**REGULAR MEETING OF CELINA CITY COUNCIL – March 10, 2025**

Attendees: Council President King; Council Members Buxton, Clausen, Fleck, Gray, Sanford, Wolfe; Safety Service Director Hitchcock; Law Director Moore

Start Time: President King called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 PM

1. **Opening Procedures**

* **Prayer and Pledge:**
  + The meeting began at 7:00 PM with prayers, including a special prayer for Councilman Eric Baltzell and his family following the loss of his mother.
  + Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
  + Reminder to silence cell phones.

2. **Roll Call and Acceptance of Agenda**

* **Roll Call:**
  + CM Buxton
  + CM Clausen
  + CM Fleck
  + CM Gray
  + CM Sanford
  + CM Wolfe
* **Agenda Acceptance:**
  + Law Director requested the addition of an executive session point (#10) to discuss pending or imminent court actions with legal counsel.
  + Motion to amend the agenda was proposed by CM Gray and seconded by CM Fleck and unanimously approved.
  + Motion to accept the agenda was proposed by CM Clausen and seconded by CM Buxton and unanimously approved.

3. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

* **Corrections and Acceptance:**
  + Minutes from the February 10, 2025, meeting were reviewed.
  + Updates included attributing discussion points to specific council members.
  + Motion to accept the updated minutes was made by CM Buxton and seconded by CM Fleck and minutes were approved with a 5-0-1 count.

4. **Committee Reports**

a. **Buildings and Grounds Committee**

* **Meeting Date:** February 10, 2025
* **Chair:** CM Wolfe
* **Vice Chair:** CM Sanford
* **Key Discussions:**
  + **Westview Park Restroom Renovation:**
    - Removal of the existing octagonal shelter house restroom.
    - Construction of a new restroom with three stalls on each side, bottle filling stations, and security cameras.
    - **Estimated Cost:** $315,000 (engineering included $350,000).
    - **Available Funds:** $366,000 from parks capital account.
    - **Construction Duration:** 3-4 months.
  + **Playground Addition:**
    - Planned after restroom construction.
  + **County Land Use:**
    - County reclaiming ground-level woods on the east side for staffing purposes.
    - Impact on soccer and baseball areas coordinated with the county.
  + **Bidding Process:**
    - Local companies invited to bid for construction projects.
  + **Timeline:**
    - Aim to proceed quickly within the year.

b. **Utilities Committee**

* **Meeting Date:** February 10, 2025
* **Vice Chair:** Mr. Gray
* **Key Discussions:**
  + **Water Operating Fund for 2025:**
    - Financial overview of income vs. spending; carryover funds at $4 million.
    - Consideration of rate increases due to no hikes since 2009 and rising costs.
    - **Potential Methods:**
      * Across-the-board increases.
      * Chemical adders and special adders.
  + **Planned Projects:**
    - Waterline replacement project management.
    - Sugar Street water line replacement estimated at $1.4 million.
  + **Carryover Fund Management:**
    - Historical minimums set at $2 million in 2012; current carryover at $4 million.
    - Proposed adjustment to $3 million.
  + **Future Projects and Rate Adjustment Strategies:**
    - Income increases, incremental rate hikes, service-based rates.
  + **Public Relations:**
    - Develop strategies to communicate rate increases and ongoing projects.
  + **Action Items:**
    - Develop rate increase scenarios.
    - Conduct cost of service study.
    - Coordinate Sugar Street project with county initiatives.

5. **Communications**

* **Awards:**
  + **Bill Montgomery:** Elected Citizen of the Year 2024 by the Chamber of Commerce.
  + Recognition for contributions to Montgomery Field and community donations.

6. **New Business**

a. **Ordinance 6-25-O: Lease to Ohio Marshallese Youth**

* **Purpose:** Authorize lease of Bryson Park District for Ohio Marshallese Youth event on May 3, 2025.
* **Terms:**
  + Lease Amount: $1 per annum plus current rental fees.
  + Event Includes: Food vendors, handicrafts, music, basketball, bouncy houses.
* **Emergency Declaration:** Necessary for public health, safety, and welfare.
* **Approval:**
  + Motion to suspend rules for three readings was made by CM Buxton and seconded by CM Fleck unanimously passed.
  + Motion to suspend rules for three readings was made by CM Buxton and seconded by CM Gray unanimously passed.

b. **Ordinance 7-25-O: Lease to Ohio Marshallese Community Inc.**

* **Purpose:** Authorize lease of Bryson Park District for Ohio Marshallese Community Inc. event on May 26, 2025.
* **Terms:**
  + Lease Amount: $1 per annum plus current rental fees.
  + Event Includes: Food, handicrafts, music, dancing, parade.
* **Conflict Check:** Ensured no overlap with Concert Series. – CM Buxton / Safety Service Director Hitchcock
* **Conflict Check:** Discussed possible conflict with Memorial Day. – CM Buxton / Safety Service Director Hitchcock
* **Approval:**
  + Motion to pass to a second reading by CM Gray and seconded by CM Wolfe unanimously passed.

c. **Ordinance 8-25-O: Lease Agreement for East View Park**

* **Purpose:** Authorize lease of East View Park for Ohio Marshallese Community Inc. events on May 10, 17, and 24, 2025.
* **Terms:**
  + Lease Amount: $1 per annum plus fees for diamond preparation and lights.
  + Event Includes: Annual non-alcohol event.
* **Conflict Check:** Ensured no overlap with Junior Night baseball. – CM Wolfe / Safety Service Director Hitchcock
* **Approval:**
  + Motion to suspend rules for three readings was made by CM Wolfe and seconded by CM Fleck unanimously passed.
  + Motion to suspend rules for three readings was made by CM Buxton and seconded by CM Clausen unanimously passed.

7. **Administrative Reports**

a. **General Fund Summary**

* **Financial Status:**
  + Positive revenue outlook with an 8.3% increase. – Auditor Shinn
  + No appropriation revenue included due to pending county certification. – Auditor Shinn
  + Engineering expenses slightly elevated due to Mill Street engineering fees. – Auditor Shinn

b. **Donations:**

* **Recent Contributions:**
  + Mercer Savings Bank: $2,000 each to fire and police departments. – Auditor Shinn
  + Celina Moose Lodge: $1,000 to fire department. – Auditor Shinn
  + Dynamic Federal Credit Union: $7,500 to Recreational Department for sports programs. – Auditor Shinn
* **Future Legislation:** Incorporate donations into the general fund.

c. **Local Industry Inquiries:**

* No official notices received from local industries regarding opening and closures of UPS. – CM Fleck / Safety Service Director Hitchcock
* Outreach conducted from County about a possible future project at Miller Woods. – Safety Service Director Hitchcock
* Brush & Limb pick up schedule. – CM Buxton / Safety Service Director Hitchcock / CM Sanford / CM Wolfe

d. **Snow Removal Complaints:**

* **Issue:** Delayed snow removal in February; specific complaints about Briar Lane. – CM Gray / Safety Service Director Hitchcock
* **Response:** City addressed individual complaints (Main Street sidewalks); standard crews handle regular snow removal. – CM Gray / Safety Service Director Hitchcock

e. **Fire Department Updates:**

* **Training:** Firefighters scheduled for training and certification in November. – CM Gray
* **Achievements:** Firefighter Schoenleben completed Firefighter II certification. – CM Gray
* **Recruitment:** Ongoing efforts to certify civil service list. – CM Gray

f. **Police Department Updates:**

* **Staffing:** Two new officer trainees graduating from the academy. – Chief Wale
* **Training:** Ongoing training programs and court duty. – Chief Wale
* **Issues:** Parking complaints managed through notifications; no new major updates. – Chief Wale

g. **Debt Reduction Update:**

* **Current Debt:** Reduced from $6.4 million to $4.14 million. – CM Sanford / Safety Service Director Hitchcock
* **Future Outlook:** Potential to reach zero debt, dependent on loan maturities and council decisions on future borrowing. – CM Sanford / Safety Service Director Hitchcock

h. **Park Enhancements:**

* **Bryson Park Walkways:** Completion of half-mile marked walkways. – CM Sanford
* **Westview Pond Area:** Topsoil addition, rip-rap, and stone finishing planned. – CM Wolfe / Safety Service Director Hitchcock

8. **Action Items**

* **Utilities Committee:**
  + Develop and present rate increase scenarios.
  + Conduct cost of service study.
  + Coordinate Sugar Street water line project with county.
* **General Fund:**
  + Incorporate recent donations into the fund.
* **Snow Removal:**
  + Improve response times for snowstorms.
* **Debt Management:**
  + Continue strategies to reduce city debt.
* **Park Projects:**
  + Complete walkway and pond area enhancements.

9. **Follow-up**

* **Executive Session:**
  + Motion to hold executive session for discussing disputes involving the public body related to court actions was made by CM Gray and seconded by CM Wolfe and approved unanimously.
* **Future Meetings:**
  + Next council meeting to review rate increase scenarios and donations incorporation.
* **Event Coordination:**
  + Ensure Ohio Marshallese events proceed without scheduling conflicts.

10. **Closing Remarks**

* Encouragement for community members to enjoy the parks and utilize the new walkways.
* Acknowledgment of the council’s efforts in debt reduction and community enhancement projects.

Adjournment

* **Time:** 8:13 PM