

**NORTH RIDGEVILLE CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES
City Hall Council Chambers – 6:15 p.m.
April 7, 2025**

To Order:

Chairman Jason Jacobs called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Led by President Jason Jacobs

Roll Call:

Members present: Councilman Martin DeVries, Councilwoman Holly Swenk, Councilman Eric Shaffer, Councilman Bruce Abens, Councilman Clifford Winkel, Councilwoman Georgia Awig, and President Jason Jacobs.

Also present: Mayor Kevin Corcoran, Planning and Development Director Kim Lieber, Assistant Fire Chief Mike Uhnak, and Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani.

New Business:

2024-48 An Ordinance creating a new Chapter 1470 Tents of the North Ridgeville Building and Housing Code.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; First Reading on 03-17-2025)

Planning and Development Director discussed the following.

Special Event Permit Application:

- The Parks and Recreation Department updated the regulation to streamline the process for hosting events in the city's parks.
- Each department will work in a streamlined process to ensure efficiency.
- Ohio Building Code Update: A new version of the Ohio building code with new requirements was released in 2024, which assisted the discussions.
- A new Ohio Fire Code is planned to be released soon.
- Special event structures, such as tents, umbrellas, and other membrane structures covering an area greater than 120 square feet, must go through the approval process with a building official.
- The City is obligated to enforce the rules of the state of Ohio as a certified building department.

Temporary Tents Application:

- The city did not have an application addressing tents, so state guidance was used.
- Recommendation to create a separate application for plan approval for temporary tents, as they differ from permanent structures.
- Streamlined to avoid redundancy with the State Building Code.

Fire Code and Building Code Integration:

- Integrating fire code and building code requirements in the application.
- Specific concerns about cooking tents at events like the corn festival.
- The building official and fire marshal must approve appliances used under tents to avoid liability.
- The plan is to wait for the Fire Code to be released to add more regulations.

Exemptions and Permits:

- Exception for Kettle corn under tents because the Department of Agriculture trucks have their own set of rules for mobile food trucks. This type of tent uses a minimal amount of oil.
- Exemptions for tents used apply for recreational camping or as an accessory to a residential dwelling under 400 square feet.
- Permit fee for tents under 400 square feet is \$25; larger tents require drawings and additional review.
- Additional requirements for tents over 400 square feet, including sidewalls and open sides.

Council Member Questions and Comments

President Jacobs wanted to know more about the additional requirements for a permit in Chapter 1470.03.

Director Kim Lieber and Assistant Fire Chief Uhnak noted the following:

- Chapter 1470.03 lists the additional requirements for a person who has been using a permit for a duration; however, the fire marshal determines further requirements based on the Fire Code, such as the side walls of a tent, as it is fire code specific concerning materials.

Councilwoman Awig wanted to know if the sidewalls regulation of a tent pertains to sidewalls on private property, like for a graduation party. In addition, if festivals like the corn festival have to get a permit.

Director Kim Lieber and Assistant Fire Chief Uhnak noted the following:

- It would depend on whether they are running the tent as a business or for commercial use.
- There is no manpower with the police department for this type of enforcement if personal properties are added too. Therefore, it would be for commercial use, but there are concerns as a Fire Marshall.
- Focus on commercial applications and city property events, not individual homeowner activities.
- Any tent erected would either pay the \$25 fee or a higher fee, depending on the size. The goal was not to single out different types of businesses. There will be internal discussions on how to deal with permit requests from festivals and other events with a lot of people with tents.
- There is a lot of investment on the City personnel side between inspections and the events, so it was appropriate to attach some fees and to monitor any dangers.

Councilwoman Swenk was concerned about spreading the word regarding permit requirements to the community for all tents over 120 feet erected on private or public property, as violations would constitute the enforcement of minor misdemeanors.

Director Kim Lieber noted the following:

- It is important to inform the community about permit requirements for tents.
- Use of city newsletters, HOA communications, and special event permit packages to spread the word.
- The permitting requirement is not for backyards; it is only for commercial applications or the City's property.

Councilman Abens discussed the challenges of permits, such as those for the corn festival, which will require individual applications to be taken out and reviewed, or the City accommodating the Corn Festival.

Director Kim Lieber noted the following:

- Noted that the preference is not to deal with all individuals, but to use the event organizer, who should assist by passing the information down to the vendors.

Councilman Winkel wanted to know if there is a concern with language for approvals for all tents over 120 square feet erected on private property. He suggested clarifying language in the ordinance to avoid misinterpretation. Proposed to include special event permit requirements in the ordinance.

President Jacobs noted that in section B of the proposed legislation, there's an exception if the tent is less than 400 feet in accessory to a residential dwelling.

President Jacobs said there could be a change to section A to say over 120 square feet erected on private property unless otherwise exempted under section B below.

Councilman Shaffer inquired about the definition of "temporary" and its duration.

Director Lieber clarified that temporary under the building code is less than 180 days.

President Jacobs added that the legislation states that no tent may be erected for a period longer than 30 consecutive days. It is understood that a permit is needed again if the tent is taken down one day and put up the next.

Councilman Abens remarked that many of the residents have a sun shade that rolls out from the edge of the house. He wanted to know if it was a tent or an awning.

Director Lieber explained that if the sunshade is part of the permanent structure, it is not a temporary tent. It would be reviewed for a permit to install on the house.

Councilwoman Swenk agreed that section A in the legislation needs more specification because it is open to interpretation.

Director Lieber remarked that she would make the changes to the legislation and bring it back to the City Council for review.

No discussion from the audience.

Moved by President Jacobs and seconded by Swenk to send Ordinance Number 2025-48 back to City Council for consideration.

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was carried.

Yes – 7

No – 0

Adjournment:

Chairman Jacobs adjourned the meeting at 6:47 p.m.

Approved on May 5, 2025



Jason R. Jacobs
PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL



Nicholas Ciofani
CLERK OF COUNCIL