

**Rittman City Council Met in a
SPECIAL MEETING – RITTMAN RECREATION CENTER
January 30, 2023 -7:00 p.m.**

Members Present: Melissa Shows, Josh Carey, Dave Williams, Ken Park, Chuck Wyatt and Amanda Nelson

Members Absent: None

Presiding: Mayor William Robertson

1. Roll Call

2 Modified Citizen's Forum Q & A: Income Tax Issue

Citizens who spoke or asked questions, but not limited to, regarding the income tax are:

Rich Barnett – 43 Sheldon Street; Catherine Winkler – 132 N. Fourth Street; Dave – last name and address unknown; Nick Burss – 11 Pleasant View; Melissa Burss – 11 Pleasant View; Mick Morgan – 113 Strawberry Hill; D. McMillan – N. Seneca Street; Abby Nahs – 516 Oliver Way; Sarah Welch – 131 Maplewood; Paul Werle – 132 Matthew Drive; Alice Widmer – 347 Cardinal Drive; Tara Boler – 8 Fairmont Avenue; Brayton Boler – 8 Fairmont Avenue; Kiera Boler – 8 Fairmont Avenue; Morgan Boler – 8 Fairmont Avenue; Ben Imhoff – 6 N. Hickin Avenue; Tina McMillan – 243 Ritter Drive; Katie Mika – 250 Baker Drive; Mark McMillen – 243 Ritter Drive; Christine – Meadowvale – Sonja – Mary Street; Sandy Gardner – 34 N. State Street; Tim Ransom – 333 Ritter Drive; Vince Irwin – Wooster; Mark Hill – 83 Pinewood Avenue; Ray Rigas 97 N. Third Street; Shawn Valery – 160 Joshua Drive; Jim Bailey – 61 W. Ohio Avenue; Dennis Vadini – 508 Oliver Way; Lee Winchell – 606 Rufener Drive; Amanda Howard – 30 Elm Street; Darrel Widmer – 347 Cardinal Drive; Steve Baker – 141 Strawberry Hill; Danny Hollbrook – Ganyard; Cris Emerson – 25 Bauman Avenue; Ron Tisher; 294 Winkler Drive; Ken Walsh – Ganyard; Rick Sample – Louise Street; John Tawney – 116 Heath Drive; Jason Shipley – 76 Orchard Avenue.

Some of the questions asked were:

How much money was wrongfully collected by the city of Rittman over those 15 years? What's the total number?

Why do you choose to use the Ohio Revised Code that was quoted in the letter? As far as refunds go.

When the mistake was discovered, was it the elected officials or was an unelected official? And who exactly said we're not going to tell anybody until the statute of limitations comes.

Should that half percent get voted back in? And I know you haven't got this part yet, but the question is. Should that happen? And are you guys going to think about something significant that you can do to get back to us? We know you can't get money back because there's something else you can do significant to get back there.

We have roughly 6,000 residents. Do you know the percent or the number of residents that actually file taxes with the city? What number of percentages live here and work here versus live here and work in another municipality?

I'm looking at some of the expenses. That the city has, and in this economy, we've all had to tighten our belts. What is the city going to do about that? From what I understand and what I'm able to read between the lines, it looks like we are paying for the city managers, vehicle maintenance and fuel and insurance, and I'm pretty sure she's allowed to drive back and forth from work to home and we're paying for miles as well. Can you verify if that is the case?

And my follow-up question is that being the case, what other cuts are you guys looking at? Because we're all making cuts for you and you want us to give you more? And I'm not seeing where this is actually helping, and there's a lot of budget shortfalls. And why were bonuses paid out for longevity to administration? Some of them were over \$10,000, according to the financials. When you already knew that the city was going to be strapped for cash.

Why are most actions taken by the Council declared a state of emergency, but paying the citizens back is not?

How are you guys using the extra money that you guys are stealing from the residents and those who work here?

You made the comment that you're doing the right thing by refunding one year's worth of taxes. You know that isn't really doing the right thing. That's doing the legal thing. I'd like to know where the money went because the roads are crap. These are the worst the roads.

And then the rec center. How much money are they bringing in? Because I mean, they should be bringing in a ton with a family of \$428.00 for a family, for a membership, for a year. That's ridiculous. Half of us can't even afford that.

I live on 3rd St. I was at the meeting last week and you guys said you found this in the third quarter, but yet we weren't notified until after the first of the year. That puts it outside of the statute of limitations. This was brought up in the meeting last week, but you guys weren't taking questions or responding. I just wanted to hear the response to that because by keeping us under wraps for three more months. You made it to where we can't come back and get 1/2 percent for those years. And then, you know, I voiced my concerns last week, the letter kind of came out. It's a little hard, I'm going to be honest with you, nobody likes reading that. Hey, here's what we did. The laws on our side, we're not getting anything back. And then at the same time you want to go for a vote for 1 1/2%. How much does it cost to put that on the ballot? How much taxpayers' dollars does it cost?

The Law Director, City Manager, Finance Director and Council President responded to each and every question/concern raised by the citizens.

(A full recording of this meeting is available. Please contact City Hall for more information)

3. Old Business

a. **Res. No. 8338 A Resolution Directing the Regional Income Tax Agency ("RITA") to Immediately Apply a Municipal Income Tax Rate of One Percent (1%) to Tax Returns Filed for the 2022 Tax Year, Notwithstanding the One and One-Half Percent (1.5%) Income Tax Set Forth in Chapter 193 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Rittman and, if an Income Tax of One and One-Half Percent has Already Been Paid for the 2022 Tax Year, to Refund the Difference Between the 1.5% Rate and the 1.0% Rate for that Tax Year Upon Approval of a Request for Such Refund that has Been Filed by any Individual not Required to File a Municipal Tax Return. Second and Third Readings.** Res. No. 8338 was read on second reading. Williams moved to suspend the rules, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried**. Wyatt moved to adopt, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried**.

b. **Ord. No. 8339 An Ordinance of the Council of the City of Rittman, Wayne and Medina Counties and State of Ohio, Amending Section 193 Income Tax Regulations Effective Beginning January 1, 2016 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Rittman. Second and Third Readings.** Ord. No. 8339 was read on second reading. Park moved to suspend the rules, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried**. Williams moved to adopt, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried**.

c. **Res. No. 8340 A Resolution of the City of Rittman, Wayne and Medina Counties, and State of Ohio, Amending the Provisions of the Municipal Income Tax Ordinance to Provide a Permanent Increase in the Amount of One-Half Percent (.5%) in the Income Tax Rate Effective January 1, 2024, for the Purposes of General Operations and Capital Improvements of the City of Rittman and Declaring an Emergency. Second and Third Readings.** Res. No. 8340 was read on second reading. Shows moved to suspend the rules, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried**. Wyatt moved to adopt, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried**.

d. **Ord. No. 8341 An Ordinance of the City of Rittman, Wayne and Medina Counties, Amending the Provisions of the Municipal Income Tax Ordinance to Provide for a Permanent Increase in the Amount of One-Half Percent (.5%) in the Income Tax Rate Effective January 1, 2024, for the Purposes of General Operations of the City of Rittman to be Allocated Three-Fourths to the General Fund and One-Fourth to the Capital Improvement Fund and Declaring an Emergency. Second and Third Readings (as Amended 01/30/23).** Ord. No. 8341 was read on second reading. Wyatt moved to suspend the rules, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried**. Shows moved to adopt, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried**.

3. Council Remarks

Nelson – I want to thank everybody that's still here for coming out and everybody that left, also thank them for coming out tonight. It was a pretty productive conversation this evening. It's good to hear from all of the citizens. They need to come to more Council meetings, that would be helpful.

Wyatt – I want to reiterate, I appreciate coming out and everybody that stuck through until the end. Very nice. Yeah, I've seen a lot of good constructive comments on Facebook, which I don't really comment or browse through too much, but a lot of great ideas floating around out there about citizens wanting to get together and do some things. And hey, man, I think that's a great idea. You don't need the government to do these things, you know, anything you want to do to make the city better is beautiful with whatever I don't think anybody's going to stand in anybody's way. But thank you all.

Carey - let's again say thank you everybody for coming out. It's always nice to have a bunch of people at the Council meetings, so we can hear what people want. We don't always have all the time to look at Facebook and see what everybody is trying to say on social media. There's a lot of different forums out there, and a lot of us have a lot of things going on during our normal days. So having the feedback from the citizens here at our meetings is really, really a good way. To hear what the citizens need and want, so, thank you again for everybody coming out tonight.

Park - we certainly appreciate all the input; we need the input. You know, we've alluded to the social media thing, some of that stuff gets a lot of facts that aren't really facts. And I think it makes it almost impossible for to you to understand what we're doing and what we're saying and when we're talking about here in this format. Our regular meetings, I can tell you that we would all love to have some input. Every two weeks, you know the second and fourth Mondays of every month, except for in the summer. It's only one. The second Monday. We need that input. We need to hear from people. We're here to represent everybody. We need to know what you want. We appreciate it. Thank you all.

Williams – I'll echo everybody what everybody else said. I appreciate everybody coming out. We all took an oath of office to uphold the Constitution and to promote Rittman. And I think that's what we're here to do, I think we have to look forward and all move in unity together for the best thing in Rittman. I've taken an oath of office and law enforcement. I worked by a code of Ethics for the licensed social work. And at the end of the day, I have to answer to my wife and kids and my parents that live in town. They're pretty much whole life. It's just about doing what's right for our families and doing what's right for our neighbors. And hopefully the people will support the 1.5 so that we can move forward as a city. Thank you.

Shows - I'm going to keep it very brief again, thank you, and I do want to stress, that not all of the questions end tonight. If you have more questions, more concerns, we still want to hear them. Obviously, this format isn't going to work every week, But don't wait, don't hold them, reach out e-mail, send a message, we are going to try to respond. We're going to try to keep updating our fact sheet on the web page and on Facebook so that you can see how your questions are being answered. Because this is going to be an ongoing discussion, nothing was settled here tonight and you know that, as frustrating as it is for all of us. But I do thank everybody they came and offered their opinions, whether whichever side they're on.

Adjourn: 10:34 p.m. Carey moved to adjourn, all Yeas on roll call and **motion carried.**

Mayor

Clerk of Council