

**FINDLAY CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 6, 2024**

**REGULAR SESSION**

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**ROLL CALL of 2024-2025 Councilmembers**

**PRESENT:** Bauman, DeArment, Frische, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Wobser

**ABSENT:** Warnecke

President of Council Harrington notified Council that Councilwoman Warnecke informed him that she would not be in attendance tonight. Councilman Wobser moved to excuse Councilwoman Warnecke, seconded by Councilman Bauman. All were in favor. Filed.

President of Council Harrington opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

**ADD-ON/REPLACEMENT/REMOVAL FROM THE AGENDA:**

Councilman Russel moved to add-on, replace, and remove the following on tonight's agenda, seconded by Councilman DeArment. All were in favor. Filed.

**ADD-ON:**

1. Letter from Mayor Murny - Immigrant Task Force (**REPORTS OF MUNICIPAL OFFICER AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS section**)

**REPLACEMENTS:**

1. Resolution No. 008-2024 - no PO/over PO amount (**LEGISLATION section**)

added:

- WOOLPERT INC \$3,000.00
- RS&H OHIO INC \$138,580.42

2. Ordinance No. 2024-010, AS AMENDED – SR 68/15 interchange renovation MOA (**LEGISLATION section**)

- SECTION 3: changed \$650,000 to now be ~~\$ 573,000.00~~ \$ 575,000.00

3. Ordinance No. 2024-019 – ~~Taxiway~~ Runway 7/25 Rehabilitation (AIP-34) ODOT Aviation grant funds – (**LEGISLATION section**)

• Header:

... FOR THE DESIGN PORTION OF THE REHABILITATION OF ~~TAXIWAY~~ RUNWAY 7/25 REHABILITATION (AIP-34) ...

• first WHEREAS:

- ~~Taxiway~~ Runway 7/25 Rehabilitation (AIP-34)

• second WHEREAS:

- ~~Taxiway~~ Runway 7/25 Rehabilitation (AIP-34)

• SECTION 1:

- FROM: ODOT Aviation Grant (M24-18)

\$ 14,900.00

- TO: ~~Taxiway~~ Runway 7/25 Rehabilitation (AIP-34), Project No. 35234200

\$ 14,900.00

• SECTION 2:

- ~~Taxiway~~ Runway 7/25 Rehabilitation (AIP-34)

• SECTION 3:

- ~~Taxiway~~ Runway 7/25 Rehabilitation (AIP-34)

**REMOVALS:**

1. Letter (anonymous) received via USPS mail on 1/17/24 (postmarked 1/12/24) – quality of life policing (**WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS section**).

*Councilman Russel pointed out that the reason for the removal of the anonymous letter is because it does not meet Council's Rules of Procedure. It was a letter that did not have addresses of those who sent it, so it is unknown where they live or even if they live in the City of Findlay.*

**PROCLAMATIONS:** none

**RECOGNITION/RETIREMENT RESOLUTIONS:** none

**PETITIONS:**

**Zoning amendment request – 116 Laquineo Street**

Executive Director Chrissy Montgomery on behalf of Women's Resource Center of Hancock County, would like to change the zoning of 116 Laquineo Street to O1 Office/Institutions. It is currently zoned as R3 Small Lot Residential. Referred to City Planning Commission and Planning & Zoning Committee. Filed.

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

**Haydee Sadler – housing of illegal immigrants**

Ms. Sadler introduced herself and reminded Council that she ran for City of Findlay Mayor last year for concerns with Findlay citizens and the voices of the residents here in the City of Findlay. She stands before Council from time to time to share information about the dangers of the direction Council and Mayor Muryn are leading the City, and the concerns of the residents of the City of Findlay. Yet in all her speaking and all her questions, Council has yet to address one of her questions with an answer. Today, she has information to share with Council and a question to ask in hopes that Council will take time to answer not just her, but also the community. When the residents of the City of Findlay raised concerns about illegal immigrants crowding the edges of our City, they are not asking how the City plans to support them. They are asking because they are concerned for the safety of their families. They are concerned about them being legal, them using non-profits to support them which are also being used as NGOs to assist in their invasion, and they are concerned about them being vetted and also voting in elections. In November of last year, Mayor Muryn wrote an article for The Courier stating she hadn't addressed illegal immigrants prior to that because she didn't want to single out a certain group of people that doesn't look like us. A few weeks later at December's Fresh Brewed Business meeting, she announced that Findlay will be a hub for those she calls legal persons even though Police Chief Mathias admittedly said at the budget hearing that the Mexican population doesn't have papers and that he didn't understand why. Later that same week at the City Council meeting, Mayor Muryn makes herself the head chef in the kitchen for managing the influx of immigrants. This is not what the people want. It is Ms. Sadler's understanding that the Inflation Reduction Act advances the Justice 40 initiative which gives forty percent (40%) of overall benefits to disadvantaged communities which are defined as ethnic minorities that include immigrants, migrants, refugees and displaced persons. According to the Justice 40 tracks map of May 2022, Findlay has been pegged as a disadvantaged community which will also allow for affordable sustainable housing for these groups of people. Not only that, the Border Security Bill serves as a mass amnesty bill to allow for illegals to vote. Before Mayor Muryn takes liberties that are not bestowed on her, she should be representing "we the people" not them the globalist. She asked that the declaring an emergency verbiage be removed from any legislation, whether it be resolutions or ordinances, that involve any integration into the community or housing so that the residents of Findlay can have a voice as to whether or not they support Mayor Muryn's socialist agenda. This matter needs to be voted on. She asked if the City of Findlay is going to push this globalist agenda of socialism by taking our tax dollars to build homes for illegal immigrants that have been invited to our City without voters approval.

*Discussion:*

President of Council Harrington informed Ms. Sadler that per City Council Rules of Procedure, even when questions are directed to City Council, City Council does not have to answer them. Anyone that has specific questions for Council or a specific Councilmember, the public is more than welcome to ask them directly, but that it is not the forum to ask them tonight. Filed.

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

~~Letter (anonymous) received via USPS mail on 1/17/24 (postmarked 1/12/24) – quality of life policing. Removed from the agenda during ADD-ON/REPLACEMENT/REMOVAL FROM THE AGENDA section of tonight's meeting.~~

**Letter from Ohio Municipal League – enhanced advocacy opportunities.** Filed.

**Email with supplemental information attached from HHWP Community Action Commission Transportation Director Jamie Baker – Hancock County Transit Development Plan.** Filed.

**Email with letter attached from Haydee Sadler – illegal immigrants.** Filed.

**REPORTS OF MUNICIPAL OFFICERS AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS:**

**Mayor Muryn – Revolving Loan Fund Board appointment**

Mayor Muryn is appointing Chris Keller to the Revolving Loan Fund Board. Ms. Keller have expressed a desire and willingness to continue to serve the community as members of the City Revolving Loan Fund Board. Her appointment will be effective January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2025. This appointment requires Council confirmation.

*Discussion:*

Councilman Palmer moved to accept this appointment, seconded by Councilman Bauman. Filed.

**Mayor Muryn – appointment to Parks and Recreation Board**

Mayor Muryn is appointing Kyle Lockmiller to serve on the Parks and Recreation Board. Mr. Lockmiller is a Michigan native who has lived in Findlay since 2013. He is a Human Resources professional and an avid hiker. He travels frequently and always has an eye on how Findlay may learn from other communities, looks for improving the City's existing amenities and is creative in encouraging citizens of Findlay to live happier, healthier lives and build community through recreation. His appointment will be effective through December 31, 2026. This appointment does not require Council's confirmation. Filed.

**Treasurer's Reconciliation Report – December 31, 2023.** Filed.

**A set of summary financial reports for December 31, 2023:**

- Summary of Year-To-Date Information as of December 31, 2023
- Open Projects Report as of December 31, 2023
- Cash & Investments as of December 31, 2023

Filed.

**Police Chief Mathias – seized drug investigation funds**

On November 16, 2023, the Findlay Police Department received notice from the Hancock County Common Pleas Court of the seized six thousand thirty-six dollars and forty-three cents (\$6,036.43) from a suspect in a possession of drugs investigation. That case was dismissed in the court system, but the money seized during the investigation was ordered to be forfeited to the Findlay Police Department. The six thousand thirty-six dollars and forty-three cents (\$6,036.43) was taken out of the Police Department’s property room and was deposited with the City Auditor’s Office. Police Chief Mathias would like to use these funds to purchase equipment for one high efficiency drug disposal incinerator for evidence drugs, paraphernalia, and Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API’s) for the Property Officer and have been unable to recently meet EPA, State and Federal requirements at facilities around the area in Ohio and Michigan. This unit would save personnel from driving long distances to dispose of these types of items in the future and to do it locally, safely, and effectively in the future. Legislation to appropriate funds to the City of Findlay Police Department budget is requested. Ordinance No. 2024-014 was created.

FROM:	General Fund (forfeited cash from case)	\$ 6,036.43
TO:	Police Operating #332100-Small Equipment	\$ 6,036.43

*Discussion:*

Councilman Russel asked if this piece of equipment will be available to the Hancock County Sheriff’s Office and/or other surrounding departments, or entities outside of the County (i.e. McComb). He asked if Findlay becomes a center for this type of thing. Service-Safety Director Martin replied that the details have not been specifically worked out on who all of the City of Findlay would be using it, but that the City collaborates throughout the county and the region on a lot of things. Up to this point, the City has relied on other communities that had these resources for Findlay to use, but that he has not worked out those details with the Chief yet. Based on the capacity and the capability of it, it is something that can be looked at. Councilman Russel asked where it would physically be located. Service-Safety Director Martin replied that detail has not been worked out yet, but will be somewhere on City property. It is an EPA-approved, smoke-free device that burns at a high temperature that hooks it down.

Councilman Greeno asked if the prescription drugs that the City currently collects would also be incinerated in this. Service-Safety Director Martin replied that is correct. It also sterilizes needles and melts things down to where they could safely be put into refuge.

Councilman Hellmann asked if there is a charge to utilize this. Service-Safety Director Martin replied no. The logistics to go through are time consuming that takes people away from the City, so the City wants to keep this service local with this opportunity.

Councilman Wobser asked if there will be any additional costs beyond this six thousand thirty-six dollars and forty-three cents (\$6,036.43) request. If this is bought, where will it be kept, etc. He asked if there will be any additional costs to get it implemented. Service-Safety Director Martin replied that it is the size of a 55-gallon drum, so there is space to store it as it is not very large. The details of where it will be stored have not been worked out yet.

Councilman Russel asked if there is a liability or insurance side to this. He asked if the City’s insurance has been contacted to let them know the City will be getting this piece of equipment and will be performing this service. Service-Safety Director Martin replied that he will make that contact to make sure its covered.

Councilman Greeno noted that the City had been taking all of the drugs to Michigan, so by having this, it will save on transportation and an Officer having to transport them. Service-Safety Director Martin replied yes, it will save on vehicle wear and tear, mileage, taking two (2) employees out of the City, etc. Logistically, it is a savings. Mayor Muryn added that a certain amount of drugs have to be accumulated before they can be destroyed which utilizes a lot of space to store them and materials as well. When enough is collected, employees take them up to Michigan, but that they sometimes cancel or change when to bring them because they do not have the personnel at their locations, so a lot of those locations are ceasing that service. As far as the insurance on it, the City does regularly update them on all equipment, but will definitely make sure to have not only the coverage for the City to use it, but if it is determined to allow other entities to use it, that there is a proper process in place and insurance around it.

Councilman Russel noted that what is approved today by the EPA today might not be approved tomorrow. Filed.

**Service-Safety Director Martin – insurance payment for repairs of a Police Department vehicle from an accident**

The City of Findlay has received payment for the repair of a vehicle from an accident from the City’s insurance company in the amount of two thousand six hundred fifty-three dollars and seventy-five cents (\$2,653.75) that has been deposited in the General Fund. Legislation to appropriate funds is requested. Ordinance No. 2024-015 was created.

FROM:	General Fund	\$ 2,653.75
TO:	Police Department #21012000-other	\$ 2,653.75

Filed.

**City Planning Commission agenda** – February 8, 2024. Filed.

**Mayor Muryn – local Opioid Settlement Funds**

Mayor Muryn is providing a quick update related to the City of Findlay local Opioid Settlement Funds. As of December 31, 2023, the City of Findlay had \$55,099.04 in the local Opioid Abatement Fund. These dollars are to be utilized for a variety of purposes broadly related to Strategies for Community Recovery, Strategies for Statewide Innovation & Recovery, and Strategies for Sustainability. When looking at strategies for community recovery, they include treatment, early intervention and crisis support, address the needs of criminal justice involved persons, mother-centered treatment and support, recovery support, prevention, harm reduction, services for children, first responder support, and workforce. In discussion with the Hancock County Board of Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS), it is recommend to hold these dollars for the time being. This allows the City to leverage other funds that are being deployed from regional, state and federal partners. Accumulating these dollars and holding them for a more impactful deployment will best serve the community. The City will continue to evaluate this on a regular basis and will come to Council when ready to implement the funds. Mayor Muryn encourages Councilmembers to have anyone that contacts them on use of these funds, to have them reach out to the ADAMHS Board or a specific local service provider to work with the City to understand the feasibility. Those with questions can contact Mayor Muryn [cmuryn@findlayohio.gov](mailto:cmuryn@findlayohio.gov) or Precia Stuby, Executive Director of the Hancock County Board of ADAMHS 419-424-1985 respectively. Filed.

**Mayor Muryn – appointment to Airport Advisory Board**

Mayor Muryn is appointing Matt Rutter to serve on the Airport Advisory Board. His appointment will be effective through December 31, 2026. This appointment does not require Council’s confirmation. Filed.

**City Engineer Kalb – ODOT FY24 HAN-Bigelow Avenue, PID117611 (32833800)**

As authorized by Ordinance No. 2023-079, a bid opening was held for this project on January 25, 2024. Bids were received from three (3) potential contractors with the bid amounts ranging from \$643,743.00 to \$812,080.00. The lowest and best bid was received from Shelly Co., Inc. of Findlay, Ohio. All of the received bids were under the Engineer’s estimate of \$833,524.75. This project is included in the 2023 Capital Improvements Plan and will be using the grand funding received from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) annually for being one of the largest seven (7) cities that are not part of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The grant funds can be used to cover eighty percent (80%) of the construction cost up to \$714,287.80 (eighty percent (80%) of Engineer’s Estimate and Construction Engineering Reimbursement). Since the grant agreement is for \$714,287.80, that amount needs to be appropriated even though the City should end up receiving \$516,000 based upon the bid amount. Two thousand dollars (\$2,000) was previously appropriated to the project for advertising. Additional funds are not needed to cover the City’s portion of the construction cost and provide a contingency for the project. Legislation to appropriate and transfer funds for capital expenditures is requested. In order to maintain the schedule that is required for funding, the ordinance needs to be approved during the February 20, 2024 City Council meeting. Ordinance No. 2024-016 was created.

FROM:	ODOT	\$ 714,287.80
TO:	ODOT FY24 HAN-Bigelow Avenue, PID117611, <i>Project No. 32833800</i>	\$ 714,287.80
FROM:	CIT Fund – Capital Improvements Restricted Account	\$ 160,000.00
TO:	ODOT FY24 HAN-Bigelow Avenue, PID117611, <i>Project No. 32833800</i>	\$ 160,000.00

Filed.

**City Engineer Kalb – HAN-Greenway Trail Phase II, PID109009, Project No. 31993800**

The Greenway Trail Phase II project is substantially complete and will be completely finished this year once the weather clears up. As part of the final punch list, there are a couple of items that will need to be completed prior final acceptance of this project. Once spring comes around, the project will be reseeded in areas that are deemed necessary, adjust any outstanding drainage issues, and complete outstanding project items. To ensure that there are enough funds in the project to compensate the contractor for any additional work that may be needed, it is desired to appropriate additional funds to the project to cover the estimated cost. Legislation to appropriate and transfer funds for capital expenditures is requested. Ordinance No. 2024-017 was created.

FROM:	CIT Fund – Capital Improvements Restricted Account	\$ 50,000.00
TO:	HAN-Greenway Trail Phase II, PID109009, <i>Project No. 31993800</i>	\$ 50,000.00

*Discussion:*

Councilman Palmer asked what details need to be cleaned up on this to wrap up the fifty thousand dollar (\$50,000) request. City Engineer Kalb replied that the bridge finally came in. It was supposed to come in August, but did not come in until October and put a temporary seeding down through there to get grass growing to avoid erosion problems over the winter, and now have to go back through and address any areas that are needing final seeding through there and will reimburse the contractor for final seeding. There are a couple of areas identified with drainage problems from the rain in the last couple of weeks that have not been able to drain and will determine if there is an immediate need to address them or if they were just because of the environment at the time. They will also go through and do a final check through of everything and make sure all of the items are completed and are satisfied before it is turned over to the City. Filed.

**City Engineer Kalb – Runway 7/25 Nav-Aid Rehab, Project No. 35234500, ODOT Aviation grant funds**

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Aviation Division has awarded the City a grant in the amount of \$465,880 for the replacement of the Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI)s and Runway End Identifier Lights (REIL)s on Runway 7/25 at the Findlay Airport. The awarded grant funds will cover ninety-five percent (95%) of the design and construction of the replacement and the City will be responsible for a five percent (5%) local match. Legislation to appropriate and transfer ODOT Aviation grant funds and the City’s local match funds to the project so the design work can commence is requested. Ordinance No. 2024-018 was created.

FROM:	ODOT Aviation Grant (M24-13)	\$ 465,880.00
TO:	Runway 7/25 Nav-Aid Rehab, <i>Project No. 35234500</i>	\$ 465,880.00
FROM:	CIT Fund – Capital Improvement Restricted Account	\$ 24,520.00
TO:	Runway 7/25 Nav-Aid Rehab, <i>Project No. 35234500</i>	\$ 24,520.00

**City Engineer Kalb – ~~Taxiway~~ Runway 7/25 Rehabilitation (AIP-34), Project Non. 35234200 ODOT Aviation Grant funds**

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Aviation Division has awarded the City a grant in the amount of fourteen thousand nine hundred dollars (\$14,900) for the design portion of the rehabilitation of ~~Taxiway~~ Runway 7/25. The awarded grant funds will cover five percent (5%) of the design cost. Previous appropriations have been made to appropriate funds from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grant and part of the local match. Legislation to accept grant funds and to appropriate and transfer the funds is requested. Ordinance No. 2024-019 was created.

FROM:	ODOT Aviation Grant (M24-18)	\$ 14,900.00
TO:	<del>Taxiway</del> Runway 7/25 Rehabilitation, <i>Project No. 35234200</i>	\$ 14,900.00
FROM:	CIT Fund – Capital Improvement Restricted Account	\$ 25,000.00
TO:	<del>Taxiway</del> Runway 7/25 Rehabilitation (AIP-34), <i>Project No. 35234200</i>	\$ 25,000.00

**Mayor Muryn – Downtown Design Review appointments**

Mayor Muryn is requesting Jordyn Taylor and Meredith Werth be appointed to the Downtown Design Review Board. Jordyn is a Marketing Analyst in the Advertising and Brand Management team at Marathon Petroleum Corporation. She has a background in marketing, corporate events, and brand management. She resides downtown. Her background and passion for downtown make her a great asset to help preserve and promote the overall aesthetic and atmosphere of downtown. Meredith is a Field Engineer with OneEnergy and has a background in Mechanical Engineering. Her background in engineering, knowledge of communities across the country, and passion for Findlay will be an asset to the board. Both individuals have shared their passion for the Findlay community and desire to be more engaged helping Findlay maintain its character while spurring investment and protecting downtown as an attractive place for all to enjoy. Their terms will expire December 31, 2026. These appointments require Council’s confirmation.

*Discussion:*

Councilman Russel moved to accept these appointments, seconded by Councilman Palmer. Filed.

**Mayor Muryn – Ordinance No. 2024-010**

As mentioned at the APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE meeting, the City of Findlay received updated project cost share estimates for the reconfiguration of 68/15. The updated cost share is now approximately \$573,000, therefore, she is requesting Ordinance No. 2024-010 be amended to appropriate \$575,000.00 Legislation to amend Ordinance No. 2024-010 is requested. Ordinance No. 2024-010, AS AMENDED was created as an add-on (already received its first reading during the January 16, 2024 Regular Session City Council meeting). Filed.

**City Engineer Kalb – Blanchard Street Waterline, Phase II-OPWC, Project No. 35740500**

The City of Findlay Engineering Department is working on the design on multiple projects so that it can be advertised early in the construction season. It is now desired to appropriate startup funds to the Blanchard Street waterline replacement project for design and advertisement. This project consist of replacing the existing 10-inch waterline on Blanchard street with a new 16-inch waterline. The replacement will start at Sixth Street and will stretch south towards the south water tower. Legislation authorizing the Mayor, Service-Safety Director, and/or City Engineer to advertise for bids and enter into contracts for construction, as well as appropriate and transfer funds is requested. Ordinance No. 2024-020 was created.

FROM:	Water Fund	\$ 2,000.00
TO:	Blanchard Street Waterline, Phase II-OPWC, <i>Project No. 35740500</i>	\$ 2,000.00

Filed.

**Service-Safety Director Martin – authorization to sell parcel #57000921770 (515 Prospect Street) at public auction**

The City of Findlay has owned the property at 515 Prospect Street (parcel no. 57000921770) since 1999. The property had garage structures on the property and had been used for vehicle maintenance and minor storage for the Findlay Police Department. In December of 2022, there was an appraisal completed when the structures were still standing. The structures on the property were found to be in bad shape and based on the poor conditions of the buildings, a decision was made to tear down the structures in anticipation of future discussions on what to do with the property with Council. Currently, this parcel is a grass lot and is of no purpose to the City with a land value of approximately ten thousand dollars (\$10,000). With Council’s approval, it is the City Administration’s intent to sell this lot at public auction to the highest bidder. Legislation authorizing the City Administration to proceed with the sale of Parcel #57000921770 by public auction is requested. Ordinance No. 2024-021 was created.

*Discussion:*

Councilwoman Frische asked how the dollar amount was determined with housing and how well things are selling and if there is a structure on the property. Service-Safety Director Martin replied that an appraisal was done when the structure was still on it and are going off what the land value is on the Auditor's website, which is the best gauge to use at this point. The structure was inhabitable so it was knocked down and is now a grass lot in a residential area. It is going to be worth what someone would pay for it at auction. Councilwoman Frische asked if the City should talk with relators to make sure the City is getting the full amount of revenue out of it. If nobody shows up to the auction, it will end up being a cheap sale. Service-Safety Director Martin replied that there are law enforcement personnel in the neighborhood to compare and can have those conversations with other relators to see if there is a difference or if they would change that based on being just a grass lot. This is to start the process with Council to confirm that this was an acceptable process in order to move forward with.

City Auditor Staschiak asked who is going to auction it, if the City is going to sell it as an absolute auction or set the minimum bid so that Council is aware that a minimum was set so that it doesn't go cheap, and if it is buildable because that would have a significant impact on the value of the lot. Mayor Muryn replied that the City will work through all of. She recommends a ten thousand dollar (\$10,000) minimum and have looked at other parcels. It is a small lot, but is buildable. There was a previous structure on it, so it could contain a residential property. City Auditor Staschiak replied that since it is buildable, it would be worthwhile to have a proper appraisal done because there are a number of builders in the community. He is a licensed auctioneer, not actively practicing. This is a type of parcel that will draw interest from the one-off builders that only do two (2) or three (3) custom homes that they build on. He is unsure of the zoning on the lot, if it can be a duplex, triplex or just a single family home, etc. There are a lot of questions that should be answered. He recommends that prior to committing to the auction that Council is given an opportunity through a committee meeting to understand those things. The last lot he looked at that was smaller went for almost forty thousand dollars (\$40,000). This town has significant value in its resources and its availability. Because this property is inside town, it should be sold carefully.

Councilman Niemeyer asked if the City could add a couple more properties and have more than one property at the auction. President of Council Harrington replied asking Councilman Niemeyer if he has specific properties in mind. Councilman Niemeyer replied not yet.

Councilwoman Frische pointed out that most of present Councilmembers were here under former Mayor Mihalik's tenure during the discussion about the property on Main Cross that was potentially going to be sold in which Council wanted a list of all properties to go through things, so she is curious of how it came about now to suddenly address this property. Mayor Muryn replied that the legislation does not specify a dollar amount because Council likes the Administration to bring things to them for conversation which is why this letter is before Council to start the process. She would be happy to have a meeting to evaluate a praise value and determine if there are any restrictions to be put on it before the City sells it. This property is being addressed with Council now because it is a random lot that the City is currently maintaining in a residential neighborhood that serves no purpose to the City, therefore, the City wants to get it off their plate before it's time for it to be mowed on a regular basis. The City does want to look at all of their other properties and what makes sense moving forward with those, but didn't want this one to be held up. Councilwoman Frische replied that she would like an updated full review of all the other City properties and where they are at, what the City's needs are and what the City does not need. She asked if the City gets a better deal if more than one property auction is done. She would like this to go to a committee and to look at all City-owned properties. President of Council Harrington asked Councilwoman Frische to put that in a written request because what she is asking for can be very comprehensive and very vague. The amount of properties that the City owns is one thing, but if looking for their current use, future use, or potential use, would be another. He asked her to be more specific in her request. He asked her what committee she is proposing this be sent to. Councilwoman Frische replied it should go to the APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE and should review all of the City's properties that are not in use or are considering to eliminate from the list of properties in the City. She does not think she is vague. She does not know what Councilman Niemeyer was looking at or considering, but thinks they should be reviewed. She does not know all the properties, but would like to know them as a Councilmember. Mayor Muryn replied that all City-owned parcels are on the County Auditor's website and can be searched by entering in the criteria of City of Findlay. She only states this because it is very extensive. There is a variety. She agrees with President of Council Harrington that more clarification is needed when asking for all City of Findlay properties that is a much different conversation than if wanting to discuss properties that the City may be interested in divesting of in the near future. The reason this particular parcel is being brought before Council now is because the City does not want City employees to waste time mowing this lot in a residential neighborhood.

Councilman Wobser noted that in order to get this request moving along, he is asking Councilwoman Frische to amend her motion to include just this property and refer it to the APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, and that he would second that motion. Councilwoman Frische did not amend her motion, so Councilman Wobser withdrew his second to her motion. Councilwoman Frische replied that she agrees that this property needs to go, but thinks it would be smart for the APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE to look at all properties. It is known that the property on Main Cross that was addressed back in 2015-2016 and was emptied over into the bus garage that the City is not paying rent for, so there is that property sitting empty. She does not know what other properties there are and does not know why she has to look for a needle in a haystack on this discussion and thinks it would be smart for Council to review all properties which hasn't been done in a few years. She does not think she needs to go to the County Auditor's page and look at a list of City properties and would assume if the City Administration is looking at one property that they do not want to mow for 2024, that there might be other properties that maybe the City might want to sell, maybe not because of mowing, but maybe just do not want to continue to maintain them.

Councilman Wobser moved to refer the sale of 515 Prospect Street to the APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, seconded by Councilman Palmer. All were in favor. Referred to the APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE. Filed.

**Findlay Fire Department Activities Report – January 2024.** Filed.

**Mayor Murny – Key Performance Indicators**

2023 City of Findlay Key Performance Indicators (KPI) are now available at: <https://www.findlayohio.com/government/transparency-performance>. The attached KPI Dashboard shows a few key metrics. These KPIs are a critical tool used to measure service delivery and operational effectiveness. They show progress towards goals set for continuous improvement. The City of Findlay is proud of the work the City of Findlay team is doing to ensure targets are met. Filed.

**City Income Tax Monthly Collection Report – January 2024.**

*Discussion:*

City Auditor Staschiak pointed out that the withholder line is down one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000). It is not a huge amount, but one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) is one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000). Council should keep an eye on that as this year progresses. Filed.

**Mayor Murny – flood mitigation update & FEMA Hazard Mitigation grant**

This letter is submitted jointly to provide an update on flood mitigation efforts and request support for an application to the Federal Emergency Management Association, FEMA. In 2023, FEMA released a notice of funding for the Flood Mitigation Assistance grant. The detailed Notice of Funding can be found at the following link, Microsoft Word - Final\_Upload\_FY23 fma-nofo-fact-sheet\_DRAFT\_9.22.23\_clean\_SUBMIT\_highlights (fema.gov). FEMA requires a member of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to be an applicant for the funding opportunity. The City of Findlay is a member of NFIP and are requesting that the City of Findlay applies for the \$20,000,000 from FEMA to be utilized for the flood mitigation efforts detailed below. In November 2009, the votes of Hancock County passed a .25% sales tax to be utilized for flood mitigation. The sales tax generated more than thirty-two million dollars (\$32,000,000) over a ten (10) year period. In addition, the community has received financial support from the Federal and State Governments. Local, State and Federal investments have support the completion of the following: purchase of properties which had regular significant damage due to flooding, transportation corridor improvements to ensure safety service accessibility throughout the County and Phase 1 benching. In addition to the projects completed, there are three (3) major projects in the design phase; widening of the Norfolk Southern Railroad Bridge from one hundred fifty feet (150') to three hundred feet (300'), the Eagle Creek Flood Basin and Phase 2 Benching east of the Norfolk Southern bridge. Following the completion of the benching project, Norfolk Southern bridge expansion and the Eagle Creek Basin, there will be a decrease in flood waters by three feet (3') in downtown Findlay during a 100-year storm event, as well as the removal of hundreds of parcels and hundreds of acres of tillable farmland from the 100-year flood plain. These projects are critical to the long-term sustainability of Hancock County. Investing in the community to reduce flooding shows citizens, as well as our businesses, as well as outside investors that Findlay is a safe, sustainable community to live, invest, and work. Although a significant amount of funding has been secured to complete the Eagle Creek Basin, Phase II Benching and the Norfolk Southern Bridge there is still funding needed to complete all of the projects. The table below details the 2019 construction cost estimates for the three (3) remaining projects along with the current construction estimates.

	Norfolk South Bridge	Phase II Benching	Eagle Creek Basin
<b>2019 Cost Estimate</b>	\$ 8,900,000.00	\$ 4,000,000.00	\$ 60,000,000.00
<b>2024 Cost Estimate</b>	\$ 16,700,000.00	\$ 6,000,000.00	\$ 75,000,000.00

To date, there has been multiple sources of funding secured to complete the projects.

- Norfolk Southern Railroad Bridge – the Federal Government has awarded a seven million one hundred thousand dollar (\$7,100,000.00) RAISE grant to be utilized for the construction of the railroad bridge. After the RAISE grant was awarded, the construction costs rose significantly and the grant is not indexed to increased costs. The increased cost has created a shortage of funds to complete the project. It has been requested that Norfolk Southern close one hundred percent (100%) of the remaining gap to replace this 100-year bridge.
- Phase II Benching – the County Commissioners have over six million dollars (\$6,000,000.00) remaining in the Sales Tax Fund that was generated over a ten (10) year period from 2009-2019. The sales tax remaining is sufficient to cover the cost to complete Phase II Benching.
- Eagle Creek Storage Basin – the State of Ohio has awarded sixty million dollars (\$60,000,000.00) to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to complete the Eagle Creek Storage Basin.
- In 2023, the City of Findlay approved two million five hundred thousand dollars (\$2,500,000.00) in Capital Funding to be utilized for flood mitigation.

To secure funding and complete construction of three (3) remaining projects, the City of Findlay has been requested to submit a Federal Emergency Management Agency, Flood Mitigation Assistance grant application.

For audit purposes, a resolution of support is requested to request authorization from City Council to submit the application for the Federal Emergency Management, Hazard Mitigation grant for a requested amount of twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000.00). The grant application is due February 22, 2024 and are requesting the legislation be adopted during the February 6, 2024 City Council meeting.

Submitting this grant does not bind the City of Findlay to any specific funding agreement for flood mitigation efforts moving forward, and per Ohio EMA, the local match requirement is met through the funds which have already been spent on flood mitigation efforts, as well as the State funds towards the Eagle Creek Basin. Resolution No. 009-2024 was created.

*Discussion:*

Councilman DeArment asked if Norfolk Southern has agreed to pay the differential. Mayor Muryn replied at this time, they have informed the City that they will not be giving any capital contribution this year, but will reconsider it next year. Councilman DeArment asked if that fits in the City's timeline. Mayor Muryn replied that would be covered as part of this grant. It would be the entire remaining amount. The FEMA Hazard Mitigation grant that the City would be applying for would cover the cost difference in each of the three (3) remaining projects, therefore, that would no longer be a determining factor in moving forward. The City would like their support and stand by the fact that they should be providing capital support, but are not going to allow that to stop the project because it is a critical piece. Councilman DeArment asked if permits are in place for the bridge. Mayor Muryn replied yes, this has been a long project with lots of permitting. All the necessary permitting processes are either started or are already complete. At this point, it is ready to begin the bid process. When applying for this grant, the City cannot bid out the projects or move forward with any construction until the City hears back on the grant. Any work that would be performed on the bid or the construction would not be reimbursable and could potentially negate the City being able to utilize the grant. This request is to be able to move forward to apply. The City is not making any statements of financial support towards the project and not entering into any formal agreements. When she discussed this with the City of Findlay Deputy Auditor Sampson, she informed Mayor Muryn that because it is a Federal grant, they want to have a resolution from Council stating that Council is in support of the grant application. It is important to continue to show support for flood mitigation and are making really good progress. The Conservancy District, as well as the Commissioners and the City of Findlay, are all dedicated to getting these projects done. This is important and would be helpful, but will get it done one way or another.

Councilwoman Frische noted that two and a half million (\$2,500,000) or five million (\$5,000,000) of City dollars was talked about potentially having to use and asked if this request will eliminate that and will free the City back up once it is known that this grant goes through. Mayor Muryn replied that there might be some little things (i.e. road work) that the City would pull out of those funds over the next year or so, but yes in essence this would negate the need for those funds.

President of Council Harrington noted that in the letter it states that the grant application is due February 22, 2024.

Councilman Russel asked if Norfolk Southern is supportive of this project and just not willing to support it financially in 2024. Mayor Muryn replied that is correct. They have been involved in the design process and have signed off on all of the designs. They have also been a part of all the conversations. The City is in discussions with them. They have to have inspectors on site throughout the project. The City has requested that they cover their soft costs so that to cover the cost of those being on site. Filed.

**Findlay Police Department Activities Report – January 2024.** Filed.

**Mayor Muryn – Immigrant Task Force**

Over the past year, the City of Findlay has seen an increase in immigrants coming to the community. Mayor Muryn's understanding is that these individuals are coming here for a variety of reasons, some have had ties or knew of our region because of past agricultural work, some are here with a staffing agency or work visas, some having found our community as they looked for a safe community with good jobs, and others are here because they were able to find housing and are working in surrounding communities (Upper Sandusky, Bowling Green, Carey, etc.). This is a topic that is being brought up frequently that Mayor Muryn wanted to provide a couple of points of clarification, as well as an update on how we, as community, are trying to wrap our arms around this new challenge. The City of Findlay is in no way bringing these immigrants here. They are not being bussed here by Biden, the City is not paying for them, and we are not a Sanctuary City. As she has shared in the past, if the City interacts with an individual who cannot provide proper paperwork and cannot confirm its existence with proper authorities, the City notifies Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). If the City believes the individual is a threat to the public, the City would detain them until ICE arrives. Fortunately, the City of Findlay has not had any such situation. Mayor Muryn's goal is that the City of Findlay is a welcoming place without inviting large populations that may cause challenges to the community. There are multiple types of immigrants currently in the community. Some are here on work visas, some are at a state in the immigration process in which they can work, and then there is a population that is in the immigration process and is not able to work (in Mayor Muryn's opinion, there is a large flaw in the immigration system, unless the immigrant is here on certain types of visas, they are unable to work for the first year they are here). Yes, there are some individuals that are here illegally and if law enforcement interacts with them, the City notifies the proper authorities. As a municipality, there are limited steps beyond that, that can be taken. Mayor Muryn believes it is worth noting that the majority of the City's immigrant population is here legally. She also believes that significant federal reform on border security and immigration is needed and that the City can both advocate for those improvements while treating individuals in the community with dignity and respect. At best guess, there were between three to five hundred (300-500) individuals that are in the community either living, working, or both which may fluctuate and may grow over the next few years, but that is not a goal of Mayor Muryn's as has been inaccurately stated.

Immigration Task Force – Mayor Muryn shared a few weeks ago that the City of Findlay recognizes the challenges of seeing a larger immigrant population, and though it is not one we created, it is one that we must address. Yesterday, she hosted the first "official" meeting of the Immigration Task Force. This is a group of approximately sixty (60) individuals or agencies who interact with the immigrant population regularly. Below is an outline of what she shared and what was discussed at the meeting. These reports will be provided to Council on a regular basis moving forward:



*Community Priorities:*

- The City of Findlay wants to continue to be a safe community that provides opportunities for a better life and treats everyone with dignity and respect.
- Recognize that the majority of challenges faced by our immigrant population are the same challenges faced by many others in the community as a whole.
- Ensure managed use of resources to meet the needs of local residents while also supporting the increased demand from the immigrant population to ensure there is not a ripple effect of issues due to homelessness, inadequate healthcare, or food insecurity.

Prior to hosting yesterday's meeting, Project Manager Hohman and I met with established Coalition Leaders to understand what each of their coalitions were seeing. Out of these conversations, it was identified that the following primary areas for discussion at our Immigration Task Force, Language, Culture, Housing, Transportation, and Food Security. Below are a few initial notes on each topic.

*Language:*

- Continue to provide ESL classes. Expand location through volunteers to help increase capacity.
- Nonprofits can utilize Canva for free to translate documents. Identify a few resources that can review the translations for accuracy.
- Identify local translators who can get certified rather than utilizing pricey tele translation services.

*Culture:*

- Educate the population that nonprofit services are not for everyday use, but for use when in need.
- Educate on laws around domestic relations.
- Educate on health screening.
- Educate on the necessity of consistently using one legal identification.
- Determine most appropriate ways that immigrants and community members can support each other in understanding and engagement.

*Housing:*

- Lack of available housing at affordable price points.
- Concerns by landlords due to no credit history, lack of access to a background check.
- Educate on restrictions with the number of individuals or families living in a single-family residence.

*Transportation:*

- Coordinate with the State and Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to get the drivers' manuals translated into other languages.
- Investigate fixed routes from denser population points to employment areas.

*Food Security:*

- Education the population that nonprofit services are not for everyday use, but for use when in need.
- Identify if there are specific foods that are desired more due to cultural differences.
- Identify distributions and communication to ensure food is getting where it is needed.

*Language:*

- Create cards for people to have in their offices or to carry that include various common phrases.
- Create a resource summary document on the different language applications and translation services.
- Create an informal translators list (individuals qualified to help in situations that do not require certified translators).
- Created a formal translators list (certified translators).

*Culture:*

- Focus on community-based education regarding the immigration process and understanding of cultural differences.
- Provide support to Cultural Connections, Borderless Connections, the Black Heritage Library & Multicultural Center, and the Arts & Heritage Council.
- Promote events and activities that celebrate cultures.
- Reinforce the importance of separating the national immigration reform challenges from what the needs of our local community are.

*Housing:*

- Encourage landlords to work with employers to get background check information.
- Educate the immigrants on housing culture and regulations.
- Translate leases so that immigrants are aware of what they are signing.

*Transportation:*

- Explore the possibility of fixed-routes for better access to work, medical appointments, etc.
- Explore ways to begin providing transportation for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> shift employees.

*Food Security:*

- Plan a resource fair similar to the "No Wrong Door" event with translators present so that individuals are able to learn about the community and resources available to them in one place.
- Create a translated pamphlet of community information that can be provide by employers to individuals.

While this is a topic with varying opinions and many levels of complexity, Mayor Muryn believes if we ground ourselves in the following, we will be able to address the challenges in a manner in which we can all be proud of.

- 1) Treat humans as humans.
- 2) Look for efficiencies in our existing system.
- 3) Engage the local community of volunteers.
- 4) Advocate for immigration reform at the Federal level.

*Discussion:*

Councilman Russel noted that he did not have the opportunity to read through this letter because of the time he received it before tonight's meeting and will be asking Council Clerk DeVore to read it in its entirety tonight. He asked if Mayor Muryn wants to highlight anything first. Mayor Muryn replied that while she feels bad having Council Clerk DeVore read it because of its length, she feels it would be beneficial to have it read into the record. She requested a motion to do so.

Councilman Russel moved to read the letter in its entirety, seconded by Councilman Bauman. Ayes: Bauman, DeArment, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Wobser. Nays: Frische. Mayor Muryn read the letter in its entirety.

Councilman Wobser thanked Mayor Muryn for this update and that it addresses a lot of topics that are on the minds of a lot of citizens and hopefully helps correct some of the misinformation that has been floating around. He asked if the group looked at or discussed the process of assimilation of these people into our community and into our country. Mayor Muryn replied that yesterday was the first meeting where they were able to break up and go into different groups and come back with culture, housing and transportation as needed action items. When individuals are coming here, regardless of how they got here, the City wants to make sure that they are integrated and are able to be productive members of society. What the City is now seeing is a large portion of those that are living in hotels are working and have money to rent a house on their own, but cannot find something or cannot get a background check because landlords do not have access to the systems that would be necessary. That is where a lot of the topics came from. Language is the largest barrier, so if the City can work on that and help them get access to language classes through the library, who's providing it as a service and partnering people up with volunteers, it will help solve a lot of the challenges that they are facing. If they are going to be here long-term, then they need to be a part of our community in a more engrained way. The City is not brining them here. There is not fifteen hundred (1,500) of them and do not have a plan to bring five thousand (5,000) in. That is all inaccurate information. Councilman Wobser replied that he looks back to some of the problems seen in other communities across the country that were recipients of large immigrant populations where a lot of the problems seemed to have stemmed out of those because they never were assimilated into our country. There was a lack of communication and understanding of how our country works and why we are the way we are. He does not know if the goal of those coming to our community is to ultimately to become citizens. The path to citizenship is a long and arduous and potentially expensive process, so maybe that is not ultimately where they are going. He suspects that Findlay does not require any type of assimilation classes or things that have to be done for those who are not pursuing citizenship, but see a big difference from those who do pursue citizenship and go through that process and have come out with an appreciation for our country and for the things that we hold dear in our country versus some that do not. If they are going to be here long term, that the City has any say in the matter at the front end of the process. He asks that be something that is discussed with this group and how to ultimately educate them on the benefits of being in our country.

Mayor Muryn pointed out that Findlay is not seeing huge issues with crime with this population. The issues that have been seen are primarily traffic violations and have seen a a couple of situations with domestic violence, a lot of it going back to educating on how Findlay treats people in this country, and luckily, have not had anything severe. This has nothing to do with the CQE program grant received from Bank of America that she has received some questions about that. The CQE program is only available to citizens. It is employers and the court making a determination on that and is not a government grant. It is Bank of America. Each of the communities that applied proposed their own program to help with economic development mobility. Each of the programs that were done by the other communities were completely different than what the City applied for.

Councilman DeArment noted that the CQE has nothing to do with immigration. It is about reforming criminals and getting them employed. There is a lot of misinformation that it is tied to immigration. Mayor Muryn replied that is correct. There are no ties to immigration. The CQE is literally individuals who have already served, but cannot get their record expunged, and have something on their record that may be preventing them from working. The courts evaluate the case and determine if it is appropriate based off of their crime and what they are looking to do and to say yes they are a qualified individual to serve in that capacity. It helps remove some of the liability from the employers from hiring that individual.

Councilman Niemeyer noted that the last he heard, Findlay was one of a handful of cities that received a grant for this. Mayor Muryn replied that the grant received was for the CQE program and has nothing to do with immigration. The City of Findlay is not receiving any State, Federal, or private entity group funding for bringing immigrants here. That is not at all happening. The CQE program is what the Bank of America offered and made known through the U.S. Conference of Mayors, of which she is a member. It is an economic mobility grant that helps people improve their lives putting them in a better position to have economic mobility. She will send Council the grant application that consists of approximately ten (10) open-ended questions on how the City wants to use these funds. The City talked to a couple of non-profit agencies asking them how they would put ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) to good use in the community. The City applied with a number of other communities. She is unsure the specific number of communities that applied, but that seven (7) different communities were selected in which each of them submitted their own program (community gardens, child financial education, etc.). They are all different. The program the City implemented is no way tied to any other community.

Councilwoman Frische informed Council that it is important to note that the Immigration Task Force is trying to address some of the concerns that are coming into the community. The same things that are going on with food security, transportation, and housing are not only for the influx in population. Although some may think there is only three to five hundred (300-500) immigrants coming in at this time, the big focus on this and the challenges we are facing, is that there is going to be more, so that number can estimated, but until we start seeing it, there are concerns.

There are domestic concerns, petty theft, and housing issues. With all of that being said, although it is has been stated that they are coming here organically, there is an economic development program where we are encouraging this influx in population into our community that we are not prepared to handle. Whether they are speaking our language or not, we are not prepared for the influx throughout all of Hancock County. While it is great that there is a CQE grant from the league of Mayors through Bank of America for ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), they may not be of the same values that we're looking for. If somebody has something on their record and want to do better, they are more than welcome to file in the courts and pay their one hundred to one hundred fifty dollars (\$100-\$150) and see what the judge says without the City promoting this kind of program in a republican community that Findlay is. Mayor Muryn asked Councilwoman Frische if she does not believe that a republican principle is helping people improve their lives and standing on their own two feet as she had just said that as not being a republican principle and that she does not agree . . . Councilwoman Frische interrupted stating not to manipulate her words. Mayor Muryn replied that Councilwoman Frische does not have to answer the question. Councilwoman Frische replied that she would be glad to answer. To be very clear, there are people in the community that need to work and want to work. When implementing a program through economic development that is bringing people into our community that have barriers and challenges and are paying them a lesser wage than what is being paid to employees that are here, there is a problem. When there are people that have had Findlay Hancock County their home for years and became eighteen (18) years of age and are looking for a job, they are going to want to have the twenty dollar (\$20) an hour job. She does not think the City should be looking at promoting people with felonies into our workforce. It looks as if we do not have people to work and are just grasping at straws of whatever we can get. So, no that is not a republican principle.

President of Council Harrington asked Council to move on and make comments to the letter that was read.

Mayor Muryn provided a point of clarification that what Councilwoman Frische is referencing is the First Diversity Staffing Company who is working with some of the migrant workers. Yes, companies have said they want to bring in these workers because they are helping benefit their business, but that to her knowledge, many of those that are here on work visas or working through the staffing agency are filling jobs that they haven't been able to fill and are making good wages. Some of them are currently paying two thousand dollars (\$2,000) a month to live in a hotel, so those are good paying jobs. If someone in our community qualifies and wants to get a job, they can do that. It would be a very different conversation if we were in a recession and that there weren't job opportunities. In her opinion, they are providing benefit to the individuals, the community as a whole, and the businesses.

Councilman Wobser added that at the Chamber of Commerce breakfast this morning, it was discussed that Hancock County's unemployment rate is two and four-tenths percent (2.4%) which is exceptionally low. It is about two and a half percent (2.5%) below the normal, which means essentially, everybody that is able to work in the county is working one way or another.

Councilwoman Frische noted that when trying to grow economic development and bring in jobs that we cannot fill because we do not have the population, it is causing us to use other programs.

City Auditor Staschiak pointed out that he tried very hard during the mid-year review to stress to Council the people who are willing to work and are not sitting at home collecting, unable, or whatever. When looking at the difference between peak employment in the 1990s of the local population and today, when running the numbers proportionately, it states that if you incentivize properly, there is two thousand five hundred to three thousand (2,500-3,000) people that are sitting out of the workforce today that were not sitting out of the workforce in 1998 and 1999 and do not really know what that number is because the government has spent a lot of money to encourage people to stay home. The City has an impact based on thriving economic development to the type of jobs that benefit the community the best. To not dilute our employment base with jobs that aren't paying a living wage is worth considering because we see it happen. Filed.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** none

**LEGISLATION:**

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**RESOLUTION NO. 002-2024** (*advances on County tax settlements*) **requires three (3) readings**

**third reading - adopted**

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE COUNTY AUDITOR TO MAKE TAX ADVANCES DURING THE YEAR 2024 PURSUANT TO OHIO REVISED CODE §321.34.

Councilman Greeno moved to adopt the Resolution, seconded by Councilman Palmer. Ayes: Bauman, DeArment, Frische, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Wobser. The Resolution was declared adopted and is recorded in Resolution Volume XXXV, and is hereby made a part of the record.

**RESOLUTION NO. 005-2024** (*Income Tax Department seasonal employee*) **requires three (3) readings**

**second reading - adopted**

A RESOLUTION TRANSFERRING FUNDS WITHIN APPROPRIATED FUNDS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**Discussion:**

Councilman Russel pointed out that the City is in its tax season and asked if this is something the City is ready to progress with a hiring process if this resolution were to be passed tonight. Mayor Muryn replied yes. This is already within their budget, so it was planned and is just moving from one line item to another.

Councilman Russel moved to suspend the statutory rules and give the resolution its third reading, seconded by Councilman Hellmann. Ayes: DeArment, Frische, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Wobser, Bauman. The resolution received its third reading. Councilman Russel moved to adopted the resolution, seconded by Councilman Greeno. Ayes: Frische, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Wobser, Bauman, DeArment. The Resolution was declared adopted and is recorded in Resolution Volume XXXV, and is hereby made a part of the record.

**RESOLUTION NO. 007-2024** (CDBG Findlay Hope House - for The Homeless Inc) **requires three (3) readings**

**second reading**

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, HANCOCK COUNTY, STATE OF OHIO TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH FINDLAY HOPE HOUSE FOR THE HOMELESS, INC. TO PROVIDE FAIR HOUSING SERVICES FOR RESIDENTS OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY RETROACTIVE TO JANUARY 1, 2024.

*Second reading of the Resolution.*

**RESOLUTION NO. 008-2024** (no PO/over PO amount) **requires one (1) reading**

**first reading - adopted**

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE EXPENDITURES MADE BY THE AUDITORS OFFICE ON THE ATTACHED LIST OF VOUCHERS WHICH EITHER EXCEED THE PURCHASE ORDER OR WERE INCURRED WITHOUT A PURCHASE ORDER EXCEEDING THE STATUTORY LIMIT OF THREE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$3000.00) ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH OHIO REVISED CODE 5705.41(D).

Councilman Greeno moved to adopt the Resolution, seconded by Councilman Niemeyer.

*Discussion:*

Councilwoman Frische asked for clarification on all of the items listed. She asked which property is the item for Rooney & Ranzau Ltd. The WPC item is normal. She asked what the Utility Services Co Inc item for the City's Utility Billing Department is. There is an outside law firm with no purchase order and asked what case it was for, Woopert Inc. for the runway 7/25 rehab design, and also RS&H Ohio Inc. also for the runway 7/25 rehab design. She asked for clarification on all of them. Service-Safety Director Martin replied that the one for Rooney & Ranzau Ltd. is for the annexation process that was planned for last year. The work was done last year and just received the invoice the beginning of this year, so the invoice arrived but there was no purchase order for it. All the annexation work that was done last year was budgeted and planned for. The WPC and the Treasurer of the State, Ohio EPA items are timing situations. The purchase order for Utility Billing was closed before the actual invoice was received. The law firm was an outstanding invoice that was just received to clean up 2023. Councilwoman Frische asked what the invoice was for Utility Billing. She asked if it was just paperwork for the annexation for a multiple list or properties. Service-Safety Director Martin replied it was to address the properties that were going to be annexed. Councilwoman Frische asked if they are completed. Service-Safety Director Martin replied yes. The purchase order for the Utility Billing item was created and closed at the end of the year before the invoice was received. The purchase order was prematurely closed to clean up the accounting aspect of things and then received the invoice after the purchase order was closed. Councilwoman Frische asked what the invoice was for. Service-Safety Director Martin replied software for Utility Billing.

City Engineer Kalb replied to the runway items for Woopert Inc. and RS&H Ohio, Inc. During the annual planning meeting In November, the FAA informed the City that funds were available and could be moved up if everything was designed, ready to bid and sent out to bid in March, so everything had to be moved up which includes three (3) different entities working at different speeds. Originally, the design of the runway was to be completed in 2024 with construction in 2025. Out of that one hundred thirty-eight thousand dollars (\$138,000) the City is responsible for seven thousand seventy-nine dollars (\$7,079) of that. The rest is all FAA funds and ODOT funds. As soon as we get the grant documentation, the funds can then be appropriated. ODOT took a little bit longer because the resolution was just approved during the last meeting or the meeting before that and just received their grant documentation for it and are now appropriating those funds and then will get a purchase order. This had to move fast in order to acquire the FAA funds for the construction of the runway 7/25. That project is to fund over five million dollars (\$5,000,000). There is not a purchase order in place yet because all of the money was not in the project at the same time. Councilwoman Frische asked if that is separate from the 7/25 ordinance that is being replaced tonight. City Engineer Kalb replied that the 7/25 project is the remaining ODOT funds that are going in there.

Councilman Greeno clarified that the WPC item is for their MPDs permit and also the stormwater MS4 permit which is an annual fee that is due. City Engineer Kalb confirmed that is correct.

Ayes: Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Wobser, Bauman, DeArment, Frische. The Resolution was declared adopted and is recorded in Resolution Volume XXXV, and is hereby made a part of the record.

**RESOLUTION NO. 009-2024** (flood mitigation & FEMA Hazard Mitigation grant) **requires three (3) readings**

**first reading - adopted**

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO TO APPLY FOR FUNDS THROUGH A FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY, FLOOD MITIGATION ASSISTANCE GRANT FOR CONTINUED FLOOD MITIGATION EFFORTS WITHIN THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO AND HANCOCK COUNTY, OHIO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

*Discussion:*

Councilman Palmer noted that the deadline for the grant application is February 22, 2024, so he is going to make a motion to pass this tonight.

Councilman Palmer moved to suspend the statutory rules and give the resolution its second and third readings, seconded by Councilman Bauman.

Ayes: Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Wobser, Bauman, DeArment, Frische, Greeno. The resolution received its second and third readings.

Councilman Palmer moved to adopt the Resolution, seconded by Councilman Greeno.

*Discussion:*

Mayor Murny apologized for the quick timeline. The reason it is coming to Council late is because originally, either the County or Conservancy District were going to be the entity applying because they've been the lead entities, but because they aren't a NFIB participant and the City already has the FEMA system set up, they requested the City be the entity to do the application because NFIB participants are a requirement of the grant. Once that was discovered is when they contacted the City to take the lead.

Ayes: Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Wobser, Bauman, DeArment, Frische, Greeno, Hellmann. The Resolution was declared adopted and is recorded in Resolution Volume XXXV, and is hereby made a part of the record.

**ORDINANCES:**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-003** (2023 annual sewer & manhole lining #35633600) **requires three (3) readings**

**third reading - adopted**

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING FUNDS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Councilman Greeno moved to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman DeArment. Ayes: Palmer, Russel, Wobser, Bauman, DeArment, Frische, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer. The Ordinance was declared adopted and is recorded in Ordinance Volume XXIII, Page 2024-003 and is hereby made a part of the record.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-004** **requires three (3) readings**

**third reading - adopted**

(HAN-Greenway Trail Phase III, PID11709, Project No. 31931900, additional design services and right-of-way acquisitions)

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Councilman Russel moved to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Wobser. Ayes: Russel, Wobser, Bauman, DeArment, Frische, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer. The Ordinance was declared adopted and is recorded in Ordinance Volume XXIII, Page 2024-004 and is hereby made a part of the record.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-009** (2024 early projects) **requires three (3) readings**

**second reading - adopted**

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR, AND/OR CITY ENGINEER OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS WHERE REQUIRED AND ENTER INTO CONTRACTS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF VARIOUS PROJECTS, APPROPRIATING AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS FOR SAID CAPITAL EXPENDITURES, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

*Discussion:*

Councilman Russel asked if this is ready to go if it gets passed tonight and asked if there is an advantage for the City to be first out with a lot of projects. City Engineer Kalb replied yes because the resurfacing program is already put together, so if this money is appropriated, he can send it out for advertisement tomorrow. Resurfacing is done, so he is moving up a lot of projects, have set some goals, and are able to meet those goals. It was originally going to be in March, but are ready to bid the resurfacing now. The Hemphill project will be here in a couple of weeks.

Councilman Russel moved to suspend statutory rules and give the Ordinance its third reading, seconded by Councilman Niemeyer. Ayes: Wobser, Bauman, DeArment, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel. Nays: Frische. The Ordinance received its third reading. Councilman Wobser moved to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Hellmann. Ayes: Bauman, DeArment, Frische, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Wobser. The Ordinance was declared adopted and is recorded in Ordinance Volume XXIII, Page 2024-009 and is hereby made a part of the record.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-010, AS AMENDED** (US 68/SR 15 Interchange renovation) **requires three (3) readings**

**second reading - adopted**

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR AND/OR CITY ENGINEER OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO, TO EXECUTE A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH THE MAUMEE WATERSHED CONSERVANCY DISTRICT AS SET FORTH IN THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT ATTACHED HERETO AS EXHIBIT A, APPROPRIATING AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS THERETO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

*Discussion:*

Councilman Palmer asked what the advantages are of approving this tonight. City Engineer Kalb replied there is a timeline with ODOT to get this money turned over to them by the 16<sup>th</sup>.

Councilman Palmer moved to suspend statutory rules and give the Ordinance its third reading, seconded by Councilman Bauman. Ayes: DeArment, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Wobser, Bauman. Nays: Frische. The Ordinance received its third reading. Councilman Palmer moved to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Hellmann.

*Discussion:*

Councilwoman Frische asked if an agreement or anything was signed with the County since it is outside the City limits. Mayor Muryn replied that the County is working with the Conservancy District, and the City's agreement is with the Conservancy District, and is an ODOT project. Since the City is providing the funds to ODOT, the City does not need permission from the County. ODOT has permission to work on it. City Engineer Kalb added that it is not a local led project and is an ODOT led project. They designed it and managed it. The City is not managing it or building it. The City is just local funds. Mayor Muryn thanked Council for expediting this. When she initially made the request, she informed Council that it will need to be expedited to meet the State's deadline.

Councilman Russel pointed out that it is interesting that this neighborhood had challenges with access, and now, looking at the flood mitigation efforts, an easily solution presents itself that makes access into the neighborhood much easier and that it is disappointing that some on Council wouldn't want to pass this and help serve these citizens giving them better access. He is glad to see this project happen with or without the dry basin. This is an improvement that he is glad to see the City of Findlay take the lead on to help serve that neighborhood even if the project is being accomplished not on City land. Councilwoman Frische replied that Councilman Russel seems to like to make personal attacks and asked that, for the record, it be noted that she voted in favor of this on APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE knowing either way, that it was going to get the rules suspended. She is not a person who is in favor of suspending rules on a regular basis. She will be supporting this when the time comes to pass it. She told Councilman Russel not to play political games during Council.

Ayes: Frische, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Wobser, Bauman, DeArment. The Ordinance was declared adopted and is recorded in Ordinance Volume XXIII, Page 2024-010 and is hereby made a part of the record.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-011** (*Downtown Recreation Area Environmental next steps*) **requires three (3) readings** **second reading**  
AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH CIVIL & ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS, INC. FOR ADDITIONAL WORK FOR ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW OF THE DOWNTOWN RECREATION AREA, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THERETO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

*Second reading of the Ordinance.*

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-012** (*CDBG administration*) **requires three (3) readings** **second reading**  
AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO, TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE HANCOCK REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS HRPC) FOR THE FACILITATION AND PREPARATION OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM YEARS 2024 AND 2025 RETROACTIVE TO JANUARY 1, 2024, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

*Second reading of the Ordinance.*

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-013** (*Technology Drive name change*) **requires three (3) readings** **second reading**  
AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE NAME OF TECHNOLOGY DRIVE, IN THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

*Second reading of the Ordinance.*

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-014** (*seized drug investigation funds*) **requires three (3) readings** **first reading**  
AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

*First reading of the Ordinance.*

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-015** **requires three (3) readings** **first reading - adopted**  
(*insurance payment for repairs of a Police Department vehicle from an accident*)

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING FUNDS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

*Discussion:*

Councilman Russel noted that this is a routine transfer of money from one fund to another. It is the insurance payment of police vehicles, so he will make a motion to adopt it tonight.

Councilman Russel moved to suspend statutory rules and give the Ordinance its second and third readings, seconded by Councilman Palmer. Ayes: Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Wobser, Bauman, DeArment, Frische. The Ordinance received its second and third readings. Councilman Wobser moved to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Greeno. Ayes: Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Wobser, Bauman, DeArment, Frische, Greeno. The Ordinance was declared adopted and is recorded in Ordinance Volume XXIII, Page 2024-015 and is hereby made a part of the record.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-016** (*ODOT FY24 HAN-Bigelow Avenue*) **requires three (3) readings** **first reading**  
AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

*Discussion:*

City Engineer Kalb noted that he does not need this adopted tonight, but will at the next Council meeting in order to stick with ODOT's schedule on this. Contracts have to be fully executed thirty (30) days from the bid opening.

*First reading of the Ordinance.*

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-017** (*HAN-Greenway Trail Phase II*) **requires three (3) readings** **first reading**  
AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

*First reading of the Ordinance.*

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-018** (*Runway 7/25 Nav-Aid Rehab ODOT Aviation grant funds*) **requires three (3) readings** **first reading - adopted**  
AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR AND/OR CITY ENGINEER OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS WHERE REQUIRED AND ENTER INTO CONTRACTS FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF PRECISION APPROACH PATH INDICATOR (PAPI)S AND RUNWAY END IDENTIFIER LIGHTS (REIL)S AT THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO AIRPORT FOR THE RUNWAY 7/25 NAV-AID REHAB, PROJECT NO. 35234500, APPROPRIATING AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS THERETO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

*Discussion:*

Councilman Bauman asked if there is an urgency to get this done. City Engineer Kalb replied this is the same situation as Resolution No. 008-2024 without a purchase order. Both these projects are going to be bid out at the same time due to them being in the same area and for the same type of work. Having the funds for the project sooner would allow him to obtain purchase orders and keep everything official, which would be helpful.

Councilman Bauman moved to suspend statutory rules and give the Ordinance its second and third readings, seconded by Councilman Palmer. Ayes: Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Wobser, Bauman, DeArment, Greeno, Hellmann. Nays: Frische. The Ordinance received its second and third readings. Councilman DeArment moved to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Bauman. Ayes: Palmer, Russel, Wobser, Bauman, DeArment, Frische, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer. The Ordinance was declared adopted and is recorded in Ordinance Volume XXIII, Page 2024-018 and is hereby made a part of the record.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-019 requires three (3) readings**

*first reading - adopted*

*(Taxiway Runway 7/25 Rehabilitation (AIP-34) ODOT Aviation grant funds)*

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR, AND/OR CITY ENGINEER OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO TO ENTER INTO A GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AVIATION DIVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDS FOR THE DESIGN PORTION OF THE REHABILITATION OF ~~TAXIWAY~~ RUNWAY 7/25 (AIP-34), PROJECT NO. 35234200 AT THE CITY OF FINDLAY AIRPORT, APPROPRIATING AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS THERETO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

*Discussion:*

City Engineer Kalb noted that this was the other project that he was talking about. It is all 7/25.

Councilman Bauman moved to suspend statutory rules and give the Ordinance its second and third readings, seconded by Councilman Palmer. Ayes: Russel, Wobser, Bauman, DeArment, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer. Nays: Frische. The Ordinance received its second and third readings. Councilman Bauman moved to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Hellmann. Ayes: Wobser, Bauman, DeArment, Frische, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel. The Ordinance was declared adopted and is recorded in Ordinance Volume XXIII, Page 2024-019 and is hereby made a part of the record.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-020 (Blanchard Street waterline, Phase II-OPWC) requires three (3) readings**

*first reading*

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR AND/OR CITY ENGINEER OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO, TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS WHERE REQUIRED AND ENTER INTO CONTRACTS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE BLANCHARD STREET WATERLINE, PHASE II-OPWC, PROJECT NO. 35740500, APPROPRIATING AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS THERETO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

*First reading of the Ordinance.*

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-021 (sale of 515 Prospect St parcel no. 570000921770) requires three (3) reading**

*first reading*

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR, AND/OR CITY ENGINEER OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO TO SELL CITY-OWNED PROPERTY LOCATED AT 515 PROSPECT STREET (PARCEL NO. 570000921770) BY PUBLIC AUCTION, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

*First reading of the Ordinance.*

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Councilwoman Frische pointed out that at the end of last year that Councilman Bauman referred her concerns with water rate increase and determining who the authority to be able to raise water rates, and that yesterday, there was a WATER AND SEWER COMMITTEE meeting that seemed to go rogue. It was referred to committee to determine who the authority is in passing legislation which is what she has been asking for this whole time since there is no legislation inside the City limits of who can raise water rates. It is important to understand that that meeting did not happen. Councilman Russel is the Chair of that committee who is usually very diligent in not allowing Councilmembers to discuss topics that are not on the agenda. The agenda went from water, sewer, and storm's long-term control plan and that there was no discussion about legislation to figure out who that authority body is going to be, and that the discussions seemed to focus on spending one to one million five hundred thousand dollars (\$1,000,000-\$1,500,000) to do a study for a long-term plan to have a third party help determine when the City raises water rates and at what percentage, all of which was completely inappropriate. It is also important to note that she has been waiting for the City's water funds to balance out, because during the Administration's presentation at the last quarter of the year to raise water rates fifty percent (50%), they were budgeting seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000) back to the operating budget. Those numbers have come in at two million dollars plus (\$2,000,000+). The City's unappropriated Water Fund balance for January 2024 is five million nine hundred thousand dollars (\$5,900,000) which includes the restricted funds of four million dollars (\$4,800,000) without the restricted funds. The WATER AND SEWER COMMITTEE does not seem to look at these numbers and take everything for face value. During yesterday's meeting, Service-Safety Director Martin stated that he does not want to make changes until there are true numbers, but that there weren't true numbers when he made the rush decision to raise water rates fifty percent (50%). She asked what the true numbers were. She asked if the numbers now are the true numbers or if they were numbers he was estimating. Service-Safety Director Martin replied asking what true numbers Councilwoman Frische is referencing. He asked what comment she is referencing because it was an extensive conversation. The conversations last night did not go backwards to talk about 2023. Discussions were about moving forward on a comprehensive plan. Even when it was talked about last year when the change was made, the master plan was part of that conversation which is what the conversation was about last night. Councilwoman Frische replied that the conversation for the topic was to determine who the proper body authority should be to raise water rates. She understands what Councilman Russel said at the beginning of the meeting in that the committee is not going to rehash last year's numbers. She was not asking for that. She has been asking on the public's behalf from the very beginning that there needs to be a better process and need to determine who the authority is, but during that meeting, it was stated that the committee did not want to rehash the numbers, that the City does not make changes until there are true numbers, however, the true numbers are in now, but are way off from the PowerPoint presentation. She asked how the Service-Safety Director got to those numbers. The Administration continually state that they watch the revenue and projects very closely. That was stated several times yesterday. She asked how the numbers are off a million and a half dollars (\$1,500,000). Service-Safety Director Martin replied it is the timing of when money comes in and out of the accounts for projects, etc.

Councilman Russel informed Council that on January 18, 2024 after the first Council meeting when it was requested that the WATER AND SEWER COMMITTEE meet, he sent the Council Clerk an email stating that the purpose of the meeting is to “determine policies and procedures for instituting utility billing rate changes”. The topic of the meeting last night was a broad conversation, but settled on three (3) areas of inquiry and more in-depth analysis. The first one was for each of the utilities (water, stormwater, and wastewater) in that the committee recommended the proper authority to make utility rate changes. The second question was what constituted making a rate change and if it would be necessitating an outside rate study or if it is something done internally through performance, or what information goes into creating a rate change. There was a lot of conversation on that part of the topic. The third question the committee was considering was the frequency of when rate changes should be considered, reviewed or analyzed. That was how the committee structured their conversations and stayed within those topics. The only topics the committee considered yesterday all fell within the purpose of the meeting being called which was “determine policies and procedures for instituting utility billing rate changes”.

Councilwoman Frische pointed out that those three (3) things were said at the beginning by Councilman Russel, but when discussions went to a long-term control plan, storm, water, sewer, Mr. Beach was not there to answer any questions, and then the discussion went to water. Although they are part of making some determinations down the road, it was as though Council may possibly be the authority, maybe so, maybe not, she does not even know. Councilman DeArment stated that he thinks it is great that Council will be determining who is going to be the authority, but that Councilman Russel stated that the committee was not going to be discussing that right then. The committee went into all of the items and then wanting to spend over a million dollars (\$1,000,000) when rates were just raised fifty percent (50%) to do a study, all of which is not anything she has been advocating for that Councilman Bauman referred to at the end of the year from all of her discussion. It was to determine who the authority is and passing an ordinance.

City Auditor Staschiak spoke in support of Councilwoman Frische’s comments in the sense that he had a conflict yesterday. He had a meeting on the City’s health insurance, which is a serious item. Had the agenda for yesterday’s WATER AND SEWER COMMITTEE meeting been posted the way Robert’s Rules would have required it be posted in detail with all topics, it would have been followed explicitly one by one, and he would have postponed his health insurance meeting to be part of a meeting where such serious things such as raising rates in water and sewer, and spending millions of dollars on studies, etc. would have been talked about. He had no opportunity to do that and feels like he was misled, which was unfortunate. He hopes it doesn’t happen again.

Councilwoman Frische raised her hand to speak. President of Council Harrington informed Councilwoman Frische that her time was about up on this subject and asked her to be brief. Councilwoman Frische replied to President of Council Harrington that he better make sure he is treating everybody the same. President of Council Harrington replied that he treats her the same as everybody else. Councilwoman Frische asked City Auditor Staschiak when talking about rate increases and determining if rates need to be raised, if he works with the Water Department to determine if there is enough money coming in for the year to be able to operate the Water Fund or if the City needs to be spending. She asked if the City has an internal program that the City Engineer and the Administration have been using that seems to have worked. She asked if the City is missing a step. She asked if the City knows at the beginning of the year if there will be enough revenue to operate. City Auditor Staschiak replied that the primary function of the City Auditor’s Office and his job is to be a check an balance to ensure that the revenues are coming in at a rate that the City will not spend one penny (\$.01), let alone one dollar (\$1.00) beyond the funds that the City needs and has slotted into the different programs. It is a primary function of the City Auditor’s Office. He does monitor it and makes sure the monies are there to pay the bills. If there wasn’t going to be enough money to pay the bills, the City Auditor’s Office would re-evaluate and take a look at that and would notify Council and the Administration of the numbers that were coming in that were being used.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Councilman Wobser: **APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE** meeting on Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 4:00pm in the third floor conference room of the Municipal Building (CR1).

agenda: sale of 515 Prospect Street (parcel no. 570000921770)

Councilman Bauman: **PLANNING & ZONING COMMITTEE** meeting on Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 12:00pm in the third floor conference room of the Municipal Building (CR1) *livestreamed*

agenda: 1. Sixth St between Blanchard Ave and Strong Ave vacation  
2. Strong Avenue north of Blanchard Avenue vacation

Service-Safety Director Martin informed Council that the Mayor’s Office recently received a letter from the Hancock County Commissioners regarding a 15-unit sanitary sewer system. Part of the Hancock County Sewer District is the Eastgate Subdivision on the east side of town off of State Route 224. It is their system that they maintain that dumps into the City’s system and that residents are billed. They have requested the City to take that sanitary over and wanted to have more discussion. He requested this topic be referred to the WATER AND SEWER COMMITTEE to have a more in-depth conversation about plans and options to move forward. Referred to the WATER AND SEWER COMMITTEE.



City Auditor Staschiak noted that at the next Council meeting, the five thousand dollar (\$5,000) request to finish some of the work on the environmental where it is known that Mr. Wilson was ready to go to bid on for the environmental work for the benching is up for its third reading, but that it is not ready to go to bid because there are adjustments that need made to his plans. Council talked and agreed, and City Auditor Staschiak encouraged the City to get a Fiduciary. It is his hope that when the third reading of that piece of legislation is given that there is also another complete effort, whether it be legislation or however Council wants to do it, in place to finalize acquiring a Fiduciary to represent the City's interest because there are a lot of wheels spinning on this property on environmental issues. When that five thousand dollars (\$5,000) passes, that would be a great time to know what is happening, as elected officials representing the City, by us.

Councilwoman Frische pointed out that since Service-Safety Director Martin referred some West Park issues to the WATER AND SEWER COMMITTEE and that there are a couple of residents from West Park in attendance tonight, she wanted to remind Councilman Russel that West Park was referred for their storm water and waste water infrastructure out there to be addressed and to start getting a plan together. The residents are waiting on a meeting. She is unsure if the committee wants to add their request to the agenda for their next meeting or get with them after the meeting to set a date. Mayor Muryn replied that she will forward the email that was provided to West Park a while ago that outlined some of the projects that are already set up to address a number of their concerns.

Mayor Muryn noted that in response to City Auditor Staschiak's comments on a Fiduciary - it is on her list of things to work on.

Mayor Muryn pointed out that there has been questions about grants. She clarified that there are lots of grants that are coming down from the State and Federal Government. The City of Findlay has received grants for decades from the State and Federal Government. How funding from those grants work is that they collect money from our taxpayer dollars that go to the State and Federal Government who are creating programs to help target things that are going to benefit different communities, and then the City competes to get them to help better the community. Some may get frustrated by State and Federal dollars being collected, about tax dollars themselves, and about that process, but that her position is that those are our tax dollars that have gone to the State and Federal Government in that it is the City's job to try to bring those back to benefit the community as much as possible. They are reviewed to make sure that there are no hidden things in them and that there are programs that will benefit the community. Until grants are no longer permitted or available at the State or Federal Government level, it is her responsibility to continue to bring those dollars home and put them to good use for our citizens.

Councilman Niemeyer asked if it would be possible to get a list of City-owned properties and addresses for reference. City Auditor Staschiak replied asking him to narrow it down. The City does the tax cards and pays the water bills on them, but the list is pretty extensive. Mayor Muryn added that there are many City-owned properties (pump stations, reservoir, all City buildings, etc.). The City has hundreds of parcels. Councilman Niemeyer replied he does not want a list of all of them.

Councilman Bauman moved to adjourn City Council at 7:40pm, seconded by Councilman Palmer. All were in favor. Filed.

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CLERK OF COUNCIL

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT