

**MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF AVON, OHIO HELD MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2024
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; Law Director – John Gasior; Finance Director– Steve Presley; Safety/Public Service Director – Duane Streator; Clerk of Council – Barbara Brooks

ABSENT: 3rd Ward -Tony Moore; Planning/Economic Development Coordinator – Pam Fechter

Council President Brian Fischer, called the Meeting to order.

1. [ORDINANCE NO. 107-24 – AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A REVISED MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE TACTICAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES \(“TEMS”\) AND RELATED TRAINING TO THE EASTERN LORAIN COUNTY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM \(“ELCERT”\) COMPRISED OF THE CITY OF AVON, CITY OF AVON LAKE \(“CITIES”\) AND THE METROHEALTH SYSTEM \(“METROHEALTH”\)](#) Mr. Streator
To be Addressed at a Special Meeting Immediately Following this Work Session

Mr. Streator advised this is an MOU that needs revised because North Ridgeville does not have a paramedic on the team so that was eliminated from the agreement and that necessitated a new agreement that only includes Avon and Avon Lake. He said it is with MetroHealth because they are the closest Level 1 Trauma facility working with the other tactical teams in our area.

2. [ORDINANCE NO. 108-24 – AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A SECOND AMENDMENT TO THE MAS FINANCIAL ADVISORY SERVICES, LLC AGREEMENT TO INCLUDE TIF ADMINISTRATION FOR 2025](#) Mr. Presley
First of Three Readings at a Special Meeting Immediately Following this Work Session

Mr. Presley explained that MAS Financial Advisory Services, comprised of Matt Stuczynski and includes Bill Logan. He advised the City has entered into this type of agreement for the past two years and they are looking to continue that in 2025. Mr. Presley said there were some reductions in the fees relative to the retainer and they discussed a cap on the amount of fees for bond and note issuances so those were amended in this new agreement.

3. [ORDINANCE 109-24 - MAKING A PERMANENT APPROPRIATION OF MONIES FOR THE CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES \(THE OPERATING BUDGET\) OF THE CITY OF AVON, LORAIN COUNTY, OHIO, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025](#) Mr. Presley
First of Three Readings at a Special Meeting Immediately Following this Work Session

Mr. Presley advised this legislation is reflective of all discussions at the Finance Committee Meeting held this past Saturday, November 16, 2024, at 8:00 a.m. and the detailed listing of expenses that were emailed to Council. He noted tonight would be the first of three readings at the Special Meeting.

4. [ORDINANCE NO. 110-24 - TO AMEND AND SUPPLEMENT APPROPRIATIONS](#) Mr. Presley
First of Three Readings at a Special Meeting Immediately Following this Work Session

Mr. Presley advised in the Police Equipment Fund No. 200; the City is not buying the Armored Tactical vehicle out of the Police Equipment Fund, but they are buying it out of the Eastern Lorain County Emergency Response Team (ELCERT) Fund in conjunction with Avon Lake and North Ridgeville. He said they are reducing the

equipment line item by \$125,000 and transferring it over to the ELCERT fund of the \$125,000 so that fund will be purchasing that armored vehicle that Council authorized.

Mr. Presley said the second item is in the amount of \$3,000 for the Chester Road/American Way Fund for some engineering for that project that needs to be completed by year end.

5. ORDINANCE NO. 111-24 - ESTABLISHING COMPENSATION FOR FULL AND PART-TIME CITY ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS NOT COVERED BY ANY COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT FOR THE YEAR 2025 Mayor Jensen
First of Three Readings at a Special Meeting Immediately Following this Work Session

Mayor Jensen advised this is the annual compensation raises for the Administrative employees that are comparable to the wage increase percentages when comparing wage increases passed for the bargaining units. He reminded Council that a 4% increase was passed for the Police Union, and they were carrying that increase through to these employees. Mayor Jensen said there are two positions where the raises are higher than 4%, one is for the payroll clerk because if that position was a union position, that employee would have a step increase in addition to the annual raise and the reason that one is different. He noted that the information the payroll clerk has access to, should not be a union position. Mayor Jensen stated the other position that was slated for a higher increase is the Utilities Superintendent because two years ago when the current employee in that position was made the full-time Utilities Superintendent, his wages were not increased to where they should be for that position. He advised this year he would like to increase the wages for that employee to be more in line with where that employee should be had he been given the increase when he was appointed to the Utilities Superintendent position. Mayor Jensen noted that the responsibilities for the Utilities Superintendent are being increased as well. He said this is only a wage increase and there are no clothing allowances or other for the Administrative employees.

6. ORDINANCE NO. 112-24 - ESTABLISHING COMPENSATION FOR FULL AND PART-TIME LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS NOT COVERED BY ANY COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT FOR THE YEAR 2025 Mr. Fischer
First of Three Readings at a Special Meeting Immediately Following this Work Session

Mayor Jensen advised this legislation includes the three Legislative employees: the Clerk of Council, the Assistant Clerk of Council and the Treasurer positions. He said these employees are Council's employees and the same 4% increase is being requested for these employees, similar to what is being request for a wage increase for the Administrative employees .

7. ORDINANCE NO. 113-24 – AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH CHAGRIN VALLEY ENGINEERING, LTD AND ESTABLISH THE COMPENSATION FOR THE CITY ENGINEER IN 2025 Mayor Jensen
First of Three Readings at a Special Meeting Immediately Following this Work Session

Mayor Jensen advised a 4% increase is also being requested for the City Engineer position. He noted there may be differences of pennies, but line by line was basically a 4% increase.

8. ORDINANCE NO. 114-24 – ESTABLISHING 2025 COMPENSATION FOR THE DIRECTOR OF LAW OF THE CITY OF AVON Mayor Jensen
First of Three Readings at a Special Meeting Immediately Following this Work Session

Mayor Jensen advised similarly the Law Director position is close to a 4% increase as well.

Mr. Gasior advised it is a 4% increase on the hourly rate, but it is slightly higher than 4% on the pay side. He said the pay side and the hourly side is a matter of moving money from one area to another. Mr. Gasior stated he tries to make things come out nice and even on the excel spreadsheet and the reason there is a slight discrepancy. He noted his assistant does not like using .33 ½ cents when calculating on the excel spreadsheet.

Mayor Jensen advised with Mr. Gasior the City always gets a better deal as far as the number of hours he gives the City. He said the compensation has always been fair and he never worries about an overcharge or extra time spent. Mayor Jensen stated there has never been an issue with the wages that are paid to Mr. Gasior.

Mrs. Demaline asked for clarification for the record, if it is a 4% increase for Mr. Gasior's annual compensation.

Mr. Gasior explained they could see when reading the Ordinance that there is an hourly rate, which was \$200 for 2024, and a 4% increase is \$208/hr. He clarified there is a division there because generally every month his hours are generally in the area of approximately 100 or thereabouts. Mr. Gasior said the first 53 hours of his hours in 2024 went toward his salary at \$200/hr. He stated for 2025 the first 54 hours will go toward his pay because of the increase from \$200/hr. to \$208/hr. Mr. Gasior added that is where the increase comes into play because it comes out to about 5.9% of an increase in the salary, but the salary is based on the \$208 hourly rate, which is increased by 4%. He clarified that it is how the money gets distributed.

Mrs. Demaline asked for clarification that the hourly rate increased by 4%.

Mr. Gasior said that is right, but the pay that he receives out of the hours submitted will go up by 5.9%.

Mrs. Demaline advised she asked since the other pay ordinances were red lined, and this one was not, and she just wanted to get a full understanding of what is being presented.

Mr. Gasior explained that going up one full hour from 53 hours to 54 hours gets 12 more hours a year, but to divide that out evenly the salary had to be increased. He said for example if 100 hours come in, the first 54 hours will be taken out and when they multiply that by \$208, it comes out to a nice even number. Mr. Gasior added when they take the hours that get attributed to a subdivider agreement for example, that will all come out nice and even. He advised a lot of his hours get assigned to subdivisions, developments and things of that nature where deposits are made to the City and Mr. Presley does a good job of making sure that there is enough money to pay him so that it does not come out of the General Fund.

9. REPORTS AND COMMENTS

MAYOR JENSEN explained that the reason these pieces of legislation were going to be read on first reading tonight at the Special Meeting was in case some Members of Council were absent for an upcoming meeting and there were not enough members present to suspend the rules. He advised it also gives everyone an opportunity to answer questions or discuss any issues that may come up. Mayor Jensen said he and Mr. Presley are available to answer any questions as the 2025 budget is a part of these readings as well.

Mayor Jensen pointed out a picture on the monitors of Ms. Berges and Mr. Varga who recently graduated from the Tree Academy, and he attended the ceremony. He said it is quite an honor that these two people take time out of their busy schedules to participate in that program. Mayor Jensen stated they also had the opportunity to present about Avon and listen as the other communities told their stories. He indicated he would like the slide presentation that Ms. Berges and Mr. Varga gave at the graduation sent to all of Council with a voiceover of what they said during the presentation. Mayor Jensen thought Avon's presentation was by far the very best as he felt like it was the most professional and well put together. He said he is appreciative of the time and effort that they have given.

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

MS. BERGES, AT LARGE advised she passed around flyers for the Annual Tree Lighting Festival that will take place on Saturday, December 7, 2024. She said the last planning meeting organized by the French Creek Foundation was this past Thursday and it was standing room only for all those involved in planning this event. Ms. Berges stated the event has gotten bigger and better every year and she hoped they would come and see what it is all about. <https://www.frenchcreekfoundation.com/christmas>

MRS. DEMALINE, WARD 1 thanked Ms. Berges for mentioning the Tree Lighting Festival and added that it is a fantastic event. She said the City looks great with all the decorations and lights going up around the City. Mrs. Demaline advised she is looking forward to seeing everything put together for the holidays.

MR. MCBRIDE, WARD 2 asked if it has been 30 days since the Urgent Care for UH has now been open and they still have their large NOW OPEN sign in the front lawn. He said he was not sure if there is a 30-day maximum for posting such a sign.

Mayor Jensen said he would check with the Zoning Enforcement Officer in the morning.

Mr. McBride added there are still a fair number of signs located in the public right of way. He said it would really be nice to get those signs pulled out to keep the builders and developers guessing about where their signs have gone as well as all the other groups who love to put their signs up in the public right of way. He suggested someone go out two weekends a month and pull the signs in violation.

MR. MOORE, WARD 3 was absent.

MS. PATTON, AT LARGE thanked Ms. Berges for reminding them of the Tree Lighting Festival. She said it looks to be a wonderful event and it is amazing that more people are joining in the planning process as a part of that committee to make this happen and that the festival is getting bigger every year as that is wonderful.

MR. RADCLIFFE, WARD 4 had no comments.

MR. FISCHER, AT LARGE had no comments.

DIRECTORS/ADMINISTRATION:

MR. CUMMINS, CITY ENGINEER thanked Council for their consideration of the contract for Chagrin Valley Engineering for 2025. He said it is a pleasure for him to work with the City Administration and City Council by working to improve the community for the residents. Mr. Cummins stated he really enjoys that, and he wanted to say, "thank you".

MS. FECHTER, PLANNING/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR was absent.

MR. GASIOR, LAW DIRECTOR thanked Council for considering the wage increase. He said it is a special honor to be able to serve the City of Avon and watch it grow as it has over the last twenty years. Mr. Gasior stated he appreciates the confidence that Council and the Mayor have shown in him. Thank you.

MR. PRESLEY, FINANCE DIRECTOR had no comments.

MR. STREATOR, SAFETY DIRECTOR/PUBLIC SERVICE DIRECTOR had no comments.

AUDIENCE:

There were no comments from the audience members.

10. ADJOURN: 7:49 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