

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

June 6, 2022

Members: Rachel Loza, Chair
Michael Brillhart
Adam Miller

Ms. Loza called the meeting to order at 7:13 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes of the May 2, 2022, Public Affairs Committee were approved as written.

Legislation Discussed:

Temp. Ord. A-60

Temp. Ord. A-61

Discussion:

Temp. Ord. A-60

An ordinance amending Chapter 1371 of the City of Cuyahoga Falls Codified Ordinances, relating to the BOCA National Property Maintenance Code, and declaring an emergency.

Ms. Janet Ciotola, Law Director, presented Temporary Ordinance A-60 to Council. In 1999, City Council adopted the 1996 edition of the BOCA National Property Maintenance Code. The Code has been modified and changed its name to the International Property Maintenance Code in the years since it was initially adopted, and it is necessary to update the Codified Ordinances to reflect these changes. The organization has changed its name to the International Code Council and a more recent release of the code is available with updates that will make enforcement of the property code more efficient.

Ms. Diana Colavecchio, Community Development Director, introduced Mr. Steve Owen, Housing Division Manager, and Mr. Charles Nettle, Housing Inspector. These gentlemen work out of the Community Development Department. They make look the city look better, more beautiful and retain property values by making sure exterior structures are maintained. They are always surveying the city. They administer their work very equitably. It can sometimes be a challenging job and it poses some safety risks, but they do their job.

Mr. Balthis stated that these gentlemen have a difficult job, and he appreciates all the work they do for the community. He asked if any of the changes impact the timelines that people have to make repairs once they receive an order. One of the areas where he has been most interested in is the balance they are able to strike with helping the neighbors that are concerned about the condition of the property, but then also working with the property owners in an understanding and caring way, gentle but firm.

Mr. Owen stated that the timeline does not change. The 30-day timeline or reasonable amount of time is defined as 30 days as part of the City ordinance.

Public Affairs Committee
June 6, 2022 – Page 2

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes stated that Mr. Owen and Mr. Nettle are great communicators. She cannot imagine the volume of things that she comes to them with magnified by 11.

Mr. Stams thanked Mr. Owen and Mr. Nettle for all the information given, when requested, especially with attention to details. Some of the e-mails that they have sent to the residents are impressive. Their responsiveness is great; if it is not that day, it is the next day for sure. He also remarked upon their thoroughness. The records they maintain go back to long before he has been on Council, and they are right there with all the documents to really state their case.

Mr. Tom Sullivan, 447 Tallmadge Road, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, stated that these gentlemen are amazing. He asked if the new guidelines allow them to step onto a porch, peek in a window, and see that a place is torn down to the studs and a fire hazard, or the plumbing lines have been taken out and not capped causing a potential rat problem.

Mr. Owen stated that looking through the front window does give them an idea. They might see some studs, but they cannot see if the plumbing is capped. It is fair game that they would go far enough to say a search warrant is need. If the property is vacant, the outside of the property is their focus.

Mr. Brillhart moved to bring out Temp. Ord. A-60 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. Miller. Motion passed (3-0).

Temp. Ord. A-61

An ordinance opting out of H.B. 172 and reaffirming the ban on discharging, igniting, or exploding consumer grade 1.4G fireworks in the City of Cuyahoga Falls, except as set forth herein, and declaring an emergency.

Ms. Janet Ciotola, Law Director, presented Temporary Ordinance A-61 to Council. The Governor recently signed H.B. 172, amending Ohio Revised Code §3743.45, effective July 1, 2022, allowing any person authorized to possess consumer grade 1.4G fireworks to discharge, ignite or explode consumer grade 1.4G fireworks on their property, or if permitted, on another person's property on certain designated days of the year. H.B. 172 also provides that pursuant to Home Rule authority, a municipal corporation may choose to restrict the dates and times that a person may discharge, ignite or explode consumer grade 1.4G fireworks or may impose a complete ban on the use of consumer grade 1.4G fireworks. This law will go into effect July 1 and will allow anyone to discharge consumer-grade fireworks on the following holidays: New Year's Eve and Day, Cinco de Mayo, Juneteenth, Memorial Day, and Labor Day weekend, as well as on July 3, 4, 5 or any three-day weekends bracketing July 4. Municipalities may "opt out" of the changes totally prohibiting fireworks or allowing the discharge of fireworks on specific dates from the list.

Mayor Walters stated the ordinance before Council is a compromise on the state law, and would allow the discharge of fireworks in the city between 8:30 p.m. and midnight on July 4th only. Council discussed their concerns regarding the effects of fireworks on certain residents and pets.

Public Affairs Committee
June 6, 2022 – Page 3

Mr. Balthis suggested that the legislation not be brought out of committee this evening and come before the committee on June 20, as to allow time for council members to seek input from their constituents and for the public to comment.

Ms. Loza stated that Temporary Ordinance A-61 will be held in committee until June 20, 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.