

**MANAGER’S CONFERENCE MINUTES**  
**Portsmouth City Council Meeting on**  
**January 28, 2019 – 8:10 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 (Absent)

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

1. **Pilot Study of New Water Plant** **CM-19-5**

Manager Sutherland reminded Council that in October 2018 funding was requested to pay for reports to allow the City to negotiate with Ohio EPA to do a pilot study for the new water treatment plant. The report was basically done, but after the discussion with the Ohio EPA they are now requiring the City to do a 6 week trial in lieu of a 4 week trial and they also want a filtration process to make sure that the treatment scheme will work. He had originally estimated around \$30,000-\$40,000 for the actual pilot study but because of the increased time and different treatment scheme that will cost an additional \$75,000 and he still felt like it was a very viable investment for the city. Acting Mayor Johnson reiterated that the actual price for just the study would be over \$100,000 and this treatment had never been done in Ohio and Manager Sutherland stated that was correct and that it would shrink the footprint of the plant which in turn would reduce construction costs. Mr. Johnson asked if there was an estimate as to how much would be saved in construction costs, Manager Sutherland said that it would be hard to put a number on it, but a New Water Treatment Plant will cost roughly \$20,000,000 and anything the city could save would be worth it. Solicitor Haas stated that the city had to spend at least \$30,000 on more property so that there would be enough room to build. The plan was to have the new plant directly behind the current plant and the additional property being purchased was needed to house construction equipment. (Solicitor Haas was speaking but his microphone was off) Mr. Johnson asked if the additional property would be utilized after the new plant was built and Manager Sutherland stated that it could be sold or used for something else. He added that if they can't shrink the footprint down, the new plant may not fit or it would be a tight squeeze.

Councilwoman Aeh motioned to accept Alternative #1.

There were no questions or comments: **VOTE: 4 Ayes – 0 Nays**

2. **PMHA request for a large scale neighborhood project** **CM-19-6**

Solicitor Haas stated that the first legislation that was read during Council session was only one part, both pieces of legislation were needed to move forward and apply for the grant.

Councilwoman Aeh motioned to accept Alternative #1.

Councilman Albrecht stated that he would rather have a meeting directly with PMHA when he is more prepared with questions. Councilman Dunne stated that he had had e-mails and multiple phone calls. Councilwoman Aeh stated that she would like something from the city regarding the sewage problem because when they first developed Orizaba Lane, she and her husband had thought about buying property back in 1964 or 1965 but found out that they had a sewage problem and standing water. She had been in some of the houses that were up for sale and she noticed sump pumps in the basements. She had checked with the city at that time and they knew it was a problem but had not been able to fix it at that time.

Larry Mitchell spoke from his seat could not hear him, but from City Clerks notes he stated that the city did put drainage between Orizaba and Thomas Avenue which helped with the standing water but sewage was a problem and he feared that there would be more problems with backups. Mrs. Aeh stated that the city had had other problems when adding onto the sewer i.e. Grandview Avenue. She asked Manager Sutherland if he could get her some additional information on the sewer issues in that area. Mr. Mitchell added that the egress onto Thomas was at a curb and was not a safe place to enter or exit. Councilwoman Aeh asked Manager Sutherland to have the Traffic Committee to meet and determine whether that egress would be a problem.

There were no questions or comments: **VOTE: 4 Ayes – 0 Nays**

### 3. **2019 Budget**

**CM-19-7**

Manager Sutherland requested legislation to move the budget forward.

Councilwoman Aeh motioned to accept Alternative #1.

Chief Raison said that he had heard that there was a new budget given out since he received the first one. Clerk Ratliff stated that the first one included 3 additional employees for the Fire Department, there were replacement pages given to Council that removed the additional employees. Acting Mayor Johnson stated the motion for Alternative #1 was without the additional employees for the Fire personnel. Councilwoman Aeh directed her comments to Chief Raison and stated that when he brought this to Council he told Council at the time that he would not need any additional employees for at least 4-5 years and even at that, it does not meet the criteria for additional personnel. She added that the city is down 15 employees in other departments; the Engineering Department was down to two employees, potholes were not being fixed etc. She said that additional employees were needed elsewhere first. Chief Raison said that he would have to go back and listen to the recording, but he knew that they were ahead of schedule. Mrs. Aeh said that when you're discussing budget it's hard to be ahead of schedule. Chief Raison stated that they were generating revenue; Mrs. Aeh asked if they would consider making it an enterprise fund, Fire fighter Scott Osborn (who did not have the floor) stated that "you guys are going to kill this program; these guys are working their tails off and the guys that are on the fence about this are going to stop". Mrs. Aeh said that other departments were also working their tails off. Mr. Osborn asked how much revenue that these other departments were generating, "ZERO". Acting Mayor Johnson gaveled and asked Chief Raison to control his employee. Mrs. Aeh stated that she was not in favor of hiring any more people in the Fire Department when the rest of the city is 15 people down. Mr. Johnson remarked that he didn't realize that the Fire Department intended to add any more people. He had the book that former Manager Allen and Chief Raison put together and it may be in there, but he had not seen it. Chief Raison said that Mrs. Aeh was correct that they had not intended on adding any more employees but they were ahead of schedule because of the high volume of calls. Mrs. Aeh responded that the call volume may drop off now that there another Ambulance service in town and Chief Raison responded only if we transfer the calls. Chief Raison stated that the proposal was an estimate of what the volume would be, which were only projections. Mrs. Aeh reminded the Chief that the City was still on Fiscal Watch and in order to get where we are, there were 20 positions that were not replaced. Chief Raison stated that he wished the Auditor was present because he projected a budget of \$16,100,000 revenue in the General Fund when the city took in \$17,600,000 in 2018 and he had yet to receive a response. He wanted to know why we show a \$1,500,000 revenue drop and hoped there was an explanation. Councilman Albrecht stated that the money the Fire Department brought in was not used in another department, it was used for the new ambulance that they wanted/needed. He said that the FD could not guarantee on a monthly basis how much revenue they were going to bring in because they do not know how many calls they are going to go on, so there was no guarantee. There was more discussion but the original motion to accept the proposed budget without additional FD employees was proposed again.

There were no questions or comments: **VOTE: 4 Ayes – 0 Nays**

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m. on a motion by Councilman Albrecht.

Submitted by: *Diana Ratliff* – City Clerk