

**Cuyahoga Falls City Council
Minutes of the Public Affairs Committee**

October 16, 2017

Members: Vic Pallotta, Chair
Adam Miller
Jerry James

Mr. Pallotta called the meeting to order at 6:46 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes of the September 5, 2017 Public Affairs Committee meeting were approved as written.

Legislation Discussed:

Temp. Ord. B-81
Temp. Res. B-82
Temp. Res. B-83
Temp. Res. B-84

Discussion:

Temp. Ord. B-81

An ordinance amending the Traffic Control File by providing for installation of various traffic control devices, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Pallotta stated that Police Chief Davis, Chair of the Traffic Committee, will give an update on the Traffic Control File. These are things have already been accomplished, stop signs and speed limits. Mr. Tony Demasi, City Engineer, will then go through the reconvening of all the streets on Front Street configuration.

Chief Davis stated that the first item is to prohibit parking on the odd side of Hudson Drive between Nutwood and 62 feet south of Nutwood. This was brought to their attention by Councilman Miller. It was a problem where vehicles were parking and creating a sight distance problem for people coming out to the intersection. The next item is Lillis Drive at Graham Road, to add signage designating a right turn only and a left turn only. The pavement markers are there. This will authorize the sign and put it in the Traffic File. Eastbound out of Sackett Avenue at the light would designate the signage for the proper turn. In the new Salt Creek Development, they are trying to stay ahead with signage as these houses are being built. Once they're approved for planning, the signs will be put up. Enclave at Old Mill Pond Development is to make sure the signs are there as the development is going through together with the Traffic Control File.

Mr. Demasi stated that he will talk about Item 6 on the ordinance, the Downtown Transformation Traffic File. Everybody was presented with a representation of what these will look like once the project is complete. The first four items are self-explanatory. Item 6(a), add signage designating Second Street, from Oakwood Drive to Northland Street, as a two-way with center turn lane. This will look like the new State Road north of Graham Road, where there is a center turn lane and one

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lane in each direction on the other side; 6(b), add signage designating Front Street, from Oakwood Drive to State Route 8, as two-way. This will change that from one-way, southbound, to two-way. There will be no center turn lane. It will just be two lanes; 6(c), add signage designating Front Street, from Broad Boulevard to Oakwood Drive, as two-way. This is the former pedestrian mall area. It's going to be a road. Part of it is already built with the curb and sidewalks. This puts it in the file as a two-way road; 6(d), add signage designating Oakwood Drive, from Front Street to Second Street, as two-way. This is a short, one-block area of Oakwood Drive between Front Street and Second Street that's currently one-way going eastbound. This will make it a two-way; 6(e), add the stop sign at Stow Avenue at Front Street. Stow Avenue will dead end into Front Street, and there will be a stop sign there for that item; 6(f), add stop signs at the northbound, southbound and eastbound approaches to the Front Street/Oakwood Drive intersection. The intersection of Front Street and Oakwood Drive will be a four-way stop. Westbound, there currently is a stop sign, so that is why it is not in the update request; 6(g), add stop sign at the northbound and southbound approaches to the Front Street and Northland Street intersection. It will be a three-way stop intersection.

Mr. Demasi stated that, jumping down to 6(j), at the same intersection, there will be signage designating the left lane as a left turn only lane and the right lane as a straight only lane. The next is Item 6(h), the intersection of Second Street and Northland Street. It is a request to add a stop sign at the northbound approach to Second Street and the Northland Street intersection. Again, they're changing Second Street in the area from one-way to two-way from Northland Street and Oakwood Drive, so a stop sign is needed there. Going down to 6(h), add a stop sign at the northbound approach to the Second Street/Northland Street intersection; 6(n) add signage designating the right northbound lane on Second Street at Northland Street as right turn only and the left lane as a left turn only. The next is Item 6(i). This is a request to add signage designating the right eastbound lane on Oakwood Drive at Front Street a right turn and straight and the left lane as a left turn only. 6(k) is referencing the intersection of Second Street and Oakwood Drive. It is a request to add signage designating the right northbound to Second Street at Oakwood Drive as a right turn only, the center lane as straight only and the left lane as a left turn only. This is by the City Building. Northbound, there will be three lanes at that intersection. The next item, 6(l), this is also that same intersection going southbound. It's a request to add signage designating the right lane at Second Street at Oakwood Drive as right turn only, the center lane straight only and the left lane as left turn only. It will mirror what's going on in the northbound side of that intersection. 6(m), this is the same intersection going westbound. It's a request to add signage designating the right westbound lane on Oakwood Drive at Second Street as a straight and a right turn only and the left as a left turn only lane. The last is Item 6(o). This is part of the annual resurfacing project. Front Street has been resurfaced from Prospect Street to Chestnut Boulevard. When that was done, some bike facilities were introduced, so that will allow the signage for that. This is typical when bike lanes are added.

Mr. Pallotta asked if there were going to be left-turn arrows on any of those intersections. Mr. Demasi stated that there will be. Mrs. Pyke asked if the symbol indicated on the picture depicting 6(l) mean it is a shared lane. Mr. Demasi stated it is a share road. Mr. Iona stated that when they

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looked at this last week with the directions, it was hard to comprehend. This makes it 100-percent easier. He thanked Mr. Demasi for doing the extra work.

Mr. Miller moved to bring out Temp. Ord. B-81 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. James. Motion passed (3-0).

Temp. Res. B-82

A resolution expressing support for and urging passage of Issue 29, the Cuyahoga Falls City School District levy, at the general election to be held on November 7, 2017, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Justin Klingshirn, Treasurer of the Cuyahoga Falls School District, 451 Stow Avenue, stated that the Levy Committee's goal is to be as transparent as possible with their financials. One of the ways to do that is to provide a Citizen-centric report. What that does is allow the citizens to be able to comprehend the report. Those reports typically tend to be around 80 to 100 pages. What their Citizen-centric report does is consolidate all that information into four, easily-readable pages. The Board of Education approved the resolution for a 4.95-mill levy to be placed on the November 7, 2017 ballot. It is going to be Issue 29. It will provide \$3.6 million per year for five years. Those funds will be used for capital improvements, technology, curriculum, human resources and operating funds. Compared to other districts within Summit County, the Cuyahoga Falls City School District received the lowest amount of combined state and local revenue per student. Also of note is the District's 20-year bond, which generates 0.88 mills, will expire on December 31st, 2017. This expiring bond will save area residents \$30.80 per year for each \$100,000 of property valuation. The additional 4.9-mill levy they are seeking will cost the property owners \$173.25 per year for each \$100,000 assessed property valuation. The net impact of the expiration of the bond issue and with the emergency levy coming on will be \$142.45 per year for each \$100,000 valuation. In total, this is \$11.87 a month, or 39 cents per day.

Mr. Klingshirn stated that some of the historical trends for the Cuyahoga Falls City School District is their general property tax election over the past five years has increased 0.99 percent. Over the last 10 years, the general property tax revenue has increased 1.19 percent. In half of those years, they lost money. Going back to 2004-2005, their five-year forecast and revenues, they received \$48.85 million in revenue. For the five-year forecast coming forward, they're anticipating \$52.29 million. That's an increase of 0.07 percent, or 0.005 percent over the course of 13 years. Since 2010, they've reduced 76 positions and have increased their students. They have been asked to do more with less for the last 13 years. They are trying to be as transparent as possible regarding their financials and they are seeking the voters' help. Mr. Pallotta stated that, as he goes door to door, one of the things that keeps being brought up is the issue of why they are razing Sill School and why wasn't the property sold. Mr. Klingshirn stated that the offer that they received for Sill School was very low. They had hoped they could do more with it, but, as time progressed, they weren't able to. The cost for asbestos removal and the cost for construction demolition has consistently increased over the years. His office is looking for US-EPA Brownfield grants, hoping that the razing of Sill School will not only generate a \$200,000 grant for the community, but also

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taking some of the property that Sill School lies on and using it as beautification and enrichment for the community there.

Mr. Miller asked how many students currently enrolled in the Cuyahoga Falls City School District do not live in the City of Cuyahoga Falls or Silver Lake. Mr. Klingshirn stated that it currently would be 539 students. Mr. Miller asked how large last year's graduating class was. Mr. Klingshirn stated it was just shy of 500 students. Mr. Miller asked what percentage of students in the district are on free or reduced lunch. Mr. Klingshirn stated he believes it is approximately 40 percent.

Mr. James moved to bring out Temp. Res. B-82 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. Miller. Motion passed (3-0).

Temp. Res. B-83

A resolution expressing support for and urging passage of Issue 35, Woodridge Local School District tax levy, at the general election to be held on November 7, 2017, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Walter Davis, Superintendent of the Woodridge Local School District, stated that he had given Council a flier that explains the levy proposal. It's been interesting and quite troubling to watch how the State of Ohio funds its public schools. If they were to make a list of all of Ohio's public schools, 610 or so districts from across Ohio, and listed them from the district that gets the most support from Columbus to the district that gets the least support from Columbus, Woodridge would be Number 10 from the bottom. There are only 9 public school districts in Ohio that receive less per pupil support than the Woodridge Local Schools. As a result, their Board of Education must consistently go back to the local taxpayers to seek additional funding to maintain the excellent program that they've become accustomed to and that their community expects. In 2012, voters were told they will be back in five to seven years, because that's the levy cycle they are forced to face. Their campaign slogan is, "Promises Made, Promises Kept." They have done everything they said they would do and here they are, back to the voters, within that timeframe.

Mr. Davis stated that with a district their size and the type of property, an 8.71-mill emergency operating levy would generate \$4 million. That \$4 million will take them another five to seven years on a five-year forecast. Unfortunately for districts like Woodridge, they will probably be back in five to seven years unless something changes. The other evening, he hosted a forum for the community on school funding. There were approximately 60 people there. The overwhelming notion that came from that discussion was that they need to do something to change the way Ohio funds its public schools. All the school districts in Summit County have been talking about this. Copley, Fairlawn, Revere, Twinsburg also receive less than \$1,000 per student from Columbus, but Woodridge is the lowest. This year, it is about \$735 per student. Their budget is \$30 million. It takes about \$10,800 to educate one child for one year in Woodridge. If Columbus is giving them \$735 per student, they must make up that difference to provide the type of progress that their students deserve, and that the community expects. Mr. Davis stated that he is always elated to

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have the support of Council and the Village Council of Peninsula Council. No one wants to come to the voters and ask for more money, but there is no choice. Columbus is not going to come to their aid at least not yet. He stated that he would like to close with one last statistic. When the governor released the biannual budget this past summer, they swallowed hard when they recognized that their meager State support was being cut by about 20 percent. They only get about \$1.4 million from Columbus, but are anticipating an overall reduction, so these local initiatives are even more important to Woodridge.

Mr. Pallotta asked what the consequences would be if the levy would fail. Mr. Davis stated that if the levy fails, they will be in rough shape. Very soon, they will be under a performance audit from the State Auditor's office. He is confident they will pass the audit. There are a lot of good things happening in both school districts. They all recognize the communities are overtaxed. His hope is that they can come together across district boundaries and pressure the legislature to find a solution for this dilemma that has been ongoing for decades and that no one has the political will to address.

Mr. Miller moved to bring out Temp. Res. B-83 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. James. Motion passed (3-0).

Temp. Res. B-84

A resolution supporting County Issue 3, which will approve a 4.5 mill renewal levy for County of Summit Developmental Disabilities ("Summit DD") for a six-year period from 2019 to 2024, and respectfully urging all Summit County voters to vote in favor of Issue 3 at the November 7, 2017 general election, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Joseph Eck, on behalf of the Summit DD Board, thanked Council and the Administration for having him there. Issue 3 is the Board's sole operating levy. It generates approximately 81 percent of the Board's revenue of about \$50 million a year. The taxpayers pay \$11.50 per month for \$100,000 of property, and that has not increased since 2007. If this levy were to pass, by the end of this levy cycle, 2024, they would have gone 19 years without a tax increase throughout that period. Each year, Summit DD has supported about 100 more clients annually, operating with a reduction in property values since 2007. This levy does not generate what it did when it was initially passed. Approximately half of the \$50 million annually that is generated goes to draw down an additional \$60 million in Federal Medicaid dollars, which is pumped right into the local community through private providers who provide Medicaid waiver services. The other \$25 million annually goes to pay for services that are not Medicaid funded.

Mr. James moved to bring out Temp. Res. B-84 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. Miller. Motion passed (3-0).

Mr. Barry Braunstein, 1405 Buckingham Circle, Apartment E, stated that the reason he was there is that he has failed to obtain permission from the Mayor and the City attorney for what should be a common-sense solution. He has asked for records of his condominium association's bills,

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because the condominium is claiming to bill them directly based on the City water and sewer bills. In the State law, there are plenty of exceptions that are reasonable; for instance, if someone wants police records and they expunge the names and addresses. In the case of their condominium association, these are not private bills; these are building-wide bills, so they're not attached to an individual. For those exceptions for common-sense reasons. If someone wanted copies of their utility bills, they would have no problem. There would be no question. They would be generally given them unless the request was outrageous and continuing. He is not asking the City to take sides in anything; he is simply asking for the records to be able to establish whether the information he is being supplied by the association is accurate or not. The City has denied his request. In the case of their condominium association, these are not private bills; these are building-wide bills, so they're not attached to an individual. There are numerous grounds on which he believes he should be provided those records. He is appealing to Council for relief, because he is not getting relief from the Administration.

Mr. Jeff Fullerton, 2420 Valley View Drive, stated that they have a drainage issue on Valley View Drive. There are open culverts. Looking at the handouts that he passed out, the first couple pictures are overviews of Valley View Drive. Pictures 3 and 4 show the front of his property, 2420 Valley View Drive. The culverts are nice and trimmed and kept clean. He is diligent about that. For 14 years, he has been keeping all the branches out and all the leaves out. Looking at Picture Number 6, it is a Summit County map. The culvert that is on the north side of Valley View is the back of three properties that are on Bridgeview Circle. What happens is those culverts fill up with twigs, branches and dead trees now and then. Everything washes down the north side of the street and fills up the culvert directly across from him and then jumps the road, comes over to his side and fills up the culvert. All that water comes down his driveway and into the garage. His garage has been flooded out a couple times. He is there to address Council with this problem and make them aware that there's an issue there. He would be glad to work with the City on anything they can do here. When he spoke to Mr. Pallotta a year or so ago about this, he mentioned he should call Chuck Novak, the City's Street Commissioner. Mr. Novak has been very responsive. At times when the culverts on the north side of the street are full of leaves, he will call Mr. Novak, and, within a day or two, the vacuum truck is out there, and they clean it out. The bigger issue is that the culverts aren't large enough or the culvert pipes aren't big enough. He would like to know whose responsibility it is to maintain open culverts.

Mr. Russell Balthis, Law Director, stated that, normally, the homeowner would be responsible for performing basic maintenance, like cutting the grass or trimming, but serious maintenance, if there was an entire tree or something in the culvert, would be something for which the City would be responsible. The City has a program where they are checked from time to time to check for major improvements that are necessary. Mr. Fullerton stated that the photos he passed out indicate the backs of the Bridgeview Circle properties. The culverts are overgrown with weeds and small trees. That is what is causing a lot of the problem. Mr. Fullerton asked if the Storm Water Department is responsible for keeping the culverts clear. He knows that some of the sewer fee that is paid is used for leaf pickup to keep the culverts empty, so they don't block sewers. He asked if that is that part of that ongoing maintenance that Mr. Balthis is talking about. Mr. Balthis

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stated that the storm water fee must go into a separate storm water account. Part of that is for the leaf program, because one of the reasons for the leaf program is to keep leaves out of the storm water system. There are many the storm water projects. All that money is used for either staff or capital projects related to storm water. There are a list of projects and a high demand for projects throughout the city regarding storm water, but that is the predominant funding source for those type of challenges.

Mr. Dave Martin, 2023 16th Street, Cuyahoga Falls, stated that he is a Board of Education member for the Cuyahoga Falls City Schools, but is there as a citizen and not representing the Board. He stated he would like to thank each member of Council for their consideration and support. It means much to the City of Cuyahoga Falls and Silver Lake that they have Issue 29 for their schools, as well as the Woodridge issue passed. He has worked with several members of Council with issues in the schools, and he appreciates their input and support. Mayor Walters has always had an open-door policy, and that's critical. He considers Issue 29 a restart to the community. There's some things that he hopes, in the next few years, will put Cuyahoga Falls on a path that can follow Woodridge. Mr. Martin thanked everyone for their support, and gave them his phone number and email address.

Mrs. Pyke asked if they can get the Street Department out to those backyards of Bridgeview Circle and have those culverts cleaned. Mr. Anthony Zumbo, Service Director, stated that he is going to seek Mr. Fullerton after the meeting and go out with him to look at what they can do. He did check on Valley View Drive today. The Street Department does go out there and do this maintenance, but it is a highly-wooded area, so there is a lot of debris that falls there and collects at the pipes. Mrs. Pyke asked if there were any storm sewers or catch basins at the end of the street. Mr. Demasi stated the he doesn't know for certain, but he doesn't think so. Mr. Fullerton stated that it comes around the cul-de-sac on each side and it runs down the street into Babb Run. If the culverts are silted in, then that water overflows into the culvert and doesn't make it to Babb Run. Mr. Demasi stated that the water follows the culverts into the park. There's a ditch on each side that goes down the cul-de-sac. There are ditches on each side of the gated auxiliary road, so that water eventually makes it down into the park.

The meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.