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Committee meetings

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Summary

- An issue in Akron, which also affects all of Northeast Ohio, is [the removal of the Gorge Dam](#), a multi-year project that will allow the Cuyahoga River to flow freely from Kent through Cuyahoga Falls and Akron and then north to Lake Erie. City Council's Public Service Committee is considering hiring a local architecture and engineering services firm for \$3.6 million to design the removal of the dam.
- In anticipation of retirements of employees from the [Akron Fire Department](#), council's Public Safety Committee made a favorable report on an ordinance to hire a national consulting firm for \$180,500 to conduct testing to fill the ranks of fire lieutenant, fire captain and fire district chief. The ordinance was unanimously approved later during the full council meeting.

Follow-Up Questions

- If council decides to hire a local firm to design the dam removal project, will they also commit to hiring local demolition and construction companies to work on the

project?

- What characteristics are the Akron Fire Department looking for in candidates to fill its leadership roles?

Notes

Find the council committee agendas and other materials for this meeting [here](#).

Watch the committee meetings [here](#).

Planning and Economic Development Committee

Did not meet

Parks and Recreation Committee

Did not meet

Rules Committee

Did not meet

Public Service, Public Utilities and Green Committee

The meeting began at 2 p.m. with a roll call. Committee Chair Donnie Kammer (Ward 7, joining online) and Vice Chair Brad McKittrick (Ward 6) were present with all committee members in attendance: Bruce Bolden (Ward 8), Phil Lombardo (Ward 2) and Fran Wilson (Ward 1, joining online).

The committee unanimously approved the previous meeting's minutes.

In new legislation, [the committee discussed](#):

- [An ordinance](#) authorizing Public Service Director Chris Ludle to enter into a \$3.6 million contract with [Akron-based GPD Group](#) to design the Gorge Dam removal.
 - According to city documents, the ordinance is “necessary for the immediate preservation of public peace, health, safety and welfare for the reason that removal of the dam will improve water quality and wildlife habitat.”
 - The committee voted 5-0 to move the ordinance to the consent agenda at the April 27 full city council meeting for continued discussion and a vote. It

must be approved by a two-thirds vote of council, followed by approval by Mayor Shammass Malik, before it will take effect.

Also during the committee meeting, there was an Arbor Week presentation by Sarah Vradenburg, chair of [Akron's Tree Commission](#); commission member Gabe Forté and city arborist Matt Knull.

They invited community members to attend [the city's Arbor Day celebration](#) on April 24 from 3 to 5 p.m. at Lane Field Park, 630 Vernon Odom Blvd. Parking will be available at 930 Moeller Ave. This free event will include a formal tree planting ceremony, tree giveaways and musical performances by students from [Miller South School for the Visual and Performing Arts](#).

The meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Public Safety Committee

The meeting began at 2:16 p.m. with a roll call. Committee Chair McKittrick and Vice Chair Kammer (Ward 7, joining online) were present with all committee members in attendance: Eric Garrett (at-large, joining online), Johnnie Hannah (Ward 5, joining online) and Lombardo.

The committee unanimously approved the previous meeting's minutes.

In new legislation, [the committee discussed](#):

- An ordinance to enter into a \$180,500 contract with [National Testing Network \(NTN\), a Washington-based national consulting firm](#), to conduct and administer competitive examination processes for the Akron Fire Department for the ranks of fire lieutenant, fire captain and fire district chief.
 - According to city documents, NTN has previously worked with the city through background investigation services for the Akron Fire Department and the 911 Center and entry-level testing for the Akron Police Department.
 - Akron Fire Chief Leon Henderson spoke to the committee and said he wants to hire this firm in anticipation of employee retirements from the department.
 - The committee voted 5-0 for a favorable report and to suspend the rules, moving the ordinance to full city council for discussion and a vote. (The ordinance passed 12-0 during council's regular meeting that evening.)

The meeting adjourned at 2:24 p.m.

Health and Social Services Committee

Did not meet

Budget and Finance Committee

Did not meet

Housing and Neighborhood Assistance Committee

Did not meet

The regular council meeting was scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. later in the evening.