



CITY OF WORTHINGTON
Worthington City Council Minutes
February 10, 2020

6550 N. High Street
Worthington, Ohio 43085

CALL TO ORDER – Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance

Worthington City Council met in Regular Session on Monday, February 10, 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, David Robinson, Douglas K. Smith, and Bonnie D. Michael

Member(s) Absent: Scott Myers

Also present: City Manager Matt Greeson, Assistant City Manager Robyn Stewart, Law Director Tom Lindsey, Director of Finance Scott Bartter, Director of Service & Engineering Dan Whited, Director of Planning & Building Lee Brown, Director of Parks & Recreation Darren Hurley, Chief of Fire and EMS John Bailot, Chief of Police Robert Ware, Clerk of Council D. Kay Thress, Management Assistant Ethan Barnhardt

There were approximately 45 visitors present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

SPECIAL PRESENTATION(S)

- Express Appreciation to Fire Chief John Bailot

Resolution No. 08-2020

Expressing the Appreciation and Best Wishes of the Worthington City Council to Chief John Bailot for his Outstanding Service to the Worthington Division of Fire & EMS and for his Service to the Community.

Introduced by Mr. Bucher.

MOTION

Ms. Kowalczyk made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 08-2020. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith.

There being no additional comments, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 08-2020 passed unanimously by a voice vote.

Mr. Greeson expressed how it is an honor for him to make a few remarks about Chief Bailot before he leaves us. He had the pleasure of hiring Chief Bailot as the Assistant Fire Chief several years ago as part of a succession plan. He came to us with extensive experience, bringing a lot of energy, drive, and passion. Because of Chief Bailot's efforts, the Division of Fire and EMS is a better organization where he has undertaken multiple important efforts and encouraged the professional development of multiple firefighters. He has been a proactive leader and partner to all of us. Chief Bailot is leaving Worthington to pursue a new opportunity and to be closer to his family. He expressed his thanks to Chief Bailot's wife for her support. We are grateful she has given her support to him and us while they have been in Worthington.

President Michael read Resolution No. 08-2020 and presented a framed copy to Chief Bailot.

Chief Bailot explained how he stood here two years ago when sworn in as Chief and was excited to work with such a strong and professional leadership group. He expressed how it is the men and women of the Division of Fire and EMS who have helped get the Division to where they are today. They have come a long way in a short period of time. It has been his pleasure to lead the Division. Assistant Chief Zambito is taking over for him and the Division is in great hands. He shared his thanks to Mr. Greeson, Ms. Stewart, and the other department heads for their leadership.

- Community Visioning Update

Mr. Sherman updated Council about how the Visioning Committee is at a key juncture. He explained how Mr. Boring came in and gave updated macro trends of the area and answered several questions the Committee members had. One key question asked was about how density impacts communities and the potential impact if Worthington does not allow for more density. This is an example of the type of questions they have been asking. Their next step is to go out into the community. They have been looking at past document summaries because it is important to know where you have been in order to know where you want to go. The Worthington 360 document is important to look at because there were concerns then that are still concerns today. Looking at the Comprehensive Plan helps to give an understanding of issues. However, the Committee came to the understanding that the Comprehensive Plan is tactical, looking at zoning, land use, and other issues. It is not the Committee's task to update that document. He thinks these past documents will set a baseline for us.

He explained how the Committee is ready to go out into the community and they have taken a lot of time to get ready to go. Part of this will be the Farmers Market and he noted that

Ms. Parini has been great to work with. The post cards have been an interesting opportunity and they are looking at different spots in the community to place them. He talked to Dr. Bowers about using their social media to spread the word about the Committee's work. There is also a pastor's organization they hope to engage with to get in front of the church community. He expressed his thanks to Anne Brown for all of her help.

The interview process is currently underway. The Visioning Committee members were interviewed by Poggemeyer. Councilmembers will be interviewed soon. They want to have those interviews done by February 24th.

Ms. Dorothy asked about multifamily housing being excluded from the Worthington market profile. Mr. Sherman said that they caught that as well and asked Mr. Boring to come back to present that information. He explained how he had a conversation with Mr. Robinson centered around education and they did a brainstorming session. It comes down to staying focused on the how, the what, and the where around education. This will be accomplished through 30 presentations around the community and the first 10 minutes of each presentation will be around education. It is going to be dynamic.

President Michael explained the background of the Visioning Process to the audience members and how it will include online and in person interviews. Mr. Sherman explained how the Committee wants young people to be involved in the visioning process and they have talked with Dr. Bowers about how to do that. He encouraged everyone to visit VisionWorthington.org and to sign up.

Ms. Kowalczyk asked when something concrete would be brought back because she is not sure of the deadlines. Mr. Sherman said they have not had deadlines yet. With the interviews starting, they will have data to put together, and they hope for the interviews to be completed the first part of March. After their next meeting they will have itinerary of dates to show Council.

Mr. Robinson brought up the subconsultant Mr. Boring and questioned his role. Mr. Sherman said that Mr. Boring has given a macro look of issues and questions around where we are going to be in 10-20 years. He has gone to MORPC documents. He is a strategist who gave a 15 page report on different trends and strategies. He would be happy to distribute that information to Council. Mr. Robinson asked how Mr. Boring was hired. Ms. Stewart responded that he is a subconsultant for demographic research hired by Poggemeyer.

Mr. Bucher asked for a rough timeline for the in-person interaction timelines. Mr. Sherman said he thinks that they will have baseline to go forward by the end of the month. The website has lots of interactive tiles with ongoing questions being asked.

Mr. Robinson asked about the subconsultant Mr. Boring and Boulevard Strategies and their added fees. Ms. Stewart said that was captured under Poggemeyer of which he is a

subconsultant under. President Michael added that he was included in the Poggemeyer proposal from the beginning.

President Michael thanked Mr. Sherman and the whole committee for their work. She asked about the Council interviews and who would conduct them. Mr. Sherman replied that it would be the person who you appointed.

PUBLIC HEARINGS ON LEGISLATION

Ordinance No. 06-2020

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 for the Tree Clearing for Northbrook Relief Sewer Improvements and all Related Expenses and Determining to Proceed with said Project. (Project No. 656-17)

The foregoing Ordinance Title was read.

Mr. Greeson explained how this ordinance is time sensitive due to the nature of the project. This is for south Worthington east of High Street in Northbrook subdivision. We need to authorize \$49,000 for tree clearing associated with the project.

Mr. Whited noted how the area needs to be cleared before March 31 so that the project does not impact Indiana bats.

Ms. Dorothy asked when it would start. Mr. Whited responded it would begin in about 21 days from today.

Ms. Kowalczyk asked about progress of the project and the expected timeline. Mr. Whited said that they have had some delays they did not anticipate, but construction should begin in the April-May timeframe.

There being no comments, the clerk called the roll on Ordinance No. 06-2020. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes 6 Kowalczyk, Bucher, Dorothy, Smith, Robinson, and Michael

No 0

Ordinance No. 06-2020 was thereupon declared duly passed and is recorded in full in the appropriate record book.

REPORTS OF CITY OFFICIALS

Discussion Item(s)

- Support for Worthington Pools/Swiminc

Mr. Greeson explained how tonight, he wants to discuss the creation of a Joint Recreation District (JRD) whose purpose would be to put before the wider Worthington area voters a levy to fund the replacement of the Worthington Pools facilities. We have heard from Ms. Hudson on the school board that they are open to considering a JRD, but they want to see a proposal from the City with the City taking a leadership role.

Staff does not have a specific recommendation tonight, rather he would like to talk about the JRD concept and seek general direction from Council if staff should work to further develop this concept and any potential legislation. Additionally, it would be helpful to understand what questions Council might like answered before making a final decision. Staff would like to bring back that information in early March. That would include a concept proposal and draft legislation for review by Council and the school board. Creation of the JRD would require passage of identical resolutions by both entities. If both Council and the schools feel good about the concepts discussed they could potentially adopt legislation as early as sometime in March and then proceed with the appointment of the JRD board.

Ms. Dorothy asked if there needs to be a vote from the community. Mr. Greeson responded that for the creation of the JRD only a vote of Council and schools is required. However, there would be a vote from the community required to put a levy in place.

Mr. Greeson said that staff has sourced multiple examples of legislation and bylaws. Each community sets up their JRD similarly, but they do different things to serve their community's unique needs. Our reality is that the Worthington area has the need to replace its outdoor pools and natatorium. There might be other needs long term that exceed our jurisdictional boundaries that cannot be easily or equitably addressed by one governmental entity. Ohio law provides for the creation of JRDs for these situations where different communities within an area share the same interests and goal.

According to our research, we could appoint a board made up of people from within the district and can place before the voters a levy to fund the pools. That would ensure that the potential beneficiaries of the pools pay for it. It ensures that the cost to the individual taxpayer is lower because costs are spread across a larger area and taxpayers in one jurisdiction are not burdened with a cost that benefits more than just the one jurisdiction. Many beneficiaries of the Worthington Pools reside throughout the Worthington school district. A JRD has the potential to create a shared commitment to address the aquatic needs of the entire community.

The creation of a JRD could also reduce the inefficiency and uncertainty from splitting apart the outdoor pools project from the indoor natatorium. For instance, if the City helps

to fund an outdoor pool in the next year and then the natatorium is saved for inclusion in a future bond issue, you will have two separate construction projects. There is the potential for greater efficiencies if the projects are planned together.

A concept staff is exploring is that the JRD would not be set up to become another governmental operating entity. The need here is primarily a capital financing need. We see a capable operator in Swiminc. When we look at the broader operational needs, we see several capable operators including the Worthington Youth Boosters, Worthington Parks and Recreation, and Columbus Parks and Recreation. We are not looking for a new entity for programmatic resources.

A potential model could be that the JRD grants money to Swiminc to build and manage a pool. This is like the model the City utilizes with the McConnell Arts Center where we own the building and private funds were raised to improve the facility. We then granted money to a not for profit to construct improvements and we also provide an operating grant. It is an example of a public-private partnership. We have been looking at Sylvania outside of Toledo which has a similar set-up. We see the potential of extending a model that already exists and has served Worthington well over the years. The JRD would contribute primarily capital financing. We will need to research the necessity of there being an operating levy as well.

President Michael brought up how the schools are currently providing funding for their use of the pools and asked how that may be impacted by the JRD. Mr. Greeson said that would be a discussion for the JRD board. They would need to draft a memorandum of understanding that explains how all of that would occur. Entities that use any new facilities would have to pay their appropriate share.

Ms. Kowalczyk asked about the process of granting money in contrast to a contractual relationship. Mr. Greeson responded that there would be a series of agreements. He views it as contracts where we are giving public funds to a not for profit and the agreement spells out what the JRD expects them to do with the funding.

Mr. Lindsey explained how he would not use the word “grant”. His conceptual understanding is that it would be a contractual agreement where the JRD would be providing the funds as part of a contractual agreement with Swiminc to provide specific services. The money would come from that pool of tax funds from the levy.

Mr. Bucher brought up how the code does not specify the size of the boards and he asked what is typical. Mr. Barnhardt explained how it varies from community to community, from anywhere from three to seven or more members. Under the Ohio Revised Code, the only requirement is that there is one representative from each jurisdiction entering into creating a JRD. Mr. Bucher asked if this would be extremely prescriptive going forward. Mr. Greeson responded that this could be written as narrowly as needed but can cover any recreational needs in the community. Mr. Lindsey explained how the scope would be a matter of the two entities creating it to initially make it broad or narrower. The benefit of creating a broader scope is that it could expand with future needs without creating new

entities. In terms of the bond levy itself, while not fully researched, that is another place you could make it more specific. Mr. Greeson presented how the key strategic question is whether or not you want to create this for the purpose of solving this unique opportunity or in the long term is it seen serving recreational needs of the broader Worthington community. Mr. Bucher said that he would generally like to leave ourselves open. He then asked whether the City would have much input on the potential levy. Mr. Greeson responded that you would be empowering the board and the Council would have a number of appointments to represent the community's interests.

Mr. Robinson prefaced his questions with a positive statement of his support of the continued vitality of the pool facilities. Water activities have been a central part of his own life. He expressed how he understands why success stories have been presented but asked if there were any examples that were not successful. Mr. Greeson explained how Upper Arlington a number of years ago created a JRD for the potential construction of a community center. Mr. Lindsey detailed how that effort was unsuccessful and the legislation included express language in its creation for the JRD to sunset if the public was not supportive. For purposes of this JRD, that could be an option. Mr. Robinson asked about if the levy does not pass what would then happen to the immediate needs of the facility. Mr. Greeson explained that one recourse is to go back to the other option presented where the City works with Swiminc to support to the degree possible the outdoor pool complex. The schools would then consider inclusion of the natatorium in a future levy. The limited dollar amounts the City could contribute may not achieve the level of outdoor pool that people expect. Another option would be for there to be a City millage increase to support just the outdoor pool.

President Michael explained how a JRD is very similar to a park district such as the Metro Parks. A JRD is able to fundraise, seek donations, and get loans in addition to whatever the city can do.

Mr. Robinson asked if a foundation could be set up under the purview of the JRD. Mr. Greeson said there could be a separate foundation as well. Mr. Robinson asked if we proceed down this road, how that affects Swiminc and the state Capital Bill funding. Mr. Greeson responded that in terms of activity at Swiminc, we would defer to them. We would have to figure out exactly how to handle eligible expenditures for the \$1 million. He would think those dollars could be used to fully design, do consulting work, and essentially lay groundwork for the facility contemplated here.

President Michael acknowledged it being a balancing act on how much you ask for. There is the question if the bond issue passes whether you may do more than one levy. She wondered if there is the potential to get funds for the outdoor pool first and then get funding for the natatorium later.

Mr. Greeson laid out how the next steps are that staff will continue to interact with Swiminc and the schools. Staff has set up a weekly meeting with the goal of bringing back more details written around any questions raised. Staff will also build out our research from other communities we are looking at and begin to prepare some draft legislation. Those

documents would be shared with all our partners ahead of time, so it is a working document.

If that information is shared at the first meeting in March, we could get it before the schools relatively quickly. We would prepare a consensus joint resolution and we would have to act on mirror resolutions. That could be done in the next month. Staff will answer as many questions about the project scope and whether an operating levy companion piece is necessary. In some legislation we have looked at, the governing entities give by-laws along with the legislation so the new board wouldn't have to spend a month crafting operating procedures. Another thing we need to consider is to support the JRD board. Many need some sort of seed money to access financial advisors and legal counsel. We will make recommendation on that as well.

Katie Minister – 1282 Harran Avenue, Columbus, OH 43235

Ms. Minister explained how she is personally passionate about this issue. She is here to say thank you for taking the time to continue to review solutions for funding the pools. She is representing a large group of people supporting a positive outcome for the pools including students, residents of the City of Worthington, residents of the school district, and people with ties to the Worthington Pools. They are willing to support this effort through volunteering time, campaigning, and fundraising. She expressed her thanks for being able to come and speak. The pools are a very important community asset to many in Worthington. She gave out her email address: katie.minister@gmail.com

President Michael asked if Council wants staff to move forward on this.

Ms. Dorothy asked whether this would push other Council priorities down the list. Mr. Greeson said whoever is appointed to this would have a significant amount of work to do, but there is an opportunity and need here.

Council agreed there is a general consensus to move forward.

- Parks and Recreation Cost Recovery

Mr. Hurley detailed how over the past year, staff has worked closely with Revenue and Cost Specialists to complete the cost recovery report that was distributed to Council a couple weeks ago. He recognized Holly Keller and Colleen Light for doing a lot of the detailed work that built out this report. He also thanked Finance Director Bartter and his staff for their efforts.

Eric Johnson – Revenue and Cost Specialists

Mr. Johnson provided a background of how they have been doing costing studies for over 30 years. In this study they costed out all of the services that the Worthington Parks and Recreation provides to their customers and looked at what are the full costs of providing those services. They identified 30 different services in 5 different groups. Information

came from City staff on how operating expenses and salaries are allocated to those services. They also accounted for overhead costs and fully allocated the hourly rate for every position including departmental and divisional overheads. They also identified program costs for facilities and fields, maintenance costs, facility costs, and allocated facility management and maintenance based on these allocations.

When looking at the summary report, you will see program costs or part-time cost including benefits and the direct operating expenses as well as the pool lifeguard cost. Most of that is made up of part-time salaries. There are direct supply services and supply costs related to individual programs.

Ms. Kowalczyk asked if the fitness floor includes equipment. Mr. Johnson said they did not get into that level of detail, but equipment is included in the costs.

Ms. Dorothy asked if these categories are something our Parks and Recreation director helped to group together. Mr. Johnson said the first step was everyone sitting down together to come up with the list. It was a combination of what he has seen and what staff wanted to see.

Ms. Kowalczyk said she was surprised about the cost of the Silver Sneakers program. Mr. Johnson said that does not account for revenues.

Mr. Johnson explained facility costs including facility management and staff costs and facility and field maintenance costs. There is also the addition of overhead costs with department management and administrative costs.

Revenues recover 120% of direct costs. When adding in facility costs that recovery goes down to 65%. Then add in overhead costs, that goes down further to 58% just for recreation programs.

He posed the question of what to do with this information. He introduced the “Service Level Pyramid” that shows the highest level of community support at the bottom and the lowest subsidies at the top. The bottom of the pyramid are programs that most enhance the community quality of life. The levels in the middle of the pyramid have more balanced benefits to both the individual and to the community. The top levels are where the benefit is more for the individual. The question is to determine where the community wants to be. They have identified what the costs are and what the recovery is, the question is what that recovery should be and where do things fit on the pyramid.

The next steps are to refer the study and its results to the Parks and Recreation Commission. They would then work with staff to develop recommendations for program placement on the pyramid. Then the Parks and Recreation Commission and staff will return to Council with their recommendations.

Ms. Kowalczyk expressed how she is fascinated by the pyramid and whether we should have anything at the top of the pyramid. Ms. Dorothy said she agrees it is sort of like a

matrix and we want to have the definitions correct. Mr. Johnson replied even though called exclusive there could be a broader definition. Ms. Kowalczyk explained how even looking at people using something it is not just about the numbers of who actively uses something. She is interested to hear what the commission has to say.

Mr. Hurley explained how Mr. Greeson has given the example of swim lessons. In some areas with bodies of water, swim lessons could be at bottom of the pyramid in that community. Or in another community it could be at the top of the pyramid. It is a decision about what you want to pay and what you value. Ms. Kowalczyk said that it is about our priorities of where we want to put our funding.

Ms. Kowalczyk asked about the percentages that were given and how we compare to other communities. Mr. Johnson said it is hard to do comparisons, but he can say Worthington is doing well. The pools are doing well in the 50% cost recovery range. At this point it is more about doing tweaks and looking at individual programs. Ms. Kowalczyk asked if there are communities with more cost recovery. Mr. Johnson said cost recovery comes down to facilities. In Dublin, they wanted to simplify and take facilities off the table, looking only at direct costs making it easier for them to reproduce year to year. Most use the model shown here tonight and want to know all costs. It really comes down to if this is something to be produced year to year.

Mr. Smith asked if we have a gauge on full time employees and what percentage they are working in aggregate. Mr. Johnson said they were looking at all their time. For a lot of the full-time staff it was 80-85% spent on programs, for some staff it was 100%.

Ms. Dorothy said she is excited to send this to the Parks and Recreation Commission to look at.

Mr. Bucher asked if in comparison to other similar size cities if there was anything negative that jumped out or seemed out of whack. Mr. Johnson said the City could be doing more on rentals, but it is all about how you want to use your resources. Mr. Hurley noted there is some opportunity for nonresident rentals for parties.

President Michael brought up the idea that has been floated around about getting a liquor permit for the Griswold and rent the facility when it is otherwise not being used. That could fit in the discussion about rentals and the need for an events center in the community.

Policy Item(s)

- Financial Report – January 2020

Mr. Greeson brought up how the City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report was given the budget award by the Government Finance Officers Association. Mr. Bartter thanked his staff for their hard work.

Mr. Robinson asked what happened to the fund balance in this financial report. Mr. Bartter explained how one thing is that when reporting monthly there are ebbs and flows of fund balance. There was a significant drop in unencumbered balance because departments encumber a large portion of their budget. There was also a \$1.2 million transfer for the 911 dispatching services. January was also a 3-pay month. He anticipates that the fund balance will build back up over the year as we receive property tax revenues.

Mr. Robinson clarified that tax revenues were up 2.4% versus last year. Mr. Barter said that was correct.

MOTION Ms. Dorothy moved, Mr. Robinson seconded a motion to accept the January 2020 Financial Report as presented.

The motion carried unanimously by a voice vote.

- General Fund Balance Discussion

Mr. Bartter explained how this is the requested Council discussion on the General Fund balance. In 2018 Council updated the General Fund Carryover Balance Policy. The updated policy targeted the unencumbered fund balance to be between 35-50% of the prior year. Also established is a financial action plan to be implemented if the balance goes under or over the targeted amount. If the balance exceeds 50%, the City Manager will schedule a discussion to oversee the current financial landscape. On December 31, 2019, the City finished the year with an unencumbered balance of 54% triggering this discussion.

He showed a chart that showed the General Fund balance finishing 2019 at 54% and staying above 35% into 2024. Items having an effect on the balance includes the transition to the Northwest Center for 911 call answering. Projections assume a 5% increase of income tax revenue and the return of employers to Anthem building.

The question is whether we should use a portion of the fund balance for one time use. Considering the 911 transition, the potential need to fund Swiminc, and the continued vacancy of the Anthem building, staff does not recommend expenditure changes. We need to maintain fund balance to borrow between funds which helps us save issuance and interest costs on reimbursable expenses.

Mr. Robinson said he stumbled across a report from July 2018 where it shows the fund balance 5 year forecast. He was struck that projections back in July 2018 were more pessimistic than they are now, which is surprising to him. He asked why the outlook now looks better than it did a year and a half ago. Mr. Bartter said there two overarching events hovering which are the transition to the Northwest Center and Anthem. In 2018 we did not have that transition occurring. In 2018 we were not projecting Anthem revenues to come back. Now we are showing a 5% increase when we have full employment going on.

Mr. Bucher asked how frequently we could discuss this topic. Mr. Bartter said that it is at Council's pleasure and staff is happy to discuss it at any time.

Ms. Dorothy brought up how we are getting rated again soon. Mr. Barter said if we do move forward with a full bond issuance we will get rated. Ms. Dorothy said the memo notes we do have neighboring municipalities and their priorities for fund balance are at 50%. We are in the middle at 35%.

Mr. Greeson brought up how there will be a meeting in the Council Chamber on Wednesday about Gypsy Moths. Public information was provided about why they are spraying. Ms. Stewart explained how Council may recall the spraying is done in the summer and involves a lot of low flying planes. We took several calls asking about why planes were flying so low overhead last time. They are asking for a notification response back that we are ok with the treatment. The treatment suppresses pheromones and disrupts the mating cycle for the gypsy moths.

MOTION Mr. Bucher moved, Ms. Kowalczyk seconded a motion to acknowledge and accept the treatment plan.

The motion carried unanimously by a voice vote.

REPORT OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Robinson explained how he has three items he would like to discuss.

The first item relates to the UMCH Comprehensive Plan update in response to City Manager Greeson's email. He would like to advocate that Council discuss that on an upcoming agenda. He sees the continued existence of the Comprehensive Plan update, which was the basis of and referenced by Lifestyle Communities, not serving us well at this point in time. It is a critical thing that we do not remain passive. His sense is that the public will be incredulous if they see the same comprehensive plan referenced.

President Michael brought up how the retreat would be based on issue orientation and this would fit into something with that and could be discussed then.

Mr. Robinson explained that the second item he wishes to discuss pertains to the issue brought up last week about the campaign contribution that President Michael accepted. He has received several questions from persons in the public and he would like to serve the public, so they know where other councilmembers stand on this issue.

MOTION Mr. Robinson moved, Mr. Smith seconded a motion to request Councilmember Michael recuse herself from the forthcoming discussion and vote on the NCR proposal at Stafford Village.

Ms. Kowalczyk said she thought Mr. Robinson wanted to hear councilmembers' opinions, not wanting to make a motion as a body. It does not make sense for Council to make

decisions on this issue. She is not in support of such a motion, but happy to have a discussion.

Mr. Robinson said nothing brings greater clarity than a vote.

Mr. Bucher asked staff if there is anything binding about the motion on this matter. Mr. Robinson said the intent of the motion was not meant to be binding. It is about our norms and assumed ethical standards as a body. Mr. Smith explained that the motion would be a request by the body for President Michael to recuse herself, not a mandate.

President Michael asserted that our law director has stated there were no violations of campaign finance or ethics. The Ohio Ethics Commission has ruled that when someone gets a contribution it is not a gift; it is not treated as that person getting personal gain. This issue was sent to every single voter and she came in first in the election. They supported her in getting elected.

Ms. Kowalczyk said that we should have that conversation about if we need to have limits generally across the board on campaign contributions. She is concerned we are going down a slippery slope. Let us talk about the issue not this particular project. She does not agree we should have a motion. She brought up that Mr. Myers is not here and in consideration of the importance of this issue he should have his voice heard.

Mr. Robinson said he is all for having a discussion, but he will not withdraw his motion. This is an important issue about money in politics.

Ms. Dorothy said this is more of a global topic Mr. Robinson sent out a letter that cost thousands of dollars from his own pocket and we as candidates ask for contributions to fund campaigns because we do not have that kind of money on hand. She does not think this motion is adequate to meet the overall conversation we should have on this topic.

Mr. Robinson explained that he is all for a robust discussion, but the specific issue is about a contribution from a CEO who is someone with business before the City. The public realizes it is an apparent conflict of interest. President Michael responded that it was raised in a letter by Mr. Robinson to everyone in the city and yet she voted first.

Mr. Smith called the question.

The motion failed by a split voice vote.

Mr. Robinson presented that his third item for discussion is about an email Council received from Suzanne Seals about how she and another resident were unable to make comments at the beginning of the meeting last week. He does not understand why they were not allowed to speak. President Michael said that she is working to provide a response to Ms. Seals.

Ms. Dorothy said she wanted to remind everyone that there is a WIFA program tomorrow at 7pm at the Old Worthington Library. The Colonial Hills Civic Association is working with the Griswold for a presentation about undertaking home renovations without sacrificing historic integrity.

Ms. Kowalczyk noted that the Chocolate Walk will be held on Thursday the 13th.

Mr. Bucher said as of 12:30pm today that Power a Clean Future Ohio has launched. He will send around documents to Council and staff for the Ohio Clean Energy Summit: Local Communities Lead in Cincinnati on April 30th. They are working with local communities where there is interest. It could be a good resource going forwards.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION Ms. Kowalczyk moved, Mr. Smith seconded a motion to meet in Executive Session for the purpose of board and commission appointment interviews.

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

Yes 6 Bucher, Robinson, Dorothy, Kowalczyk, Smith, and Michael

No 0

Council recessed at 9:54 p.m. from the Regular meeting session

MOTION Ms. Kowalczyk moved, Mr. Smith seconded a motion to return to open session at 10:21 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously by a voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

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

President Michael declared the meeting adjourned at 10:21 p.m.

/s/ Ethan C. Barnhardt
Management Assistant

*APPROVED by the City Council, this
2nd day of March 2020.*

/s/ Bonnie D. Michael
Council President