SPECIAL SESSION

November 21, 2023

The Council of the City of Chardon met in Special Session Tuesday, November 21, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Chardon Municipal Center.

Christopher Grau, Mayor & President of Council presiding.

The meeting opened with the pledge of allegiance and roll call.

Members of Council present: Andrew Blackley, Deborah Chuha, Christopher Grau, David Lelko, Kyle Martin, Heather Means, Daniel Meleski.

Members of Council absent: none.

Others Present: City Manager Randy Sharpe, Finance Director Mark Iacofano, Clerk of Council Amy Day, Police Chief Scott Niehus, Bala Ramaiah, Paul Gordon.

ORDINANCE NO. 3257
AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN IT SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH ISSQUARED, INC. AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read for the first time by title only.

Mr. Meleski moved and Mrs. Chuha seconded the rules be suspended and the Ordinance be read for the second and third time by title only.

Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Ordinance No. 3257 was then read for the second and third time by title only.

Ms. Means moved and Mr. Meleski seconded for the adoption of Ordinance No. 3257.

City Manager, Randy Sharpe, provided a background about the investigation that went into finding a provider for the City’s IT Services. He explained that members of staff closely looked at three companies: VC3, All Covered, and ISSquared, and have recommended awarding the contract to ISSquared, under his ability as City Manager to award under contracts for professional services. He explained that the three companies were similar in costs, but ISSquared was offering to treat the City like a partner rather than a client.

Mayor Grau asked what the City can expect from the transition from its current provider.

Bala Ramaiah, CEO of ISSquared, stated that any transition from one provider to another will have some issues that occur however, their job is to minimize the impact of the issues that arise and they will be prepared and available.

Mayor Grau asked about the incident severity and priority definitions.

Mr. Ramaiah explained the classifications of incidents and how they will be handled.

Mr. Meleski asked if the IT issues the City has had with the former provider will be adequately covered.

Mr. Sharpe reviewed some issues that the City encountered with its former provider, and stated that there is language in the contract with ISSquared that they will be on-site when needed.

Chief Niehus further explained the challenges the City had with the former provider.

Mr. Ramaiah explained that they spread the knowledge about the City’s system amongst a variety of engineers in various locations to ensure continuity.

Mr. Blackley asked how ISSquared monitors and provides protection from 3rd party vendors.

Mr. Ramaiah explained that they will have tools to manage and protect the City as best they can, and will monitor anything that goes in or out of the City’s system.

Mr. Blackley asked about the City’s web browsing policies.

Mr. Sharpe stated that the City has general language in its personnel policies, but it should be revisited.

Mr. Ramaiah stated that they will tell the City where to reduce their risk.

Mr. Martin stated that he appreciated that ISSquared will make recommendations on the best way to design a project, even if it is contrary to what they are asked to do.

Paul Gordon, Sales Executive, stated that the City can let ISSquared know what they want done, and they are the experts and will make sure it is engineered correctly.

Mr. Martin inquired about what training they provide for employees, especially with regards to security awareness.

Mr. Ramaiah explained the pointed training they provide.

Mrs. Chuha asked if her non-City e-mail is protected.

Mr. Ramaiah stated that they do not have a way to protect non-City e-mail addresses and he recommended any City business be used with Chardon.cc e-mail.

Mrs. Chuha asked if the municipal court is included.

Mr. Sharpe stated that the municipal court uses the County’s IT Department and does not use the City’s IT services.

Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 23-23
A RESOLUTION TO REDUCE COLLECTION OF THE CITY OF CHARDON’S 2.00 MILL FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES LEVY TO 1.50 MILLS FOR 2024 ONLY was read for the first time by title only.

Mr. Blackley moved and Mr. Meleski seconded the rules be suspended and the Resolution be read for the second and third time by title only.

Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 23-23 was then read for the second and third time by title only.

Mrs. Chuha moved and Mr. Blackley seconded for the adoption of Resolution No. 23-23.

Finance Director, Mark Iacofano, stated that the County recently performed its mandated sexennial appraisal of properties which resulted in an average increase of 29.5% to residential property values. As a result, they strongly encouraged political subdivisions to investigate their other voted levies to counter the increase. He noted that the City is expected to see an increase of $103,646 for 2024 because of the increases to property values. He explained that staff reviewed options to ease the burden on taxpayers and recommended the reduction of an outside mill levy, specifically a 2-mill fire and EMS levy to 1.5-mills or approximately $86,848.41. Since the general levy will see the increase, that money will be transferred to the fire and EMS levy to make it whole.

Mayor Grau asked if the Finance Director can provide an example of the benefit a property owner would see from the reduction in the fire and EMS levy.

Mr. Iacofano stated that he looked at some examples, but there are a number of factors that would affect the amount, and the amounts vary.

Mr. Blackley stated that the amount of impact from the City's portion of the property tax appears to be very small.

Mayor Grau stated that a handful of residents reached out to him to see what can be done. He noted that this is only for one year, and the City would have to do this again after one year.

Mayor Grau noted that the Fire Department will be made whole and is supportive of this proposed action.

Mr. Meleski noted that the Finance Committee recommended Council approve the proposed reduction to the Fire and EMS levy for 2024. He added that there is only so much that the City can do to ease the tax burden, but there are areas such as the schools that may have a bigger impact.

Ms. Means noted that the school superintendent is planning to come to the December Regular Session of Council to address this.

Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – none.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS –

Mr. Sharpe asked Council to consider his request to provide non-essential employees ½ day off on Friday, December 22 for the Christmas holiday.

No member of Council voiced any objection.

Mr. Sharpe reported on the status of the Brewfest agreement, noting that it is in the process of being reviewed by MDN Events.

Ms. Means acknowledged and thanked Dave Nelson and Chardon Square Association for his efforts with the holiday arches on the Square.

Chief Niehus reported that Shop-With-A-Cop will be held on December 3 and reported on recent donations.

ADJOURN

Mr. Lelko moved and Mr. Blackley seconded to adjourn. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Attest:

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CHRISTOPHER GRAU, Mayor
President of Council

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AMY DAY
Clerk of Council