

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

November 2, 2020

Members: Russ Balthis, Chair
Susan Spinner
Adam Miller

Mr. Balthis called the meeting to order at 6:55p.m. All members were present.

The minutes of the October 5, 2020 Public Affairs Committee were approved as written.

Legislation Discussed:

Temp. Ord. A-79

Discussion:

Temp. Ord. A-79

An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a license agreement with the Downtown Cuyahoga Falls Partnership, for the purpose of constructing and maintaining signage for a historical walking trail in Downtown Cuyahoga Falls, and declaring an emergency.

Ms. Diana Colavecchio, Community Development Director, and Ms. Kaylee Piper, Executive Director of the Downtown Cuyahoga Falls Partnership, presented Temporary Ordinance A-79 to Council. The Mayor will be authorized to enter into a license agreement with the Downtown Cuyahoga Falls Partnership, for the purpose of constructing and maintaining signage for a historical walking trail through downtown Cuyahoga Falls, with sign locations depicted on the map attached hereto as 128 Exhibit "A". The license agreement shall contain such terms and conditions as are necessary in the opinion of the Director of Law to protect the public interest.

Ms. Colavecchio introduced Kaylee Piper, the new Executive Director of the Downtown Cuyahoga Falls Partnership. Prior to Abbie Poeske, the previous Executive Director, resigning, she had put into work this important project. A Historic District was created in the downtown, but there had not been anything done to recognize it is a Historic District. There is no signage. This signage has some unique technology built into it. It consists of seven markers that will appear downtown. Ms. Piper stated that they will be located at various points to learn about the first settlers, river history and economy.

Mr. Balthis asked if this is something that will it be on a list somewhere of other historical sites. Ms. Piper stated that they share all the resources with Heritage Ohio and other local communities. She is working with many main street organizations to cross-promote, as well. Mr. Balthis stated that this will be a great activity for families. It is outdoors and COVID safe. He stated that he would like to remind Council what they are voting on with this ordinance is to approve a license agreement that will allow the Downtown Partnership to place the signs on City property. There is a 30-day notice if, for any reason, it would need to be canceled.

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Ms. Piper stated that there is code on the signs that can be scanned, and it will show what that area looked like several decades ago. Mr. Balthis stated that this is being implemented in a way that can be changed and updated so it is different, and it brings people back to downtown. He stated that he appreciates her thinking outside the box and the partnership with the Cuyahoga Falls Historical Society.

Mrs. Spinner stated that the augmented virtual reality concept is going to expand the interest in that. Once people have that experience and share it, it is going to be extremely popular. Ms. Piper stated that they have gotten approved for the grant they applied for, so they are hoping for the funds for that.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes thanked Ms. Piper for her work on this. It is a great partnership between the Downtown Partnership and the Community Development Department. Triad has offered a lot of in-kind work. There are others who have contributed to this, including the Historical Society. This is a group project, and it really is the perfect kind of legacy to leave from all the people who are part of it. She is extremely excited about it and thanks everybody for their work on it.

Mr. Miller asked if these locations would have access to the free downtown Wi-Fi. Ms. Piper stated that she is still learning where those points are. From what she understands, it is maintained in the Pavilion, and that is right in the area, but there are some that are outside that footprint. She will do some more research and send it to Ms. Colavecchio.

Mr. Gorbach and Mr. Stams congratulated Ms. Piper on her new position. Mr. Gorbach stated that he looks forward to using the augmented reality.

Mayor Walters stated that under the Portage Trail Bridge at night is interactive lights and music. It is a nice accent to this area. These were ordered about a year ago, and it took this long to get them installed. There is also going to be a program that is going to be going on downtown where the parking meters are going to be free from Black Friday until January 1st. The reason for that is they are going to be adopted and decorated. It will be a walking tour of decorated parking meters. The businesses will adopt a meter and decorate it. They will pay to enter and sponsor that and cover the free parking at that time.

Mr. Balthis stated that with COVID, it has been a difficult time and a lot the City's small businesses are struggling. A lot of the businesses have great websites. He has been ordering a lot of things and having them shipped from local businesses. He asked everyone to please consider all the local businesses downtown and throughout the city through this difficult time.

Mrs. Spinner moved to bring out Temp. Ord. A-79 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. Miller. Motion passed (3-0).

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.