



**CITY OF WORTHINGTON**  
**Worthington City Council Minutes**  
December 16, 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 Monday, December 16, 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, Assistant City Manager Robyn Stewart, 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, Management Assistant Ethan Barnhardt

There were 8 visitors present.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**VISITOR COMMENTS**

*There were no visitor comments.*

**NEW LEGISLATION TO BE INTRODUCED**

**Resolution No. 79-2019**

Adjusting the Annual Budget by Providing for a Transfer of Previously Appropriated Funds.

**Introduced by Mr. Robinson.**

**MOTION** Mr. Foust made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 79-2019. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith

**There being no additional comments, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 79-2019 passed unanimously by a voice vote.**

**Resolution No. 80-2019** Expressing the Appreciation and Best Wishes of the Worthington City Council to Jack Miner For His Outstanding Service to the Community.

**Introduced by Mr. Robinson.**

**MOTION** Mr. Foust made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 80-2019. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith

**There being no additional comments, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 80-2019 passed unanimously by a voice vote.**

**Resolution No. 81-2019** Expressing the Appreciation and Best Wishes of the Worthington City Council to Douglas Foust for his Outstanding Service to the Community.

**Introduced by Mr. Robinson**

**MOTION** Mr. Smith made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 81-2019. The motion was seconded by Mr. Myers.

**There being no additional comments, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 81-2019 passed by a voice vote.**

Mr. Miner was presented a framed copy of Resolution No. 80-2019 by President Michael.

*President Michael expressed how proud she is of everything Mr. Miner has done for the City. Mr. Miner expressed his thanks to everyone. He conveyed how it is great to see the work of Community Relations Commission (CRC) to bring the whole community together. He thanked Angie Courtwright who served as Vice Chair and Lori Trego with the City of Worthington. He then congratulated Eddie Pauline who will be stepping in as new chair for the CRC.*

*Mayor Holmes explained how it is good to be here and he commented how he is acutely aware of the hours that Mr. Foust and other Councilmembers have put in serving the community. The Foust family have been long time residents of Worthington. He personally knows multiple generations of the Foust family.*

Mr. Foust was presented a framed copy of Resolution 81-2019 and a shadowbox containing his Council nametags by Mayor Holmes.

*Mr. Foust thanked Mayor Holmes for being here tonight. He commented that our City and our nation are founded on a principle of representative government. He has tried to keep that in front of himself at all times while seated here. He expressed that we as City employees, whether Council or staff, are not leaders, but public servants. It is easy and even tempting to forget that, to think we know what is best, to seek out and surround ourselves with a group of people who think as we do and reinforce our own ideals about the future direction of the City.*

*He described how he has never cared what a regional planning commission thinks or says. A half million new people in the next thirty years is a data point and it does not change his thinking about this organically grown City of Worthington. To use a current example, he does not care that a small, orchestrated parade of architects and developers all go up and praised the new Stafford Village design last week. He agrees that it is a very attractive structure. It would be gorgeous on the Harding/Boundless site, but the question in the moment was appropriateness to the location in the Historic District. He is similarly unmoved that a couple dozen people wrote letters and another half-dozen go up and spoke in favor. It all comes back to representative government and our roles as public servants and the importance of truly heeding the majority.*

*Consider this, he and his wife, attended a nice party over the weekend. A friend of his is in the process of moving from the Short North to the home they just bought in Rush Creek. They are excited. His friend was talking about all that moving entails, and that reminded him of what he has felt since the time before campaigning four and a half years ago and why he did this.*

*There is an unwritten agreement, a social contract as he sees it, between public servants and the public we serve, to honor their expectations. It is not what his friend said to him, but rather it is what he did not say. He did not say, "You know Doug, we think Worthington is kind of a B/B minus, but we are moving here in the hopes that it will eventually become what we want it to be." Think about it. Has anyone ever actually said those words prior to putting it all on the line, making the biggest purchase of their life, going to the bank and signing on the line for a thirty year commitment on money they have not made yet. No. They looked and said, that is for me. That looks like my idea of home and that is where I want to be at the end of the day. The place I want to raise my kids. They could have picked another community, but they chose Worthington. That is the guy he feels responsibility to, and he sincerely hopes everyone seated in this room feels that same powerful sense of responsibility, that social contract.*

*You can talk all you want about "MORPC says..." or walkability or inclusivity or any of a list of other popular phrases and concepts, but do not forget about his friend and the thousands like him who staked their future on what they saw here now, not what somebody else thinks we are obligated to become. There is that unwritten social contract that he believes we as public servants are first and foremost obligated to respect and uphold.*

*He questioned what is the antidote to the poison of that bumper sticker thinking. That lure of thinking we are leaders rather than public servants. It is the Visioning process we all committed to. Before you take another step down the path of new urbanism, or potentially, irreversibly throwing the Historic District and our guidelines under the bus, or any of those things that cannot be undone, please pause just long enough to really find out what the people think. It is only a matter of months until the Visioning will be complete and there is nothing to pressing here that we cannot wait to let the people speak, the people we were placed here to represent, the majority of voices here in our community today who chose Worthington not for what they thought it might become someday but for what they saw here now.*

*People have criticized the City for years for not listening. In commissioning the Visioning process, you have asked the question, and now you had better be prepared to accept and embrace the answer, whatever it turns out to be. Please, before taking any significant steps that will alter the City, stop and listen before you act.*

*He concluded by thanking City staff for their dedicated service, for their friendship, and for all they have done to teach and guide him. It sounds cliché, but he has been truly honored to represent the residents of Worthington, to serve alongside you, and he sincerely hopes that he has served you well.*

*Mr. Greeson explained how when a Councilmember leaves office, there is a sense of change for staff and he wanted to express how he appreciates the perspective that Mr. Foust has brought to the table. He has always been a pragmatic and principled advocate for Worthington's history and culture with deep roots in the community. His business expertise and fairness has always helped us with what is financially prudent and also good for public employees and their families. He offered a quote from Lord Baden Powell, "The main question of life is not what I can get, but what can I give."*

*President Michael thanked Mr. Foust and explained how she knows we will see you involved around the City and will continue to express his views and thoughts.*

*Mr. Myers conveyed that they do not always agree but that is a good and healthy thing. They could always disagree, but it would always be considered with respect and you will always still be friends. That is what Worthington is. He is proud and honored to say he has served, disagreed, and agreed with Mr. Foust and counts him as a friend.*

## **REPORTS OF CITY OFFICIALS**

*Mr. Greeson highlighted how at our last meeting there was a conversation regarding Franklin County's communication to us about signing a letter consenting to refugee resettlement if that were to occur. He sent an email with updated info from Franklin County and Mr. Lindsey on the topic.*

*Mr. Robinson expressed that he hopes we prepare a letter and execute that this evening. However, his question is that we may be tacitly acknowledging the validity of the executive*

*order. He suggested language that explains that this letter of consent should not be construed as an endorsement of the legality of the executive order. The City of Worthington's consent is not based upon the executive order, but only on compliance with federal immigration laws. Mr. Lindsey suggested adding the language to the end prior to the section that reasons "This consent shall remain valid."*

**MOTION** Ms. Dorothy made a motion to accept the letter as revised and instruct the City Manager to send this letter. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kowalczyk.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

*Mr. Greeson brought up a memo given to Councilmembers with a couple of emails that Mr. Robinson sent regarding the process we are using the Municipal Planning Commission/Architectural Review Board including suggestions about how it should be handled differently. We are not asking to do anything this evening, it is just bringing it to the attention of Council for review. The earliest the Stafford Village applications could be on the MPC/ARB agenda would be January 9. In the event you want to provide instructions about process, it would ideally need to be done before then.*

*Mr. Robinson said the excerpts are from foundational City texts, ordinances, the Comprehensive Plan, and Design Guidelines. He will be reaching out to discuss this and it is a matter of greatest importance. He looks forward to dialoguing before the new year and after.*

## **REPORT OF COUNCIL MEMBERS**

*Mr. Robinson mentioned his attendance at the Past Forward Conference, however he was not satisfied with his thinking and notes and will stew on things and report at the first meeting in January. Two other issues he wants to discuss includes that he plans on preparing a proposal for a campaign finance charter amendment in November 2020 encompassing two basic provisions which are reporting requirements and contribution limits. He will share what he drafts and how this is an important topic for our City. He has spoken recently with the policy director in Columbus on R-Pace. They have added additional consumer protection provisions above and beyond what exists in Bexley. He hopes to use this new and improved ordinance and he wants to explore ways to use the enactment of this program or other related measures to incentivize solar companies. Worthington has approximately 35 solar installations, and he remarked how cool it would be to add 25-50 in the first year. How great would it be if Worthington becomes the center of the solar industry in Franklin County. He will that bring forward once Columbus brings forward their legislation. He hopes that what was done in Columbus meets Council's concerns.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION**                    Mr. Foust moved, Mr. Myers seconded a motion to adjourn.

President Michael declared the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

/s/Ethan C. Barnhardt  
Management Assistant

*APPROVED by the City Council, this  
6<sup>th</sup> day of January 2020.*

/s/ Bonnie D. Michael  
Council President