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CITY OF NORTH CANTON, OHIO
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

**TRANSCRIPT OF
MARCH 2, 2020, MEETING**

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Transcript of Proceedings of the North Canton
City Council, taken by me, the undersigned, Laurie Maryl
Jonas, a Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public in
and for the State of Ohio, at the North Canton Civic
Center, 845 West Maple Street, North Canton, Ohio, on
Monday, March 2, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.

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1 APPEARANCES:

2 Daryl Revoldt, Council Vice President, At Large

3 Doug Foltz, Ward 1

4 Stephanie Werren, Ward 3

5 Dominic Fonte, Ward 4

6 Mark R. Cerreta, At Large

7 Matthew Stroia, At Large

8 Patrick A. DeOrion, Director of Administration

9 Timothy L. Fox, Director of Law

10 Jina Alaback, Director of Finance

11 Robert G. Graham, Engineering Services

12 Catherine A. Farina, Deputy Director of
Administration and Development

13 Stephan B. Wilder, Mayor

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1 MR. REVOLDT: I'd like to call to order the
2 committee of the whole meeting for Monday, March 2,
3 2020.

4 Clerk, would you please call the role.

5 MR. YOUNG: Fonte?

6 MR. FONTE: Here.

7 MR. YOUNG: Revoldt?

8 MR. REVOLDT: Here.

9 MR. YOUNG: Foltz?

10 MR. FOLTZ: Here.

11 MR. YOUNG: Werren?

12 MRS. WERREN: Here.

13 MR. YOUNG: Stroia?

14 MR. STROIA: Here.

15 MR. YOUNG: Cerreta?

16 MR. CERRETA: Here.

17 MR. YOUNG: Six present. Peters is absent.

18 MR. REVOLDT: May I have a motion to excuse
19 Member Peters?

20 MR. FOLTZ: Motion to excuse Member Peters.

21 MR. CERRETA: Second.

22 MR. REVOLDT: All in favor, say "aye."

23 ("Aye" in unison.)

24 MR. REVOLDT: Opposed? Very good.

25 Let's move to the first item on your agenda,

1 Ordinance, Rules & Claims. Mr. Stroia.

2 MR. STROIA: Is this by memo?

3 MR. REVOLDT: I think this was initiated by
4 the director of law, was it not? It was the
5 legislative procedure?

6 MR. FOX: No, this was actually the idea,
7 indeed, of our -- our clerk.

8 MR. REVOLDT: All right. Ben. And who's
9 that? Would you like to explain this, Ben?

10 MR. YOUNG: During my admittedly short time
11 as clerk, I have seen four different versions of a
12 piece of paper I'm sure you're all familiar with
13 called a legislative request. And so the intent
14 behind this is just to try to standardize that
15 process and make it a bit more clear who can file a
16 legislative request with the clerk's office. And
17 then also it's adding a reporting requirement that
18 the clerk tell the chair of what other committee a
19 piece of legislation is assigned to that that
20 legislation has been assigned.

21 MR. FOLTZ: Okay. So you have the agenda
22 request attached that shows all the approval process,
23 and also on the italicized print, if you look at
24 11 -- 111.04, that would be the change versus the
25 existing legislation work; correct?

1 MR. YOUNG: Correct.

2 MR. REVOLDT: Okay.

3 MR. FOLTZ: Okay.

4 MR. REVOLDT: Are there any questions about
5 this?

6 MR. FONTE: I think it's a good idea.

7 MR. FOLTZ: I think we try it, see if it
8 works out, and obviously if it streamlines operations
9 it's a better idea for us to use.

10 MR. REVOLDT: Mr. Stroia, do you think you
11 have four to vote on this?

12 MR. STROIA: Yes, I do.

13 MR. REVOLDT: Okay. Very good. We'll place
14 this on the agenda for Monday night. I think we can
15 give this a first reading and proceed on an emergency
16 if there aren't any objections, okay.

17 Let's move on to Personnel & Safety.

18 Mr. Peters is absent but we have two items. Dominic.

19 MR. FONTE: So the first one is a resolution
20 accepting the internship policy handbook, and Cathy's
21 been working on that, and I know the law director,
22 and probably you have a few input and revisions to
23 make. Cathy, do you want to touch on that a hair,
24 what the handbook?

25 MS. FARINA: Certainly. That's the

1 internship policy handbook. Actually, our wonderful
2 interim council clerk from Walsh over there, Ben
3 Young, has also been working very hard on putting
4 that together, and is actually putting together a
5 more formalized program through Walsh University. I
6 think we handed that out to everybody to take a look
7 at and see.

8 We will have a program administrator of --
9 administrator of that, and that will be Ben, and we
10 will be working with the program through Walsh where,
11 once when they're receiving credit, that they are not
12 compensated because they are receiving school credit
13 to work in an internship. It will be very formal
14 where we'll have job descriptions, so we're going to
15 ask each department what areas they have a need for
16 an intern, then we'll actually have a job description
17 for that, and there be a portal where they will
18 apply, and then they're evaluated by the professor of
19 their program.

20 Anything else, Ben, that you want to add?

21 MR. YOUNG: It's not actually, as written,
22 limited to Walsh. It would apply to any university
23 student that wished to apply.

24 MR. FONTE: That's great.

25 MS. FARINA: Right. That's through Ben

1 coming through Walsh, but that would be correct.

2 MR. FONTE: Would the intern program just be
3 like a school cycle? Basically it wouldn't be pay,
4 it would be for experience and credit for school?

5 MS. FARINA: Right.

6 MR. FONTE: It would be like a semester, like
7 that type of thing?

8 MS. FARINA: Right. That would be the class
9 they're in that semester.

10 MR. REVOLDT: Unpaid.

11 MS. FARINA: Right.

12 MR. FOX: Yes. Ben has done a yeoman's job.
13 There's a lot of research that goes into this. It's
14 actually very difficult to take something that's a
15 bit complicated and the requirement to be very
16 precise in what you're doing to make it appear as
17 straightforward as he's been able to do that.

18 But, you know, there's two criteria in here.
19 We're looking at the US Department of Labor Wage and
20 Hour Division and the National Association of
21 Colleges. Employers have provisions that must be not
22 only provided in this handbook but must be followed.
23 And those of us attending the government seminar this
24 past weekend, as we had learned that wage and hour
25 claims, if the government is wrong, can be very

1 expensive. They lead to -- if you have not done this
2 correctly, it leads to payment of double what the
3 back wages should have been, together with paying the
4 claimant's attorney's fees. So that's very
5 important.

6 I believe that the policy that we have in
7 this -- in this handbook be -- be spot on and that's
8 why we're, you know, giving it the very close look
9 from several departments because we absolutely, you
10 know, don't want to do something incorrectly and, you
11 know, harm a student or harm our bottom line for not
12 following it closely. Because if your policy isn't
13 correct, that's, you know, probably a giant red flag
14 that you might be doing something else incorrect. So
15 we appreciate his hard work and we're going to
16 continue to refine this.

17 MR. REVOLDT: So, Dom, should we have -- I
18 know Tim has some edits. Should we bring this back
19 in two weeks?

20 MR. FONTE: I think we should be able to get
21 it on with those few revisions and then maybe read it
22 again.

23 MR. REVOLDT: We'll put it on for -- if there
24 are no objections, we'll put it on for a first
25 reading next Monday night.

1 MR. FOX: Thank you.

2 MR. REVOLDT: Very good. Let's move on to
3 the second item.

4 MR. FONTE: So this is the code of codified
5 ordinances. This is one Jina worked on. It's the
6 title/pay, and if you have a moment, would you be
7 willing to speak about it a little bit, Jina?

8 MS. ALABACK: Certainly.

9 We looked at the -- they were called the
10 exempt positions, so these would be all the positions
11 outside of the union. We started looking at the
12 part-time hourly rates and also the salary rates for
13 each of those positions. We compared those as a
14 market study, so with the job descriptions where some
15 of those jobs compare to in the private industry. We
16 also looked at Ohio Municipal League does a salary
17 study each year and we compared each of the positions
18 that we could find relative to what we have here as
19 well with other charter cities of the same size,
20 population size.

21 So we did some relative studies and we looked
22 at the organizational alignment, where we could move
23 some positions to keep them a little more current.
24 So that's what we're proposing. This is not to move
25 anybody's salary to these, this is just to increase

1 the cap for these positions.

2 MR. FONTE: How did we compare to the other
3 charters when you look -- when we were trying to hire
4 people as you're looking at a comparison, how do we
5 look?

6 MS. ALABACK: This all started when we were
7 trying to hire a position. And for the last about
8 month and a half we had some difficulty bringing in
9 people with proper experience or qualifications with
10 the pay rates that we were offering. Which, of
11 course, initiated our study.

12 MR. FONTE: And then the birth of the new
13 revised codified code?

14 MS. ALABACK: Correct.

15 MR. REVOLDT: Jina, if you could, would you
16 comment on the changing nature of public employment
17 and the challenges communities face in light of
18 changes in Ohio pension law.

19 MS. ALABACK: The pension system has changed
20 a lot over the years. Used to be 30 years for a
21 PERS -- Public Employees Retirement System -- 30
22 years, at any age you could retire. Now that has
23 increased. There's different groups, different
24 qualifying groups, A, B, C, or D, and they all have
25 their own rules. Basically for new employees coming

1 in, actually that's Group D, so that's around 32
2 years. The age has increased. There's a set minimum
3 age as well. No healthcare is being offered.
4 They're going to the stipend so you can buy it on
5 marketplace. So the benefits are not what they used
6 to be either. You used to be able to say you had all
7 the great benefits which would offset the lower wage
8 in public employment, and that's not really the case
9 anymore. It's still a good pension; you just have to
10 put a lot more time in to get there.

11 MR. REVOLDT: Mr. Mayor.

12 MAYOR WILDER: Yes. Jina, this also covers
13 our part-time employees also?

14 MS. ALABACK: Correct.

15 MAYOR WILDER: Well, I want to thank you. I
16 think you've done a very comprehensive analysis on
17 this. And I think what we're doing today is bringing
18 our wages up that are fair and reasonable to attract
19 persons that are interested in employment with the
20 city, be it police, fire, administrative, clerical,
21 or other positions. And finally, I think we're to a
22 point where our city is competitive but will also
23 attract and help us keep personnel that's going to be
24 here for -- for a long time. So thank you for that
25 analysis and your presentation.

1 MR. REVOLDT: Are there any other questions
2 for either the director of finance or for Dom on this
3 matter? Comments? If there are none, Dom, I would
4 assume we'd like this on the agenda for a first
5 reading with an emergency clause?

6 MR. FONTE: Yes, sir. Next week, if we could
7 do it.

8 MR. REVOLDT: No objections? Very good.

9 Let's move on to Finance & Property.
10 Stephanie.

11 MRS. WERREN: Jina, do you want to talk about
12 this?

13 MS. ALABACK: Certainly. Thank you.

14 MRS. WERREN: We talked about it last week,
15 some different allocations we need to account for;
16 right?

17 MS. ALABACK: Yes. As I spoke about the
18 accountant position we were looking to hire, we were
19 having some trouble finding somebody with the
20 qualifications we're looking for and experience level
21 coming in to hit the ground running. To be able to
22 bring in a person new and in the organizational
23 structure where we are, we really needed to look at
24 the people that we have now and the jobs that they
25 were doing. So I'm asking for an appropriation

1 amendment to bring the current employee --

2 MRS. WERREN: Up to that level.

3 MS. ALABACK: Up to that level. Correct.

4 The other piece of the -- I need to move some
5 of the wages out of personnel into contract services
6 because we've had a --

7 MRS. WERREN: Temp.

8 MS. ALABACK: -- temp in there, thank you,
9 for the last about a month and so we need to move
10 that down to contract services. Not additional
11 money, just move it around.

12 MRS. WERREN: Okay. And I think one thing
13 that you mentioned, the temp, and we talked about
14 that last week, too, and that was another reason to
15 have the different salary ranges because it's great
16 we have temps available to us but the amount of money
17 per hour is so high. And it really can cost a lot of
18 money. So for us to go back and have to hire
19 different people, it's just the cost of the process.
20 Not to mention timely. I mean, the amount of time
21 Cathy has put into this and interviews. So we want
22 to keep our people. So thank you for looking at all
23 that.

24 MR. REVOLDT: Would you like this legislation
25 on emergency?

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MRS. WERREN: I would. I would.

MR. REVOLDT: Okay. First reading on emergency, if there are no objections. Emergency clause.

And that concludes our agenda for council of the whole meeting. May I have a motion to adjourn this session?

MR. CERRETA: So moved.

MR. FOLTZ: Second.

MR. REVOLDT: All in favor, say "aye."

("Aye" in unison.)

MR. REVOLDT: Opposed? Very good.

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(Meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.)

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Attest:


Benjamin R. Young
Clerk of Council

Daniel Jeff Peters
City Council President

