

CITY OF KETTERING
CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MINUTES
May 26, 2020

The Council of the City of Kettering, Ohio, met in a workshop session on Tuesday, May 26, 2020, via video conference due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting came to order at 6:00 p.m.

Council Members Present included Mayor Patterson, Vice Mayor Klepacz, Mr. Lautar, Mr. Duke, Mr. Scott and Mr. Wanamaker and Mrs. Fisher.

Staff Members Present: City Manager Mark Schwieterman, Assistant City Manager Steve Bergstresser, Law Director Ted Hamer, Economic Development Manager Gregg Gorsuch and Community Information Manager Mary Azbill

Council Meeting Agenda Review – Mr. Schwieterman reviewed the agenda. A resolution is on the agenda for the façade improvement program at the corner of Wilmington and Devon (formerly Union Savings Bank). A coffee shop is under construction, is code compliant and site improvements are eligible for funding. City recommends Council approves the grant.

Another resolution in which National League of Cities is asking Kettering to be a champion partner to get resolutions passed in support of working through the federal government for funds for COVID-19 for funding directly to local governments. If the resolution passes, the City will get it to the NLC as soon as possible.

Fire Engine Donation - Fire Chief Butts has been working with possible recipients for donation of one of our KME fire engines. These are 20 plus years old. Typically KFD donates them when their value is low. Kettering Schools declined the offer. Sinclair accepted the donation. The value of the engine is \$3,500. The City will start the administrative process to turn it over to Sinclair to use for training.

Maplecrest Project – A letter was sent to property owners stating the City is waiting for a signature by one resident to move forward. The project will move forward regardless. That particular individual will not be part of the project without signature.

Mr. Duke asked what would happen if that person does not sign. Mr. Bergstresser stated the County will tie in his existing lateral to the project. The County is offering to replace laterals where it meets residents' houses. Owner had concerns about language in the agreement. If he does not sign, the County will tie into what he has.

Overtime Update - Public Safety overtime numbers are doing well. Kettering Fire Department is fully staffed. Vacancies at the police department and operations modified due to COVID. School Resource Officers are working with patrol rather than in schools.

COVID-19 Discussion Points

Fitness centers are open with no capacity issues. Maximum capacity is 20 at Kettering Fitness and Wellness Center and 40 at the Recreation Complex. Fitness centers shut down for an hour for cleaning several times each day.

Mr. Lautar – The 20 is inclusive of walking track? Mr. Schwieterman explained that the walking track is still closed as directed by public health. The Recreation Complex is not yet allowed to be open. While fitness center is open, the Recreation Center is not.

Mr. Duke asked if the maximum capacities of 20 and 40 normal or different than usual? Mr. Schwieterman stated it is a reduced number because of the social distance calculation, but the 20 and 40 is conducive to normal client load.

Mr. Lautar asked if there are time limits for individuals using facilities. Mr. Schwieterman stated that aerobic equipment has a 30 minute time limit to encourage patrons to work out and leave.

Mayor Patterson asked about membership and if new members are welcome. Mr. Schwieterman explained that members are welcome and memberships are still able to be purchased.

Tennis courts, pickleball courts and skate park opened today. Playgrounds remain closed.

Financial Update - May 15 was a data point for income tax revenues for April. January 1 through May 20 comparison for 2019 and 2020 was completed. The City's withholding account is the majority of the City's revenue for income tax. Top ten accounts are the majority of withholdings at 47%. Those 10 accounts were 7.29% higher than last year at this time. The City's top 200 accounts (total of 3000 accounts) accounted for 80% of the withholdings and are 5.3% higher this year. Total withholding is up 4.47%. Bonus season is during March and April which contributed to strong numbers despite the pandemic. The City is happy with the number. July 15 is the next data point. We are about \$2M below for individual returns due to deadline extension. It is expected that number will rebound at that time.

Mayor Patterson surmised we won't really know until July 15 when people file their taxes. Mr. Schwieterman confirmed and stated the City will check in June. Individual returns will come in July 15 and the City expects that to cover the \$2M shortage.

Mayor Patterson asked if filing deadline of April 15 received extension of October 15, would it be extended further for July 15 deadline. Mr. Schwieterman that October 15 remains the extension deadline.

Mr. Lautar asked if other cities are seeing the same positive numbers. Mr. Schwieterman confirmed they are.

Youth Sports – Mr. Schwieterman explained that Gary Schussler reached out to youth sports organizations and came to mutually agreeable terms with EKRC, KABC and FKAL to be able to implement youth baseball teams. Restrooms will be in operation. Concessions may not be possible. Parks will clean restrooms in the mornings. Baseball teams will maintain soap, etc., adhering to state guidelines while using the facilities. The state of Ohio does not want food to be handled. Therefore, sealed bottles of water or sports drinks only will be allowed. No shared bottles, coolers and water fountains allowed. Parks Division will prepare the fields to potentially play June 15.

Mr. Duke asked about restrooms for adult teams. Mr. Schwieterman explained that Parks Division would maintain restrooms. Mary Beth O'Dell stated that restrooms would only be open for scheduled programs.

Polen Farm – Banquet centers were open to 300 last week with social distancing. There are a few events on the calendar for June. PRCA staff is working with those people to get details about their events and numbers attending. The gazebo will not allow six feet of social distancing.

Mayor Patterson asked for an explanation regarding social distancing with people at tables and separating them by six feet. Mr. Schwieterman explained that if a group of 10 or less comes into a restaurant, it is treated as a group from the same household. Mr. Duke added that people are given freedom to sit with their "family" but strangers are still separated.

Playgrounds are still closed. The National Recreation and Parks Association considers splash pads and playgrounds to be the same. Splash pads have many touch points. The state keeps changing the requirements on sanitization.

Mr. Schwieterman explained the City made a decision to keep the water park closed for summer. State guidance has not changed that opinion. Daily use would allow less than half of typical daily visitors/numbers. Financially, it does not make sense. It will take six to eight weeks to get staff on board, and staffing will not be possible. The water park would be open for four weeks at half capacity. Ohio Parks and Recreation Association's survey results stated 58% of pools are not opening. NRPA's survey showed that 31% will open public pools, 46% are waiting to hear and 23% are opening.

Mrs. Fisher asked if the City could educate the public on rationale for not opening. Mr. Schwieterman stated that memberships pay for amenities rather than taxes.

Mr. Scott asked if the City could release the numbers to show the loss if the water park opened. Mr. Schwieterman stated they will report numbers regarding the water park.

Mr. Duke stated that teens work at the water park and are too young to oversee social distancing. Mr. Schwieterman pointed out that lifeguards should be watching visitors, not social distancing.

Mr. Lautar asked about the indoor pool being open for lap swimming. Mr. Schwieterman stated that PRCA is looking into that. It will mostly be lap swimming.

Mayor Patterson asked for a date to expect the indoor pool to open. Mr. Schwieterman stated it would be announced next week. That will also involve staffing from layoff and furlough lists.

School Resource Officers – Mr. Schwieterman stated the City has a 70 (schools) / 30 (City) split contract with the schools. Schools closed in March and the contract was terminated through graduation day.

Capital Improvement Projects – Mr. Schwieterman explained that Rosewood Arts Centre and Gentile Park. Rosewood is between \$4 and \$5M and has a \$450K grant from the state. Gentile is over \$1M with a grant for a playground. The state will honor grant funding if projects are delayed due to pandemic. The City would re-appropriate the projects at a later time which means the majority of the project should be done by June 2022. Rosewood would need the design completed and new roof in 2021 to keep that project on schedule. The Gentile grant is flexible. A portion of the design is finished. The City can do Gentile Park or finish the design and hold construction or stop the design and construction.

Mrs. Fisher asked the cost of the design. Mr. Schwieterman explained Gentile could just keep moving and construction would take place in 2021 or 2022. Rosewood has not started design, so the City isn't losing money, but it may not be necessary to pull the trigger.

Mayor Patterson asked for the estimated time for the design on Rosewood. If we don't have to pull the trigger now, if we determine we don't generate funds to do what we hope to do, those plans may become moot and then we have to spend our money. Gentile Park should pause that, too. Mr. Schwieterman stated the City could get a document that will meet the state's guideline to keep the grant that will push the design back as far as possible and see how that looks. The City will put the plan on pause and still meet the state guidelines.

Mayor Patterson stated the park will not be different whether we design it now or in a year. He asked if the City has \$1M for the park or \$500,000. Mr. Schwieterman recommended finishing design of Gentile Park.

Administrative buildings will open to the public June 1. Council will meet in chambers June 9 as opposed to virtual meeting. Public commenters can wait in a conference room, if social distancing becomes an issue.

Mr. Duke asked if volleyball courts are going to open. Mr. Schwieterman will get an answer.

At 6:59 p.m., Mr. Klepacz made a motion to enter into executive session under Section 121.06 (k) of the Codified Ordinances for purposes of personnel matters, labor negotiations, economic development, property matters and negotiations with organizations or individuals; the motion was seconded by Mr. Scott. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

At 7:23 p.m., Council exited the executive session and went back on the record.

The workshop meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

ATTEST:

DONALD E. PATTERSON
MAYOR

LASHAUNAH D. KACZYNSKI
Clerk of Council