

Zoning and Annexation Committee Meeting Minutes

October 27, 2014

The Zoning and Annexation Committee of the New Philadelphia City Council meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m. on October 27, 2014 in Council Chambers. Present were Mrs. Cheryl Ramos, Chair; Committee members Darrin Lautenscheleger and John Zucal. The Chair announced that the meeting would be recorded.

Guests attending were: Council President Sam Hitchcock, Council Clerk, Patty McKay, Council members: Winnie Walker, Sandy Cox, Rob Maurer, and Dan Lanzer; Law Director Marvin Fete (in-part), Service Director Jim Zucal, and Mark Cox.

The Chair stated that there were two items of business to discuss tonight and any other matter to come before the committee.

The first item of business: To discuss the committee recommending to city council that proposed ordinances and resolutions be posted on-line with the goal of true, accessible transparency for our residents and tax-payers so that they can be viewed before they are voted on and codified. The Chair asked if the committee had any problems with council recommending that proposed ordinances and resolutions be posted on-line.

John Zucal asked if the mayor had weighed in on this with the Chair. The Chair reminded everyone that the mayor had said at the last committee meeting, September 8, that they had everything ready to go. The Chair has talked with Jeff Erb, city IT manager, and he did not have a problem with it. The Clerk already has everything in electronic form. If you check the website, it is really nice because you can see all the committee notices, agendas and what is happening in city council so people have ready access to it.

Darrin Lautenscheleger asked if the Law Director had any concerns with the proposed ordinances not being in final form to be on-line. John Zucal also expressed that his concern was that the proposed ordinances would be in proposed form, that someone would look at it one week and that it would change form midstream and be something different.

The Chair suggested that a disclaimer could be put on the proposed ordinance showing that it was a draft and not final. Mr. Lautenscheleger suggested putting a category for proposed legislation with the disclaimer at the top that it is proposed and subject to change or amended with the appropriate legal language. Mr. Zucal asked if Word was being used and if a watermark could be added to make it clear this is proposed and if it passes then the watermark could be removed. The Council Clerk explained that she gets a hard copy from the Law Director that is clearly marked proposed. Mr. Zucal stated he would like to see the proposed legislation emailed to her from the Law Director's office with a watermark clearly indicating that this legislation is proposed. Mr. Zucal stated that if this process was not cumbersome for Mr. Erb, and could be done well in a timely fashion, he was not opposed to it.

The committee agreed to recommend to the full Council that a category for proposed ordinances and resolutions be created on the website with a disclaimer that these were proposed and could be amended with a majority vote of council, be watermarked as a draft, emailed from the Law Director to the Council Clerk to be forwarded to Jeff Erb, IT to be posted on the website. Marvin Fete, the Law Director, agreed to this and supported the idea.

Mr. Lautenscheleger moved that the committee recommend to the full council that a category for proposed ordinances and resolutions be created on the city website with a disclaimer that these were proposed and could be amended with a majority vote of council, be watermarked as a draft, emailed from the Law Director to the Council Clerk to be forwarded to Jeff Erb, IT, to be posted on the website. Motion seconded by John Zucal. Motion unanimously passed.

Second Item of Business: The committee had been assigned to look in to a letter received by Mayor Johnson from Lee Montgomery, union representative asking for an ordinance (she provided the sample) from the city in support of jobs for federal government employees. Mr. Jim Zucal, Service Director, had asked that this letter be assigned to committee. Mr. Jim Zucal explained that they had not received a call or a visit, just received the mailing asking for support for the federal employees. He has not heard the office is closing just that there is to be some restructuring. Chair discussed that some information formerly available at the office is now only available on-line.

These federal level bills mentioned in the letter concern the Social Security Administration (SSA). The letter mentions Vision 2025 regarding the Federal SSA. The Federal Government Employees Union is concerned that there may be a loss of jobs in the SSA field offices.

John Zucal said it would be nice to know if they believe the local office will close or what is the heart of the request and why now. The Chair stated that she felt the heart of the issue was for the Federal employees to save their jobs. John Zucal said he wished we knew and he felt that the letter and the resolution did not match and that we had to read between the lines if the SSA was moving towards regionalization or what. Darrin expressed the same but he did not have a problem with placing the resolution on the agenda tonight and passing it on first reading.

The Chair pointed out that this resolution was the sample from the union representative and that she felt this issue was their fight (the federal employees) and that the City should not be involved, it is not our position to take sides but if people want to call their legislatures to support such and such bill, they can do so. Darrin felt that if the city council sees a need to keep local jobs it should be recognized to keep the jobs and the taxes, etc., here. The Chair stated that the correspondence is from the union rep and addresses jobs in Ohio not specifically New Philadelphia. Mr. Zucal felt that we should support the resolution so that the city can have a say against big government. Mr. Jim Zucal said he would like to know more, because we have not heard that the New Phila office is closing and he would like to know more about the vision. Mr. John Zucal suggested we should get a copy of the vision plan that was mentioned in the letter so we could know more from an educational stand point. Mr. Jim Zucal said that if they really cared they would have personally visited the mayor's office. Mr. John Zucal felt that the city should be proactive about it. Sandy Cox said that she hated to see the regionalization of the SSA field offices, if it was going to happen, and the city did nothing about it. Mr. John Zucal suggested that the union rep should visit and we could make an informed decision and not a hypothetical one. Winnie said that she had no problem supporting the resolution given that there may only be four field offices in Ohio. Dan Lanzer did not want the same situation to happen again like a resolution to support a state wide ballot item and "we couldn't do nothing." The Chair noted that this federal legislation was not out of committee per the letter and she felt Congress would not be acting on anything until January 2015 due to the upcoming elections.

The Chair suggested that the issue regarding (federal) Vision 2025, S.2742 and H.R. 3997 be investigated further and that all should feel free to investigate as well so everyone will know what is going on and another meeting will be scheduled. The committee agreed.

As there were no other matters to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mrs. Cheryl Ramos

Chair

Zoning and Annexation Committee

An audio recording of this meeting is available upon request from the Clerk of Council.