

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

April 3, 2017

Members: Vic Pallotta, Chair
Adam Miller
Jerry James

Mr. Pallotta called the meeting to order at 8:12 p.m. Mr. James was absent.

Legislation Discussed:

Temp. Ord. B-27

Temp. Ord. B-28

Discussion:

Temp. Ord. B-27

An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract or contracts to purchase property in connection with the Dickerson Run Nature Preserve Project, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Pallotta stated that on January 23rd, they brought this out. Neal Hess presented this nature preserve. Dickerson Run runs from the west portion of the boundary line of Woodridge High School to Haas Road. It is thousands of feet of stream and a nature-preserve type area. The City has submitted a grant application with the Ohio Public Works Commission Clean Ohio Conservation Fund. It is one of three or four organizations that have submitted for this grant. The grant is for \$2,573,607 and the portion that the City is requesting is \$1,061,000.

Mr. Balthis stated that, last Friday, he, the ERTAC Board and their coordinator, Deputy Director Bob Genet from the County, Mr. Zumbo, Mr. Stewart and Matt Dickinson did a site visit on the property. They will be scoring this project on April 10th. The winners will be announced on April 20th. There are four applicants, three of which were submitted by the Summit County Metro Parks and then the one submitted by the City of Cuyahoga Falls. Mr. Neal Hess couldn't be here tonight and sent his apologies. They recommended that the project will score a little bit better in the readiness category if there is a contract for the sale of the property. This ordinance authorizes the City to a purchase contract, but the most important part is it's contingent on the City being awarded the grant. The main purpose here is to make the application more shovel ready, because, as of now, if the City were awarded the property, theoretically, it doesn't have a legal right to purchase the property. This ordinance is to give the City the right to purchase the property to make it a little more competitive when it is scored on paper on April 10th. Mr. Pallotta stated that he wanted to make sure everybody understands the City isn't out of any money. If it is awarded the grant, it's a good deal for the City. If the City doesn't get the grant and it's awarded to the Akron Metro Parks then, unfortunately, the property that is in question here will probably be developed, and that's going to be another hurdle.

Mr. Miller moved to bring out Temp. Ord. B-27 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. Pallotta. Motion passed (2-0).

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Temp. Ord. B-28

An ordinance authorizing the Parks and Recreation Board to apply for and accept a grant from the Department of Natural Resources, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Pallotta stated that this ordinance has to do with the tennis courts at Kennedy Park. Mr. Ed Stewart, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, stated that when made the deal with the school to rebuild the high school tennis courts, all the City's tennis courts were in bad shape. Tennis was on a decline. The use wasn't there. In some of the parks, like Valley Vista, there was a great need for parking, because it's a very heavily-used park. Oak Park was another park where the tennis courts were removed. They used to receive numerous complaints from Oak Park, because the lights were literally 20 feet from houses. Right now, one of the few active sports in the United States is tennis, so the Park Board brought it up. The first park chosen to bring back a tennis court was Kennedy Park. That is because the area there is not surrounded by housing. The lights were left there in case the City wanted to do a basketball court or tennis court at some time, so the site is ready. It is 75 percent, 25 percent match for the City. The grant is not due until the end of the month, but they will get more points with Council's approval to move forward. They are asking for the whole 75 percent, estimated to be \$85,000, to build two tennis courts. Mr. Pallotta stated that that doesn't mean that, at some point in time, Oak Park or Valley Vista won't get a tennis court in another year and another grant period. Mr. Stewart stated that is true. Because the popularity of tennis is on the rise, that gives them more reason to do so.

Mr. Rubino asked how many acres are incorporated within Kennedy Park. Mr. Stewart stated that it is on the grant application and he will get a copy to Mr. Rubino. Mr. Rubino stated that that portion of the park takes up a very small portion of the entire Kennedy Park. He asked if the school that is there sets partially on park land. Mr. Stewart stated that the City has funny boundaries between all the school and City properties, but, at Kennedy, the parkland starts right at the end of the overhang where the tennis courts used to be, so the tennis courts would be 100 percent on City property. Mr. Iula asked if the tennis courts at Preston School were still there. Mr. Stewart stated that they did some work with that to keep a solid surface area for the schools, because Preston is one of the few schools that doesn't have any blacktop recess area when the weather is bad. There is not a very long life left in that asphalt, because of turning it into an ice skating rink for 20 years. Mrs. Pyke stated that she wasn't silent when they removed the tennis courts, because she believes they were a real asset to the community and the neighborhoods. She is glad to see at least one of the parks is hopefully getting the tennis courts back.

Mr. Miller moved to bring out Temp. Ord. B-28 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. Pallotta. Motion passed (2-0).

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.