

CITY OF BLUE ASH

Interoffice Memo – City Manager's Office

TO: City Council
FROM: City Manager and Department Directors
SUBJECT: Agenda Items for the May 24th Council Meeting
DATE: May 22, 2012
COPIES: Department Directors, Press, Clerk of Council, Solicitor

This memo offers a brief description of the topics included on the May 24th Council agenda.

9.a.1. Ordinance No. 2012-28 – amending Chapter 131 of the Blue Ash Code of Ordinances

Ordinance No. 2012-28 addresses recommendations relating to Chapter 131 of the Blue Ash Code of Ordinances amending Sections 131.07-1, 131.07-038, 131.07-79, 131.07-86, 131.07-110 and 133.17(b) to reflect both changes to the Position Classification Plan and changes to a section of the Blue Ash Code of Ordinances.

The first recommendation relates to the position soon to be vacated by Judy Clark, whose resignation is effective June, 2012. Her current title is Economic and Community Development Director. In order to allow the primary focus of this position to be strategic Economic Development efforts, it is recommended that the title be amended to Economic Development Director, and the responsibilities of community development supervision be reassigned.

The second update dovetails with the above relating to the title and position description of the Assistant Community Development Director. To accomplish the transfer of community development responsibilities from the Economic Development Director, they would be reassigned to the Assistant Community Development Director. Given this expansion in responsibilities, this title would be amended to Community Development Director. Additionally, this position would become supervisory, taking on the responsibilities of managing both the Administrative Clerk for the Department, as well as the Community Development Program Administrator. As a further note, it is intended that the Community Development Director and the Economic Development Director would hold the same rank organizationally of Division Head.

The third recommendation regards the position of Assistant City Manager. Currently the Assistant to the City Manager is responsible for external communications for the City including Community Relations, coordination of Public Information, website/social media matters, and the provision of Administration and Council Administration Support. Promotion of external and community relations is an integral aspect of Community and Economic Development, therefore it would be consistent to have this department, in its recommended new configuration, report to the Assistant to the City Manager. This would best coordinate efforts in the arena of Community and Public Relations. Concurrent with the assignment of these additional responsibilities, the present Assistant to the City Manager should be reclassified to Assistant City Manager, a change which necessitates an increase in number of positions at this classification, slight revisions to the job description, and an update to section 133.17(b) of the Code of Ordinances.

The fourth recommendation relates to part-time responsibilities in the Recreation Department. As the demand for fitness increases in the Recreation Center, there is a corresponding need for the division of responsibilities. Therefore it is recommended that the position description for Recreation Aide IV be expanded to include duties related to fitness such as fitness consulting, teaching fitness classes, etc.

Another recommendation corresponds with upcoming changes in the Police Department due to impending retirements. Extending the lower end of the pay range for the position of Auxiliary Police Officer will allow further flexibility in meeting staffing needs, while maintaining budgetary goals.

Finally it is recommended that position of Deputy Treasurer/Tax Commissioner be removed from the pay plan. The vacancy of Finance Officer/Tax Commissioner has recently been filled. As there is no present need for a Deputy Treasurer and the Tax Commissioner responsibilities have been transferred and continue to be fulfilled, the position of Deputy Treasurer/Tax Commissioner can reasonably be removed from the pay plan at this time.

Please direct any questions regarding this ordinance to the City Manager or Treasurer.

9.a.2. Ordinance No. 2012-29 – authorizing an energy services agreement associated with energy-saving facility improvements; and

9.a.3. Ordinance No. 2012-30 – approving funding sources for energy services agreement including municipal lease

Ordinance 2012-29 and 2012-30 relate to the energy efficiency improvement project for City facilities as was previously discussed at the January Council retreat and the May 10, 2012 Council meeting.

In 2009 Hamilton County was the recipient of over \$4 million of federal Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG). The County allocated approximately \$1.5 million of their award to “buy down” the cost of energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements via a performance contracting process and invited Hamilton County communities to participate. In spring 2011, Hamilton County contracted with Ameresco, Inc after a competitive process, to serve as the County’s and participating communities’ energy service company. Since that time, the City has worked with the County and Ameresco on an initial scoping facility and systems audit and later an investment grade audit to determine the needed energy saving improvements. Nearly \$2 million worth of improvements were identified related to heating/air conditioning, controls, lighting, water heating, etc... The vast majority of the equipment identified for replacement is operating on borrowed time or in some instances already inoperable.

The County has allocated at least \$248,000 of their EECBG funds for the Blue Ash project, Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance has also offered \$200,000 from their EECBG award, and \$15,000 has been identified in Duke Energy rebates. The only way for City to receive the grant money is to move forward with this process and in a timely manner as the grant funds must be spent by September 12, 2012. Also, additional savings will be gained via reduction in energy usage as soon as the obsolete equipment is replaced.

Ordinance 2012-29 allows for the City Manager to enter into an Energy Services Agreement with Ameresco, Inc. in a form reviewed and approved by the solicitor, for an amount not to exceed \$2 million. The total amount of expenditure to Ameresco must be included in the Ordinance, however, the net cost to the City will be just over \$1.5 million after reimbursement of the grant monies and Duke Energy rebates.

Questions regarding this Ordinance should be addressed to Kelly Osler, Assistant to the City Manager, 745-8503.

The second Ordinance, 2012-30 provides the funding mechanism for these improvements. Administration has reviewed several funding options including the use of general fund balance, debt issuance and various capital lease options. Given the favorable lease rates and a desire to preserve general fund balance it is our recommendation that the City enter into a municipal lease to fund these improvements. We have received a proposal from Fifth Third Bank that

provides for a ten-year tax-exempt municipal lease of \$1,500,000 in net equipment cost, with a lease rate of 2.35%, payable in annual installments, with the City retaining ownership of the improvements throughout and at the end of the lease.

Questions regarding this Ordinance should be addressed to Sherry Poppe, Treasurer/Administrative Services Director, 745-8513.

9.b.1 Motion setting 7:05 PM, Thursday, June 14, 2012 as public hearing regarding a denial of the Board of Zoning Appeals of the appeal of the order of the Zoning Administrator regarding the removal of a horse

A Notice of Appeal was filed with the Blue Ash City Clerk of Council on May 16, 2012 regarding a denial by the Board of Zoning Appeals of the appeal of the order of the Zoning Administrator dated February 27, 2012 to Ingrid Anderson, 9701 Conklin Road, requiring the removal of a horse.

Please direct any questions regarding this motion to the Assistant Community Development Director, Dan Johnson.

9.c.1. Ordinance No. 2012-32 – Authorizing submission of a Surface Water Improvement Fund grant application

For over a decade, the EPA has been working on an expansion of its traditional role to include programs to provide for an improvement in the quality of storm water, as reflected in the establishment of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) multi-phased Storm Water Permit Program. In order to comply with these phased requirements, the City of Blue Ash has joined over 45 other entities located in Hamilton County under the Hamilton County Storm Water District (HCSWD). Those governmental entities who do not participate in this program are required to comply with the rather difficult requirements on their own. Collectively, the HCSWD works very well, and keeps all the members in compliance and involved in not only properly handling storm water flows, but in working to keep the runoff as clean as possible.

As a part of the EPA's efforts, the Surface Water Improvement Fund (SWIF) was established in 2008 offering grant opportunities to local entities who can apply for funding assistance for projects benefitting the quality of storm water. Parks and Recreation Director Chuck Funk and Public Works Director Gordon Perry were contacted by Mr. Rich Cogen of the Ohio River Foundation in order to team with Blue Ash in the submission of a SWIF grant on a project in Blue Ash. The City of Blue Ash is eligible to apply for and be offered a SWIF grant for water quality improvement projects, but it is important to note that competition is strong and the OPEA's funding is only \$1,000,000 state-wide. This grant requires no monetary match, can be implemented with existing staff, and project costs are paid directly through the OEPA. Projects funded during prior program years included: storm water demonstration projects, stream restoration projects, wetland restoration projects, rain garden installations, etc.

The Public Works Director seeks Council's confirmation of the submission of a grant application under this SWIF program for improvements and repairs required to the drainage creek and detention basin located between the South Firehouse and the Amphitheatre/Nature Park. City staff was preparing to do the work this year and the grant opportunity appeared to match the requirements of this project. Due to the deadline of grant, a grant application was filled out and submitted. The City's local participation contribution for the grant is in-kind services, which we had already planned for this project; therefore, no additional funding would be required. The Ohio River Foundation, a non-profit organization committed to improved quality waterways, would perform the educational component of the grant.

While there is no assurance that Blue Ash will be successful in being awarded this grant, it was felt that an ordinance considered by Council would be appropriate. While repairs and improvements must be accomplished on the drainage creek and basin this year, the scope of

the grant effort is broad, and it certainly would be helpful from a budgetary and operations standpoint to secure this grant.

Any questions can be directed to the Public Works Director.

9.c.1. Ordinance No. 2012-31 – Authorizing the purchase of a replacement pumper truck for Fire Department

The Fire Department has been working on the design and specifications for a new fire engine. This engine was approved in the 2012 capital budget and will be replacing an engine that has already been sold. The Department has spoken with several vendors, looked at several fire engines and has concluded to request the purchase of a Pierce Engine.

The Fire Department has a long history with Pierce products and, in fact, the department's entire fleet is made up of Pierce trucks. The quality, durability, fit and finish of Pierce trucks are extremely high.

The Fire Chief has worked with a sales representative from Finley Fire Equipment to obtain the best price possible for the unit. Purchase of this unit can be made from the Ohio State Term Schedule #7761800208. To avoid a price increase, purchase commitments must be effective prior to June 1, 2012. It is recommended that the City take advantage of the pre-pay discount that Pierce offers which will be an additional savings of \$20,293. If the City takes advantage of the pre-pay discounts and deadlines, our cost of the truck will be approximately \$511,000.00.

The truck includes a light tower, compressed air foam system (CAFS), remote deck gun and a generator. All of these items are additional tools that the Fire Department can utilize to be more efficient and effective as possible.

Please direct questions regarding this ordinance to the Fire Chief, 745-8534.