



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

Development & Parks

Office of the Clerk of Council
200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Stephen A. Renner, Chair, Ryan P. Jolley, Michael Schnetzer

Kimberly McWilliams, CMC, Clerk of Council

Monday, August 25, 2014

Law Library

Immediately Following Finance Committee

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES: Anthony Jones, Tony Collins, Joann Bury, Mayor Stinchcomb, President of Council Brian Larick

Present 1 - Stephen A. Renner

Absent 2 - Ryan P. Jolley, and Michael Schnetzer

ITEM - From Director of Parks & Recreation

2014-0119 Parks & Rec. Supporting Docs

1. Code Change 563.18 - Fishing

Renner said first item is a code change; Collins said it is a simple clarification; we have had some confusion about fishing in parks; clarifying that fishing in our ponds is catch and release and fishing in open waters is by state law; someone was camped out by a pond and was catching and taking fish with them; Larick said only question I have is that we changed water to creeks (general to specific); Collins said trying to eliminate taking fish from ponds; if it's a public water in a park it is considered a "creek", i.e., Big Walnut Creek, McKenna Creek; creek was used to differentiate between the waters of the state; makes it more clear for residents to understand; used to just say Woodside Green Park and Woodside South and left out Hannah Park and out other ponds; these would only apply to parks; fishing licenses are required in State of Ohio but don't think anyone has ever been enforcing in our parks; assume Ohio Wildlife Division could show up and ask to see a fishing license.

Recommendation: 1st Reading, Consent; no need to come back.

Discussion Item:

1. Development and Parks Performance Timetable

Larick said talking about this committee and what makes sense on how to provide information to Council and/or the public on any topic or portion of topic; on a big scale it could be operations of the pool, or economic development

contact efforts or even a segment of the work that is done from an economic development perspective, or a data report from Building and Zoning of permit requests, or time for permits to be completed or issues that have come up with applying for a permit; where we have the opportunity to have discussion on what information can be provided and/or discussed with Council, members of the committee and general public that is informative and educational that is not overwhelming from a workload standpoint; not massive PowerPoint presentations, but just good info; requesting suggestions from committee on telling a story; information that is understood without having to be called upon to explain so that we can know those things at any point in time; Collins said already provide quarterly Parks Board update on financial status of different enterprises but don't actually present findings to Council so they kind of get washed out; thus gives impression that we don't track things; maybe instead of presuming reading updates, should make presentation to Council on status of specific items; lots of things came up this year that I'm sure you would have liked to have known ahead of time; can bring those topically; those aren't performance measures, those are just what is happening today; Larick said one thing that comes to mind is park facility upkeep; what does it take to maintain parks facilities; i.e. fuel expenditure, manpower and labor to mow, weed, etc.; what is that aggregate because that translates to the public as scale; if we have 700+ acres of parks and we have a specific amount in maintenance expenditure, here is what that means; Collins said the challenge is we focus so much on higher view often because our ability to take in data, compile, summarize and put it in format that is readable; wish financial reporting system could do that but doesn't do that for us so it takes man hours to do; trying to establish a fee-based system for our athletic field users, so analyzing how much it costs to maintain each field is a major project; so only do on an as-needed basis because Parks doesn't have resources to do the cost analysis; it's critical, so instead I look at macro levels; I focus on the enterprise operations from the revenue side, from the recreation side; and then from the expense side I look at a combination of budget performance quality performance, and customer service level types of things; don't have that kind of data; been goal for four years to have detailed analysis of, for example, the island at Creekside; there has been considerable degradation of the park over the last 5 years and comparing the amount of money we have spent to the number of visitors; I would love to see those numbers, but can't pull Mike Musser off job long enough to sit down and create that system so we can collect it; Larick asked what things he would like to see included; Collins said there are some subjective things and some quantitative things, is our dollar cost going up because erosion is increasing; Larick said what are the things; Collins said erosion control, mowing, electrical repairs, man hours, quality; it looks horrible now compared to what it looked like 5 or 10 years ago; can look at it to tell there is an issue with maintenance and need to set quantitative goal but has always been tabled to take care of a bigger priority; Larick asked so we don't have either in our management systems or financial systems, a means of approximating the upkeep generally through all of our parks as opposed to specifically one park, we don't know how much time one employee spends mowing in a week; Collins said it would take a lot of man power; not a good way to determine how much time he spends on mowing; very few parks employees that only perform one role; do not have a job-charging system; some organizations have that where you have a job card and you punch into a job and you charge your time out to certain areas, but we don't have that system.

Development has quarterly and mid-year reports and it outlines the number of permits and capital investment for those permits, the number of business visits, new companies that we are able to identify; job numbers are really hard because they are not always available; we have produced mid-year reports that have a collection of everything which is required of the Building Department by the State Building Code; capital investment is a big positive impact, more taxes, more people feel comfortable investing; business and jobs are next variable; we have zoning applications, permits, code enforcement issues (and a detailed map of where they are at) with repeat offenders, etc.; we have Planning Commission every two weeks and I think that may be a valuable update which is in our Council report every week (what was passed, etc.); another big work area with tangible results is the CIC, a lot of activity is going on there with the Land Bank, where we have been able to turn around some properties for private development; we have a new website that is up and running for economic development purposes; we are getting involved in a lot of other things that may not be for public consumption yet, but the organization itself has been making strides toward their goals which is not often discussed unless requests for additional funding have been made; we have other larger projects like the Fiber Optic Capital Program for which we received \$1 million dollar grant from the State; Larick said his thinking is that lots of different buckets, how are they defined; is there something identifying what you do and how you do it with some level of data to provide quantity effort; the whole point is to educate both internally and externally the things that are done; one of the more difficult things is translating commercial work and the efforts it takes, whether it is cost or regulation, from people's individual worlds into the commercial scale; so if it costs \$1,000 to mow a park and people think they could get a small business to do it for less; that's what I'm looking for to be able to educate and translate; to also help understand where attention is needed; where we may need resources, to help with discussion, dialogue and support.

Renner said he goes to Woodside Green Park a lot; he knows how much time is invested; it's a nice park to go play; baseball, soccer, people fishing in pond; but people are not aware that the City is investing in this park; most activity takes place on the weekend or after hours; so what is there to educate them that the city has been there; I'm sure the pond takes lots of hours to maintain along with the shelter, the basketball courts, etc.; Larick said maybe forget about dollars and all of the detail that may be tough to capture, but what is the work schedule of things that are done at Woodside Green Park, that you mow weekly or when it exceeds 3", or the pond upkeep, or that the bathrooms are checked on a regular basis; Collins said there is a lot of information of what goes into the management of that park that people don't understand or know; Collins used the example that every year for years the city rented the area that is now owned by St. Matthews for soccer fields for the Gahanna Soccer Association and we would mow the fields at the Northeast School for GSA; people didn't know that, it just happened, they just showed up to play and for years the City paid, so maybe it's not just site based, it's also program based; Collins said that's what we're dealing with for athletic fields, what does the city do for the athletic fields that can be identified; Larick said if we can't identify maintenance across the board of parks but identify things unique to a specific park separately; once that makes sense we slowly work towards a bigger picture; doesn't all have to be done at once; Stinchcomb asked if there were any other (other than pools) hot topics or areas of interest that the committee would like to delve into; Larick said point here is that this type of information helps to fend off anxiety no matter how the

information is presented because the information and insight is there; Renner strongly believes this; when a resident asks why, the information tells why and often times having that information, and the reasoning behind it, answers those questions and tones down or reduces the energy; Stinchcomb asked if that information would come from minutes of this committee; Larick said it potentially becomes information on the website; people can read it, understand it and see that we are all engaged in it and at the same time that information is in some reasonable format for the public; identifies all of our parks, all of the work done in the parks, all of the activities held in those parks, etc.

Economic Development is a little different because there isn't the personal attachment that some of the parks have; but when it comes to revenue, effort and response, what is the schedule; what are the proactive and responsive steps; what are the players; short description of understandings and time commitment and what that represents; we have talked many times about our acreage and what is available and what the ownership structure looks like; we have so many plots that are an acre or less, we have these that are consolidated ownership, etc.; that can help provide description; we have many discussions around economic development and the future, which is true, and we need to understand the work that is being done and understand limitations and capacity; Jones said since his Deputy Director, Michael Blackford, is on board he has taken over the Planning Commission process which helps a lot; it freed me up to be able to spend 2 hours strategizing and analyzing the Tech Center corridor from Hamilton to Taylor Station; all of the businesses that are there, the acreage that is vacant in the city and in the township, the amount of square footage, the amount of income taxes generated from this corridor, the infrastructure needs within this corridor and how the strategy is going to be based in the future for economic development to make this corridor the most attractive place for incentives and for us to create the jobs we need to sustain our operations going forward; this is laying out a strategy for negotiations so we have to be somewhat cautious, but the factual data I have in a document that I can provide at the next meeting shows what the city's land should look like in the Buckles tract north, Tech Center Drive east of Science Boulevard and Central Park; here are some of the dynamics that are impacting that discussion; that data lays out infrastructure needs, when we need to look at incentives this is a corridor that should be our top priority; it's our Emerald Parkway in Dublin; this is where all of our jobs are; 12% of our income tax comes from this mile of roadway; how do we insure that we increase that with the vacant land that is there; that helps shape some framework; I'm not saying that I can do that for every corridor, but this was the focus of my department; Larick said that is specifically where I'm going; can a portion of what you are talking about be standardized over time for different parts of the community; Jones said we are working on that with the website that we just created; we have "parks"; the industrial zone south of Claycraft, we have Central Park, Eastgate, etc., but each one of these individual parks will have that level of detail, vacant land, property ownership, industry makeup, amount of commercial space, incentives in place, need for infrastructure, etc., and those are going to be segments we are working on now; the goal is to have printable pdf's from the website; where people can go to find out what they need to; these are goals we are working on but it takes a lot energy; graphic design is a challenge; website is by far biggest thing that we have accomplished in a while in regards to information gathering and a very easy presentation can be done.

Collins believes that 90% of the time if people have the information in front of them it quells the issue; takes time to get data together; Larick said purpose of this conversation outside of regular Council meetings and just "here is legislation that I need approved" and to have the discussion in a format that can be broken down into doable pieces, not asking for everything all at once; what can we lay out as informational aspects within both areas that can then be built into a comprehensive information piece about function, cost, effort, etc., over some span of time; I'm less concerned with the timeline than to present a picture of what makes sense for the future and move on one step at a time; Jones asked where does the educational component of what I just spoke about regarding Tech Center Drive go; that's not necessarily a function of operations but it is a very strong function of policy going forward, investments, incentives, etc.; Larick said it could be presented as a competitiveness packet, here is our bucket of incentives and what we can provide and this is what our competitors (other cities) can provide; show the market drivers, what drives people to a certain place; Jones said he would love to have that conversation, his only fear is that it would get into the hands of our competitors; agrees that that information by far is the biggest way to overcome that disadvantage; that information leads to policy action that needs to occur because there is some policy action that needs to occur like renegotiation of some contracts, investments of some capital; how to get that information into your hands so that it is not a hard ask all at once which is not the best way.

Larick said from an economic development standpoint we need to start with the map; identify properties and prioritization of areas; identify levels; small single parcels not contiguous may be Level 9, Buckles Tract may be a level 1 and whatever fits in between; Royal Plaza, Morse Road; laying out from economic impact kind of picture; then means and methods operationally what is done to attract and support and build, etc.

Stinchcomb said could probably do that same thing that we did in parks; brought out the map and identified the location of all of the parks and which areas of people they serve; Larick said from a parks standpoint it is really the scaling and the commercial aspect of maintaining and running the parks; Larick said it's a commercial enterprise, it's not like my back yard, I can get out my little push mower and do my thing; there are regulatory requirements from a safety standpoint, there are heavy equipment requirements because of size and scale; it doesn't translate to my little back yard; people typically fall back on their own scenario; when we say it costs so much for our data system, but underneath that is a commercial industrial class secured in a network; that's not go buy a \$50 router and put in a couple of codes and you have your laptop up and running; that is not what we're talking about; people need to know how much it costs to run the parks they enjoy; identify the costs run a commercial enterprise; Mayor said it has been a problem for a long time; people have to understand they can't use same experience from their home; Larick noted not everyone has a problem understanding City operations aren't exactly like running your home and this information can be helpful.

Jones said have already done some of this work so it's not as big of a job; decided to go through land use plans and do an analysis for Planning Commission, have the Commission look at it, review it, discuss it and give us some feedback; did Westside and presented to Planning Commission, we had several meetings on it with data about investments, about what it was like in

1997 compared to what it is now, some variables of the plan and how it is relevant or not relevant; there were no recommended changes (that's not really what we were asking for) but they gave us their feedback; we already have it prepared and I will bring it to the next committee meeting if you so desire to provide to the development committee; it's informative but somewhat lengthy so we have to cut it down because there are a lot of technical design components; the goal with Planning Commission was to make it simple, to make sure they are aware of what the plan says so when applications come before them they can pull upon those facts; plan from 1997 is a little old, but some of the variables aren't going to change plan; 62 is going to be our major thoroughfare; code enforcement is something we need to work on and address; we had planned to do that with each individual land use plan throughout Blackford's first year here and we have already done the biggest one; some are much smaller in scope and scale; intend to go through those and as Planning Commission reviews we are going to give Council our analysis and Planning Commission's feedback to educate before we make any comprehensive requests.

Larick said any of these types of things would be secondary to specific items on the agenda that need to be covered; if committee agenda items are too much for an evening, then things can be pushed so that the outcome here is do you have enough thought for what can be prepared for presentation as a first step and/or discussion for a first step; Jones said Tech Center Drive is already completed and would probably come with a lot of other discussion; that is more strategy looking forward; I lay out what needs to happen for us to be successful in this corridor and it shows where we need to take action; Larick asked if the basics of that can be translated to the website; Jones said it is a 3-page Word document with a lot of graphics; I would take out some of the strategy points because those are for internal consumption like negotiation tactics but I can have that prepared; Larick said if you already have that and can bring it to committee, then we can discuss whether something else may have more depth or what the next step needs to be as time goes on; to build upon it; to build this "book of information" that we have covered and is available to understand more fully the jobs that are done in each of the areas of the city; Stinchcomb said end product could be more depth of information on the website and knowledge that the City has discussed them and worked on them and this is a summary of the discussion; Larick said less of the discussion and more of the information; my feeling is to consolidate the information into key pieces of info; Stinchcomb clarified that this could be a source of current knowledge that is available; if someone asks about Tech Center Drive, we can direct them to the website and a specific page; Stinchcomb says it is building content and certainly education for Council; if we have committee like this we may decide the information is important for all of Council to hear, not just in small committees because then you are only reaching half of the members of Council; Larick said split committees have positives and negatives; being split a portion misses out, if it's common stuff it's not a problem and it makes sense; it's a way to cover more things and get more things accomplished, etc., and items like this can be vetted in a smaller group that then can be taken to everyone; if it's something that everyone needs to know then some people are hearing it twice; it makes sense to bring it to everyone once; Stinchcomb said over the course of time most want to hear and participate in the discussion; they may want to hear the discussion for a specific item, but they are in the other room discussing something else; administration likes to present to the bigger group; prefer it for all of Council at one time.

Jones said reading and ranking the Economic Development Plan RFP responses is going to take some involvement as well; don't know how you envision this, but it's going to take some communication to the bigger body once we get to that particular point; some of those variables will be a discussion there, so having Council involved in some of the things we are doing will be great; we will have additional dialogue as to what Council is looking for early in the process so that by the time it comes to the final ask there will be some comfort there; Larick said where I see some opportunity here is that typically I would see this group working through the broad issues like: what is the scope, where do we want to focus, what is the cost, what is the proposal; then it has been vetted and the lower grade stuff has been removed and what is brought forward seems to be solid, and then the "final proposal" is taken to the Committee of a Whole to make sure there isn't anybody on Council who has some other thoughts that need to be included; I find that the smaller group can work through the minutia much easier, and then take the beta to the full group for final review; Jones said this is a very limited body who meets every other Monday and this process takes a lot of daytime activities, review and meetings, etc., which will make it more of a challenge to have this body more engaged in that particular role; was hoping to have at least one Council person to serve on that body; whether we give recommendations to this body and then we go over that, or have this body delineate all of the individual components, that would take some time during the day; Larick said we have a Development chair that could come to those meetings; Renner said he didn't know what they were talking about; Jones said received 5 responses to the Economic Development Department RFP that was sent out; need to form a committee to review those proposals; Renner said he would serve on the board; Jones said he would email the RFP responses to Renner.

Collins said comprehensive planning is basis of planning our future; what capacity do we have; doesn't matter if we have \$20 million or \$40 million worth of projects if we only have \$5 million of capacity.

Collins said has really focused on aquatic side of what is going on; presented a lot of data today; mentioned that I would like to see us come back in two weeks (I'm sure there are going to be a lot of questions) and then we have a public meeting; struggling with format of the meetings; by the time we have the public meeting, all options would have more bones about them; whatever proposals would be looked at by a parks board with Council members who would participate in that conversation; I would rather this be citizen driven instead of staff driven in terms of the decision process going forward; mentioned it to this group previously but didn't have a plan then; Collins said received proposal from Steven Nye on Friday and it was with them running pool but City still paying for everything; hoping for Option D and the citizen proposal came in as an "A"; the YMCA CEO wants to talk about it again; they want to look at the citizen proposal and see what input they may have; they don't want to be deemed as "walking away"; as we go forward and these scenarios evolve, it puts more clarity behind whether Option "D" is possible or if Option "A" is the only one; we have the Steven Nye variation, we have the YMCA variation, I've even heard there may be some private folks that may be interested; at the end when we have all options available, I want a citizen group to evaluate those options; what level of quality, security, performance measurement, etc. they want to see; before the other topic was put on the agenda I was focusing on the pools; If I leave the

aquatics issue, the topic today, because of the Stonehenge proposal, would be land inventory, land planning, how we plan our land for parks use, how we acquire land (how it is acquired for different functions), the cost analysis for an operational park versus a green or open space, etc. because so many people don't understand our acreage and why we have what we have and why you can't just go sell it; Larick said if there were no material agenda items at the next committee what would you bring to the table; Collins said just looking at it tonight and hearing what you are describing, I think if you look at the information that people often question us about beyond park operational cost, land (why we have land and what it does), recreational enterprises; Larick said and what does it take to keep them whether it be a foreman, an onsite person, cleaning, maintenance; it doesn't have to be dollar specific but it can be for this enterprise; Collins said it's similar to data in the color chart that we often talk about the surface things of just the direct operational costs, but when you look at those indirect management, capital costs and infrastructure costs you could do this analysis with almost everything that we do and I think that it would be helpful because those are the things that people don't understand; like maintaining athletic fields; you have to buy the mower, perform maintenance on the mower, buy gas and oil for the mower, involve Human Resources in hiring the person to operate the mower, number of injuries involved in that position, you can track that; but I just need time to think about how to go about it.

Jones said would be appropriate for him to take time to think about it as well so there can be some consistency leading up to other things; is there some way to integrate them, more priorities, etc.; Larick said want to make use of times we have available to be informative, educational, useful and valuable in what we do and not having this committee, or the service and safety committees as well, feel like an it's an opportunity missed; Collins asked what does Council see; I'm in the woods so far that sometimes I lose sight of the trees; what might be important to you I don't see because I deal with it every day and it's a matter of fact item; Larick said parks, upkeep, things; Stinchcomb said topics will help prioritize what they bring; Larick said need something that provides scale; if we're talking about schedule, something that provides scale whether it be acreage or supplies; my point is we're not talking about buying small amounts, we're talking about cases; Renner said want to go away from cost center type stuff and more towards the overall vision; why is Woodside Green so important; what does it do from your overall strategic plan of the Big Walnut Trail; or maybe it's having informational items at the park in kiosks so that you don't have to have an actual person there telling about park; Collins said there may be something topical for Council that the directors are not hearing; every once in a while a Council person sends them a question; realize there are trending topics and instead of us guessing what to bring to your attention, it would be helpful on what to bring going forward.

Larick said when looking at Woodside Green Park and how it fits into the overall land use plan, this helps build the picture for all of the parks like Gramercy Park (on Hamilton), Royal Gardens (on Agler), and other small pieces of property that the city deals with and drawing that picture of what does and does not go into the grand plan and providing clarity for some of it.

Collins asked if everyone received color-coded parcel list sent last Friday; didn't get a response from anyone; Renner said didn't get it; Larick said he is reviewing it; Stinchcomb said it was a good first step.

Renner adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Kimberly McWilliams, CMC, Reporting