

**NORTH RIDGEVILLE CITY COUNCIL
SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 6:15 p.m.
MONDAY, APRIL 17, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chairwoman Holly Swenk called the Safety Committee meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Members present were Chairwoman Holly Swenk, Councilman Bruce Abens, and Councilman Martin DeVries.

Also present: Mayor Kevin Corcoran, Law Director Brian Moriarty, Council President Jason Jacobs, Councilman Dennis Boose, Councilwoman Georgia Awig, Councilman Clifford Winkel, Police Chief Mike Freeman, and Assistant Clerk of Council Fijabi Gallam.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Councilman Holly Swenk asked if there were any corrections to the Safety Committee Meeting Minutes dated February 21, 2023. No discussion was offered. The meeting minutes stand approved as submitted.

New Business:

Councilwoman Swenk asked if anyone from the public would like to give comments or concerns regarding T4-2023. No discussion was offered.

T 4-2023 AN ORDINANCE CREATING N.R.C.O. CHAPTER 478, REGULATING THE OPERATION OF LOW-SPEED AND UNDER-SPEED VEHICLES.
(Introduced by Councilwoman Swenk)

Chair Swenk provided an overview and purpose of the legislation. Chair Swenk would like to find the best way to allow low-speed and under-speed vehicles on city roads. There have been multiple discussions regarding T 4-2023 and there have been some changes in the legislation.

Chair Swenk asked if anybody on the committee had any questions or concerns regarding T 4-2023. No comments from the Committee.

Chair Swenk asked for any other comments or questions from the administration.

Mayor Corcoran remarked that Chief Freeman is available to discuss the legislation.

Chief Freeman expressed that he has some serious safety concerns. He understood that there are places that allow the vehicles in question. The places are more resort-oriented, like Put-in-Bay. The City of North Ridgeville is not designed to have the vehicles in question on public streets. Chief Freeman explained the following concerns.:

- Roads with 25 mph and roads in developments have a high number of vehicles using those roadways;
- The vehicles are not designed to take a hit or crash;
- Concerned about the idea that the vehicles could be a danger to 16-year-olds and younger;
- Child car seats in the vehicles;
- Some of the vehicles do not have airbags.

Chair Swenk asked for any other comments or questions from the administration and City Council. Chair Swenk presented a picture of the vehicles in question to the committee. The picture is attached to the minutes. Chair Swenk, Chief Freeman, and Mayor Corcoran pointed out the following.:

- The vehicle is plated and titled by the Ohio BMV. The vehicle also has full coverage insurance. The person driving the vehicle could be ticketed.
- The vehicle currently can't be on City of North Ridgeville streets, or they would be ticketed.
- The proposed legislation also talks about low-speed, under-speed utility vehicles, or mini trucks. The legislation is not limited to golf carts.
- There are different versions and years of golf carts. Older golf carts could have just a windshield and no other safety features.
- Proposed N.R.C.O section 478.05 Inspection and Title Requirements separate the different types of vehicles.
- The pros outweigh the cons from a safety aspect.

Chair Swenk remarked that many of the changes were made to consider the Chief's concerns.

Councilman DeVries expressed that he is worried about the North Ridgeville Officers having the time to enforce the proposed section N.R.C.O. 4780.05. He wanted to know the process for the responsibility. Councilman DeVries believed that instead of taking care of the issues for motorcycles and speed bikes, creating T 4-2023 would add more to the problems. He added that he would vote yes to send the legislation back to City Council for consideration, but it does not mean he supports the legislation. He would like to have all of the City Council votes on the legislation. Councilman DeVries does not think it is practical for the City of North Ridgeville and is worried about people using it inappropriately.

Chief Freeman expressed that he could see the vehicle in the 50 years old and older communities instead of residential neighborhoods.

Councilman Abens explained that the legislation does state the vehicles in question does restrict vehicles from being on roads that are more than 25 mph. This restriction does allow the officers to give citations to owners of the vehicles when on roads that are more than 25 mph. Councilman Abens noted that it would be hard for anyone to get to the schools in these vehicles because of the road requirements.

Chair Swenk asked for any other comments or questions.

Chair Swenk does agree with Chief Freeman on allowing the vehicles in the 50 years old and older communities, but there are pools in other developments that could benefit from using these vehicles. Chair Swenk explained that she has seen other cars on the streets that don't have safety features.

Chief Freeman explained that batmobiles and golf carts are two different vehicles. He added that the number one crash cause is the speed in America. Golf carts and others like it would be subjected to crashes because there is a difference in speed from regular motor vehicles. Chief Freeman reiterated that people would get hurt in these types of vehicles.

Chair Swenk agreed and understood Chief Freeman's statement. She noted that there are risks with driving a motorcycle as well.

Chair Swenk asked for any other comments or questions. No discussion was offered.

Moved by Swenk and seconded by DeVries to send T4-2023 back to City Council to consider and amend with the following changes.

- Added, "speedometer" to the equipment list
- Added, "Low-Speed Vehicle (LSV) or under-speed vehicle means a vehicle:
 - a) that is 4-wheeled,
 - b) whose speed attainable in one mile is more than 20mph and not more than 25mph on a paved surface;
 whose gross vehicle weight rating is not more than 3,000 pounds.

All LSVs must meet all U.S. federal safety standards and state/local laws

- Added under 478.05 (b), "displaying a reflective triangular shaped sticker/decals issued by the inspecting authority....."

A voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

Yes - 3 No - 0

No further business.

Adjournment:

Chairwoman Swenk adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Date Approved: June 3, 2024

Fijabi Gallam, MMC
Assistant Clerk of Council

