



CITY OF WORTHINGTON
Worthington City Council Minutes

June 1, 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 1, 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.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION(S)

- Community Energy Saver Program

Mr. Bucher expressed how he is excited to see this program launch today. There have been a lot of people working hard over the past few months to find the right fit for our community. He is excited to get a strong campaign going around being more efficient with our energy.

Ms. Parini introduced to Council the representatives here tonight from AEP Ohio and Columbia Gas. These utilities do these types of programs all over the state and this program will run from June 1st through September 30th with the focus of promoting energy efficiency available to the community. The benefits of the program are to save energy at home and work. The awards which we will talk about, are the Sustainability Roadmap and \$60,000 in grants to be used for energy efficiency upgrades at our local small businesses. She showed the Worthington boundaries on a map and noted that every red dot indicates the location of a utility customer that can participate to earn points for this program. For the purpose of this program, we will be earning points sort of like a contest in that map. The Sustainability Roadmap plan is what we will earn if we get halfway. This award lays out the community's plans and activities for the next three to five years of sustainability related tasks. This is a valuable piece of the puzzle.

Mr. LaScola explained how he has talked to both Mr. Greeson and Mr. Whited about this and how it is an exciting thing for the community. It can help the community get grants and keep the things that are important to the community on track because there will be assignments and people's names assigned along with timelines. What is different is that we are going to be working on the Sustainability Roadmap Plan in conjunction with the Energy Savers Program itself. With the House Bill 6 passage, our programs will need to end at the end of September.

Ms. Parini said they would continue to work with staff on this. This is a true value to the City going forward that we will earn. Even more exciting is the financial incentive. We had started working on this several months ago and had been planning to spend the financial incentive award on a greater community enhancement, but when COVID-19 hit, they considered abandoning the project all together. However, it was decided that we could take the money for grants funded directly to small businesses. We are developing a short grant application for small businesses in Worthington that need energy efficiency upgrades.

Mr. Lloyd detailed how the idea with these grants is that we are going to be able to pay for energy efficiency upgrades for these businesses so they can stay more financially stable. The easiest thing for businesses is to replace lighting fixtures, so that is something this grant could pay for. Businesses could also do some small HVAC upgrades.

Ms. Parini said she spoke to the historic district businesses this past week, and they are already asking when they can get their hands on this money. We are excited to directly help offset some costs for businesses, especially during this crisis. She overviewed the goals and how AEP and Columbia Gas looks at how many people in our community sign up for these programs in a typical month and averages that over a year for a baseline. We chose a goal of 4X the baseline that will net \$40,000 from AEP, and 3X the base line from Columbia gas that will net \$20,000.

She explained how both owners and renters can participate, all you have to do is be a customer of AEP and Columbia Gas. You can do rebates for your home, buy a new appliance that is Energy Star certified, or fill out a rebate form on AEP's website. The

biggest thing will be downloading the Its Your Power App from the App Store and doing a home energy profile. You will get a free kit for participating. If you do those steps, you will earn two points for our program. We need roughly 210 accounts to participate to achieve our goal.

Mr. Lloyd detailed the business programs that both AEP and Columbia Gas offer. AEP's program is designed to go after those smaller businesses. This is a team of people who go out and do an assessment of a business's facility and identify potential upgrades. That team will write a proposal to do the install work. AEP will pay up to 80% of the cost to have that retrofit done. He is told the average is up to 50% of the cost. They already have a list of qualified customers within AEP, and they plan on starting to call those customers starting today to let them know about this program. Every business that goes through this will earn three points. Columbia Gas's innovative energy solution can provide rebates for some kitchen equipment, furnaces, installation upgrades, and other energy savings measures that can be taken advantage of.

Ms. Parini gave an overview of their marketing strategy. Today they had a kickoff call with about 20 people who have agreed to be ambassadors. There are probably about a dozen more who could not make the call but want to participate. These are community members that are influential in the community and passionate about this program. Both Mr. Bucher and Ms. Dorothy were on that call. Ms. Kowalczyk has agreed to help out. We are trying to pick folks in different neighborhoods to put up yard signs and signs around town. They plan to have a robust social media campaign with Facebook ads. We cannot do as much as they would otherwise in light of COVID-19 and will have to rely on word of mouth and neighbor to neighbor discussions. It seems pretty attainable just knowing how Worthingtonians are and how they want to support businesses and sustainability efforts. AEP and Columbia Gas have been very generous with this program and have designed and printed the yard signs that will be put up at their cost. She showed the flyers and banners they plan to utilize for their marketing campaign.

Ms. Kowalczyk expressed how this is a really positive initiative and thanked Ms. Parini for working on this and bringing it to Council. It is something that meets Council's priorities in terms of energy efficiency and sustainability. She asked to understand the Sustainability Roadmap and what the timing is for that and the staff capacity available. She wondered if this would take away from existing resources. Mr. LaScola explained that it is really about having a workshop or several meetings where we come together and take on whatever you have already started. We try to build from what you have already started with such as waste, wastewater, recycling, and greenspace. We bring your people together with the group that is appointed as part of the implementation team. They have experts in the field building sustainability roadmaps. We come together and they lead the people from Worthington through the planning meeting. We start with narrowing down the primary objectives. Much of it happens through email and conversations. It does not take people away from their regular jobs, it is more picking their brains and utilizing their time to read and review to build this document. He does not believe this will be detrimental to the work that the City is already doing. Ms. Kowalczyk said it is more a question for Mr. Greenson and staff and what they perceive the capacity is compared to working on other initiatives.

She asked when that work would start and if it would be after we get the points to achieve our threshold. Mr. LaScola replied that in a perfect world we would wait to get further down the road, but we will be starting when you achieve 50%. His funding for this ends at the end of September due to the House Bill passage. We are going to be working on some of these steps along the way and on the same timeline we are working on community energy savings. Mr. Greeson explained we have not thought through exactly how much time or who would work on this. The reality is we have been more focused on some other things in recent months. We have staff members who have done a lot of work in this area. We have catalogued through the Sustainable 2050 initiative many of the sustainability activities we are currently conducting and ones that are proposed in existing plans. We are confident we are well organized to make efficient use of this opportunity. We may have to lean on Mr. LaScola's team when we reach a point where we may be resource restrained.

Ms. Dorothy expressed she is very excited this program is going forward. She has worked to get people in the community to take advantage of these programs, and unfortunately, they are twilighting soon. She asked how we will know that community members are signing up for this and we are working to achieve our goal. Mr. LaScola said from AEP's perspective they will be able to track downloads and home energy profile and kit requests. That is all done through the app. It will come through their compliance team and be officially counted for. Ms. Poe with Columbia Gas said their process would be similar to AEP's and they would be able to track on the back end who participates in their energy efficiency programs and report back to the Worthington Partnership. Ms. Parini said that their Green Team and ambassadors will meet monthly to talk about this and get updates on points to keep the momentum going. There are several councilmembers on the Green Team, so they can provide updates, or she would be happy to. Mr. LaScola said there would also be a public website that will track the goal. Ms. Dorothy said she cannot shout loud enough how important it is to save energy. Every watt we save is a clean watt of energy we are not using, and every person will be saving money. Then through this we are also able to give money to our downtown businesses. She is so excited about this program and she wants us to blow our goals out of the water. Ms. Parini said that Ms. Brown with the City will be working with them to put out information through all of the City's communication channels as well. She is excited to get the community involved.

Mr. Robinson asked Ms. Poe and Mr. LaScola to explain House Bill 6 and what the motivation is for AEP and Columbia Gas to encourage people to use less energy. Mr. LaScola said back in 2009 with the passage of HB 220, there were mandates put on electric utilities to help customers save energy with PUCO requirements to meet. We feel like we are doing a great benefit and service to our customers because we are helping them save money and save energy. They can use that money to buy computers or hire employees. We get that loss revenue recovery, so we are not out. House Bill 6 when it passed, it says they need to stop doing what they are currently. They are collecting money through an energy efficiency rider, so that funding mechanism ceases at the end of 2020. So, there is a change in rules, so there is a change in what they are offering in regard to energy efficiency. Ms. Poe said energy efficiency is a great way to help their customers at Columbia Gas and help them have more affordable bills. House Bill 6 does not affect Columbia Gas's energy

efficiency programs. Their energy efficiency programs are set to continue past the end of 2020, through the end of 2022.

President Michael thanked the Partnership, AEP, and Columbia Gas for presenting tonight. This is an exciting program and she is glad we will be working together to see how to improve sustainability and help local businesses.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- Meeting Minutes – May 11, 2020

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

The motion carried unanimously by a voice vote.

NEW LEGISLATION TO BE INTRODUCED

Ordinance No. 20-2020 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 Cost of Phase II Energy Conservation Measures, Authorize the Execution of Agreements with ABM Technical Solutions, LLC, and Determine to Proceed with the Project. (Project No. 695-19)

Introduced by Mr. Smith.

Ordinance No. 21-2020 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 Construction of the NE Gateway Intersection Improvement Project and all related Expenses with said Project. (Project No. 602-14)

Introduced by Mr. Myers.

Ordinance No. 22-2020 An Ordinance to Revise the Codified Ordinances by Adopting Current Replacement Pages

Introduced by Ms. Dorothy.

Ordinance No. 23-2020

Amending Ordinance No. 45-2019 (As Amended) to Adjust the Annual Budget by Providing for Appropriations from the General Fund Unappropriated Balance and Waiving the Formal Purchasing Requirements.

Introduced by Mr. Robinson.

Mr. Greeson expressed that we certainly did not want to bring an item to you like this. We would rather not have this kind of expense at a time where we are concerned about revenues. We place a high value on the maintenance and continued operation of our facilities and have uncovered a concern that needs to be addressed in a time sensitive manner.

Mr. Hurley explained that in early April, staff became aware of excessive water usage from lines that feed a mechanical room at the Community Center. As we investigated further, it was suspected there was a leak present in a piping system underground that takes hot water from one mechanical room to the other. We became concerned about the soil in the area as we suspected a leak there and we had American Leak Detection come out. They came out and exposed the pipe and tested it, finding a leak off the bottom corner of the chiller. They found as they dug deeper that the steel piping was surrounded by PVC, the leaking had gone through the PVC insulation causing significant deterioration in the piping. As they tested the area around the leak, hoping to find a place where the piping was of good enough quality to weld the new piping in, they found the damage travelled a good way under the PVC piping. The next issue became whether it had gotten under the building through the foundation and we found that it had. Not only were we going to have to replace it up to the building, but we would need to get under the building. There are a couple other obstacles such as piping running under some electric conduit creating challenges. The good news is that the Community Center has been closed, so it has not hurt operations to this point. Without this heated water you would have a great deal of humidity and condensation in the windows in the natatorium. We are effectively closed until we can get this repair completed.

The bid they gave us to fix this along with their subcontractor Brenner Mechanical, the range of pricing was from \$139,950 to \$149,950 dependent on what they encounter. The appropriation that we are requesting is \$155,000. We know there are still some challenges. and this is a unique situation that we are going to remedy. It was good news in a way, where the chiller sits, we were worried, but they poured a concrete foundation below. That is good for the stability of the chiller, but it created a swimming pool effect that contributed to the pipe deterioration. We will be installing a sump pump system to keep that from happening in the future. We understand this is not normal protocol, we prefer to follow the guidelines and go out to bid. But because they have already done a lot of work and testing, we would have to go back and have specifications drawn and go out to bid, which would assuredly take us through the summer and into the fall before we could get this fixed and consider reopening the pools.

President Michael asked how long this will take to get fixed. Mr. Hurley replied the contractor has been willing to go ahead and order the pipes. The pre-engineering and construction of the pipes is already underway. If we are able to enter into an agreement, the initial engineering and delivery time was four to five weeks and we are already about two to three weeks into that window. It is his understanding we should be able to get them here within the next two to three weeks and get this done somewhere at the end of June, possibly being able to open the pool sometime in July depending on some decisions that still need to be made to be ready.

Ms. Dorothy asked how long we expect this new pipe to last and how long the old pipe will last. Mr. Hurley replied that this was a little bit of a fluke scenario. Whatever the initial leak was, the system design that enabled that water to rest around the pipe accelerated the deterioration of it. You would not expect a 16-17-year-old structure to have that. We faced the decision to replace the rest of the run, this is for a little over half of it, but they came in to test the remaining piping and determined it did not warrant the added cost to replace. He does not know if he can give a number of years, but this is far faster than it should have happened. Between remedying the conditions and adding the sump-pump, we feel we will be able to get much more life this go around. Mr. Whited said the way the pipe was installed, and the lack of drainage shortened the life span. It should typically last 20-30 years. Ms. Dorothy summarized that our new pipe would last 20-30 years, and the old pipe will last maybe 10-20 years. Mr. Hurley said that the pipe's integrity was tested, and between the City's financial condition and the engineer's opinion it had significant life left, we decided to go this route. Ms. Dorothy expressed she wanted to make sure this was listed as a maintenance item in 20-25 years, so it does not surprise us because it is going to come up again.

There being no additional comments, the clerk called the roll on Ordinance No. 23-2020. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes 7 Bucher, Robinson, Kowalczyk, Dorothy, Smith, Myers, Michael

No 0

Ordinance No. 23-2020 was thereupon declared duly passed and is recorded in full in the appropriate record book.

MOTION Ms. Kowalczyk made a motion to pass Ordinance No. 23-2020 as an emergency. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bucher.

There being no additional comments, the clerk called the roll on Ordinance No. 23-2020 as an Emergency. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes 7 Robinson, Dorothy, Smith, Myers, Kowalczyk, Bucher, Michael

No 0

Ordinance No. 23-2020 As An Emergency was thereupon declared duly passed and is recorded in full in the appropriate record book.

Ordinance No. 24-2020

To Amend the Official Zoning Map of the City of Worthington, Ohio, to Change Zoning of Certain Land from I-2, General Industrial to I-1, Restricted Light Industrial at 6580 Huntley Road (100-006136).

Introduced by Mr. Smith

Mr. Brown described how this is tentatively scheduled to go to the Municipal Planning Commission (MPC) next week. It would then come back to Council after the MPC makes a recommendation.

Mr. Robinson asked is there any way that the use that SuperGames is looking at could be added as a conditional use to the industrial zoning as opposed to rezoning the property itself. Mr. Brown replied it could be, but it would have to go through the same process as rezoning would take. Mr. Robinson said there is a possibility for addressing legitimate concern for rezoning the property as opposed to a one-off conditional use for retaining the existing zoning.

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.

REPORT OF CITY STAFF

Policy Item(s)

- Permission to Bid – Police Building Roof Replacement Project

Mr. Whited explained how this is a much-needed project that is one of several that are being coordinated together. Mays has been involved with us for roofs for quite some time. The cost estimate is \$425,000 and we look forward to acquiring a solid contractor for the work. We will go to bid as soon as we can legally. He estimates it will be about a three-month project.

Ms. Dorothy explained that the market should be a little bit better for us considering everything that is going on. She is very happy we are getting the work done.

MOTION

Mr. Myers made a motion to consent to bid the police building roof replacement project. The motion was seconded by Ms. Dorothy.

The motion carried unanimously by a voice vote.

- Permission to Bid – Police Building Vestibule

Mr. Greeson said this project is being coordinated with the other activities at the police station and is associated with our transfer of dispatching services to the Northwest Center in Dublin. It will create a secure vestibule in the police station in a space that is currently lobby.

Mr. Whited described how this is really just some rolling off and establishment of different areas in there to make it a safe place to enter in the event of an emergency when the building may not be staffed. This is a small project and will bid at the same time as the roof. It should not take long to construct, but the work of coordinating with the other two projects may take a little longer. He estimates three months or less to completion.

Ms. Dorothy asked how this would be used by the public. Chief Ware explained how we are trying to balance safety and someone in need. Someone who may need immediate police attention will go to a police station. With us not being staffed as we normally are, and with officers on patrol, we want to provide a safe space for someone to get into to get away from whatever threat might be present until we can get to them. We will have some support staff there, but it will not be 24/7 support. We want to meet the expectations of our community for service levels. There has to be a way for people to still have access to their officers. It is a balance of safety with service.

MOTION Mr. Robinson made a motion to consent to bid the police building vestibule project. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bucher.

The motion carried unanimously by a voice vote.

Mr. Hurley displayed an overview of the reopening timeline for the Worthington Parks and Recreation Department. He explained how we saw several other communities ready to move on tennis and pickleball, so we moved along with them in reopening those facilities on May 27 along with the skate park. We have not received many reports of large gatherings so far and people seem to be doing their best to follow guidelines. Today we opened Godown Dog Park and posted distancing guidelines and other safety measures. We will be watching it as well and people seem to be doing a good job spacing out. The big upcoming activity is the reopening of the Community Center fitness floor. Staff did a really good video walking you through and showing visuals of the center. Starting today residents and members were able to begin reserving 75-minute timeslots where they can come in and utilize the fitness floor. Playgrounds are the big one that is still closed by the Governor and the Health Department. For the ballfields, we are working closely with the Youth Boosters and we are starting maintenance on them. We did not bring on seasonals this year, and with the rain and flooding recently, our ballfields have not received much attention. We will do all we can do to be ready when the Youth Boosters decide they want to proceed. We will then open to our other core user groups which include senior softball and church leagues and decide from there if we want to open them further or not. Of the other items on the list we are waiting to see, the outdoor restrooms are a big one, especially down at the parklands. The guidelines and our standard of wanting to make sure those are

safe would require multiple cleanings a day. Without seasonals that is a challenge and we are exploring contractual services. The restrooms at Perry and McCord are not under as much pressure until the ball diamonds open. No word on the senior center at this time.

Ms. Dorothy asked whether we are using all of our fulltime staff and if we have rehired any of our part time staff. Mr. Hurley explained we have thirteen recreation staff that are not of the parks crew. Four of those are Griswold Center staff and the rest typically work events or at the Community Center. All of those staff are engaged in covering hours related to reopening the Community Center. We are bringing back a select group of part-timers to have enough hours to serve the public. We will be monitoring how ready people are to use the facility to determine whether or not to bring back any more part-timers. With our financial situation, we are looking to bring back the minimal amount needed to do a good job.

Mr. Greeson explained how he and Chief Ware have reflected a lot in recent days on events that have transpired in our country and in our region. Individually, we have felt strongly that as public leaders, as public safety leaders in Worthington, we needed to go on the record offering our thoughts. We have decided to do that jointly tonight, and we will share our thoughts publicly through the City's various communications channels.

Chief Ware shared how we were shocked and saddened to watch the devastating video of George Floyd being killed, which has sparked protests close to home and around the world. Racial injustice, inequality, and bias remain present and are all too real for many people. We have internally discussed these issues while he has been here, and City Manager Greeson and staff have discussed it for far longer than that. We are deeply troubled by the fact that people of different races and backgrounds are treated differently in our society. The color of person's skin should not dictate how an individual is treated, or increase the likelihood of physical conflict, injury, or even death. In our ideal world, all people would be treated equally. People in positions of authority, including police officers, do the right thing and all people in the community trust them to do that. We have a lot of work to do as a country, as a city, and as a community to achieve this equal treatment and trust.

We believe this needs to be a community conversation about how Worthington can be supportive and welcoming of people from all racial and ethnic backgrounds. Members of the community and the city government need to work everyday through each individual interaction to be respectful, supportive, and caring of others regardless of their background. We are committed to having conversations and taking specific steps to proactively address issues of racism and discrimination. Ultimately, we all need to show respect and caring for all people around us. The City government, including the Division of Police, strives every day to achieve the ideal that we described. However, we are not perfect and anytime we do not live up to the ideal we expect of ourselves; we risk losing the same respect and caring that we are encouraging in the community. We must be vigilant to continually improve and grow in this area.

We have taken a number of specific steps in our Police Division in this area. In the past two years, we have trained on diversity awareness, ethics, social and emotional

intelligence, crisis intervention, bias awareness, use of force, and de-escalation techniques. As leaders, we strive to be positive examples. We expect our officers and all City employees to act professionally and treat people with respect and dignity. Our officers work hard to build positive experiences and relationships in our community. Many times, they go well beyond what we expect of them. But we have to acknowledge we are not perfect and there is room for improvement. We need to continue to commit to holding ourselves accountable for our actions. We commit to fully investigating any incident that gives us pause, so we can take the appropriate corrective actions. Our society and our community have much work to do and we want to help lead the discussions to encourage a stronger, more respectful, and welcoming community for people of all backgrounds. In the coming days, we will be reaching out to community partners as we take on this extremely important effort.

Mr. Greeson explained that we are going to share a version of that statement with the community in a written form. We will be engaging our Community Relations Commission and other community partners, asking for their support and dialogue, to determine the best ways to talk about this and move forward in our community. That is an obligation we have as public leaders and take seriously.

President Michael thanked Chief Ware for the very thoughtful statement. She expressed that it was very well written.

Ms. Kowalczyk described how she had a brief exchange with Mr. Greeson about a specific related matter, and she asked for more information about how this came about particularly since some members of the public have asked. It is her understanding that some of our officers were in Columbus last night assisting the Columbus Police. She asked for an explanation of how that came about and what they were doing down there. Chief Ware explained that the events downtown are rather significant and straining on the resources of members of the Columbus Police Department. In addition, there was concern about traffic creating a danger for the protestors, and also traffic impeding the efforts to allow a peaceful protest and First Amendment assembly. Our officers were engaged in blocking off ramps from the interstates and to that immediate downtown area for the safety of not only the protestors marching, but the motoring public so that they did not get caught up in there and not be able to get out. We were not engaged in anything related to the event itself. We were there strictly in a support role to minimize the amount of vehicle traffic. Ms. Kowalczyk explained it is her understanding that this was related to a mutual aid agreement that our department and others have with each other and the City of Columbus. Chief Ware explained that typically it is not the biggest agency in the county asking for assistance, it is usually them offering the assistance in our times of need. That is often done without any expectation of a return. It is twofold, in that we want to return the favor and that citizens of Franklin County that are not participating in those events downtown are able to commute safely through the area. Mr. Greeson added that in a little bit broader perspective, it is not unusual for cities to provide assistance to others when the service demand outstrips their ability to staff it. That may occur in our Service Department, it occurs daily in our Fire Department where we are part of automatic aid where we back each other up and support each other. In times like this where there is a large event that

out strips the capability of a department, we may play support roles like many of the other suburbs.

Ms. Kowalczyk asked about holding protests or rallies on City street corners. She has had some folks ask what the requirements are and whether there is a permit needed. Individuals have the right to be on public sidewalks without a permit, and we have had larger gatherings on the Green before. Mr. Lindsey explained how we are talking about permitting and expression of First Amendment rights, it varies by the nature of that expressive activity that someone might engage in. He agrees that the answer is very dependent on the type of event or activity. An individual walking on public sidewalks, carrying a sign, and expressing views is certainly protected First Amendment activity without any permit required. The question with the use of public property starts when the use begins to interfere with the right of all to use that property. If someone wants to reserve a park or a facility for their exclusive use, certainly that becomes a permitting situation. Occasionally that is one with the Village Green and more often done with other park facilities, whether for expressive activity or other activities if it is a special right exclusive to that person or group. The First Amendment affords great rights to the public to express their views. The City's rules and provisions do not conflict with that nor can they. The City Charter speaks specifically to the Village Green in terms of regulating its use and its purpose is for the participation of the inhabitants. The City Manager is authorized to establish rules and regulations governing its use. There are specific provisions in the Charter that regulate the placement of structures as well as the removal of plants or planting of plants. That is why Council takes action when it is of a more permanent nature. From a planning standpoint, if somebody were planning large numbers of people, there is a great benefit from a public safety standpoint to know the number of people and provide resources for traffic control and to make sure the public is well served. Mr. Hurley added that the City Manager can set guidelines and policies in terms of permitting the Village Green. Our filter for that is printed on our permit for the Village Green is non-profit groups in the Worthington Area can apply to hold special events on the Village Green. While that is not a lot of detail, that is the lens we look through when we get a Village Green Permit request. We would not permit weddings or private parties like we might in some of our parks. The Village Green has been held to that permitting standard of those non-profit groups wanting to hold community events. Mr. Greeson described how in reality, we have had people on the sidewalk and a little bit on the Village Green today peacefully protesting. We welcome that. It is not something we are striving to permit. What contacting and engaging in City staff does, is that we have the opportunity to help ensure that we are thinking about things like traffic control. It is a busy intersection and we want the right staffing and measures in place to ensure their safety and that the Green is not getting negatively impacted as an important civic place in our community.

Ms. Kowalczyk remarked that a lot has happened in the last week as the Chief has said. She put out a statement on social media this past Friday before the weekend's events had taken place. Since then, she has watched events continue to unfold in Columbus and she was in shock. A large number of people were peacefully protesting but were primarily met with force. Some may think that the events of the last couple days could not happen in our community, but it is not about if the event could happen, it is about what we are doing to

ensure it does not happen. We as a City should be promoting and exemplifying a culture of inclusiveness and openness. People have asked her what they can do as citizens of Worthington, and what can the City itself do to respond. She had a few thoughts that she would like to share and hopes that we can pursue. First is to definitely listen, particularly to those people who have faced racism their entire lives. She is white and does not know what being black in America feels like and she will never truly know how it feels. She does not know how she would react to the systemic racism that black people face. She would listen with the intent to understand what she can do to support people of color in our community. Secondly, she suggested people seek out resources and learn what implicit bias means, what structural racism is, how it is perpetuated, and what we can do to identify our own biases and how to address them. Understanding starts with each of us. Finally, she has told Worthington residents they can and should share with the City their thoughts and concerns. Show up. Attend the Community Relations Commission meetings. Share your thoughts with our Visioning Committee that is right now asking residents for feedback on what they want to see Worthington be in the future. Share your thoughts with City leaders and with Council either formally, one on one, or both.

We should all be open and ready to listen, learn, and act. She asked what we can do as City leaders. She commended Mr. Greeson and Chief Ware for their statement today and commitment to working on these issues. She echoed those statements and added that we need to understand our current situation and ask important questions. What are our police department policies and current stance on body cams, training, community effort and engagement, our policy on physical force, complaint filing, implicit bias training, and recruiting? She asked what we are doing in our community to ensure trust, handle situations appropriately, and ensure our police department upholds the value of protecting and serving all in our community. Implicit bias training, hiring practices, and recruitment of women and minorities are things we can look at across the board with our City practices and policies. It is also time to revisit the School Resource Officers. She wanted to thank both Mr. Greeson and Chief Ware for speaking with her multiple times over the past few days as she tries to gain a better understanding of where we are now. As City Council members, we need to prioritize equity as a policy agenda. She asked if we are willing to sign on to declare racism a public health crisis. We said last year about this time that we wanted to be diverse, inclusive, and welcoming. We took a bold step to pass a Non-Discrimination Ordinance. She is proud to live in a community that strives to be better. We have an opportunity and responsibility to take bold action and continue that message. This is hard work and it takes time and commitment, but she is confident we can do it. She looks forward to working with all of you on further dialogue and action.

Mr. Robinson commented that he would like to thank Chief Ware for the unambiguous statement acknowledging the rights and responsibilities that we all share and the role of law enforcement in protecting and not infringing upon them. He looks forward to reading the words when they are published and following further discussion and action in our City and completing those goals.

Mr. Bucher echoed everything that was said by the two previous members of Council and thanked Chief Ware for his comments that hit it squarely on the head as far as where we

need to build off of. He looks forward to proactively working with Council to lead by example and play an important role on this in the Central Ohio region.

Ms. Dorothy agreed with the statements of all the previous Councilmembers who expressed their thoughts. She appreciates Chief Ware and Mr. Greeson's statement. She would like to emphasize what Ms. Kowalczyk said that we need to build on having successful measures to move the needle. We do not have a very diverse community. It seems like we do not have a lot of unrest because we are mainly homogenous. We do need to make sure we are looking at our implicit bias and we are ready for our de-escalation techniques and looking to see what is happening with our School Resource Officer. She knows that at one point we said we were going to revisit the School Resource Officer and we have not. We were not sure what we were looking at to see where we could move the needle and make it an inclusive, equitable space for everyone. Realizing that all of us here are not in the minority, we are in the majority, we have a specific lens we have to take off and put ourselves in another position. It is hard to do, and it is something she believes we can move forward on. She appreciates all the ideas that Ms. Kowalczyk put out there and everyone else that has signed on for this too.

President Michael thanked Chief Ware and Mr. Greeson for the wonderful statement that took a lot of time and careful thought in order to put together. She thanked the Councilmembers for their efforts and determination to want to make our City better as we move forward.

Mr. Greeson said that these are tough conversations and challenging issues. He does not feel like we could have a better Council or be in a better community to tackle these things together. We will hope to do things more inclusively than ever before.

REPORT OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Ms. Dorothy explained that the McConnell Arts Center is still moving forward trying to figure out what to do next in the changing times. It is very difficult for any institution, especially the arts. They have not put together exact plans of how to move forward, but they are still doing everything they can to promote arts in the community and have some community engagement. She is sure they will need help restarting.

Ms. Kowalczyk shared that she attended the SOAR meeting that the Visioning Committee held as an observer. She got to see them using the technology, it was a little bit clunky, but they made it work. She encourages other folks to watch and see how they are engaging with people. She has been trying to continue to get people involved in that process and she encourages everyone else to do so as well.

President Michael shared that the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission and the Central Ohio Mayors and Managers Association have been conducting Zoom meetings which she has been participating in. She has been keeping track of what is going on and how communities are working together and moving forward to opening up Ohio.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION Ms. Kowalczyk moved, Mr. Smith seconded a motion to meet in Executive Session to consider the purchase of property for public purposes.

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

Yes 7 Robinson, Dorothy, Smith, Myers, Bucher, Kowalczyk, Michael

No 0

Council recessed at 9:11 p.m. from the Regular meeting session.

MOTION Mr. Myers moved, Ms. Dorothy seconded a motion to return to open session at 9:33 p.m.

The clerk called the roll on returning to open session. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes 7 Smith, Bucher, Kowalczyk, Robinson, Myers, Dorothy, Michael

No 0

ADJOURNMENT

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

President Michael declared the meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

/s/ Ethan C. Barnhardt
Management Assistant

*APPROVED by the City Council, this
15th day of June, 2020.*

/s/ Bonnie D. Michael
Council President