on the performance of the banquet center at the plaza. Mayor Lee seconded the motion and there was a 0-3 vote in favor of the amendment.

#### PRESENTATION

Paul Oberdorfer introduced Travis from Hampton Golf which joined the meeting virtually. Paul Oberdorfer presented slides that gave an overview of the banquet center's revenues, expenditures, 10-year maintenance plan, and timeline of staffing. The banquet coordinator vacated the position in November of 2023, and it has been staffed with city personnel. Paul said that we have to come up with a short-term solution or not be able to operate the building. He stated how important the banquet center is to the overall impact on the entire building.

#### **Commissioner Simmons entered the meeting at 5:25 pm**

Travis from Hampton Golf introduced himself and Hampton Golf stating that they have 37 assets and 25 management contracts with banquet centers. He listed short term priorities as follows:

- Stabilizing a team
- Initiating Software and analyzing data
- Establishing vendor relationships
- Restabling caterers
- Securing Liquor License
- Extension of Golf Course

Long term Goals would be to focus on making the banquet center a destination wedding. Getting rooms for the nights, golfing, etc. He thinks there is a big opportunity.

Commissioner Hohman asked if Travis thought they anticipated being able to hit the threshold to earn the revenue share and how long he felt it would take. Travis said there will be a ramp up period and it may take one season to reach the threshold. Commissioner Hohman asked if Hampton Golf has experience doing weddings and Travis said they are absolutely versed in weddings at 25 venues.

Commissioner Lee asked if they will be using local vendors. Travis replied that they will use the caterers already established at the plaza and brides will be able to select.

Commissioner Hohman asked what Hampton would do differently as far as advertising the banquet center. Travis said the extent of the current advertising is if someone goes to Ft Piqua Plaza website's

website. Hampton Golf will have a professional photographer take pictures and showcase how fabulous it is.

Commissioner Simmons asked if we might see a spread in a bridal magazine. Travis said it definitely warrants it.

Commissioner Hohman asked how many years Hampton Golf has with weddings and event planning. Travis said he personally has 25 years and Hampton has multiple units.

Commissioner Hohman asked how much the revenues were increased at the golf course after Hampton took over.

**Public Comment:**

Kathy Alexander asked if Hampton Golf also represents the Country Club. Travis said no and Kathy asked why not. Travis said they were not the right fit.

Diane Parke asked how many weddings have been done at the golf course.

Ruth Koon asked if the same person who manages the country club will be managing the plaza and Travis said no. Ruth also asked if nonprofits will be able to continue to use the banquet center at no cost. Travis said that is up to the city. Commissioner Hohman said we should come up with protocol for nonprofits to make sure it's being handled equitably.

Kathy Alexander asked if references were checked with their other locations and if their sales increased. Paul said country clubs vs. city are very different. The city subsidizes for the citizens to have amenities. Paul said that reference checks were done when we hired them to manage the golf course.

Mary Simmons asked if the city looked at anyone else. Paul Oberdorfer replied that it goes back to the timeline that we started in 2021. The expedited nature is the fact that we lost the banquet coordinator that was working there. Trying to augment that with our own city staff makes it difficult. Without having staff in place, we can't perform. Miss Simmons asked if we were going to keep those employees on and Paul Oberdorfer said that no one will be affected. They are helping on top of their regular duties.

Tom Lillicrap asked how bar service will be tied to Hampton Golf. Paul Oberdorfer said will break apart the liquor license, so Hampton Golf has their own. Ruth Koon asked if the current liquor provider will still be allowed, and Paul said yes.

Ruth Koon asked if the Country Club contract was cancelled by Hampton or the Country Club.

Citizen asked if the city checked with others to manage the banquet center. Paul said that we did talk to one other.

Citizen asked if the increase in bookings is a guarantee or a potential increase. Travis said it is Hamptons projections based on what they know. They are confident as they propose conservatively and hope to overachieve.

Citizen asked if the library will still be able to use the banquet center. Paul said it will be part of the policy.

Citizen asked if there wasn't much advertising because it is an emergency. Paul Oberdorfer responded that there is an urgency because we lost staff.

Commissioner Hohman explained that because we are a charter form of government the City Commissioner delegates the role to the City Manager to evaluate and select the best company. The city manager was not obligated get City Commission approval. Paul Oberdorfer said that Hampton Golf has demonstrated their product.

Citizen asked who the local vendor was that Paul Oberdorfer looked at and Paul Oberdorfer said he would prefer not to say. Citizen asked if we could put in the contract that Hampton uses only local vendors. Paul Oberdorfer said that we can't restrict them from only using local vendors. Citizen said so you're not guaranteeing that they are always going to use local vendors. Paul Oberdorfer said that we could not guarantee that before. Commissioner Lee said Travis said he would look at local vendors first. Commissioner Hohman said it is desirable and when we do our yearly review if we see they are only using vendors from out of state we'll question that.

Citizen asked who is going to pay for the contract, specifically the maintenance. City money or taxpayers' money. Paul said Ft Piqua Plaza operates as an enterprise fund and it is all based on revenues and expenditures. In terms of the city paying for things, it is the city's obligation as it is our asset. Commissioner Hohman reiterated that the city owns the building, and the maintenance is our responsibility. He said we own the risk but have the potential for a really high upside.

Commissioner Lee repeated that he wants to make sure that Hampton is using local vendors. Travis responded that everything from caterers to florists would be local. Paul Oberdorfer said they will bring everything together. Commissioner Hohman asked if we've talked to the Chamber of Commerce Paul Oberdorfer said that

Citizen asked if there should be another amendment, so the banquet center isn't going to be like the golf course and lose money. Commissioner Vetter said Hampton was not responsible for the performance of the golf course before they took over.

Diana Parke, if anyone approached the existing wedding venue on Demming Road was approached. She said she is all about using local vendors. Paul Oberdorfer said that the vendor on Demming Road was not approached. He said the opportunity to take the two assets we have, the golf course and the banquet center and maximizing both of those together for golf events. If you have a wedding and the wedding party wants to play golf that morning, having one vendor allows us to seamlessly do that kind of marketing. From a management perspective you want to have the least number of relationships with vendors that you can so if you have an issue, you are only going to one person. Diane Parke said she

thinks we should support our home businesses and they should have been asked first but said she understands also.

Citizen asked how much the contract is for. Paul responded that it is for \$30,000 but it will be a wash when you look at what we spend on marketing and salaries.

Adam Seas said there have been a lot of improvements to the golf course. He asked if we were taking away a liquor license from another business. He wants to help everyone. Paul Oberdorfer said the liquor license is very complicated and should have been split out from the beginning. He said where it's Hampton or someone else you still have to separate the licenses. Commissioner Hohman confirmed that it wasn't being taken from someone else. Paul Simmons said that it makes sense having the liquor license separated from the event space because it's not an everyday bar, it's an event space.

Ruth Koon asked how many employees will work at the banquet center. Travis said they will start with two and will have the benefit of using the golf staff also.

Tom Lillcrap said he apologizes for his misunderstanding at Tuesday's commission meeting. He misread the contract and did not understand the money generated from events would come to the city. He feels like Hampton will be able to help with the building and thinks we should give the guy a chance. Commissioner Hohman told Tom that there was no reason to apologize because he was trying to figure it out too. Tom Lillcrap said the contract was not clear.

Diana Parke asked who called the special meeting. She said people didn't know there was going to be a special meeting and they thought it would be for two weeks. Paul Oberdorfer said that he scheduled the meeting. Commissioner Lee said the city is not required to post the agenda. Commissioner Hohman said it is all on the up and up per the law but thinks it could have been handled differently. Reality is if it's not done today, we may have to cancel events and it could ruin potential earnings for years. He gave an example of when a venue for a wedding he was involved in was canceled at the last minute. Diana Parke said there were a lot of questions.

Commissioner Hohman said we are not voting on the text of contract. We are just giving authorization to the City Manager to enter into a contract. Diane Park said two weeks doesn't seem like too much to ask.

Paul Oberdorfer said that we started having conversations for two years but since staff left it became rushed. Commissioner Hohman confirmed that it would have been done differently if staff had not left. Paul Oberdorfer said he should have given a presentation at the regular commission meeting. Commissioner Hohman pointed out that the City Manager didn't need to get commission approval at all, and he appreciates that it was shared with commission.

Commissioner Simmons said it would be a disservice to those who contacted him if he didn't ask if someone looked over the contract that has experience with contract negotiations.

Citizen asked how the liquor license is being separated. Chris Schmiesing said he approached the city commission four years ago to approve downtown revitalization, which created 9 additional licenses.

Commissioner Vetter made a motion to adopt the amended resolution and Commissioner Hohman seconded the motion. All were in favor and the resolution passed 4-0.

**ADJOURNMENT** at 6:26 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kris Lee', is written over a horizontal line.

KRIS LEE, MAYOR

Passed: 3.5.2024

Attest: Melissa Kinney

COMMISSION CLERK