

Cuyahoga Falls City Council
Minutes of the Public & Industrial Improvements Committee

July 7, 2025

Members: Meika Penta, Chair
Frank Stams, Vice Chair
Gary DeRemer, Jerry James, Rachel Loza

Mrs. Penta called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes of the May 5, 2025 Public Improvements Committee meeting were approved as written.

Legislation Discussed:

Temp. Ord. B-41
Temp. Res. B-42
Temp. Ord. B-43
Temp. Ord. B-44
Temp. Ord. B-45
Temp. Res. B-46

Discussion:

Temp. Ord. B-41

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, for the replacement of the Air Handling Units on the Municipal Building, located at 2310 2nd Street in the City of Cuyahoga Falls, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. John Ball, Building and Maintenance Superintendent, presented Temporary Ordinance B-41 to Council. The Director of Public Service will be authorized to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, for the replacement of the air handling units on the Municipal Building, located at 2310 2nd Street in the City of Cuyahoga Falls. The Director of Finance will be authorized to make payment for same from the Capital Projects Fund, Line Item Capital Outlay.

Mr. Ball stated that this ordinance is to replace the two air handlers in the boiler room in City Hall. They are original to the building and well past their timeframe to be replaced.

Mrs. Penta stated that this project was budgeted last season. The cost is \$400,000.

Mr. Stams moved to bring out Temp. Ord. B-41 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. James Motion passed (5-0).

Temp. Res. B-42

A resolution of intent to appropriate certain property along Wyoga Lake Road between Seasons Road and East Steels Corners Road, and declaring an emergency.

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Mr. Tony Demasi, City Engineer, presented Temporary Resolution B-42 to Council. The City wishes to make improvements to Wyoga Lake Road between Seasons Road and East Steels Corners Road, a road which shall be open to the public without charge. This Council will be asked to find and determine that the acquisition of fee simple title and temporary construction easements is a proper public use associated with the improvement, as contemplated in Art. I, §19 of the Ohio Constitution.

Mr. Demasi, stated that the Wyoga Lake Road Improvement Project involves the addition of a center turn lane and a multipurpose path from East Steels Corners Road to Seasons Road, a new traffic signal at Wyoga Lake Road, bike lane, lighting and pavement resurfacing. As part of the project, some property acquisition is required. They have two types of property acquisition needed for these projects. The first are permanent warranty deeds and the second are temporary easements which allow the City to grade and restore property as part of the project.

The City's right-of-way consultant has been working with 31 property owners along Wyoga Lake throughout the year to negotiate the property rights needed to complete the project. As of today, 13 of the 31 property owners have signed the deeds and the easements. Of the 18 remaining, a handful have said they will sign, but they have not received the documents. They need to start the appropriations process. During this time, they will continue to negotiate with the remaining property owners, but if they cannot come to an agreement, they will return with an appropriations ordinance. Since they are still negotiating, at the end of the next week, they will submit with the packet a substitute resolution. The City is planning to bid the project in February of 2026. Construction should begin in May of next year and be complete in November of 2027. The project is a \$7.1 million construction project of which they have \$5.6 million in ODOT funding, \$750,000 from OPWC and a little over \$700,000 of City money in the project.

Mr. Siegferth asked if there is a firm timeline regarding when negotiations will cease. Mr. Demasi stated that there is. They have to a certified right-of-way to complete which means, in cases of appropriations, that they file the Court cases at approximately the end of August. Council will be seeing an ordinance to appropriate property in the next packet.

Mr. Stams moved to bring out Temp. Res. B-42 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. James Motion passed (5-0).

Temp. Ord. B-43

An ordinance authorizing the Mayor, as Director of Public Safety, to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, for the demolition and replacement of Fire Station 4 and construction of a new training facility and training prop, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Tony Demasi, City Engineer, presented Temporary Ordinance B-43 to Council. Fire Station 4 is outdated and in need of being demolished and replaced. A new training facility and training prop are needed to maintain and improve the readiness of the City's safety personnel.

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The Mayor, as Director of Public Safety, will be authorized to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, for the demolition and replacement of Fire Station 4. The Director of Finance will be authorized to make payment for same from the Capital Projects Fund, Line Item, Capital Outlay.

Mr. Demasi stated that Fire Station 4, located at the northeast corner of Northampton Road and Bath Road, was built around 1947. The existing fire station holds one company consisting of three members. Plans are prepared and bids were opened on June 17th of this year. The project will build a new, modern fire station capable of housing two companies, a training facility holding training apparatus, classroom space for up to 50 and a training prop. They received 7 bids and the lowest and best bid was received from Summit Construction out of Akron, Ohio. The estimate for the construction project was \$10 million and Summit Construction's low and best bid was \$9,316,000. All bids are posted on the website. The demolition work project for the old center warehouse and police station buildings is under a separate contract. Construction activities for the remainder of the project are anticipated to begin the middle of August. Completion is scheduled for January of 2027 and full completion is scheduled for March of 2027.

Mrs. Penta stated that she is extremely excited about this project. The City has a great Police Training Center and it is nice that the Fire Department will have one as well. According to the budget sheets, it was budgeted at \$11 million, so it is under budget. Response time is going to be a question that a lot of the residents will have because of the construction and the work area. Chief Martin stated that they were careful to plan this out so that existing Station 4 will not be interrupted at all in service, so there should not be any negative impact to response times.

Mr. Balthis expressed how excited he was about the project. The training facility is critical for public safety. He acknowledged that it is important that a lot of thought went into this to ensure that Station 4 remains operational during construction. He asked if any of the other stations are equipped to house six full-time employees or two companies. Chief Martin stated that Station 4 is currently the only one that cannot, so it will be up to speed with all the other stations.

Mr. Bryan Hoffman, Finance Director, stated that, as part of the budget, they did have \$11 million as the total cost of this project. He wanted to acknowledge that in the State Capital Budget last year, they did receive \$3 million from the State as part of the project, so they are happy that the cost to the City specifically will not be the full cost of the project. They have already received those dollars from the State. It is not a matching grant, so the total cost being \$3 million less to the City.

Mr. Stams moved to bring out Temp. Ord. B-43 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. James Motion passed (5-0).

Temp. Ord. B-44

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a modification of Contract No. 8984 with DLZ Ohio, Inc., and declaring an emergency.

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Mr. Russ Kring, Water Utilities Superintendent presented Temporary Ordinance B-44 to Council. The Director of Public Service will be authorized to enter into a modification of Contract No. 8984 with DLZ Ohio, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$500,000.00. The total contract price after modification, as authorized herein, shall not exceed \$1,523,071.44. The Director of Finance will be authorized to increase appropriations in the Sanitary Sewer Fund, Line Item Capital Outlay, by \$500,000.00 and to make payment from the same.

Mr. Kring stated that for the last four years, the City has been working with DLZ Ohio, Inc. with the ultimate goal to replace the City's main interceptor sewer which currently runs through the Gorge Metro Park. The recent step was to finalize the major design, which was completed this spring. This request represents the final design project. This will allow them to go out and apply for potential funding and go out to bid when the time comes.

Mrs. Penta stated that the purpose is to get more funding for this for going out to bid. This is something that needs to get done. It is waterlines, and not glamorous, but it is infrastructure that needs to be maintained.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes asked if the timing of this project is intentional with the dam removal. Mr. Kring stated that the hope is for them to be ready to construct it in conjunction with the dam. They are going to have to remove the old sewer located down there now, so the people involved with the dam would like the City to get in with them and work their way out with removing the existing sewer; that way, everybody gets in and out at the same time. That is the goal.

Mr. Stams moved to bring out Temp. Ord. B-44 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. James Motion passed (5-0).

Temp. Ord. B-45

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, without competitive bidding, with United Survey Inc. for the lining of storm sewers in the City right of way, emergency. and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Russ Kring, Water Utilities Superintendent, presented Temporary Ordinance B-45 to Council. United Survey Inc. was the only available contractor able to assist in this project, Although no specific expenditure for repairs in the City right of way has individually exceeded the threshold competitive bidding amount to date, collectively the expenditures may soon exceed the competitive bidding amount of \$75,000.

The Director of Public Service will be authorized to enter into a contract or contracts, without competitive bidding, with United Survey Inc. for the lining of storm sewers in the City right of way in a total amount not to exceed \$97,000.00 for the 2025-26 fiscal year. The Director of Finance will be authorized to make payment for same from the Storm Drainage Utility Fund, Line Items Capital Outlay and Other Operations.

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Mr. Kring stated that there are two 72-inch culvert pipes that run under Graham Road, one in front of Menard's and one at the end of the Purdue cul-de-sac. They flow south to north. They were installed in around 1960 and are in bad shape. Rather than replace these, this company will come in and grout any voids in the pipe and spray a half-inch cementitious lining to basically reline the pipe. This will allow them to rehab the pipe without cutting into the road.

Mrs. Penta stated that there is no disturbance with the traffic. It is all underground. It is budgeted at \$97,000. Mrs. Penta asked about the longevity of these relined pipes. Mr. Kring stated that they have a 50-year lifespan.

Mr. Balthis stated that the cost of this project is approximately \$97,000 and it is anticipated to last about 50 years. He asked what the cost is for total replacement of the culvert. Mr. Kring stated that, based on what they are seeing in construction costs, about \$300,000 each.

Mr. Balthis stated that it is great that they are looking for ways to extend the life of this infrastructure, work faster and manage the stormwater better. He asked if they have previously used this process throughout the city. Mr. Tony Demasi, City Engineer, stated that they just used it on Front Street as part of the South Front Street Project. They lined a line of sanitary sewer on Broad Boulevard and Second Street, as well. Mr. Balthis stated that infrastructure needs are a constant struggle and challenge, and these are innovative ways to handle the problems.

Mr. Stams moved to bring out Temp. Ord. B-45 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. James Motion passed (5-0).

Temp. Res. B-46

A resolution authorizing the Mayor to apply for Federal Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality Funds programmed by the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) for the signal improvement of Barney's Busy Corners, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Tony Demasi, City Engineer, presented Temporary Resolution B-46 to Council. The United States Congress has set aside monies for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) projects through the State of Ohio, Department of Transportation (ODOT) and administered by the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS). Local Public Agencies, (LPAs) can apply for these monies and be selected for funding by the Ohio Association of Regional Councils (OARC), who has been charged with management of a statewide CMAQ program by ODOT.

The Signal Improvement of Barney's Busy Corners is a transportation activity eligible to receive federal CMAQ funding. If requested funds are granted, the City of Cuyahoga Falls shall be responsible for at least twenty (20%) percent of the eligible costs. The Signal Improvement of Barney's Busy Corners is vital to the safe and efficient travel of motorists from the cities of Cuyahoga Falls, Tallmadge and Akron. The Signal Improvement of Barney's Busy Corners is in need of improving traffic flow and reduce delays to reduce congestion and improve efficiency, and reducing crashes.

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The Mayor will be authorized to apply for Federal Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) Funds programmed by the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) for the following Congestion Reduction Project: The Improvement of Barney's Busy Corners, including relocation of roadways; estimated cost \$382,765.27 The City of Cuyahoga Falls acknowledges and understands the AMATS 2025 CMAQ Guidance and confirms to the best of its knowledge that the information contained in the project application is accurate, that it intends to diligently pursue that project, and that a local share is required to match federal funds.

Mr. Demasi stated that, in July of 2017, the City was awarded \$276,000 in safety funds from ODOT for this project. That grant was used to pay for an alternative analysis and suitability study to what improvements to the intersection could be implemented. The result of that work was a recommendation that there be an existing traffic signal upgrade, connect the intersection with the City's Centrac and install warning devices to warn drivers diving eastbound approaching the intersection about stoplights. A couple of years ago, City Council approved the remaining the grant to provide to final design. This summer, the final design has been completed and they are ready to apply for the construction. AMATS is currently soliciting applications and those are due July 18th. Congestion/Mitigation and Air Quality grants fund projects that reduce congestion, improve air quality by increasing traffic flow and provide better coordination with traffic systems. The current estimate for a signal upgrade is \$400,000, so they would be requesting 80 percent of that through the funding.

Mrs. Penta stated that this is another area that definitely needs to be reviewed. It has been a long process of getting information and studies. Fixing an area like Barney's Busy Corners takes time, and she is glad that they have not forgotten about it and that they are looking for grant money and trying to make it safer.

Ms. Loza thanked Mr. Demasi for recognizing that this is a potentially dangerous intersection and putting in the work to get some additional warning signs. It is in Ward 1, and it is clear by the numbers that a lot of people do drive through that area. This has her full support.

Mr. Brillhart asked if these signals have a battery backup in case of power failure. Mr. Demasi stated that they would have battery backup. They are going to introduce preemptions into the construction for the City's safety forces.

Mr. Stams moved to bring out Temp. Res. B-46 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. James Motion passed (5-0).

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.