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CITY OF NORTH CANTON, OHIO

IN RE:)	
)	
NORTH CANTON)	
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE)	
VIRTUAL MEETING)	
)	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
)	

Transcript of Proceedings held virtually before North Canton City Council, taken by the undersigned, Shannon Roberts, a Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of Ohio, at the offices of North Canton City Hall, 145 North Main Street, North Canton, Ohio, on Monday, the 26th day of April, 2021, at 8:37 p.m.

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APPEARANCES:

Daniel Jeff Peters, Chairman

Douglas Foltz, Member

Stephanie Werren, Member

Daryl Revolt, Member

Mark Cerreta, Member

Dominic Fonte, Member

Matthew Stroia, Member

Stephan B. Wilder, Mayor

Patrick DeOrion, Director of Administration

Catherine Farina, Deputy Director of
Administration

Jina Alaback, Director of Finance

Robert Graham, PE

Martin B. Van Gundy, IV, Chief Building Officer

Benjamin Young, Council Clerk

1 MR. PETERS: And at this time, I'd like
2 to -- I would like to call to order the North
3 Canton Committee of the Whole meeting, April
4 26th, 2021. The time is 8:37.

5 Ben, would you please call the roll?

6 MR. YOUNG: Member Fonte.

7 MR. FONTE: Here.

8 MR. YOUNG: Member Foltz.

9 MR. FOLTZ: Here.

10 MR. YOUNG: Member Werren.

11 MS. WERREN: Here.

12 MR. YOUNG: Member Cerreta.

13 MR. CERRETA: Here.

14 MR. YOUNG: Member Revoldt.

15 MR. REVOLDT: Here.

16 MR. YOUNG: Member Peters.

17 MR. PETERS: Here.

18 MR. YOUNG: Member Stroia.

19 MR. STROIA: Here.

20 MR. YOUNG: Seven present.

21 MR. PETERS: Okay. First and only,
22 finance and property. Chairwoman Werren, the
23 floor is yours.

24 MS. WERREN: I think we are going to
25 do -- Pat, you have a little --

1 MR. DEORIO: Yes.

2 MS. WERREN: Yes. For some of these
3 great funds that we are getting. And as we
4 discussed today, we feel like it's just going
5 to go quickly with the great ideas that we
6 have. So thank you.

7 MR. DEORIO: Yeah. So I think Ben and I
8 and -- worked on a little PowerPoint that we
9 are going to go through. I apologize that it
10 doesn't have any fancy pictures or anything.
11 But I think that you'll get it.

12 So I'm just going to kind of go through
13 this, but -- so the American Rescue Plan Act,
14 enacted March 11, 2021, is a stimulus
15 package. And it included allocations for
16 local government. We are expecting
17 approximately \$3.3 million in two
18 installments. The first will be in May of
19 2021. So I apologize, I did not get a chance
20 to work with Ben on -- my eyesight is, you
21 know, not as good as it used to be. I
22 thought it was a "2," but turns out it's
23 actually 2021.

24 MR. YOUNG: No. I just fixed it.
25 That --

1 MR. DEORIO: I know. I know. I'm just
2 trying to give some levity here, levity. So
3 the first will be in May of 2021. And then
4 the second will come sometime in 2022. The
5 criteria for all of the funds that's received
6 is that it must be spent by the end of
7 December in 2024.

8 As compared to previous stimulus
9 disbursements, there is a little bit more
10 spending latitude with this one. They are
11 generally looking for us to do projects with
12 this, not be idle with the funds, you know,
13 land bank with it, use it for wages, things
14 like that. So it's actually project
15 oriented.

16 Next slide, please. So in -- upon the
17 notification, the first step was to talk with
18 the Mayor and see what direction he wanted to
19 go out of his office, and two important
20 guidelines regarding how to look at the
21 spending of these funds. So his focus was to
22 be involved with projects in areas that had
23 benefits to the wider community. So not just
24 internal City operations or not just a few
25 people on a few streets, but to try to bring

1 the most benefit to the widest possible parts
2 of our community, and to then focus on
3 projects in areas that do not presently have
4 a dedicated funding source and that are
5 difficult to secure grant funding or sizable
6 donations for. So that -- you know, with
7 those criteria in mind, that kind of directs
8 us to the City park system.

9 Next slide. So North Canton currently,
10 as you know, does not have a park levy -- we
11 are not asking for one -- that support the
12 operations and the maintenance of City parks.
13 Now, as you know, many surrounding
14 communities, and ones similar to us, are
15 supported by park levies. Practically
16 everything, you know, around here has one.
17 We know that Plain is going for a renewal. I
18 believe Canton City is doing one under the
19 great leadership of their park
20 superintendent. And -- but what that does is
21 that means that we can -- from our income
22 tax, you know, we can maintain our parks in
23 their current condition, but it makes it
24 difficult -- it's almost impossible for
25 significant capital improvement allocations

1 to be had. And I think we don't have to look
2 very far to see the evidence of that.

3 So when we look at the skateboard park,
4 the splash pad at Dogwood pool, the Dogwood
5 pool house, all of these things have been
6 identified over the years as needing capital
7 dollars to improve them. You know, the --
8 the pool house itself, you know, we know that
9 a number of City Council members have been
10 working on this, and it's very difficult to
11 get donations of a significant amount to kind
12 of make all that come to fruition.

13 So when you get an opportunity like this
14 that -- that we get some funds in, it kind of
15 makes sense to direct it toward the capital
16 investment in the park facilities in order to
17 do some things that we just probably would
18 never get -- get around to being able to
19 doing -- do it.

20 Next slide. So for the first installment
21 that we are getting here in May, we are -- we
22 are gathering up the ideas. I have had an
23 opportunity to -- over the last few weeks, to
24 talk to many of you about the -- the items
25 that you feel, following the Mayor's

1 guideline, would be important to us as a
2 community. And this is not in any particular
3 order. So I want to repeat that. No
4 particular order.

5 But, again, the Dogwood pool house
6 renovations, that property that was built in
7 1970, 1971. We have had continual roof leak
8 issues, you know, rotting away of -- of the
9 office walls, a concession stand that only
10 functions in one direction. We know that
11 there is opportunity if we can do that in
12 both locations. The lavatories, the showers,
13 the -- you know, the ADA compliance, the
14 COVID compliance, just the general welcome,
15 you know, to come into the place, it's in
16 a -- it's in very unsatisfactory and poor
17 condition. And this would be a great
18 opportunity.

19 The Dogwood pool splash park was, you
20 know, graciously installed by a Council and a
21 Mayor, you know, 17, 18 years ago, but
22 it's -- it's tired, it's dated. It hasn't
23 had improvements. It has just been
24 maintained when something breaks. And, you
25 know, if you want to keep people coming and

1 you want to keep that interest in it -- these
2 are comments that we get, is that -- and we
3 talk with our management team from the Y.
4 These are things that they have been bringing
5 to our attention for some time. We just have
6 not been able to set aside any capital
7 improvement dollars.

8 The skateboard park, what more can we
9 say, you know, with the folks that have been
10 speaking out on this. And I want to make
11 sure that I, you know, say in all of this
12 stuff here -- and I want to go back to, you
13 know, something that Councilman Cerreta
14 touched upon, and that is, you know, I don't
15 want to run all these projects. We want
16 community involvement.

17 And so all the folks that have expressed
18 an opportunity -- or expressed a willingness
19 to come forward and to talk about it and to
20 lead on this subject, you know, to get
21 involved, this will be that time. We will
22 put those groups together and get them
23 working on solving any of these things that
24 the City Council would decide to move forward
25 with. And I think that's a great opportunity

1 to channel all that positive energy for
2 change and improvement here.

3 As you recall, in the 2017 parks master
4 plan that we put together that we submitted
5 to the State for funding, it was a three-
6 phase project. And the third phase of that
7 was an East Maple Street event center. We
8 don't want to forget about that.

9 And in light of what we just heard with
10 the little league, I know that Mark and I had
11 gone out and talked to some of the
12 benefactors of that organization, and there
13 was genuine interest to partner with us, but
14 we didn't have any funds to partner with at
15 the time. So this would be an opportunity to
16 kind of leverage some of those dollars.

17 The Bitzer Park renovations and
18 improvements, I think -- Councilman Peters,
19 did you -- did you want to cover something
20 there at this time, or do you want me to
21 just --

22 MR. PETERS: Yeah, actually, I can do
23 that now.

24 MR. DEORIO: Okay.

25 MR. PETERS: You know, and, first of all,

1 what I'm seeing so far here, Patrick, is
2 outstanding. I am so excited. And to your
3 point about getting the -- the public
4 involved, you know, we have Joe Mulqueen who
5 has spoken very passionately about the
6 skateboard park. You know, I think he's
7 going to be a real nice addition to that
8 committee, I believe.

9 MR. DEORIO: We are counting on him.

10 MR. PETERS: Yeah. To get what we need
11 accomplished with that. So I'm particularly
12 excited about that.

13 But to your point, you know, with these
14 funds, this allows us to invest heavily in
15 our parks. And we recently -- or we had --
16 we had received a Rotary donation in the
17 amount of \$50,000, and it was to be used in
18 Bitzer Park. So in -- in the spirit of these
19 funds that we are getting here, what I'd like
20 to do is to return that \$50,000 donation back
21 to the Rotary, allow them to utilize the
22 funds for other worthy civic projects
23 throughout the City that we may not be able
24 to use these funds -- these ARPA funds for.

25 So I -- we can do that by voice vote.

1 And all we need to do is -- well, I just need
2 a motion to direct the Director of Finance to
3 return the Rotary \$50,000 donation.

4 MR. FONTE: I make a motion that we move
5 that money back to them.

6 MR. CERRETA: Cerreta seconds.

7 MR. PETERS: All right. All in favor,
8 say "aye."

9 MR. FOLTZ: Aye.

10 MR. PETERS: Aye.

11 MR. REVOLDT: Aye.

12 MR. CERRETA: Aye.

13 MS. WERREN: Aye.

14 MR. FONTE: Aye.

15 MR. PETERS: Opposed?

16 (No response.)

17 MR. PETERS: Okay. Motion carries.

18 MR. STROIA: Opposed. Opposed. Stroia
19 opposes.

20 MR. PETERS: All right. Stroia opposes.
21 Passes 6-1.

22 Okay. Patrick, back to you.

23 MR. DEORIO: Thank you. So back to the
24 Bitzer Park renovation and improvement. So,
25 you know, we -- we would, you know, come back

1 on that with what we need to do to get that
2 fine-tuned and moving forward. And we know
3 we had some issues, you know, when we were
4 bidding that out. But all those things we
5 will start to address again.

6 So the pickleball and bocce courts are,
7 you know, also things that we can do to
8 provide, again, a more well-rounded park
9 experience, not just necessarily one sport
10 all the time, but add some of these things to
11 it.

12 And then, finally, the -- the interior
13 build-out on the lower level of Arrowhead.
14 This was the men's and women's lockers. We
15 are in the process of removing those lockers
16 and doing an auction with that. But really
17 to leverage our opportunities to grow our
18 banquet business. And we know that as time
19 goes on, there are fewer facilities to do
20 that available, and that we could, you know,
21 work on trying to build a -- a year-round
22 opportunity for functions there.

23 So those were I think the gist of the
24 conversations that I have had with you. I'm
25 just reciting them here for you all to look

1 at and to opine on. I do believe that if --
2 if you move forward on this, I think from the
3 Finance Director's point of view, one of the
4 criteria that she was trying to make sure we
5 addressed with this, you know, step one of
6 the audit requirements from the State is to,
7 you know, pass some legislation that would
8 earmark this -- these -- these -- for all of
9 these things.

10 And as -- if that is, in fact, what
11 happens, then the administration would be
12 charged with going out and starting to get
13 just some ballpark estimate to put together a
14 budget, and then working with all the
15 individuals who want to come forward and work
16 on any one of these components and start
17 putting that all together, including members
18 of Council.

19 MR. FONTE: Thank you. That's great.

20 MR. FOLTZ: That's great.

21 MR. CERRETA: Terrific, Pat.

22 MR. FOLTZ: Yeah, Jeff, this is
23 Councilman Foltz.

24 MR. PETERS: Yes, sir.

25 MR. FOLTZ: As chair of parks and rec, I

1 wholeheartedly support these improvements, as
2 you guys would know. Your parks are an
3 extension of your neighborhood. They are the
4 face of your community where people gather,
5 and this gives us a once in a lifetime
6 opportunity, not using our local taxpayer
7 funds to do this, but federal funds to really
8 improve our parks. So I just think it's --
9 it's great that we can put this money towards
10 our parks and recreational amenities, that
11 not only we can enjoy, but future residents
12 and generations beyond us.

13 So I wholeheartedly support this. I'm
14 glad the administration is bringing this
15 forward with this Council. Thank you.

16 MR. CERRETA: Good comments, Doug.
17 Cerreta here. One of the things I mentioned
18 to Pat, and I'm very strong about, is, you
19 know, to make these things work. But more
20 importantly, not only are they just, you
21 know, amenities that we need, but some of
22 these things are going to make us money to
23 help improve the other things that we need.
24 You know, some of these things on this list
25 will bring in funds, you know, whether it be

1 your banquet center, your -- you know, your
2 different improvements to the pool and so on.

3 So that's very important. We have this
4 money. Let's use it to make money and make
5 things great as we move down the road. So
6 thank you, Pat. Very well done.

7 MR. FOLTZ: Yeah.

8 MR. CERRETA: Good comments everybody put
9 into this, too. These are great things.

10 MS. WERREN: Hey, Pat and everybody, I --
11 I concur. I mean, and when we talk about,
12 you know, our destination -- we already
13 talked about that a little bit, and are we a
14 destination city. Well, when I was younger
15 and had my kids -- and I'm sure others of you
16 would concur -- you would drive to other
17 communities to use their parks.

18 And so when you think about that and
19 people coming in and with some of the
20 accessibility that we are going to have and
21 the different things, people will drive here,
22 and they'll get ice cream or they'll get
23 breakfast, or they'll stay for dinner, or
24 maybe if we have a pavilion, they'll make a
25 whole day of it. But that is what people do.

1 I mean, people are driving to Umbrella
2 Alley, which is an alley with umbrellas, to
3 stay in Louisville for a duration. It's
4 bringing them in money. So if we can keep
5 doing more of these things, and like you
6 said, with federal monies, I mean, this is
7 unheard of, and we probably won't ever get
8 this again. So I'm thrilled.

9 MR. FONTE: This is part of the whole
10 big -- the big theme here in our City.

11 MS. WERREN: Yeah.

12 MR. FONTE: We are adjusting our sails,
13 and we are looking to the forward -- not for
14 what we want necessarily, but we are looking
15 for down the road for the betterment of our
16 community as it evolves and changes. These
17 are the right things to do. I know it in my
18 heart.

19 MR. FOLTZ: Right. And Councilman Foltz
20 weighing in again. The key is here, too,
21 it's not going towards one project and one
22 ward. We are talking about the entire City.
23 You know, and it's going to just -- that the
24 entire community can use. I mean, sure, we
25 can do a street or this or that. But I think

1 you get more benefits -- and I always say
2 parks and recreation, the benefits are
3 endless. They are. And that's why I'm so
4 excited about this. So thanks for
5 everybody's positive comments. This is
6 awesome.

7 MR. PETERS: Patrick, I will say this:
8 This -- and I can't underscore this as much.
9 This is a monumental shift in amenities and
10 what we are going to be able to provide for
11 our residents. I am -- I'm through the roof
12 excited on this. So I'm looking forward to
13 it.

14 MR. DEORIO: And I would be -- and,
15 again, having looked at this for the first
16 time -- I didn't get a chance to review it,
17 but I think also I'm missing off of here was
18 a dog park.

19 MR. FOLTZ: Yes. Yes, that's right.

20 MAYOR WILDER: Yes, that has come up in
21 conversation.

22 MR. FONTE: The dog park is a great idea.

23 MAYOR WILDER: If I -- if I may
24 interject, I refer back to our previous
25 meeting with comments from Mr. Revoldt. You

1 know, the advancements that we are making
2 with bringing new businesses here, as we look
3 maybe for the next three, four, five years,
4 hopefully as we attract new businesses, these
5 businesses will help us in the sustainability
6 of our parks.

7 And so I think also in the long run, too,
8 that whatever we can provide now for our
9 citizens, we'll be able to, over in the next
10 three, four, five years, as we attract
11 businesses in here for income for the City
12 and -- and I think it's going to be a good --
13 a good direction for us to go. Put it that
14 way. So thank you for your comments.

15 MR. FONTE: And it comes back to
16 supporting our local businesses around the
17 community, because there are plenty of big
18 box apparatuses. We need to focus on the
19 people that are, you know, coming here,
20 generating revenue, generating income,
21 providing jobs, and lifestyles and places for
22 people to live. We also want to make sure
23 that we do everything we can as a City to
24 help them thrive and grow, and then in the
25 long run, the City thrives and grows because

1 of the revenue.

2 MAYOR WILDER: Well, you know, too -- you
3 are right, Dom. And, you know, again, we
4 talk about trying to attract young families
5 here and -- and professionals and people.
6 Each of our parks has its own identity. And
7 I think, you know, Doug Foltz will -- will --
8 can comment on that, too, you know, Doug.
9 Each of our parks has a certain identity, and
10 wherever it goes, whatever we decide on, I
11 think it's going to enhance that park in one
12 way, shape, or form. So --

13 MR. FONTE: I mean, we have -- we have --
14 we have like, what, nine parks in a six and a
15 half mile radius?

16 MAYOR WILDER: Well, we have -- I think
17 we have a good amount of parks. We are just
18 missing up north.

19 MR. FOLTZ: Right. And, Mayor, to your
20 comments -- Councilman Foltz -- you know,
21 Doug Wechter, Gary Wechter, what did he talk
22 about? He talked about playing football at
23 West Park. I mean, your memories are in your
24 parks. And it's also an attraction to
25 families that want to move here, aside from

1 our great housing, schools, our
2 infrastructure, our service and safety
3 forces, our parks are a great amenity to
4 build off of, too.

5 So, you know, like I said, this is --
6 this is awesome to go forward. And, you
7 know, when we get Dogwood done and this, you
8 really can't ask for any more for our
9 community, really, especially when we are not
10 using local dollars. I mean, that was just
11 such a home run. I mean, this is such a
12 gift, a once in a lifetime opportunity.

13 MR. PETERS: Well, if I can add one more
14 point, and I have -- I have talked about
15 this. When we authorized the money to
16 renovate Dogwood pool four -- what was
17 that -- four, five years ago, I contended
18 then, and as I contend now, you know, that --
19 I think that's an economic driver. That
20 holds the property values up. I just -- and
21 I agree with you, Doug, on all points, so --

22 MR. FOLTZ: Yeah.

23 MR. PETERS: Yeah, it's a great thing.

24 MS. FARINA: And this is Catherine. I
25 just wanted to add one thing also to

1 Stephanie's point, about people coming from
2 other areas to our areas. Brian Hill and I
3 did extensive park research earlier last
4 year. We were going around outside of our
5 community to see what was available. And you
6 know what, we met people from our community
7 at Green parks, at the dog park in Plain
8 Township. We introduced who we were from
9 North Canton, and folks would say, we're from
10 North Canton; why don't we have this. And we
11 were -- you know, we were cognizant of that.
12 So I mean, to be able to have that and our
13 folks don't have to travel to other
14 communities, we can have it right here in our
15 great backyard, this will be wonderful.

16 MR. FOLTZ: Right.

17 MR. STROIA: This is Stroia. I just
18 wanted to say this is truly a once in a
19 lifetime opportunity. I mean, we'll never
20 get this ever again.

21 MR. FOLTZ: No.

22 MR. STROIA: So looking down this list, I
23 love that most of these things are used by --
24 pretty much anybody can come and use these.
25 So it benefits a great deal of our community.

1 And, second, as Mark pointed out, there is
2 potential to make money on this stuff to
3 further fund other things. And then you are
4 talking about real estate values around all
5 these areas going up. So this is -- this is
6 very exciting. Pairing this with Dogwood
7 Park, I mean, you are taking the parks that
8 are, you know, very good right now to just
9 the complete next level. So I'm very excited
10 about this.

11 MR. PETERS: Grab your boots, Patrick.
12 Going for a ride.

13 MR. DEORIO: Yeah. I'm not making life
14 easier for myself, am I?

15 MR. PETERS: No, you are not. All right.

16 MS. FARINA: We are -- we are a slim
17 administration staff, but we get a lot done.

18 MR. PETERS: That's right. You most
19 certainly do.

20 MR. FONTE: Hey, one quick thing. To get
21 things done, you don't give it to a slow
22 person; you give it to a busy person.

23 MR. PETERS: That's right.

24 MS. FARINA: That's right.

25 MR. PETERS: I agree. All right.

1 Patrick, anything else?

2 MR. DEORIO: I think we'll -- I'll work
3 with the Clerk and with the Law Director on,
4 you know, what we would need to do as far as
5 passing something by City Council, you know,
6 to comply with that audit requirement. So
7 we'll have something coming back that we
8 would probably put on the next regular
9 meeting, whenever that is.

10 MR. PETERS: Okay.

11 MR. FOLTZ: Okay.

12 MR. PETERS: Sounds great.

13 MR. YOUNG: That needs a vote to move
14 this out of Committee.

15 MR. PETERS: I'm sorry, Ben?

16 MR. YOUNG: To put it on the Council
17 agenda, we need a vote to move it out of
18 Committee.

19 MR. FOLTZ: I'll make a -- make a motion
20 to put it on Council meeting next week.

21 MR. REVOLDT: Revoldt seconds.

22 MR. FOLTZ: Oh, that's a special meeting.
23 Can we put it on the special meeting, along
24 with the DORA?

25 MR. PETERS: Yeah, we can, can't we?

1 MR. FOLTZ: Okay. Because we are having
2 one next week. Let's just do it.

3 MR. PETERS: Okay. There was a motion
4 and a second. All in favor, say "aye."

5 MR. FOLTZ: Aye.

6 MR. PETERS: Aye.

7 MR. REVOLDT: Aye.

8 MR. CERRETA: Aye.

9 MS. WERREN: Aye.

10 MR. FONTE: Aye.

11 MR. STROIA: Aye.

12 MR. PETERS: Opposed?

13 (No response.)

14 MR. PETERS: All right. Motion carries.
15 And that's ending on a high note. So with
16 that, I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

17 MR. REVOLDT: Revoldt moves.

18 MR. CERRETA: Cerreta seconds.

19 MR. PETERS: All in favor, say "aye."

20 MR. FOLTZ: Aye.

21 MR. PETERS: Aye.

22 MR. REVOLDT: Aye.

23 MR. CERRETA: Aye.

24 MS. WERREN: Aye.

25 MR. FONTE: Aye.

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MR. STROIA: Aye.

MR. PETERS: Opposed?

(No response.)

MR. PETERS: Motion carries. We are
adjourned. Thank you everyone. Have a great
evening.

(This proceeding concluded at 9:00 p.m.)

ATTEST:

Daniel Jeff Peters,
Council President

Benjamin R. Young

Benjamin R. Young,
Council Clerk

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF OHIO,)
)
 STARK COUNTY.)

I, Shannon L. Newhall, a Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of Ohio, duly commissioned and qualified, do hereby certify that the within testimony so given was by me reduced to Stenotype, afterwards prepared and produced by means of Computer-Aided Transcription, and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcription of the testimony so given.

I further certify that this proceeding was taken at the time and place in the foregoing caption specified.

I further certify that I am not a relative of, employee of or attorney for any party or counsel, or otherwise financially interested in this action.

I do further certify that I am not, nor is the court reporting firm with which I am affiliated, under a contract as defined in Civil Rule 28(D).

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal of office at Canton, Ohio, this 1st day of May, 2021.

Shannon Newhall

 Shannon L. Newhall, Notary Public
 My commission expires February 2, 2023