MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AVON, OHIO HELD MONDAY, MAY 5, 2025 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING AT 7:30 P.M.

PRESENT:
Council Members: Council-at-Large – Mary Berges; 1st Ward – Jennifer Demaline; 2nd Ward - Dennis McBride; 4th Ward - Scott Radcliffe; Council-at-Large – Michelle Patton; Council-at-Large and Council President – Brian Fischer; Mayor – Bryan Jensen; City Engineer – Ryan Cummins; Planning/Economic Development Coordinator – Pam Fechter; Law Director – John Gasior; Finance Director– Steve Presley; Safety/Public Service Director – Duane Streator; Clerk of Council – Barbara Brooks

ABSENT:
3rd Ward -Tony Moore

Council President, Brian Fischer, Chair called the meeting to order.

1. ORDINANCE NO. 39-25 – AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OR HIS DESIGNEE TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH PUBLIC CONSULTING GROUP, LLC FOR THE PURPOSE OF COLLECTING SUPPLEMENTAL MEDICAID PAYMENTS FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE AVON FIRE DEPARTMENT Mr. Gasior
To Be Addressed at a Special Meeting Immediately Following this Work Session

Mr. Gasior advised PCG (Public Consulting Group, LLC) is an entity that has been doing this type of collection work throughout the United States, and he understands that they have been doing this for at least thirty years. He said one of the first states that contracted with them was Washington and now Ohio is the thirty-first state to have an agreement with Public Consulting Group noting that the agreement is at the State level. Mr. Gasior explained that Avon has an ambulance department staffed with paramedics and operates Emergency Medical Services out of the Fire Station. He said there are emergency runs with this service and with some of the runs, the people have private insurance, and some are on Medicare, and some are on Medicaid. Mr. Gasior stated this entity is set up to try to obtain federal money to make up the difference between what Avon charges for an emergency medical run and what Medicaid pays for that run. He advised the State of Ohio looked into this program and signed up and he noted there is an Ohio Revised Code section that was passed and there were regulations that were passed. Mr. Gasior said what the State of Ohio has allowed PCG to do, in this initial year which will begin July 1, 2025, is to collect the difference between what Medicare pays the City for an ambulance run and what Medicaid pays the City for an ambulance run. He stated from his understanding; the City is paid about $450 for a Medicare run and about $250 for a Medicaid run. Mr. Gasior advised PCG would like to represent the City and try to acquire, in this case $200, of difference through the federal government from a pool of funds the federal government has available to make up the difference and charge the City ten percent (10%) per the contract for their services. He said Fire Chief Swope was initially solicited by this group and Chief Swope checked with the EMS billing agent, Great Lakes Billing Associates, who has been the chief billing entity on all our ambulance runs for years. Mr. Gasior stated he spoke with a representative at Great Lakes Billing Associates who confirmed it is a legitimate company and that if the City does not contract for this service, they were leaving money on the table. He advised initially the savings was thought to be in the $50,000 to $60,000 range, but that would not hold true in the first year because the State has only allowed PCG to collect from “Fee for Service” Medicaid clients. Mr. Gasior explained there are two types of Medicaid clients: HMO and Fee for Service. He believed the HMO client is a Medicaid recipient who probably has some source of income similar to someone with private insurance, but when the person has no income, they still receive services provided by Avon’s EMS and Medicaid calls that a Fee for Service recipient. Mr. Gasior said in 2024 there were 260 Medicaid runs and 16 of those were Fee for Service and the remaining 244 were HMO Medicaid clients. He stated PCG understands that the State is only going to allow them to collect the difference, at least in this first year for 16 runs. He stated the cost difference is in the area of $175 to $200 per run and the City is only going to be able to collect that on those 16 runs, which translates into a relatively small amount. Mr. Gasior noted initially it was thought the difference paid would be on the entire 260 runs, but it is not. Mr. Gasior advised representatives of PCG are hoping to work with the State Legislature to open this up to all Medicaid runs regardless of whether they are HMO or Fee for Service in the years to come. He said if Council approves contracting with PCG it would be for three years noting that there was no other company that provides this service. Mr. Gasior stated his recommendation, which is based on the recommendation from the representative at Great Lakes Billing Associates and he spoke to the representative at PCG, would be to go forward and allow the City to sign up. He advised it is on the Special Meeting agenda for this Work Session because the document in the Exhibit A needs to be signed by Chief Swope and submitted to the Ohio Department of Medicaid by May 8, 2025, so they cannot wait until the Regular Meeting scheduled for May 12, 2025, as such, he is asking Council to consider allowing the City to go forward. Mr. Gasior noted the agreement for services does not have to be in by May 8th and he would like to make a couple of tweaks to it, but for the most part, he would like to have knowledge in advance of any assignments and he would be asking PCG if they can make a tweak to that paragraph, but everything else was probably fine. He stated it is a three-year agreement, and the hope is that in the latter two years, the City will be looking at receiving the difference on the full number of Medicaid runs.

Mr. McBride said he understands the amount received will only be for the Fee for Service Medicaid runs in 2024, but he asked if the agreement was drafted in such a way that if the State Legislature should permit all Medicaid runs to pay the difference that the City would receive those funds retroactively. He asked if the agreement would need to come back to Council and be amended.

Mr. Gasior advised as far as he knows there will not be a need for an amendment, but if there is he would bring it back to Council. He said basically this agreement states that whatever PCG can collect, they will collect and take ten percent.

Mr. McBride commented that ten percent was below the industry standard for a collection agency and he felt the City should accept it.

Mr. Radcliffe sought confirmation that there was no initial fee or other fees beyond the ten percent of the collections received and the agreement is for three years with the option to renew it for an additional three years to which Mr. Gasior confirmed Mr. Radcliffe's synopsis of the agreement. He asked about the funds coming in, if those monies go to a specific fund for tracking purposes or was there an existing fund.

Mr. Presley advised these funds would be placed in the same account as all the other ambulance reimbursements that the City bills.

Mr. Gasior advised he would also like to insert language that the City can opt out at any time if the City is not satisfied. He added that if PCG gives any pushback on that idea, he was still good with a three-year contract.

2. ORDINANCE NO. 40-25 – TO ACCEPT IMPROVEMENTS IN NAGEL FARMS SUBDIVISION

Mr. Streator

Mr. Streator advised this legislation is for the acceptance of improvements for the Nagel Farms Subdivision. He said the City has been working with the developer, the construction company and Bramhall Engineering and they are very close to getting all the requirements done and they anticipate everything to be completed this week, and he expects to have the Routing Sheet available to Council by next Monday night. Mr. Streator stated he would keep Council updated on any issues, but they are very close and are working diligently to get everything completed this week.

3. ORDINANCE NO. 41-25 – AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE A SIXTY (60') FOOT TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION EASEMENT AND A THIRTY (30') FOOT PERMANENT EASEMENT TO THE AVON LAKE MUNICIPAL UTILITIES BOARD FOR THE INSTALLATION OF WATER-RELATED IMPROVEMENTS AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO THE EXISTING REGIONAL WATER SYSTEM

Mr. Gasior

Mr. Gasior advised there is already an easement at this location, so they were not doing anything unusual here. He said that Avon Lake wants to expand on the easement a little bit as the proximity to the railroad tracks is not desirable from his conversations with Brian Bruce, Superintendent of Utilities. Mr. Gasior stated all they are doing is moving the easement a little bit away from the railroad tracks and it is for Avon Lake Regional Water.

Mr. McBride asked if they were moving an existing waterline.

Mayor Jensen confirmed that saying they want to move it away from the railroad tracks.

4. RESOLUTION NO. R-16-25 – AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE TO ENTER INTO A LEASE AGREEMENT WITH THE HUNTINGTON PUBLIC CAPITAL CORPORATION Mr. Presley

The Second of Three Readings of Resolution No. R-16-25 will be at the Special Meeting Immediately Following this Work Session

Mr. Presley advised the Streets Department had a new front-end loader budgeted for 2025 and they were looking at bonding it out or leasing it. He said looking at a 4.4% interest rate over the five-year period, they felt it was very entertaining and as such they would like to move forward with the lease. Mr. Presley stated previously the major leasing company was Key Bank and they no longer will do leases for entities where Key Bank is not their primary banking relationship noting that the City has Huntington Bank as their primary bank. He advised the piece of equipment is available through Sourcewell, so it is a cooperative purchasing agreement and if they proceed with the lease, they were at a 5.6% interest rate for the same period, so it is a very competitive price at 4.4% over the duration of the lease.

Mr. Gasior advised the City entered into a Huntington Bank lease agreement for the van used at the Senior Center and this lease will be with Huntington Public Capital Corporation noting it is similar in nature.

5. REPORTS AND COMMENTS

MAYOR JENSEN had no comments.

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

MS. BERGES, AT LARGE, had no comments.

MRS. DEMALINE, WARD 1 said she had some follow-up questions from the Service Committee Meeting that was held on March 24, 2025, and subsequently Council passed Resolution No. R-13-25 on April 14, 2025, for the installation of Sidewalks for the 2025 Program. She asked if the affected residents have been notified.

Mayor Jensen advised letters went out, but the engineering is not complete yet, so it was not a formal letter.

Mrs. Demaline asked approximately when those letters were sent out.

Mr. Streator believed Ms. Clements was working on those letters the day after the Resolution was passed.

Mayor Jensen mentioned the City has received some phone calls already.

Mrs. Demaline stated it was also discussed adding sidewalks to the section on the north side of Detroit Road from Avondale to Country Lane noting that was a part of the 2024 sidewalk plan. She asked if the City was moving forward with the engineering for that area and how close they were to being notified that they would need to install sidewalks.

Mayor Jensen said those property owners have not been notified and confirmed that they would be notified.

Mrs. Demaline asked if that area was also in the process of being engineered.

Mayor Jensen confirmed that the City was waiting for the other engineering work to get done first.

Mrs. Demaline inquired how the engineering work was progressing for the first set.

Mr. Cummins advised survey crews have been out collecting survey data, so the work is underway.

Mrs. Demaline stated another item discussed in that Service Committee Meeting on March 24, 2025, was sewer improvements along Stoney Ridge Road. She added that Mayor Jensen mentioned in that meeting that it would need to come back to Council for some appropriations for that work and she asked where they were on that work.

Mayor Jensen advised currently they are doing some sewer line camera inspection work to see where the blockages are located and the condition of the storm sewer. He said they will be coming back to Council to see what direction the City recommends going forward and make sure that Council is onboard with that recommendation.

Mrs. Demaline said regarding the temporary traffic signal located at Long Road and Detroit Road is another topic that was discussed at the Service Committee Meeting, and she asked if there were any further updates to that situation.

Mayor Jensen advised he believes that they have almost all that information put together so it would be brought back to Council.

Mrs. Demaline thanked Mayor Jensen for the updates.

MR. MCBRIDE, WARD 2 sought confirmation the couple of remaining sections of sidewalks are still to be installed on Colorado Avenue between Detroit Road and Bridge Pointe Trail as there are a couple of sections with missing sidewalks.

Mayor Jensen concurred and advised notice was sent to the property that they need to install their sidewalk, and the City was waiting to hear back. He said it was discussed that the City is not willing to wait another year while the property owner decides what they want to do regarding improvements at that location. Mayor Jensen noted that the property owner of the furniture company should be starting to install their sidewalks soon.

Mr. McBride asked what the City was doing as far as sidewalks at the corner of Colorado Avenue and Detroit Road and the former Avon Brewing Company property.

Mayor Jensen advised he spoke with the owner of that property and within the next month or so that parking area would be striped so the sidewalk would be marked out. He said the property owner was advised that he cannot park more than three vehicles on the corner of the Detroit Road side of that property.

Mr. McBride felt that was a smart move, noting that it is a safety issue.

Mr. McBride commented that Great Clips was a big sign offender over the past weekend. He advised he does not know if the City Zoning Enforcement Officer has ticketing authority, if not they may have to look at that. Mr. McBride said to him it appears to be a corporate or large franchise policy as Great Clips in other locations had signs out as well. He stated he would like to see a step process where they receive a warning, then a fine per sign and the fine increases from that point. Mr. McBride felt they need to take away the profit from these businesses or they were going to continue to place signs in the public right of way.

MR. MOORE, WARD 3, was absent.

MS. PATTON, AT LARGE gave her condolences to the Sprenger family in the loss of Breanna Sprenger who was an Avon High School graduate and a Paralympian. She said Breanna was a friend of her son and an amazing advocate for people with special needs. Ms. Patton stated that Ms. Sprenger was often out speaking about what it means to have a disability, and her passing is a great loss to the community and as well as to her family.

MR. RADCLIFFE, WARD 4 reminded everyone to get out and vote tomorrow.

MR. FISCHER, AT LARGE had no comments.

DIRECTORS/ADMINISTRATION:

MR. CUMMINS, CITY ENGINEER had no comments.

MS. FECHTER, PLANNING/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR had no comments.

MR. GASIOR, LAW DIRECTOR had no comments.

MR. PRESLEY, FINANCE DIRECTOR had no comments.

MR. STREATOR, SAFETY DIRECTOR/PUBLIC SERVICE DIRECTOR, reported that the Fire Department totals for April were 248 ambulance calls and 64 fire calls for a total of 312 calls, which is down a bit from this time last year. He said in comparison North Ridgeville had 486 calls and Westlake had 522 calls for the month of April noting that Avon is not far behind these neighboring cities. Mr. Streator advised the warmer weather is keeping the Police Department busy with more calls this time of year.

AUDIENCE:

Pat Jankowski, 1409 Hollow Wood Lane reminded everyone to vote tomorrow.

6. ADJOURN: 7:55 p.m.
There being no further business, the Work Session of Council was adjourned.

PASSED: ____________________________

SIGNED BY: _____________________________________
Brian Fischer, Council President

ATTEST: __________________________________
Barbara Brooks, Clerk of Council