

**NORTH RIDGEVILLE CITY COUNCIL
SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 6:00 p.m.
MONDAY, September 9, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chair Holly Swenk called the Safety Committee meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Members present were Chairwoman Holly Swenk, Councilwoman Georgia Awig, and Councilman Martin DeVries.

Also present: Mayor Kevin Corcoran, President Jason Jacobs, Councilman Bruce Abens, Police Chief Mike Freeman, Fire Chief John Reese, and Police Lieutenant Tony Lee.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chair Holly Swenk asked if there were any corrections to the Safety Committee Meeting Minutes dated June 3, 2024. No discussion was offered. The meeting minutes stand approved as submitted.

{Clerk's notes: Numerous discussions took place among the audience that were not captured in the minutes because the microphone did not detect their voices.}

New Business:

2024-81 An Ordinance amending N.R.C.O Section 452.03 – prohibited standing or parking places.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; First Reading on 08-05-2024)

Chair Swenk asked Mayor Corcoran to provide an overview of the legislation.

Mayor Corcoran stated that he has received repeated requests to amend regulations to allow parking on the opposite side of the street. He added that the city's growing population is contributing to increased traffic and parking issues. Some neighborhoods have signage indicating no parking at all, but this is not consistent throughout the city. There is a complaint regarding buses struggling to get through the streets, and there is concern that emergency vehicles might also be unable to pass because of parked cars. Mayor Corcoran further noted that surrounding municipalities, including Avon, Avon Lake, Westlake, and North Olmsted, all have regulations against parking on the side with fire hydrants.

Councilwoman Awig stated that she supports parking on one side of the street; however, she raised concerns about the potential issues it could create for cul-de-sacs if cars were allowed to park there.

Mayor Corcoran understood Councilwoman Awig's concerns.

The Committee members agreed that some of the concerns involve residents hosting parties and the street parking issues.

Police Chief Mike Freeman stated that the issue of on-street parking presents both advantages and disadvantages. He outlined the following concerns related to street parking.:

- The more people you have parking on the street, the more people you have crossing the street—including kids.
- Passenger doors are to the landside.
- Long lines of cars cause a sight issue—like kids playing in between the cars.
- The busier streets can hold up traffic or increase speeds when people are trying to get somewhere.
- People will not be able to get to the ice cream trucks.
- There will be an issue with people parking in front of mailboxes and trash cans.
- Some streets do not have sidewalks, which could be a safety issue if you have to walk in traffic.

Lt. Lee highlighted the importance of uniformity, noting that the lack of legislative backing for enforcing complaints causes a challenge for the police department. Many developments display signs indicating that street parking is prohibited, and residents rely on the police department for enforcement. He stated that, as a supervisor, consistency from the City would make their jobs easier.

Police Chief Freeman requested that the legislation be uniformly applied throughout the entire city.

Fire Chief Reese stated that cities with legislation permitting street parking on one side often have different street conditions than those in North Ridgeville. He expressed that approving such legislation is challenging due to both pros and cons.

Councilwoman Awig inquired about the distance between fire hydrants.

Fire Chief Reese responded that fire hydrants are spaced 300 feet apart and are easy to locate using GPS.

Councilman Jacobs asked if there have been instances when fire trucks were unable to access certain streets. Chief Reese confirmed that there have indeed been multiple occasions where fire emergency vehicles could not navigate through some streets.

Fire Chief Reese noted that there have been numerous occasions when fire emergency vehicles could not navigate certain streets.

Police Chief Freeman commented that the proposed legislation will not resolve the existing issues, indicating that there are more cons than pros associated with it.

Chair Swenk confirmed that vehicles cannot be parked within 10 feet of a fire hydrant and that this regulation is enforceable within the city.

Police Chief Freeman further stated that enforcement is also possible for vehicles parked within 30 feet of an intersection.

Councilman DeVries expressed his belief that the legislation provides the police department with an additional tool for enforcement when necessary.

Police Chief Freeman is more concerned with the safety aspect than the enforcement aspect.

Councilman DeVrie inquired how the police officers respond to repeated offenders.

Police Chief Freeman stated that while officers do not have a specific protocol for this situation, if they are unable to pass due to two cars parked opposite each other, they will locate the address of the vehicle and knock on the door to request the owner to move their car.

Chair Swenk inquired whether residents are permitted to park on the streets during parties.

Police Chief Freeman responded that they occasionally provide residents with options when their driveways cannot accommodate multiple vehicles.

Mayor Corcoran expressed that there is a common belief within the community that parking on the street is illegal; however, enforcement is challenging for the police due to not having an ordinance prohibiting it.

Police Chief Freeman added that the streets in North Ridgeville vary, with some lacking sidewalks.

Chair Swenk inquired whether the passage of the legislation would impact streets that currently display "no parking" signs.

Police Chief Freeman clarified that it would not affect those streets, which the police department already enforces.

Resident Frank Toth asked who granted the authority for the placement of "no parking" signs on certain streets.

Mayor Corcoran explained that these signs were installed at the request of residents or the developer. However, he noted that there is no ordinance in place to enforce these restrictions.

Moved by Swenk and seconded by DeVries to send Ordinance 2024-81 back to City Council for further review.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion carried.

Yes – 0

No – 3 (Swenk, DeVries, Awig)

2024-82 An Ordinance establishing enforcement capability regarding fireworks for the Police Department.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; First Reading on 08-05-2024)

Chair Swenk asked Mayor Corcoran to provide an overview of the legislation.

Mayor Corcoran noted that recent changes to the State code regarding fireworks regulations have occurred. While these regulations are enforceable under State law, they are not currently enforceable by the North Ridgeville Police Department. Enforcement is designated to the Fire Marshal according to the State code. He advised that legislation is necessary to regulate the use of fireworks within North Ridgeville. Mayor Corcoran proposed that the City consider implementing stricter restrictions on fireworks or potentially reducing the number of days they can be used.

Mayor Corcoran stated that the Fire Code prohibits the discharge of fireworks within 100 feet of any dwelling. He emphasized that the majority of the city is unable to discharge fireworks legally. He also highlighted that enforcing fireworks regulations presents a challenge for police officers.

Councilman DeVries inquired about any increase in fireworks-related calls over the past year.

Police Chief Freeman confirmed that there has been an increase in such calls and noted that additional legislation is necessary to enforce the restrictions on illegal fireworks use. This proposed legislation aligns with the regulations that the State adopted.

Mayor Corcoran read an email complaint from a resident concerning fireworks disturbances.

Councilwoman Awig questioned whether implementing a ban on fireworks would present additional challenges.

Police Chief Freeman emphasized the need for enforcement tools within the police department.

Chair Swenk inquired about the first penalty and its maximum fine of \$1,000.

Mayor Corcoran clarified that first-degree penalties fall within a range of fines corresponding to various misdemeanor offenses.

Chair Swenk additionally asked whether the proposed legislation would authorize police officers to issue citations for the use of fireworks on non-designated days.

Police Chief Freeman stated that they would implement what the City of Elyria has done by forming a task force during the holidays.

Fire Chief Reese agreed with Police Chief Freeman's concerns.

Mayor Corcoran added that fireworks should not be discharged within 150 feet of livestock.

Resident Frank Toth raised concerns about the challenges related to the legal use of fireworks in the area.

A discussion followed regarding the issue of illegal fireworks being used on non-designated days.

Moved by Awig and seconded by DeVries to send Ordinance 2024-82 back to City Council for discussion and consideration.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion carried.

Yes – 3

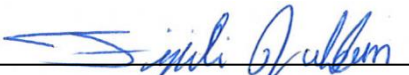
No – 0

No further business.

Adjournment:

Chair Swenk adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Date Approved: September 15, 2025



Fijabi Gallam, MMC
Assistant Clerk of Council