

**MANAGER’S CONFERENCE MINUTES**  
**Portsmouth City Council Meeting on**  
**May 28, 2019 – 8:12 p.m.**

Members present:

Sean Dunne	1 <sup>st</sup> Ward
Jo Ann Aeh	2 <sup>nd</sup> Ward
Kevin E. Johnson	3 <sup>rd</sup> Ward
Jerrold Albrecht	4 <sup>th</sup> Ward
Gene Meadows	5 <sup>th</sup> Ward
Thomas K. Lowe	6 <sup>th</sup> Ward

Also present was City Manager Sam Sutherland, Auditor Williams and City Clerk Ratliff.

1. **Scioto Trail Gas Station Grant Funds** **CM-19-41**

Manager Sutherland said this was to accept \$67,000 grant money for more cleanup on the Scioto Trail Gas Station property. Councilman Lowe asked if the area had been contaminated and Manager Sutherland stated that this was for soil remediation.

Councilman Lowe moved to adopt alternative #1.

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

2. **Branch Rickey Park Security System** **CM-19-42**

Manager Sutherland stated that installing security around the park would be a step in the right direction, the cost would be around \$8,000 to install cameras and the amount requested included a year’s worth of monitoring the security system. Councilman Lowe asked Chief Ware about the bad element down at the park and inquired as to why it wasn’t being patrolled and the element removed. Chief Ware stated that with this system it would be monitored 24/7, if they patrolled in that area the bad element would just watch for when the area was patrolled and go in when the police weren’t around and by using the cameras to monitor, they could dispatch a patrol when something or someone was spotted.

Councilwoman Aeh moved to accept alternative #1.

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

3. **Boat Races Labor Day Weekend** **CM-19-43**

Manager Sutherland stated that \$10,000 is the city’s contribution to the Boat Races being held during River Days.

Councilwoman Aeh moved to accept alternative #1

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

4. **Tracy Park Christmas Lights** **CM-19-44**

Manager Sutherland stated that a request of \$10,000 had been made by Main Street Portsmouth for new Christmas Lights for Tracy Park. He said with the success of Winterfest, it had sparked enthusiasm to dress Tracy Park up to make it look better during the holidays. Contributions have already been received from the Martings Foundation, Scioto Foundation and Main Street Portsmouth.

Councilwoman Aeh asked what happened to the old lights that were used down around the riverfront. Manager Sutherland said that he believed that there were a few left and Acting Mayor Johnson stated that they used to charge to go down along the riverfront to view the lights.

Councilwoman Aeh moved to accept alternative #1.

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

5. **2.25% Wage Increase FOP and Dispatchers** **CM-19-45**

Manager Sutherland stated that this had gone to fact finding and the result of that was 2.25% for the FOP and Dispatchers. He said that .25% would need to be added to the non-union, 1039 and 1039-C employees due to the “me too” clause.

Councilwoman Aeh moved to accept alternative #1

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

6. **Gate Replacement Service Department** **CM-19-46**

Manager Sutherland stated that the current gate was inoperable and security has been an issue and with this new gate the Police Department would contribute some cameras for additional security.

Councilwoman Aeh moved to accept alternative #1

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

7. **Acceptance and Appropriation of Insurance Funds for Police Vehicle** **CM-19-47**

Manager Sutherland stated that this was to accept insurance funds in the amount of \$58,869.30 for a wrecked police cruiser and to appropriate \$58,869.30 to be used to replace the damaged cruiser.

Councilwoman Aeh moved to accept alternative #1

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

**Discussion**

Manager Sutherland stated that he would like Council to think about what to do with the 99 Year Leases of City Property. He said recently a situation had come up, where he was approached by an individual that was trying to redo their HVAC system and wanted to take a loan out, but when a title search was done it was discovered that the building was sitting on City owned property which had been leased for 99 years and he believed this particular one expires in 2035. He would like Council to decide what to do with the property as the leases expire.

Councilwoman Aeh asked Clerk Ratliff to check on the 99-year leases for the properties on Market Street. She said she believed that there was time still left on those but would like to know when they expire. She added that there was a clause in which if at any point they failed to pay their lease, the property would revert back to the City. She said that when she was City Clerk, she found that they weren't paying their leases because the Auditor at that time didn't want to deal with those small payments and told the people just to forget it, however once this was caught the people did catch up their back payments. Councilman Meadows suggested not going over 10 years for any lease, but would like there to be an automatic renewal provision that gave both parties the option to terminate. Councilwoman Aeh said that would be fine but who would monitor the accounts to make sure the renewal was paid. She suggested just selling the property as the leases expire.

Manager Sutherland said that Health Commissioner Chris Smith would like to discuss the 2.25% Health Department raises.

He addressed the overrun of cats in neighborhoods that was discussed in Council meeting and said that when the city was in a financial crisis, the cat program was one of the first things cut, but he could run the figures to see what the cost would be to start it back up. Councilwoman Aeh stated that they were bad in her neighborhood, she went out on her deck and there was cat fur everywhere; you can't sit in the chairs on her front porch because they were covered. She said you can run them off but they come right back because they're well feed and someone was feeding them. Mr. Smith stated that if they know who the owners were, they could speak with them. Mrs. Aeh said that her neighbor has cat food on her front porch and she thought the Health Department should speak with her about it. Mr. Smith said that he could certainly address that aspect. He said he would bring the cost to reinstate to Council at the next meeting.

Mr. Smith addressed Council regarding the 2.25% raises for the Health Department. He said that they do not give health department raises until they see what the city does and he thought that this had been addressed at the last meeting. He said every time they were given raises, it had to go before the Board of Health to be approved and he hoped that next year if raises were given that it was done by the first of the year. He would like to get this on the agenda so that it could be put on Council's agenda in two weeks, so that it could be passed. Mr. Smith stated that Council had requested from the Health Department to know when the last time it was that raises were given in that Department. He had emailed them payroll changes of two employees from the Health Department that were given raises since the 10% raise was given to all non -union employees. The raises for these two employees were the exception, he said one employee changed jobs which resulted in a .50 increase and the other employee's job was just underpaid and had been for years, which was why that employee was given an additional raise but also additional duties. He questioned why everyone was also so upset over the Health Department raises because when a Police Lieutenant becomes a Police Captain no one says "that person got a raise", he said the same thing happens in the Health Department when employees move to different positions within the Health Department. He said he would be more than happy to have Council tell him that they're on their own, so that next January 1<sup>st</sup> the Health Department could decide what they wanted to do and if they could give their 30 employees raises.

Mrs. Aeh explained that years ago they had a City Manager claim that he couldn't get out of his office. He had two women working in his office at the time, so Council gave the two employees \$2,000 each per year and with that increase they took on more of the Manager's responsibility. One of these women decided she wanted to go back to school and was only going to work 4 days so her salary was reduced by \$2,000 per year. The Manager then went on to give the reason that the employee should be able to keep the raise was because she was doing 5 days work in 4 days. Council's question was "what was she doing with the other eight hours when she was working 5 days a week?" He said that in the one employee's situation, she was brought in at an especially low salary, she had been with them for 10 years, however, when he hires someone new, they come in at a much higher rate of pay than the employee that had been there 10 years. Acting Mayor Johnson asked what the actual request is for and Mr. Smith said it would be for the 2.25% backpay and the Health Department would cover it for the rest of the year. Mr. Johnson asked Sam if that could be on the next agenda and he said "yes". There was no vote to move it to Council Agenda.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m. on a motion by Councilman Lowe.

Submitted by: *Diana Ratliff* – City Clerk