

Finance Committee
Monday, May 23, 2022
6:00 p.m. Medina City Hall – Multi-Purpose Room

In attendance: J. Coyne – Chairman, P. Rose, J. Shields, B. Lamb, R. Haire, and Dennie Simpson. Jessica Hazeltine - Absent

Also present: Mayor Hanwell, Greg Huber, Keith Dirham, Nino Piccoli, Chief Walters, Andrew Dutton, Jansen Wehrley, Lt. Marcum, Theresa Merkle, Sara Crawford, and Teresa Knox.

1. Assignment of Requests for Council Action
2. 18-138-7/9 – Amend Code, Sec. 505.08 – Animals and Fowl – Feeding of Deer/Wild Animals

Mr. Lamb stated it would be preferable to pass a complete package that includes all the aspects of the recognized issues that we have with deer and all the possibilities of how to do the managing. His suggestion / goal for tonight is a complete agreed upon approach to this issue, there is another meeting on June 28th and he will review that plan prior to meeting. Wiser and more prudent to table this until we can see how it fits into a larger plan.

Mr. Coyne stated this has been going on for many years, and thinks he agrees the ordinance on feeding wild animals in and of itself wouldn't solve any issues because the issue will continue with respect to deer, he is not sure if others are feeding different types of animals. John stated doing a more comprehensive plan is probably correct. What's the direction of that and what would it entail? Management only of non-lethal or a combination, what are you looking at?

Bill is talking about the meetings that were held that were fairly well attended, the surveys, the general response – the broader response which we have not gaged of the entire community and all the tried and true possibilities in constructing into your management plan and no one piece would be effective because it isn't that simple. All the things that contribute to what we perceive to be the issues, those are the things that need to be put together.

One issue with not feeding wild animals was to not pit neighbor against neighbor and we need to add another line in this ordinance to have a conversation with the offender first to try to mitigate the problem prior to a first-degree misdemeanor. We need to see what kind of package we can put together that has broader community support and that is the goal. If we get to it and it's accepted, it's great and if it is not accepted by this body, then we have to go back to the drawing board. Bill Lamb doesn't want just a quick fix.

Mayor Hanwell respects Bill's comments but the fact of the matter is if we put together an archery program and lift the ban on hunting in the city, the archery season starts in September and it will take us a while to put together a plan and get it back in front of council to get direction if interested and get the state to approve. This will take a while and council will be going on break for 6 weeks during summer. From the administrative side of it, Mayor Hanwell would simply like to see if there is any interest with majority to start a draft plan for permitting archery hunting. Not that anyone would be committed, but give the administration the direction to put together a draft plan and then do an RCA and have that run in tandem with the Special Legislation meeting, because otherwise we will lose another whole year with the timing on this.

Mr. Coyne stated he thinks that is part of what Mr. Lamb is alluding to with his deer management plan.

Mr. Lamb replied what he said was to not rule things out or rule things in. Clearly there is no RCA, primary talk with administration (not his committee) has been about a culling program. It would be premature for us to do this prior to looking at a complete program. It would be premature to agree to anything unless we have that RCA and know exactly what that entails which would be - who would do it, how and where, and what would the specific permitting program be.

John stated the question to ask members of council here tonight is that to put something together and talk about it and feels Mr. Wehrley through ODNR and other contacts that he has been with over time has some information of other communities because we are not the first community that has done this. If we get direction from both Bill's committee and the administration to come up with a program, the first question in his mind, is there enough support from council to allow an archery program to occur as part of the program in the City of Medina.

Ms. Haire stated she understands what Mr. Lamb is saying but she has been in communication with a number of people and not just in her ward, she has even been stopped in the parking lot at the grocery store and 90% of those people are in favor of culling the deer, none of these people "hate" the deer but because they've been a problem. These are people that have educated themselves, have spent a lot of money in their yards to try and protect what they have on their own properties to no avail and she herself included. The consensus of the people that do want a culling program, they want a program that is going to be safe with professionals and they want it done but not in a matter where these professionals are allowed in a neighbor's yard and feel that may be dangerous. Ok with it being in a park setting where it is more contained and regulated.

Mr. Simpson stated he was never in favor of culling but the majority of people he has been in communication with and that he represents are in favor of a culling program and that is because the population of deer have become dangerous for citizens and for the deer themselves. At this time, Dennie stated he is in favor of hiring professionals in selective park areas and possibly on school properties. Dennie is not in favor, because of safety reasons, of having a culling program done in neighborhoods where several neighbors ban together and give permission for hunting.

Regi also added that if they move in the direction of culling and that would be an immediate result, that we have a plan in place for the future because they will eventually repopulate.

Mr. Coyne stated he agrees and in thinking about the feeding ordinance and going through the process and hearing the different things of communities talking to Jansen over the last two weeks while the Special Legislation meetings were being held to find out what other communities have done or are doing and the safety aspect of it seems like other communities have had success. John would like to look at other communities that have done this and have done different types of programs. John feels many residents may be at the breaking point, and are frustrated because there are just too many of them and it's causing a nuisance, so to speak, in that they are doing things that they've never done before in resident's yards.

Mr. Coyne said he thinks, a comprehensive program, maybe talking with Jansen and getting more information about how to develop a program with an archery component or culling component, that is what he would be in favor of.

Mr. Shields stated that after listening to all three council people, he feels they are all moving in the same direction and agrees with everything the three have said and is himself hearing from more and more from people who feel like we've been talking about this for a long time and it is time we do something and come up with a plan and not only do something right now, but do something long term and be responsible after the fact. He is hearing the same thing from the majority of the residents he has talked with both in his ward and throughout the city.

Paul Rose spoke on the survey and 65% of the residents want some sort of population reduction now and 93% of his neighbors in Forest Meadows want some sort of population reduction now! Mr. Rose feels strongly about doing some sort of population reduction now whether it is through an archery program, culling program or whatever and get that on the board now to get something moving to reduce that population so that when the comprehensive plan is out there we have fewer deer to work with and that will make it easier to implement. Mr. Rose is willing to submit the RCA to get things moving through the council process before council takes summer break.

Mr. Coyne asks do we submit and RCA with Bill's program since it's really nothing that defines what the perimeters should be or do you want to work with Jansen to come up with a plan for the June 28th meeting? How do you want to proceed? You just heard from council that we all want some kind of program to lower the numbers of deer.

Bill Lamb stated the first thing he would want from all of council is to completely educate yourselves on deer management plans and exactly what happens if you simply cull with regard to the timeline of reproduction of the deer that you cull. It multiplies the number that will come back because we are in a rural area. Regardless of what we do we have to have a realistic plan and a baseline. 65% of 1,200 people is not the population of adults in this community which is probably around 9,000 people. There are people that have different opinions than those that may be the loudest, maybe the most sarcastic, or maybe the ones that yell more but there are a lot people to hear from. This issue requires a deeper education and understanding of how you can deal with it and deal with it long term. This also includes personal responsibility.

Maybe it would be a good idea to take some more personal responsibility and seriously look at the things you plant, you can plant things that are less likely to be eaten. Bill Lamb stated from what he has heard, it is a lot cleaner to shoot deer if you are going to cull the deer in the park get professional people like police officers that are trained to shoot them with a gun because deer are more likely to be injured and run if they are shot through an archery program.

John Coyne stated the majority of council here feel that as part of your program Bill, there has to be some lessening of the herd, the majority consensus would be that lessening the deer needs to be part of your plan.

Mr. Lamb stated the procedure to do that is simply detail out an RCA and turn that RCA in and stick it in committee and then we will have something to work from.

Mr. Rose stated he will have that ready for the next finance meeting on June 27th. Stating that will give he and Jansen enough time to work on it.

Mayor Hanwell stated out of fairness we are using the words control hunt and culling interchangeably. Culling is a totally different program, where there has to be a plan involved. The state has to approve it and there are a lot more hoops to jump through. If it is a controlled hunt where we lift our ordinance to reduce the number of deer due to the problems we are having here in town, then we can do that without all of those hoops that the culling requires.

Mr. Rose relayed that the control hunt program (archery program) is also the City Parks Director's preferred method of reducing the deer.

Mayor Hanwell also stated that the most lethal and most accurate is likely a high-powered rifle but there are concerns with a high-powered rifle that you don't have with an archery program and have the option to choose either just crossbow or crossbow and compound. The Mayor stated Jansen can speak of a number of cities that have been doing this program with archery alone, safely since 2015. Cities very similar to us with no safety concerns at all.

Jansen stated yes there are other cities doing this with also trying to meet a variety of different goals and their programs are designed differently and a lot of the city fees can be recovered through applications.

Some communities that have either wildlife damage control permits or archery programs include Hudson, Mentor, Broadview Hts., Strongsville, North Royalton, Medina County Parks District has a lottery program, the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Cleveland Metro Parks and Summit Metro Parks. There are a lot of communities who are managing this without culling/sharp shooting by just lifting their restrictions on hunting within their community putting the responsibility back on the residents which is exactly how the state of Ohio manages the deer in Ohio.

Dennie stated with the programs that Jansen is speaking about sounds really interesting but he still would not be in favor of hunting in neighborhoods but could we start a program like that to specifically target our parks for the people that sign up for those permits.

Jansen stated that would be considered a controlled hunt if we did it within our parks because we are restricting the area and can also restrict the date, and times it is allowed and do it on a lottery based system and that is what Medina County Parks does and theirs is modeled after Summit Metro Parks and this can certainly be done and these are some of the things we need answers on because that is a completely different program. We don't have guidance on what direction we want to go and he is not writing three different programs and the sharp shooting option requires much more work because there has to be a management plan and we have to work with the state to obtain a permit and there are also funds that are associated with that. The choice to have an archery program would be the best accepted and the easiest to do because it just requires us to change the ordinance and having a permit process.

John stated what he is hearing is that if there is a request made, you should work on putting together some kind of proposal so that council can review it but also thinks that Bill also needs to be involved with the discussion. Twenty years ago, we hardly had any deer and we have to get back to the point where we are at a manageable level again.

Jansen stated there are several components to a management plan with maintenance.

Mayor Hanwell stated the word the state used for us when he, Jansen and Mr. Huber met and tried to tell them this, was their responsibility was that we literally created a sanctuary here for them because there is hunting all around us and the deer have no enemies or natural threats to them within the city limits. Mayor stated there are different areas of the city where the lots are a ½ acre so if you put 4 lots together and you are talking about a 2-acre span and some of those have a ravine running through it which makes it that much safer from an elevated position of shooting downward at the animal below you. He feels rather than just saying it should only be in parks or public lands, he is asking that they ponder that for a little bit that there may be some land spaces coupled together.

Mr. Rose stated he knows a couple of property owners who have 5 or more acres in the city and they would be willing to have archers on their property.

Mr. Lamb stated with the program where people would be permitted to go up into trees and hunt on a piece of property would be very hard because of limited sizes of some properties even when put together.

Bill stated we shouldn't be looking at which one was the most expensive but which one would be the most efficient and the cleanest kill and that simply would be to close the park and have professional people do it.

Mr. Coyne stated, whomever puts in an RCA, it just needs to have definitive direction on what has to happen.

Mr. Rose asked if the RCA could be in so council can look at it and start the discussion at the June 27th finance meeting and that would give Jansen about a month to put that together so that if they do decide to move forward with some sort of population reduction of the deer plan, they can decide on it before summer break.

Mr. Coyne feels the RCA should come from Jansen since he has the most information, something to look at with some guidance with not only thinning of the herd, but management as far as maintenance concern going forward, with respect to even including this feeding of the animals if it's appropriate.

Bill asked if a new RCA would go to Special legislation.

John stated that Bill's meeting is the 28th and it could be talked about too at the Special Legislation meeting.

Bill Lamb feels it is procedure and has to go through Special Legislation first.

John stated the question would be knowing the timeline, we can't have three meetings from June, July and August because then it will never happen.

Bill feels that is not our timeline, we didn't start this with a timeline.

Mr. Coyne stated that he thinks from what he heard, the program would be implemented in the fall.

Mr. Lamb replied that there is no program in place.

Mr. Rose indicated that the biggest complaint that he has received from the residents is that we've had this for anywhere from 9 to 13 years and nothing has been done, the residents are tired of that. We need to move this forward to satisfy the needs and the wishes of the voters and the tax payers. Not trying to minimize the work you've done, just trying to get a plan together that is comprehensive and inclusive of those who wish to try and co-exist with the deer. We need to get this population reduction of the deer moving forward quickly.

Bill Lamb expressed that all this anecdotal information, all this "I hear what the people say". We are here to make solid meaningful decisions, not work under an arbitrary time line, not cast aspersions on people, not make things up. Bill stated we have an interesting history in this country of beating nature down and this is just one more example.

This sounds to him like just another quick fix and now we want to hurry up and get another program, another suggestion put in, another request put in because there never was a request put in. The only thing that was sitting here was this one thing that council backed down on as soon as four or five people showed up saying cats and dogs shouldn't be included in the wild animal ordinance. I try to make sense when I talk and I don't attack people, and I actually have a record here Paul of getting things done for this community. I just don't sit here and yell at the end of a meeting.

John stated moving forward, remember there are 6 of us elected officials here today and if we get a plan together collectively. We have to decide, not just one of us makes a decision on what happens. If we all feel something should happen being the majority decides because that is how it works in a democracy. These issues we are talking about now are issues we talk about once something is submitted, so get us something that we can determine with the timeline as a group of what we want to see and take it from there. That's the responsible thing as a legislative body.

3. 22-121-5/23 – Advance Request - #001 to #380

This is the mechanics behind how we handle a grant. The grant is for the Gates Mills project. Lending money from general fund to grant fund. We will do the project and then be reimbursed and repay the advance.

Mr. Shields moved to approve, seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion passed 6-0.

4. 22-122-5/23 – Budget Amendments

#2022-018 – Misc.

Keith stated there are a number of things in here, grants, advances, and the lights for the Sugarhouse intersection, and the South Court tower painting. Mr. Shields moved to approve, seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion passed 6-0.

5. 22-123-5/23 – Amend Ord. 79-22 – CHIP Rehab – 420 N. Jefferson St.

Mr. Dutton stated this was originally approved for \$67,623.00 then found additional work needed that increased the cost by \$8, 247.00 bring total to \$75,807.00. Emergency clause is to pay contractor. Mr. Shields moved to approve with the emergency clause, seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion passed 6-0.

6. 22-124-5/23 – PY22 CHIP Grant Application

Mr. Dutton stated this is their program year 2022 CHIP Grant application and are partnering with

Brunswick City which increases likelihood of getting funded and the amount we can receive. Mr. Shields moved to approve with the emergency clause, seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion passed 6-0.

7. 22-125-5/23 – PY22 CHIP Grant Partnership Agreement w/ City of Brunswick

Mr. Dutton stated this goes along with the CHIP Grant application and is their partnership agreement. Emergency is needed for timeline restrictions as it's due June 22, 2022. Mr. Shields moved to approve with the emergency clause, seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion passed 6-0.

8. 22-126-5/23 – Amend Ord. 35-22 – 368 Foundry St. Purchase

Mr. Dirham stated they need a few more dollars to finish this out and it is closing tomorrow so needs the emergency clause. Mr. Shields moved to approve with the emergency clause, seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion passed 6-0.

9. 22-127-5/23 – Exp. To Fechko – Emergency RT18 Waterline Extension – ARPA Funds

Mayor Hanwell stated most of the time that we do a street project within the city we try to do all of the infrastructure. This has been a problematic line and this is the money for them to put in the new line, charge it, test it and tap everyone into it. Nino corrected the account number to #171-0610-54411. Mr. Shields moved to approve with the emergency clause, seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion passed 6-0.

10. 22-128-5/23 – Exp. To Core & Main, LLP – Emerg. RT. 18 Waterline Ext. – ARPA Funds

Mayor Hanwell stated these are the pieces and parts that it took to do the project. Correct account number on this is #171-0610-54411. Mr. Shields moved to approve with the emergency, seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion passed 6-0.

11. 22-129-5/23 – Memorandum of Understanding – City of Medina Railway

Mayor Hanwell stated on behalf of Mr. Patton, this is a new MOU, we have waived in the past the annual fee and access fees and they were only paying the per car fee now we are seeing the reserve come down and some future maintenance issues we will need to deal with. The crew agreed to pay \$10,000 a year starting January 1, 2022, but we owe a credit for overcharging per car fee of \$13,600.00 and so they will be taking their \$10,000 off of the top for this year using the \$3,600 in credit for the per car fees until they use that up. Mr. Shields moved to approve with the emergency clause and dollar amount to be amended, seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion passed 6-0.

12. 22-130-5/23 – Expenditure – Plotbox Cemetery Management Software – ARPA Funds

Mr. Wehrley stated this is to purchase and implement Plotbox Cemetery Management Software at Spring Grove. A lot of what we do currently is on paper, paper maps, paper burial cards that are filed at the cemetery and here at City Hall and everything is updated by hand. They currently have an access program with no support and stored locally on servers and was created in 2004 with the help of the Friends of the Cemetery that they use to find burial records on the computers. Starting to see a trend with genealogy requests where people are interested in that and are doing a lot of research at the cemetery leading into a lot of questions in the office and they are at a point where they would substantially benefit from having a true management system to help them clean up their processes and improve record keeping. Plotbox offers a intergraded GIS drone overlays maps for the cemetery to where their staff can take a tablet out into the field when they are doing lot sales with families and they can pull up drone imagery which will color code lots that are available which are sold and which have internments in them

so that in real time we can go out in the field and pull up these records and be able to provide a better service to the families without digging through multiple piles of papers and cabinets and hoping our records are correct. Most of the expense is data migration and is about a 6 to 8 months process. Plotbox is a global company and they are based in Ireland.

Jansen has vetted 3 different software providers since April of 2019 and had over 14 meetings with Friends of the Cemetery and Cemetery Commission with Nino in attendance at a lot of them where we went through demos of each software and liked the services of Plotbox. It is believed that this purchase may fit into the ARPA Fund use guidelines because as you know we are seeing an increase in needs at our cemetery. This is pending Mr. Huber's review. Darin in IT has reviewed this system as well. Mr. Huber stated there are some things that need to be taken out of the contract.

Mr. Rose asked if there is any need for this software package to work with Finance software package. Paul strongly urges backup.

Jansen stated that it has that capability, there was an option they didn't include it in this price because we would essentially be changing the way we do business right now. It is a robust program it can be integrated with any financial software.

Mr. Shields moved to approve the Plotbox Cemetery Management Software subject to final approval of the law director, seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion Passed 6-0.

13. Executive Session: (to consider the employment of a public employee or official)

It was moved by Mr. Shields and seconded by Mr. Simpson to enter into Executive Session at 7:10 p.m. to consider the investigation and charges and complaints against a public employee or official to include the Mayor and Law Director. Motion passed by the yeas of J. Coyne, R. Haire, D. Simpson, P. Rose, and J. Shields. B. Lamb did not go into executive session.

Executive Session adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

The Finance Committee reconvened at 7:30, and there being no further business adjourned.

John M. Coyne, Chairman