



City Council Organizational Meeting Agenda

Minutes

Monday, January 3, 2022 at 7:30 pm

6550 N. High Street, Worthington, Ohio 43085

1. Call to Order

Minutes:

Worthington City Council met in-person in an Organizational Meeting on Monday, January 3, 2022. Clerk of Council, Kay Thress called the meeting to order at or about 7:30 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes:

Clerk Thress invited all to stand and join in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

3. Oaths of Office

Minutes:

Ms. Thress shared that the City of Worthington charter directs that newly elected and re-elected members of Council be administered the Oath of Office. There are four members who will receive the Oath of Office. Oaths will be administered alphabetically meaning our newest Council member, Katherine Brewer will go first, followed by Rebecca Hermann, Beth Kowalczyk, and David Robinson.

Ms. Brewer has asked her law partner, Brian Wood to administer her Oath of Office. She invited Ms. Brewer and Mr. Wood to gather near the podium where the Oath of Office was administered.

Ms. Thress shared that Ms. Hermann originally asked her friend and neighbor, Julie Mills to administer her Oath of Office but Ms. Mills was not feeling well. Julie, if you are watching, we hope you feel better very soon. State Representative Beth Liston has agreed to administer her Oath of Office. Rep. Liston joined Ms. Hermann at the podium and swore her in.

Ms. Thress invited Ms. Kowalczyk and State Representative Liston to gather at the podium where Ms. Liston administered Ms. Kowalczyk's Oath of Office.

Ms. Thress invited Mr. Robinson and Vice-Mayor Joe Mas to gather new the podium where Mr. Mas administered Mr. Robinson's Oath of Office.

4. Roll Call

Minutes:

Members Present: Katherine Brewer, Peter Bucher, Rebecca Hermann, Beth Kowalczyk, Bonnie Michael, David Robinson, and Doug Smith

Also Present: City Manager Matt Greeson, Assistant City Manager Robyn Stewart, Assistant City Manager Economic Development Director David McCorkle, Director of Finance Scott Bartter, 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

5. Election of President of City Council**Minutes:**

Ms. Thress reported the next item of business being the election of the Council President. She provided guidance for nominating a member to serve in that capacity. The nominations were read into the record with Councilmember Bonnie Michael receiving three votes: Ms. Kowalczyk, Ms. Hermann, and Ms. Michael and David Robinson receiving four votes: Katy Brewer, Pete Bucher, Doug Smith, and David Robinson. The two were provided an opportunity to provide a brief statement regarding their interest in serving as Council President.

Ms. Michael shared that as Council President, she will continue to work on a multitude of diverse issues. She brings proven leadership experience, financial accountability, ongoing knowledge on development, 26-years of relationship building, and coordination with both internal and external partners. In addition, she promises that she will safeguard the City's finances and ensure the delivery of the City's excellent amenities, leading a strong voice to celebrate our history, and embracing measures to guarantee the continued thriving of our community following the visioning plan that was recently enacted. The key to planning a successful Council agenda is blending Councilmember concerns with the needs of staff. She guarantees she will continue to include you in the planning and leading meetings in a way to ensure we address Council priorities as well as administrative needs. She commits to giving all community members a fair opportunity to engage with Council and to promote listening to their ideas with open minds. She will continue to lead meetings to ensure that everyone gets to express their thoughts and leave her thoughts to the end of each discussion to make sure all Councilmembers feel free to share their thoughts before leadership weighs in. Due to the demand on the President, a flexible schedule is ideal and since she runs her own business, she has the flexibility to attend community events, ribbon cuttings, COMMA meetings, and also have regular one on one meetings with Councilmembers to understand their ideas, concerns, suggestions, and aspirations. 2022 is going to be a decisive year for Worthington and development will be at the forefront and proven leadership will be critical. She has the leadership experience and proven relationships to bring parties together for win-win results. For the first time in our history, the majority of the Council is held by women. Her continued service as President will highlight Worthington's continued commitment to diversity by supporting female leadership. As President, she will be able to pass along

her experience to whoever is Pro Tem so they can get the leadership she received as Pro Tem. She has worked hard the past 26 years to support Worthington's growth to one of Ohio's most prosperous, accessible, and safe communities with a unique historic charm, top-notch schools, and outstanding services. As President, she pledges to be open, accessible and committed to leading the Council and the community into Worthington's future.

Mr. Robinson commented that Worthington is an exceptional, distinctive community, historic, authentic, and beautiful. It is comprised of extraordinary people and possesses a civic culture that enables us to thrive. And yet, though distinct, our City is not an island. We are very much a part of a rapidly changing world that provides both hazards and opportunities. We know that change is inevitable, but in many ways change is desirable, but it is crucial that we the citizens and by extension the elected City Council, deliberately, proactively, shape this change. If we do not, others will. It is this issue of change, who will shape it, and how it will be shaped, that gets to the heart of why he now seeks this position on Council. A core conviction of his is when Worthington residents are informed, engaged, and truly listened to, it is then we make the best decisions. Though listening to residents is at the heart of a healthy political process, it is the Council that is charged with the difficult task of making decisions based on public opinion, and the quality of our own processes. This gets to the issue of how we will shape change. He proposes a new commitment to not only be open to new ideas but actively seek them. To rigorous, respectful debate, and to grapple with difficult issues. Favoring action over avoidance. In these ways and more, this is how we will get things done and with public support. One specific idea he proposes is that we adopt a model of issue based working groups, the issue could be anything, where a Councilmember brings before a meeting an idea for a possible City action, making a case and seeking the support of the Council for the further exploration of this idea and if affirmed, forming the sanctioned working group comprised of one or more Councilmembers, members of the public, experts from within and outside of Worthington, and with support of staff. They would then report back to Council what is discovered and what if developed here would help us realize an important goal or vision. Let the Councilmembers lead and if the ideas have merit, then let it be done. Finally, City Council is not only about policies and programs, we also have the opportunity to impact through our own conduct, the broader community, by engaging in serious, respectful dialogue. We can cut through misperceptions, fostering real, genuine, understanding. We can demonstrate through creativity and imagination, that we can solve what was once thought to be an intractable problem. In these ways and more, he believes we can foster a healthy political culture here in Worthington, something very much needed throughout our Country today. On the basis of these ideas, he seeks Council's support tonight. Members marked their ballots, which were collected and read into the record. The votes for President: Councilmember Michael receiving three votes: Ms. Kowalczyk, Ms. Hermann, and Ms. Michael and Councilmember Robinson receiving four votes: Katy Brewer, Pete Bucher, Doug Smith, and David Robinson. The President of Worthington

City Council for 2022 - 2023 is David Robinson. Congratulations Mr. Robinson. Ms. Thress shared that we are extremely grateful to once again have Retired Ohio Supreme Court Justice and Worthington resident Eve Stratton with us this evening to administer the Oath of Office for our new President of Council. She will also administer the Oaths to the President Pro-tem, Mayor, and Vice-Mayor.

a. Administer Oath of Office

Minutes:

Justice Stratton administered the oath of office to Mr. Robinson. Mrs. Thress relinquished her role as temporary chair and turned the meeting over to President Robinson.

6. Election of President Pro-tem of City Council

Minutes:

President Robinson reported the next item of business being the election of the Council President Pro-tem. He shared that the process would be the nominating and election process would be the same as it was for President. He asked the members to nominate a member to serve as President Pro-tem. The nominations were collected and the vote read into the record with Councilmember Beth Kowalczyk receiving three votes: Ms. Kowalczyk, Ms. Hermann, and Ms. Michael and Councilmember Katy Brewer receiving four votes: Katy Brewer, Pete Bucher, Doug Smith, and David Robinson. The two were provided an opportunity to provide a brief statement regarding their interest in serving as Council President Pro-tem.

Ms. Brewer expressed her thanks to all who voted for her this evening, and she could not have made it this far without the stellar examples set for her. It is a pleasure and an honor to be sitting here tonight. The journey to get to this moment has been tiring and at times stressful, but entirely invigorating. While she is a newer member lucky enough to serve, she knows that she can jump into the position of President Pro-tem of Council and make you all proud. She wants to hit the ground running and is up to the challenge and task this job asks of her. Her ask is that we all have leadership roles on Council and can focus on our strengths and passions. She hopes we can all work together. Her ask is that you all put your faith in her that she will discharge this job to the best of her abilities. She is ready to commit herself to the Council and all the residents of Worthington. She looks forward to the future and our relationships moving forward, and our dedication to the amazing city we call home.

Ms. Kowalczyk expressed how she is proud of the work Council has accomplished and she is excited about where we can go as a new Council. You are humbled when you knock on doors during a campaign and are asked what City Council does. While we may have grand visions of our importance in this community, perceptions of our impacts really boil down to a few important things, such as if the trash was picked up, are the streets plowed, is our community safe, and are our amenities and infrastructure maintained and updated. While we pass an annual Operating Budget and Capital Improvements Plan and offer suggestions for how to get things done, it is

our City staff that has taken on the responsibility to carry out those important functions that matter to our community and they have done this admirably. It is our job as Council to give them clear direction after reviewing and thoughtfully considering all the information provided. She has also learned that oftentimes it is best to stay out of staff's way. We represent 14,786 residents in this community and all the wonderful neighborhoods that comprise Worthington. According to the Census, a majority, 52% are women, more than 21% are 65 or older, and more than 8% are people of color. 5.3% are under 65 with a disability. An estimated 3.5% of our residents live in poverty. We are charged with representing every one of these residents and serving our community's best interests. This often means looking beyond individual immediate concerns to the greater good and the impact on our City's future. Our responsibility is to consider all points of view, data, and information to make the best decisions that we can in support of our community and its future. She knows that all of Council shares the desire to do the right thing for our community. We have important, broad-based policy issues that lie ahead of us including supporting ongoing economic development efforts, prioritizing infrastructure improvements, implementing our community visions, and developing diversity, equity, and inclusion policies and practices that will support the vision of Worthington becoming a diverse and inclusive community. The 2021 election results demonstrate that the community is interested in having a balance and diversity of perspectives on the City Council. We have lost a great deal of institutional knowledge and specific expertise with the departures of former Councilmembers Dorothy and Myers. She is grateful that we will have Ms. Michael's years of experience to continue to guide us. She believes that her nearly 30 years of legal, state government, and advocacy experience have served her and the community well, in addition to her four years of serving on Council. In the past 4 years, she has had the opportunity to serve through the appointment to boards and community groups and to be involved with community organizations. This experience has given her valuable insight into how our community partners support our community and keep her connected and grounded. As President Pro-tem, she pledges to achieve the following on behalf of the City Council to the best of her ability. To Ensure confidence in City Council and our ability to lead. Leading by example, treating all with civility and respect, including each other, staff, and residents. Continuing to improve communication to the public through multiple channels. Encouraging greater engagement with local government. Creating an inclusive environment for all who want to learn and be involved. Finally to be prepared and ready to serve, actively listen, encourage collaboration, and be responsive to all of Council and the community that she serves.

Votes were then cast for President Pro-tem and read into the record by Ms. Thress with Councilmember Kowalczyk receiving three votes: Ms. Kowalczyk, Ms. Hermann, and Ms. Michael and Councilmember Brewer receiving four votes: Katy Brewer, Pete Bucher, Doug Smith, and David Robinson. The President Pro-tem for 2022-2023 is Katy Brewer.

a. Administer Oath of Office

Minutes:

Justice Stratton administered the oath of office to Ms. Brewer.

7. Election of Mayor

Minutes:

President Robinson said he would entertain nominations for Mayor of the City of Worthington.

MOTION A motion was made by Ms. Michael and seconded by Ms. Kowalczyk to re-appoint Scott Holmes as Mayor of the City of Worthington.

There being no additional nominees, nominations were closed.

The motion to re-appoint Scott Holmes to serve as Mayor of the City of Worthington carried unanimously by a voice vote.

a. Administer Oath of Office

Minutes:

Justice Stratton administered the oath of office to Mayor Holmes.

Mayor Holmes expressed his thanks to the Councilpersons who have supported him. Mayor of Worthington is the best job in the world.

8. Election of Vice-Mayor

Minutes:

President Robinson said he would entertain nominations for Vice-Mayor of the City of Worthington.

MOTION A motion was made by Ms. Michael and seconded by Mr. Bucher to re-appoint Joseph Mas as Vice-Mayor of the City of Worthington.

There being no additional nominees, nominations were closed.

The motion to re-appoint Joseph Mas to serve as Mayor of the City of Worthington carried unanimously by a voice vote.

a. Administer Oath of Office

Minutes:

Justice Stratton administered the Oath of Office to Vice-Mayor Mas.

Vice-Mayor Mas expressed his thanks to the members of the Council to continue their trust in him. He has really enjoyed being the Vice-Mayor over this past year and thanked Mayor Holmes for all of his help and guidance.

9. Designation of the Clerk of Council as Council members' designee for Open Records Certification

Minutes:

MOTION A motion was made by Ms. Kowalczyk and seconded by Ms. Brewer to appoint the Clerk of Council as Councilmembers' designee for open records certification.

The motion carried unanimously by a voice vote.

10. Adjournment

Minutes:

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

The motion carried unanimously by a voice vote.

President Robinson declared the meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

| Minutes published on 01/13/2022, adopted on 01/18/2022

/s/ D. Kay Thress

Clerk of Council

Attest

/s/ David Robinson

President of Council