

CIRCLEVILLE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES 9/16/2025

Circleville Committee of The Whole convened in City Council Chambers, 127 South Court St., Circleville, OH 43113, on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. Present at Roll Call: President Barry Keller and Council Members Katie Logan Hedges, Sheri Theis, Tom Klitzka, Jeff Hallinin, John Moats, Audrey Lukasak, and Clerks Melissa Burns and Sarah Kolesar. Absent member(s): Tom Duvall. Invited Guests present: Service Director Jim Sanley, Mayor Michelle Blanton, Craig Litmer, and Frank Aransky from American Structurepoint.

Keller called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with Roll Call.

Hallinin motioned to approve the minutes from September 2, 2025. Seconded by Theis. Motion carried.

New Business:

a) A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE FINDINGS OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY PERFORMED BY AMERICAN STRUCTUREPOINT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF CIRCLEVILLE FOR THE PURPOSE OF CREATING A GRADE SEPARATION OVER THE EXISTING NORFOLK AND SOUTHERN RAIL LINES AND KNOWN AS: PIC CIRCLEVILLE RRGs PID 115981 FEASIBILITY STUDY.

Discussion: Stanley stated this Resolution for the grade separation which has been in the planning phase for approximately a decade and is targeted to commence construction in April 2030. Craig Litmer from American Structurepoint elaborated, stating that the project aims to enhance emergency response reliability, improve safety and mobility, and reduce train-related delays. The feasibility study recommends a maximum 5% grade for the bridge approach, ensuring it spans the railroad right-of-way with adequate vertical clearances and aligns with future railway plans. Seven potential locations were evaluated, with four alternatives advancing for detailed analysis, including Geographic Information System (GIS) base mapping, traffic studies, preliminary alignment and profile modeling, environmental assessments, and stakeholder coordination. A public meeting on March 5, 2024, drew over 100 attendees and generated 37 detailed comments, leading to the selection of the South Court Street Alternative as the preferred corridor, which was submitted to the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). On January 10, 2025, the City secured a \$20 million Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant, with the total project cost estimated at \$25 million. The grant requires a 20% match, split equally between the City and the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC), contributing \$2.5 million each. Litmer outlined the next steps: submission of an Alternative Evaluation Report (AER) by December 2025, a public meeting in April 2026, Stage 1 submission by May 2026, Stage 2 by November 2026, Stage 3 by May 2027, Right-of-Way (R/W) authorization by February 2028, and construction beginning in April 2030. In response to Council President Keller's inquiry about impacts on homeowners and businesses, Litmer explained that ODOT will identify affected parties during the R/W phase, provide fair compensation, and assist with relocation. Klitzka asked about pedestrian access, and Litmer confirmed that sidewalks are included in the proposal. Addressing Lukasak's concerns about inflation, Litmer noted that ODOT's inflation calculator was used to estimate costs for both design and construction phases.

MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE: Hallinin motioned to forward the Resolution to the next Council meeting on October 7, 2025, with a recommendation for adoption. Klitzka seconded. (6 Yeas - 0 Nays) Motion carried.

Theis motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 p.m., Seconded by Hedges. Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by: Melissa Burns, Clerk.