

STREETS, BUILDINGS & GROUNDS MEETING MINUTES

March 14, 2022

In Attendance: **Vermilion City Council:** *Monica Stark, President of Council; Steve Herron, Council At Large, Pat Stein, Ward One; Teresa Mayle, Ward Two; Greg Drew, Ward Three; Barb Brady, Ward Four; Brian Holmes, Ward Five*

Administration: *Jim Forthofer, Mayor; Chris Howard, City Engineer; Amy Hendricks, Finance Director; Chris Hartung, Police Chief; Tony Valerius, Service Director*

Call to Order: Steve Herron, Chairman, RESOLVED THAT this Health & Safety Committee comprised of the committee of the whole does now come to order.

TOPIC ONE: 2022 Streets Program

S. Herron thanked everyone for submitting their top priority streets, so council could have a chance to review them. G. Drew said as a new council member he would like explanation how this process works. S. Herron said council will come up with a decision after reviewing the priority list. He said there could be four or more reasons why they feel they need to do one street over the other. G. Drew assumed their decisions come down to funding.

M. Stark asked C. Howard what streets the administration was looking at and what streets qualify for OPWC funding and that sort of thing. C. Howard said they can apply for OPWC funding for Highbridge Road (north and south) based on the traffic volumes. Another is Hollyview (Phase 2) – this will be third year they will try for this funding. He said OPWC funding is based on the pavement condition rating and traffic. When you apply for OPWC, you guarantee the useful life of 20 years. The OPWC applications are due in September and the funding is not available till the following June. In addition, the city applies for MPO funding, which is more of the state routes, so this year they will apply for Vermilion Road, Phase 4 and Sunnyside Road, Phase 3.

Amy Hendricks said based on the estimates for the 2022 planning, they already have scheduled projects that have been allocated for. There is about \$1.6 million at the end of this year to carryover for projects for next year. There are still questions about the 2019 additions to the fuel tax. It appears that Governor DeWine will be able to keep that in place through this year but has opposition in November, as part of the platform for running, is to remove this, so there is still a question mark to be able to plan on that for financing. G. Drew asked what the average residential street costs. B. Brady said it depends on the length of a street. Mayor Forthofer said they could spend a million dollars on one street in Valley View. B. Brady said Edgewater Drive was \$200,000, but that was about six years ago.

M. Stark asked if Main Street is scheduled to be done this year and has the money been allocated already. Mayor Forthofer said this is up in the air because of the work being done from Huron Street to north Main, but again the Army Corp of Engineers will be doing the west pier in the future and will be bringing cement trucks down there, so they don't want to fix Main Street until that is resolved. C. Howard said in reality this will be a 2023 project. He said years ago they had discussed doing a mill and fill from Liberty to Huron Street and believes council delayed this project.

B. Brady asked if there is money available in Streets M&R. A. Hendricks said this amount is fully consumed with payroll, general parts, fuel charges, etc. B. Brady asked if they are making any transfers from the general fund in this account because the city used to transfer money into M&R. A. Hendricks said this would be a choice that council could make and approve. B. Brady asked if the \$1.6 million includes the permissive use fund. A. Hendricks said the \$1.6 million is the road levy only, and permissive use has an estimated \$377,000, and Streets M&R has \$114,000, which is already committed. She confirmed the \$377,000 permissive use fund is available for roads.

P. Stein asked what streets are being done this year. C. Howard said the big project this year is the Urban Paving for the Lorain County side on Liberty Avenue (Rite Aid to the county line). He said the city's portion was over \$600,000. The other approved project is the Woodlands/Liberty Avenue intersection estimated at \$200,000. Both projects were already budgeted and the \$1.6 million remains after these projects, stated Hendricks.

S. Herron suggested submitting three or four streets to the administration to see what the numbers look like. C. Howard said Brownhelm Station Road will cost millions of dollars. B. Holmes addressed Highbridge Road (north and south) and knows they don't like doing roads in sections, but you have Brownhelm from Vermilion Road to Highbridge, and he knows they redid this intersection when they did Highbridge from Brownhelm north to the bridge, but could they figure this part of Brownhelm down so far heading east with OPWC funding. C. Howard said yes they can submit for OPWC, but they cannot submit for MPO funding because it has to be considered an arterial to get funding from Erie County for MPO. B. Holmes said Highbridge comes right off Route 2 and Sunnyside and this area is being used a lot, and they can throw Brownhelm right into the mix because you're either coming down Sunnyside north and then cutting across to Brownhelm to Highbridge, or Brownhelm right to Vermilion Road. He asked if a speed zone study is worth it. C. Howard said this is dictated by ODOT and they have an idea of the traffic, which is used when submitting. He said the Chief has equipment they can monitor traffic with, but he needs to make sure ODOT is willing to accept it.

B. Brady asked if the city has approached Brownhelm Township to apply for funding for the City. C. Howard said last year they tried to go through the Lorain County Engineer's office for Brownhelm to Claus Road. B. Brady

asked if they are getting more from the fuel tax. A. Hendricks said they would be getting some, but how this is prorated to the townships she is unsure of. B. Brady said they should share because those in Brownhelm are paying, and they need to get something back. B. Holmes said this is certainly worth approaching the trustees on.

G. Drew noted the city administration provided a list of streets as well, which mimics some of the streets council provided, so he suggested they focus on these first. He said the administration and council both picked Ferry Street. P. Stein said this will never get done as it is a small street. He said they both agreed on Frederick in Ward Two and Idleview in Ward Three, so maybe they start with what the city and council agreed on as being the streets they fix.

B. Holmes said once they do the sections of Sunnyside and Vermilion Road, again this comes back to Highbridge being the alternate route, so they will cause more damage to those two roads. C. Howard said the Vermilion Road, Phase 2 project is slated for 2023 and Vermilion Road is slated for 2024, then they will be applying for the next phase which won't be until 2026 and 2027. B. Holmes said Highbridge would be a total tear out.

S. Herron recalls in the past there was an order in Valley View because of how the water drained, so he was wondering why the administration did not have Timberview on their list. He asked the administration if they felt Idleview should be done before Timberview. T. Valerius said Idleview will never get any additional funding as it will be 100% city funded. He said if they have city funds, then it would be nice to take care of Idleview because it is in horrible condition. Probably three years ago, Bramhall Engineering did a pavement rating study on Pineview, Timberview, Hollyview, and Mapleview. The worse one was Hollyview, so this is why they attacked it first. The second was Mapleview, and the third worse was Pineview, and then Timberview according to the pavement condition rating. C. Howard recommended council come up with a street or two from each ward and they will do a pavement condition rating, and then council can make a decision based on that.

M. Stark said they shouldn't look at the streets this year that Chris will be applying for funding on. Mayor Forthofer said this is a share and it will take city money. M. Stark said if Highbridge got chosen, then maybe next year they can use their funds for this project. She asked if they pay 80% of the project. C. Howard said those are the MPO projects. The OPWC funding is around \$250,000 – \$300,000. He said the city can go for loans too like they did for Hollyview. He said they will apply again for Hollyview. M. Stark said Hollyview has such flooding issues, and the pavement is terrible to drive on, so she feels this is high on the list.

B. Brady said she and Tony talked about Edison Estates because they have a potential to be like Valley View if they don't take care of it because they are all concrete streets and they're getting older. She thought they could maintain the roads, but there isn't money available in Street M&R, but would

there be money to do a fairly extensive project of cutting the concrete out and performing repairs, so they don't have million dollar streets. She thought it would cost around \$40,000. T. Valerius said this is an estimate. He said any street repairs around catch basins can be taken from the stormwater fund.

P. Stein said Portage is damaged from the drainage above, so would this be considered stormwater. T. Valerius said he wouldn't think so. B. Brady asked if the state would be helping with Portage because of the trucks going up and down Portage. She thought they were supposed to put the street back to its original condition after they finished fixing the west pier. Mayor Forthofer said this was the contractor for the Army Corp of Engineers and he did not think there was much damage that was shown by the before and after video.

S. Herron asked council members to pick a street in their ward that they felt was most important.

Pat Stein (Ward One) – Portage (Stop at Clubhouse)

Greg Drew (Ward Two) – Frederick, Gardiner, & Dorothy (Small streets and could be completed as one project as they connect in a horseshoe). He noted there is an 8" drop between traffic going east and west on Frederick.

Teresa Mayle (Ward Three) – Pineview (Community Pool is on this street, highly traveled). She felt Idleview was horrible but thought it would be beneficial to get Pineview cleaned up.

Barb Brady (Ward Four) – Berkely

Brian Holmes (Ward Five) – Highbridge (south side section of Brownhelm). C. Howard noted the north side needs to be widened. T. Valerius said it will affect storm sewers too.

B. Brady said she would not be against trying some chip and seal with a matte cover in Ward Four in VOL or behind Americut. They did it in VOL when Jean Anderson was Mayor and when Bob Sasala was doing a lot of stuff. The sections they did have held up a whole lot better than the other parts of the street that weren't done. She suggested looking at streets like Rowland, Ferndale, or Lansing using a chip and seal with a fiber matte over it to seal it. C. Howard said not many communities in the area use chip and seal. It is usually the counties that do it, but not residential areas in the city. He explained that chip and seal is a pavement restoration while the pavement is still in good condition. A lot of these streets are beyond that repair. You have to have a certain rating to make it viable to use, otherwise you could be wasting money. He said chip and seal only lasts three to six years, so this is something to consider. It's a temporary fix. B. Brady said it was done almost 10 years ago. She isn't saying they are good, but they are better than the ones they didn't do it to. She said this would be a giant crack seal over the whole road, so it stops the water from getting under it, so maybe they should try it because it's cheap.

C. Howard said they will do a pavement condition rating of the roads selected and then they will come up with an approximate cost estimate on a distance of road they pick.

TOPIC TWO: Downtown Pedestrian Improvements Proposal (ODOT Safety Funding)

C. Howard said in 2019 the City went after a Safety Grant from the State of Ohio and Vermilion was one of only three communities that could actually get funding for safety improvements. This would be for pedestrian improvements downtown. He provided council with a map of high visibility crossings for pedestrians. The improvements include pedestrian upgrades along U.S. 6 from Decatur Street to Exchange Street. Specifically, curb extensions and high visibility crosswalk on the east side of Decatur Street; curb extensions and high visibility crosswalks on both sides of Perry Street and Washington Street; curb extensions, a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon, and high visibility crosswalk on both sides of Grand Street; and an RRFB and high visibility crosswalk on the west side of Exchange Street. The ADA curb ramps at the intersection of U.S. 6 and S.R. 60 will also be upgraded to current standards. Originally, the state said funding would be available in 2025, but they actually made that money available sooner, so in order to take advantage of this money, they have to submit Stage 2 plans by July 1, 2022, so they can begin construction next year. He said the city is receiving \$275,193 and the total City share of the project is \$116,273. He said the city received the largest chunk of this funding.

P. Stein asked if the sidewalk replacement is public sidewalks, and C. Howard concurred.

Mayor Forthofer said many businesses had formerly stated that Grand Street and Liberty were definitely in need of crosswalk help.

B. Brady asked what the bump outs look like. C. Howard said they will be curbed and grass, so you're actually pushing out into the lane, so you're reducing the lane width in order to protect the pedestrians, so they can get across quicker. M. Stark asked how this will work with the snowplows if they have bump outs. C. Howard said it will not go into the travel lane – it will just taking parking away in some areas. B. Brady confirmed it will take parking away. C. Howard said yes, but it will not be very many. The most dangerous spot is at Grand. Mayor Forthofer said from his observation it will require a reeducation of their local drivers as to what a crosswalk is and who has the right of way because the local folks are not used to it.

B. Holmes asked if West River and Liberty from the bridge was ever in consideration. C. Howard said no as they went for limited funding, and they focused on downtown. They have more walking public in this corridor – not saying they don't go the whole way.

S. Herron MOVED; M. Stark seconded to have legislation prepared to authorize a not to exceed of \$52,000 for Bramhall's Construction Plans and Cost Estimate. Roll Call Vote 7 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

S. Herron adjourned the meeting after no further business came before the committee.

Next Meeting: April 11, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m. at the Vermilion Municipal Court Complex, 687 Decatur Street, Vermilion, Ohio