



**CITY OF WORTHINGTON**  
**Worthington City Council Minutes**  
November 12, 2019

6550 N. High Street  
Worthington, Ohio 43085

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

Worthington City Council met in Regular Session on Tuesday, November 12, 2019, in the John P. Coleman Council Chambers of the Louis J.R. Goorey Municipal Building, 6550 North High Street, Worthington, Ohio. President Michael called the meeting to order at or about 7:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:** Rachael R. Dorothy, Douglas Foust, Beth Kowalczyk, Scott Myers, David Robinson, Douglas K. Smith, and Bonnie D. Michael

**Member(s) Absent:**

**Also present:** City Manager Matt Greeson, Law Director Tom Lindsey, Director of Finance Scott Barter, Chief of Fire John Bailot, Director of Service & Engineering Dan Whited, Director of Planning & Building Lee Brown, Director of Parks & Recreation Darren Hurley, Clerk of Council D. Kay Thress (Assistant City Manager Robyn Stewart and Assistant City Clerk Ethan Barnhardt arrived at approximately 8:20 from another meeting)

There were thirty-two visitors present.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

*President Michael invited all to stand and join in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.*

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

*Mr. Greeson shared that one of Council's priorities is to look for ways to make our community and City government more sustainable. One of the issues that was raised by a Council member was trying to get information on Residential Property Assessed Clean Energy (R-PACE), particularly how it is being rolled out in Ohio and more specifically central Ohio. We invited Caleb Bell with Law Firm Bricker & Eckler LLP. He is their public finance chair who has been working on PACE issues on behalf of the Energy Special Improvement Districts and other entities around Ohio to provide some information on this subject.*

*Mr. Bell shared that he represents the Columbus Regional Energy Special Improvements District. This is a shared services program that is hosted by the Columbus Regional Finance Authority. It operates with many jurisdictions that have all used special assessment financing for energy improvements, primarily on the commercial side. The Trivium project on West Wilson Bridge Road was funded with PACE financing through special assessment. This concept, R-PACE, is the program for residential properties. Over the last several years he has been working with the Columbus Financial Authority, other Port Authorities and Regional Authorities around the state to determine how to make PACE work for individual homeowners. The statewide cooperative group will launch the resulting program, the R-PACE effective January 1, 2020.*

*Several regions in the state are already working with the program in one way or another. In central Ohio, the City of Bexley has already approved legislation for R-PACE with others scheduled to approve legislation soon. Other municipalities, like Worthington are currently just gathering information. Multiple communities, primarily in Northeastern Ohio have already approved this program. They will be the launch communities in the new year.*

*R-PACE is defined as being a method of financing that is designed to enable a homeowner to do energy efficiency or certain alternative energy improvements to their home and finance that effort over a long period of time with a fixed rate of interest. The financing mechanism is not a loan but rather a special assessment. The special assessment will be added to a property owners tax bill. The term of the loan can be set for 5, 10, 15, or 20 years with the interest rate based on the term.*

*While the Renovate America group is the lender that will launch this program in Ohio, they are not the only lender that offers this product. There are roughly four other such lenders that operate in the four or five states that currently offer a similar product.*

*Early on, particularly in California, the program was done based on underwriting the value of your home. If you had equity, then you could get PACE financing. Often homeowners had a lot of equity in your home but not much income. In Ohio we decided to create a new model. Not only is equity in the home required but also homeowners must have the ability to pay. The Ohio product utilizes a FICO score of at least 620 that is not part of other states requirements. That will create a minimum threshold for someone to be able to qualify.*

*Mr. Robinson asked why Ohio is launching the program with a single provider and when will others be able to enter the program. Mr. Bell replied that the problem with R-PACE is that it requires many small projects with volume. These projects are probably \$10,000 to \$20,000 each and many are needed. Developing a uniform system across the state was our first problem that needed solved. The second problem was to determine who would be willing to invest time and money to do that. We had to talk to one of the five lenders to do this. Since the Port Authority was already doing commercial PACE financing, they were the likely ones to address the residential issue. Toledo's Port Authority tried financing*

*themselves and determined that they couldn't do it on their own, so they partnered with Renovate America to launch the program. That agreement provides for Renovate America to obtain cost recovery from another lender if within the first 2,500 homes that are done in the state of Ohio another lender funds them. It is not exclusive, but it also creates an embedded cost recovery mechanism for the port authority that invested a great deal of time to put it together.*

*Mr. Robinson asked if there was an estimate as to how long the 2,500 projects would take. Mr. Bell replied possibly a year or two. It is not exclusive during that period.*

*In Ohio, the R-PACE is a shared services program where multiple local governments are committing to the same standardized program across the state. In central Ohio the Regional ESID has custody for your energy programming. They adopted a R-PACE plan that enables any of the member communities to activate this program. Local government that deals with energy agrees with this program. It is up to the individual local governments to decide whether to participate. Bexley has already agreed and their city council approved the plan. Council's role is to evaluate the program to determine if you would like to have it available for your citizens. If you do, then there is an ordinance and an agreement which enables the standardized system to be available.*

*This standardized, legal process means that a homeowner will still call their local heating and cooling provider for home improvements. If that provider has access to this program and are qualified as a contractor, they will be able to offer this financing option to the homeowner.*

*When asked by Ms. Kowalczyk how the contractors are qualified, Mr. Bell replied that they are qualified by the capital providers that participate in the system. If there are five capital providers, each provider will make the vendor level financing available. The vendor would do a training that involves a background check. Their social credit is evaluated. The lender will provide the qualifications of the individual contractor. It doesn't mean that the government won't supervise this process. If the government, City Council or the Columbus Port Authority, or anybody in the system determines that a particular contractor is doing something wrong or even an individual contractor who works at a particular contractor is doing something wrong, the government has the authority to exclude that contractor from the system regardless of whether the capital providers like it or not.*

*Mr. Myers asked how that works. If a contractor comes to my house and messes up the job, how do I get them off the list? Can a homeowner get them off the list? Mr. Bell replied not necessarily because it is possible to have an unreasonable homeowner. Mr. Myers agreed. Mr. Bell explained that in Ohio, the contractor doesn't get paid unless the homeowner signs off on the installation. That is not actually the case most of the time when we do home renovation projects. It is an imbedded system where it is likely the contractor will want to resolve disputes because they want to get paid. Secondly there is actual power in the system for the homeowner to withhold their consent to pay the contractor.*

*When asked by Ms. Kowalczyk what happens if the homeowner withholds their consent, Mr. Bell shared that there are several ways a homeowner can do that. Ohio has a three day right to cancel. It applies to the signature on the contract, within three days you can choose to fund or not fund. If you are in an emergency, it is likely the work will get done in three days so you can just choose to not install the work at that point.*

*Mr. Bell continued to address numerous questions by Mr. Myers and Ms. Kowalczyk about how disputes are resolved.*

*Ms. Kowalczyk commented that she is still not hearing a formal process that is any different than if you did get a home equity line of credit and you decided not to pay. It is still a dispute between the contractor and eventually it will end up in court. There is no intervening party unless you take it to the Attorney General's office or something like that. Mr. Bell disagreed. He believes there are several intervening parties. Homeowners have the right to report to the shared service system and they would. When asked who that is, Mr. Bell replied the Columbus-Franklin County Finance Authority, the Columbus Regional Energy Special Improvements District, Toledo/Lucas County Port Authority and the others who are all participating. There is a Port level cooperative agreement. There is your residential plan at the district level. That is the board that Mr. Foust sits on in Columbus. We have the PACE Board, which can hear a complaint or a problem. The City can hear a complaint or a problem. The onus on the government side is to report those up the chain so we have the appropriate listing of exclusions or problems that are being vetted. If a citizen informs the municipality but it is not reported up the chain, then there is no opportunity to fix the problem. A little different than in California and Florida in that here we inserted the government as a level between the lenders and the homeowners.*

*When asked by Mr. Myers if the government has any enforcement authority, Mr. Bell replied that the government is the arbiter of whether the project is approved or not. It is also the arbiter of whether funding occurs or not. Mr. Myers commented that the government applies the underwriting standards. Mr. Bell agreed that it is a double underwriting standard. It is no different than a revenue bond. Both the project is going to underwrite, and the government is going to check that underwriting and both must approve. If both don't approve, then you don't end up with funding. This is similar. You have the capital provider side approving a project, but their approval is not going to result in funding because the government must also approve it. This "fox guarding the hen house" concept allows for a pause to ensure that assessments do not occur without the appropriate government oversight of the project.*

*Mr. Myers asked if the governmental agency also approves the character of the improvement as to whether it qualifies. Mr. Bell replied yes. The improvements must meet the energy enhancement requirements.*

*Mr. Foust shared that he is a little confused as the funding passes through much like a property tax. He borrows money for ten years to add solar panels on his house. His project went fine but he sells the house after five years. He asked how the remaining balance gets paid off. Mr. Bell replied the upon transfer of a residential property, payoff will likely*

*occur much like a second mortgage. The outstanding item will be picked up during title search, deed documents, etc. If a cash purchase occurs, it may be as is and transfer subject to.*

*When asked by Mr. Myers what the lien priority is, Mr. Bell replied that it is a tax lien item equivalent to any other assessments.*

*When asked by Ms. Dorothy the question of what happens if taxes go into arrears, Mr. Bell replied that the PACE program is a tax lien-based program. This rides alongside all the items like Franklin County, the schools, the city, etc. that appears on an individual's tax bill. If the property taxes are not paid, the County Treasurer will add you to the delinquent list and it will be treated as any other property owner in arrears.*

Mr. Bell explained the delinquent process in greater detail.

*Mr. Bell reiterated that the underwriting parameters placed on this product, such as having equity in your home, the PACE project plus your mortgage can't exceed 97% of the value of the home, and you must have the ability to pay in the first place help guard against the general population from having delinquency problems.*

*Ms. Kowalczyk recalls FICO scores as an item that is reviewed. She asked what else is taken into consideration. Mr. Bell replied that a back-end analysis is done on all debt, like a credit card application.*

*Ms. Kowalczyk then asked what kind of disclosure documents are shared with a homeowner, potential client, at the time of reviewing options for payment. Mr. Bell replied that he spent the last six weeks drafting the consumer documents for this program. Ms. Kowalczyk stated that she would like to see the documents. Mr. Bell replied that they will be available soon. The documents include a funding contract between the Ohio R-PACE program and the property owner. That contract lays out the principal and interest, term, etc. There are also several disclosures: the three day right to cancel, a note before you owe, as well as a confirm terms call with the homeowner that is separate from the contractor. That conversation is recorded and provides an opportunity for the homeowner to get additional information and questions answered by someone other than the contractor.*

*Ms. Kowalczyk understands that the commercial PACE has an energy assessment done to provide return on investment information. She asked if there is a similar assessment done with the residential product. Mr. Bell replied that there are several choices. The homeowners can choose to hire an energy auditor or hire a third party to do a full-blown building analysis. Solar and geothermal are different. Those assets are perse eligible. Further evaluation about the improvements is more about the homeowner's willingness to pay for the cost of the solar and get the benefit of the power. It is something they can evaluate. The R-PACE component doesn't involve a third-party energy audit by a hired engineer or contractor, instead it is component based. There are many items that qualify as energy efficient that would qualify under this program.*

*To Mr. Myers question as to whether these loans are getting bundled and resold, Mr. Bell confirmed that they are. They are all rated and then sold to investors. There are parameters that help keep us out of a low-quality product. Ms. Kowalczyk reports that Renovate America got in trouble with that in California, but it looks like they have figured out how to improve their product to prevent that from happening. Mr. Bell thinks that all the lenders got in trouble in California, which is why this product has survived. It is a good product, but it needed a better system. Ohio happened to have a statute that would work and people who were using the commercial side of the product. To make it work here we knew we had to do more and better than what was done in California, particularly on the ability to pay standards and governmental oversight. We believe it is a much better system.*

*When asked by Ms. Kowalczyk if there are other states that have implemented these changes that are ongoing and have done the work so we can see how they are working, Mr. Bell replied no. Ohio will be the first state that will have the ability to pay standard from day one. He thinks it is a good thing because it creates a market that won't have a race to the bottom where lenders try to out compete each other. All vendors must abide by these same standards.*

*Ms. Kowalczyk commented that the standards were implemented by this authority and not by the state legislature or the attorney general through rule making procedures. These are pretty much self-imposed standards. Mr. Bell agreed. In a way it is self-regulated. It is also a positive story about shared services. While cities do not necessarily have extensive experience in tax lien secured financing, we have the finance authority to help with that. Mr. Bell added that any one of the five lenders who are not performing can be rejected from the program.*

*Mr. Kowalczyk appreciates the information but is still concerned that we are getting into the business of lending to our residents. That is not necessarily an area that she thinks government should be involved. There are private mechanisms for funding these services. She is interested in seeing how it plays out in other communities.*

*Ms. Michael asked if there is a requirement that Worthington City Council approve this prior to Worthington residents partaking in the program. Mr. Bell replied that residents can't be involved in the program without City Council first acting.*

*When asked by Mr. Myers what the action is, Mr. Bell replied that the action enables the plan that was adopted by the energy district to be active within Worthington. That means that it enables an individual homeowner to settle with their contractor to use this method of financing. It is ultimately an assessment that Worthington is imposing upon an individual homeowner at their request. City Council must first pass legislation to authorize the use of this program. That legislation also has the authority for Council to repeal the authorization if it doesn't like the program. There is also an annual item of enrolling the assessments. That action is passed to the county auditor at the end of each year.*

*To Ms. Kowalczyk's question regarding disputes, Mr. Bell thinks that dispute resolution would likely be done by staff and not be something that Council would need involved in.*

*Mr. Robinson thanked Mr. Bell for coming out tonight. He has encouraged this conversation with Council because he believes our society must move with due haste to address the threat of climate change. He knows of no other mechanism whereby our community could make such significant strides in solar generation as this mechanism. If fellow council members know of other means by which we can do so, he asked them to advance the ideas.*

Mr. Bell briefly ran through the remainder of his presentation, much of which has already been shared.

*Mr. Smith asked if this program is open to smaller business that are not eligible for commercial PACE. Mr. Bell replied that it splits based on property tax classification. Are you residentially taxed or not. The other is how do you normally get financing. Are you in the residential mortgage pool or in the larger pool with commercial underwriting? The Finance Authority can do small \$100,000 loans but they do have fees associated with them.*

*Ms. Kowalczyk commented that she appreciates Mr. Bell's willingness to come and respond to members' tough questions. She did not know anything about this program until Council member Robinson brought it up. She saw that there was discussion at Columbus City Council where some issues were raised. She has been made aware of the fact that National Consumer Law Center is watching this very carefully considering what has happened in other states. She thinks members should be cautious in looking at these alternative loan models. She doesn't think this is the answer to save the world from climate change or the best use of our resources. She thinks members can watch and see how it plays out. If things seem to go well then perhaps, we can continue our discussion.*

*Ms. Dorothy added her agreement of Ms. Kowalczyk's comments. She is not sure that the government should be involved in this lending game. She added that everyone in Worthington has access to AEP's energy efficiency program. Columbia Gas also has a similar program. Her household has gone through the programs and it has saved them a great deal of money. They have been able to reduce their energy use significantly and receive rebates. Those programs could be pushed out without any additional products being added.*

*Mr. Robinson commented that he has heard twice the comment that the government would be getting into lending with this program. He believes that is a misunderstanding and asked Mr. Bell if he would speak to that. Mr. Bell agreed that "government lending" is misconstrued. A loan product that creates a financing mechanism for a homeowner, that financing is secured with special assessments, the loan product is funding by a capital provider and not the government. It is more about policy more than anything. Is the product something that Council is willing to have available to property owners or not. It is not correct to call it a loan. No tax dollars are securing this financing. It is completely at the risk of the homeowner and the capital provider. Ms. Kowalczyk acknowledged the*

*program as one that Council members would be endorsing. The city must take official action to endorse this product and to her, that is the same thing. Mr. Bell shared that he wrestled with the contractor issues in this product a great deal. He keeps coming back to the idea that if this program doesn't exist there will be less scrutiny on our contractors. If it does, there will be more scrutiny on contractors. He doesn't think that is a bad thing.*

Council members thanked Mr. Bell for the information.

## **REPORTS OF CITY OFFICIALS**

### Policy Item(s)

- Proposed 2020 Operating Budget – Presentations from Community Groups

#### Old Worthington Partnership

*Ms. Mullen expressed how excited they were to be here to talk about their organization's many accomplishments and to illustrate how impactful the City's investment has been. The Partnership is a volunteer based 501©3 non-profit organization focused on enhancing the geographic heart of Worthington as well attracting visitors and positive attention to the community. They stand as a community advocate for growth, sustainability, collaboration, and engagements. Last year at this time, they were entrusted with the expanded mission of tourism and they felt uniquely positioned to take on that growth. With the addition of the tourism mission, they strategically looked at the organization's structure and how they could create efficiencies and opportunities across their missions. In doing so they had many conversations around the organization's name and the response was overwhelmingly positive. The small logo and name change allow them to keep Old Worthington at their roots and foundation, while bettering them to market and be inclusive of all of Worthington.*

*She explained how they expanded the board of directors adding five new board members, including two tourism professionals Cathe Moog and Michelle Wilson. They also added Andrew Shuneson from FCBank, Jen Blosser from AR Workshop, and George Bleimes from the Farmers Market.*

*Ms. Parini discussed the City's return on investment. She explained how they have three core values which are engagement, collaboration, sustainability. For engagement they are doing lots of media including two TV spots with a commercial played on ABC6, expanded social media, and the Best of the 'Bus Award. Their events are the most public way of engaging with the community. They have three ticketed events to bring in visitors from outside the community with 65% coming from outside 43085. They have also successfully launched Worthington First Wednesdays which has resulted in a 20% sales increase over typical mid-week sales.*

*She explained how there have been numerous key meaningful collaborations including with the City of Worthington and other new partners. They worked with the Bicycle and Pedestrian committee on projects including bike path signage, showing Old Worthington*

*is just down the road. Their core of volunteers has expanded including local high school lacrosse and football players. The Partnership has received \$9,500 of in-kind services from collaboration including a custom social media plan for both experience Worthington and Old Worthington Partnership and design work on marketing pieces. The Picnic with the Partnership is an amazing and unique community event.*

*Sustainability has experienced a lot of growth with the establishment of a new committee created from grassroots efforts from volunteers that was folded into the Partnership structure. There is a sustainability table at the Farmers Market to educate the public and gather feedback. They are exploring AEP programs and working with businesses to upgrade their recycling and composting program. This year they successfully diverted nearly 16,000 single use plastic bags from the landfill.*

*The Farmers Market has had a new Market Manager this year, Christine Hawks, who has taken the reins and done a great job. There has been lots of reinvestment in the Market with new active branding brought under Partnership. There have been new connections with the Green Plate Special and new community table partners. The SNAP program served an average of ten customers per week with 26% who are new customers. The Farmers Market has an economic impact of \$63,017 using the approximate spending on Saturday, September 14. That is a conservative estimate of what is spent each day. The Worthington Farmers Market is regularly voted the best in the region and recently won Best of the 'Bus from CityScene Magazine.*

*She explained how Beth Dekker is the Tourism Director. Under the Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA) Program, 25 individuals from multiple organizations and companies became certified tourism ambassadors. This has allowed them to leverage limited dollars to get other people to work for us as ambassadors. Marketing has included a Group Tour Magazine article, sophisticated social media, targeted ads, additional blog posts, and the Holiday Ambassador Program. The strategic marketing impact is shown by 35,000 impressions on a targeted ad to ASAE convention guests. The Holiday Ambassador program has utilized social media influencers.*

*In 2020 and beyond she expressed how they are excited about the Fifth Annual Picnic with the Partnership. They are also unveiling a new social media plan and a new marketing campaign "In Worthington." The Community Development Committee has ideas to make the district more beautiful and want to study parking issues. The Sustainability Committee has ideas about working to change behaviors in community. There is also discussion about a public arts program.*

*President Michael thanked everyone for coming and the members of the board for coming.*

*Mr. Robinson commended on the quality of the marketing pieces expressing that they are well done.*

*Ms. Dorothy explained that she appreciated the additional collaboration with different entities, it is phenomenal and keeps getting better year after year. She hopes that it will continue.*

*President Michael said she received a phone call about the parking issues at the Farmers Market at the Worthington Mall, showing how popular this is. Ms. Parini said they would continue to monitor parking issues. They did a lot of additional marketing about it moving indoors.*

*Mr. Myers clarified that their total ask is for \$120,800. Ms. Parini replied that \$55,000 is for the Partnership, \$55,800 from CVB carryover, and \$10,000 that was generated by the Econolodge. Mr. Myers asked if that depletes the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) fund. Ms. Parini responded that they would have another year or so left in the fund. The CVB did a good job creating a nest egg and they anticipate operating at the same level the next two years.*

*Mr. Foust explained how this is essentially public money going to support private sector ventures. He expressed that what is good for business in Worthington is good for all of Worthington, but what about having these types of resources to be extended to merchants on Proprietors or Linworth for example. He would like to take a closer look at businesses in Worthington as a whole. Ms. Parini said they are happy to engage with businesses outside the historic district, but their mission is to work with folks as it relates to tourism. Their work with Old Worthington stems from their roots as the business association. Since they are a part of a special class in the historic district, they feel those resources are geared specifically towards them since a lot of what they do is collaborate on some of the events and experiences that happen there.*

*Ms. Kowalczyk said she has had privilege of being on the board for two years now and everyone has great energy and creativity. She thanked them for everything they have done for the City. It is great to see this public private partnership bloom and grow.*

### McConnell Arts Center

*Ms. Donovan introduced herself as serving as the Interim Executive Director and as the Director of Programs. She described their mission and vision and how 72% of Americans believe that the arts unify us. 90% of Americans believe that arts centers are important for their community's quality of life. The McConnell Arts Center (MAC) has grown over the past ten years. They host a number of community groups and have spaces that are rented through the year for events large and small. There are offerings of over 200 classes, workshops, and camps. The Worthington Arts Festival has a strong presence of local regional and national artists. They have partnered with and share resources with a variety of other organizations.*

*MAC attendance increases steadily each year and in 2018 there were 98,000 visitors. There have been 605,800 visits since November 2009. Eric Gnezda recently mentioned how Songs at the Center reaches three million plus each year. That program started at the*

*MAC. When patrons come to visit the MAC they spend money in Worthington. In 2019 it is estimated the economic impact is \$3.4 million dollars. The investment made by the City is vital.*

*2019 has been a year of transition where they have refocused staff and fiscal resources. There has been the creation of increased administrative efficiencies and improved financial check and balances. The has board increased their engagement. There has been an effort to work on brand consistency. A conversation began to set the stage for strategic planning. In 2020 they are celebrating 10 years of creative arts experiences and have multiple events planned.*

*She introduced Erin Blue who will be joining them as MAC's Director. She worked previously with the Columbus Museum of Art and the Columbus Symphony Orchestra. President Michael expressed her thanks for the presentation and welcomed Ms. Blue back to the community.*

*Ms. Dorothy brought up how she has been a board member for several years and it has been phenomenal to see how the MAC has been made into an institution. The transition of the Arts Festival to the MAC has been a great addition to the community. She thanked everyone and explained how it provides so much opportunity to enhance our lives.*

### Worthington Historical Society

*Ms. LaLonde touched on some of the things they have been working on this past year and what they have coming up. She explained how they continue to maintain the Orange Johnson House, the Old Rectory, and the Jeffers Mound. They are continuing to do a photographic inventory of their collections and making sure everything is updated from the index cards and getting it put into their computer system. Over 5,200 records were worked with last year with another 3,800 worked with this year.*

*The Historical Society has a number of popular events. Working with Experience Worthington they have definitely seen an increase in the number of visitors coming. Some events include:*

- *The spring opening at the Orange Johnson house*
- *Pioneer days with local third graders*
- *Historic Worthington Walking Tour series*
- *Walnut Grove Cemetery tours*
- *Worthington tour of Homes and Gardens*
- *Antique Sale at Market Day*
- *Group tours at the Doll Museum at the Old Rectory*

*At least 50% of the tickets sold to the Orange Johnson House were young persons that were not from Worthington. The Ghost Tours were sold out and 45% of people were outside of Worthington, with one coming from West Virginia. The Doll Museum has gotten*

*national attention. The Bicentennial Project at the Orange Johnson House they hope will occur in early spring 2020.*

*Ms. Dorothy thanked Ms. LaLonde for being open to collaboration. It is amazing how these three groups have been collaborating. The displays done by the Historical Society are phenomenal and it is enlightening to seeing how much care goes into preserving this history.*

*President Michael said that history is such an important part of this community and she conveyed her thanks to Ms. LaLonde and the board for keeping Worthington's history in place.*

*Mr. Myers said to all three groups that presented, that five or six years ago he and Mr. Norstrom saw several dysfunctional groups. They were very disturbed by that dysfunction and had several closed-door discussions about whether to continue this funding. In contrast, tonight he has seen collaboration and noted how all three organizations are run by women. He then asked how many people remember Art of the Green which rotated art three to four times per summer. He misses it. Some of the art was done by amateurs, professionals, and kids. It gave one more reason to go down to the green.*

- Proposed 2020 Budget – Departmental Overview

### Service & Engineering

*Mr. Whited showed the historical levels for the Service & Engineering Department's operating budget from 2018 through 2021. He noted how nothing significant has changed with mostly inflationary changes.*

*Ms. Dorothy brought up historical road salt costs. Mr. Whited said between utilizing direct liquid application and some changes Mr. Tennant has made, we will have significantly less costs and more environmental sustainability.*

*Mr. Whited listed some of the changes in the coming year. There is \$4,000 added to building equipment maintenance budget for additional repairs for HVAC not covered under the HVAC contract. An addition \$500 to Fleet Computer Maintenance due to projected increases in the FASTER software utilized by the fleet department staff for inventory and repair of vehicles and equipment. They added \$2,100 to right-of-way mowing and weed control to cover the contractual increase for services. Added \$1,500 to Storm Water Education to fully fund payments to the Franklin County Soil and Water services to comply with storm water quality regulations. \$12,000 in uniform funding was moved from the 202 fund (Street) to the General fund.*

*Their budget goals for 2020 include:*

- *Completing the American Public Works Association (APWA) Self-Assessment.*
- *Prioritizing needed waterline repair/replacements.*

- *Future progress with the Northeast Gateway Project and commencement of construction.*
- *Continuation of major repairs and replacement of sanitary sewers.*

*The APWA self-assessment is not a simple task evaluating the entire system, clarifying the budgeting role, promoting staff development, coordinating with other departments, and doing succession planning which will ultimately help us achieve accreditation. Most communities that do this are larger communities. He explained how he has created an intergovernmental approach combining best practices. It is a slow process, but our former intern Christa Johnston helped us get this off the ground before she left.*

*President Michael asked about the costs for the Northbrook and Kenyonbrook projects. Mr. Whited said that Northbrook is approximately \$600,000 and Kenyonbrook is approximately \$2.1 million. He hopes that they get kicked off relatively soon.*

*Mr. Myers noted how the Service & Engineering Department has a lot on their plate this next year and he knows we have talked a lot about waterlines. He asked how much could be expected to be accomplished realistically. Mr. Whited said that next year will be understanding of the system and creating a prioritization based on different criteria that would be level of service, pressurization, and who is impacted. They will go in and create a table of prioritized projects and then begin cherry-picking those as we go through the following years. It may be 2021 before we start into construction.*

*Ms. Kowalczyk asked what the APWA accreditation will get us and if it will help us with getting grants. Mr. Whited said that he cannot say that directly, but it does give us a higher level of credibility in that area. One of his goals when he has come here was to put in place policies and procedures on why we do things, but he has struggled on how to do that. When he went to the APWA meeting last year, he became convinced that this was the best way to do that. Ms. Kowalczyk noted the recent snow and cold temperatures and brought up how she wanted us to bring up how we can encourage property owners to be timely in clearing their sidewalks and doing it properly. Mr. Greeson said that the recent weather illustrates why we need to engage our education process. We can work with Ms. Brown to initiate that earlier. President Michael referenced using the City's social media and newsletter to get that information out. Ms. Kowalczyk expressed that she would like us to be proactive.*

### Parks & Recreation

*Mr. Hurley said that the expenditure summary stair steps are due to the annual staff cost of living increase for inflation, but they are flat budget as far as line items. Additional costs include \$3,000 for pool chemicals to allow for continued safe and clean operation of the community center pools. \$1,500 for fields maintenance to maintain ball diamonds and soccer fields. \$1,400 was added to ground maintenance to allow for continued contractual services in the City's parks and facilities such as for mulching, painting, facility work, portable restrooms and repairs.*

*The Departments 2020 budget goals are to:*

- *Finalize design and begin implementation of McCord park improvements.*
- *Facilitate a community input process early in the year to lead to the replacement of the playground at Selby Park during the late summer/early fall.*
- *Continue work with the Parks and Recreation Commission to identify and implement improvements in the Olentangy Parklands to enhance river experiences and accessibility.*

*Mr. Hurley explained that for Selby Park, they will involve the neighborhood there and it will be a robust process to replace playground. The Olentangy Parklands improvements will allow them to take advantage of other investments that have been made such as the Pickleball courts and restrooms.*

*President Michael asked about the Selby Park project and if it includes the blacktop area that is falling apart. Mr. Hurley said it is not a part of that. He explained how we need a little help from a consultant to help us sort that out which is currently budgeted in the third year of the CIP.*

- **Financial Report – October 2019**

*Mr. Robinson asked Mr. Bartter if he was surprised that income taxes have exceeded last year and if there were trends. Mr. Bartter said through the month income taxes have been relatively flat. Mr. Robinson asked about unencumbered balance which slightly exceeds 50% and when it would be discussed as per the Fund Balance Policy. Mr. Greeson said he believed the conversation would be at the year-end close. Mr. Bartter said that there could be some cyclical changes throughout the year, and it was thought the discussion would be done once we close out the year and look back.*

**MOTION**                      Mr. Myers moved, Ms. Dorothy seconded a motion to accept the October 2019 Financial Report as presented.

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

*Mr. Greeson explained how we have completed the departmental presentations. The intent is to come back and discuss any follow-up questions Council may have. In conjunction with the SwimInc board and the Worthington Schools there will be a public meeting on December 3<sup>rd</sup> from 6:30-8:00 PM which will likely include a similar presentation to what Council heard and some additional information. In that vein, we are going to be working on some financial scenarios related to that issue and answer questions about the financial mechanisms to afford doing that.*

*President Michael suggested that something should be prepared to announce that meeting. Mr. Greeson said Ms. Brown would work on this.*

*Mr. Robinson asked if there would be representatives from all three organizations there and if the presentation would be identical. Mr. Greeson confirmed representatives from all three organizations would be there, but the presentation is not finalized. Mr. Robinson asked if all three options as presented earlier are still considered viable and desirable to present to the public. He thinks that if they are presented to the public at the December meeting it would be understood by the public that they are all actively being considered by Council. President Michael said part of it is giving out some options and seeing what options the public likes. Mr. Foust asked if there was an option Mr. Robinson did not believe should be on the table at this point. Mr. Robinson explained that he needs to be much more educated about the Joint Recreation District.*

## **REPORT OF COUNCIL MEMBERS**

*Ms. Dorothy shared that she had the honor to be part of the mayoral delegation to Sayama, Japan as part of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of our sister city agreement with them. She explained part of that was that we did gift exchanges, and she showed some of the gifts that were given to the delegation. She explained how part of their discussion was how they would like to foster cultural exchange and that they would like more youth delegate exchanges again. There will be a more in-depth presentation on December 5<sup>th</sup> at the WIFA presentation at the Griswold center.*

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION** Ms. Kowalczyk moved, Mr. Robinson seconded a motion to meet in Executive Session to discuss compensation and board & commission appointments.

**The clerk called the roll on Executive Session. The motion carried by the following vote:**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>7</b>	Robinson, Kowalczyk, Foust, Dorothy, Smith, Myers, and Michael
<b>No</b>	<b>0</b>	

Council recessed at 9:56 p.m. from the Regular meeting session

**MOTION** Mr. Myers moved, Mr. Foust seconded a motion to return to open session at 10:30 p.m.

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

