

MINUTES – REGULAR SESSION

PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING
 Monday July 08, 2019
 6:00 p.m.

The City Council of the City of Portsmouth, Ohio met in regular session on Monday July 08, 2019 at 6:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

Acting Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order. A moment of silent prayer was observed followed by The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll Call showed the following members to be present:

Sean Dunne	1 st Ward
Vacant	2 nd Ward
Kevin E. Johnson	3 rd Ward
Jerrold Albrecht	4 th Ward
Gene Meadows	5 th Ward (Absent)
Thomas K. Lowe	6 th Ward

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

Councilman Meadow’s absence was excused on a motion by Councilman Albrecht. The motion carried viva voce: **VOTE: 4 ayes – 0 nays.**

Public Hearing – Tax Budget 2020

Acting Mayor Johnson declared the hearing open at 6:07 p.m. There was no one present who wished to address Council on the Public Hearing. Acting Mayor Johnson closed the hearing at 6:07 p.m. since there were no comments.

**Public
Hearing for
Tax Budget
2020**

Council dispensed with the reading of the Journal for the Regular Session of June 24, 2019 on a motion by Councilman Albrecht. The motion carried viva voce: **VOTE: 4 ayes –0 nays.**

STATEMENTS OR REMARKS FROM CITIZENS ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Joseph Pratt – 1662 Grant Street Portsmouth, OH – He thanked Council for passing the first two readings regarding the Christmas Lights for Tracy Park. He said it was very rare for Main Street Portsmouth to request additional funds outside of what they normally receive. He added that the \$10,000 will be added to a budget of \$40,000 for the entire project and that they were only \$2,000 short of meeting the goal, but it will be a spectacular light show.

LEGISLATION

The clerk gave a **third reading**, to an Ordinance authorizing the appropriation of \$8,000.00 from CIP Fund No. 301 to be paid from Land Improvement Cemetery/Grounds Line Item No. 301.333.5502 for security cameras and monitoring system for Branch Rickey Park.

Councilman Albrecht moved the Ordinance be passed.

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 4 ayes– 0 nays, the Ordinance was passed.**

**Ord. #48-2019
Branch
Rickey Park
security and
monitoring
system**

The clerk gave a **third reading**, to an Ordinance authorizing the appropriation of \$10,000.00 from General Fund No. 101 to be paid from Community Agencies Line Item No. 101.119.5291 for the City’s contribution for the Boat Races to be held during the River Days Celebration.

Councilman Albrecht moved the Ordinance be passed.

Acting Mayor Johnson stated that he was excited about the boat races returning to our area. Councilman Lowe stated that he felt that the city needed to develop more down on the riverfront to help accommodate people attending the races as well as the racers.

**Ord. #49-2019
Boat Races
for River
Days**

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 4 ayes– 0 nays, the Ordinance was passed.**

The clerk gave a **third reading**, to an Ordinance authorizing the appropriation of \$10,000.00 from General Fund No. 101 to be paid from Grounds Recreation Line Item No. 101.335.5263 to be used for Christmas Lights for Tracy Park.

**Ord. #50-2019
Christmas
lights for
Tracy Park**

Councilman Albrecht moved the Ordinance be passed.

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 4 ayes– 0 nays, the Ordinance was passed.**

The clerk gave a **second reading**, to an Ordinance authorizing the appropriation of \$7,000.00 from Capital Improvement Fund No. 301 to be paid from Land Improvement Cemetery/Grounds Line Item No. 301.333.5502 for fence repairs at Branch Rickey Park.

Councilman Albrecht moved that this constitute a second reading.

There were no further questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 4 ayes– 0 nays, a second reading was declared.**

The clerk gave a **first reading**, to a Resolution providing for the annual tax budget for municipal purposes for the year 2020.

Councilman Albrecht moved the Resolution be adopted.

**Res. #09-2019
Public
Hearing for
the 2020
annual tax
budget**

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 4 ayes– 0 nays, the Resolution was adopted.**

STATEMENTS OR REMARKS FROM CITIZENS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Benny Blevins – 1018 4th Street, Apt. D Portsmouth, OH – He is a member of the Portsmouth Welcoming Community Christ, a member of the pastoral team, Adjunct Instructor at Shawnee State University and a native son of Portsmouth. He said in 2018 his church was formed as well as the Pride Event as a response to a young transgender child in this area who was receiving death threats and violence from her peers as well as adults. It was also in response to a young gay teenager who committed suicide after his family was abusive to him and he was rejected by his church. He said that in 2018 they had 500 in the Pride event and this year there was 900 involved in the event with 40 vendors participating and 3 local businesses that sponsored the event. He advised that 4 young people stated that the Pride event had a profound impact on their lives. He added that he grew up in this area and was a Christian and this area could be a bit unwelcoming to LGBTQ issues. He stated that he was a member of a church when he was a teenager and when they found out he was gay, he was told that he would no longer be allowed to teach Sunday School and not allowed to be around any young men because his church felt that being gay meant that he was also a pedophile. He said the event was about love not hate.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS AND REPORTS:

City Clerk's Report – City Clerk Ratliff reported the following:

1. She received the Oath of Office for the two Police Officers: Clayton Nickell and Amy Glockner.
2. She received via email on July 1, 2019 from the Auditor's office, the following summary statements of the Combined MTD/YTD reports for the period ending June 30, 2019: Expense, Revenue and Fund.

The City Clerk's report was received, filed and made part of the record, on a motion by Councilman Albrecht. The motion carried viva voce: **VOTE: 4 ayes– 0 nays.**

City Manager's Report – Manager Sutherland thanked former 2nd Ward Councilwoman Jo Ann Aeh for all of her years of service. He said the lady was a pleather of knowledge and she will be missed.

The City Manager's report was received, filed and made part of the record, on a motion by Councilman Albrecht. The motion carried viva voce: **VOTE: 4 ayes– 0 nays.**

Acting Mayor's Report – Acting Mayor Johnson reported the following:

1. He acknowledged former Councilwoman Aeh and the vacant spot and will miss working with her and we owe her a debt of gratitude. He appreciated her service to our city and her help to him personally; she will be missed.
2. He was looking forward to Saturday July 13th as it will be a busy day in our community. The Blues, Brews and BBQ will be Saturday and he was looking forward to being one of the judges of the food. He said Life Point Church will be hosting "Serve Day" this Saturday and he had

emailed all of Council regarding an email he had received from Craig Massie who was looking for projects that needed done during “Serve Day” for his group. He also will be speaking at the Grave Marking Ceremony in Greenlawn Cemetery on Saturday.

The Acting Mayor’s report was received, filed and made part of the record, on a motion by Councilman Albrecht. The motion carried viva voce: **VOTE: 4 ayes– 0 nays.**

Solicitor Haas’ Report – Solicitor Haas had no report due to absence.

Auditor Williams Report – Mr. Williams reported the following:

1. He said that he sent emails and a couple of hours of conversation with the retirement system and he even sent another email that Mrs. Aeh had asked him to send with additional information and he still had not heard a response back from them other than that they received his email. He said when and if he receives anything from them, he will report it to the Solicitor first and then to Council.

The City Auditor’s report was received, filed and made part of the record, on a motion by Councilman Albrecht. The motion carried viva voce: **VOTE: 4 ayes– 0 nays.**

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS FROM CITY COUNCIL

1st Ward – Councilman Sean Dunne reported the following:

1. He said it was difficult not seeing Jo Ann’s car outside and on a personal level it was great working with Jo Ann, she was very helpful to him as a rookie and was very generous with her time to explain things to him. He still was hopeful that the situation could be resolved quickly. He added that it was unfortunate the way insurance was organized in this country and that someone could be blocked from doing a public service because of the absolute insane situation with the health insurance company. The last country he lived in, this would never have been a problem and he doesn’t like the overall context that it created because in some ways we’re excluding certain people from public service and denying them the right to hold a public office. He added that Jo Ann had told him that she was very thankful that Trent had spent so much time looking into it.
2. He thanked Sam and Andy for looking into a number of things related to Front Street and Scioto Trail.
3. He followed up on issues relating to cats in the city and thanked Manager Sutherland and Chief Ware for contributing to that and they were waiting for Solicitor Haas to provide a clarification of property and animals and trying to balance the ability for people to have cats and what the neighbors have to put up with.
4. He was able to stop by the Portsmouth Pride event and thought their organizational infrastructure was incredible and he hoped to have an event that ran as smoothly. He felt it was a very well attended event and great to see. He was able to talk to several people at the event and they felt that the event was something that made them feel a lot more secure and welcomed in the area.
5. He said the Blues, Brews and Barbeque event is this coming Saturday and everyone is welcome to attend. He said along with these other events whether it’s Christmas Tree lights in Tracy Park or the Pride event, it was great to see that we’re developing this as a space for people to attend and have a good time.
6. He spoke to a representative from Brian Baldrige’s office as they had sent out a letter asking about different projects in the city and he was able to speak about a number of things. He said they were very much interested in the Stadium and possible riverfront development. He stressed that the NFL would not help but felt that the State would help if we show that we’re using it as a space for a variety of cultural events.
7. He spoke to ODOT about the space under the bridge by Front Street and was waiting on them to get back with him.
8. He gave an update on the Skate Park and thought that they would be given a message of whether or not they could start with preliminary preparations for the park but they have not received it yet.
9. He said the Dog Park was moving forward and was great.
10. He attended a River Days planning event with Councilman Lowe and it was interesting to hear the preparations that were being made for the boat races. He felt it would be an incredible time and people were very excited about it.
11. He read a proclamation for All Saints Church for their 200th celebration.
12. He was leaving the Cincinnati area (his favorite bagel place) this morning and seen someone wearing a Portsmouth Skate Park t-shirt.

2nd Ward – Vacant

3rd Ward – Councilman Kevin E. Johnson reported the following:

1. He said there was a vacancy in the 2nd Ward and the resumes were due by July 17th. He reviewed the qualifications for the position being if you have been a resident of the City for at least three

years and of the 2nd Ward for 6 months or more, a resume could be submitted to the City Clerk because a decision would be made later this month.

2. He thanked Sam for a couple of items regarding trees and fallen limbs. He thanked Andy Gedeon because every time he contacts him, he's right on it.
3. He again thanked the news media that covered our meetings.

4th Ward – Councilman Albrecht reported the following:

1. He received a complaint about a month ago about people living in a trailer at Mound and Grant Streets. He turned it into Mike Winters but haven't heard anything back to date.
2. He said that he would miss Councilwoman Aeh also and that she was very knowledgeable.

5th Ward – Councilman Meadows had no report due to absence.

6th Ward – Councilman Lowe reported the following:

1. He thanked Sam for taking care of the potholes on the Gallia Street bridge. He received compliments about the quickness of the request.
2. He reported 1117 Johnson Street for having high grass.
3. He attended an event at Allard Park for Miss East Ali Escamilla (River Day's contestant) in which she raised money for human trafficking awareness.
4. He said that there was a reason that he was sitting in a different chair tonight and it was because of Councilwoman Aeh. He said she had done so much to help him with his Council position and it was a shame that she's being wronged and he hoped something could be done about it because we need her back here. He said that she was the most knowledgeable person with regards to city business that he's met and he will sit in her chair until she comes back.

Councilman Lowe made a motion to recess into Executive Session with the City Manager to discuss upcoming contract negotiations.

The role was called and the motion carried: **VOTE: 4 ayes– 0 nays, Council recessed into Executive Session at 6:32 p.m.**

Executive
Session

Councilman Dunn moved that Council reconvene from Executive Session. The roll was called and the motion carried. **VOTE: ayes 4 – nays 0, Council reconvened with all still in attendance except Auditor Williams at 6:41 p.m.**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:43 p.m. on a motion by Councilman Albrecht.

City Clerk

Acting Mayor