



CITY OF WORTHINGTON
Worthington City Council Minutes
June 8, 2020

6550 N. High Street
Worthington, Ohio 43085

CALL TO ORDER – Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance

Worthington City Council met remotely in Regular Session on Monday, June 8, 2020, via Microsoft Teams video conference. 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, Director of Service & Engineering Dan Whited, Director of Planning & Building Lee Brown, Director of Parks & Recreation Darren Hurley, Chief of Police Robert Ware, Chief of Fire & EMS Mark Zambito, Clerk of Council D. Kay Thress

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. 27-2020

Recognizing the Negative Impacts of Racism and Committing to Promote Racial Equity.

Introduced by Ms. Kowalczyk

MOTION

Mr. Smith made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 27-2020. The motion was seconded by Mr. Myers.

President Michael explained how during tonight's work session members will be going through this resolution. If it is completed tonight, that is great, but if not, staff will take suggested comments and rework in hopes of approval at the next meeting.

Mr. Greeson explained how last week he and Chief Ware shared a joint statement regarding events in our country, our community, and our region. At that time, Council expressed the desire to do its own resolution expressing its feelings on the matters at hand. The task of collecting your thoughts and putting them to paper was assigned to our Law Director Tom Lindsey.

Mr. Lindsey detailed how based on statements at the last Council meeting, we proceeded with the task of drafting a resolution on racism for Council consideration. The starting point that he used to prepare this resolution was to look at the resolution that was adopted by the Columbus City Council, the resolution adopted by the Columbus Board of Health who serves as our contracted public health agency, as well as a resolution that was passed by a subcommittee of the Cleveland City Council. This is a topic that is of great national concern and there is no shortage of information available.

The seriousness of this issue has prompted him to try his best to find the voice of many and consolidate it into a resolution of one, which is a challenging task. He has worked to define the common voice of our seven Councilmembers to best capture the thoughts that he was hearing. Due to the Open Meetings Act, it is challenging to do this sort of drafting because we had to be mindful to not have Councilmembers replying-all, limiting their expression of thoughts to only him. He has done his best to put into words what he was hearing. He appreciates all the input that he has received. Instead of attempting to do another draft for tonight, he thought it would be best for Council to have that discussion and work through the suggestions that individual Councilmembers had made. He suggested that Council talk in broader measures as to this resolution and then perhaps start down the path of the actual editing and suggestions.

President Michael suggested that Council begin at the very beginning and address it topic by topic. The first comment that she received is in the title to remove the word "Negative" to read "Recognizing the Impacts". Ms. Kowalczyk said that was a good idea.

President Michael moved on to the first Whereas clause describing the video of George Floyd dying under the knee of a police officer in Minnesota and the resulting protests in Central Ohio and around the world focused on racism in America and police encounters with persons of color. Mr. Robinson shared that his reaction to the first paragraph is that it is a bit removed and distances us from the act of the death or killing of George Floyd. It is not the disturbing video that is the issue, it is the death or killing of Mr. Floyd. His recommendation said that the death of George Floyd under the knees made vivid to all through the video and the resulting protests, it brings us closer to the reality of George Floyd's death and murder as opposed to the video. His second comment is that he believes using the language, "Brought a renewed focus," it sounds a little bit cerebral and as if we had been focused once before, we forgot and now we are back on it. To him, the word, "Awareness" is closer to home and gets at the important issue of changing people's hearts

and minds. Ms. Kowalczyk said that she likes what Mr. Robinson has proposed and agrees with his rationale. We need to be clear on what it is we are talking about. Mr. Myers also agreed with Mr. Robinson's comments, but he wants to make the point that this is a renewed focus because this is happening repeatedly in a predictable cycle. It is important in this paragraph to express that this has happened before, and we need to not let it happen again. Ms. Kowalczyk wondered if it is not just a renewed focus. There is something more to what is happening now. She is not sure of the right words to describe it, but it is different than before and that is important to point out. Ms. Dorothy concurred as well with Mr. Robinson, specifically about switching out a video for a death. President Michael asked if Council wanted to recommend language now or have staff take the comments for wordsmithing. Mr. Robinson suggested moving on and coming back if we have more time.

Mr. Lindsey responded to Council questions about whether there is a scrivener taking notes of this conversation. He explained that he is taking notes of the things that Councilmembers are agreeing on and their discussion.

President Michael moved on to the next paragraph. Mr. Myers expressed that there is no "May" about this. President Michael suggested replacing it with "Are". Mr. Myers said that change will affect some of the verbiage that will need to change so the tenses agree. Mr. Robinson suggested that instead of saying it is most effective when it begins at the municipal, organization, neighborhood, and personal levels, he wonders if it is stronger and more direct to our responsibilities by saying, "achieving racial justice requires we act at the municipal, etc cetera levels." He believes it is a little more explicit as to why we are discussing this and how we want to act because it does require action at the local level for this to be addressed effectively. Mr. Myers said he was looking at Mr. Robinson's draft, the last part with policies and practices is a little too limiting. If this is going to move forward, it is going to have to be grassroots movement, and he wants to make certain we are not looking for some panacea in a government policy that is going to fix things. Ms. Kowalczyk said she would also support the requires we act language. She does not have an opinion on the rest of it.

President Michael progressed to the third paragraph. She explained it was suggested that we strike "Proud Of" and substitute with "Acknowledges" and instead of "Excellent" replace with "Dedicated". That language was a way of toning down and trying to let the Police Department know we support them and to acknowledge their dedicated service. Mr. Robinson suggested instead of using the word "acknowledges" which he hears as a reluctant or weak word, using the word "Affirms" which is a slightly more positive active word. Mr. Myers said he believes affirm is a good word. Ms. Kowalczyk suggested the last section read, "...while recognizing the need for accountability, transparency and continuous improvement." Mr. Robinson and Mr. Myers expressed they think that is good. Mr. Robinson asked about making the last point even clearer, it is a little redundant when we get to training and support. That is mentioned in at least one or maybe two other paragraphs elsewhere. Mr. Myers agreed that we mention training in two successive paragraphs. He is fine striking that and seeing the next Whereas stay pretty much as is, it is short and says what we want to say.

President Michael moved forward to the next paragraph. She expressed that one of her thoughts was, “WHEREAS, the Division of Police provides and will continue to provide.” So that not only have we done it in the past, but we are making a commitment to doing this ongoing in the future. Then also adding from the Community Relations Commission’s request at the end, “Promoting best practices to protect civil and human rights.” Mr. Bucher and Ms. Kowalczyk expressed they liked both additions.

President Michael discussed the fifth paragraph. Mr. Robinson explained that with the Ohio Collaborative and Police Advisory Board, not only do our policies reflect the standards, but we are actually certified by the advisory board. Adding “Has been certified by the Advisory Board” would be clearer and more accurate as to our relationship with the board. President Michael conveyed if that is accurate, to include it.

President Michael moved to the following two paragraphs. Mr. Robinson explained that he believes that the wording in the sixth paragraph is awkward where we say, “Helping lead discussion to encourage a stronger, more respectful community.” Mr. Bucher agreed and suggested, “...and commit to helping.” President Michael and Mr. Robinson agreed that wording was good.

President Michael moved on to the eighth and ninth paragraph. Mr. Bucher suggested that somewhere throughout this, he believes we should be condemning some of the actions that led to these deaths. He does not know if we can put that here, or in a section at the beginning. He wants to hear other Councilmember’s thoughts on condemning the actions that led to these incident and other incidents in recent history. Ms. Kowalczyk expressed she would be in support, but she does not have a language suggestion. Mr. Bucher said we could work it out at we continue. Mr. Robinson stated that maybe it could be in the next paragraph where we are listing manifestations of historical racism, something could be included in there about recurring abuses by law enforcement or something like that. Ms. Dorothy said she would agree with Mr. Robinson.

President Michael read the text of the tenth paragraph and explained one simple suggestion that came from the Community Relations Commission was adding, “WHEREAS, Racism takes on multiple forms” and then adding, “...including but not limited to...” Councilmembers agreed those suggestions sounded good. Mr. Robinson expressed that his current reading of the paragraph is that it feels like it is cautious and dancing around something. For instance, just saying one population better than another, he wonders if we can say for instance, “Individual racism based on race.” It seems otherwise we are missing that clarity. For the three instances, we should put based on race unless everyone feels that is obvious and redundant. Mr. Bucher said he thinks the more clarity, the better. Mr. Myers asked for more explanation. Mr. Robinson explained that there are three elements here. There are individual, institutional, and structural. And each of those could be made clearer if we added “based on race” In other words, “...racism, whereby an individual prejudices or discriminates against another based on race....” There are many forms of bigotry and bullying that may or not be based on race. President Michael said she agrees on the first two, but the third says, “structural racism” has to do with race, which is the history of institutional racism across institutions. She

believes the third one already covers that. Mr. Robinson said that would apply to all three we identify as forms of racism. When he read it, it failed to make the point clearly that we are talking about because of race. President Michael explained Councilmembers will see a redrafting and decide after seeing that. Mr. Bucher suggested adding at the beginning, "The City Council condemns racism that takes multiple forms..." Ms. Kowalczyk said she needs to see it, but she thinks we should just condemn racism. Mr. Myers agreed with Ms. Kowalczyk, and that the paragraph we are talking about now sounds like a definitional paragraph as opposed to an action paragraph. Maybe the next whereas is a standalone that, "City Council condemns racism in whatever form it takes." Ms. Kowalczyk suggested to be more concise, "In all forms."

President Michael progressed to the next paragraph. Ms. Dorothy suggested a change after redlining and the dash to add more of a definition of that, "...limited available house and transportation options – that still impacts current outcomes...." Mr. Robinson commented that if we are identifying historical forms of racism, he likes Ms. Dorothy's addition. But even those elements if we are listing, he would suggest that we adopt some of the elements he put in his notes. First and foremost is the threat of physical violence. Terrorizing African Americans has been the basis of much of the other negative effects. And then underfunded schools, discriminatory lending, employment opportunities, exclusion from a range of societies, clubs, and other means of social advancements. He quoted Toni Morrison who said that racism in many ways boils down to distractions where you spend your time as an African American repeatedly defending your worthiness to exist. He feels something more robust along the lines of what he suggested could be warranted if we are going to be listing historic experience. Ms. Kowalczyk expressed she thinks that is okay, but she does believe that you lose the impact of the inability to build wealth, which is where you get to the redlining issue, which is significant. We need to include that reference to redlining and it could be helpful to have that definition in there somewhere. Ms. Dorothy said she has no problem listing more historical racism. She thinks the comments that Mr. Robinson brought up about bringing slaves over since 1619 is very pertinent throughout this whole conversation, so to bring it back to that time is appropriate. She would like to keep in redlining and the limited available housing and transportation options. She is okay with adding additional historical racism since the beginning of the founding of this country. President Michael inquired if it at some point gets so long that it loses its point. Mr. Robinson said that it does, but he does not know if we have reached that point. President Michael said she is not sure on this paragraph because when we see it rewritten, we will probably have a better ability to look at it.

President Michael continued working through each paragraph of the resolution. Mr. Myers asked if we have ever included, "Now Therefore be it unanimously resolved," and if we have not, why not. Mr. Robinson stated that he would like to see it assuming it is unanimous, it is a forceful expression. Council generally agreed that they liked the suggested language. Mr. Robinson asked that Section 1's language match the earlier change to the heading.

Ms. Kowalczyk suggested on Section 2 to remove the second part of the sentence because it is irrelevant to what is happening with Worthington and the Community Relations

Commission suggested that as well. She is not making a judgement on what is happening in Columbus, there have been differing reports of who is responsible for what. She believes it is perfectly fine to end that sentence at “injustice”. President Michael voiced that she has had phone calls from some businesses that are concerned about whether the City is going to stand up against having rioting and looting. Mr. Myers expressed that goes without saying. Mr. Robinson stated that it is implied in the phrasing “Peacefully protest” so, striking the rioting component is desirable. He also suggested that we add something about the moral rights of the citizens to peacefully assemble and protest against injustice. Councilmembers agreed on Mr. Robinson’s suggestion. President Michael asked if the City Council is affirming moral rights or is responsible for constitutional rights, she is unsure how you define moral rights. Ms. Dorothy expressed that is a good point and she would say constitutional rights.

Ms. Kowalczyk recommended under Section 3 it could be a little stronger in terms of ensuring racial equity. We are not just fostering diversity and inclusion, we want to review our own policies and practices to ensure that we are upholding the rights of citizens and we are not discriminating. Mr. Robinson agreed and suggested that this is where he hoped that we could include definite statements of action. He is hoping for a report or informational bulletin where some of the key questions that members of the community have about use of force and also the mutual aid agreement with the City of Columbus. He hopes that we can get information in written form from staff and the Police Department that would inform the public and perhaps then be the basis of us reviewing and deciding if we are comfortable with them as expressed. He would like to see Section 3 be strong with more definite commitment to bringing information to the public. Ms. Kowalczyk shared an idea called an equity audit that is a comprehensive benchmarking tool that assesses equity, inclusion, and diversity. That might be a good way to characterize what we are looking for.

President Michael said her only concern is how deep in the weeds we get when we are at the tip of the iceberg, figuring out what we need to do and specifying actions when we have not had enough chance to get into whether these are the actions we need. She agrees with bringing information to the public, but she is concerned with putting in things we have not had a chance to research, define, or determine staff timing for. An equity audit sounds good, but she does not know how much time it takes or what it is exactly. Mr. Robinson asked if we could commit to having these on an agenda soon. That way Ms. Kowalczyk and others could research and bring information back to Council. Mr. Myers said that what we are driving at here, is that we do not want to limit this to just safety service issues. It is bigger than that, it is a top down review. Ms. Kowalczyk agreed and said that we have a challenge right now. We want to take action, but we are not sure what we want to do. We want to assure people that we are taking it seriously and commit to taking action. It is a fine line between deciding we are going to investigate what we can do, versus here are the steps. Having a report back to Council is important and she does think it should be broader. Mr. Myers said that he would assume this is something that is done on a periodic basis with all policies. Our HR policies are updated on a regular basis. It is a good idea that we should maybe hash out the specifics at another Council meeting and get a report from staff about what is doable. This resolution is a statement of aspirations and a

commitment to undertakings. We need to make it clear we do want to make certain we are using best practices in all departments in Worthington.

Ms. Kowalczyk stated that it is important for us to figure out exactly what we do want from staff in terms of the various components. Immediately the review of the questions that have been posed about the policies and response is not something we necessarily put in the resolution, but we need to make sure they are put on the agenda moving forward. Mr. Robinson said he spoke with Mr. Greeson about use of force and the mutual aid agreement, and staff is working on assembling information for the public. Mr. Greeson explained that we are little concerned as we answer questions daily or in a piecemeal fashion, that we might do that inconsistently or not provide enough context or data or information. Chief Ware would like to have a little bit of time to provide more comprehensive responses on all these very important topics. We have collected all the questions that we have gotten from Council and the public and the intent is to try to answer them all to the best of our ability and transparently. We know that is something we need to do expeditiously, but not so fast we do not do a good job and therefore provide an incomplete picture. Chief Ware explained that he feels as if we do not do a good job of advertising what it is, we currently do. The policies that are in place, the training we conduct, the oversight that we conduct. It is prudent that He writes this up in a white paper form that gives everybody in the government and the public an opportunity to know where we are as we begin to have discussions about how we improve and where we want to go as a community. Mr. Greeson said that while that work is being done, we will collect more information on best practices in approaching diversity and inclusion strategies on an organizational wide basis. He had the pleasure of doing work with MORPC as he served on the executive committee. They learned lessons and did a lot of good work that he is going to review.

Mr. Lindsey explained that trying to understand where Council ended up on Section 3 was a little bit difficult. He asked if someone could assist to get a better sense of the drafting. Mr. Robinson said he heard two things from Mr. Myers and Ms. Kowalczyk, the language “...will undertake...” and then “...and report back to Council”. Mr. Myers referenced one of Ms. Kowalczyk’s suggestion that reads, “The City of Worthington will undertake a review of relevant organizational policies and practices to increase public awareness, foster diversity and inclusion, and make improvements where needed and will report findings and needed actions and changes to the community.” Council agreed that is good language.

Ms. Kowalczyk suggested adding at the end of Section 4 the words transparency and oversight. There were no objections from Councilmembers about those additions.

President Michael read the text from Section 5 and Ms. Kowalczyk asked if we received feedback from the Community Relations Commission on that language. President Michael answered that we did, and they were wanting to take a major lead role and be provided additional funding for that effort. She is not sure that we will have any one source in which we are going to be reaching out to the community, but the Community Relations Commission would be a very important part of working with this. But we may have other opportunities that are going to be beyond them. We are recognizing that we support their

promotion and fostering their ability to help work with this. Mr. Myers stated that we are elected as Council members to lead this City. He believes it is our duty and responsibility to be in the front of this incredibly important issue. While he welcomes the help and support of the Community Relations Commission, he thinks this is our obligation and duty as Councilmembers to take the lead on this issue. President Michael asked if there is change anyone wants to make to Section 5. Ms. Kowalczyk asked if there is a thought about enlisting the assistance of the Community Relations Commission. Mr. Myers said that is implicit in Section 5, we will probably reach out to them. Ms. Kowalczyk explained she is giving a little more of a stronger role than they have been given in the past to provide direct support on issues. She thinks the most recent example was the Nondiscrimination Ordinance. She is not arguing this language one way or another, but she is trying to think it through on whether there is a need. It says continue to support, so that suggests to her that we continue to support the work they are already doing. She believes they have adopted a very important role. They have been setting up meetings and they see themselves as providing a lot of assistance in this area. Mr. Robinson suggested that the inclusion of the Community Relations Commission in the resolution at all indicates the significance they have in our thinking. Mr. Lindsey noted for clarification that there is language in Section 5 from our City Charter and that is the role the Charter assigns to the Community Relations Commission.

President Michael moved on to Section 6 and Section 7. Mr. Myers asked if we wanted to limit this to just racism. He asked do we want to eradicate bigotry based on race, religion, national origin, or creed. He realizes the issue right now is racism and he does not want to dilute that. Mr. Robinson suggested, "...eradicate racism and all forms of bigotry..." as a singular way of expanding the purview. Mr. Myers said he does not want to dilute the current issue in front of us. In his own world, he has seen so much reaction to migrant farm workers that he finds incredibly troubling. He knows this is not the issue today, but we can leave it the way it is. Ms. Kowalczyk suggested she would prefer to do that because we have adopted the Nondiscrimination Ordinance. We have made our intent clear, and this is very specific, and she does not want to dilute it.

President Michael thanked everybody for their time and effort they have put in on this. Mr. Lindsey will get a revised version out and this will be on next Monday's agenda.

Policy Item(s)

- Financial Report – May 2020

Mr. Bartter explained how income tax collections are down about \$712,000, which is approximately 26% from 2019. Of that, \$650,000 was from individual and net profit collections, which indicates that what is pushing those revenues down is the movement of the due date to July 15th. Hopefully, we will see that come back in the August and September collections.

MOTION

Mr. Myers moved, Ms. Dorothy seconded a motion to accept the May 2020 Financial Report as presented.

Mr. Robinson asked if Mr. Bartter could describe what types of entities fall under the categories of individual and net profits. Mr. Bartter explained that withholding would be employees working at a business within Worthington and having the 2.5% income tax withheld by the employer and remitted to the Regional Income Tax Agency (RITA). Mr. Robinson asked if most of our large employers would fall under that category. Mr. Bartter explained that it is everybody with employees. Predominately that is made up of MedVet, Worthington Industries, and the Worthington School District. That is where most of our income tax revenue comes from. Individual is the individual tax returns filed, including anything that flows on individual returns like schedule C and E type activities. For example, if you work in Dublin and earn 2%, and live in Worthington, you are going to owe 0.5% to us. The net profit is on the profits of the businesses within Worthington. Mr. Robinson noted that withholding was down 4% and asked if that is better than expected given that we are looking at a 10 to 11% projected decline in revenue. He asked if we are encouraged by this. Mr. Bartter said it is not as bad as we thought it could be, but he is not ready to say that everything is great.

Ms. Dorothy asked about a revision that was sent out to Councilmembers. Mr. Bartter explained that the May 2020 income tax update came in a separate cover. Ms. Dorothy said that as she looked at this report, it looks like we were not affected that much. Year to date income tax collection are above estimates by \$70,000. The additional drop in showed how much we were ahead before this May and then how we are down about 20%. Mr. Bartter said we were down 26.18% for May for the month. There are two reports, one is the financial report, which goes to the overall picture of everything. He used year to date for the most part in that. Then you have the more specific May income tax report, which breaks it down by the month so you can get into the weeds more with the income tax if you so choose. Ms. Dorothy asked if we could anticipate something similar for next month and if we have any projections. Mr. Bartter replied that he anticipates we will be down significantly in June. We received two distributions, the first is at the first of the month from RITA, the second is a reconciliation we receive on the 15th. He does anticipate we will be down significantly, but he does not know yet.

Mr. Robinson asked about the 26% figure and clarified that it is from two categories. Mr. Bartter said the 26% is an overall comparison of May 2019 to May 2020 across the entire thing. 90% of that drop was in just those two categories, which is attributed to the push in the due date. Mr. Robinson asked if in fact the decline in individual net profit is comparable to withholding, we will realize the income in July when the reporting takes place. Mr. Bartter replied that is what we hope. Mr. Robinson brought up how year to date income tax collections are above estimates by .67% and asked how we were above budgeted amount given the impact of COVID. Mr. Bartter responded that we were way overestimates prior to May.

The motion carried unanimously by a voice vote.

Ms. Thress brought up that there were questions that have been asked online about the resolution. The first question asked where she could see a copy of the resolution. Then

there were questions about what the City Council is doing to improve racial relations within the Police Department, what are the next steps to improve the quality of life for all Worthington residents, and when will the Police start wearing body cameras.

Mr. Greeson explained how those are all great questions and are both high-level questions about what we can do as an organization, as a community, as well as more detailed questions about body cameras. You heard from Chief Ware earlier about how he is preparing a report. This is not the first person who has asked about body cameras and we will be preparing information about that. We would be glad to talk about it tonight if that is Council's preference. President Michael said we will be getting information out to everybody and she hopes staff will share a copy of Chief Ware's white paper with these individuals asking questions. Mr. Greeson confirmed we will follow-up with them this week and make sure they know we have heard their questions and concerns. We are a little behind answering all the emails and questions we are getting, so for the listening public, he urged to bear with us.

Information Item(s)

- Update on COVID-19

Mr. Greeson invited Captain Chris Craig to provide an update on the numbers we see from the epidemiologists from Columbus Public Health.

Captain Craig explained if we look at the numbers, the big number you see under the Columbus jurisdiction includes Worthington. Total cases for Columbus are up to 5,160 cases. Unfortunately, that includes 237 deaths. In Worthington, there are 89 confirmed cases. There are five probable cases, and the discrepancy is that sometimes in long-term care facilities, the epidemiologists do not have contact tracing follow-up. We sadly have 17 deaths from COVID-19. The silver lining is that our numbers are beginning to stabilize and over the past couple of weeks, we have only seen one or two case increases as opposed to 10 to 20 per day. In Columbus, we are seeing an average of 60 to 80 cases a day. He cautions that with these numbers comes increased testing. The big things we are not seeing are additional overflow into hospitals, excessive ICU bed usage, and things like that. On the unfortunate side, where we are seeing clusters are at long-term care facilities and the jails.

Ms. Kowalczyk asked if there were any more details in terms of long-term care facilities. She asked if they are containing it. She has heard stories from around the state of the challenges and folks have testified at the state house about the challenges in long-term care facilities, which is concerning to her. She asked if there is any support the City can provide or should be providing in that area. Captain Craig responded that the biggest challenge with them early on was with the availability of training and equipment. We did have one of our facilities that had quite a few cases, but we were able to work with Columbus Public Health and the state to provide the equipment and training they needed. Fortunately for the rest of the public, we have been able to keep it contained to those areas. That is a credit to the workers and the public health folks that have gone there with

education and the appropriate PPE and helped them get up to speed on this. Unfortunately, not every place is prepared for this type of disease outbreak. Usually looking at other types of disease outbreaks in these facilities, they only affect a small number of people, and they can be isolated. This is different and it caught facilities off-guard. Getting PPE was a challenge. Because of the actions of Dr. Acton and Dr. Roberts and slowing the spread, they could be supplied and educated.

Mr. Robinson asked what the latest science is saying about the potential seasonality of the virus. Captain Craig responded that is still highly debated and speculated on. He would say that from all the data he has seen and the folks he has talked to, it appears this is going to be more of a chronic condition that we will deal with until we have a well matched vaccine. Fortunately, it seems to be stabilizing a little bit. Whether it will come back in the fall, no one is sure. It will be interesting to see in two weeks if we see an increase in cases from everyone gathering for the different protests and demonstrations. We are getting more testing and we are not seeing the sickest of the sick. The best science we are looking at is up in the air and depends on who you talk to. There are still unknowns as we move forward. There is hope on the treatment and vaccine front. Many of the measures we took slowed it down where we could get a grasp on it.

Mr. Greeson explained that Columbus Public Health has announced community testing sites. There is a pre-registration and appointment required for testing and they ask you to call the testing organization to schedule. There is not one in Worthington, but there are many throughout the Columbus area and harder hit areas. It is important to note that at the top of their flier, they say no one will be turned away for inability to pay.

Ms. Kowalczyk asked whether people needed a referral from a physician or if anybody can walk up and get a test. Mr. Greeson said he would get that clarified.

Mr. Greeson shared that we do not have any significant operational things to report related to COVID-19. We are not getting many complaints anymore about our businesses as we see people adapt to the need for screens, gloves, and mask wearing. Our volume of calls requiring Columbus Public Health and Division of Police investigation has decreased. From a logistical standpoint, we are doing well with our own PPE for city operations. In our planning area, we need to talk a little bit about reopening and our continued efforts there.

Mr. Hurley detailed how we reopened the Community Center last week and we are off to a good start there. We have been seeing about 20 to 25 people per registered session. Right now, it is a fitness operation for folks who want to use the equipment. The other big news is that on Wednesday playgrounds will re-open. There is a lot of rejoicing around town about that. Staff are currently inspecting and cleaning to get ready for the re-opening. The other big item we have been working on are the sports fields. We have been working with our community partners, most significantly the Worthington Youth Boosters, and they have announced they are going to be starting up their travel programs for boys and then a little later the recreational programming for boys. We anticipate having the fields open on June 15th. Outdoor restrooms have not been opened at this point, but with the opening

of the sports fields and the activities picking up at the tennis and pickleball courts, we are evaluating our ability to open those safely and responsibly.

President Michael asked why the Youth Boosters are only starting sports for boys, and not offering sports for girls. Mr. Hurley said that they are not going to move forward with travel softball or recreational softball. He does not know the details, we are waiting to be informed by them. He saw one report that stated that they had a limited number of teams interested.

Mr. Bucher asked about as things open back up and people might have a different understanding of what is allowable and not for restaurants and other businesses, what is the proper way to report or inquire when somebody comes across something they are not sure what the current health requirements are. Mr. Greeson replied that Columbus Public Health is maintaining a line. If we receive one, we are sending that into their system for them to quickly dispatch their public health sanitarians to inspect. That is typically within 24 hours or less.

Mr. Greeson described how under the incident command structure; David McCorkle has been leading the liaison function. He has had a multisector, mix of folks working from the Partnership, the Chamber, and business leaders volunteering to survey businesses and identify needs. The needs at this point are more marketing oriented, trying to make sure people are aware that they are open. We will explore how to best do that.

Ms. Stewart explained how she has been helping Lisa Fuller connect with various individuals in the community she identified she would like to work with on a community recovery piece to all of this. The libraries have graciously offered some of her time as well as other people that do a lot of community outreach to be engaged in this effort.

Mr. Greeson stated that this group is not intended to be a direct service provider. It is supposed to communicate with all the service providers as well as individuals and families to assess need and to use that information to better design strategies. On another front, he believes the Farmers Market will be moving this upcoming weekend from the Community Center to West Wilson Bridge Road. Our team has been working with property owners in the Officescape Area with the Partnership to help facilitate that relationship. We are excited that they will be able to continue and he believes they are going to add a walk-up function in addition to the drive-in function.

Ms. Kowalczyk followed-up on the Farmers Market, noting there is a board meeting tomorrow. They are going to limit the number of people. It is a walk-up, but also a pick-up still. There are still a lot of logistics they must work out.

Mr. Robinson asked if we are still in a state of civil emergency. Mr. Greeson replied that he let that quietly expire. There have been relatively flat number in Worthington, and those cases have been confined to long-term care facilities. We want to maintain a heightened concern and send messages about good hygiene and wearing masks. We are maintaining some people working from home and are still doing meetings virtually. Social distancing

remains important. However, he does not see a particular need to use the type of emergency management tools that having a local state of civil emergency would provide us.

Mr. Greeson brought up how we have had several topics come up in recent weeks that were topics raised in the interviews and conversations leading up to the retreat. It may be in Council's interest to have Councilmembers start to reconnect with some of the issues that were put on the plate earlier in the year such as Age-Friendly, PACE, and the Joint Recreation District. It strikes him that we need some sort of retreat type dialogue and while that may be difficult to do through virtual means, it would still be valuable from a governance standpoint. If we are going to continue to maintain focus on these other areas, it is important to consider an exercise to sort through what is critical and urgent. We may not be able to do all of them well. He thinks there is value in having a dialogue around priorities and honest conversation of what we are realistically going to be able to tackle this year.

Mr. Myers asked if that would be a Committee of the Whole topic. Mr. Greeson said that it could be. Mr. Myers suggested that staff put together a list and drop it in the next Council packet. Council can then sit down and discuss which ones they want to tackle in the upcoming Committee of the Whole meetings. On the list, we can say which ones we want to tackle. Mr. Greeson said the challenge is that not all the issues will be well suited for that. Some might require significant staff work and time.

Mr. Robinson asked that when providing a list, to indicate the level of staff hours that will be required. That is a huge factor in considering what could be advocated for or not.

REPORT OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Ms. Kowalczyk shared how she appreciated all the thoughtful discussion and consideration of the resolution tonight. She believes Council did a great job coming together on a statement and it was very clear that we all agree that we are committing to act, which is the most important thing our community needs to hear right now.

Mr. Myers explained how he was struggling with all the drafts we had and how to address this. He wants to make sure we as a Council set our eyes on the road, on the issue of racial equality and that we are willing to do the work and be introspective. There are issues in our community that we really need to address, and it is not going to be easy or fast.

Mr. Robinson said that he truly enjoyed this evening and he feels grateful to everyone for the cooperative spirit that we all brought to this enterprise.

President Michael also thanked everyone for all their hard work, time, and careful thoughts about our City, its future, and what we can do to make Worthington an even better place than it already is. She is looking forward to all of us working together on figuring out how to carve out an action plan based on the resolution we will pass next week.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION Mr. Bucher moved, Ms. Kowalczyk seconded a motion to adjourn.

President Michael declared the meeting adjourned at 9:39 p.m.

/s/ Ethan C. Barnhardt
Management Assistant

*APPROVED by the City Council, this
6th day of July, 2020.*

/s/ Bonnie D. Michael
Council President