

Service Committee Minutes

Honorable Council
City of Newark, Ohio
May 16, 2022

The Service Committee met in Council Chambers on May 16, 2022, following the Finance Committee with these members in attendance:

Doug Marmie sitting in for Jeff Rath
Jeff Harris – Vice Chair
Spencer Barker
Beth Bline
Mark Labutis sitting in for Ms. Hottinger

We wish to report:

- 1. Ordinance No. 22-17** AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE EDITING AND INCLUSION OF CERTAIN ORDINANCES AND A RESOLUTION AS PARTS OF THE VARIOUS COMPONENT CODES OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR THE ADOPTION OF NEW MATTER IN THE UPDATED AND REVISED CODIFIED ORDINANCES; REPEALING ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT THEREWITH; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Tricia Moore, Law Director – This is the yearly legislation that is prepared by AmLegal so that anything we've changed throughout the year will be updated.

Motion to send to full council by Mr. Barker, second by Mr. Labutis

Mr. Marmie – Can you have her explain the emergency clause?

Law Director Moore – It is top meet deadlines for publishing.

Motion passed 5-0
- 2. Resolution No. 22-49** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO, TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS AND ENTER INTO CONTRACT, SUBJECT TO THE APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS, FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A GRAVITY SANITARY SEWER ON RIVER ROAD FROM PARK TRAILS TO THORNWOOD DRIVE.

Roger Loomis, Water Administrator – This is a sanitary sewer system that is being installed to eliminate a pump station in Park Trails. It's being done ahead of the roundabout work on Thornwood and Reddington, so this is being funded through ARP funds and the estimated cost is about \$3 million. We are anticipating doing the roundabout sometime later this year, so we are in a position to get this done.

Motion to send to full council by Mr. Barker, second by Ms. Bline

Mr. Barker – What's the timeline for this project once it goes out to bid and is approved.

Mr. Loomis – It's a six month project ,but we are going to do sewers about 25 feet deep, so maybe September, we're working out the details of that./ How it works in conjunction with the roundabout project too, we're kind of at the mercy of ODOT and their schedule, but it shouldn't be more than 4-6 months.

Motion passed 5-0

3. **Resolution No. 22-50** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE LICKING COUNTY COMMISSIONERS TO ACT AS THE PURCHASING AGENT AND GOVERNMENTAL AGGREGATOR FOR NATURAL GAS AGGREGATION PROGRAM FOR THE CITY OF NEWARK, LICKING COUNTY, OHIO.

Mayor Jeff Hall – This is just another step in the process, this passed by 33 votes and the Electric went down by 4 votes, but they still have provisionals and some other ballots to count, so there is still a possibility we'll be coming back with an Electric piece. If you remember, the grouping and they put out for bids and the cost savings results and that's what this piece of legislation is.

Motion to send to full council by Mr. Barker, second by Mr. Labutis

Mr. Harris – I will be abstaining from this, because I work for the gas company.

Rochelle Volen-Smith, 237 Violet Ct. – I felt when we put this up for the vote that it was not clear what companies would be dealt with and it was awfully reminiscent of some things that have been passed in the past that turned out to be quite unsuitable. I'm really not clear what companies we're dealing with and how this is going to benefit the public. We've been getting things in the mail that are equally vague about true benefits of this including members of the government, so I do have questions in that order.

Mayor Hall – Electric aggregation was included in deregulation years ago, it's just the supply side. As far as I know you still get billed the same way, but it will be that supply ingredient. No one is required to do it. It took this body to allow it to go to the voters to vote for it. It's passed it will be an automatic opt-in, but you can opt-out for free. If you're on Energy Coop, you won't have that option anyway, whether it's gas or electric. You're able to opt-out if you don't like it, you can opt-out at any time, I believe the projected savings is about \$100 a year, it's not hundreds of dollars. It will still be working with your normal supplier on the billing side, I believe, is that fair? It's just the supply piece of your bill, if you look at your bill it's divided. So, people will be out negotiating with a big bundle of subscribers saying we'll give you this business for whatever time, what kind of price can you give us and they'll be negotiating. We have met and talked with the negotiating side of that, and they are very reputable. You may get stuff in the mail from companies that may not be. Again, once the opt-in happens you will get notification of that and notification that you can opt-out if you want to, then you remain exactly how you are. If you opt-in, it locks in a rate for a while. Right now if you are not locked in to any contracts the rate will vary each month depending on what the market is. So, it can change. If you feel it's better to lock in a rate, it seems like electric and gas prices are going up, this isn't going to happen tomorrow, but if you think it's going to be going up, you can lock in a lower rate. Number one, it's reputable company that will be representing us, number 2, it is endorsed by the County Commissioners Association of Ohio, that same company has been used throughout the State by a lot of communities. The more communities that get involved, the cheaper the price will be. So, for Council to stand in the way of the voters to have that, probably wasn't appropriate. The suppliers will vary, because it will depend on who's going to offer the best price.

Mr. Marmie – I just want to clarify one thing. Everybody will be entered in, you have to opt-out if you do not want to be in. But, the Energy Coop is exempt from that. There's no penalty or repercussions for opting out, it's just you're automatically enrolled and if you don't want in you have to tell them.

Mayor Hall – The plans in the past have been opt-in and the problem is no one gets around to doing it, so they never have the numbers needed to get a low enough rate. So, when it's opt-

out, people will stay in until some reason they decide not to, but they can opt-out at any time without a fee and that was a critical part of the Administration and Council's side that anybody could get out for free, no penalties, anytime. Not all companies have that.

Rochelle Volen –Smith, 237 Violet Ct. – Still unclear as to what companies are going to be involved in this. Is there any information on that?

Mr. Barker – I think you would need to ask that of the County Commissioners, they are the ones who came to each municipality with this program and it's run through their association.

Ms. Volen – Smith – How do I do that?

Mr. Barker – You would need to contact them at the County Building.

Mr. Harris – I think they have meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10am.

Motion passed 4-0 with Mr. Harris abstaining.

Meeting stands adjourned

Jeff Harris, Vice-Chair