

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**  
**May 21, 2024**

The second monthly meeting of Mansfield City Council met on  
Tuesday, May, 2024 at 7:32pm in the  
Council Chambers of the City Building.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the audience.

Eleazer Akuchie led the audience in prayer.

**ROLL CALL:** The following answered were present at roll call: Burns, Meier, Akuchie, Diaz, Mount, Falquette, and Scott. (Excused Absences: Daley and Zader {6-0})

There being no objections, the reading of the Journal and Correspondence was dispensed with.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Is there anyone signed up for public comments. I do believe we have a couple or one. Ok, we have Brody Rayburn, if you will come to the microphone. State your name and address and the procedure is you have three minutes.

**BRODY RAYBURN:** Hello everyone. My name is Brody Rayburn. I live at 867 Arlington Avenue, Mansfield Ohio 44903. And I am here tonight to talk about dispensaries. You know, I am currently not a smoker, where I work doesn't allow that. I am coming on behalf of my wife who is an RN and other hard-working members of this society, here in Mansfield. You know, a lot of times, we view pot smokers as a thirty-year-old kid living in their parent's basement. And, I think we need to change that way of thinking. There are hard-working people in this community, and that have to drive 45 minutes away and that have to drive 4-hours away in Michigan. I'm not gonna change some peoples mind here, ok. We're not passing laws on morality, because if we were doing that, we wouldn't have a bar on every corner. We wouldn't have sex shops within Mansfield, but we do. We serve alcohol on Sundays, and there's bars everywhere, right? Where I'm coming from, is that this bill was passed by Ohioans that regulate marijuana like alcohol. And, that's all this is. Every dispensary that I've went to with my wife has been id's, I mean it's been the whole nine. And, I hear a lot of talk about people saying that marijuana is the gateway job. It's not. Maybe alcohol. Maybe pharmaceuticals. In that, I think that we need to look within ourselves, because there's always going to be that one off. There's always going to be that one off, because nobody has enough self-discipline. They move from alcohol, marijuana, pharmaceuticals, to heroine and everything else. Because they don't have self-discipline. I have a liquor cabinet at home. Do I go home and drink every single night? No, I drink in moderation. And, here in Mansfield Ohio, I feel there needs to be a dispensary. For the people that actually need it, whether it be medical or whether it's recreational. Because some people either have a glass of bourbon at night, some people have a beer at night, some people like to smoke a joint at night after a hard day's work.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** thirty seconds.

**BRODY RAYBURN:** I appreciate you guys hearing me. Again, I'm not gonna change some of your minds, I just would ask that you just kind of view it. Because, there are some hard-working people that just like to relax at night just like you do whether it's a beer or whatever else. Thank you.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Thank you Mr. Rayburn. Once again, Mayor Perry?

**MAYOR JODIE PERRY:** Ok, let's talk about Emergency Services Week. So, this is the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Emergency Services Week. So, I just want to read this a little bit. Obviously, this is beyond just our emergency workers, it goes into hospitals, and other healthcare workers in that spot. Emergency Medical Services is a vital public service, an access to quality emergency care, dramatically improves the survival and recovery rate of those who experience sudden illness or injury. The members of Emergency Medical Services Teams are ready to provide lifesaving care to those in need, 24-hours a day, seven days a week. EMS Teams consists of emergency physicians, nurses, medical technicians, paramedics, educators, administrators and others. The members of EMS teams, whether career or volunteer, engage in thousands of hours of specialized training and continuing education, to enhance their life-saving skills. The people of Mansfield, Ohio benefit daily from the knowledge and skills of these highly trained individuals and it is appropriate to recognize the value and accomplishments of our EMS providers during this week. So, do want to say I think Director Porch did a great job highlighting all of the work that certainly happens from our teams and the squads that go out around the clock to keep all of us safe so wanted to make sure that they hear from us that we appreciate them. And, I just want to add another thing really quickly, if I can. I have answered a few questions on Facebook regarding the change in the water bill. We did talk about this in the couple council meeting ago. But I want to hit it again just for anyone listening on Facebook or who may stream the meeting later. You know, if you have opened-not everyone opens their water bill, they may just pay automatically things like that. But, if you open your water bill now, it's gonna look different. And that's because the fee structures are itemized. What changed? It's really just that we broke out the fees. This was something that was supposed to have been done a year ago. It took about a year to get the software to cooperate and get all the pieces in place. This dates back to the last changes that were made in '2023. So, there's confusion about our bills went up, questions about that. There was no other change recently other than we're itemizing those bills. Certainly, if people have questions, they are seeing a higher than normal bill, always prudent to call in. Our teams do try to make sure that when possible, we alert people if we are seeing things than are unusual on their bill. But, we literally have tens of thousands of accounts so that is impossible to do on a broad basis. But, we really do appreciate the folks in our departments that are working to get all of the billing to the spot that it needs to be, we recognize that there's is still work that needs to be done. I just want citizens to know that whether it's the passage of the levy that just passed. You know, that will only be used, that can only be used, and it will only be used on upgrading our water mains. I know our fund accounting is complicated. Until I got closer to the city work, you don't understand why are this fund or that fund, and I think in long term you will see. I would like to do more dialog with citizens. Just to help people understand. To be more transparent, I think that takes a lot of the questions out of it. But, that is the change on the water bill specifically. If you are seeing something abnormal, you should probably call into utility services, and have them take a look into your account. Thanks.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** If I may, along that line, tonight Director Andres said we had a water-sewer appeal board meeting. And one of our people at the appeal, was appealing their case said, "Well, I was waiting on the city to call and say something about my bill being so high." Well, with a little over 20,000 different accounts out there, it's a little hard for the department to call everybody that their bill is running high. So, it's prudent upon the all the citizens of Mansfield, you see your bill is abnormal and higher than normal. Maybe you need to make a phone call, and then they would be more than happy to research and see. They got the equipment, they can see how many gallons you are using a minute or hour, an hour not minute, whatever. It's up to the citizens to take some responsibility to oversee their own. I just thought I would tack that on to what you said Mayor.

**MAYOR JODIE PERRY:** I would say, you know, again, when First Energy is not calling us when our electric usage is higher than normal. But, that being said, we are trying to get more information into consumers hands so they can also look at their usage. We want to be working with our citizens on that, and give them the tools, so they can look. It's happened to me before. A toilet ran the whole time I was

gone, and that was an expensive bill. But, I mean it ran. I couldn't argue it, I just paid it. But, some of these things can get very expensive quickly. So, thanks.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Very good. Thank you. Director Blankenship.

**DIRECTOR KELLY BLANKENSHIP:** I would just like to say. I am very pleased with the Mayor and her administration and let you all of you know and thank them publicly for how closely they're with the Finance Department, including us in meetings and discussions that they are having and I feel that we have a great partnership in. And, it makes me excited to keep doing what I am doing. Thank you.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Thank you. Director Andres.

**DIRECTOR LOUIE ANDRES:** I think we covered just about everything. Some things I could have said, but they said it very well. So, I don't need to repeat that. Just emphasize to the citizens, look at your water bills like you do your electric bills. And if you see something, our staff is there to help you. Like you said, we can see on the hour what your using, and that's the new software that we have. So, it is a new tool, like the Mayor said. We encourage the citizens to monitor their own water use and their electric and everything like everybody else. That would be good. Thank you.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Director Porch?

**DIRECTOR KEITH PORCH:** Nothing further.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Director Harper.

**DIRECTOR ROELIFF HARPER:** Nothing further.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Thank you. With that, we shall now proceed with legislation. So, I will call on Mr. Akuchie.

#### **LATE BILLS**

**ELEAZER AKUCHIE:** Thank you Mr. President. I move with respect to **Bill 24-090** that the rule requiring legislation be submitted by Monday at 4:00 pm be suspended and that **Bill 24-090** be allowed on the floor this evening.

**DAVID FALQUETTE:** Second.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Council will cast there vote on the motion. Motion passes 6-0.

#### **SUSPEND RULES**

**ELEAZER AKUCHIE:** I would like to move with respect to all Bills that come before council this evening that the rule requiring reading on three different days be suspended and that each Bill be read one time by title only. Seconded by Mr. Falquette. Council casted vote on the motion. Motion passes 6-0.

## LEGISLATION

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Ok, our first bill for tonight for council is Bill 24-064, Mrs. Meier.

**CHERYL MEIER:** Thank you Mr. President I move that Bill 24-064 be read and placed upon the floor for discussion.

**ELEAZER AKUCHIE:** Second.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** It's been moved and seconded. The clerk will now read Bill 24-064.

**DELAINE WEINER:** Imposing a six-month moratorium on the acceptance, consideration, and/or granting of any applications for local licensing approval and/or any zoning, occupancy, or other permits relating to cultivators, processors, or retail dispensaries of marijuana within the City of Mansfield, and declaring an emergency.

### SIX MONTH MORATORIUM - DISPENSARIES

BY: MRS. MEIER

BILL #24-064

ORDINANCE: 24-074

Imposing a six-month moratorium on the acceptance, consideration, and/or granting of any applications for local licensing approval and/or any zoning, occupancy, or other permits relating to cultivators, processors, or retail dispensaries of marijuana within the City of Mansfield, and declaring an emergency.

Upon motion by Mrs. Meier that Bill 24-064 be 2<sup>nd</sup> read.

The Bill was declared 2<sup>nd</sup> read, signed by the President, approved by the Mayor and attested by the Clerk.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Any discussion on Bill 24-064? Mr. Falquette.

**DAVID FALQUETTE:** Just a general question to throw out there. If this were not to pass, if there were no moratorium, I guess our zoning department gearing up with any updates that they may want to put on the table. Probably, the meeting after this. Should that go in that direction?

**MAYOR JODIE PERRY:** So, some of that is what we are waiting to hear from the state on. I do understand they addressed that a little bit. Councilwoman Mount was updating that a little bit this morning. So, yes, if we do not pass the moratorium, and it is open. I do definitely think at that point we would want to know what our options are for zoning. And it sounds like the states doing somethings, but also not decided yet. So, we will have some decisions to make. And I guess, well yes. And I will just end it there.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Any other questions, discussions on Bill 24-064? Mrs. Meier.

**CHERYL MEIER:** Do we know, do the restrictions would still be in place as far as what's in place now for medicinal dispensaries? Like the 500 feet, not around schools, daycares and those kinds of things? Would all still be in place, correct?

**DIRECTOR KEITH PORCH:** Correct.

**CHERYL MEIER:** Ok. We just don't know if there will be additional parameters.

**DIRECTOR KEITH PORCH:** The dispensaries have to be a mile apart, in addition to the 500 foot.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Any other questions? Mr. Falquette.

**DAVID FALQUETTE:** Thank you. Just from the video conference we had on yesterday. One of the things I took notice of, is because we do not have any medical dispensaries, we're already pump-the-brakes so to speak. A few years ago, they're getting top priority to go to dual use. So, because we don't have any, nobody can jump on the bandwagon, so to speak, to become dual use. And the people that are doing just recreational, they're already out until like September. That's what I was getting from the video yesterday. So, this six-month is almost gonna coincide with as fast as the state could possibly move. Anything goes, I just thought I would bring that up to all of council.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** You had something Director Porch?

**DIRECTOR KEITH PORCH:** I think the city would be looking at the 10-B licenses. Those applications. Because of medical, we won't have to deal with those issues. The 10-B licenses, that would come before council.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Any other questions, discussion? Ok, that will be considered the 2<sup>nd</sup> read for Bill 24-064

*END OF DISCUSSION*

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Moving on to Bill 24-070, Mrs. Meier.

**CHERYL MEIER:** Thank you Mr. President. I move that Bill 24-070 be read and placed on the floor for discussion.

**ELEAZER AKUCHIE:** Second.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** It's been moved and seconded. The clerk will now read Bill 24-070.

**DELAINE WEINER:** Authorizing the Mayor to submit the City of Mansfield's Consolidated Plan/Annual Action Plan for PY 2024 to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development indicating proposed uses for the City's 2024-2028 Community Development Block Grant Funds (CDBG) under the provisions of Public Law 93-383, as amended, and declaring an emergency.

#### **2024-2028 ACTION PLAN - CDBG FUNDS**

BY: MRS. MEIER

BILL #24-070

ORDINANCE: 24-075

*(POSTPONED UNTIL June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024) By: CHERYL MEIER*

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Ok, moving on to Bill 24-071, Mrs. Meier.

**CHERYL MEIER:** Thanks Mr. President. I move that Bill 24-071 be read and placed upon the floor for discussion.

**ELEAZER AKUCHIE:** Second.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** It's been moved and seconded. The clerk will now read Bill 24-071.

**DELAINE WEINER:** Authorizing the Mayor to submit the City of Mansfield's Consolidated Plan/Annual Action Plan for PY 2024 to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) indicating proposed uses for the City's 2024-2028 HOME Investment Partnership Program Funds under the provisions of Public Law 93-383, as amended, and declaring an emergency.

### **ACTION PLAN – H.I.P.P. FUNDS**

BY: MRS.MEIER

BILL #24-071

ORDINANCE: 24-076

Authorizing the Public Works Director to accept and appropriate a grant from the Richland County Foundation in the aggregate amount of four thousand eight hundred 00/100 dollars (\$4,800.00) for the purpose of hiring a summer intern and declaring an emergency.

Upon motion by Mrs. Meier, that Bill 24-071 be read and placed upon the floor for final passage, seconded by Miss Mount. The vote was taken and resulted as follows: Ayes:6 Nays:0

The Bill was declared passed, signed by the President, approved by the Mayor and attested by the Clerk.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Is there any discussion Bill 24-074? Miss Mount.

**DEBORAH MOUNT:** Just a quick question. Is, if we vote on it June 4<sup>th</sup>, is that meeting the deadline? Or, do we have to call an emergency meeting. Thank you.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Is there any discussion on Bill 24-071? Hearing none, Mrs. Meier.

**CHERYL MEIER:** Thank you Mr. President. I move that Bill 24-071 be placed on the floor for final consideration.

**DEBORAH MOUNT:** Second.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** It's been moved and seconded. Please cast your vote for Bill 24-071. Bill Passes 6-0.

*END OF DISCUSSION*

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Moving on to Bill 24-086, Mr. Falquette.

**DAVID FALQUETTE:** Mr. President. I move that Bill 24-086 be read and placed upon the floor for consideration.

**ELEAZER AKUCHIE:** Second.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** It's been moved and seconded. The clerk will now read Bill 24-086.

**DELAINE WEINER:** Authorizing the Public Works Director to accept and appropriate a grant from the Richland County Foundation in the aggregate amount of four thousand eight hundred 00/100 dollars (\$4,800.00) for the purpose of hiring a summer intern and declaring an emergency.

**GRANT – SUMMER INTERN (PWD)**

BY: MR. FALQUETTE

BILL #24-086

ORDINANCE: 24-087

Authorizing the Public Works Director to accept and appropriate a grant from the Richland County Foundation in the aggregate amount of four thousand eight hundred 00/100 dollars (\$4,800.00) for the purpose of hiring a summer intern and declaring an emergency.

Upon motion by Mr. Falquette, that Bill 24-086 be read and placed upon the floor for final passage, seconded by Mr. Akuchie. The vote was taken and resulted as follows: Ayes:6 Nays:0

The Bill was declared passed, signed by the President, approved by the Mayor and attested by the Clerk.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Is there any discussion on Bill 24-086? Hearing none, Mr. Falquette?

**DAVID FALQUETTE:** Thanks Mr. President. I move that Bill 24-086 be placed upon the floor for final passage.

**ELEAZER AKUCHIE:** Second.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** It's been moved and seconded. Please cast your vote for Bill 24-086. Bill Passes 6-0.

*END OF DISCUSSION*

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Moving on to Bill 24-089, Mr. Falquette.

**DAVID FALQUETTE:** Thank you Mr. President. I move that Bill 24-089 be read and placed upon the floor for discussion.

**ELEAZER AKUCHIE:** Second.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** It's been moved and seconded. The clerk will now read Bill 24-089.

**DELAINE WEINER:** Authorizing the Public Works Director to accept and appropriate a grant from the Richland County Foundation in the aggregate amount of two thousand five hundred and 00/100 dollars (\$2,500.00) for the Summer Fun at North Lake Program, and declaring an emergency.

**GRANT – SUMMER FUN (PWD)**

BY: MR. FALQUETTE

BILL #24-089

ORDINANCE: 24-088

Authorizing the Public Works Director to accept and appropriate a grant from the Richland County Foundation in the aggregate amount of two thousand five hundred and 00/100 dollars (\$2,500.00) for the Summer Fun at North Lake Program, and declaring an emergency.

Upon motion by Mr. Falquette that Bill 24-089 be read and placed upon the floor for final consideration, seconded by Mr. Akuchie. The vote was taken and resulted as follows: Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

The Bill was declared passed, signed by the President, approved by the Mayor and attested by the Clerk.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** is there any discussion on Bill 24-089? Mr. Falquette.

*DISCUSSION:*

**DAVID FALQUETTE:** Mr. President, once again I just want to thank the Richland County Foundation for thinking of the city and making these donations.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** Yes, they are very much appreciated. Hearing no other discussion, Mr. Falquette.

**DAVID FALQUETTE:** Mr. President. I move that Bill 24-089 be placed upon the floor for passage.

**DEBORAH MOUNT:** Second.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** It's been moved and seconded. Please cast your vote for Bill 24-089. Bill Passes 6-0.

*END OF DISCUSSION*

**CLOSING COMMENTS:**

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** With that, I do believe that concludes legislation. Is there anything else to come before council this evening?

**DAVID FALQUETTE:** I move to close.

**DEBORAH MOUNT:** Second.

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** It's been moved and seconded to close. All those in favor say aye.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS:** Aye

**PRESIDENT SCOTT:** 8:01pm council is now closed. We are adjourned.

*END OF DISCUSSION*

**ADJOURN:** Upon motion by Mr. Falquette, seconded by Miss Mount, and passed by voice vote, the meeting was adjourned.

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Delaine Weiner  
Clerk of Council

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Phil Scott  
President