

Cuyahoga Falls City Council
Minutes of the Public & Industrial Improvements Committee Meeting
June 2, 2008

Members: Debbie Ritzinger, Chair
Mark Ihasz
Terry Mader

Mrs. Ritzinger called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes from the May 19, 2008 committee meeting were approved as submitted.

Legislation Considered

Temp. Res. A-67

Temp. Res. A-68

Temp. Res. A-69

Temp. Res. A-70

Discussion:

Temp. Res. A-67

A resolution pledging cooperation by the City of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, in the matter of rebuilding Chart Road from Northampton Road to 700 feet west of Keyser Parkway, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Demasi stated this was the first of four Issue 1 projects the City will be applying for. They applied for Chart Road last year. Although it scored well, it was not high enough to receive funding. They are hopeful that this year, along with the Governor's stimulus package, that projects like Chart Road will be funded. The plans for this project are 100% complete. They should know before July 1, 2009.

Mrs. Ritzinger asked if it was possible the City would hear this year. Mr. Demasi stated it was possible. Mrs. Ritzinger asked if all four of the pieces of legislation were for the same grant. Mr. Demasi indicated they were.

Committee recommended bringing out Temp. Res. A-67.

Temp. Res. A-68

A resolution pledging cooperation by the City of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio in the matter of rebuilding Cochran Road from State Road to Cavalier Trail, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Demasi stated this was the second Issue 1 application. The plan is to widen Cochran Road to two 16-18 foot lanes and install curbs and a storm sewer. They do not need additional right-of-way but they would need to get temporary work easements. They estimate the project to be \$2.5 million. The money would be available in July, 2009 and work would begin in 2010.

Mrs. Ritzinger asked if the project still needed to be designed. Mr. Demasi indicated it did and added that it was on the five-year plan.

Mrs. Colavecchio asked Mr. Demasi to explain what Issue 1 money was. Mr. Demasi stated it is a program where bonds have been sold to raise money for infrastructure improvements across the state.

The City has been successful on many projects and has rebuilt roads, installed utilities and replaced sanitary sewers. The Broad Blvd. bridge was done with these monies. He stated that the \$2.5 million was for the entire project and included design work. The grant would be for 50%. Mrs. Colavecchio asked if the project included sidewalks. Mr. Demasi stated the project has not yet been designed so he was unable to verify that. Mrs. Colavecchio asked if the project would still move forward if the City does not receive funding. Mr. Brodzinski stated it would not move forward within the current five-year plan. Mr. Demasi added that the preliminary scores are sent in late fall and the final scores are sent to Summit County in December.

Mrs. Colavecchio distributed a handout containing signatures of residents on Cochran Road. These residents feel this is a private rural district they have protected for many years. They are not all in favor of their road being improved.

Delores Rice, 57 Cochran Road, stated that the majority of the residents have lived on this road for 20+ years and many were either widowed or retired and on fixed incomes. This same situation occurred on Chart Road. On the average, the home owners paid \$14,000 for the sewer line and \$5,000 for the water line. This will take years to pay off. The people on Chart Road did not want it and the people on Cochran Road do not need it.

Mr. Demasi indicated there is sewer out there and that the jurisdiction for sewer falls under the responsibility of the County and not the City. He added that the County may plan to upgrade its infrastructure once the City does this road. They would need to coordinate their efforts.

Don Kaiser, 223 Cochran Road, disagreed about the existence of sanitary sewer. He asked if it would be up to the County whether to install sewers and whether the homeowners would be assessed for that as well. Mr. Demasi stated the decision to install sewers is the County's and that Mr. Kaiser would have to check with the County regarding assessment. Mr. Kaiser asked what the charge would be to the residents for what the City is proposing. Mr. Demasi was not sure of the exact figure but stated that the grant would pay for 50%, the City would pay 20% and the residents would be responsible for the remaining 30%. Mr. Kaiser asked how long the project would take once it began. Mr. Demasi stated if construction started early in the year, it should be completed by the end of the year. Mr. Kaiser asked when the Cochran Road cul-de-sac was vacated and the new road dedicated. Mr. Demasi was unsure and indicated he would look it up and get the information to Mrs. Ritzinger who will get back to Mr. Kaiser.

Mary Geistweite, 126 Cochran Road, stated she has worked for local government for many years. She has lived in her house for 24 years and her parents lived there 10 years before that. This road has been overwhelming for residents because they have not had any say in what has been done. They had no choice on construction. No choice regarding the access given to all of the traffic. No choice in zoning changes. She attended the meeting regarding the Humane Society and felt everything was all one-sided. There are residents with homes and lives involved, and there are two sides to every picture. If government works, the public should have a voice. Mrs. Truby indicated that the area is zoned industrial which is what it was before the merger. The zoning has not changed since it came to Cuyahoga Falls. Mr. Kaiser disagreed with that statement. If that was true, he would not have been able to obtain permits to make the improvements to his property he's made over the years, both before and after the merger. He would not have obtained any permits if the area was zoned industrial. Mr. Guerra stated the area has been zoned industrial in 1987 and changed to E-I, which is employment-industrial, in 2005.

Mrs. Ritzinger asked Mr. Guerra to get back to her regarding when the cul-de-sac was vacated and whether a sewer line currently exists in the area. Mrs. Colavecchio also requested information regarding zoning history prior to 1987.

Mr. Walters was under the impression that landowners needed to be in favor before a reconstruction project could move forward. Mr. Arrington stated there were two different ways to do an assessment project. One is through a petition process. The other is under the Revised Code which states if a resolution is approved by 75% of Council, no petition is necessary. Mr. Walters asked who chose this project for Issue 1 application. Mrs. Truby stated they had three major companies looking at that area, along with the Humane Society. One of the companies is a top ten employer who is looking at the potential to build a new building which would encompass its world headquarters. She added that the City owns two acres of this area.

Mrs. Hummel stated that based on the estimate of \$2.5 million and the percentages stated earlier, it appeared that the residents would be responsible for \$330,000. She asked how many parcels would be affected. Mr. Demasi believed there were 17 parcels and stated an owner could own more than one parcel. Mrs. Hummel asked what the frontage was. Mr. Kaiser stated that most parcels were 242 feet and two were split lots at 120 feet. There are nine total parcel owners plus one vacant lot.

Mrs. Klinger asked what the timeline was in getting the application to the state. She wondered whether Council had to pass this legislation at the next meeting. Mr. Demasi stated if it wasn't passed next week, it would need to be passed at the following meeting. The applications are due at the end of June. Mrs. Klinger stated that due to the property owners' objections, she would like to see Council hold this legislation. She would also like to see what the property owners' assessments would be.

Mrs. Hummel asked if points are awarded to a project if it is already designed. Mr. Demasi stated points are awarded for many categories but confirmed that an existing design does receive points. Mrs. Hummel asked what would happen if the City receives funding but does not go forward with the project. Mr. Demasi stated the City has two years to use the money, otherwise, it would just be returned to the state.

Mrs. Pyke asked whether the City would assess the Humane Society. Mr. Demasi stated it would. She asked if the assessments would be done by benefit. Mr. Demasi stated it would be done by the best and new method which worked on Williams Street.

Mrs. Klinger asked whether there had been any talks with the County regarding its part in this in terms of sewer. Mr. Demasi indicated they've had preliminary discussions. Mrs. Klinger stated she would be interested in the charges the residents would incur for sewer as well.

Mr. Kaiser commented on the 75% tax abatement that was given to the Kempel Subdivision and asked why those could not also be given to other projects such as this one. He did not think it was fair. Mrs. Pyke stated that Williams Street was done by petition at the request of the residents with the majority of residents wanting the street done. It was constructed with Issue 2 money and was done as an incentive for people to move back into a community reinvestment area where the City was losing residents.

Mrs. Colavecchio stated that Council would be holding this legislation and added that residents would be able to voice their comments again at the next committee meeting in two weeks.

Committee recommended holding Temp. Res. A-68.

Temp. Res. A-69

A resolution pledging cooperation by the City of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio in the matter of improvements to Seasons Road, located in the City of Cuyahoga Falls, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Demasi stated this is the third Issue 1 project. Last year, the City applied with Stow on this project. It scored high but not high enough for funding. Administration is hoping that, with Stow and Hudson, the project will receive funding. He added that Stow began purchasing right-of-way earlier this year. Mrs. Ritzinger confirmed that this project was in conjunction with Stow, Hudson, Cuyahoga Falls and Summit County. Mr. Demasi agreed.

Committee recommended bringing out Temp. Res. A-69.

Temp. Res. A-70

A resolution pledging cooperation by the City of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio in the matter of the improvement to the intersection of Howe Avenue and Main Street in the City of Cuyahoga Falls, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Demasi stated this was the last of the Issue 1 applications for this year. This is to finalize the right-of-way plan so that the City can begin with the purchase. Construction is scheduled for 2010 and is estimated at \$750,000. The project is being done with ODOT Highway Safety Funds where ODOT pays 90% and the City pays 10%. With Issue 1 funds, the City's portion would be 50% of \$75,000.

Committee recommended bringing out Temp. Res. A-70.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.