

THE CITY OF FREMONT, OHIO
Journal of Council
April 16, 2015

The regular meeting of Fremont City Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m. in the form prescribed by the General Rules of Council. President Dallas Leake called the meeting to order.

The following members answered roll call: Gross, Knisely, Ruiz, Kreilick, Michles, and Stout.
The minutes for council meeting held on April 2nd were approved.

First reading an ordinance amending appropriations within General Fund 101, and declaring an emergency. Mr. Ward explained that the appropriations were needed to make repairs to a staircase. On a motion to suspend Rule #4 by Gross, seconded by Ruiz. Motion carried 6 yes votes. On a motion to adopt by Knisely, seconded by Ruiz. Motion carried 6 yes votes. (Ord. 2015-3762)

First reading of a resolution approving and authorizing the Mayor to enter into an Enterprise Zone Agreement between the City of Fremont and Alkon Corporation, and declaring an emergency. Mr. Smith stated Alkon Corporation is planning on expanding its business and has asked for a property tax abatement of 75% of its new property taxes for 10 years. Alkon is looking to put an 18,000 square foot addition to their property. Along with new equipment, this project is a capital investment of 7.9 million dollars. Alkon currently employees 156 and will be required over the next 3 years to create 20 new jobs. On a motion to suspend Rule #4 by Knisely, seconded by Ruiz. Motion carried 6 yes votes. On a motion to adopt by Knisely, seconded by Ruiz. Motion carried 6 yes votes. (Res. 2015-1952)

First reading of an ordinance amending the personnel policy and procedure manual of the City of Fremont to include changes to Section 5.18 regarding City Recreation Passes for non-union employees and certain elected city officials. Mr. Ward explained that the city is offering the same free Recreation Pass to non-union employees as the other full time union employees receive. On a motion to suspend Rule #4 by Ruiz, seconded by Knisely. Motion failed 5 yes votes to 1 no vote.

Committee Reports

Utilities and Traffic Committee – Chairman Kreilick nothing to report this evening.

Laws, Rules, and Ordinances Committee – Chairman Gross announced a Laws, Rules, and Ordinance Committee Meeting that was scheduled for May 7th at 7:00 p.m. due to scheduling conflicts, it will be moved to May 21st at 7:00 p.m. concerning the chickens that are being housed in the city limits.

Government and Economic Development Committee – Chairman Stout reported that the trip to Wooster by Mr. Smith and several council members was very informative. Although she was not available to attend, she has frequented Wooster many times and is extremely impressed with their revitalized Downtown area. They came home with a lot of good ideas to share.

Finance and Labor Committee – Chairman Michles stated he is working with Mr. Grahl to have someone speak at a committee meeting sometime in July about the bonds pertaining to the city.

Community Partnership Committee - Chairman Knisely nothing to report this evening.

Citizens Service Committee - Chairman Ruiz stated Block Watch was in the stages of making plans for the 32nd annual Night Out Event which will be held on Tuesday, August 4th. It is a crime prevention event held to support prevention awareness, community partnership. She thanked the fire fighters and EMS for helping a community member, Sharie Nichols when she had a fall at church.

Council Comments

Mrs. Stout had no comments this evening.

Mrs. Ruiz commented on the trip to Wooster stating that it was very informative and, that she was pleased with the buildings and the way that it was done. She commented on one gentlemen of Wooster investing in a building with the amount of money and pride he had. She hoped that the City of Fremont could take as much pride and invest in the same format. She thanked everyone for the kind expression and condolences in the loss of her brother.

Mr. Gross thanked Kay Reiter and Joe Smith on the work they did in the Alkon agreement. He stated that the wonderful explanations from both made it easier to suspend rule 4 and to expedite it so the business could grow. He echoed the sentiments of Mrs. Ruiz about the Wooster trip. He thought it was very educational in regard to different type of liquor license. The group was able to go around and meet with several of the business owners. The one thing that stood out for him was the business owners' willingness to compromise with each other for the good of their downtown.

Mr. Knisely also thanked Kay Reiter and Joe Smith for the great job they are doing. He stated he was proud to be a citizen of Fremont, Ohio.

Mrs. Kreilick stated although she appreciated the comments about Wooster, it is important to remember that we have dedicated people right here in Fremont; and their accomplishments should be acknowledge for the great effort they are making in our downtown area. Naming just a few contributors: the Perkins, Ralph and Julie Smothers, Barbara and Joseph Fisher, George Keller, Mr. Kerns and his grandson, the Miller Brothers, and along with herself and the establishment that she maintains in the downtown district. She wanted the council to understand that all these contributors have been trying to get the ball rolling for the revitalization of our downtown area. She stated that she would love to have the community help them understand how to meet their needs so that the downtown can succeed through their support. A lot of investment has been made and a lot of effort has been made for our Downtown Area.

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Mr. Michles reminded the public with the weather getting warmer, please be careful and mindful of outdoor activity. He also thanked Mr. Kerns for attending the City Council Meetings on a regular basis and all the work he has done Downtown. He asked Mr. Wiersma if we had members going to the Woodville event that was mentioned at last council meeting. Chief Wiersma stated that yes there was.

Elected Officials' Comments

Mr. Melle stated the city filed its brief in opposition to the Wasserman's filing. The next thing he mentioned that there was approximately three weeks before the next council meeting and he encourage everyone to be sure to vote on May 5th.

Mrs. Elder nothing to report.

Mayor Ellis stated that he attended the Opium Town Hall Meeting Tuesday night at Terra and it was a wonderful discussion. He believes the city needs to educate the public in any way it can, and that prevention has to be a community effort. Treatment and getting to the root of the problems are the answer, not just having the police throw the bad guys in jail. He thanked Detective Bliss and Chief Wiersma for their participation in the event. He mentioned the Design Review Committee and that he would like to appoint Steve Miller, Shawn Kerns, Joe Smith, and Pastor C.J. Burel. He stated that City Council has to approve those appointments and that it would be brought before council in the form of an ordinance or resolution at the next council meeting. He states that the Community Policing Working Group is moving forward. They have identified the anticipated outcomes which included strategies for improved communication with the members of the community and police department, efficient resolution of complaints relating to the police department activity, freedom of fear for both citizens and the police department, building positive relationships with citizens of all ages, and revitalize our belief in the police department. He stated they were going to look for things that can accomplish these things. He stated that they will be using the city website to get information from the citizens about the police department activities and issues through surveys. He is working on retaining a Facilitator for the committee. Some of the groups they are looking for representation are NAOMI, NAACP, Mrs. Ruiz, Fremont Clergy Association, Sandusky County Mental Health Coalition, the domestic violence task force, Terra State Community College, University of Toledo, and a couple of other individuals that have experience working with youth in our community, along with police department members.

Department Heads

Mr. Smith nothing to report.

Mr. Sanchez he stated that he also served on the panel for the Opium Town Hall Meeting. He encourages all City and Sandusky county officials to make themselves aware of the opium problem we have in Sandusky County.

Mr. Lamson nothing to report.

Chief Schneider reported that there was a retirement effective April 12th with Firefighter Dwayne Martin. There is a replacement for him that will be starting soon. Also the department has started its spring flushing and flowing of the hydrants in the city.

Mr. Ward wanted to add to Chief Schneider's comments that the citizens should expect to see some rusty water with the flushing of the hydrants. Public fishing is permitted at the dead end of Walnut Street.

Chief Wiersma asked that anyone that was interested in being an ACE Mentor please contact Violetta Rhea. He reported on two calls that had occurred since the last council meeting which involved guns that could have turned out badly, but the police handled it without incident.

Public Comments

Tom Kerns 1520 Finefrock Road. Mr. Kerns is the President of Downtown Fremont. He stated that he liked Mrs. Kreilick's comments about the progress that has happened over the years in the downtown area. He also wanted to acknowledge the people that she recognized. He stated that his organization is soliciting membership in Downtown Fremont, Inc. There are several types of memberships that are available to the public. At the present time there are 44 members, the goal is to reach 100 members. Mrs. Elder asked what happens with the membership dollars. Mr. Kerns explained that membership dollars are used to fund the activities that Downtown Fremont would engage in, along with expenses of having a full time director, and other activities such as general marketing support.

President Leake thanked Mrs. Kreilick for her comments. He stated a lot of time we spend a lot of time and energy on what we don't have and forget about all the good things that we do. He mentioned that he attending the task force too and he thought it was very informative. He believes that in order to get the information to those that need to know we have to think outside of the box and take the information to them. He commended all that had a part of putting the event on. He believed that the Mayor's policing committee was a great idea and believed that we needed to get more people involved. He echoed Mr. Melle's comments about voting on May 5th. Voting is the great equalizer that we have in this country.

There being nothing further to come before council, on motion to adjourn by Kaisely, seconded by Ruiz, motion carried 6 yea votes. Meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.