

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

April 19, 2021

Members: Russ Balthis, Chair
Rachel Loza
Adam Miller

Mr. Balthis called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes of the March 15, 2021 Public Affairs Committee meetings were approved as written.

Legislation Discussed:

Temp. Ord. B-18
Temp. Res. B-19

Discussion:

Temp. Ord. B-18

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

Police Chief Davis presented Temporary Ordinance B-18 to Council. Upon the recommendation of the Traffic Committee, the Traffic Control File is hereby amended as follows:

1. Request to replace the 4-way stop with a traffic signal at the intersection of 2nd Street and Northland St.
2. Request to prohibit left turn movements into and out of the Target/Staples, and Applebees/Ollie's, drives from Howe Avenue by making these areas a right turn only.

The Chief of Police will be authorized and directed to note in the Traffic Control File the proper legends. The Mayor will be authorized and directed to cause the installation or removal of the proper signage reflecting the above amendments.

Mr. Balthis stated that there has been a lot of discussion and concern around that intersection. Hopefully, that would be an improvement there.

Mr. James stated that he would like to thank them for bringing up the intersection problems. When he goes door to door, there are all kinds of complaints about near accidents and accidents going on in that intersection. There has been some concern that when people are exiting the highway, there is not that much of a stretch there if there is a red light. It is something they will need to get used to. This is a safety precaution that is going to help everybody. He has requested this for years and he is glad to see it come to fruition.

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Mayor Walters stated that the light is going to go into flash in all directions on Monday for a week. That is one of the requirements before it goes live. The following Monday, it will be operational. As many on Council know, they are not allowed to put traffic lights where they want to. It is regulated by the stops as well as two-way stops and four-way stops. Originally, there was no warrant to put a traffic light there, but they had some experts look at it and determine there could be a light installed at that intersection.

Mr. Miller moved to bring out Temp. Ord. B-18 with a favorable recommendation, second by Ms. Loza. Motion passed (3-0).

Temp. Res. B-19

A resolution supporting the Mayor's submission of an application to the Federal House Appropriations Committee for Federal Fiscal Year 2022 Community Projects to repair the Downtown Cuyahoga Falls Riverfront Boardwalk and complete the Gorge Terrace Street Transformation Project, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Anthony Zumbo, Service Director, presented Temporary Resolution to Council. The Federal House Appropriations Committee is seeking funding submission applications for Community Projects, through the Federal House Appropriations Committee, for the Federal Fiscal Year 2022 Appropriations legislation. The City of Cuyahoga Falls has identified the need for, and proposes capital improvements to public infrastructure, to wit: repairing the Downtown Cuyahoga Falls Riverfront Boardwalk and completing the Gorge Terrace Street Transformation Project.

Mr. Zumbo stated that they City had an opportunity to apply for these projects through Congressman Ryan for the Appropriations Bill. These two projects are a continuation of the Administration's Downtown Cuyahoga Falls reopening and providing access for folks to get there. The boardwalk project is going to be a rehab and a continuation of the Riverfront Boardwalk and Trail between Broad Boulevard and Riverfront Park. Some of areas of boardwalk have fallen into disrepair. A study has been done, and they are looking to see what can be done to replace and enhance some of these areas. In looking at this project, they are going to re-image the existing boardwalk and also provide some overlook areas and improve ADA compliance. It would provide some direct access to the Cuyahoga River and would give connectivity on the Metro Parks trails and additional neighborhoods from the north. It is going to provide enhanced access for folks, and it is going to provide support for all of existing and future businesses in this work-and-play environment. The Mayor has said all along that access is and will remain the driving force of the City's downtown success story. This will continue to enhance access if the City is fortunate enough to receive it.

Mr. Zumbo stated that the Gorge Terrace plan is involving Front and Second Street from the Cuyahoga River to Chestnut Boulevard. They had originally done a Master Plan prepared by GPD in August of 2013, and the City attempted to get this funded, but were unsuccessful. They have kept this Master Plan to try to bring this back and continue to push the efforts of downtown further south of Broad Boulevard. Basically, this is going to transform these two and four lane sections

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into two-lane complete streets. Complete streets are a concept that incorporates different modes of transportation, pedestrian, bicycle and all vehicles. This would include some on-street parking, new sidewalks and pedestrian crossings. They are going to include a new multi-use path and enhanced bus stops for transit users. They are going to incorporate some green infrastructure for storm management that will have to be done for this project and some traffic calming strategies to increase efficiency for pedestrian and vehicles as they move together. This will provide access to the Metro Parks trail system. This is one of the pushes that the Mayor wants in his commitment to the reopening of Front Street. This continuation south has pushed public and private reinvestment into the City. This project will only enhance that and bring it forward.

Mayor Walters stated that they have already submitted these a week ago Wednesday to Congressman Ryan's office. This is the follow-up to have a resolution that is going to give it a little more juice. They do not know how they score these projects, but, within Congressman Ryan's district, Cuyahoga Falls is the third-largest city, so they have a good chance. He reached out to him personally. This is a new process in Washington, so they are very hopeful they will get funding.

Mr. Balthis stated that he is excited they are looking at this and other sources of revenue to continue the progress in downtown. There are some structural issues with the boardwalk, so finding the outside funding to revitalize and improve that would be fantastic. He appreciates the Administration's innovation in reaching out and looking for other sources to continue progress on Front Street to expand it towards the river and towards the Gorge.

Mr. James thanked Congressman Ryan, the Administration and everyone involved. There are a lot of hikers and walkers, and they are going to be thrilled that they can walk down through Cuyahoga Falls along the river with their hiking and biking. Mrs. Spinner stated that she and one of her daughters walked along the historic trail markers. They really tried to see that area as tourists in their own town, and it was thrilling. It would be even more enhanced by the boardwalk. She is very much excited about the continuation of that commitment into the south side of Broad Boulevard and continuing that momentum and growth.

Mr. Brillhart asked what the timetable would be should the City get these grants. Mr. Zumbo stated that these projects are both in the planning stage, so the money would be for the 2022 fiscal year for the Federal Government. The end of September is when the federal fiscal year ends. October 1st is when funds would be available. The boardwalk project is probably several years away. They are considering potentially doing a design build or a hybrid similar to what was done on Front Street for the Gorge Terrace project, where the contractor prepared the final construction plan, because that is a more expedited delivery system. If it was done that way, they might be able to get Gorge Terrace started within a year or so of getting out to bid.

Mrs. Penta stated that she wanted to remind everybody that this Saturday is the Kayak Fest.

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Ms. Loza moved to bring out Temp. Res. B-19 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. Miller. Motion passed (3-0).

The meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.