



City of Willowick
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, October 1, 2024 at 7:30 PM
 City Council Chambers

ADA NOTICE

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals needing special accommodations (including auxiliary communicative aids and services) during this meeting should notify the City of Willowick at 440-585-3700 at least three working days before the meeting.

MINUTES

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Council President Koudela.

PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION

Council President Koudela says that the Council Clerk passed away on September 21. She had been the Clerk since March 2023 and was a great asset to this council and to the City and she will be missed. They take a moment of silence in her honor. For tonight, the Law Director will be doing the Roll Call in her place.

ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL

PRESENT:

President Monica Koudela
 Ward 1 Councilman Patrick Mohorcic
 Ward 1 Councilman Devon McFarland
 Ward 2 Councilwoman Theresa Bisbee
 Ward 3 Councilman Charles Malta
 Ward 3 Councilman David Phares

Also Present: Mayor Vanni, Law Director Landgraf, Police Chief Daubenmire, Chief Brennan, Engineer McLaughlin, Finance Director Benedict, Service Director Shannon.

Absent: Recreation Director Kless, Fire Chief Malovrh

ABSENT:

Ward 2 Councilwoman Natalie Antosh

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Motion to Approve the Minutes from the September 17, 2024 Regular Council Meeting

Unfortunately, these minutes are not completed at this time so this has been tabled.

APPOINTMENTS, SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS & PROCLAMATIONS

Council President Koudela mentions there is an Oath of Office for Brian Borgione and she turns this over to Mayor Vanni.

Mayor Vanni says it is a great honor and his privilege to swear in the newest officer. He is proudly from the City of Willowick and grew up with the Mayor's kids in grade school. Mayor Vanni reads him the Oath.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS

REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR/SAFETY DIRECTOR

Mayor Vanni says it has been a rough two weeks for everyone in the City. Christine Morgan was a very unexpected passing. She did a wonderful job for the City and Residents and he can't say enough about how much she went above and beyond. She is very missed. Lt. Guerrieri's wife has also passed away about a week and a half ago. His thoughts and prayers are with the whole department and everyone involved. It's a very tough situation. We also lost K9 Anchor. They are great dogs. He thanks everyone for coming together to get through these times. Moving onto business, Tim McLaughlin and him met with Willoughby, Eastlake, Laketran, NOACA, for Vine Street Corridor. It was a very productive meeting. Laketran is now going to be moving on drafting the Engineer's scope. Should take about a month and they will have another meeting sometime in November, but it is making good progress. Hopefully that comes to fruition in 2026 for all new lights on Vine Street. The next meeting on October 15, he asked the Superintendent Pat Ward for Willoughby Eastlake Schools to come and provide an update on what is going on at the schools. He has done a really good job there. There are a lot of new programs. Also, the Willowick Café is getting close. Pat Mohorcic is doing a lot of the heavy lifting on that. There was paperwork drawn from NOPEC that this will be an energy Special Improvement District. This will help businesses out and spur some businesses here. The first one will be Willowick Café. He is hoping that the 15th or the first meeting in November, Erin from NOPEC will come out and explain. This is exciting news. All good news there.

Last Monday, Council President Koudela, Councilman Phares, Councilwoman Bisbee all went to Euclid's sewer meeting for next year's sewer rates. They were informed that the increase might be bigger than anticipated. Wickliffe was on the same rate program as Willowick and their service director was also there. They all voiced their displeasure with the rate increases. They are still looking at what the final numbers are going to be. They do plan on going back when this goes to their Council. He believes it will be first reading on October 7th. After two readings he plans on being there and he will be reaching out to their Service Director this week. He thanks those Council people who attended with him.

Asphalt and striping are currently set to begin for Shoregate Shopping Center on October 7th. Design for the median is at the Engineer's Office and they are hoping that will be done before the end of the year. He concludes his report.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION OF THE MAYOR'S REPORT

Mr. Phares makes remarks about Chris's service to the City. He says that she did a lot that went above and beyond the job description. If you ever had questions, you'd call her. She will be missed.

Mr. Malta directs this to Pat. He says since Pat has been doing the heavy lifting on the Willowick Café, he is hoping that he can answer his question. Is that why there has been a standstill for the past 8 months.

Mr. Mohorcic says like a lot of the commercial real estate, and residential you're seeing in the CRE Market, the interest rate plays a huge role. NOPEC comes in as a secondary lender. Restaurants are risky and banks were not lending, but he thinks they have come to a good point to get their collateral in place. They really need TLC in that part of the City. He believes a fire is what caused a lot of it over there.

Mr. Malta thanks him for his response.

Mr. Phares says Patrick do they have any architectural plans?

Mayor Vanni says right after he became Mayor in November 2022 that following month he came out with plans. With the market and rates going up, the timing was not right, but the plan looks great and he is hoping to get this done as soon as possible. He is excited about this.

GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS – Directors & Officials

Service Director – Todd Shannon

He has a couple items of interest. Beginning in November, Lakeshore Blvd will be torn up again with water line replacement from the County. They have no control over that, it is their timeline. Leaf Collection in the City will be October 28-December 6. They will try to make it through three times. They cannot predict when the leaves will fall.

President Koudela asks him to clarify the dates.

Mr. Shannon says October 28 through December 6, weather dependent and also manpower and equipment dependent.

President Koudela asks where on Lakeshore will the road be torn up?

Mr. Shannon says it will be from 293 to Seaborn area. It will be similar to what was done last year. The same company has the contract.

No additional questions.

Recreation Director – Julie Kless

Ms. Kless was not in attendance this meeting.

City Engineer – Tim McLaughlin

Mr. McLaughlin has no formal report, but is open to questions.

No questions.

Finance Director – Cheryl Benedict

Ms. Benedict has no formal report, but is open for questions.

No questions.

Law Director – Stephanie Landgraf

Ms. Landgraf has no formal report, but is open for questions.

No questions.

Police Chief – Rob Daubenmire

Chief Daubenmire submitted his report electronically this morning. He has no formal report, but is open for questions.

No questions.

Fire Chief – Bill Malovrh

Chief Malovrh was not in attendance this meeting.

Chief Housing/Zoning Inspector – Sean Brennan

Mr. Brennan has no formal report, but is open for questions.

Ms. Bisbee thanks him for taking care of the issue with the fencing. The neighbors are very happy.

Mr. Brennan thanks her.

WARD MATTERS

President Koudela wants to let everyone know that Commissioner Plecnik has presented them with a commemorative gavel for their 100th anniversary. She plans to use it from now on and thanks him.

No additional comments.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

a) Public statement (1 minute maximum)

b) Council response to the public

c) Public clarification (30 seconds to 1 minute for the purpose of restating or rearticulating an original question, concern, suggestion or idea)

Ralph Sylvester, 31823 Pendley Rd. Utilities coming in, he gets 30% off but then his water bill goes up like \$150. Will something be done? He heard there is a meeting coming up on the 15th? Will this be resolved, can they get a reduced rate?

Mary Betsa, 30409 Gebhart Place, a very small home, smaller than some of the others. Her husband is retired and they are hardly home. Her bill was \$600 opposed to the normal \$200. She was shocked. Her daughter told her to go on the Willowick Community Page because she is not the only one. She opened that up and she just cried. She thought of the people with \$1300 bills and \$800 bills. In a way, her husband and her have lived here for 5 years and they have loved it, but if they keep getting those bills, they will have to find somewhere else where they can retire.

Justin Culter from Major Waste Disposal comes to speak. He sees on Miscellaneous on the agenda that Director Shannon is making a motion to award the 5-year contract for garbage, recycling, and yard waste. They have been in service for 45 years and they already service a lot of Willowick's commercial spots and they would be honored to serve the Residents of the City.

Brett Fegan with Kimble Recycling and Disposal comes to speak. He sent everyone a letter and hopes they had a chance to read and digest it. Based on the Resolution on the agenda, it looks like things are not going Kimble's way. They do not want to lose the contract. They have been serving the City for 9 years and there have been very few complaints sent his way. There has been an issue with delays for yard waste in particular areas. The yard waste carts that they included in their bid would have made them more efficient. The bids were so close, only \$0.30 difference, but it would save the residents. They felt the Yard Waste Carts would help save on bags. There is still time if you decide to push this back and have another reading on this. There are still four months on the Contract. He would be happy if they did that, but he understands that they have a job to do as far as making the right decisions for the Community. He thanks everyone and wishes them a great evening.

Vince Crawford with Waste Management comes to speak. He jokes that there have now been three trash companies in a row. He wants to say that he appreciated the opportunity to bid on the service. He thinks what they do differently is how they invest in their safety and sustainability programs. They would love the opportunity to service the community. Their price is about \$0.25 different. They feel that they are the best value for the community for the service.

There was no one else to speak in this portion.

President Koudela responds to the three trash companies first, thanking them for being there and their bids. They all received the opportunity to review these and have discussed with the Service Director. She moves onto the concerns regarding the sewer rates. They did go up and it is a lot. It is definitely a hard thing to swallow. They felt the same way when they got the notification from the City of Euclid. It is a very complex thing. This has been something that committees and Council have been discussing since 2022. This is a huge hit. As the Mayor mentioned, four of them were at the meeting last week. Unfortunately, they plan for additional increases. All of this stems from federal requirements for updates to the plant to satisfy EPA requirements and treatment costs have gone up. They were at that meeting expressing their concerns, similarly to the residents at this meeting tonight. They all said that this is a hit. Like you mentioned, with property values going up, property taxes will be increased. She said the residents cannot afford this. They have said this before. She knows it is rough.

Mr. Mohorcic wants to point out that this is an unfunded mandate from the EPA. He wants Euclid to be more transparent about what they are doing. These rates decisions are being made by elected officials that our residents did not vote for in another city. They understand this. Residents are being priced out of their homes because of utility bills and it is frustrating. They (Council) all pay the same bills that the residents do. He jokes he needs to stop watering his lawn so much.

Mr. Mohorcic says he knows some senior residents get a 30% reduction. One thing they did do, this year, is offer that 30% reduction. If you are not enrolled in that, a lot of Senior Citizens are on the water through the County. As Mayor Vanni alluded to, the rate decisions from their study and their consulting group are not the rate decisions they are seeing which adds to frustrating when trying to put a budget together. They are throwing darts at a wall hoping something sticks. He encourages everyone to show up to the Euclid meeting as it will be the ultimate decision maker on this on October 7th.

Ms. Bisbee says to build on what everyone else has said so far, they really had a tough time when they voted on the increase to their residents. It is a pass through that they are getting from the City of Euclid. They have no control over what is going on, it is EPA that is putting this on and they have exhausted their legal options for this. When she opened her bill she was also shocked. It is unfortunate that they are having to help support that plant.

Mr. McFarland agrees that this is rough for everyone. He encourages everyone to talk to their neighbors because bills will be similar.

The residents speak up to say that is not the case. They didn't get their bills raised (the neighbors), it was just them.

President Koudela says not everyone is on the same billing cycle. The Finance Director has also been informed by the Water Department that, because of that billing cycle, not everyone got the full increase last quarter. Next quarter might include the full increase. If you are having extra usage, there might be some type of leak, so you might want to look into that.

Mr. McFarland says if you are significantly higher than your neighbors with similar houses, he encourages you to look for those leaks. It might be something where your toilet is running a moment longer even. These rate increases are rough and they are trying to reduce it.

A resident speaks up to say there must be a lot of houses with a leak then. The rates are so different.

President Koudela asks her to state her name and address for the record.

She states it is Lydia Donnatelli 750 E 300th street.

President Koudela says it is hard to compare, every house is different, but there could be an issue. That is something to look into. Council has looked into all different options, they even filed legal action at the time of the first increase. They have no additional options. There was talk of building their own plant, but the Engineer reports the cost is roughly \$100 million plus significant responsibilities to follow. President Koudela expresses again that this is something that bothers them. They have had a lot of meetings to discuss this. It is devastating. The 2025 rates are anticipated to be more than double what was expected, which they found out when they attended this meeting. She asks if Mayor Vanni wants to make a comment.

Mayor Vanni says these decisions are not made lightly at all. They pay the same water bill. He was also shocked when he got his. They have not raised rates for 10 years. Since he has been on Council, they have always been conscious of the fact that they are a bedroom community. They don't have the Lubrizol that Wickliffe has and they don't have that income coming in. It is a fee being passed onto them without voting on. They went 10 years without raising rates and were doing okay. Well, in 2022 everything went nuts. They weren't even told until December. They found out on accident and filed a formal letter of disagreement. Willowick, Wickliffe, and parts of Willoughby Hills go through the Euclid system. Basically it's an EPA decree from the storm in 2008. The EPA came in and said they had to build a brand new plant. It's unbelievable what they have done over there, but the debt service on this plant alone is \$8.5 million for the year and going up. They are kind of in the same situation as we are. We made it known this is a big burden to tax payers. The other half of the equation is that, when they pass that cost onto them, they have to absorb it. It does not give them any leeway to keep making improvements to the sewer system which is also needed. They have spent over \$10 million in sewer improvements the past 10 years. They need the sewer fund to be self-sustainable. They have gone into the General Fund before to absorb some of these costs, but that is not sustainable. They will continue to watch and let Euclid know where they are at. They are doing everything they can.

Mr. Phares says when the Mayor talks about the General Fund, it pays a lot of wages for Safety and Parks and Rec. If we have to go into that fund, it will hurt down the road. It is all very complex. These are hard decisions for Council.

Mr. Mohorcic says in that situation, it is essentially Resident taxpayers trying to pay for it. This was not an act of Congress or an act by Council. This was a unilateral decision by someone and the only way to fund it is on the backs of residents. If we had to pull out of the General Fund, it would mean less officers on the road, less snow plows, taking away from other services, etc. Every time they put a rate increase on them, it is putting the City into a tougher and tougher bind. He hopes the Residents will let the City of Euclid know.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance – Bisbee, Mohorcic, Antosh

There will be a split Committee meeting on the 15th. President Koudela says that her and Mayor Vanni were discussing that, with Euclid not setting their rates yet, they contemplated holding a Committee Meeting at a later date.

Safety – Phares, Malta, McFarland

No report.

Service, Utilities & Public Lands – Malta, Phares, McFarland

Mr. Malta says that he was asked to suspend tonight's meeting due to the loss of Chris. He thinks he will suspend it until further notice. What was on the agenda was the renaming of the basketball court, which

was a great idea, but per the Ordinance they cannot do anything for three years so it is senseless to have a meeting for that. He appreciates the input from the Law Director.

Streets, Sidewalks & Sewers – Mohorcic, Bisbee, Malta

No report.

Tax Compliance – Koudela, Antosh, McFarland

No report.

Moral Claims – Antosh, Phares, Koudela

No report.

Budget – Mohorcic, Koudela, Bisbee

No report.

LIAISON REPORTS

Planning – Phares/Alternate Antosh

No report.

Board of Zoning Appeals – McFarland/Alternate Koudela

No report.

Volunteer Fire Fighters' Dependents Fund Board – Antosh, Phares

No report.

Recreation Board – Bisbee/Alternate Phares

No report.

Plan Review Board – Antosh

No report.

Hearts & Hammers – Malta

FUND TRANSFERS & BID AUTHORIZATIONS

CONTRACT APPROVALS

INTRODUCTION & CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATION

1. Resolution No. 2024-51

A Resolution to Approve Authorizations (Then and Now Certificate) to Hanger 14 Solutions in the Amount of \$3,252.00 for the City of Willowick, and Declaring an Emergency.

Motion to suspend the rules made by Ward 3 Councilman Malta, Seconded by Ward 3 Councilman Phares.

Voting: Mr. Malta, YEA, Mr. McFarland, YEA. Ms. Koudela, YEA. Mr. Mohorcic, YEA. Ms. Bisbee, YEA. Mr. Phares, YEA.

Yeas unanimous.

Motion to adopt made by Ward 3 Councilman Phares, Seconded by Ward 1 Councilman McFarland.

Voting: Mr. Malta, YEA, Mr. McFarland, YEA. Ms. Koudela, YEA. Mr. Mohorcic, YEA. Ms. Bisbee, YEA. Mr. Phares, YEA.

Yeas unanimous.

No Discussion; Motions Carried

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Motion to award a five-year contract with up to five one-year option periods for the collection and disposal of garbage, recycling and yard waste pick up to Major Waste commencing February 1, 2025 in accordance with the bid specifications submitted.

Motion to approve made by Ward 3 Councilman Malta, Seconded by Ward 1 Councilman McFarland.

Mr. Malta asks Justin from Major Waste, what the protocol is when streets or days are missed by his company. Is there a centralized number? He wants to know before they approve the bid.

Justin says yes, there is a local number that usually residents call, but they do also have an 800 number and also email. They report the miss and the inter office protocol is that a vehicle will come handle the miss within 24 hours. Holidays they run one day behind. If a holiday falls on a Monday, they run Tuesday through Saturday.

Mr. Malta asks if residents will get some type of email prior to awarding of the bid so they know what the protocol is for missed days? They can call City Council too of course.

Justin says yes, absolutely.

Mr. Mohorcic says he is very excited about this proposed contract because it has recycling he believes every week as well as an extra month for yard waste at, or around, the same cost as what they pay now. He feels this is a great bargain for the residents. Thank you to all the companies for bidding.

Ms. Bisbee asks him to explain the policy on yard waste and large item pick up.

Justin says yes, yard waste must be contained to a bag or personal can not weighing more than 50 lb. Sections of branches or twigs must be 4' length bundled. Large item pickups like furniture or textile material require wrapping prior. Fridges and freezers need to be expelled of Freon before they can be picked up. That is a Lake County landfill and safety concern.

Ms. Bisbee asks to speak to Brent, from Kimble also. She wants clarification on large item pick ups. An example, if a resident moves out on a street and leaves half their house on the tree lawn, what is your policy.

Brent says they will pick up the majority, but it's almost like they need the roll off. That's where most haulers stand with that unless the contract specifically says unlimited. This is an unlimited contract, but tailored to a "reasonable amount of trash".

Mr. Phares asks Brent to describe the Yard Waste Cart.

Brent says the Yard Waste Cart is similar to the recycle cart. 64 gallons with a different colored lid. That cart can be filled up with yard waste and yard waste can be filled up aside from it, not limited to just the cart.

President Koudela asks if there is any further discussion. No.

Voting: Mr. Malta, YEA, Mr. McFarland, YEA. Ms. Koudela, YEA. Mr. Mohorcic, YEA. Ms. Bisbee, NO. Mr. Phares, YEA.

Motion passes.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

a) Public statement (1 minute maximum)

b) Council response to the public

c) Public clarification (30 seconds to 1 minute for the purpose of restating or rearticulating an original question, concern, suggestion or idea)

Lydia Donnatelli comes to speak again. Her rate went up \$60 for the last quarter. Should she be expecting that \$400 of sewage next quarter? If so, she needs to start looking for a new house or another job. She has two kids and she should not have to be struggling in this community. This is not Cleveland, this is Willowick. She moved to the suburbs to live in a suburb, not a city. As far as the waste, genuine question, if we are getting new trash? Are we getting new trash bins? Will there be unexpected cost with this as well? Will the rate go up with a new trash company? She needs to know financially for her family. She has a dream job that doesn't pay much.

Michael Kopp 32309 Knobel Rd. says regarding the rates in Willowick they are supposedly the same as Wickliffe and Willoughby Hills. Should they be the same when Wickliffe has a lot more industry than we have? There is a lot more waste through those sewers than residential. He has not seen the increase everyone else has so far.

Phil Detering, 469 Bayridge, asks if there is a formula for the cost in the water bill? A price for clean water coming in and sewage charge? Are there flat rates or percentage increases for different costs where he can compare his bill to someone else's to see that they are all paying the same percentage?

Donna Rosciszewski, 412 Beachwood Drive, says this quarter has the first "Willowick Service Charge", she is unsure if it was always there. She did call the utilities department when she received the bill and she explained they got a new software and that is why there was a delay. Maybe now it's itemized instead of lumped all together? Also there are rumors on Facebook that this is happening because of Shoregate Towers. Is that true?

Joseph Betsa, 30409 Gebhart Place, his wife complained also. He is one of the Willowick soccer coaches also. He donates his time to Willowick. He just retired 6 months ago and did not expect this to happen. He does not want to have to go into work again. He worked for 45 years, he does not need to do it again. He cannot afford to do the utilities; his wife is working her butt off. Are we going to go to Euclid on Monday to explain our situation? Are we going to have the backing from our City? He wants to go up there and say something, but he wants the backing that he knows they will get justice. Euclid should not have that control over them.

Terry Wood, 32315 Glen Arden Dr., they have the same type of situation. The bills keep going up, her husband is on Social Security, she gets a 3% annual raise if she is lucky. Health care goes up and sewers are now going up and it is drastic. It's not \$25/year, we're talking \$100... that could pay a week of groceries. It's getting to the point where they don't have it any more. If it keeps continuing like they are

saying, they will have to look for somewhere else to live. You are talking about middle to lower income residents and they do not have the money to pay these kind of bills. She thanks everyone for turning out and speaking their minds. She asks that Council goes to bat for them because they are hurting. If you go to the webpage and listen to all the complaints, people are not happy in Willowick right now. It is not just the water. She has lived here over 20 years. From some of the comments she hears that this used to be a wonderful City to live in, but things have changed. People are upset about the 100 year anniversary of the City. Council got a gavel, what did the citizens get? To celebrate 100 years of being here... you have to give something to the people here in Willowick. She understands Council's position as far as the budget goes.

Mary Betsa speaks up to say the bill is due October 15. Will there be late charges?

President Koudela closes the second public portion. She thanks everyone for being there. They like when residents come and speak. Phone numbers and emails are on the website. Personally, she does not hear from many residents. She wants to listen to them and hear the concerns. That is how they make decisions. What they hear from residents is certainly part of the conversation when these tough decisions come into play. As far as bills go, water comes from Lake County Department of Utilities and they are the ones that process the billing for both water and sewer. Our sewage goes to Euclid and is treated there. Then Euclid sends a bill based on the amount that they treat. So unfortunately there is no way... they have to be billed the same. Lake County Utilities Department bills based on how much water you use, and there is a certain rate for the sewer. What they bill for sewer charges has two portions. There is a flat rate sewer charge based on...

Finance Director Benedict says it is based on the size of your water meter. However, every single family, resident, or home, is billed the same amount which is \$6.25/month or \$18.75/quarter. Then there is a \$4.75 charge on top of that which is what Lake County Department of Utilities charges for the billing. That's the \$23.50 that is showing on service charge. That has been there since 2012, she thinks it is just with the new billing software it is separated out to where you are seeing the charge, but it is not a new charge. That is one part of the charge, but then there is the consumption charge based on water usage. If you have a leak and your usage goes from 10 units to 40 units, your water will go up that much and your sewer charge will go up that much because they do not have a way to measure sewage coming out of the homes. Outside of a rate increase, if you have high usage all of a sudden, it is frequently a water leak. She welcomes residents to call her so she can see if usage has increased or if rate has just increased.

President Koudela says that the flat rate charge has been there all along, but for whatever reason, it's more noticeable this time. It is the flat rate sewer charge, per household. Current usage charge rate is \$9.8397 per unit. One unit is 100 cubic feet. That is the rate. It costs more money to treat dirty water than clean water.

City Engineer says with sewage and water rates there is no way to measure sewage. Unfortunately, the amount of sewage that is treated for Willowick on a daily basis correlates directly to that difference.

President Koudela says there is a meter somewhere in the County that measures the flow of sewage. Twice as much goes through that meter as the amount of water is supplied to their households. As far as what Euclid charges Willowick and Wickliffe, it is the same rate. What Wickliffe charges their residents, she doesn't know. She's sure they pay Euclid more than we do, but it is the same rate. She does not want to speculate why the bills are so different. It is possible though that based on billing cycles, you had the full rate increase. You might look at two consecutive bills at the higher rate. She recommends calling Cheryl or the Water Department. From what she has heard, they are pretty helpful.

Finance Director states that the Water Department is currently slammed with calls at this moment. She is happy to help with it. As far as water vs sewer, she believes Lake County Department of Utilities has different minimum values. That could explain why sewer is unusually higher than water.

President Koudela says as of today, there is no scheduled rate increase for next year, but she is not saying that is not going to change. As mentioned, Euclid is anticipating there will be a rate increase to them that is fairly significant. They talked about having a meeting in two weeks to discuss and it might be postponed. That's when they will discuss what to do. They talked about advancing money from the General Fund. Unfortunately, moving money from the General Fund is taking money out of other departments. Just like you have to figure out your budget, they need to figure out theirs. Where will the money come from? Will there be another rate increase? Probably... maybe January 2025. As soon as they know, they will do their best to inform the residents. There was also a question about the trash. There are no additional costs, carts will just be switched out by this company. There is no significant change for the next 5 years. Slight increases, but no additional costs for switching companies. Someone brought up Shoregate Towers. No... you are not paying their sewer bill. They are behind and they are in receivership which means a third party is taking over and working on paying the bills. Full transparency, they have seen that as the rates have gone up, so has the delinquency rates have also gone up meaning less people are paying their bills.

There was discussion as to whether or not Shoregate is still delinquent for this year.

Mayor Vanni says they have received like \$323,000 in delinquent sewer bills YTD. That is good... it will help that fund. We are assuming a good chunk of that is what Shoregate owed the year before.

Mr. Shannon says they did put another month of yard waste in there as well as every week recycling. So for the same cost, you're getting more services.

President Koudela says they are trying. They said the same things to the City of Euclid last week. This is not okay. These rate increases are devastating. Are we going to stand up with you? Absolutely. We already have. She plans to be at the meeting on Tuesday and Mayor Vanni plans to be at their meeting on the 21st. It would be great if residents went and expressed the same concerns. They are facing the same issues. Euclid is facing the same issues that they are also. These requirements by the EPA and Federal Government are difficult. They are trying.

President Koudela clarifies that the meeting is on Monday October 7th at 7 pm Euclid City Hall.

Mayor Vanni says they know Willowick is frustrated. The perception in Willowick is that residents are subsidizing this plant. They know that we are frustrated, but they are kind of in the same boat because they are getting the pressure from the EPA and you cannot fight the EPA.

A resident asks with the due date of October 15, what do they do if they can't come up with that money?

President Koudela says she unfortunately doesn't have an answer for that.

Finance Director Benedict says she can call tomorrow to try to get some answers and also see at what point late fees start. She will report this information out.

President Koudela says Council's phone numbers and names are on the City website. If you can't come to the meeting, send an email and they can submit it to Euclid.

Lydia makes one more comment. She says that saying you don't know what residents are upset about is woefully ignorant. If you have a Facebook, you will be able to find out. If you want to know and be proactive, as who they were elected to be for this City, then get a Facebook page. She knows you can't answer every question, but then they can see what people are frustrated about.

President Koudela says that she rarely hears from residents. Rather than going on Facebook, please reach out directly.

Mr. Malta reminds everyone that Gold Star's Spaghetti Dinner is at the American Legion in Willowick this Saturday and it is \$15. They are hoping to build monuments for the families that have lost sons and daughters in war.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Ward 3 Councilman Malta; Seconded by Ward 3 Councilman Phares

Voting Yea: Mr. Malta, YEA. Mr. McFarland, YEA. Ms. Koudela, YEA. Mr. Mohorcic, YEA. Ms. Bisbee, YEA. Mr. Phares, YEA.

No Discussion; Motion Carried; Meeting Adjourned at 8:40 p.m.


President of Council

October 15, 2024
Date Approved


clerk of council