



# City Council Agenda

## Minutes

Monday, October 4, 2021 at 7:30 pm

6550 N. High Street, Worthington, Ohio 43085

### 1. Call to Order

**Minutes:**

Worthington City Council met in-person in Regular Session on Monday, October 4, 2021. President Michael called the meeting to order at or about 7:30 p.m.

### 2. Roll Call

**Minutes:**

**Members Present:** Peter Bucher, Rachael Dorothy, Beth Kowalczyk, Scott Myers, David Robinson, Doug Smith and Bonnie Michael

**Member(s) Absent:**

**Also Present:** City Manager Matt Greeson, Assistant City Manager Robyn Stewart, Assistant City Manager Economic Development Director David McCorkle, 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

**There was three members of the public in attendance.**

### 3. Pledge of Allegiance

**Minutes:**

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

### 4. Visitor Comments

**Minutes:**

There were no visitor comments.

## Special Presentation(s)

### 5. Presentation on Inclusive Housing Initiative - Kathleen Fox, President of Community Strategy Partners, LLC

**Minutes:**

Mr. Greeson explained how at the beginning of the pandemic, a Council Retreat was

cancelled and Ms. Fox was going to be a speaker at that retreat on topics of growth, development, and engagement around that. However, we are pleased to have her this evening to talk about another topic of great importance. She will be speaking about the Inclusive Housing Initiative in Central Ohio, which is a project that involved many regional organizations. She has presented to the Community Relations Commission who encouraged this presentation and they approved a motion to provide a \$1500 sponsorship for this regional process. They encouraged the Council to also be a sponsor of it as well.

Ms. Fox expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to speak about building inclusive communities in Central Ohio. They have a number of organizations that have joined this initiative as sponsors and partners to address a critical issue in this region. How we respond to this challenge will affect our future success as a region. Our region is experiencing all the national trends that place pressure on housing affordability such as undersupply, underfunding, labor and material shortages, rising production costs, and exclusionary zoning, and other policies. Adding to that, we are the only growing region in Ohio and of the largest 30 US metros, Columbus has the sixth-highest increase in net move-ins between 2019 and 2020. Central Ohio is expected to grow by nearly a million people by 2050 according to the Mid Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC). We are growing faster than the US average due to natural population increase and the US and international in-migration. The recent Census data show that in Franklin County, we grew by nearly 14% which is more than 160,000 additional people in the last decade, which is the second-largest increase since the nearly 180,000 increase in the 1950s. With our regional housing trends, housing production has not kept up with demand over the past decade. We will need 300,000 new housing units by 2030 and we have a mismatch of housing types and sizes compared to our region's needs. We do not have enough of the right types of housing for families wanting to buy their first house, senior citizens wanting to age in their community, and young people going into their first jobs. We have also lost naturally occurring affordable housing units. According to the Board of Realtors, the median home price has increased by \$61,500. Our region also has extreme geographic and economic segregation. According to a 2015 study, we are second only to Austin, Texas for the worst economic segregation in the United States. We have an extensive lower-wage warehouse and distribution sector in our region, and many jobs are inaccessible by transit. Many working people have few housing choices, lower access to higher-resourced neighborhoods, and high transportation costs to get to the available jobs. 30% of people in Franklin County live below 200% of the federal poverty level and are housing burdened, paying more than 30% of their income on housing. 54,000 households in Franklin County pay half of their income towards housing costs. According to a 2018 study by Harvard University, Central Ohio is among the least promising places in the US for lower-income children to climb the economic ladder. Moving earlier in childhood to an area that is better resourced, can increase a child's future economic success. Our region needs to provide these opportunities and we need regional engagement to solve these problems. Otherwise,

our future success as a region will be hampered. We need Central Ohio regions, such as Worthington to work together on this journey.

She has heard and read a lot about Worthington's visioning process, and the City has created and adopted an impressive list of vision statements. Notably, related to this conversation, there is a goal to create opportunities and remove barriers for people from a wide range of ages, abilities, and income levels to live in Worthington. There is also a goal to increase the diversity of the City to better reflect the racial and ethnic composition of the region. Worthington also has recently adopted legislation to prohibit housing discrimination based on the source of income, so those who rely on veterans' benefits, social security, and other income will be treated fairly in the housing marketplace. Worthington's actions are in alignment with the Inclusive Housing Initiative.

The Building Inclusive Communities initiative launched its first programming last week and has mostly been virtual for public health reasons. They have reached a wide audience with local and national speakers. The initiative has presented to various community groups, been featured on live radio, and presented multiple live-streamed roundtable discussions. All of the public programs have been recorded and are available on demand. Over the next year, they are working on a variety of efforts to expand understanding of the need for housing choices and mixed-income communities, to increase awareness of the challenges that exist, and build a network of communities and organizations involved. The goal is to learn about the tools available to expand inclusive housing while maintaining the character of their neighborhoods and communities. They now have a dozen technical experts from the country assisting them, and were just awarded a challenge grant to help fund bringing in Harvard Loeb alumni to Central Ohio for workshops. They are creating a Harvard Loeb speakers bureau for virtual and in-person programming. A communications toolkit is being created to hold conversations about potential solutions to our challenges. They have two dozen sponsors and are actively seeking new partners and sponsors.

Ms. Dorothy asked if there are any general or specific barriers in Worthington to creating more inclusive communities and having more housing options. Ms. Fox responded that many communities have zoning codes that do not allow different types of housing, that would be one area they would look to work on how their planning and zoning is written and if it is possible to allow additional sizes and types of housing in ways that are respectful to each community's particular way of planning. It is not a one size fits all solution, it is more about establishing a dialogue about what the community would want to do to address this to fulfill the visioning statements that were adopted.

Mr. Robinson asked to find out more about the initiative and what exactly the initiative is and what is the educational component it includes. Ms. Fox replied that they launched a series of programs last week and are launching additional programs over the next year. Some of those will involve conversations in various communities where those communities invite the initiative to come in and speak with other local

organizations interested in being a part of it. They will create a toolkit for local organizations to have conversations in their communities and neighborhoods about inclusive housing and what that would look like. There are some specific technical assistance advisors, who are people working in these areas across the country and they will be available to help with organizations and neighborhood groups that want to have conversations about how to incorporate housing options in ways that are keeping with the character of those communities. There will also be some workshops to look through what the options might be and help that community have a conversation about what options may work for them.

Ms. Kowalzyk commented that this is the right time for Worthington to have these discussions. It is evident from the visioning statements that this is something that people in the community want because housing is an effective way to become more inclusive. She attended some of the sessions that were streaming and found them incredibly informative. It struck her that offering diverse housing options is an economic development strategy since employers are experiencing difficulties retaining employees who have issues with reliable transportation to get to their job. Looking at how we can build a stronger workforce in our community will help us attract more employers and build our income tax base. Also, the more we can be inclusive and diverse, will give people the capacity to be successful in the workplace because our work is diverse. She knows some people have some confusion over what affordable housing means and mixed-income housing, it is important to talk about a diverse set of options that benefits our community. We have dipped our toe into this with our work with Stafford Village and NCR and having them offer units to the community at an affordable rate while having the market-rate apartments support that. She is encouraged and excited to hear about new ways we can promote inclusivity through housing options, particularly for older adults which is a tremendous need in our community.

Mr. Smith explained how he attended the online forum last week as well and it was really interesting to hear some of that conversation. Some of the language used at the forum and tonight is a little confusing, he thinks that he understands the initiative when it comes to housing. It seems at the forum ownership of housing was talked about versus rentals. Ms. Fox explained how both are important, homeownership and rental options are something we do not have enough of either. Mr. Smith asked if the work product of the initiative would be to identify that need and the ratio of rentals versus ownership. Ms. Fox replied they are working with MORPC, which did an extensive effort on a regional housing strategy. They will be working with all of that information and data. This effort is to have a broader conversation with people, so you do not need to be a housing nerd to understand what we need to do and why. Communities would then have conversations about the best ways to increase inclusive housing in their communities. Mr. Smith expressed he would be interested in learning about market demand and how it intertwines with this conversation. Ms. Fox replied that there is a much higher market demand for housing than we are producing here, which artificially inflates the prices. It is not a good situation to have a

constrained marketplace with these high prices.

Mr. Myers asked what Ms. Fox would ask of Worthington to support the initiative in a broader sense. Ms. Fox replied that they would love to have the Council's sponsorship of the program along with resident groups or community organizations to join with the initiative. The goal is to engage with as many Central Ohio residents as possible. Mr. Myers asked what sponsorship would entail. Ms. Fox replied that it would be a financial commitment, ranging up to \$5,000. The CRC has already committed \$1,500 and they have expressed that they hope that Council would help get the City's total commitment to that \$5,000 level. Additionally, they are engaging with sponsors to the degree they wish to be engaged in shaping future programming and conversations. That could involve holding workshops with community organizations, having Worthington people serving as speakers or moderators for future programming as well.

Mr. Bucher commented that this work is going to be critical moving forward and should be at the top of the list for planning going forwards. He appreciates the initiative in providing resources for this conversation moving forwards.

President Michael expressed that this is very important for the community. There are people who cannot downsize, and young families who cannot move in that would like to. She appreciates Ms. Fox for coming in tonight.

Mr. Robinson expressed that he would support the City by supplementing the CRC's contribution to \$5,000 and would like to have the conversation now.

Mr. Myers asked for an explanation for how those dollars would be budgeted. Mr. Greeson replied that it would not be problematic if he is authorized to execute it.

Mr. Robinson expressed if we make this funding contribution, we will be able to request that a workshop be held in Worthington. He would like to be able to pick the phone up to contact some experts and make informational requests. He would feel like we have skin in the game.

**MOTION:** Mr. Robinson moved, seconded by Mr. Myers that the City pay the additional \$3,500 needed to cover the \$5,000 sponsorship fee for the Inclusive Housing Initiative.

Mr. Myers suggested that the City pay the entire \$5,000 and let the CRC keep their commitment of \$1,500 for other efforts.

**MOTION:** Mr. Robinson amended his motion to reflect the entire \$5,000. Mr. Myers seconded that motion.

**The motion carried unanimously by a voice vote.**

## Public Hearings on Legislation

### 6. Ordinance No. 46-2021 Amend Code Section 903.11 Block Party Fees

Amending Section 903.11 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Worthington Pertaining to Permits for Street Use.

#### Minutes:

**The Foregoing Ordinance Title was read.**

Mr. Greeson described how in the agenda packet there is a memorandum from the

Management Assistant, who often processed permits for block parties and garage sales. He has studied this process for us and recommended that these fees be eliminated as both a service to our citizens, but also the amount is negligible and the cost to process these fees outweighs the benefits. We studied other jurisdictions and many do not charge fees, so it would not only be cost-effective but also more customer-friendly and promote a sense of community.

**There being no additional comments, the clerk called the roll of Ordinance No. 46-2021. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Vote Results:** Ayes: 7 / Nays: 0

## **7. Ordinance No. 47-2021 Amend Code Section 757.03 Garage Sale Fees**

Amending Section 757.03 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Worthington Pertaining to Garage Sale Permit Application Fees

### **Minutes:**

#### **The Foregoing Ordinance Title was read.**

Mr. Greeson described how this legislation is a little bit different than the prior ordinance. Block party fees were put in place to incentivize people to return the equipment that the City allows people to use. For garage sale fees and frequency limitations, we permit them so that people are not holding a business in their driveways and holding sales every weekend. We only charge \$5 for the permission, we still want people to get permits, but the cost to staff time and the inconvenience to have someone come in is not worth the amount we are charging. We looked at other jurisdictions and staff is recommending eliminating this fee as well.

President Michael clarified that people still will need to get a permit. Mr. Greeson replied that the purpose of getting the permits still stands. We still want to restrict the manner and frequency that the garage sales occur, but we do not feel the fee is necessary.

Ms. Kowalczyk said that we still need to have the permit to limit the number of garage sales, but she has noticed that a number of communities in Central Ohio that do not have permits. She asked if there is a significant issue in our community where we need to have a permitting process whereas these other communities do not. Mr. Greeson explained that we have had a long-standing permitting process and as a result of that process he cannot cite any particular problems. We did change the signage regulations relating to garage sales a number of years ago to help with advertising, but we did not increase the number of garage sales that are permitted. The reason the permits are in place is to prevent them from occurring extensively in neighborhoods time after time. Ms. Kowalczyk asked if the same justification for paperwork would apply if it is apparent that it is an outdated requirement considering we have a number of cities in Central Ohio that do not require a permit. Mr. Lindsey explained how the primary focus of this legislation was to be able to go online with the permits by eliminating the fees and work on the finance side of things. We can certainly work to further survey other communities to get a sense of whether they have problems enforcing a requirement to limit the number of garage sales. You do not have to have a permit to limit the number.

Mr. Myers explained how he does not have a problem with the permit, but in the past, he may have violated this by having multiple garage sales in a year. He understands we do not want to have perpetual garage sales and we might be able to use our zoning code to enforce that. If we are going to look at this again, he might recommend the ability to have two garage sales a year. He noted that anything we can do to encourage block parties and to get neighbors out is a good thing. Mr. Greeson explained how this will make things easier for the Clerk, the Finance Department, and our citizens.

Ms. Dorothy expressed she would be concerned about having no permit, but she could see the rationale behind taking away the fee.

**There being no additional comments, the clerk called the roll of Ordinance No. 47-2021. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Vote Results:** Ayes: 7 / Nays: 0

## **New Legislation to Be Introduced**

### **8. Resolution No. 41-2021 Adopt Job Description (Customer Service Supervisor)**

Adopting a Job Description for the Position of Customer Service Supervisor and Amending the Staffing Chart and Pay Resolution to Accommodate Said Position.

#### **Minutes:**

**Resolution No. 41-2021:** Adopting a Job Description for the Position of Customer Service Supervisor and Amending the Staffing Chart and Pay Resolution to Accommodate Said Position.

#### **Introduced by Mr. Bucher**

**MOTION** Ms. Kowalczyk moved, seconded by Mr. Smith to adopt Resolution No. 41-2021.

Mr. Hurley explained how these resolutions change job descriptions and alter the staffing chart around three position changes in the Parks and Recreation Department. They are undertaking a minor reorganization as a result of retirements and vacancies. There will be a net-zero effect on the operating budget, so it is really just some maneuvering around the structure we have been working on since the retirement of our Recreation Superintendent.

Ms. Kowalczyk asked how the changes are going in the Parks Department. Mr. Hurley replied they are going well, but it has been a challenge. However, COVID has created some challenges in determining how things are going as some operations have been slowed down due to the second wave. He thinks that on the staff and transition side it has been positive.

**There being no comments, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 41-2021 passed unanimously by a voice vote.**

### **9. Resolution No. 42-2021 Amend Job Descriptions (Recreation Supervisor-Senior and Customer Service Coordinator)**

Amending the Position Description for Recreation Supervisor-Senior and Amending the Position Title and Position Description for Customer Service Coordinator and Amending the Staffing Chart and Pay Resolution to Reflect this Title Change.

**Minutes:**

**Introduced by Mr. Myers**

**MOTION** Ms. Dorothy moved, seconded by Mr. Robinson to adopt Resolution No. 42-2021.

**There being no comments, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 42-2021 passed unanimously by a voice vote.**

## **Reports of City Officials**

### **10. Reports of City Officials**

**Minutes:**

Mr. Greeson explained that Councilmembers should have received in the mail at their homes a request from Worthington Schools to participate in a survey from the School Facilities Task Force. The Task Force at their last meeting invited the community to react to the work they have been doing, and the consultants refined some of the ideas they were working on. There were five school facilities options that this survey is intended to get community reaction to. They are essentially variations on a theme. The significant investment in Thomas Worthington High School runs across all five of the scenarios and much of the Task Force discussion has centered on the need for investment there. That means potentially replacing 145,000 square feet of the high school. For the City, there is a sizeable opportunity to invest in an iconic location in our community. There is also the potential for investment at Kilbourne Middle School. All the variations from there are the degree to which the different elementary schools are invested in. It would be beneficial to request that the schools have their consultants give Council a presentation at some point. While he has been participating in this, it is important for Council to understand the process and what is being heard from the community.

Ms. Dorothy asked about the timing of when they are expecting input and when we might get some feedback from the consultants. Mr. Greeson replied that the survey is for individuals participating, not collectively as a Council. In the future, if you want to give a collective response you will probably need to dive a little deeper and have a presentation.

Mr. Greeson asked Mr. Hurley to give an update on McCord Park, which the progress there is really exciting.

Mr. Hurley explained how we are excited to see progress at McCord Park. He wanted to show a few slides of the park construction, which is beginning to take shape. We have not heard concerns from neighbors about noise or traffic. We started construction of Phase One, which is the southern portion between the Community Center and the ball diamonds, stretching over to the west side of the park. The pads for the reservable outdoor shelters are starting to come in and the multi-use trail which will be built. The most recent exciting thing is the far west side where there will be the new full-size soccer field. For the playground, we are subject to shipping delays and shortages of materials, so it looks like the replacement will not occur until the



spring. The old playground has been removed and the area worked on and will unfortunately not be completed until next year. The area where the train observation deck will be has seen a lot of progress. The caboose will sit down in a bowl, allowing ADA access, and there will be an amphitheater area. They believe that everything will be accomplished this fall, including the shelters. Paving will start as early as next week for the trails and parking lot. The last piece will be the playground as soon as the weather allows in the spring.

Mr. Greeson noted that staff has distributed the budget and CIP documents. Beginning next week, staff will provide an overview of the proposed budget and will touch on the five-year forecast. On October 18th, we will present the CIP in detail. Beginning in November, staff will begin departmental presentations and community groups. If Council has any questions, staff will be happy to answer them along the way.

## **Reports of Council Members**

### **11. Reports of Council Members**

#### **Minutes:**

Mr. Robinson asked about the weekly information packet from staff that is usually full of good information, and whether this information is made available to the public or if it is limited to the hard copies received in the packets. Mr. Greeson replied they are only distributed in the hard copies to Council. Mr. Robinson asked if we could think about whether there are types of documents and information that would be useful to put online. Mr. Greeson explained it is a grab-bag of stuff and we will put some thought into it.

Ms. Dorothy attended the Bike and Pedestrian meeting on Monday and it was very insightful. They were suggesting that due to the fact we have adopted Age-Friendly initiatives and a connected Worthington as part of visioning goals, that we would have additional funding for filling sidewalk gaps. They had a resolution regarding that and it is something they want Council to seriously consider. She would be strongly in support of funding the closing of those sidewalk gaps.

Mr. Bucher plugged that there are three hours left to register to vote and he encouraged anyone who was interested to do so.

President Michael explained that the Central Ohio Mayors and Managers Association had their meeting last week and it was the first meeting she totally missed due to surgery. The topic they were discussing was broadband and a history of how cities have been funded. There has been the thought of whether cities need to be more proactive across the state on other ways of funding cities. She has been working a lot on the Park and Recreation Foundation, there will be an update on that soon on what has been worked on and thought about. Between Parks and Rec and Bike and Ped, we have over \$10 million in needs right now with our existing facilities. If we have a foundation, it may help us reach some of these needs.

## **Other**

## Executive Session

### 12. Executive Session

**Minutes:**

**MOTION** Mr. Bucher moved, Ms. Kowalczyk seconded a motion to go into Executive Session to consider the purchase of property for public purposes, conference with an attorney for the City concerning disputes involving the City that are the subject of pending or imminent court action, and to consider the appointment of a public employee or official.

**The clerk called the roll on Executive Session.**

**The motion carried by a roll call vote.**

**Council recessed at 8:43 p.m. from the Regular meeting session.**

**MOTION:** Mr. Smith moved, Mr. Myers seconded a motion to return to open session at 9:08 p.m. The motion carried unanimously by a roll call vote.

- a. **To consider the purchase of property for public purposes.**
- b. **Conference with an attorney for the City concerning disputes involving the City that are the subject of pending or imminent court action.**
- c. **To consider the appointment of a public employee or official**

## Adjournment

### 13. Motion to Adjourn

**Minutes:**

**Mr. Myers moved, Ms. Dorothy seconded a motion to adjourn.**

**The motion carried by a voice vote.**

President Michael declared the meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

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Contact: D. Kay Thress, Clerk of Council (Kay.Thress@worthington.org (614) 436-3100) | Minutes published on 10/25/2021, adopted on 11/01/2021

/s/ Ethan C. Barnhardt  
Management Assistant

Attest

/s/ Bonnie D. Michael  
President of Council