

WHITEHALL CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA MEETING MINUTES

President Potter called the February 15, 2022 agenda meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. All members were present.

President Potter reviewed the agenda and confirmed who would handle the various required motions this evening.

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie A. Ogg, Clerk of Council

APPROVED: _____, 2022.

Thomas M. Potter, Council President

WHITEHALL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES – February 15, 2022

President Potter called the regular meeting of Whitehall City Council to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 15, 2022.

At President Potter's request, everyone rose for a moment of silence. Those assembled then recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

On roll call by the clerk, the following members of council were present:

Karen Conison
Wes Kantor
Jo Anna Heck
Amy Smith
Bob Bailey
Gerald Dixon
Lori Elmore

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. Conison moved to approve the February 1, 2022, agenda and regular meeting minutes and the January 31, 2022 agenda and special meeting minutes. Mr. Kantor seconded the motion. There was no discussion. On a roll call vote, all members responded in the affirmative and the minutes were approved as submitted.

POLL PUBLIC:

Jeff Thoburn
466 Maplewood Avenue
Whitehall, OH

My Poll Public of 2/1/22 was called out as erroneous both here in the People's chambers and online where one Whitehall political aficionado -- slash -- character assassin said that I need to drive around and take peeks to learn about Whitehall instead of using the world wide web. While reading about the Safer Whitehall Levy online, I came upon the 2020 Whitehall Police capital budget entry of \$3.6 million for a building addition. This is a budget entry at the official Whitehall dot US website that in at least 2 years time has not been revised, updated, or removed. I quoted that entry. The feedback received triggers deja vu to my attendance at a Whitehall planning commission meeting where I picked up the evening's itinerary handout that listed a Poll Public session. When I asked if the Poll Public portion of the planning commission meeting was in progress because other residents were speaking, I was told there is no Poll Public session at planning meetings. That said, I apologize for referencing information obtained at your government website, and if other portions of my 2/1/22 Poll Public were found to be erroneous, I welcome your contacting me to debunk them and correct my stated claims. Thanks.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Administration and Financial Management – Chairperson Bailey reported that the committee met last Tuesday and their minutes are on file. They will meet again next week, sometime after 6:30 p.m.

Community and Elder Advocacy – Chairperson Dixon reported that they met last Tuesday and their minutes are on file. They will meet again next week, sometime after 6:30 p.m.

Community Standards and Enforcement – Chairperson Smith reported that they met last Tuesday and their minutes are on file. They will meet again next week, sometime after 6:30 p.m.

Economic Development – Chairperson Kantor reported that they met last Tuesday and their minutes are on file. They will meet again next week, sometime after 6:30 p.m.

Infrastructure, Maintenance and Services – Chairperson Conison reported that they met last Tuesday and their minutes are on file. They will meet again next week, sometime after 6:30 p.m.

Public Safety – Chairperson Elmore reported that they met last Tuesday and their minutes are on file. They will meet again next week, sometime after 6:30 p.m.

Parks and Recreation – Chairperson Heck reported that they met last Tuesday and their minutes are on file. They will meet again next week, sometime after 6:30 p.m.

OFFICIALS' REPORTS

Mayor Kim Maggard – at the last meeting she was asked when she thought the mask mandate be lifted. Since that meeting, she has been in contact with the Columbus Public Health and the Franklin County Public Health. They explained to her that there are four-color options, which are red, orange, yellow and blue. Yellow is moderate and if this can be achieved then the mask mandate can be eased. Currently yellow means there is a five to seven point nine percent positivity rate for covid. That is ten to forty-nine cases per thousand. The goal is to get to yellow. Currently in Franklin County, there is a nine point seven percent positivity rate. Two weeks ago, rates came down by fifty percent and last week they came down by forty percent. That is a good trend. She hopes that in two to three weeks adjustments can be made to the mask mandate. It is difficult to see other states and communities to the northwest and northeast of Whitehall easing their mask mandates however they are in the yellow status. Some of the things keeping Franklin County in the orange status at this time is that sixty two percent are fully vaccinated with two shots. However, the booster rate is below fifty percent and the positivity rate is not dropping as fast as people would like but she believes that in two to three weeks we can get there. There is light at the end of the tunnel and she is asking for patience. She knows the masks will not be worn forever. Thank you.

City Administrator Zach Woodruff – was not present.

City Attorney Michael Bivens – he just returned from Washington D.C. and he is the Ambassador for the City of Whitehall to speak to and have some strategic conversations at the National Association of Counties meeting at the Legislative Conference. He was invited there because Franklin County Commissioners have funded a program that currently operates in the Mayor's Court. He was advancing the conversation as it related to the services that are provided in Mayor's Court as a touchstone and a bridge to the poverty blueprint Franklin County initiated as well as the strategic initiative to use the criminal justice

system as a touchpoint for eradicating poverty, systemic racism as well as providing additional services. The goal and he is excited about what occurred over the weekend. The next phase of this could potentially be to provide wrap around services to the defendant that come to court. Wrap around services means that it does not just impact the defendant but they actually get into the defendant's home to impact their significant others and their children with the express goal that if they can stop it here then maybe they can stave off any future incidences of crime or any that might occur. He is excited about the conversations he has had over the weekend and he hopes to share more information as he is developing relationships in that regard. He is excited that Whitehall is on the radar and that they are in the topic of discussion because the way they are providing the services is innovative. No one is really doing it the way Whitehall is and that is just the Whitehall way. He hopes in the coming weeks to get on Councils agenda to do some public presentations as it relates to domestic violence. One of his prosecutors has gone through some significant training that he would love to share with members of Council and members of the public just to inform them of some innovative ways to stave off and to prevent domestic violence in the future. Thank you.

City Auditor Steve Quincel – he said last Tuesday, the Ohio House Ways and Means Committee held its first hearing on HB 519. This bill modifies the law for city income tax filing extensions and limits the penalties for filing late. HB 519 would prohibit his office from sending notices to taxpayers who have extended their federal tax filing deadline. The catch is they do not have access to IRS records and they would not know that the taxpayer has filed an extension. To contact the taxpayer, they must wait until the taxpayer files their return or their extended due date passes. Again, they have no way of knowing what their due date is. If his office would happen to send a prohibited notice to one of these taxpayers, the city could be penalized by having to reimburse the taxpayer for any reasonable costs incurred in responding, which could include the costs for tax accountants and attorney fees. This bill also limits the penalties the city can impose on late filers up to fifty percent of their unpaid tax so long as that amount is under one hundred fifty dollars. This eliminate penalties for taxpayers who have filing requirements but do not owe any tax. Late fees help the city recover costs that are incurred in enforcing the filing requirement. The alternative would be filing charges against the taxpayer for failing to file taxes, which ends up costing both the taxpayer and the city just to bring the account into good standing. He officially wanted the record to reflect he opposes HB 519. Thank you.

Public Safety Director Van Gregg – was not present.

Treasurer Shaquille Alexander– he had no official report. He said his first week on the job has been eventful to say the least. He thanked everyone for wishing him well and welcoming him onto the job. He thanked everyone for making last week a special moment for him, his family, his loved ones and his supporters. Thank you.

President Potter – advised that the following Officials' Reports have been filed in the Council Office since the last meeting: The Mayor's Report to Council for January 2022, The Auditor's Expense Report for January 2022, the Auditor's Bank Report for January 2022, the Auditor's Statement of Cash Position Report for January 2022 and the Auditor's Revenue Report for January 2022.

COMMUNICATIONS, PETITIONS AND CLAIMS:

There were no Communications, Petitions and Claims filed in the Council Office since the last meeting.

VERIFICATION OF COPIES:

President Potter requested a roll call on whether each member of council received a copy of each item of legislation listed on the agenda prior to the meeting, including any add-on legislation. On a roll call vote, all members responded in the affirmative.

THIRD READING:

THERE IS NO LEGISLATION FOR THIRD READING.

SECOND READING:

ORDINANCE NO. 005-2022 was read by title only by President Potter:

AMENDING 143.15 (d)(1) TITLED EMERGENCY MEDICAL BILLING.

RESOLUTION NO. 008-2022 was read by title only by President Potter:

AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT(S) WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT) FOR IMPROVEMENTS AT THE MAIN STREET AND HAMILTON ROAD INTERSECTION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Ms. Conison introduced and moved to suspend the rules on Resolution No. 008-2022 and Mr. Kantor seconded the motion. There was no discussion. On a roll call vote, all members voted in the affirmative and Resolution No. 008-2022 was suspended.

Ms. Conison moved to adopt Resolution No. 008-2022 and Mr. Kantor seconded the motion. There was no discussion. On a roll call vote, all members voted in the affirmative and Resolution No. 008-2022 was adopted.

POLL PUBLIC:

No comments at this time.

COMMUNITY DATE BOARD:

No comments at this time.

POLL COUNCIL:

Chairperson Conison thanked everyone for viewing and she will see everyone next time.

Chairperson Kantor thanked everyone for viewing tonight. He congratulated the Whitehall Bowling teams. The boys, the Rams won the MSL league and the girls got second in the league but today they won the Sectional. Good coaching there and super students and he wished the good luck going forward and he

hopes to see some of them at the State. He thanked the people who have contacted him in reference to his comments on the Police and the Service Department. He appreciates everything that they do and there is no one better than they are. He asked that everyone keep the Wolfe, Hundley and Kasinex families in your thoughts as the Mothers have all passed away and were lifelong residents of the community.

Chairperson Heck thanked everyone for viewing. She thanked Mayor Maggard for the mask update and City Attorney Bivens for representing Whitehall and she is sure he did a fabulous job. She looks forward to hearing more about those wrap around services. It will be a great help to the community.

Chairperson Smith thanked everyone for viewing and she appreciated the update from Mayor Maggard on the mask mandate and why the decisions are made and it is helpful for people to understand. She likes that they are being innovating and looking at the whole person and just the act or the moment in someone's life. She thinks that is fantastic.

Chairperson Bailey said the folks covered everything and he has nothing to add.

Chairperson Dixon thanked City Attorney Bivens and Mayor Maggard for their comments. This is his last opportunity to acknowledge Black History Month. When he was growing up here in Whitehall, it was a ninety-nine point seven percent white community. He was just a kid living his life here and he remembers there were riots downtown in the late 1960's. He was concerned about them as a child, he was afraid and he did not know what it was all about. He feels it really affected him and he wanted to take his time in life later on to understand the black experience in Whitehall that which he was not surrounded by. Part of that education on his part was reading. He has read a lot. He has had a lot of discourse with people over three states and decades. Out of his top ten favorite books in life, one of them is by a man named Nathan McCall. He wrote a book called *Makes Me Wanna Holler*. The byline is a young black man in America. He really goes into depth, he was raised in a middle class family and he got in trouble and was sent to prison for armed robbery. His story is told well and eye opening. He wanted to put that out there if anyone wants to learn a little more about at least one black man's experience in America, this is an excellent book to read. In today's dispatch, there was an article about Dave Chappelle and the affordable housing situation in Yellow Springs. The media had misreported that he was against affordable housing and that is really not the case. The thing for him, what he took from it were these two things. Number one, the people with enough power in whatever form that takes can and should fight any and everything they deem wrong for their town. Secondly, a Council responding properly and (?) to citizens' concerns and demands can vote against things brought before them that their constituents do not want. In the past years, he has been in talks with Target, and this was as a private citizen, they now have locking carts. He is thrilled about it and he knows there are constituents out there who are sick and tired of seeing the Target carts everywhere. He thanked everyone who is watching from home and he thanked Mr. Thoburn for his comments as well.

Chairperson Elmore thanked everyone for viewing on Facebook. She thanked Mayor Maggard for the update. She thanked City Attorney Bivens for the great information he provided to them. She thanked City Auditor Quincel for the information regarding legislation from the Statehouse, which impacts what happens at the local level. She will be watching HB 519. This month is also Heart Awareness Month. Red is not just for Valentine's Day. She believes it is an opportunity to honor the too often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every endeavor throughout history. Thurgood Marshall was the first African American appointed to the Supreme Court, Shirley Chisholm, the first African American woman in New York's Twelfth Congressional District to be in Congress, Colin Powell, Four Star General became Secretary of State, Barak Obama, the first black President, Kamala Harris, first black woman to become Vice President of the United States and bringing it all the way home to Whitehall, Michael Bivens, first African American City Attorney, herself, first African American woman to be elected to City Council and Shaquille Alexander, the first African American Treasurer. Her hope is that they continue to represent this city well and all of its residents. She will leave with this. The healthiest thing is to be true to one's own self but also that you have the right to express what you see and what you feel and what you think, to be

bold, to be bold with your vision as you can possibly be. Alice Walker, who in 1982 became the first black African American woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for her fiction novel named *The Color Purple*. Thank you everyone.

President Potter echoed everyone's comments this evening and for the reports given.

Having nothing further, Mr. Bailey moved to adjourn and Mr. Kantor seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all members responded in the affirmative and the meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie A. Ogg, Clerk of Council

APPROVED: _____, 2022.

Thomas M. Potter, Council President