

City of Springdale Council

December 20, 2023

President of Council Anderson called Council to order on December 20, 2023.

The governmental body and those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Browder took roll call. Council members Anderson, Gleaves, Jacobs, McFarland, Sullivan-Wisecup, Vanover, Webster were present.

The minutes of the December 1, 2023 meeting were considered. The minutes were approved with seven affirmative votes.

Mr. Vanover: Point of order, Mr. President.

President Anderson: Yes sir.

Mr. Vanover: We don't move to adopt the minutes?

Mr. Jacobs made a motion to adopt the minutes of the December 1, 2023 meeting; Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup seconded. The minutes were approved with seven affirmative votes.

Committee and Official Reports

Civil Service Commission

Mr. Coleman: Good evening Council. Happy Holidays to you all. Springdale Civil Service Commission did meet on December 7th here at the Municipal Building and those in attendance were myself, Ms. Cheryl Darby, also, Mr. Brian Uhl, and Human Resources Administrator Stephanie Morgan. It was a brief meeting compared to some of our other meetings, but, we did acknowledge several different reports and I am happy to indicate this evening that within the hiring process, the Building Department Administrative Assistant position is filled. Yes. The Fleet Mechanic I hiring position, filled. Yes. The Police Clerk hiring position, filled. Yes. So, as we continue to move forward, we put a pause on the Tax Account Clerk hiring as you will hear later on this evening. We have our Finance Officer Tax Commissioner, Ms. Katie Smiddy in attendance, and we thought it was best that we hold that position up and make sure she was involved in the hiring process. We are indeed excited to welcome our new Commissioner to the Civil Service Commission, with that person being Kathy McNear, as you're all aware. Makes it kind of easy for me because our previous Commissioner was Kathy Nienaber, and, so, all I have to remember is "Kathy", and we'll be in pretty good shape. But, we do wish our outgoing member, Kathy Nienaber continued happiness for her new journey. And with that, that concludes my report. Any questions?

President Anderson: I don't see any lights. Thank you Mr. Coleman.

Rules and Laws	Mr. Jacobs	-	No report
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Finance Committee

Mr. Vanover: Finance Committee met last week. Went through the rough draft of the budget, which is the same thing that you'll have in front of you tonight we will walk through. The finance Committee would heartily recommend adoption of this, but, we won't do that until next month. So, with that, that would conclude my report.

Planning Commission	Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup	-	No report
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Board of Zoning Appeals

Mr. Gleaves: The December 26th BZA meeting has been cancelled. There will be a training session that's going to be held in early January. The date has not been determined yet. The training is for the new members coming in to get on board where everybody has a smooth transition. The next scheduled BZA meeting will be January 23rd in these chambers. That's all I have.

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Board of Health

Ms. McFarland: Our December meeting was held in the conference room next to chambers on December 14th. All but one member was present. Mr. Clayton gave an update from the SOS (Springdale Offering Support). They were able to help 92 families with canned and non-perishable food, and gifts for the children in the families. They had their pick up on this past Monday, December 18th. They did a drive-thru at the Fire Station. They had a lot of good words to say about Debra Boggs and Terry (Metz) with the Health Department, Officer Keenan Riordan, Tom Lindsey with the Fire Department. They were a huge help in getting everything organized and put together. The Health Department interns helped with shopping, and wrapping, so, all in all it turned out to be a great year for the program yet again. So, they appreciate everybody's help with that. As far as COVID cases, there has been a small increase still in the number of COVID cases. There were two vaccine clinics that were held in November with a total of 19 children vaccinated, and there is a grant that the Health Department is working on for the Mosquito Control. They should find out that from the Ohio EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) very soon. It looks like our next meeting is going to be held January 11th, 2024.

Capital Improvements	Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup	-	No report
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O-K-I

Mr. Anderson: No report for OKI, there was no meeting in December. The next meeting will be in January where the new board will be seated, and will start taking up business of handing out money again.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Hawkins: First on my report, I'd like to introduce our new Finance Director/Tax Commissioner, Katie Smiddy. Would you come forward please. You can come to the dais, while we say glowing things about you. (laughter) Katie comes to us from Cincinnati Community Action Agency, where she served there for approximately a year and a half as their Chief Financial and Information Officer. Prior to that, she was with the City of Montgomery for approximately seven years as their Finance Director/Tax Commissioner. Katie received her Master's degree in Public Administration from Wright State, and, her accounting degree from Xavier University. And, she also enjoys spending time with family, fostering dogs, running, and, one unique thing, that, I don't know, I think we had some discussion about this, but, she replaces Kathy McNear, who was also a Philadelphia-born individual. So, we have another person from "Philly" who's going to be helping to take care of our money.

Ms. Smiddy: Absolutely. All things fast, right? Drive fast, talk fast, eat fast.

Mayor Hawkins: We're happy to have you. Welcome. And, if you get the opportunity, please introduce yourself to Ms. Smiddy.

Ms. Smiddy: Thank you so much. Absolutely humbled for the opportunity, but, so excited to work with this amazing team we have here at the City. So, looking forward to all great things coming to Springdale. Thank you. (applause)

Mayor Hawkins: We also had the grand re-opening of Dunkin Donuts. The Sprinkles Mascot was present, and, so, they are open, and please go get your donuts, coffee, what have you there. We had the 55th anniversary and ribbon cutting for the Bishop Center with Calvary Church. That was originally supposed to take place back in 2020, but COVID had derailed that a little bit. We had the swearing of Officer Kellen Lyons, who had worked with us before in the past, and was on a little hiatus, and is back with the Springdale Police Department, so, we welcome him back, and we had the swearing in of a new Sergeant, Garrett Welander, and he was just promoted and that took place about a week ago as well. It's important for everyone to know we have the Pep Rally and Hall of Fame Coaches Induction on January 5th at 6:30 p.m. Friday evening, so, please come and support the youngsters that are playing our winter sports as well as folks that are being inducted into the Hall of Fame. To give you a General Fund Report; the beginning balance was \$9,516,099.86, the year to date actual receipts was \$21,439,313.16. Year to date expenditures, \$22,732,317.58, and our unencumbered balance is \$7,000,688.78. That's our General Fund Report. And then, a report on SOS (Springdale Offering Support). First off, appreciate all the time that folks have put in. Health Department,

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Mayor Hawkins (continued): Fire Department, Police Department, Municipal Administration as well as specifically Ms. (Debra) Boggs has taken things by the reins as well. SOS this year assisted 92 families, 317 children assisted. There were 169 bags created, eight bikes, 11 blankets that were donated and crocheted by one of our Springdale residents. We have over 100 food boxes that were given out, and we had great partnerships as we always do with a number of different businesses within the City of Springdale; Compass Community Church assisted. We also had Lowe's who donated several heaters and cleaning supplies as well so, great appreciation goes out to all that assisted and donated and helped with SOS this year. And, that concludes my report.

Administrator's Report

Mr. Jones: Want to start with thanking Mr. Uhl. I think each week, every meeting, the sound system gets just a little bit better as we tweak. Are you guys able to hear down there okay this week? The higher up you can wear it (referring to the microphone) the better, according to Mr. Uhl.

President Anderson: How's that? Is that any better Mrs. Webster?

Mr. Jones: Perfect. Thank you. A couple of things real quick. AARP free basic tax filing services, Springdale Community Center front desk is going to start taking appointments on January 2nd. And, also, starting January 2nd, the Springdale Community Center will be taking registration for youth sports. That entails and includes soccer, volleyball, baseball, t-ball, coach pitch and softball. And, the only other thing I have, I believe now all the elected officials should have their keys. Is that correct? Okay. Perfect. Thanks for the reminder tonight too Mrs. Webster. That concludes my report. Thank you.

Law Director's Report

Mr. Braun

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No report

Engineer's Report

Mr. Riggs: Thank you. So, the Northland Boulevard Project is wrapping up. We submitted final tracings which is basically 99% construction plans to ODOT (Ohio Department of Transportation) in December. So, we're in the final stretches of that. At least the design. Right-of-way acquisition is still in progress. You'll have the legislation tonight before you about paying for the parcels that we have agreed to acquire, or that have been agreed to. So, we're moving along with that, and that's expected to be done, I believe on the 19th; January 19th is when we're anticipating all the right-of-way to be cleared. Unfortunately, I have some bad news about the Northland Project. We did submit for an OPWC (Ohio Public Works Commission) application for funding assistance. I think it was like \$1.3 million dollars. Unfortunately, we were not successful with that, but, we're not giving up. We've got two other grant applications; one with the County that we're currently pursuing. We did pass the pre-application process, and we've recommended to go into the final application, and I believe that is due about the same time; sometime in mid-January, I forget. I think the 18th or the 19th. So, we're still working on that. The Crescentville Road Project, State Route 4 to (Route) 747 improvements. All the concrete work is done. The curb, catch basins, entrance aprons; they're substantially complete, and the Butler County Engineer's Office is expected to bid the asphalt work as part of their 2024 county-wide resurfacing program next year. The Tri-County Parkway Sidewalk Extension Project; 95% of plans were submitted to Public Works on December 7th, so, they're being reviewed then there's one or two parcels that need easements, temporary easements, so, it won't take long. There's not federal funding involved in that project, so, it's much easier to work through. That concludes my report.

Rental Program Committee

Mr. Vanover: The Rental Committee, I have no report on that, except that I intend to touch base with everybody and re-ramp up in January and get back at it.

President Anderson: Yes. I know we talked about picking that back up once things, the holidays, we got through the season to work on that next step of work. The next chunk of work is largely related to parking and road aspects as opposed to blight. Thank you. Before we leave Committee and Official Reports, I just wanted to circle back with a question for Finance. Looking ahead in the Administrator's Report, there was an expectation that we were going to review the budget at tonight's meeting. We're okay waiting until next month to review that. Administration,

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President Anderson (continued): there's no problem with that. I saw there was presentation on 12/20 of the budget. Do we need to review that in Council tonight, or, can we wait until next month?

Mr. Vanover: My intention with Finance Committee is to walk through the budget as we typically always do. But before it's voted upon the following meeting.

President Anderson: Right. I just didn't know when we would expect to do that as part of the appropriation ordinance.

Mr. Vanover: No. It's right there on Section Nine.

President Anderson: I see Section Nine. I don't know where my head's at tonight. Thank you. I just wanted to make sure we caught it.

Communications - None

Communications from the Audience

Ms. Matheny: I'm just here to give my annual Charter Revision report. We met on Wednesday, December 6th. All members were in attendance. We did have the swearing in by Mr. Anderson of our newest member, Butch Hafer, we held the election. I was put back on as Chairperson, by acclamation, and we do have an opening; that's on your agenda tonight. And, I believe Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup is bringing in Michelle Miller's name. Michelle would very much like your support to be on Charter Revision. And, then, I just had one question. Why did we skip the invocation?

President Anderson: (off mic) We didn't have one prepared prior.

Ms. Matheny. It's not going to be an ongoing thing, right?

President Anderson: (off mic)

Ms. Matheny: Okay. It's just been a question in the audience. We were just curious. Thank you.

President Anderson: Alright, can you hear me? Test, test, test. Better? Okay. We'll have to keep the meeting tight. There's like one bar left on this mic too. So, pressure's on. Keep your comments brief.

Presentation of the 2024 Budget

Mr. Vanover: Council, as we get ready to dive into this, I won't go through all the pages, as a matter of fact, I'd be remiss if I didn't offer Mayor (Hawkins) or Mr. Jones, did you want to make any additional comments before we start?

Mayor Hawkins: Thank you Mr. Vanover. Again, thank you to all those in the Administration that assisted in this. Stephanie Morgan spearheads this process and it is a, I guess, it's a labor of love, but it is definitely laborious. Just so residents understand, and for our new members, this process takes months to go through all the Department Directors give their "wish lists" to the Administration. They go through and get pared down. They get sent back, Directors go back and look at those again, and send back out their requests in terms of budgetary items. And then, the Administration goes through putting that together. You'll find as you go through the budget, there are line item notes, which, a lot of times will speak to discrepancies and what happened the year before, or why there's a change, and so, a lot of times, questions that come up get answered, but we have these discussions in case there are other questions/concerns that individuals have. But, a lot of them get answered with the diligent notes on the side of it. That's also for the residents and the folks that are here, and folks at home watching. If you don't see a lot of questions that come through, it may be because there's a lot of explanations within that document. Mr. Jones?

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Mr. Jones: I'm good. Thank you.

Mr. Vanover: Alright, just first, the cover page speaks volumes. Mayor Hawkins mentioned that our current carryover is in excess of \$7.5 million dollars. That's great news, however, you project that down the road, that's not going to hold up. We are rapidly losing ground. So, the Departments have their work cut out for them, and, I know, as in past, they will work hard on keeping us in line. It's important to point out the expenditures far exceed revenues for 2023. So, we have some decisions down the road that will have to be made. We are expecting revenues to drop to \$23,406,772.24. That is very concerning, to say the very least. I won't dwell. You have the facts and figures in there. Do yourself a favor and take a look at it. Because, it truly sets the stage for what the future is going to hold for us as a body, and, the work that the Administration will also have to work with. We'll just start through. First off,

Police Department - no questions/concerns

Mr. Vanover: Any questions?

President Anderson: So, for people who haven't been through this before, if, as we go through each section is how we've done it. We'll read each section. If you have any questions for Mr. Vanover, just chime in. I'll see the light, and then I'll call on you, and that's how I'll make sure it gets answered. Does that still sound right?

Mr. Jacobs: There was a couple of items, and I don't want to belabor this, as we mentioned. We don't have to go through individual details. The DARE (Drug Abuse Resistant Education) Program is mentioned three times in the first couple of pages. I understand we've discontinued that. I was wondering if Administration could kind of speak to that. Because, I think some members of the public misunderstand why we may be moving away from the DARE Program, and what vision we might have for replacing it. I don't think the language here is the issue, I just had that question, and I know some community members have been talking about it. Thank you.

Mayor Hawkins: I'll let Mr. Uhl address that.

Mr. Uhl: A couple of things with the DARE Program. The DARE Program in and of itself has been found to be an ineffective program by the National Institute of Justice, and no longer funded as a government program. The State of Ohio stopped funding it as well. The State of Ohio actually prohibited any schools from actually funding the program as well. They can't use public funds to fund a DARE Program. When we looked at the DARE Program, we were one of two agencies in the County that were still operating DARE. We were operating DARE; the Village of Glendale has DARE in one of their schools. Not all of their schools. Fairfield still has DARE, but, we were one of the very, very few that still operate DARE. As we looked at what the program was, our officers were tied to an individual curriculum of DARE, which consists of a total of 22.5 hours per school. Not per class, per school, when they typically do five grades in each school. The older grades get about ten hours of DARE-related educational instruction. The younger grades get anywhere from an hour to an hour and a half of instruction over a ten week period. So, we looked at how we could better implement a program that isn't tied to a curriculum, but, keeps police officers in schools. It's just not tied to the DARE curriculum. So, I think everybody heard DARE was no longer going to be in the school, and automatically assumed that that meant no police officers in the school, and that's not the case. We actually have a better plan to do different types of training that are age-specific, and relevant to current topics to work with the school administration to figure out what their concerns are and to provide some of these trainings to the different grade levels. So, there's still going to be the educational component. There are still going to be police officers in the school, they will be uniformed, they will be in plain clothes, so, our police officers have daily contact with each school, so, none of that is going away. If anything, it will be enhanced and you'll see more police officer presence both in a uniform capacity, and a plain clothes capacity.

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Mrs. McFarland: Do we know when more information will be coming out about that? A big part of the fifth grade graduation program at the end of the year is part of the DARE Program. So, I know even right now, the fifth grade teachers are concerned, and I know this is the budget talk, and I know this isn't the time really, but, when will we know more about that to pass on to the schools and the families?

Mr. Uhl: The Police Department is currently working with the schools to get through that initial fifth grade education, but, after January, the DARE Program is no longer going to exist.

Mrs. McFarland: Right. Okay.

Mayor Hawkins: So, I think it's safe to say, much like my predecessor when the idea of the DARE Program being stopped, it wasn't something that I was excited about that concept or idea. Having some more discussion with regard to what Administration has provided in terms of information, specifically that our current Chief of Police, Chief Butler, our former Chief of Police, Chief Wells, both had encouraged that this program be discontinued for the same reasons that Mr. Uhl had indicated, is a big thing. The big concern that I had was making sure that we have the engagement with officers with our young people so that we can foster that sense of community, and have a great relationship with our law enforcement officers, specifically the first responders in general. And, so, we've had the conversations that it's been stressed, that it's critical that our law enforcement officers are going to be in the schools, and are going to do some type of programming. And, so, the Police Department is going to work that out in terms of whether that's bringing in Police dogs, or going through and talking about the dangers of internet crimes, what have you. But, there's still going to be some actual educational component that our law enforcement is going to go into the schools, and engage in, and, in terms of being present, it's my understanding that they've been more present in the schools now, than they were before just trying to manage the DARE program. They're there. And, that's the other thing that's important in terms of a safety thing. Perspective wise, you heard Mr. Uhl talk about how few schools we have that are around in the area that are doing DARE as well as the State saying, "Hey, we're not going to fund or use these dollars for it." What you have seen the trend go to now, is Resource Officers. And, that is a choice that a school district has to make because they're paying for part of that money when they go through and they do that. So, in our district, we have, I believe, Resource Officers in the Middle School and the High School. I don't think it's something that we have throughout the elementary schools necessarily. But, you know, as a City, it's important that we have our law enforcement officers going to school. They're doing that. They're there. So, that shouldn't be a worry. That's being addressed in terms of an educational component. That's going to be addressed and they'll work out something a little more formal and making sure that Ms. Tenbarge, the principal there, it works with them and we're not going to interrupt their educational process, but, all that stuff is going to be covered. We're not going away, there's going to be more contact in the schools, and the reality is it's just not going to be under the banner of "DARE", which, as you look around, most schools are not doing. Thank you.

Mr. Jacobs: I appreciate that. I'm just going to speak loud because my battery is already out. I appreciate that we talked about it. If you just do a little bit of research, you see that all the research shows it's not an effective program. It's popular with politicians and parents, but the research doesn't bear it out. And, the fact that we're moving away from it isn't about money, it's about not putting kids at a lower priority. So, I appreciate the time we took, and I'm sorry it took some time from the reading of the budget.

Mr. Vanover: That's no problem. That's what we're here for.

President Anderson: That's an important question because it speaks to priorities. It is something that we talked about in the Finance Committee meeting too.

Mr. Vanover: Still on Police Department. Any questions? (None)

Fire Department	-	no questions/concerns
Health Department	-	no questions/concerns

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Parks and Recreation Department	-	no questions/concerns
Building Department	-	no questions/concerns
Waste Collection	-	no questions/concerns
Public Works	-	no questions/concerns
Administrative Office Budget	-	no questions/concerns
Economic Development Department	-	no questions/concerns
Finance Department	-	no questions/concerns
Legislative Body	-	no questions/concerns
Other Boards/Commissions Budgets	-	no questions/concerns
Mr. Vanover: That would be Civil Service, ICRC Contractual Services.		
Tax Department	-	no questions/concerns
General Administration	-	no questions/concerns
Transfers and Advances	-	no questions/concerns
Cameron and Underwood Parks	-	no questions/concerns
Adult Sports Fund	-	no questions/concerns
Street Maintenance Fund	-	no questions/concerns
State Highway Improvement Fund	-	no questions/concerns
One Ohio Opioid Fund	-	no questions/concerns
Grants Fund	-	no questions/concerns
Court Computerization Fund	-	no questions/concerns
Springdale Youth Boosters	-	no questions/concerns
Merchant Street TIF	-	no questions/concerns
Sheraton Lane TIF	-	no questions/concerns
Commerce Park TIF	-	no questions/concerns
Drug Enforcement Fund	-	no questions/concerns
Law Enforcement Fund	-	no questions/concerns
DUI Fund	-	no questions/concerns
Law Enforcement Training Fund	-	no questions/concerns
Insurance Trust Fund	-	no questions/concerns
Health Insurance Trust Fund	-	no questions/concerns
Street Improvement Debt Fund	-	no questions/concerns

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Capital Improvements Fund	-	no questions/concerns
Residential Recycling Fund	-	no questions/concerns
Tri County Mall TIF Fund	-	no questions/concerns
Parks and Urban Forestry Fund	-	no questions/concerns
Northwest Business Center TIF	-	no questions/concerns
Unclaimed Monies Fund	-	no questions/concerns
OBBS Asset Fund	-	no questions/concerns
Fire Insurance Proceeds	-	no questions/concerns

Mr. Vanover: At this point now, you're into revenues. Do yourself a favor and go through those and look at them. They, like I said, we're looking good coming into the end of this year, but, we've got a lot of work ahead of us for future years, and, hopefully, we can see some things come on board that will change that dynamic. Any further questions?

Mr. Jones: Just a comment. We do not have on our staff a full-time grant writer. But, we have a lot of Department Heads, and Assistant Directors and staff that involve themselves in grant writing. And, our City Engineer and his staff at the firm he works out of write a ton of grants for us. So, I'd just like to point that out, you know, many times there are 80/20, or 50/50, and sometimes it's just money that we get that we're not matching, but, we would struggle to operate without some of the grants and funding we receive and I would just like to say that, first of all, to point that out, and so when you're going through here, take a good close look at that. But, also, to point out that there's a lot of staff that works hard for that, and, they're not, per se, grant writers, but yet they seek monies that they realize is out there. I think we've all heard our Engineer say more than once we've gotten the majority of the Northland Project not fully funded, but the majority of it funded, and he's still optimistic, and still out there digging for money hoping to eventually get it all funded. So, I just want to thank him publicly and the job that he and his firm does for us, but, also, the department heads for the work they do on it. Thank you.

Mr. Vanover: Thank you Mr. Jones. Well, and I would be remiss if I didn't give a tip of the hat to the Administration, staff, supervisors, and one person who, well, you have this document in front of you. We had a draft of this document just a week ago, so, Ms. Stephanie Morgan, who does yeoman's work on this. I would be remiss if I didn't give her due accolades. The Administration has admitted in conversation that her ability to carry this through enables them to stay focused on their operation. So, if anybody wants to see what a \$25 million dollar budget looks like, there it is. And, it has grown a number of years that I have sat here.

Mayor Hawkins: I wanted to thank and commend Mr. Vanover and Mrs. Webster on the Finance Committee. We were able to breeze through this. We spent about 2 and one half hours through the course of their meeting going over the budget, so, there was a very in-depth process to get to this final result. But, thank you guys for your time and attention.

Mr. Jacobs: I just wanted to echo Mr. Jones comments. We have a fantastic grant writer, Commissioner Clayton, but that's not his official duty. He's done amazing work, and I know there's a lot more. Just for the public's benefit, would we say that our biggest concern with declining revenue is still that work-from-home situation? I know there's other factors, but the public may not be aware why we're staring down declining revenues.

Mr. Vanover: That is something that is still shaking out. We had \$2 million dollars in refunds, Mr. Uhl? Mr. Jones?

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Mr. Uhl: Yes, we've had about, I think at last count, we had about \$680,000 go back, attributed just this year to work-from-home. That was for individual refunds, but we've also refunded, I know we did one company in particular to the tune of about \$600,000 just to one company that was continuing to make payments to the City. That all needed to all be refunded back to that company. So, between business loss, work-from-home; both of those are significantly impacting our earnings tax and what we're collecting on an annual basis.

Ms. McFarland: Can somebody explain, just because it was new information to me as a work-from-home employee, the "lookback period" now that we have to go back three years and how that's changing revenue that we thought we had had. Just for residents to understand.

Mr. Uhl: Are you asking from what we collected versus; "then versus now"

Ms. McFarland: Right.

Mr. Uhl: I don't have those numbers off the top of my head. To what the process looks like.

Ms. McFarland: What this process is. Why it changed, or when it changed.

Mr. Uhl: So, I think everyone was eligible to file for refunds who was continuing to be withheld from their company in 2022, sorry, 2021. I think 2021; anybody who was withheld in 2021 was eligible to file for a refund in 2022 for any of those withholdings. Similar to this year, anyone in tax year 2022 who was withheld from their employer was able to apply for a refund for any work that was done outside of the City of Springdale, they were eligible for a refund.

Mr. Gleaves: I think it's important that we recognize also our Fire and Police Departments and some of the things that I've noticed that they've showed me on some tours that they have done to save money and build camaraderie. They have taken and modified their own buildings, modified their own rooms. They've also built tables in their eating areas that saved massive amount of money. That shows camaraderie, so, they should be commended on them coming together and doing these things to save money and also build a better environment.

Mr. Vanover: Well, if you want a one snapshot picture of their efforts, we have a 20 year old aerial (fire engine) sitting out there that is still in working order today. We hold our breath that we get the new one before that one gives up the ghost. But, yes, all the departments do streets, and roads, they do a tremendous amount of work, rebuilding catch basins. They keep it "in house" rather than subcontracting it out. You can pick a department, and they're all routinely giving extra to help control those costs and those figures. And, you're right, we would be looking at a completely different picture with the attitude that we have and I have said in years past, and I'll say it again, and in the future, our employees are one of our strongest assets. And, we would be less without them and their attitude. So, yes, all of them, the entire front door to back door deserves a pat on the back.

President Anderson: Mr. Vanover, if you can keep me on the straight and narrow here. In the past, I don't see any more questions. In the past, have we done a Roll Call vote on the budget, or done acclamation? What does Finance typically like to see happen.

Mr. Vanover: We will let this sit. You get a chance to digest, and we will look for the official approval in January.

President Anderson: In that January ordinance. So, it will be part of an ordinance in January. So, you'll have a chance to ask more questions after you've digested this. If anyone has that, we'll do that at the January meeting. Thank you Mr. Vanover.

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Ordinances and Resolutions

Public Hearing

Ordinance No. 47-2023

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A ZONING MAP AMENDMENT FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 501 EAST KEMPER ROAD AND APPROVING THE PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND THE FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE PROPERTY

President Anderson: Before I open the public hearing, I just wanted to check in with Administration. Did you have additional information to share before we go to the public hearing? I don't know that there was, but, just wanted to give you that opportunity. Well, at this point, there is a public hearing attached to this. If anyone from the public would like to speak for or against the ordinance and the zone map change, this is your opportunity. Again, you would just come forward to the podium, sign in, give your name and address, and then speak for or against the matter at hand. So, at this point, I'm opening the public hearing.

Ms. Vecchione: Good evening. My name is Sarah Vecchione. My address is 7965 N. High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215. I'm here representing Chick-fil-A and Kimley-Horn and I'm here to answer any questions related to the civil site design.

President Anderson: Thank you.

Ms. Vecchione: We're requesting approval from the Council for the proposed site plan.

President Anderson: We're still inside the public hearing. If you want to hang out (addressing Ms. Vecchione) if there's questions from Council, there'll be an opportunity for them to ask those as well. Is there anyone else that would like to speak for or against the item before I move on to Council questions? (None) I'm closing the public hearing related to Ordinance No. 47-2023.

Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 47-2023; Mr. Jacobs seconded.

Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup: I just wanted to say that on behalf of Planning Commission, that we do encourage all of you to vote yes on this. It is a small strip of grass that's being changed from "SS" to 2.27 strip of grass that's being switched from "SS" to "PUD" is what we're asking. And, what that will do is just include that strip in the original PUD, so it's all covered under the same covenants.

Ordinance No. 47-2023 passes with seven affirmative votes.

President Anderson: Thanks for coming out. Sorry we didn't have more questions for you.

Ms. Vecchione: That's alright; made my life easy. I appreciate it.

Ordinance No. 51-2023

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 94 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF SPRINGDALE, OHIO AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Mr. Jacobs made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 51-2023; Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup seconded.

Mr. Braun: I just wanted to let Council know that this is something that the legislature, each year, makes revisions to the tax code. This brings us into compliance with that, and, we're obligated by law to adopt these, and, to make these changes. It's not something that originated here in the City of Springdale. Thank you.

Ordinance No. 51-2023 passes with seven affirmative votes.

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Mr. Braun: I wanted to bring to Council's attention that you have in front of you an amended Exhibit A. It includes nine additional properties. When you read the amendment, it would be nice if we could also have a motion to adopt the amended Exhibit A, and then, after you accept that through a motion, that you could do a motion to adopt the amended ordinance. These properties are additional properties since we put the packet out that have reached an agreement with (off mic) property, and we anticipated that because we're continuing to negotiate, our agent is, to get these properties approved so that the project is complete. I was talking with the City Engineer before the meeting. We might anticipate additional properties at your first meeting in January that we'll reach agreement on, and we'll bring those back to you, but, at this time, we do have nine additional properties, so I would be requesting a motion to amend the ordinance to include the presented Exhibit A.

President Anderson: As a matter of process, would we read the ordinance first, and then do the motion? So we can read it as is, and then we can do the motion to amend?

Ordinance No. 52-2023

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY ASSOCIATED WITH THE NORTHLAND BOULEVARD RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

President Anderson: Council, you've heard the reading of the ordinance as submitted. We have a request to amend the Exhibit A. Would anyone like to make a motion to amend.

Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup: I'd like to make a motion to amend Exhibit A.

Mr. Jacobs: Second.

President Anderson: Moved and seconded to amend the Ordinance with the updated Exhibit A as presented to Council at the meeting tonight. Is there any discussion or questions about the motion to amend the Exhibit? (None)

Motion to amend Exhibit A for Ordinance No. 52-2023 passes with seven affirmative votes.

Mr. Jacobs made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 52-2023; Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup seconded.

Ordinance No. 52-2023 passes with seven affirmative votes.

Ordinance No. 53-2023

ADOPTING A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION/ESTIMATED RECEIPTS ORDINANCE TO MAKE APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES AND ADJUST ESTIMATED RECEIPTS FOR THE CITY OF SPRINGDALE, OHIO FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2023

President Anderson: So, related to Ordinance No. 53-2023, this was the supplemental appropriation and the adjusted receipts.

Mr. Jacobs made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 53-2023; Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup seconded.

President Anderson: Is there any discussion or comments now knowing that we will be taking action tonight? (None)

Ordinance No. 53-2023 passes with seven affirmative votes.

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Ordinance No. 54-2023

ADOPTING A TEMPORARY APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2024, UNTIL THE FISCAL YEAR 2024 APPROPRIATION PERMANENT ORDINANCE IS ADOPTED BY CITY COUNCIL

President Anderson: I think Mr. Braun wants to give me a correction on process for the previous ordinance. I had it marked on my sheet as a first reading, but it's a financial ordinance, so, we can act on it tonight.

Mr. Braun: That is correct Mr. President. All appropriation ordinances under Ohio law require one reading, and go into effect immediately.

President Anderson: Thank you. So, thank you for keeping us honest. Mr. Vanover, was that your comment as well? (Mr. Vanover nodded in agreement) So, Council, we're going back to the reading for Ordinance No. 53-2023. As you heard, this is an appropriation ordinance, so it does not require a second reading, or an emergency clause. It would still go into effect tonight.

President Anderson: Alright Council, we've heard the reading of Ordinance No. 54-2023. Mr. Braun, we're okay to continue? We don't have to read that again? Perfect. Mr. Jacobs thanks you.

President Anderson: Okay, Council, you've heard the reading of Ordinance 54-2023. This is adopting the temporary appropriation ordinance for January 1, 2024, until the fiscal year 2024 appropriation permanent ordinance is adopted. It was a first reading, but, as with financial ordinances, we heard we can act on it tonight. What is your pleasure?

Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 54-2023; Mr. Jacobs seconded.

Ordinance No. 54-2023 passes with seven affirmative votes.

Ordinance No. 55-2023

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 07-2023 TO PROVIDE FOR WAGE INCREASES FOR CERTAIN CITY EMPLOYEES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 55-2023; Mr. Jacobs seconded.

Mayor Hawkins: I look for Council's support with regard to this. I will tell you, as a brief anecdote, I did have a young lady who grew up in Springdale, just graduated from Princeton last year, going to college, been a lifeguard, was mentioning that our neighbors to the east are paying their lifeguards \$15 an hour, and while she would love to come back to Springdale this summer, she said "Why would I do that if I can go make more money someplace else?" So, appreciate your support on this.

Mr. Jones: The increase that we're requesting is consistent with that of the Police and Fire units. Thank you.

Ordinance No. 55-2023 passes with seven affirmative votes.

Resolution No. R35-2023

A RESOLUTION APPOINTING _____ TO SERVE AS A MEMBER OF THE CITY OF SPRINGDALE CHARTER REVISION COMMITTEE FOR THE UNEXPIRED TERM ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025

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President Anderson: This is a resolution to back fill the Charter Revision from a member who has moved to the Board of Zoning Appeals at our last meeting. We use the same process as we did in the last meeting where the floor will be opened. You don't need a second. You can nominate. If there's just one, then we'll move forward with that. But, before we get to the nominating process, we'll start by reading the ordinance in full with a blank, and then we'll go from there. So, Mr. Jacobs when you're ready.

President Anderson: Alright, Council, at this point, we'll open the floor up for nominations for the member of the Charter Revision.

Mr. Gleaves: I would like to appoint Michelle Miller to the City of Springdale Charter Revision Committee. Most of us know Michelle. I think all of us do. She's very active in the Community. As of now, I believe she's on the board of SOS (Springdale Offering Support). She's been a soccer coach for years. She's a Princeton graduate. She'd be very, very, very good for this position, and I would like to appoint her.

Mrs. Webster: Second.

President Anderson: The floor is still open for nominations, are there any other nominations for this seat? Seeing none, by acclamation, if we could read Resolution No. R35-2023 inserting the name Michelle Miller in the blank.

Resolution No. R35-2023

A RESOLUTION APPOINTING MICHELLE MILLER TO SERVE AS A MEMBER OF THE CITY OF SPRINGDALE CHARTER REVISION COMMITTEE FOR THE UNEXPIRED TERM ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025

Mrs. Webster made a motion to adopt Resolution No. R35-2023; Mr. Jacobs seconded.

President Anderson: I do want to echo Mr. Gleaves' comments on Michelle Miller. I served with her on Board of Zoning Appeals before she went to Planning (Commission). When you say she's Springdale, I think you're right. She's lived here a long time, and, has a lot of good connections in the Community. So, as you heard earlier from the podium, she'd be a welcome member to join the Charter Revision Committee.

Resolution No. R35-2023 passes with seven affirmative votes.

President Anderson: I'd like to point out to Mr. Coleman's comment earlier about Civil Service. This was a case where Council was able to replace a Michelle with a Michelle, so I feel like we're doing our part to make it easier on all of our Chair people.

Executive Session – Economic Development

Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup: I would like to make a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss Economic Development matters.

Mr. Vanover: Second.

President Anderson: Is there any comments or discussion before we take a vote? (none)

The motion passed with a 7-0 vote to go into Executive Session. Council departed chambers at 8:24 p.m. Council returned to chambers at 9:20 p.m.

City of Springdale Council

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Old Business

Mayor Hawkins: We had some discussion last meeting regarding speed, specifically over on Crescentville. Mr. Ross had come through and Administration has reached out to Mr. Ross, but wanted to update Council as well as our residents regarding Crescentville. That strip of roadway had been three different speed limits, went through a process in the last 18 months to 24 months, thereabouts, when that project was done with that roadway. Consolidated the speed limit to make it consistent. The road was expanded for safety purposes, and, also new traffic lights which I know that it was commented on that the lights were bright. They were brighter because that was a safety thing that ODOT (Ohio Department of Transportation) had gone through and done. When they go through and they make determinations regarding speed limits, the Ohio Department of Transportation has individuals that are experts with regard to traffic and speeds, and they make those determinations. You're not going to be able to come back a year later, 18 months later, 24 months later and have that changed, because they've already made a determination on what is the safest and best speed for that roadway. So, it's not really an option. One of the accidents that was referenced, and Administration checking it, it sounded like that actually took place before the construction had occurred. So, as it stands, that's, by the State of Ohio, a safe lane of travel and made improvements to make it as safe as possible between Springdale, West Chester, and Sharonville. There's a reality that we want folks to come in like Mr. Ross did. Mr. Gleaves had had some folks comment to him with regard to some concerns on Springdale Lake Drive in that area with regard to speeding and not obeying stop signs. We want residents to come in to let Administration and Elected Officials know so that we can address those things if we aren't already addressing them. Sometimes we are. We use law enforcement, increased enforcement presence, and so that's one of the things that's going to happen on Springdale Lake Drive as well as on Crescentville. We also have, I call them speed sticks, there's probably more appropriate radar signs. We also use those for detecting how fast folks are traversing in a certain area so that we can make adjustments. But, just wanted our Elected Officials and residents know those are issues that have been addressed and are being addressed moving forward.

President Anderson: I will also note that Crescentville just recently got a bunch of trees installed. The planters just went up and down that road, so I think those trees will actually make a big difference too for how the residents feel about traffic going down, especially as they mature. I mean, it's a whole row of trees now on Crescentville. That should help.

Mr. Vanover: Well, a big part of the issue is really not the speed, but the weight, the mass that's going through there, and, unfortunately, we can't control that. And, you're right, the trees are nice. As a matter of fact, I got a hold of Mr. Jones and Mr. Uhl yesterday morning because there was a tree already down, and it wasn't hit by a car, which irritates me even more, but, that's a whole other story. But, it's a big issue there is the mass; the weight of these trucks. Once you tie in the numbers that are coming through there, but, the speed would be the lesser of the two.

Mrs. Webster: I want to make a public apology to Mrs. Gilmore from the last meeting. I inadvertently voted "No" for her and I did not mean to do that. So, I apologized to her in public at the last meeting, and I'm doing it again tonight. So I hope, I think she will accept my apology.

President Anderson: Thank you for that. Michele is a great resident too, so, I'm sure she appreciates that.

Mrs. Webster: That was a big mistake. I didn't mean to do it.

City of Springdale Council

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New Business

President Anderson: I do have one item I wanted to bring up to Council. Earlier, we had a comment about the Invocation. That was something that Mrs. McNear, as I mentioned, had taken care of Council, had done for Council as part of those duties. I wanted to see if that was something that Council, not to not continue it or do continue it, but rather, put it in rotation so that individual Council members would take turns providing the invocation just to give some diversity of that. I personally think that would be a great thing for people to do. We could set up a rotation where individual Council members could provide an Invocation if they so choose. So I just wanted to see what you guys thought about that rather than just have one person go from one perspective. What do you guys think?

Mr. Vanover: I personally would have no problem doing that. I filled in numerous times in the past. So, if people want to do a rotation and are comfortable doing that, I have no problem with that. I think that, well, I don't think, I feel very strongly that we should continue the tradition.

President Anderson: Thank you. I agree. I think it's important. I just think adding some diversity and new voices would be useful, which is why I was bringing that forward. Would anyone be opposed to setting up a rotation? Then we'll plan on doing that. I'll send out a rotation just so you know ahead of time that it will be your turn, and then when we get to that step and we'll just add a name so you know that it's your turn, and then you have the opportunity. Again, if you have questions about what would be appropriate for an Invocation, reach out or speak to Mr. Braun. There are some limitations to what we can do as a public body, so just make that if you have, take that moment, or maybe Mr. Braun could provide a little bit of guidance in advance of what would be appropriate, and maybe save questions and go from there. I'll take the first turn just so we don't have to worry about it. You don't have to stress because the next meeting is in January, so I'll go first. But, after that, we'll set a rotation.

Meetings and Announcements

Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup: I have two things. First of all, I do want to recognize that we had a member of Board of Zoning Appeals that passed away on December 10th, Larry Weiner. And, he was a very important part of our community and we thank him for his time that he served, and personally, he was a friend of mine and he was a very, very kind person who always had a smile on his face and a joke ready; always, and, he is very missed already, and I just wanted to take a moment to recognize him because he was on Board of Zoning Appeals, and he did pass away on the tenth, and the other thing I have is that Planning Commission will be meeting at 7:00 p.m. on January 9th in these chambers.

Mr. Uhl: I just wanted to advise that Civil Service Commission will have their next meeting on January 4th at 2:00 p.m. in Council Conference Room.

President Anderson: I do want to take this moment, announcement-wise, to thank Administration. I've received a number of compliments about the updated lighting that went out. I know it was delayed, the Christmas lighting, due to some problems with Public Works trucks and equipment. But, it looks really nice. Driving in tonight it was really impressive to see, so I appreciated that. For what it's worth, I know it's not easy getting up there, and people were getting antsy, but, it looks great. Also, while we're tooting your horn, for those that missed it, the Santa 5k SOS event was amazing. So, all the work that went into that is very much appreciated. The Christmas market that the Rec Department put out, if anyone didn't see it, they should plan to go next year, assuming they're doing the event again. They really put on a really impressive show there. They had really "upped their game" from the year before. There was twice as many vendors, there was a lot of people. We had amazing weather. The race was really well managed. It was appreciated. I got nothing but good compliments for that. So, I wanted to pass that along.

City of Springdale Council

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Communications from the Audience

Ms. Wells: Hello, my name is Katie Wells, and I live on Bernhardt Court. With the news that Artisan Village defaulted on their loan, I am wondering what the next steps are for Tri County Mall and what that means for Springdale.

President Anderson: Is there anyone that would want to take a stab at that?

Mr. Braun: As you're aware, there's currently legal proceedings pending in Hamilton County, so, I think the answer to that is those proceedings will control what happens to that. There's multiple layers of financing and agreements that will be renegotiated, and, there'll be loans that will be sold, if you're following the docket, that's in the process of happening, so, I think my quickest answer to you is stay tuned.

Ms. Wells: Another follow up to that is I just want to clarify, I know, like in the default process the water and the electric are going to get shut off and BJ's has to leave and Mi Cozumel has to leave. Will that affect the outside businesses that are in the lot, or are they two completely separate entities?

President Anderson: I'm not sure we have information on that. Administration do you have that? Mr. Braun?

Mr. Braun: Yes. Mr. Lamping indicated to me that those are separate.

Ms. Wells: Okay. So, just the two businesses (that) are affected are inside of the mall.

Mr. Braun: And, again, whatever happens to the mall itself might ultimately control what happens on the outside.

Ms. Wells: Okay. Thank you guys. That's all I had today.

Mayor Hawkins: Katie (Wells), the reality is, if everything went through as planned, as quickly as they wanted to, they'd have to shut down anyway to go through and do that whole electrical, water changeover. So, those businesses would have been down for a significant period of time, maybe until everything was finished anyway. So, that was something that was likely to probably happen anyway. It's never good when we're losing businesses, and those are two places that folks love to go, and, so, hopefully, they shall return to Springdale.

President Anderson: I will add. We get it. A lot of people are going to ask us questions about it. It's not being ignored. As Mr. Braun said, there's proceedings that limit what we can talk about, but, just because we don't talk about it every meeting doesn't mean that we're not working on it. As soon as we can share things, I think we will, but, we don't want to ever do that in a way that would jeopardize or make it more difficult for any developers that might want to come in or continue in the space that they're in. But, it's a hot topic. I agree. But, stay tuned is not the best answer, but, it's the best one we can give right now.

Ms. Wells: Thank you guys so much. I appreciate it.

President Anderson: Thank you.

President Anderson: Next, I think there's a scrivener's error in the agenda. I think right now it's listed as "Update on (legislation) still in development", and then "Recap (of legislative items requested for next Council meeting)". We typically, I think, do it in the reverse. But, rather than try to dictate what Mr. Jacobs will do, since both of those are his items, I'll turn it over to you for both the update and the recap in whatever order you think is most appropriate.

City of Springdale Council

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Update on legislation still in development

As you review your Internal Memorandum, Item I was addressed by Ordinance No. 47-2023; An Ordinance Approving a Zoning Map Amendment for the Property Located at 501 East Kemper Road. That was approved with seven affirmative votes. Item II was addressed with Ordinance No. 55-2023; An Ordinance Amending Ordinance No. 07-2023 to Provide for Wage Increases for Certain City Employees. That was approved with seven affirmative votes. Item III was addressed by Ordinance No. 51-2023; An Ordinance Amending Chapter 94 of the Code of the Ordinances of the City of Springdale, and that was approved with seven affirmative votes. Item IV was addressed with Ordinance No. 52-2023; An Ordinance Authorizing the Purchase of Certain Real Property Associated with the Northland Boulevard Reconstruction Project. That was approved with seven affirmative votes. Item VI was addressed by Ordinance No. 54-2023; Adopting a Temporary Appropriations Ordinance for the Period January 1, 2024 until the Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations. That was approved with seven affirmative votes. Item VII was addressed with Resolution No. R35-2023; Appointing a Member to Serve on the City of Springdale Charter Revision Committee. Ms. Miller was approved with seven votes. Or, it was by acclamation, I believe. Item VIII was addressed by Ordinance No. 53-2023; An Ordinance Adopting the Annual Appropriations/Estimated Receipts for Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2023. That was approved with seven affirmative votes as well.

Recap of legislative items requested for next Council meeting

Mr. Jacobs: A Resolution Requesting Advance Payment from the County Auditor at our January meeting. There will be a Resolution Authorizing the Investment of Municipal Funds at our next meeting, and then of course Adoption of the Budget after the run-through tonight. Unless Administration has anything else.

President Anderson: Before we get to Item 17 (adjournment), I just want to wish everyone a Happy Holiday, Merry Christmas, if you do follow that, and next year, assuming we adjourn here in a minute, Happy New Year to all.

Adjournment

Mrs. Sullivan-Wisecup made a motion to adjourn; Mr. Jacobs seconded the motion and Council adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Browder
Clerk of Council

Minutes Approved:
Jeffrey Anderson, President of Council

_____, 2024