

WHITEHALL COUNCIL COMMITTEES

MINUTES – April 9, 2024

Council President Potter called the April 9, 2024, Council Committees' meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.

The following members of the council and the administration were present:

Members of the Administration

Council President Thomas Potter

Mayor Michael T. Bivens

Dir. of Public Service Casey Thomas

Council Members

Gerald Dixon

Larry Morrison

Amy Smith

Jo Anna Heck

Devin Brown

Amy Harcar

ADMINISTRATION/COUNCIL OF THE WHOLE MATTERS:

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Councilperson Morrison opened Administration and Financial Management at 7:46 p.m. and said no drafts or pending legislation are on the agenda.

There was no discussion on Administration and Financial Management.

Having nothing further, Councilperson Morrison closed at 7:46 p.m.

COMMUNITY AND ELDER ADVOCACY

Chairperson Harcar opened Community and Elder Advocacy at 7:46 p.m. and said no drafts or pending legislation are on the agenda.

Tuesday and Thursday are Senior Dining Days at the YMCA at noon for residents sixty and older. A donation of one dollar and fifty cents is optional.

Having nothing further, Chairperson Harcar closed at 7:47 p.m.

COMMUNITY STANDARDS AND ENFORCEMENT

Chairperson Smith opened Community Standards and Enforcement at 7:07 p.m. and addressed the legislation in her committee, as follows:

Councilperson Dixon spoke with Director Thomas and asked that Ordinances 018-2024 and 020-2024 be held over for a second reading so that they could be discussed further. He received some statistics from Deputy Chief Sharpless about the issue of cars being sideswiped. What he found with the statistics was that while those may be people who did indeed send in a notice of this happening; it does not necessarily mean that it is everyone that it

has happened to. Sometimes it was a mirror as had happened to him on Collingwood while visiting a constituent. They want us to pass this legislation to get people off the curb; but indeed, if they are going on the curb because of reckless driving, speeding, or distracted driving, he thinks it is important and they owe it to those citizens to at least try to ameliorate the problem before they are cited for this other issue which we do not care about. He asked the Mayor if he had any statistics to counter the reasons for parking on the curb.

Mayor Bivens did receive an email from Councilmember Dixon and the email to his recollection went off the presumption that people were parking potentially on the curb to avoid reckless and distracted driving. This is where his enquiry went to Deputy Chief Sharpless, as it relates to some of the statistics that Mr. Dixon just mentioned. He believes Mr. Dixon had a lengthy conversation with Deputy Chief Sharpless about that and was provided with some statistics and he has them to share with Council as well. As a city, he was provided with information on the number of accidents involving vehicles parked along the curb. He shared the following statistics; 2019-0; 2020-2; 2021-2; 2022-4 and 2023-1. There were complaints of people parking on the curb during that same period as follows; 2019-19; 2020-10; 2021-9; 2022-5 and 2023-4. The reason why people are doing it is unknown.

There was continued discussion on Ordinance 018-2024 and Ordinance 020-2024. There was a discussion on speedbumps and calming islands. There were eight hundred-three speeding tickets in the last three months. In 2023, there were one-thousand twenty-one speeding tickets issued.

Councilperson Dixon read a comment to the Council that was written by a resident about parking over the curb. He requested a meeting with the Mayor, himself, possibly another Councilperson, a Civil Engineer, the Service Director, and a couple of citizens to see if they could brainstorm some ideas.

Mayor Bivens said that it is a great idea, but it is an idea that Chief Crispin presented on the Public Safety Alliance. It is actually in the works so there is no need for an offshoot meeting. There will be citizens who will be a part of that discussion and safety and speeding is part of that discussion.

Councilperson Dixon gave the Council two articles and stated he tries to understand Code Enforcement's role in government, especially with a Constitution that says God gave us liberty. This is where he sits; he sits from a place of order but he cannot require that of other people who be not like him. His concern with Ordinance 020-2024 is the term "preserve the appearance". He feels you are codifying aesthetics. He had issues with terms like "competence" "refuse and debris of all kinds" because wording matters to him. He asked Walt if there was a specific list that defines refuse and debris of all kinds. Walt's answer was, is it defensible in court?

President Potter explained there is a mechanism in place to help lower socioeconomics residents with their house repairs and it is Pride of Whitehall.

Councilperson Dixon requested a list of all mechanisms in place to help residents.

Chairperson Smith said it seems like the language is conflicting or disconcerting such as neat and orderly manner. There was continued discussion on this topic. It was decided that more discussion was needed with Walt Sural as to how to enforce this legislation.

SECOND READING:

ORDINANCE NO. 018-2024 (*Comm. Stand & Enf. – 2nd reading – SUSP & ADOPT 04/16/2024-Smith/Morrison*)

AMENDING SECTION 903.31 TITLED "PARKING PROHIBITED ON FRONT LANDSCAPED AREAS "OF THE STREETS AND PUBLIC SERVICES CODE OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ORDINANCE NO. 019-2024 (*Comm. Stand & Enf. – 3rd reading – ADOPT TBD-Smith/Heck*)

Referred to Planning Commission for May 2, 2024 Meeting

AMENDING SECTION 1109.04-TITLED “COMMUNITY GARDENS AND URBAN AGRICULTURE” OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ORDINANCE NO. 020-2024 (*Comm. Stand & Enf. – 3rd reading – ADOPT TBD-Smith/Morrison*)

Referred to Planning Commission for May 2, 2024 Meeting

AMENDING CHAPTER 1113 TITLED “LANDSCAPING” CODE OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL, CODIFIED ORDINANCES BY IMPLEMENTING A LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ORDINANCE NO. 022-2024 (*Comm. Stand & Enf. – 3rd reading – ADOPT TBD-Smith/Dixon*)

Referred to Planning Commission for May 2, 2024 Meeting

AMENDING CHAPTER 1115 TITLED “OUTDOOR LIGHTING” CODE OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL, CODIFIED ORDINANCES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ORDINANCE NO. 023-2024 (*Comm. Stand & Enf. – 3rd reading – ADOPT TBD-Smith/Dixon*)

Referred to Planning Commission for May 2, 2024 Meeting

AMENDING CHAPTER 1111-TITLED “PARKING, LOADING AND DRIVE THRU” OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Having nothing further, Chairperson Smith closed at 8:58 p.m.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Chairperson Dixon opened Economic Development at 8:58 p.m. and said no drafts or pending legislation are on the agenda.

There was no discussion on Economic Development.

Having nothing further, Chairperson Dixon closed at 8:58 p.m.

INFRASTRUCTURE, MAINTENANCE AND SERVICE

Chairperson Brown opened Infrastructure, Maintenance, and Service at 8:58 p.m. and said no drafts or pending legislation are on the agenda.

There was no discussion on Infrastructure, Maintenance, and Service.

Having nothing further, Chairperson Brown closed at 8:58 p.m.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Chairperson Morrison opened Public Safety at 8:59 p.m. and said no drafts or pending legislation are on the agenda.

There was no discussion on Public Safety.

Having nothing further, Chairperson Morrison closed at 8:59 p.m.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Chairperson Heck opened Parks and Recreation at 8:59 p.m. and said no drafts or pending legislation are on the agenda.

Chairperson Heck echoed everyone sentiments and thanked the Parks and Recreation Department for the Solar Eclipse Party.

Having nothing further, Chairperson Heck closed at 8:59 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

Submitted by:

Julie A. Ogg, Clerk of Council

APPROVED: April 16, 2024

Thomas M. Potter, Council President