

CITY OF KETTERING
CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MINUTES
JANUARY 25, 2022

The Council of the City of Kettering, Ohio, met in a workshop session on Tuesday, January 25, 2022, in the Deeds Conference Room, Kettering Government Center, 3600 Shroyer Road. The meeting came to order at 6:00 p.m.

Council Members present included Mayor Lehner, Vice Mayor Fisher, Mr. Klepacz, Mr. Duke, Ms. Duvall, Mr. Scott and Ms. Hall.

Staff Members present included City Manager Mark Schwieterman, Assistant City Manager Steve Bergstresser, Law Director Ted Hamer, Planning & Development Director Tom Robillard and Community Development Manager Angela Rahman.

Mr. Sterling Abernathy, Ms. Tawana Jones and Ms. Kristin Williams (via Zoom) were also in attendance.

Racial Equity Survey - Mayor Lehner introduced Ms. Rahman who represents the Board of Community Relations and stated that a presentation would be given regarding the Racial Equity Survey. The City's Board of Community Relations (BCR) conducted the online Racial Equity Survey from January through March, 2021, to better understand race relations locally on the heels of national protests in response to the George Floyd shooting. Gathering input from Kettering residents was a logical first step toward assessing overall community needs and appropriate decision making moving forward relative to employment, housing, education, access to healthcare, transportation and public safety. Ms. Williams from NineteenEleven Consulting presented the general results of the Racial Equity Survey. Both qualitative and quantitative results were analyzed to gain a better understanding of respondents' sentiment in order to provide recommendations for next steps. The survey presented 16 questions regarding demographics, race relations, social networks and equal opportunity. Respondents were asked about their interactions with businesses and police along with access to jobs, education, health services and home buying opportunities. In all, there were 544 respondents who participated in the survey. Most participants were between the ages of 36 and 45, and 53% respondents were women. Kettering residents accounted for 77% of respondents. Survey results showed that social networks are predominantly white and lack diversity. Overall, respondents reported being optimistic about the state of race relations in Kettering with most having little to no worries about race relations. Respondents were more likely to agree or remain neutral about statements declaring equal opportunity across racial groups. Education was the most trusted institution relative to equitable treatment, followed by housing, healthcare and City staff. The survey shed light on several qualitative themes including: no consensus; lack of diversity; differing definitions of racism; politicization; and law enforcement. Many respondents had polarized views when answering the same question. One of the next steps will be to determine how well the survey results represent the views of Kettering residents, how responses vary across racial groups, diversity of social networks for Kettering residents and how well results capture resident attributes. Recommendations include transparency, exploring perceptions, welcoming community conversations, establishing and publishing a glossary of working definitions, adopting a racial equity framework, conducting staff training and potentially creating a position to constantly measure and address perceptions and activity. BCR will work on a timeline for activities, what activities will be initiated, who the audience will be and what outcomes are anticipated. BCR will collaborate with nonprofit organizations, public and private school districts in Kettering and the City of Kettering government. The main objective for BCR's next steps is to ensure that Kettering residents and businesspeople feel that they are part of an inclusive community.

According to NineteenEleven Consultants, "This topic is extremely difficult to survey, so conversations might be more effective. Creating a space for honest dialogue will be fruitful." The consultant commended Kettering for trying to accomplish a difficult task that most tend to avoid. Council members expressed interest in helping to start these conversations

Ms. Hall asked how many respondents were from Kettering. Ms. Williams stated there were 419 people from Kettering or 77%. Ms. Hall asked why the answers are not definitive if samples for perception were met. Ms. Williams stated the survey questions were not strong enough to garner definitive answers. Ms. Hall recommended that a more scientific survey be given in two years.

Mr. Duke recommends focus groups to further study this. Ms. Williams stated this topic is extremely difficult to survey, so conversations might be more effective. Creating a space for honest dialogue will be more fruitful in conjunction with a stronger survey.

Mr. Scott asked what people of color means. Ms. Williams said the survey was not clear but implied anyone who is not white.

Mayor Lehner stated this should be discussed further by Council at a later date.

Mr. Klepacz asked for Ms. Williams' thoughts on transparency. Ms. Williams stated that putting something on a website is a terrific start, but it eliminates a lot of people. She recommends doing press releases encouraging dialogue. Set the tone for how Kettering will move forward. It will be difficult to make these conversations welcoming for people of color in predominantly white neighborhoods. Rather than drawing on perceptions, research racial equity in the area and have conversations. City of Kettering is doing what most are avoiding, and that is a commendable position.

Mr. Schwieterman addressed several items on this evening's Council agenda.

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Activities Guide – Mr. Schwieterman advised that paper prices are impacting the overall cost to print the quarterly activities guide. PRCA's budget can cover the increased costs. The project costs \$80,000 to send the brochure to 26,000 homes four times each year.

Kettering Parks Foundation Funds – Mr. Schwieterman explained that the Kettering Parks Foundation collected money for additional pickleball courts and the donation from the Lathrem family. The actual projects will come before City Council; but this allowance to accept funds will be the start of that process.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations – Mr. Duke asked for clarification on the \$300,000 for EV charging stations. Mr. Schwieterman explained that this project requires extensive electrical work, transformer installation from AES and running power to the site. It is a significant percentage funded by grants. The City has \$300,000 on the resolution this evening. Networking services, warranty services and maintenance service for five years is \$56,000 for the life of the project. The City has costs for the conduit and electrical service, as well. This resolution to apply for the grant only.

Mr. Duke asked how many stations the City will have. Mr. Bergstresser stated that this project will install two charging stations. Adding additional stations to the same power source is a balance because the more stations available, the longer it takes to charge due to less electricity available.

Rosewood Arts Center Phase 2 – Mr. Schwieterman explained that Rosewood Arts Center Phase 2 will be covered this evening to begin the bidding process. This \$4.7 million project does not include furniture, fixtures and equipment which are being raised by the Parks Foundation with a goal of \$1.5 million. Phase 3's \$1.1 million cost is included in capital improvement plan 5-year budget presented to Council in September in the budget plan for 2023. Brumbaugh Construction is currently working in Phase 1. Supply chain issues have occurred, but nothing devastating at this point.

ARPA Fund Alteration – Mr. Schwieterman explained that due to time lag for purchase of a medic for the Fire Department in 2021, the City was going to use state bid pricing. It does not appear that state bid pricing will comply with federal procurement rules. The solution is to come back with a resolution to buy a medic, appropriate the general fund budget and allocate same dollar amount to ARPA for Fire payroll services. The City will achieve the same result with a different way to get there. It could be two years before the fire department can get a medic. ARPA funds will be tracked along the way.

Ms. Hall asked how vehicle replacement is determined. Mr. Schwieterman explained that the City has fleet management system to assist in determining when a vehicle should be replaced, and the budget will reflect that. All of the data comes from actual vehicles used and point values are assigned to each type. Vehicles can also be moved around to save wear and tear to operations with less use. The City is always looking for grants and other ways to extend the life of our vehicles.

Aquatics Schedule – Mr. Schwieterman explained that there is a significant staffing shortage at the aquatics facilities. Due to lack of lifeguard staffing, the aquatics facility will not open Tuesday and Wednesday from 6:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. through February. The facility is already closed from 1 to 3 on those days.

First Four Traffic – In response to Mr. Duke's question regarding First Four traffic awareness from the January 11 workshop, Mr. Schwieterman stated that a Montgomery County task force operates stings and makes arrests in a concentrated effort during this major sporting event. City dollars do not support that.

At 6:54 p.m., Vice Mayor Fisher made a motion to enter Executive Session under Section 121.06 (k) of the Codified Ordinances for purposes of Personnel Matters; and Property Matters, seconded by Mr. Scott. The motion passed unanimously upon roll call.

At 7:27 p.m., the Council exited Executive Session and went back on public record.

The City Council Workshop Meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

ATTEST:

PEGGY LEHNER
MAYOR

LASHAUNAH D. KACYNSKI
Clerk of Council