

**MANAGER’S CONFERENCE MINUTES**  
**Portsmouth City Council Meeting on**  
**March 22, 2021 – 8:30 p.m.**

Members present:

Sean Dunne	1 <sup>st</sup> Ward
Charlotte Gordon	2 <sup>nd</sup> Ward
Kevin E. Johnson	3 <sup>rd</sup> Ward
Lyvette Mosley	4 <sup>th</sup> Ward
Edwin Martell	5 <sup>th</sup> Ward
Dennis Packard	6 <sup>th</sup> Ward

Also present was City Manager Sam Sutherland, City Clerk Diana Ratliff, Solicitor John Haas and Auditor M. Trent Williams.

1. **Concrete Improvement under the Grant Bridge** **CM-21-22**

Manager Sutherland asked Council to appropriate the money for the concrete so that the project could be started and completed. Solicitor Haas asked that a fund number be included on where the money would be coming out of.

Councilman Dunne motioned to adopt alternative #1.

There were no questions or comments: **VOTE: 6 Ayes – 0 Nays**

2. **ODOT Final Legislation 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Paving** **CM-21-23**

Manager Sutherland stated this was the final step and it would need to have the readings waived to meet the April 12<sup>th</sup> deadline.

Councilman Dunne motioned to adopt alternative #1.

There were no questions or comments: **VOTE: 6 Ayes – 0 Nays**

3. **ODOT Appropriation for Paving St. Rt. 23 and 73** **CM-21-24**

Manager Sutherland said that this was fir the city’s portion of the paving project. The handicap ramps could be done over a period of two-years as a different project.

Councilwoman Gordon motioned to adopt alternative #1.

There were no questions or comments: **VOTE: 6 Ayes – 0 Nays**

4. **Trash Can Purchase** **CM-21-25**

Manager Sutherland said that it’s been over a year since they order the last batch and these were needed.

Councilman Dunne motioned to adopt alternative #1.

There were no questions or comments: **VOTE: 6 Ayes – 0 Nays**

5. **NatureWorks Grant** **CM-21-26**

Manager Sutherland said that this was part of the Master Plan and this would be for a roof enclosure over the center area of Market Street and this would be a way to get the funding as part of the project. Engineer Prosch had already drawn up some plans on how to add additional parking between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Street and he felt it would be a nice asset to the city. Clerk Ratliff asked if all of the trees would be removed and he replied “yes”.

Councilman Dunne motioned to adopt alternative #1.

There were no questions or comments: **VOTE: 6 Ayes – 0 Nays**

6. **Municipal Court Appropriations**

**CM-21-27**

Auditor Williams advised that the Other Section was left out of the Ordinance and needed to be input.

Councilman Dunne motioned to adopt alternative #1.

There were no questions or comments: **VOTE: 6 Ayes – 0 Nays**

**Discussion** –

**PCFO Legislation** – Power A Clean Future Ohio and this would allow the city to enter into this organization that the city would provide a commitment to move more of our energy sources to renewable energy. It would eventually allow the city to get an outside auditor for Environmental purposes and give the city advice on how to improve. He would get additional information for the next meeting.

**Community Development Director Salary** – Vice President Dunne said that initially when this was brought up and was discussed about a salary increase because of additional responsibilities with the Human Rights Commission, however after reviewing everything and hearing the accomplishments at the Strategic Planning Session he would like to review this further.

**Vacancy Tax** – Councilman Martell said that this had been a hot topic and it wasn't to hurt businesses, but a form of encouragement for building and property owners to do what they've been given an allotted amount of time to do. There were buildings and houses that had been sitting empty for years. There were so many things that happen when a building sits empty and one of those was Public Safety which was mostly due to neglect. He said that there were ways to be exempt from the tax and he listed several of those and again, this wasn't hurting anyone who was trying to do something with their building. He said the problem was that the Slum Lords were being constantly fed in our city and they hold the city back from moving forward. He added that a prime example was the Scioto County Heritage Museum in which they took a vacant building and allowed an entrepreneur to make this building nice again; he encouraged people to do something with their buildings. He said Code Enforcement would play a big part in enforcing the public safety portion of these vacancies. Councilman Packard stated that a large portion of the owners that fall into this bracket were people not paying their taxes and he wondered how adding another tax would get them to suddenly become compliant. Mr. Martell stated that this would be through Code Enforcement and this tax would be different than the tax he was referring to. He said the money that was collected from this would help to fund the Code Enforcement and help alleviate the issues of not having the money to serve out-of-state owners for their condemned houses or blighted buildings. Solicitor Haas stated that this would be a huge undertaking because there still needed to be some details worked out before moving forward.

**City Liquor License** – Councilman Martell had spoken with Darrell at the Ohio Liquor Agency and he advised that they could apply for, but would not own five D5J's but they had to be within a 15-acre radius such as an Entertainment Zone. The TREX system was also discussed and people could look up other businesses who have licenses in other cities and contact them and request to purchase the license.

The meeting adjourned at 9:28 p.m. on a motion by Vice President Dunne.

Submitted by: *Diana Ratliff* – City Clerk

For the full audio version of the Manager's Meeting, please go to [www.portsmouthoh.org](http://www.portsmouthoh.org) under City Manager 2021 "Audio".