

CITY OF KETTERING  
CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL WORKSHOP SESSION MINUTES  
JUNE 7, 2022

The Council of the City of Kettering, Ohio, met in a special workshop session on Tuesday, June 7, 2022, at the Kettering Government Center in the Deeds Conference Room, located at 3600 Shroyer Road, Kettering OH 45429. The meeting came to order at 1:02 p.m.

Council Members present included Vice Mayor Fisher, Mr. Duke, Mr. Klepacz, Ms. Duvall, Mr. Scott and Ms. Hall. Mayor Lehner had an excused absence for the first part of the meeting.

Staff Members present included City Manager Mark Schwieterman, Assistant City Manager Steve Bergstresser and Community Information Manager Mary Azbill. Throughout the meeting, Planning and Development Director Tom Robillard, Administrative Systems Director Drew Miller, Public Service Director David Duritsch and Police Chief Chip Protsman were in attendance

Mr. Sterling Abernathy was also in attendance.

Mr. Schwieterman opened the second session of the two-day special workshop session announcing there would be five presentations. Any presentations that have not been shared due to time constraints will be presented at a regularly-scheduled workshop. Thus far, the Volunteer Office and Engineering Department will present at regular workshop.

Mr. Schwieterman introduced Administrative Systems Director Drew Miller by describing the amount of change brought about under his leadership from mailroom and secretarial pool to IT, graphic design, records management, geographic information systems (GIS mapping) and printing. The design and printing functions ensure the City maintains the same brand, look and feel for its communications.

Council requested copies of KPD annual reports that Drew distributed. Chief Protsman brought copies with him later in the session.

Ms. Duvall asked about protection against water and fire damage. Mr. Miller explained that the fire inspector regularly inspects that area.

Vice Mayor Fisher asked how many are electronic files to help with staffing access. The records manager is organized and documents are destroyed when appropriate.

Mr. Klepacz asked if everything is digitized. Mr. Miller stated that permanent records or photos that have historical interest are digitized.

Mr. Schwieterman added that when Council reports a property, staff can pull it up in the GIS system. Kettering provides GIS for Moraine, West Carrollton, Washington Township and Miami Township, as well.

Mr. Miller stated that Administrative Systems is 60% IT (four employees) who support every piece of technology including server rooms, 500 PCs, laptops, body and dash cameras, Wi-Fi, cameras at Fairmont, Miami Township and throughout the south building.

Mr. Scott asked if Administrative Systems is involved with Flock cameras. Mr. Miller stated the vendor provides everything for that function.

Mr. Miller stated that IT set up the command center at Fire Headquarters. Mr. Schwieterman used the George Floyd protest as an incident where staff could watch from the Emergency Operations Center. Mr. Miller stated that the room adjacent to EOC holds the entire backup for the City. Fire Headquarters was designed to be completely self-sufficient. If critical infrastructure would go down, the City could operate from that facility. It supports the dispatch center which would be moved there.

Mr. Duke asked if anything changed since the cyber security presentation at Council workshop such as insurance. Mr. Miller stated that MVRMA includes cyber insurance as part of their coverage. Mr. Duke asked if MVRMA would cover the City if it was held for ransom. Mr. Miller stated that in theory they would, but insurance companies are losing money because of claims. We use real time synchronization during mission critical for backup. IT employees are generalists, not specialists, and the City uses best practices for protection.

Mr. Miller stated the majority of IT tasks are planning for personnel. Advanced IT expertise comes from Buckeye Business Solutions for types of things we don't do often enough to have on staff.

Mr. Klepacz asked if the dispatch center at the Emergency Operations Center is set up just like KPD. Mr. Miller confirmed that it is. Mr. Klepacz expressed concern about lack of training for the EOC. Mr. Schwieterman stated training sessions have taken place. Y2K was the last time the city had an EOC. City Council members would simply report to the conference room upon request.

Vice Mayor Fisher asked why the City does not have an expert for cyber security. Mr. Miller explained that there are so many vulnerabilities that it's more than a full time job for just one person. It's more than one piece of software. It's updating systems at least once a month which are a full-time job. Vice Mayor Fisher asked if having someone would at least help protect the City. Mr. Miller confirmed that anything would help including hiring a full-time person assigned to cyber security.

Mr. Duke suggested the cities working together to hire a cyber security specialist and asked if this has been considered. Mr. Miller explained that cyber security awareness training taught by a subject matter expert is important. Mr. Duke would like to see figures to hire someone to do that full time.

Mr. Scott stated he uses an iPad at home next to the company laptop and does not have a VPN on his iPad. Mr. Miller stated that City email is publicly accessible on the web.

Mr. Schwieterman introduced Planning and Development Director Tom Robillard. Because of the work P&D does in conjunction with Engineering, it is important for the two to be near one another. P&D is responsible for buildings, inspections, planning and zoning, community development, property maintenance and zoning and property maintenance, regional initiatives and boards and commissions. All inspectors are certified in different acumens.

Mr. Robillard stated that codes enforced by P&D include all things on private property, zoning code, building codes and property maintenance code, subdivision code, federal regulations, flood damage reduction code, storm water runoff code and business regulations code (police).

Mr. Scott asked if the property maintenance code was a state document. Mr. Robillard explained that it is a City document that mimics the state.

Mr. Duke asked if the massage parlors are gone. Mr. Robillard stated that massage parlors are a police matter. Mr. Scott asked if the School of Medical Massage is permitted. Mr. Robillard confirmed it is.

Mr. Robillard stated Kettering handles building code enforcement for Kettering and Oakwood including permit processing, plan review and inspections. Kettering is one of the first cities in the country to do online permitting. Inspections include building, electrical, plumbing, HVAC and fire.

Ms. Duvall asked if the numbers cited on the building code enforcement presentation were average. Mr. Robillard confirmed this is the case.

Mr. Duke asked if the City keeps the fees for inspections done for Oakwood for the information we send them. Mr. Robillard stated the City keeps the fees and Oakwood pays the City, as well. The City keeps all of the records because we are the official building department licensed by Ohio to enforce the building code.

Mr. Duke asked if Oakwood has inspectors. Mr. Robillard stated they do not have building inspectors.

Ms. Hall stated that Oakwood has their own inspectors when it comes to selling a house. Mr. Robillard stated that is a zoning inspector. All structural permits are through the City of Kettering, which enforces Oakwood's building code.

Ms. Duvall asked if the City could tighten things the state code does not include. Mr. Robillard stated that most of the things the City is concerned about are zoning codes, and we do not tighten the building codes.

Mr. Robillard said that P&D zoning code administration and enforcement takes 85% of the time working with builders, residents and developers.

Mr. Scott asked for an example of a case study on difficult properties that were fulfilled. Mr. Robillard stated that Jiffy Lube on Woodman and Dorothy—formerly Throckmorton's has been hard to deal with while working with the developer to design the site. Eudora was a good site that we worked with although the building was there.

Mr. Duke inquired about the property at Wilmington and Woodman. Mr. Robillard stated it is not a bad property to develop, the owner bought it and backed out of the plan.

Mr. Robillard stated that community development consists of creative problem solving groups such as the StayPut program. City staff knew an eviction moratorium was coming to an end and worked with the courts to smooth the transition. StayOn is a similar program to assist with energy costs. Micro-enterprise grants are short term programs to help businesses. There are homebuyer and homeowner assistance programs, as well.

Mr. Duke asked if Kettering received federal CDBG funds because the population is more than 50,000. Mr. Robillard confirmed Kettering is an entitlement community that receives funds directly from HUD.

Mr. Robillard stated that property maintenance is comprised of three inspection areas that are covered each year. Complaints are not punitive. The City just wants compliance and will work with KFD, KPD and Senior Services to assist owners. Nuisance abatement program passed by City Council allows the City to step in and go to private property and fix the problem. We work with KPD to do nuisance abatement for felony issues such as drug houses.

Ms. Duvall asked what happens after a year. Mr. Robillard stated they allow the owner of the property to re-occupy it.

Mr. Robillard stated the program has also been helpful in commercial properties. For instance, Wilmington Heights shopping center is in disrepair. The owner was told to fix it or it would be torn down. There are multiple developers who want to purchase the property, and it's now moving forward in the courts.

Mr. Duke asked if property owners with a year of re-inspection fees were required to pay. Mr. Robillard stated that once we assess a property, it gets added to their taxes, and when they sell the house, those are collected.

Mr. Scott asked if general property maintenance issues are more problematic from residents or businesses. Mr. Robillard stated it's easier with residents as 80% fix the problem upon notification,

Mr. Robillard stated property complaints average around 4,500 per year of which less than half are violations. Tall grass complaints average about 1,500 per year of which 150 are actually violations.

Mr. Scott asked if the land owner is billed by the City. Mr. Robillard confirmed. Mr. Scott asked if the owner is charged for man hours. Mr. Robillard confirmed and stated the size of the yard counts, as well.

Mr. Robillard said P&D oversees several boards and commissions, as well, including Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Board of Community Relations, Property Maintenance Appeals Board and Board of Plumbers Registry. P&D is a very diverse, responsive, agile department trying to come up with creative solutions focusing on community image, reinvestment in community and encouraging personal responsibility.

Mr. Scott posed a hypothetical question: if he were a business owner who wants to relocate to Kettering in a specific structure, would he go to P&D and state he is working with a realtor. P&D will inspect the building and give a checklist of what needs done to come up with code. Mr. Robillard stated that was not correct. If they're located in Town & Country Shopping Center, they get a permit for that. For stand-alone structures, like Friendly's which have been vacant for more than two years, need to come into compliance, and that older, non-maintained properties may require demolition.

Mr. Scott stated we work with a business occupier and thoroughly work with them to discuss what needs to be done. Mr. Robillard stated P&D would identify what needs to be done. Mr. Schwieterman stated there are certain things people ignore and the City reminds them. The City also recommends not buying a property without talking to the City about the anticipated use.

Mr. Scott stated the perception of business owners is that the City keeps adding to the list of things to do. Mr. Robillard stated P&D uses requirements from zoning code.

Mr. Klepacz asked how the City handles complaints on private properties. Mr. Robillard stated private property is no small thing. If someone wants to build a room addition, we will ensure the building is sound. They agree to have us come onto their property to inspect. We are not allowed to go on someone's property unless we use the driveway and front door. If we can see it from the right of way, then we can proceed.

Mr. Duke asked what is being done about neighbors who can see that maintenance needs to be done, but inspectors can't see it from the right-of way. Mr. Robillard stated if the property owner will not let the inspector see past the right-of-way, there is nothing they can do. The County can send the Health Department. Most people comply.

Mr. Duke asked if he stands in a neighbor's home, can the City enforce it. Mr. Robillard stated that at times they could enforce it.

The group took a five-minute break.

Mr. Schwieterman introduced Police Chief Chip Protsman who discussed KPD's top three priorities: strong relationship with community; address drug issues affecting our community; and address traffic issues to reduce fatalities.

Chief Protsman then discussed the organization structure of KPD. The Professional Standards Unit Sergeant is responsible for Internal Affairs consisting of internal and external complaints about an employee; monthly reports on use of force, traffic stops, race and types of stops; accreditation manager supervision. The Administrative Lieutenant supervises five school resource officers, a public information officer and the community services specialist. The crime analyst is a new position responsible for gathering information and sharing with command staff. There are two Captains that lead the Support Division and Operations Division. The Operations Division consists of: the patrol section led by a shift lieutenant and two sergeants totaling 15 officers per shift; the Criminal Investigations Section (assigned general cases); Tactical Crime Suppression Unit (combined group from cities focusing on bigger cases); polygraphists; juvenile detectives dealing with juvenile, suspects or victims; and the undercover Vice Unit. The Support Division consists of the Staff Lieutenant responsible for the Records Section; Jail; Personnel and Training; Dispatch; and Property Room.

Mr. Duke asked if Court Security Officers are part time. Chief Protsman stated they report to Court Sergeant. Mr. Duke asked if the court directs their work. Chief Protsman stated KPD directs their work.

Mr. Klepacz asked if the chaplains are contract employees. Chief Protsman stated they are volunteers. Mr. Klepacz asked if the Public Information Officer (PIO) rotates. Chief Protsman stated that the PIO and supervisors rotate. Mr. Klepacz asked how the current employment situation is impacting KPD. Chief Protsman stated KPD is better than most and is in the process of hiring a dispatcher for which 70 applied and 27 took the test.

Mr. Duke asked if the uniformed deputy bailiff and court security officers are full time. Chief Protsman stated two uniformed deputy bailiffs are full time and court security officers are typically retired law enforcement working part time shifts. They are paid hourly.

Vice Mayor Fisher asked about the state of the drug issue in the region. Chief Protsman stated it ebbs and flows but they are doing a good job of maintaining and not letting it grow. He said hiring a Crisis Intervention Specialist has been helpful.

Ms. Hall asked if tactical people are undercover in the high school. Chief Protsman explained that Kettering has a regional swat team, and they are not in the schools.

Chief Protsman explained how officers are assigned throughout the city by beats that are covered 24 hours a day.

Ms. Duvall asked how often beats are adjusted. Chief Protsman stated they are not adjusted often.

Chief Protsman explained that crime is analyzed every two weeks. If there is a jump, they want to know why. Thefts will always be the biggest driver.

Ms. Duvall asked about domestic violence being missing from the list of offenses on screen. Chief Protsman explained that it is on a different slide and it is monitored closely. It spiked during COVID, and KPD tries to provide public education and mental health assistance to victims and suspects. Ms. Duvall asked how often arrests are made for domestic violence. Chief Protsman stated that arrests are made in almost every case as specified by state law.

Mr. Scott asked if there is a way to pinpoint where crimes occur. Chief Protsman stated that these are referred to as hot spots, and KPD tracks the businesses and residences that have the most calls.

Ms. Duvall complimented the crime map on the website.

Chief Protsman stated that Beats 35, 40 and 41 are the high call areas.

Mr. Duke asked how Beat 35 is the smallest but the busiest. Chief Protsman stated that a lot of incidents happen there.

Mr. Duke asked that during the six-month analysis of the Flock cameras, KPD should measure effectiveness in Beat 35.

Chief Protsman advised Council that when they hear complaints, they should give the name to the City Manager's Office who will give the information to KPD.

Mr. Scott stated he's lived in Kettering since 1958 and never heard a complaint about KPD. Chief Protsman stated that in-car camera footage and complaints received are used as tools. If officer does something wrong, it's addressed.

Mr. Duke stated that when the Chief calls a resident, perceptions are cleared up quickly.

Mr. Klepacz asked if local law enforcement trains for situations like the recent school shooting in Texas. Chief Protsman stated that police forces in the region have a good understanding of what needs to happen should an incident like that happen locally.

Mayor Lehner entered the meeting at 3:00 p.m.,

Mayor Lehner asked if Kettering has school district officers. Chief Protsman stated we do not have those but larger school districts do.

Mr. Schwieterman introduced Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts (PRCA) Director Mary Beth O'Dell. She stated that PRCA was founded in 1955 with a volunteer board, and a director was hired in 1967. Ms. O'Dell is the fourth PRCA director. Ms. O'Dell stated Lincoln Park Civic Commons completed in 1987 and then Frazee Pavilion design started. In 1988, the first bond levy renovated Kettering Recreation Center and ice arena, lobby, gym, original water park and fitness wing. In 1991, Frazee was completed. In 1995, Delco Park was acquired by the City. In 2005, the skate park was built and was the first street style skate plaza in the world. In 2013, the City renovated 16 neighborhood parks and opened the Habitat. In 2014, PRCA was awarded the Gold Medal of Excellence for the third time. In 2016, the Veterans Plaza opened and was funded by the Parks Foundation. In 2018, the Rosewood renovation project began and pickle ball courts expanded. Ms. O'Dell said PRCA has great partnerships in the community, and that PRCA is currently in the design phase for Gentile Park, which will bring the number of Kettering city parks to 22.

Ms. O'Dell said PRCA has several divisions: Recreation; Parks; Cultural Arts; Frazee Pavilion; and administration, with a total of 45 full-time employees, 388 part-time and seasonal employees. We currently have 47% less seasonal since 2019 when there were 723.

Mr. Scott asked how PRCA will solve the hiring crisis. Ms. O'Dell stated they started recruiting in November and know of other cities that are not even opening pools, so Kettering is doing better than other communities.

Mayor Lehner asked how much PRCA would have to pay. Ms. O'Dell stated it is not just the money. The volume is not out there. Prospective employees did not show up for interviews or to the first day of the job.

Ms. Hall asked if ARPA funds could boost salaries. Ms. O'Dell stated there aren't enough people in the job market to take the jobs. We would be chasing dollars and the revenues wouldn't come in.

Ms. Hall stated that passes for the Rec Center are \$120 per year and asked if prices could be raised to bring in more revenue. Mr. Duke stated that the number of teens has shrunk and are not available. He asked how programs will be staffed. Ms. Duvall stated that people are at the places they make the most. Ms. O'Dell stated that the City is looking at future models. How much we pay has to be phasing. It will be a succession of years of planning. We are budgeted for 700 people.

Mayor Lehner asked if COVID caused less need for staff. Ms. O'Dell stated the community didn't participate because of COVID. Mr. Schwieterman stated that all COVID work from home has accelerated a ten year transition in the workforce.

Ms. O'Dell reviewed the amenities Kettering offers including: a BMX track; disc golf; sand volleyball courts; basketball courts; tennis courts; 356 acres of green space; pickle ball courts; a cemetery; a splash pad; and shelters. There are 14 groundskeepers to maintain the parks. The Recreation Division includes a senior center, an expanded at Kettering Fitness and Wellness Center with a track above the Trent Arena and Polen farm. Recently, drop-in rates are up the most. Least amount is membership. Fitness is almost back. Water park passes are up 19%.

Mr. Duke asked if KRC should partner with Silver Sneakers. Ms. O'Dell stated the contract is not solid and the market is saturated.

Ms. O'Dell stated that Rosewood Arts Center will have one of the best public art education facilities in Ohio once the renovations are completed. The Center will have classroom studios. More than \$1.2 million was raised and this will cover furniture, fixtures and equipment, but more funding is needed for the theater.

Mr. Klepacz asked if there were any updates to the rust on the Schantz Avenue Bridge. Ms. O'Dell stated that Shayna McConville and John Sliemers are working with a company on how to treat it.

Ms. O'Dell mentioned the Kaleidoscope Art on Wheels which is a mobile unit resulting from a partnership between Habitat and Rosewood.

Ms. O'Dell said the Marketing and Communications Division responsible for social media, PRCA app and the Rosewood Habitat and fitness newsletters. The department will hire a part time social media analyst. Administration and Special Projects has all program information on Rec Trac.

Mayor Lehner asked who appoints people to boards. Ms. O'Dell stated that applications are reviewed for Arts Council and Partners for Healthy Youth.

Ms. O'Dell stated a recent survey shows 99% satisfaction rate.

Ms. O'Dell ended by outlining upcoming projects including pickle courts, We Are Kettering and Gentile Park.

Mr. Schwieterman introduced Public Service Director Dave Duritsch who began by saying that his department used to be two separate departments—Streets and Facilities. He leads by the three Ps: people who do the work; programs/tasks; and policy. There are three divisions--facilities, streets and vehicle maintenance center. Kettering has 250 miles of roadway, 230 miles of sewer and open channels. There are 39 full-time and 2 part-time employees. Snow and ice removal is the most important program. When we have snow and ice, we recruit all hands on deck for 12-hour shifts, park maintenance, and facility maintenance. Engineering staff who have a CDL provide supplemental help. Leaf pickup is most popular as calls are 5 to 1 about leaves vs. snow and ice. We also have a spring leaf pickup. The Yard Debris Center collects brush from March until December and goes to the leaf farm. All leaves are collected from leaf farm to make compost for the next year. Roadway maintenance includes asphalt, bridges, culvert, guardrail, storm sewer maintenance, traffic signs and street signs. Streets handles traffic control programs for special events.

Ms. Duvall asked who is responsible for the grate in the front of a residence. Mr. Duritsch stated that Streets cleans grates, but if there is something on top of it, homeowners should clean it.

Ms. Duvall stated that a street sign at Dorothy and Shroyer needs attention. Mr. Duritsch asked her to send the information to the City Manager, and he will send it to the Sign Shop.

Mr. Duke asked if the City should be contacted if the sewer hardware dropped below street level. Mr. Duritsch confirmed.

Mr. Klepacz asked how streets are tracked during plowing. Mr. Duritsch the Streets Division hits the main thoroughfares first--upper 8; then the secondary--9 through 16. All residential streets are cleared using the same district map as leaf collection. GPS can now run a query to see which streets are completed. If Council members have complaints or questions, they should forward it to the City Manager.

Mr. Scott asked about the brush policy. Mr. Duritsch stated if there are things in the street in the channel, the City clears it. Property owner is responsible for tree lawn. Mr. Schwieterman stated the City recommended residents do it, but we sometimes help.

Mr. Duritsch stated facility maintenance is equipped with 25 full-time employees who maintain buildings, clean and upgrade 175,000 square feet. Vehicle maintenance center employs 7 full-time employees who are responsible for fleet inventory, vehicle maintenance and fleet management. There are 350 vehicles to be maintained.

Vice Mayor Fisher asked Mr. Duritsch what keeps him up at night. He responded that ice and snow are his main concern during winter.

Mr. Schwieterman advised Council to get a name, address and send it to the City Manager's Office for ice and snow. The City changed policy for snow removal, so now two inches of accumulation are needed to plow and salt the entire city, as opposed to four inches of snow. Tolerance for neighbors is less so we went to a more liberal snow and ice plan. We try to be done with plowing within 36 hours. There is no last residential street to be plowed because the strategy changes with every snowfall.

The meeting adjourned for the day at 4:35 p.m.

ATTEST:

PEGGY LEHNER  
MAYOR

LASHAUNAH D. KACYNSKI  
Clerk of Council