



CITY OF WORTHINGTON
Worthington City Council Minutes
January 21, 2020

6550 N. High Street
Worthington, Ohio 43085

CALL TO ORDER – Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance

Worthington City Council met in Regular Session on Tuesday, January 21, 2020, 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: Peter Bucher, Rachael R. Dorothy, 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 Bartter, Chief of Fire John Bailot, Director of Service & Engineering Dan Whited, Director of Planning & Building Lee Brown, Chief of Police Robert Ware, Director of Parks & Recreation Darren Hurley, Clerk of Council D. Kay Thress, Assistant City Clerk Ethan Barnhardt

There were 29 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.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

- COSI Science Festival Worthington STEM Star Presentation

Mr. Greeson introduced Stephen White from COSI who had joined Council last year to discuss the COSI Science Festival.

Mr. White thanked the City and the City Manager for their assistance and leadership. He explained how last year COSI hosted the COSI Science Festival in partnership with Worthington and 12 other communities in the Central Ohio region. The festival impacted over 40,000 people. Many Ohioans are unemployed even though there are skilled jobs available. The goal behind the Science Festival is to engage people where they are and to inspire them around science. They are working to get underrepresented communities interested and involved, partnering with non-profits and businesses to move the needle. This year will be the second year of the festival that provides free opportunities for the public to engage in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math).

As part of the festival, they have to select Grand Marshals who are leaders in the community and are great examples of ordinary people doing extraordinary things. The communities themselves select who will become the Grand Marshals.

Melissa Hindman, Parks & Recreation Marketing and Community Outreach Supervisor, came to the podium to announce that the official COSI STEM Star from Worthington who will serve as Grand Marshal at the 2020 COSI Science Festival is Stephanie Maxon. Ms. Maxon has been involved in a number of efforts including the creation of Science Invitational and teaching summer camp for elementary children. She has a love for environmental science where she takes students to Rumpke to learn about recycling. She also has a passion for students learning English and science at the same time. Ms. Hindman emphasized how proud we all are that Ms. Maxon is our Worthington STEM Star for 2020.

Mr. White presented a trophy to Ms. Maxon in honor of her work to inspire the next generation.

- Community Visioning Update

Mr. Sherman thanked Council for the opportunity to update them on the Visioning Committee's activities. They are actively bringing the data gathering segment to a close. They had a great presentation from Anne Brown to hear her talk about how she can help the Committee and how she has access to a large email list to reach out to the community. Dr. Trent Bowers talked for an hour to bring everyone up to date on the schools and their budget. There was a discussion about how to best engage students. Worthington has a unique history where students grow up and leave Worthington only to return in the future. The Committee also worked through old business which led to the establishment of working teams. There are three working teams: Communications, Stakeholder Interviews, and the Speakers Bureau. They have selected leaders for those teams and put volunteers together.

The responsibility of the Communications Team is all about how to get after the education piece and driving engagement with the Vision Worthington website. He showed a picture of the post card that will help direct people to the website to share their vision. He emphasized how this website is going to be a fantastic tool. He then overviewed the different parts of the website. The Communications Team will be updating the website and monitoring it going ahead. He thanked the City for making this investment.

The Stakeholder Interview Team is key to what we are trying to get after, conducting in-depth interviews in a way to touch the entire community. They are working to adjust the questions to fit the various people we will be interviewing. The Visioning Committee was asked to name two people from the community. The City Council will be interviewed. The applicant pool of those not selected will also be interviewed through various methods. The interview process will begin next week. The goal is to have it completed in February.

The Speakers Bureau team will be going out and talking to the community. The biggest challenge will be the slide deck that is over 25 slides. They have the goal of going out and conducting 30 formal presentations as a way to gather data. The presentations will be trying to ask the question and then drive home the answer of why people should care. There is the need to overcome apathy. The Committee wants to gather opinions and implement what the community wants to see.

They look to have the website up and running by the next meeting on the 27th of January. They cannot go to Farmers Market until the website is available. For in-person events they will have a banner to hang up that has website URL posted on it.

In response to some questions about the timeline from Councilmembers, he thinks they are about 95% through the discovery phase. There will be some parts of the community education piece that will always remain open. Listening and learning is ongoing. They are nearly done with the environmental scan. Phase four is collaborative input and there will be meetings in March, April, and May.

Ms. Kowalczyk asked about the Speakers Bureau and the strategy to reach people who may not participate by going to a website. She emphasized how we really want a diverse group with diverse feedback to inform the visioning process. Mr. Sherman said if need be they will go out door to door. We can track what quadrant of the City someone is in. We will not know who answers but we will be able to see where they are reaching out from. He thinks they will find out if they are not getting the input they want by asking questions and being relentless. The Committee will not have a final product until September. Ms. Kowalczyk mentioned how the answers are anonymous and she asked if we will be able to track by demographic how people respond to a question. Mr. Sherman said part of that is asking for an email address, request their gender, age range, and location in the City. With the election that just concluded, there are people who we may be able to get some insights from on how to get out to the community effectively.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- Meeting Minutes – January 6, 2020 (Organizational)
- Meeting Minutes – January 6, 2020

MOTION Mr. Bucher moved, and Ms. Kowalczyk seconded a motion to approve the aforementioned meeting minutes as presented.

The motion to approve the minutes as presented carried unanimously by a voice vote.

NEW LEGISLATION TO BE INTRODUCED

Resolution No. 02-2020 Appointing members to Various Boards and Commissions

Introduced by Mr. Smith

MOTION Mr. Myers made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 02-2020. The motion was seconded by Ms. Dorothy.

There being no additional comments, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 02-2020 passed unanimously by a voice vote.

Ordinance No. 01-2020 Granting a Temporary Construction Easement to Columbia Gas of Ohio, Inc. over the Property Owned by the City of Worthington at 7200 Huntley Road for Material and Equipment Storage to Accommodate the Relocation of Utilities as Part of the Northeast Gateway Project.

Introduced by Mr. Robinson.

Ordinance No. 02-2020 Amending Ordinance No. 45-2019 (As Amended) to Adjust the Annual Budget by Providing for an Appropriation from the Capital Improvements Fund Unappropriated Balance to Pay the Costs of the NE Gateway-Utility Relocation and All related Expenses and Determining to Proceed with said Project. (Project No. 602-14

Introduced by Mr. Bucher.

Ordinance No. 03-2020 Amending Ordinance No. 45-2019 (As Amended) to Adjust the Annual Budget by Providing for Appropriations from the General Fund Unappropriated Balance to Provide Funds for the Reimbursable Charges Associated with the Electric Vehicle Charging Station Payment Process and the Increased Property Taxes at the Kilbourne Memorial Library Building.

Introduced by Mr. Smith.

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)

- Electric Vehicle Customer Payment Structure

Mr. Greeson detailed how Mr. McCorkle has been working with the Service and Engineering Department to shepherd the process of installing the electric vehicle charging stations and it is nearing completion. What is needed tonight is feedback from Council on what the cost structure is going to look like.

Mr. McCorkle overviewed the timeline of the project and how it was one of Council's 2019 priorities. We were able to go after AEP rebate dollars for two EV chargers with one being installed in Old Worthington and the other at the Worthington Community Center. The discussion tonight is around how we are going to charge customers for use of the EV charging station and whether the City will subsidize use of the stations.

He showed pictures of the charger at the Community Center and in Old Worthington and explained that when finished they will be light grey with the Worthington logo, a Clean Fuels Ohio logo, and the AEP logo. These are Level Three DC fast chargers. We are one of the first communities in Central Ohio to be installing this type of charger as they are generally provided by private entities, not public. They are capable of completely charging a vehicle within approximately 90 minutes.

He displayed a map of the other Level Three charging stations in the northern Columbus region. In Worthington, there is AAA which charges 30 cents per minute to charge. Other locations include the Sam's Club on Morse Road, Kinsale Country Club in Powell that provides charging complementary, and Easton which has six complementary fast chargers.

A place to start when deciding pricing for the chargers in Worthington is 30 cents per minutes. He suggests not subsidizing the charging and to set the initial rate as close as we can to what we think will be the breakeven point. We will have dynamic pricing with the ability to change the prices to where we are not generating profit or charging customers more than what we are paying for the electric.

He gave examples of the consumer cost structure with different usages, detailed how the more electricity that is used, the lower the cost per kilowatt. Other communities in Central Ohio offer Level Two charging for free. To his knowledge, no one is offering Level Three charging for free.

The staff recommendation is to set the pay structure at a rate that will have our revenues equal our expenses and staff will adjust the hourly rate to get as close to zero as possible.

President Michael asked at what rate we would be starting at. Mr. McCorkle said the memo referenced 30 cents as a starting point, but we do not have any data yet to tell us if we are close. It will only take a short period of time to know if we need to adjust that price up or down. President Michael asked how someone pays to use the chargers. Mr. McCorkle responded that users would have a ChargePoint account which stores their credit card information. Once you scan it, the charge starts and will charge the user based on how long they charge. For the City, it is a reimbursement where we pay for the electricity up front to AEP and then ChargePoint will reimburse us the dollars.

Mr. Robinson asked how vehicle owners will know what price they are being charged. Mr. McCorkle responded that the price is visible in the ChargePoint app and at the charger itself. You have the ability to see the prices at all charger locations and information about what type of chargers and connections are available. You can also sign up to be in a virtual queue to charge your vehicle that he imagines is similar to how Uber works.

Mr. Robinson asked how the price would compare to what someone would pay at home. Mr. McCorkle explained how very few people would have access to a Level Three charger at home due to their significant cost. Paying at home could range from 10 cents to a couple dollars. With these chargers in Worthington, you should be able to charge in about 30 minutes for \$9. You are paying for the convenience of using a charger in attractive locations and being able to get a full charge in 30 minutes versus 12 hours.

Mr. Robinson asked about our breakeven point and why it would vary. Mr. McCorkle replied that it would vary on usage because the price per kilowatt hours could change. Once our rates are locked in, it should be close enough that we do not need to change it often. When talking about dynamic pricing we do not know the exact amount, but once we start charging people within a short period of time watching usage we should have a good handle on what the appropriate pricing is. Mr. Robinson expressed how he does not understand why we would need to vary the rate substantially. Mr. McCorkle said we are going to monitor the cost and we may know quickly the right amount to break even. The staff recommendation is a conservative rate based on comparable chargers in the area.

Ms. Dorothy asked what we expect our expenses to be and what non-warranty items and liability we might have. For example, what happens if you have someone park at the charger who is not an electric vehicle. What does our enforcement look like? Mr. McCorkle said he reached out to other communities in Central Ohio and they shared that electric vehicle drivers often self-police themselves. Most communities have signs posted that say parking is for charging only. We may need to occasionally remind someone to move their car. The City will have a FAQ page with all kinds of information on park times and etiquette for using the chargers. We do not have any sort of punitive action discussed at this point. Some operators of charging stations have implemented penalties if someone is still plugged in and not charging. He recommends against starting with a penalty in place. The initial recommendation is to roll these out and see if people self-police themselves. Ms. Dorothy explained how most electric vehicle owners can charge at their homes, and we want to attract visitors. We will have the ability to come back with tweaks to this program later if needed. Mr. McCorkle said that other communities such as Powell and Bexley have Level Two chargers that are available for free right now with annual operating costs of about \$1,000. Both communities are rolling out Level Three chargers, but they are waiting on our breakeven model to set their prices at a point to break even. Mr. Lindsey explained how in regard to the liability issue, the City has various immunities under state law and we also have insurance that protects us. He thinks it is a good question and we will notify our insurance carrier we have these. They will also be included in our physical assets for the City, so they are covered under insurance.

Mr. Myers clarified this is about the breakeven costs for variable costs, it is not including the cost to buy the vehicle stations. Mr. Barter replied that is correct. We are being reimbursed by AEP for the costs of the chargers themselves. Mr. Myers said by his quick math that 30 cent per minute for 30 minutes is around 4.5 cent per mile which versus the cost of gas is pretty cheap. He asserted that we should not subsidize users and we should breakeven on variable costs. If we want to enforce something we would then need to enact a new parking violation. His last question is about when this was originally brought up there was a discussion about the ability to get freeway signage. He

wondered if we have investigated doing that. Mr. Whited and Mr. McCorkle both said that has not been looked into, but they will do so.

Mr. Bucher asked about someone who is at the station or in line if they can see estimated wait time. Mr. McCorkle said yes, the app will share how much time until fully charged. You can receive notifications when charging is ending.

Ms. Kowalczyk asked if we will get data telling us where people are coming from who use the chargers. Mr. McCorkle said yes we would be getting a lot of data.

Mr. Myers asked if we are adopting a price or delegating price setting to staff. He wants to make sure staff has direction.

MOTION

Mr. Myers made a motion to authorize the City Manager to set the charge for use of the City's electric vehicle charging stations at an amount equal to the City's estimated cost to provide service. Until further adjusted by staff the cost will start at 30 cents per minute. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kowalczyk.

Mr. Robinson said that he thinks it would be appropriate to start at a lower price. Usage will be relatively low anyway. Ms. Dorothy said that it is already a low cost per mile and a lot of the cars are already subsidized. She is not of the mind to subsidize them even more. As soon as these go online everyone will have an app and be able to find out where these spots are. We need the ability to have staff change pricing to make sure they are used in a good manner.

The motion passed by a voice vote.

Mr. Greeson called attention to information distributed about the annual Worthington Chamber of Commerce Groundhog Day event featuring brief talks about what is happening in Worthington. At your place is the Park and Recreation cost recovery and fee analysis for review. It was previously indicated that the consultant who conducted the analysis will present to Council and take questions at the Committee of the Whole meeting in February. After that presentation it will be referred to Parks and Recreation Commission. Additionally, demolition began and is completed on the building at the corner of Huntley and Worthington Galena.

Staff has several substantive items they have been writing memos on. Sharon Township has approached us about creating a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD). In the past we negotiated one with Perry Township in the Linworth area but decided not to go forward with it. In this case Sharon Township wants to put a JEDD in the Olentangy Valley area where they are doing senior housing construction and a renovation of the retail. A JEDD allows an income tax to be levied in the area of the district where the township uses the city's income tax authority and the city administers the income tax in the area. The township takes 80% of the income tax revenue and the City receives 20% and the cost of the administration. We will be working with them to bring that forward in the not too distant future. These districts create opportunities for the Township to capture a revenue stream that is only afforded to them through these JEDDs. A recent change in the law stipulates that the township has to partner with what is considered a contiguous municipality. We would prefer they work with us. We get a small amount of revenue off development there. They have TIF-ed and abated properties and that affects the fire millage we get revenues from. This may help with gaining a commitment to renegotiate the Sharon Township fire service contract.

Mr. Myers asked for an educational presentation of the JEDD.

Mr. Greeson brought up information on Worthington Pools and SwimInc. Joint Recreation District (JRD) information was distributed to Council, SwimInc, and Dr. Bowers with the school district. There will be discussion about the JRD and the pools as early as next Monday night. We will send out communications from Dr. Bowers and his board. We will schedule a discussion in February to talk about where we are.

Lastly, tonight there was an open house for the McCord Park playground which is a component of another Council priority. The most critical component of the park project that needs to move forward is the playground feature. The consultants for this project have created a great video as part of the public process which he would like to show to Council.

Mr. Hurley explained how they have been working on the playground piece. 161 children gave their input on the project.

Ms. Dorothy asked when we would find out about the potential for funds from the state. Mr. Greeson confirmed that we did apply for Capital Bill funds. There will be a discussion about CIP funding which may need to be reconsidered due to SwimInc. We are currently only moving forward with input on the playground because we have the funding for that.

Ms. Kowalczyk suggested that there are some items that could be identified as age friendly projects and therefore qualify for funding. Mr. Hurley brought up how we have had several seniors state that the paved trail would be an asset to the park.

REPORT OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Ms. Dorothy said she had a meeting with the cemetery board who has a bid out on another phase of the Ozem Gardner project. Work is slowly moving forward. She commented on the recent letter about gypsy moth treatments and conveyed her worry about a Dispatch article about lanternflies that are coming and are another pest that we must deal with. They go after a variety of trees and fruits.

President Michael mentioned that she, Mr. Myers, and Mr. Greeson had a meeting with a member of Lifestyle Communities and their attorney. It was a general discussion about where to proceed and focused on community engagement. There was discussion about conducting meetings with neighbors and citizen groups. There is another project they are waiting to go through first and after that goes through they will start a dialogue that will continue through the project and development. Beyond commercial on High Street and preserving the ravine, there are a lot of unknowns. The gentlemen they met with were open to ideas and communicating with citizens and residents. It was a very good beginning meeting.

Mr. Myers added that it struck him that they did not have a plan or profess to have a plan. He thinks we delivered a fairly blunt message that if they do intend to move forward with development on UMCH they would need to do it much differently than last time. There needs to be substantial changes to their approach. Whether that message was received, it was delivered.

President Michael expressed how she wanted to be transparent about the discussion and how focused on community engagement.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION Mr. Robinson moved, Mr. Bucher seconded a motion to meet in Executive Session to discuss the appointment of public officials.

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

Yes 7 Kowalczyk, Dorothy, Smith, Myers, Robinson, Bucher, and Michael
No 0

Council recessed at 8:57 p.m. from the Regular meeting session

MOTION Ms. Dorothy moved, Ms. Kowalczyk seconded a motion to return to open session at 9:28 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously by a voice vote.

Resolution No. 03-2020 Appointing Catey Corl to Serve as Council Member Bucher’s Appointment to the Community Visioning Committee.

Introduced by Mr. Bucher.

MOTION Ms. Kowalczyk made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 03-2020. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith.

There being no additional comments, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 03-2020 passed unanimously by a voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION Mr. Robinson moved, Ms. Dorothy seconded a motion to adjourn.

President Michael declared the meeting adjourned at 9:28 p.m.

/s/ Ethan C. Barnhardt
Management Assistant

*APPROVED by the City Council, this
3rd day of February 2020.*

/s/ Bonnie D. Michael
Council President