



## **Meeting Minutes**

Monday, May 16, 2016 ~ 7:30 P.M.

Louis J. R. Goorey Worthington Municipal Building  
John P. Coleman Council Chamber  
6550 North High Street  
Worthington, Ohio 43085

## **City Council**

*Bonnie D. Michael, President*  
*Scott Myers, President Pro-Tempore*  
*Rachael Dorothy*  
*Douglas C. Foust*  
*David M. Norstrom*  
*Douglas Smith*  
*Michael C. Troper*

*D. Kay Thress, Clerk of Council*

**CALL TO ORDER – Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance**

Worthington City Council met in Regular Session on Monday, May 16, 2016, in the John P. Coleman Council Chambers of the Louis J.R. Goorey Worthington Municipal Building, 6550 North High Street, Worthington, Ohio. President Michael called the meeting to order at or about 7:50 p.m.

**Members Present:** Rachael R. Dorothy, Douglas Foust, Scott Myers, David Norstrom, Douglas K. Smith, Michael C. Troper and Bonnie D. Michael

**Member(s) Absent:**

**Also present:** Clerk of Council D. Kay Thress, City Manager Matthew Greeson, Assistant City Manager Robyn Stewart, Director of Finance Molly Roberts, Director of Public Service and Engineering Dan Whited, Director of Planning and Building Lee Brown, Director of Parks and Recreation Darren Hurley, Interim Chief of Police Jerry Strait and Chief of Fire Scott Highley

There were ten visitors present.

President Michael reported it not being necessary to recite the Pledge of Allegiance because it was done during the Joint Meeting of City Council and the Sharon Township Trustees.

**VISITOR COMMENTS** – There were no visitor comments

**PUBLIC HEARINGS ON LEGISLATION**

*President Michael declared public hearings and voting on legislation previously introduced to be in order.*

**Ordinance No. 17-2016**

Approving an Agreement with the City of Columbus and United Dairy Farmers, Inc. to Provide for the Provision of Municipal Services, the Jurisdiction for Enforcement of Municipal Building and Zoning Regulations and the Sharing of Income Taxes and Personal Property Taxes for the Redevelopment of the 1.446± Acres at 2204 West Dublin-Granville Road.

**The foregoing Ordinance Title was read.**

*Mr. Greeson shared that United Dairy Farmers (UDF) redevelopment at SR-161 and Linworth Rd. now includes the bank next door when means that it is located partly in the city of Columbus and partly in the city of Worthington. The agreement in this ordinance deals with that issue. He asked Mrs. Fox to provide the details.*

*Law Director Pam Fox shared that as a result of this redevelopment, the convenient store structure will now be located on two parcels, with each parcel being in a different municipality. This is not unique in Worthington because of several other structures/businesses that are similar.*

*The agreement before Council tonight addresses many of the different aspects of the site. The building and fire regulations will be administered by the city of Worthington. Zoning can't be contracted away from the municipalities so the site has to comply with the zoning for both of the municipalities. This was rezoned in Worthington in 2014. They have also gone through their zoning clearance with Columbus as well. The agreement also addresses income tax. Because of the complications involved with apportioning part of their income tax withholdings to Columbus and partly to RITA, staff has decided that the benefit is just not there and have decided that Columbus can receive whatever income tax withholdings this particular site may generate. Property tax is also mentioned that may or may not apply. Each parcel will receive its own real estate tax bill and the Auditor's office will do that apportioning. This agreement needs to be approved by the city of Worthington and the property owners' attorneys will then take that to the city of Columbus and go through their process.*

*Mr. Norstrom commented that Mrs. Fox indicated that when staff looked at this, they decided that it was not worth it for the City to pursue income tax collections from the UDF. He asked what the value of "not worth it" is. Mrs. Fox thinks it was going to generate a few thousand dollars a year. In talking with our finance director, she indicated that the process just was not going to be worth the small amount of money that we were going to receive. Mrs. Roberts added that a very small portion of the actual building where employees would be working is located on the City's site. So to apportion a few square feet for income tax purposes for a couple of employees was just not worth the effort in the long run.*

*Mr. Norstrom stated that he is not opposed but at the same time, a couple thousand dollars here and a couple thousand dollars there makes sense for us to go after it. He asked if the cost of setting it up is a one-time cost and then just automatic after that. Mrs. Roberts replied that she doesn't believe so. As Mrs. Fox alluded to it is a national company. Their payroll will probably not be handled through this site specific and they would have multiple employees working in various stores for probably not much money per hour. While she appreciates the comments and she does think that a couple thousand dollars here and a couple thousand dollars there does add up. This specific site was just not worth the effort and we feel that this could maybe lead towards steps to future possibilities in a cooperation in other parcels as we've indicated.*

**There being no additional comments, the Clerk called the roll on the passage of Ordinance No. 17-2016. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes 7** Foust, Troper, Norstrom, Dorothy, Smith, Myers and Michael

**No 0**

**Ordinance No. 17-2016 was thereupon declared duly passed and is recorded in full in the appropriate record book.**

**Ordinance No. 18-2016**

Approving a Grant as Part of the City's Economic Development Venture Program and Authorizing the City Manager to Enter into an Economic Development Grant Agreement for the Same.

**The foregoing Ordinance Title was read.**

*Mr. Greeson shared that staff is excited to have this agreement proposal to share with Council. He asked Economic Development Manager David McCorkle to present his first agreement to Council.*

*Mr. McCorkle shared that the Venture Agreement before them this evening is in the amount of \$58,000 in totality to Wheels Up. Wheels Up was created in 2014 as a new method of private aviation. The concept is selling a set number of flight hours on an aircraft through guaranteed access to specific aircrafts without the costs and burden of fractional ownership. They tend to offer better pricing through their membership based programing and a wide range of products and services. Participants generally pay an annual membership and then pay per flight hour to use the fleet. The company's fleet has doubled in size, specifically the Beechcraft King Air, which is their primary aircraft within the fleet. They have also tripled the number of flights per day over the last year and a half as they now have over eighty flights per day.*

*Wheels Up has had a presence in Worthington since 2014. Their current location is at 450 West Wilson Bridge Road. They have grown from six employees at that location to approximately twenty two employees. The company has identified a new location, a couple of doors down at 350 West Wilson Bridge Road, the building that is under construction right now and set to open towards the end of this year or early 2017.*

*Wheels Up is committed to create an additional thirty eight jobs and approximately \$3.2 million in payroll by the end of their five year term grant. This will bring the number of jobs to approximately sixty individuals at that site.*

*Mr. McCorkle reported that staff is recommending a \$58,000 venture grant that is payable in four installments. The first would be \$22,000 and payable upon full execution of the grant agreement as well as full execution of their lease. The three subsequent payments would be paid at the end of years one, two and three respectively, and each in the amount of \$12,000 and each contingent upon them meeting the payroll thresholds for that given year. This venture grant is a key factor in their decision to stay in Worthington otherwise; it is entirely possible that they would wind up in a different municipality in central Ohio or out of state completely.*

*Mr. McCorkle introduced Rob Patrice, Executive Vice President and Jeremy Wormter, the Senior Director of Member Services. He invited them to comment.*

*Mr. Patrice thanked Council for having them. They love being in Worthington. Their corporate office is in Manhattan. Eight of them started Wheels Up in 2013. He worked for NetJets and recruited by Wheels Up. He told them he would not move to New York and would rather work in Columbus so they started out in October 2013 in his basement. They have grown significantly since then as they have sixty-four airplanes in their fleet now and doing eighty flights a day. He thinks they will hit one hundred flights by Memorial Day so it is a pretty good growth for them in just a couple of years. With Tim Spencer building next door, it was a good opportunity for them to look into moving into his building. They have looked in Dublin, Westerville, and the city of Columbus as well as out of state but they like being in Worthington. They sat through the I-270 growth corridor for the last two and a half years and while it wasn't enjoyable they have lived through it and it is really nice. One of the biggest things that he likes is that they were able to bring people in from all over the City and within twenty minutes, they can get to this area. They can recruit from New Albany, Gahanna, Westerville, Hilliard, Powell, etc. and they are all within twenty minutes or so. They would love to stay here if they can and they appreciate Council's time.*

*Ms. Dorothy asked which local airports they use. Mr. Patrice replied that they have a good relationship with Ohio State. They actually have a stop locker there so strategically throughout the country because they have specific stock onboard so with that they have locations that they frequent and have all of the specific stock onboard. At Ohio State they have three stock lockers. They also use Port Columbus and Delaware County airports. They can use Rickenbacker and Bolton Field although they haven't used them yet. About 60% of their flights in Columbus are out of OSU and just under 40% are out of Port Columbus.*

*Ms. Michael shared that this is wonderful. Their business has been very successful and she hopes that it continues.*

*Mr. Norstrom noted as did Mr. McCorkle in his memo that the revenue coming to the City is significant and if approved will more than pay for the grant money we will be paying.*

**There being no additional comments, the Clerk called the roll on the passage of Ordinance No. 18-2016. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes 7** Troper, Norstrom, Dorothy, Smith, Myers, Foust and Michael

**No 0**

**Ordinance No. 18-2016 was thereupon declared duly passed and is recorded in full in the appropriate record book.**

## NEW LEGISLATION TO BE INTRODUCED

### **Ordinance No. 19-2016**

Amending Ordinance No. 44-2015 (As Amended) to Adjust the Annual Budget by Providing for an Appropriation from the Capital Improvements Fund Unappropriated Balance to Pay the Cost of the 2016 Street Improvement Program and all Related Expenses and Determining to Proceed with said Project. (Project No. 630-16)

**Introduced by Mr. Troper.**

The Clerk was instructed to give notice of a public hearing on said ordinance(s) in accordance with the provisions of the City Charter unless otherwise directed.

## REPORTS OF CITY OFFICIALS

### Policy Item(s)

- Swiminc. Request – Forgiveness of Loan

*Mr. Greeson reported that members received a request from Swiminc to forgive several loan payments. Some may recall as outlined in the memorandum in 1996 the City approved a loan of \$600,000 to Swiminc for improvements to the swimming facilities at that time. It was payable in equal installments of \$30,000 over twenty years. There has been a series of adjustments related to the timing of those payments and other things. At this point Swiminc has asked us to forgive the remaining loan balance of \$105,000 as it kicks off some fundraising efforts to modernize what is an important asset in our community, the Worthington Pools. There is a promissory note associated with this loan. He will turn comments over to Rob Schmidt, chairman of the SwimInc Board to overview their request and what they plan to do with the resources. Should Council pursue forgiving the loan then staff will have to come back with the appropriate legislation to change the promissory note.*

*Mr. Schmidt thanked Council for the opportunity to address them on this issue. He provided members with depictions of the changes that are being proposed for the swimming facility and provided a set to display on the overhead.*

*Mr. Schmidt briefly shared how he got involved with serving on the board of Swiminc. He was appointed by the City as a condition of the loan we are talking about here tonight to sit on the board of Swiminc. Swiminc. is the non-profit organization that has run the Worthington pools since it was founded in the 1950s. The organization operates without any direct subsidies from any of the governmental agencies in the area. They receive a rental fee from the school district for the use of the natatorium by the high school swimming and water polo teams but otherwise the facility is completely funded and operated by revenue generated through their programming and the summer memberships.*

*In 1996 they had some problems with the HVAC system in the natatorium and one of the pools was leaking. They were able to receive a loan from the city of Worthington of \$600,000 at 0% interest, and were able to make the needed repairs and keep Swiminc. going. In the intervening period of time, Swiminc. has started the process of building its capacity and making investments in their facility. The last majority investment was in the natatorium in 1972-1975. They have an aquatics complex that serves the entire greater Worthington community that is also reaching the end of its useful life.*

*Around 2008 they began a process of accessing where Swiminc needed to go. They met with many of their stakeholders, they went through the economic downturn, and came out the other side with a plan. Many people from many different avenues (schools, library, parents, Sustainable Worthington, etc.) were involved in developing a concept behind their plan. The plan is comprised of two key elements. The first is to revitalize the outdoor recreational facilities as outside memberships are critical to its continued existence. Without the revenue generated from the outside memberships and all of the programs that are run there during the summer, Swiminc. could not support itself. Outdoor recreation nets about \$350,000+. The natatorium and programs associated with events from the end of the summer season to the beginning of next year's summer season equate to a \$250,000 to \$300,000 loss. That includes the revenue they receive from the school district. So there is a clear need to maintain their summer memberships.*

*Mr. Schmidt shared that with the help of Phil Sobers and his predecessor, Dick Rabold, and some rather fortuitous closings to the south, they have seen a spike in their summer membership. That has maintained the revenue stream for the organization for certainly last year and their numbers look very good so far this year. They do not think that is sustainable because they are competing with the very nice and very new facilities in Dublin and Westerville that are also targeting their particular market, which is the family market. As they were developing their plan, they looked to one core need, which was to ensure the continued success of their summer programs.*

*Mr. Schmidt shared that the second key element to their programming is the ability to change the dynamics with respect to the winter programs. As he shared, the natatorium is not self-supporting. One of the primary reasons for that is the limitations with pool time and the ability to run programs for the community that they can use to provide greater services as well as change the revenue equations. Swim teams are very important but they do not generate the kind of revenue needed to support an aquatics facility like the natatorium. They need to change that equation.*

*Mr. Schmidt showed an image that included the key elements. It will have a new entry; new waterslides and water play area, and in the middle, a new building built over the existing north pool. It will be an indoor/outdoor facility that will include locker rooms and warmer water that will provide for various programming opportunities (lessons, adult aquatics, and possibly rehabilitation services). This building will allow us to change the programming during the winter to assist with balancing the income streams.*

*Mr. Schmidt then shared the plan. Last December they received a suggestion from a state representative to apply for state money under the capital bill. Council's support was critical in making sure that happened and it did. They received \$1 million towards this project. That is about 20% of what they need. Swiminc. has always been sort of in the background. Council members and possibly staff have received comments about things that we are doing wrong because many in the public still think that we are a public, Worthington pool. Swiminc. has never had an opportunity to raise its profile as part of a capital program of this scope. They have never done it and have actually never had to do it but they need to do it now. They are asking that Council forgive the three remaining payments on that original \$600,000 loan. The original loan was made to make a capital investment in the operation of the pool. It has done that. They need to redirect those funds into building the capacity of the organization to do the capital fund raising needed. They need help. They need professional guidance in how to raise the kind of money that Swiminc. needs to raise because they have never done this before. The board is comprised of volunteers just like him who have dedicated themselves to this organization but as a whole he thinks they have zero professional fundraising experience. They are asking for forgiveness of this loan. They will then be able to take the \$35,000 this year and the \$35,000 in each of the following years and use it as the seed money the organization needs to make this change happen.*

*Mr. Schmidt added the reason they need to direct the \$35,000 in this manner is because Swiminc. operates on a very, very thin margin at this point. Last year at the end of their fiscal year they made \$18,000. They are doing better this year and everything looks good except they have a giant hole in the north pool. That is the pool they want to replace and it lost about 42,000 gallons of water when they filled it up. This could change their capital investments this year in terms of how they can get this pool open. The \$35,000 that they are asking for through the forgiveness of the loan is so that they can direct all of their resources to keeping the pools running and use this money exclusively and only for this important new program that they need to kick off. They may not have the resources to do it unless they get this help. He is trying to convey that they have a very thin operating budget. They have an aging facility that they are keeping together with wire and duct tape. They need to change it and know they need to change it. But they also need to create the capacity to do this. This \$35,000 this year and the \$35,000 in the succeeding years will be dedicated for the sole purpose of making sure that they have the capacity to pull this off. So they are asking for council to agree to ask Mr. Greeson and staff to put together some legislation to release Swiminc from the remaining three payments on the loan, please.*

*Mr. Troper asked if they will be coming back to council to request additional funding. Mr. Schmidt acknowledged that it is very likely they will. Mr. Troper then asked if he had an idea of what that request for time and money might be. Mr. Schmidt replied that in his ideal world they would break ground for the renovations at the end of the 2017 summer season, which is a year and five months from now. That is incredibly aggressive but the more likely outcome is at the end of the 2018 summer season. The key being is that the renovations have to begin at the end of the summer season because they can't disrupt their summer membership. That is the timeline for construction. If you back it up from*

*there, they need to have the funding in place probably nine months before they begin construction, which puts them in the first quarter of 2017 if they are going to move forward at the end of the 2017 season. If that is the case and knowing the City's Capital Improvement Project and budgeting timelines, he needs to come back with their request for whatever they may be able to work with from the City's perspective. That may not be practical or something that Council could even consider but if that is the timeline they move forward with that would be the timeline he would to Council with that request. The request would probably be \$1 million from the City. He doesn't know the way or the options needed to pull that together but as he ballpark the process for gathering the resources from the constituents that they have for this pool, that is kind of the timeline and kind of the size of the request. When they make that request they will find out whether the City is even able to do it.*

*Ms. Dorothy commented that Swiminc operates the pool. She asked whose land it operates on. Mr. Schmidt replied that the pool is located on school district property. They operate pursuant to a long term lease with the school district. Ms. Dorothy recalls that it is currently used for teams, lessons, and for a community meeting place in the summer. She asked if that is accurate. Mr. Schmidt replied yes. Ms. Dorothy asked if there are any other swimming pools in the district that the school uses. Mr. Schmidt replied no. Ms. Dorothy concludes that this pool is used for the entire school district. It is the only pool that we have. Mr. Schmidt agreed. Ms. Dorothy stated that currently they do not have any taxing source for additional income however the school gives them \$100,000. Mr. Schmidt reported that the lease they have with the school district is basically a dollar a year lease and they operate the pool. They receive \$100,000 a year from the school district that is a facility use fee for the four high school swim teams and the four high school water polo teams. Using basic numbers for pool rental, they receive a slight deal if they were just renting a pool but they have no commitment otherwise to the upkeep of the facility.*

*Ms. Dorothy asked if he knows the approximate number of summer pool members. Mr. Schmidt thinks last year the number of total memberships, which could be comprised of anything from an individual membership thru family membership was around 1400 memberships. Users are concentrated in Worthington residents that live near the pool, a fair concentration to the south and in the Worthington Hills area.*

*Ms. Dorothy asked if the membership has been fairly consist for the last seventy years. Mr. Schmidt replied no. He believes membership in 2004 was around 1,100. They may have actually been below 1,000 members at one point. They were in a very bad spot in the early 2000s. Mr. Riebold was able to turn the organization around. In 2008 the school district actually proposed to remove the rental fee altogether. The Swiminc board at that time told the schools if they take away that funding they would be done. The school district relented although they did reduce the fee from \$125,000 to \$100,000. The summer membership has been the key focus of the marketing of this pool and over the last three to five years we have continued to maintain very strong membership numbers. But they are competing and if they are unable to use one of the pools, memberships will decline.*

*Ms. Dorothy commented that there are many activities that occur in the summer and many in Worthington have this community asset. They can get there by not only car but also by biking and walking. She thinks it is very important to have those types of facilities and activities available to members of the community. Mr. Schmidt agreed which is why he has agreed to do this for so long.*

*Mr. Troper asked if Worthington residents receive a discount. Mr. Schmidt replied that residents of the school district receive a discount.*

*Mr. Troper asked Mr. Schmidt how much money he anticipates asking the school district for. Mr. Schmidt replied at least the same amount as the City.*

*Mr. Foust shared that he and his family had a membership to that pool from 1959 to the early 1970s. He has carried on that same tradition with his own children in the 1980s and 1990s. These are big numbers that we are talking about. He sees this as a diamond in the rough that is just waiting to be polished. He is very excited about what they are trying to accomplish. He wished them all the best in their effort.*

*Mr. Myers asked Mr. Schmidt how much he thinks they can raise outside of the school district and the City. Mr. Schmidt replied that while he isn't a professional, he believes he can get \$2,000,000 out of the membership and out of corporate donors. He is just not sure from who yet. He shared that he has access to list of people who have given to this organization from back in the 1960s. They have a membership now that has never been asked. They have a non-profit organization that has never functioned in the way that non-profits do in terms of raising money. Swiminc. has never had the mindset that it must be thinking about raising money every minute of every day as an organization. He thinks if they change their thinking as an organization and build on the history as it has been in the middle of Worthington for over sixty years, we have to build on that. Mr. Greeson refers to this as the central park of Worthington. We have to take that concept and take it out to Worthington. He thinks once they do that assuming they have the capacity, assuming they demonstrate their seriousness, and assuming they can instill in the confidence in the community that they as an organization know what they are doing, he thinks they can do that. But they have work to do.*

*Mr. Myers shared that Mr. Schmidt reached out to Council months ago and he appreciates that. He thinks he has a very sympathetic Council here but times are also tough on Council's side as well. He knows he has set a very aggressive goal and a very aggressive plan and he appreciates that. He would hope that they could get over 50% of their fundraising from non-government sources and with \$2,000,000 from non-government and \$3,000,000 from government they are not quite there yet. Mr. Schmidt agreed that if he can get that then he is there for the project but Mr. Myers is right in that it would not be at the 50%. Mr. Myers agreed.*

*Mr. Schmidt said he would make that a goal. That gets to the other point he wants to make and that is that they need to change the dynamics of the organization. When they*

came to Council two years ago and asked them to move the payment date, the reason for the request was because their cash flow projections showed them running out of money. As an organization they cannot continue to function with that type of razor thin safety net. As they move forward with raising money, if he can raise three million dollars from the community and corporate interests for the purpose of this pool, they are not going to stop there.

Mr. Myers thinks that one of the reasons they received their appropriation from the general assembly is because of their example of a public/private partnership. He hopes they can leverage the private side because obviously the general assembly believes that model is a good one and they are giving a great deal of money to people they trust. He shares that opinion as well.

Mr. Schmidt commented that he is a taxpayer in the city of Worthington. He loves this model. He thinks this is the way that you do these kinds of services with this type of community. Again, it is one of the reasons why he is so vested in this part of the community and it is the type of model that he wants to see function and work. But he thinks they need more community buy-in rather than going to the governments to do this. They really need the people to understand what it is and make that investment. Mr. Myers added they need to show the community that this is what a public/private partnership looks like.

Mr. Foust commented that in the spirit of building that excitement he asked if there was any thought in doing this in phases. Something is done, memberships increase and enthusiasm builds. It feeds off of itself and some of the private funding comes as a result. Mr. Schmidt acknowledged that they have looked at a phased approach. Unfortunately, the core part of the plan involves knocking down parts of the outside operations and to the extent there are phases they tend to be very smaller chunks of the bigger concept. It will be analyzed as part of a feasibility analysis, which would be the first thing they accomplish if the loan is forgiven. Phasing it is on the table and has been. He thinks every one of the council members has raised that possibility. They are well aware of it and it may be something that they will have to consider.

Mr. Smith thinks as a person who has been a professional fundraiser in the past, the forgiveness of the City's loan would give them a huge jump start.

#### **MOTION**

Mr. Smith made a motion for staff to move forward with the forgiveness of the City's loan to Swiminc. The motion was seconded by Mr. Foust.

Mr. Norstrom shared that he doesn't have the experience that Mr. Foust has but this is a . . . how did you put it? Mr. Foust stated a gem waiting to be polished.

Mr. Norstrom stated that he disagrees with Mr. Myers in that he thinks this could easily be 50/50 or 60/40. He would like to see Mr. Hurley have some information for Council on competition and whether we could hurt ourselves by funding this project but he thinks

*it is such an important asset to the community and as Mr. Foust and others have said, it is a community meeting place at least in the summer and now it looks like it could extend to be a meeting place in the winter. With this vote Council is not saying we are going to give more money but he thinks they are giving a clear signal that they will be reception to a request from Swiminc. for more money.*

*Ms. Michael acknowledge Michael Bates who wished to comment.*

Michael Bates, 6560 Evening St.

*Mr. Bates shared that he doesn't know much about Swiminc. other than what he read in the documents for tonight's meeting but Mr. Myers has already articulated many of his concerns. The City seems to have some real tight financials right now and he thinks starting to give away money is probably not in the cards. As many know he sat through the budget meetings late last year and the meetings this year and this afternoon he tabulated that Mr. Whited could use another \$100,000 or more for the roads. Mr. Hurley could use another couple hundred thousand dollars to replace park equipment. The MAC receives money as an ongoing process. He also wants to reference Mr. Greeson's letter dated January 2016, which he submitted with the budget and the first item says that the budget seeks to maintain healthy fund balances. It is important for a variety of reasons. The first one, in the future it is unlikely that we will be able to reduce significant numbers of additional positions without reducing service levels or consolidating functions in other government entities. He then goes on point by point talking about what the tightness of the budget does to the city and how it affects operations. So before members start voting to give away \$100,000, and he is just looking at the numbers, he thinks we need to think about where we are as a City from a money perspective.*

*Mr. Norstrom shared that he has already done that. He understands the situation the City is in. He also understands that the \$100,000 is an important part of this community and we will make it work.*

*Mr. Bates commented that if he understands the staff letter for this meeting, Mr. Greeson indicated that the \$100,000 would have to come out of the Capital Improvements Program and his brief review of the CIP looks like it is fully allocated out through 2020. Mr. Norstrom shared that the CIP is always fully allocated five or six years in advance and we always change it. Mr. Bates commented that Mr. Norstrom is indicating that we are either not going to do mandated work by say the EPA. . Mr. Norstrom interjected by stating that anything that is mandated will be done but like we have in the past, we may change our capital investment priorities. Mr. Bates concluded that something else is going to be hurt. Mr. Norstrom disagreed. He stated the priorities will change. You are assuming that the capital budget priorities in the future are the right priorities. Mr. Bates stated that he is assuming that because they are the ones that have been presented. Mr. Norstrom agreed but added that capital budgets always change in the out years. Sewer improvements for his street have been in the budget continually since he has been on Council, going back nine years. Council changes the capital budget regularly because it is projections for the future. Understand that those priorities change every year. Mr. Bates acknowledged that being one of Mr. Norstrom's prerogatives as a*

member of Council but in his view and based on the City's own documentation, the City is involved in other things. This is not a priority. Council is making it a priority. Mr. Norstrom agreed that they are making it a priority which is something they do often with capital investments. They had major investments in the Recreation Center because of mistakes that were made and adjustments had to be made. They do adjustments all the time. Mr. Bates agreed that the Recreation Center was an adjustment but not an improvement. It was because of a previous mistake. Mr. Norstrom stated that it was a change in priority. Mr. Bates stated that he would classify that as an emergency change in priority. He thanked Council for the opportunity to comment.

Ms. Michael shared that this project reminds her a little bit of the McConnell Arts Center project in that there was a public/private partnership that worked together in which the City had to come up with some of the seed money in order to enable the private sector folks to raise the money from the private sector. She sees this forgiveness of the loan at this point as providing the seed money that will help Swiminc. be able to reach out and see how much private money they could raise which would significantly improve the project and possibly limit the amount of funds they would need from the public sector.

**There being no additional comments, the motion carried by a voice vote.**

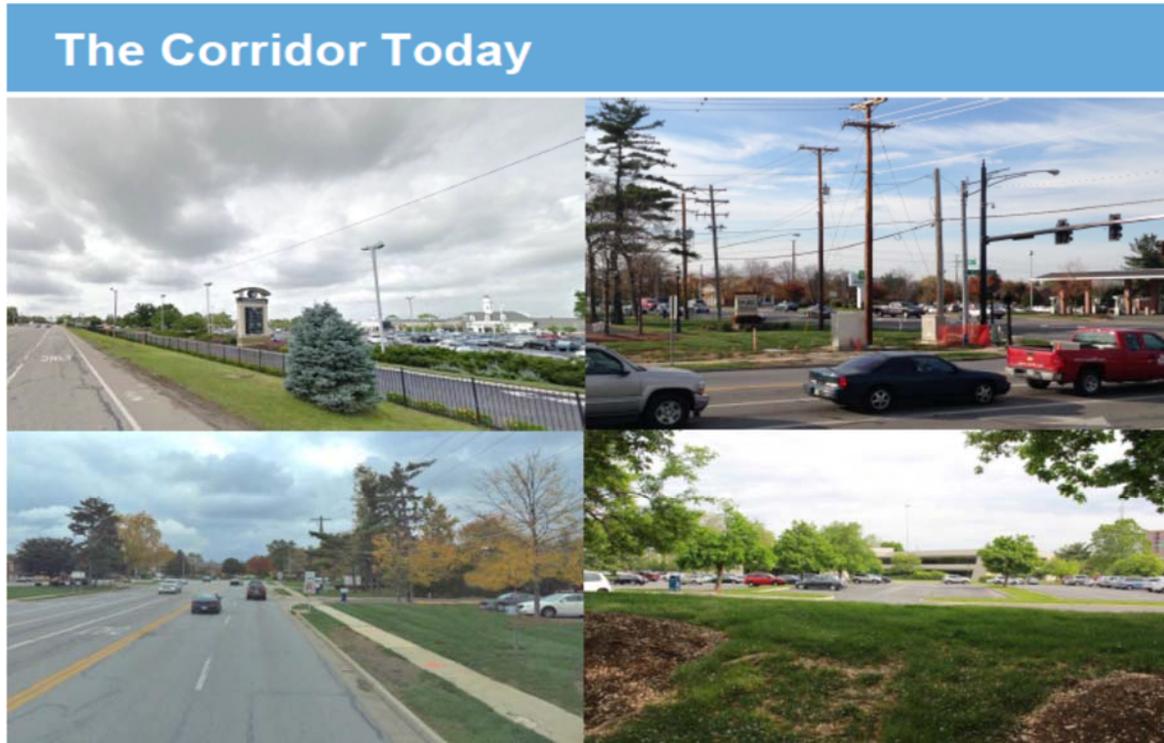
- Funding of Improvements – Wilson Bridge Road Corridor

Mr. Greeson shared that staff will be coming to Council probably in mid-June to review in more detail a phase approach to long term planned Wilson Bridge Road corridor enhancements. As members may recall, staff had consultants do a corridor wide plan. Council has been spending a great deal of time talking about zoning regulations related to Wilson Bridge but it has been since November or so since we have talked about the long term physical infrastructure plan for the corridor. Staff wanted to bring that back to the forefront of members' minds for a couple of reasons: 1) Preparation for a more detailed conversation in June and 2) Because grant cycles are starting to emerge that we potentially need to be responding to for elements of this. Staff will do an abbreviated version of the presentation that was given almost six months ago now and expect that we will bring refined strategies to members in June. He shared that he and Mr. Brown will work together to share the information.

Mr. Greeson shared that consultants were hired to work with staff to identify improvements. They looked at signage, wayfinding and the Wilson Bridge Road Corridor Plan. We purposely set out to identify a plan that probably exceeded our CIP revenues because we want a long term strategy for this. What we are really going to be talking about now and in June are our incremental steps towards realizing our long-term vision. Why is this important? Below are the reasons we felt it was important to continue to invest in the Wilson Bridge Road corridor:

- 1) It is the Gateway into the City
- 2) Safe & Connected
- 3) A Complete Street
- 4) Revitalizing to the Surrounding Properties

- 5) A Reflection of Worthington’s Character and Future
- 6) Leveraging the Interchange Improvements
- 7) Easy to Navigate
- 8) A Beautiful, Great Street.



Slides that showed the entrances to other local community were shared. Mr. Greeson commented that these are all communities that we compete with for economic prospects.

### Current & Complete Streetscape Elements



*Mr. Greeson commented that the picture on the left identifies some of the challenges that we are dealing with, that of remaining competitive. We are aiming at developing character by constructing wider sidewalks; develop a sense of place with decorative mast arms and streetlights and by adding vegetation.*

*Ms. Dorothy shared that she actually works in Westerville and goes by the entrance several times a day. Some of the placements for their bike and pedestrian improvements do not make much sense, as she has not seen anyone sitting on the benches. She hopes we will do better with our placement of things so they will be useful for bicyclists and pedestrians. Mr. Greeson is sure that she will be involved in the improvement process to ensure the correct placement of items. He added that Westerville's improvements were some of the more recently done in central Ohio so we showed their pictures. Ms. Dorothy thinks it looks beautiful and she was jealous for a while but she thinks we can do better. Mr. Greeson agreed. He shared that they have actually had a significant economic return in terms of private investment because of their public improvements. That might be some information to share of what happens when you invest in streetscapes.*

*Mr. Greeson reported the corridor was broken into six focus areas. From a financial standpoint, we think there are only a few of those areas that we can focus on at this time. The corridor extends from the River to the Rail Corridor, which is really anchored by two wonderful parks, Olentangy Parklands and McCord Park. We probably do not promote them as assets enough to the businesses along that corridor. We have a 75,000 square foot community center and a great ball complex on one end and Ohio's busiest trail system on the other and those are real assets.*

Focus Areas:

- 1) Olentangy Park
- 2) West Wilson Bridge Road

*Mr. Greeson shared that this is the intersection of West Wilson Bridge and Old Wilson Bridge. There is difficulty for the office users to turn left from Old Wilson Bridge onto West Wilson Bridge during peak hour. Staff has evaluated installing a traffic light and some enhancements at that signal to respond to concerns and complaints received from our office users.*

*Ms. Michael asked which side of Wilson Bridge Road the pole would be anchored on. Mr. Greeson replied that it looks like it would be anchored on the south and the lights would face the west so it would stop the westbound traffic. It would give a dedicated signal to the people coming off of West Wilson Bridge Road.*

*Ms. Michael requested an additional traffic study because she has been watching that intersection on a regular basis. There is approximately one hour a day in which there is a problem. Mr. Greeson acknowledged that often we design around peak periods. We*

*have had traffic engineers from the GPD Group look at this intersection. Some additional review has been done by Carpenter Marty and it might be beneficial in that June meeting to have them talk about what they see as the effect of this light on traffic management along the Wilson Bridge Road Corridor. The two questions are: 1) Is the signal warranted and does it meet the ODOT state standards for implementation of a traffic signal and 2) What is the effect on the overall flow of traffic on the corridor. We know it would be beneficial in terms of helping the offices exit and we know we receive complaints from some of our businesses about that.*

### 3) Worthington North Entry

*Mr. Greeson shared that once ODOT has completed their improvements on N. High St. there will be purposeful streetscaping to help enhance the appearance of the area behind the mall and along the northern entry into the City that is not part of the ODOT scope.*

*Mr. Brown shared that during the process members of the steering committee talked about this area repeatedly. Removal of the vegetation provided a direct visual of the rear of Kroger so a great deal of honeysuckle was left on purpose to provide some screening.*

### 4) North High Street Corridor

*Mr. Greeson stated that the long-term vision is to capitalize on the investment ODOT has made in the new streetlights with trees, gateway signage, and vegetation. The aluminum fence has seen better days and will be replaced overtime with a stronger one. This contemplates banners as well as brick piers and fencing that is more substantial and has a long life span as well as street trees .*

### 5) East Wilson Bridge Road

*Mr. Greeson shared that there is a repetitive pattern here and if members remember the characteristics of a great urban streetscapes are good walkability path accommodations, and things that frame areas such as streetlights, trees and public art. Members will notice that it starts to repeat itself throughout this corridor. There will be a ten foot bike lane so one of the ideas of the steering committee and probably discussed many times in the different forums is trying to connect that trail that we built on the west side of Wilson Bridge Road to the east side. The idea is that once High St. is crossed we would create a bike trail all the way to the community center and potentially through the Huntley/Wilson Bridge/Worthington-Galena intersection and on down to the Schrock Road bike lane system. The idea is to advance that trail.*

### 6) McCord Park.

*Mr. Greeson commented that they have talked about priorities but there are a couple of impending deadlines. We can apply for federal funds through MORPC's attributable funding process. The pre-application is due in the middle of June with a final application due in August. The multi-use path connection would likely be the most competitive of*

*these elements, which is a significant dollar amount of \$1.93M. Typically, a federal grant like that would require a 20% match. If we apply for funds for anything this year, it is for federal dollars that would become available in 2021. There are benefits and downsides with federalizing a project, particularly one like this that requires right-of-way acquisition. He thinks we need to think carefully this summer about whether to apply for MORPC funding or going for Clean Ohio and State Greenways and Trails funding. Staff is evaluating that at this time and will be prepared with a recommendation in June.*

*Mr. Norstrom asked if there was something that prohibited us from applying for both. Mr. Greeson said he did not think so. The MORPC application is due in August and is a significant effort. The Greenways and Trails is due in February. He asked Mr. Hurley if he wished to comment. Mr. Hurley shared that the only challenge of paring the state grants is that it is very difficult to back out or lessen any award once it is awarded without being penalized on future grant applications. If we go after those funds, we need to make sure we need what we are asking for.*

*Ms. Michael added that those funds have a very limited period of time in which they must be expended, less than two years. Mr. Hurley agreed. He added that if the project is well-defined, they are very restrictive in their use and difficult to change or go backwards once awarded. Ms. Michael went on to say that in order to go forward, we would already have to have the right-of-way acquired. She is not sure we have the time to get the properties purchased. Mr. Hurley added that in essence, there would need to be a clear path to construction.*

*Mr. Greeson shared that staff is really giving members a little bit of what it is wrestling with. There are really three approaches to this task. 1) More flexible right-of-way acquisition process if we do it ourselves and go after state grants. 2) A costlier and longer process is we go after attributable funds. The potential dollar amounts might be higher but they would not be available until 2021. 3) Then there is likelihood that redevelopment will occur on pieces of East Wilson Bridge Road. We expect that we will require right-of-way to be donated and in some cases TIFs to be created to help finance the trail or for the developer to pay for the trail themselves. So it is trying to determine how we mix and match all of these options to accomplish what we are trying to do. Staff wanted to get Council's feedback to the degree that you are ready to do it on some of these order of priority. He heard Ms. Michael wanted to have some technical conversation about the intersection signalization and that can be arranged. We have about \$800,000 that is programed in the CIP for these improvements. We are starting to see TIF revenues come off of the Worthington Place TIF at about \$200,000 a year that we believe we can use for projects from High St. and going west. So we have some revenue coming in and we need to work with Council to allocate it strategically. He would like some discussion on these priorities if members were prepared to do that. If not, he would like them to think about it prior to the June presentation.*

*Mr. Norstrom commented that we have the bike path on West Wilson Bridge Road. Strategically he would think putting the bike path sidewalks down along the entire corridor would establish at least the initial indication of exactly what we want in the*

*corridor. Actually going out to 2021 makes good sense in some respects because we may not get the pedestrian accommodations on the far east side until about then. He would approach the grant agency by sharing that the west trail is complete and we are looking for their money to complete the trail to the east.*

*Mr. Greeson commented that we have \$800,000 that we could use for match or we could take an approach of trying to achieve the multi-use path through TIFs and development requirements and other grants. Mr. Norstrom stated we could potentially use that money then not as money but as in-kind contributions against those federal grants. He has done that before in his bus garages. He does not know if we can do it like that but he thinks we need to look at it.*

*Mr. Greeson shared that in this list of priorities that staff presented last November, the gateway was higher than the path in terms of use of the limited CIP dollars that we have available. Staff is looking for input. We can fund #1 off a couple of years of TIF revenue. We cannot fund #2 and #3 without an influx of outside revenue streams. We can fund \$800,000 of one.*

*Ms. Michael asked what is included in the cost of the gateway. Mr. Brown shared that the work on the gateway is to Wilson Bridge Road. He thinks the idea was to get some private investment for the area between Wilson Bridge and Caren Ave. especially with the redevelopment of the Holiday Inn site.*

*Mr. Greeson commented that we would not be able to get private investment to help with the area north of Wilson Bridge Road although we are funding it off private investment TIF revenues. We could see private investments doing pieces of the trail but we would probably end up with gaps that we would have to fill and it may take a while as East Wilson Bridge Road develops.*

*Mr. Brown shared that area in question might be along the south side of East Wilson Bridge Road as there may only be three feet to work with. We would need an additional 12 to 15 feet of dedicated right-of-way to be able to extend this multi-use path. As you get into the residential and more toward McCord Park the idea was as projects come in we would require the right-of-way dedication and/or require the streetscape improvements to be constructed or put the funds into a kiddy at that time if it did not match up with our plans. But pretty much from the bend going east is the area that we would need additional right-of-way.*

*Mr. Norstrom stated from a priority point of view the east side would be one where we would have the potential of getting a developer to provide additional funds. Mr. Greeson thinks in some cases we would get the right-of-way and in others we would get right-of-way and trail constructed. He thinks we will probably still end up with some gaps. Mr. Norstrom shared that for him the North High corridor would be a lower priority than would be the East or West Wilson Bridge Roads, especially East Wilson Bridge in terms of providing an incentive for private developers to come along and increase the development of the corridor, which is our ultimate goal.*

*Mr. Myers stated that he is confused about what Mr. Greeson is asking. You are asking long range for the next five or six years. It is his understanding that we have \$800,000 in this year's CIP to spend. The potential for state or federal assistance in the multi-use path is in the out years. Mr. Greeson stated there are two options that we are looking at. One is that we have a TIF revenue stream now that we have one payment from. It was a little less than \$100,000 from The Heights for the first half payment so we can reasonably project that we will have a couple hundred thousand dollars a year and we are going to start evaluating how to allocate that money. Ms. Fox has said that we can use that from High St. to the west.*

*Mr. Myers asked if we could use it from Wilson Bridge Road and going north. Ms. Fox replied that it gets a little more difficult but depending on what you are talking about doing, we could probably use it.*

*Mr. Myers stated that he would hate to commit the \$800,000 in this CIP to the East Wilson Bridge Road bike path when we don't really know what might get developed along there in the next two or three years or where additional money may come from. Most of the development that we are seeing now, including the 350 building, the Mall, the path and it is all on the west side and he would like to continue that progress. He also remembers when the steering committee got started we were looking at gateways. That was really the emphasis of the steering committee through the whole process. It was the emphasis of wayfinding and the gateway was High St. We just had a significant alteration in the I-270/US 23 interchange and that is our primary gateway and it is even more primary now with the changes to the intersection. He thinks it makes sense to commit the first \$800,000 to the area of I-270 to Wilson Bridge Road and continue what has already begun by ODOT.*

*Mr. Norstrom understands that but it is just making it look good. It does not influence economic development in any way. There is minimal economic development that can occur from I-270 down to Wilson Bridge. The only places are the McDonalds and AAA buildings. Whereas we have along the East Wilson Bridge Road corridor an opportunity for a great deal of economic development. So the question is what are we going to use the money for. Is it to make Worthington look beautiful, which is a good thing to do or is it to encourage and stimulate economic development to generate more tax dollars in the long run that can then be used to make Worthington look beautiful. That is a good policy question to discuss.*

*Mr. Myers replied that over the last year he has continued to hear that one of the things that not only do the citizens find appealing but that also drives development as much as anything is our Worthington brand. Our Worthington brand is our Worthington look. We have the principal entrance to our City that looks nothing like Worthington. He firmly believes that the look sells and stimulates development. He still does not understand what you are going to spend \$800,000 on this year on the east side.*

*Mr. Norstrom commented that he articulated a pedestrian path. As far as the details go, he does not know what we can get but he thinks that is the better direction to go than just making High St. look beautiful. He fully agrees that the look of Worthington is important but once you get south of that corridor, you have the look of Worthington. It is the most expensive part of our capital development program in this corridor, and is that where we should put the most money now. He is assuming that that money will not stimulate economic development as much as money spent directly on East Wilson Bridge Road would. Mr. Myers stated that you are going to put a path in and spend our money on a path when we probably could leverage private developers to do that for us.*

*Mr. Greeson shared that this is a good discussion. He purposely wanted to refresh members' memory so that when staff brings strategy options in June members will be prepared for the discussion because it has been six months since we talked about this.*

*Mr. Greeson told members that he thinks we can do three things.*

- 1) Have the engineers prepared to give a succinct analysis of the intersection signalization. We can come up with strategies that have options.
- 2) The multi-use path or,
- 3) The High St. Gateway and the relative pros and cons of financing strategies around those.

*Mr. Norstrom commented that he would want to see the justification for those two or somewhere else in the corridor in terms of economic development. He would like to know the impact. Then we should be putting our dollars where the economic return is the highest. Mr. Greeson thinks staff can research that although he is not sure how helpful it will be in this specific instance.*

*Mr. Norstrom stated that at the off-site, they talked about having Council members more involved in developing these things. He would suggest that we do that in this case.*

*Ms. Michael shared that we were planning to dedicated the next committee of the whole meeting for Council to work on developing exactly what you are suggesting. Mr. Norstrom replied that the only problem, you mean before we hear the consultants. Ms. Michael commented that the consultants would be part of the discussion. Mr. Norstrom replied that by that time some strategic decisions have already been made in terms of what is presented to Council.*

*Mr. Greeson commented that we are not making any decisions. We will give members everything we know because really we have choices. We have a budget and there are things that we need to invest in over time. It is a matter of Council setting priorities as to where you want to make those investments.*

*Ms. Dorothy noted that several different funding options were shared that we could go after. She also wants it noted that she read in This Week News that Upper Arlington received \$500,000 for two different paths from the State budget for this current year so*

she would imagine that could also be a potential source of funding for the Wilson Bridge Road multi-use path. She would like to see improvements in locations on West Wilson Bridge where we are already seeing more influx. She thinks only half of those buildings are occupied. She asked if that was correct. Mr. Greeson replied that there is occupancy in all of them. It is actually good. Ms. Dorothy shared that she would like to keep on building on that momentum in that area. Mr. Greeson agreed that there is momentum in that area.

Ms. Michael asked if there was anything else, members wanted staff to include for the Committee of the Whole meeting in June on this topic.

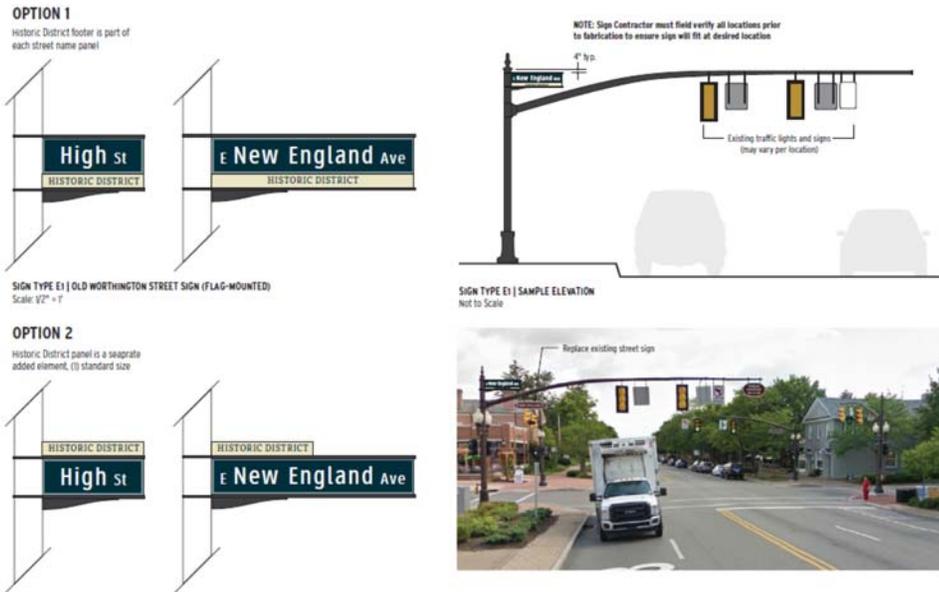
Mr. Greeson shared that staff also wanted to provide members with a brief wayfinding update.

Mr. Brown reported that at the same meeting in November members discussed wayfinding. He shared several slides that depicted examples of the signage.

Mr. Brown shared that over the last few months the project has somewhat stalled because the Old Worthington Association is upset with the name on the signage. They asked that it be changed to include the "Worthington Historic District" instead of just "Old Worthington". This was brought up during our steering committee meetings for over a year and a half and they had members on the steering committee. Members of their committee have since changed and one of the things we want to bring before members tonight for a quick discussion is a revision to what we shared last year to get your thoughts and comments on.



Mr. Brown stated that the sign would be the same Old gateway sign only with the addition of "Historic District" as a banner at the bottom. Two options for the street signs are depicted below with Option 1 being staff's preference. The thought is to add "Historic District" to all the signs so that visitors will know that they are in that district.



Mr. Greeson added that the signs would be along SR-161 and High St. It will extend to the neighborhoods over time (neighborhood signs are below).



Ms. Michael asked how much more expensive would this change be. Mr. Brown replied that the depictions are rendering that the consultant provided. He made some changes to the sign below using Photo Shop. OWA wants a sign that identifies the “Worthington Historic District” and have it state that it is on the National Register of Historic Places. Staff’s idea is to have four additional signs placed at the gateways into Old Worthington however; it comes with a price tag of approximately \$18,000. Mr. Greeson added that we will be sending this example to them but wanted to provide Council with an update first.



Ms. Michael noted that the Worthington Women’s Club renovated signs would also be located at the four gateways. Mr. Greeson and Mr. Brown agreed.

Ms. Michael asked if there is any way to utilize the existing sign pole and perhaps somehow under the Worthington Women’s Village Sign include something identifying the Worthington Historic District instead of having two signposts and all of the extra signage. She does not think the extra signage is needed. Mr. Brown thinks she is channeling her Dr. Chosy impression because that was one of his concerns when he served on the steering committee. This was for discussion with Council tonight to try to work towards some resolution.

Ms. Michael asked if there is a way to incorporate this on the four signs that the Worthington Women’s Club are providing before sending it to the OWA. She asked where the signs would be placed at the same intersections. Mr. Brown replied that the idea was that as you were coming into Old Worthington on the right hand side of the street you would see the Old Worthington kind of where the Worthington Women’s Club signs are now down the opposite side of the street. Ms. Michael highly recommended that we do not try to post the Worthington Women’s Club sign other than where they have been for the last seventy years. Mr. Brown shared that they were going to move them to the inside of the Green. Ms. Michael thinks they will have some problems.

Mr. Greeson asked what they want to do.

*Mr. Myers commented that they already had this resolved once. We adopted the former Old Worthington Association's suggestion; the medallion is what they wanted first. Now they want something different. He asked if they are going to want something different the next time they have an election. Mr. Brown reminded him that they have not seen what was shared with Council tonight since we just got it today. Mr. Myers noted that every time they have an election they want something different. It has gone that way so far, even though their former board agreed to the medallion. Now their new board does not want the medallion but rather an \$18,000 sign.*

*Mr. Brown shared that their board has evolved. He thinks the decision of the medallion at the end of last year was a compromise. Mr. Myers stated he is getting a little frustrated given that this has been pushed back for so long because of the interest of a few and he thinks it is time to move on.*

*Mr. Greeson commented that it is very common in historic districts to do a sign like this somewhere. Mr. Myers commented that he believes we have one. Mr. Brown agreed that there was one located on the Village Green. Mr. Greeson added that we do not have anything that identifies the boundaries.*

*Mr. Norstrom believes the existing sign is sufficient. Ms. Dorothy agreed.*

*Ms. Michael added that the Worthington Women's Club paid to have one located by the Griswold Center.*

*Ms. Dorothy does not think there is enough information on the sign and is therefore worthless for a pedestrian.*

*Several members opposed the Historic District sign.*

*Ms. Michael would like to see where staff plans to place the Worthington Women's Club sign as soon as possible.*

*Mr. Foust wondered why the addition of historic district to every street sign was necessary. That seems like a needless expense. While we do not know what the cost, he can't imagine that it will be cheap. Mr. Brown shared that at least with Option 1, they felt they could incorporate it into the realm of our original scope. The additional signage really throws us out of budget.*

*Mr. Norstrom asked if we manufacture the street signs in-house. Mr. Greeson and Mr. Brown agreed that the current signs are done in-house. Mr. Brown added that the goal is to replace damaged signs with the new design in-house. Mr. Norstrom concluded that the cost would be relatively inexpensive.*

*Mr. Norstrom reiterated that Council is not in favor of the "Historic District" signs although including "Historic District" on the street signs makes perfect sense and we do that over time.*

*Ms. Michael again shared her interest in the placement of the Women's Club sign. Mr. Brown shared that we can discuss that.*

*At Mr. Norstrom's prompting, Mr. Brown shared that what we discussed last year in the fall was to flip flop where the current Women's Club signs were located and have them on the interior. Ms. Michael stated the women of the Women's Club do not have that same understanding. Mr. Brown replied that he does not care where they are placed. Mr. Norstrom stated that the Women's Club has paid for their signs. The OWA does not want to pay for their signs. Mr. Brown shared that he told them that he would send them the bill but they did not seem receptive to that at all.*

## **REPORTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS**

*Ms. Dorothy shared that this Friday is Bike to Work Day. She encouraged everyone to ride his or her bike to work.*

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION** Mr. Smith made a motion to meet in Executive Session to discuss the discipline of personnel. The motion was seconded by Mr. Myers.

**The motion carried by the following voice vote:**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>7</b>	Norstrom, Dorothy, Foust, Troper, Smith, Myers, and Michael
<b>No</b>	<b>0</b>	

Council recessed at 9:16 p.m. from the Regular meeting session.

**MOTION** Mr. Myers made a motion to return to open session. The motion was seconded by Mr. Norstrom.

**The motion carried unanimously by a voice vote.**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

President Michael declared the meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

/s/ D. Kay Thress  
Clerk of Council

*APPROVED by the City Council, this  
5<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2016.*

/s/ Bonnie D. Michael  
Council President