

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
Minutes of Bellbrook City Council Regular Meeting
November 23, 2020

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the November 23, 2020 City Council Meeting was conducted using Zoom's remote webinar platform.

PRESENT: T.J. Hoke
Ernie Havens
David Van Veldhuizen
Forrest Greenwood
Elaine Middlestetter
Nick Edwards
Mayor Mike Schweller

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Melissa Dodd, Chief Jim Neidhard, Deputy Chief Anthony Bizzarro

WORK SESSION

Mayor Schweller called the work session to discuss the fire station consolidation and CICs to order at 6:00 pm.

City Manager Dodd began by explaining that the fire house discussion would focus on the need, funding options, and other considerations. The current proposal is to expand station 22 instead of building an entirely new fire house. Years ago, the city looked at purchasing a larger lot on Franklin Street, but it was very expensive. The architect estimates that the city would save 30% to 40% by adding on to the current fire house.

Mrs. Middlestetter asked how long the proposed fire house would be used. Chief Neidhard answered that the proposed fire house would last a very long time unless the city were to grow.

Mr. Havens asked what Station 21 in downtown is used for. Chief Neidhard explained that it is where the offices are. There is one fire engine and one medic unit. This building is only used on weekdays during office hours. After that and through the night the fire fighters and medics work from Station 22. If the two stations were consolidated the extra fire engine and one of the three medic units would not be needed. He added it is his opinion that consolidation is the best plan. The architect explained that a ladder truck would not fit in the current spaces we have. The expanded fire house could fit a ladder truck or another engine if that is the choice that is made in the future.

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Mayor Schweller noted that a business case would need to be explained to the public including a cost-benefit analysis. They would need to justify a levy to bring in the estimated \$3 million.

Chief Neidhard explained that Bellbrook would still be well served by one fire station since the city is only about three square miles. In comparison, Washington Township has five stations each covering about six square miles. Another important consideration is that Bellbrook utilizes mutual aid with Sugarcreek Township that has a fire house in our downtown.

Deputy Chief Bizzarro explained that fire station 21 was never meant to be lived in. There are no showers, only a partial kitchen and the ramp from the bay ends at the property line. The owners of the adjacent property have been agreeable to allowing the fire department the room necessary to be able to move equipment in and out of the bay. That station also needs updates that have been postponed including new bay heaters.

Mrs. Middlestetter asked if there was a possibility to sell the property that currently houses station 21. Mrs. Dodd answered that it could be possible, but it could be difficult because the demand for commercial properties is low.

Mayor Schweller asked if the Chief or Deputy Chief see any benefit to having the two locations. They replied that they did not and that a combined station makes much more sense.

Mr. Hoke asked about financing options. The City Manager explained that the Fire Fund has a deficit. An initiative through bonds would need to be voted on.

Dr. Van Veldhuizen stated that selling the downtown city-owned properties is a goal included in the Comprehensive Plan to allow for more business to grow. He added that he sees that it is more of a timing and issue of when to consolidate the fire stations.

The Mayor explained that the Administration building was renovated without needing a vote. The city took out bonds.

Mr. Havens asked if it would be simpler to move the offices into the Administration building. The Deputy Chief explained that they do need to be where the firefighters and medics are stationed. He added that not only is there no room for offices in the current Station 22, but there is also no room for the files and other storage currently located in Station 21.

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Mayor Schweller reminded Council that the city did look at becoming part of a Fire District with the Township. Mrs. Dodd said she would gather the information from that discussion that took place in 2015.

Mr. Edwards stated that the city and the citizens will have to make up the financial deficit at some time but that 2021 would not be a good year to try to pass a new levy. Council discussed the most recent levy attempts.

Mr. Greenwood added that there are savings that happen by using mutual aid.

The City Manager will provide the information about the fire district and previous levies/bonds.

Mayor Schweller directed the Clerk to reschedule a work session to discuss CICs since there was not enough time to discuss it tonight.

REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Schweller called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Hoke, yes; Mr. Havens, yes; Dr. Van Veldhuizen, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mrs. Middlestetter, yes; Mr. Edwards, yes; Mayor Schweller, yes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

After polling the members of City Council about the regular meeting minutes of November 9, 2020 Mayor Schweller declared the minutes approved.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Schweller announced that Saturday was Small Business Saturday and he encouraged residents to consider purchasing gifts from Bellbrook businesses.

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Dona Pierce, Oasis House of Dayton spoke about the amazing work this charitable organization does. Oasis House provides a safe haven for survivors of human trafficking for up to two years. They provide mentoring, education, and spiritual guidance. The volunteers reach out to possible victims through the internet and on our streets. Human trafficking includes sex and labor trafficking. It is estimated that 95% of trafficking starts on the internet. Ms. Pierce added that they also provide a jail ministry and run trainings to raise public awareness. She explained that they would appreciate any donations, offers to volunteer or follows on social media. Their website is www.oasisforwomen.org.

PUBLIC HEARING OF ORDINANCES -

Mr. Hoke read **Ordinance 2020-11 An Ordinance Repealing Old Part Two, Title Eight “Boards, Commissions and Committees” Of the Bellbrook Municipal Code and Enacting A New Part Two, Title Eight “Boards, Commissions And Committees” Of The Bellbrook Municipal Code.**

The City Manager explained that this ordinance abolishes three unused boards: Parks and Recreation Board, Youth Advisory/Action Board, and the Bellbrook Tree Preservation Committee. These have been inactive for an extended period of time.

Mr. Hoke made a motion to adopt **Ordinance 2020-11 An Ordinance Repealing Old Part Two, Title Eight “Boards, Commissions and Committees” Of the Bellbrook Municipal Code And Enacting A New Part Two, Title Eight “Boards, Commissions And Committees” Of The Bellbrook Municipal Code.** This was seconded by Dr. Van Veldhuizen. The Clerk called the roll. Mr. Hoke, yes; Dr. Van Veldhuizen, yes; Mr. Havens, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mrs. Middlestetter, yes; Mr. Edwards, yes; Mayor Schweller, yes. The motion passed 7-0.

Dr. Van Veldhuizen read **Ordinance 2020-12 An Ordinance To Approve The Rezoning Of 2006 Bonniedale Drive From O-1, Office Building District To R-1a One Family Residential District And To Amend The Official Zoning Map Of The City Of Bellbrook, Ohio, For The Property Located At 2006 Bonniedale Drive.**

The City Manager explained that this property formerly housed Tony Cali’s Allstate insurance business which relocated to West Franklin Street. The property was never converted to a commercial space

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structurally and still maintains the appearance of a residence. The rezoning was approved by Planning Board at their October 22nd meeting.

Dr. Van Veldhuizen made a motion to adopt **Ordinance 2020-12 An Ordinance To Approve The Rezoning Of 2006 Bonniedale Drive From O-1, Office Building District To R-1a One Family Residential District And To Amend The Official Zoning Map Of The City Of Bellbrook, Ohio, For The Property Located At 2006 Bonniedale Drive.** Mr. Hoke seconded the motion. The Clerk called the roll. Dr. Van Veldhuizen, yes; Mr. Hoke, yes; Mr. Havens, yes; Mr. Greenwood, no; Mrs. Middlestetter, yes; Mr. Edwards, yes; Mayor Schweller, yes. The motion passed 6-1.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

Mr. Edwards read **Ordinance 2020-13 An Ordinance Approving the Appropriations of the City of Bellbrook for the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2021.**

The City Manager explained that this is only for operating expenses. Capital expenses have been extracted and will be discussed more in depth after the first of the year for later inclusion in the budget.

Mr. Edwards made a motion to introduce **Ordinance 2020-13 An Ordinance Approving the Appropriations of the City of Bellbrook for the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2021.** Mr. Greenwood seconded the motion. The Clerk called the roll. Mr. Edwards, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mr. Hoke, yes; Mr. Havens, yes; Dr. Van Veldhuizen, yes; Mrs. Middlestetter, yes; Mayor Schweller, yes. The motion passed 7-0.

Mr. Havens read **Ordinance 2020-14 An Ordinance Amending Ordinance 2020-10 to Adjust the City of Bellbrook Appropriations.**

Mrs. Dodd stated that this is the final supplemental appropriation of the year to ensure all funds and major expense categories are appropriated adequately to close the year. She explained that there were two last minute items: a diesel purchase by the school, and a capital improvement item that had not rolled over from 2019 by the time the books had closed.

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Mr. Havens moved to introduce **Ordinance 2020-14 An Ordinance Amending Ordinance 2020-10 to Adjust the City of Bellbrook Appropriations**. Mrs. Middlestetter seconded the motion. The Clerk called the roll. Mr. Havens, yes; Mrs. Middlestetter, yes; Mr. Hoke, yes; Dr. Van Veldhuizen, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mr. Edwards, yes; Mayor Schweller, yes. The motion passed 7-0.

RESOLUTIONS - none

CITY MANAGER REPORT

The City Manager reported that the first round of interviews for Fire Chief were held the week of November 16th. Council will interview the top two candidates on December 1st from 6-8pm via Zoom.

The North West Street Sidewalk Project to add sidewalks to connect Franklin Street with the Plaza was completed. This was funded partially by a Community Development Block grant awarded by Greene County last year.

Mrs. Dodd shared that the Ohio Senate is amending House Bill 404 which will extend the virtual meeting provision to July 1, 2021. The original deadline was December 1, 2020.

All Coronavirus Relief Funds had to be encumbered by November 20, 2020 based on the funding guidelines. Mrs. Dodd explained that we had a last-minute request by the Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Community Support Center for an additional \$10,000 grant to help families which have increased in need with the recent surge in the virus. We had enough in unencumbered funds to be able to grant the request. She thanked Council for their support of this. All funds have now been encumbered and an updated breakdown of expenditures was attached.

The Service Department is currently seeking a full time Maintenance Worker. This position has been vacant since February and will be filled in order to bring the department up to full staff for the winter. The city will be accepting applications until December 6. All information is on our website.

OLD BUSINESS - none

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NEW BUSINESS - none

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Service – Mr. Greenwood reported that the Service Department has prepared the trucks are prepped and ready for snow.

Safety – Mr. Hoke thanked Ms. Pierce for taking time to speak to Council. He added that some of the questions you can ask a person to try to determine if they are a victim of trafficking include: “are you living with your employer?”, “Can you leave your job if you want to?”, and “Do you have identification?”.

Finance – none

Community Affairs – none

CLERK’S REPORT

Mrs. Timmons announced that future items include legislation coming soon from the Planning Board. The date for the Council’s 2021 Goal Setting work session has been set for January 18, 2021. An executive session is planned for December 14 to discuss the Clerk of Council.

COMMENTS

All of Council wished the citizens a happy, safe, and healthy Thanksgiving. They also promoted Small Business Saturday.

Mr. Hoke also relayed that a large tree had partially fallen over in their neighborhood which is covered by their HOA, but that the Service Department should take extra care after weather events.

PUBLIC COMMENT - none

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EXECUTIVE SESSION for the purpose of reviewing negotiations with public employees (IAFF) concerning their compensation and other terms and conditions of their employment.

Mr. Edwards made a motion to enter into executive session. The motion was seconded by Mr. Havens. All were in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Schweller announced that there was no further business to come before the Bellbrook City Council and declared the regular meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Michael W. Schweller, Mayor

Pamela Timmons, Clerk of Council