

City of Montgomery  
City Council Work Session Minutes  
April 21, 2021

Present

Brian Riblet, City Manager  
Terry Donnellon, Law Director  
Tracy Henao, Asst. City Manager/Acting Comm. Dev. Dir.  
John Crowell, Police Chief  
Gary Heitkamp, Public Works Director  
Katie Smiddy, Finance Director  
Paul Wright, Fire Chief  
Matthew Vanderhorst, Community and Information Services Dir.  
Connie Gaylor, Clerk of Council

City Council Members Present

Chris Dobrozsi, Mayor  
Craig Margolis, Vice Mayor  
Lee Ann Bissmeyer-teleconference  
Mike Cappel-teleconference  
Ron Messer  
Lynda Roesch  
Ken Suer

City Council convened its Work Session for April 21, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in a hybrid meeting at City Hall and by telephone conference with Mayor Dobrozsi presiding. This remote access meeting was allowed by emergency legislation adopted by the Ohio General Assembly and approved by the Governor. The emergency legislation added language to RC Section 121.22 allowing public meetings by telephone conference during the current pandemic and declared State of Emergency. As required by the statute, notice of the telephonic meeting was publicized more than 24 hours in advance to allow public access through the same conference call in service. The public was also given a backup number to call in the event there were technical difficulties. This Notice was posted on the City's website and a similar Notice was sent to The Cincinnati Enquirer.

**ROLL CALL**

Mayor Dobrozsi stated that the roll was called during the Public Hearing and that Vice Mayor Margolis had joined that meeting while in progress. He stated that all other members of Council were present either in person or on the phone line.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

Vice Mayor Margolis presented Doug King with a Certificate of Appreciation for his service on the Board of Zoning Appeals.

City Council thanked Mr. King for his service on the Board of Zoning Appeals and for working with the residents' requests and the code to reach the best possible solutions.

Council Member Roesch presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Tyler and Anita Scott as the 2020 Winter Seasons of Beauty winners on behalf of the Beautification and Tree Commission.

City Council thanked the Scott's for their festive and beautiful decorations during the Christmas holiday and for always beautifully maintaining their property.

Aaron Kellenberger, Chair of the Beautification and Tree Commission congratulated the Scott's on their beautiful presentation and stated that there were other properties considered but their holiday decorations made their property stand out above the rest.

**GUESTS & RESIDENTS**

Mayor Dobrozsi asked for a motion to move the Guests and Residents portion of the agenda to the end of the agenda after Other Business.

Vice Mayor Margolis made a motion to move the Guests and Resident portion to after Other Business on the agenda. Mr. Cappel seconded. City Council unanimously agreed.

**LEGISLATION FOR CONSIDERATION THIS EVENING**

There was no legislation for consideration at the meeting.

**ESTABLISHING AN AGENDA FOR MAY 5, 2021 BUSINESS SESSION**

**PENDING LEGISLATION**

**An Ordinance Designating the Wooley-Hattersley Carriage House as A Montgomery Landmark**

Mayor Dobrozsi explained that this was the third reading of this Ordinance and asked if there were any updates.

Ms. Henao replied there were none.

**An Ordinance Agreeing to Adjust the Boundaries Between the City of Montgomery, Ohio And the City of The Village of Indian Hill, Ohio Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 709.37**

Mayor Dobrozsi explained that this would be the third reading of this Ordinance and asked Mr. Donnellon if there were any updates.

Mr. Donnellon stated that as reported at the March Work Session, the homeowners have reached out to the School Districts regarding consent from both districts and were waiting on responses. He asked to have the Ordinance tabled until consent had been received. He stated at that time the Ordinance could be added back to the agenda for a third reading.

Vice Mayor Margolis made a motion to table the legislation until a request is made to add back to the agenda. Ms. Roesch seconded. City Council unanimously agreed.

**An Ordinance Authorizing the Law Director to Initiate Proceedings to Appropriate Property for The Purpose of a Road Improvement Project on Montgomery Road in The City of Montgomery, Hamilton County, Ohio**

Mayor Dobrozsi explained that this was the third reading of the Ordinance and asked if there were any updates.

Mr. Donnellon stated there were none.

**NEW LEGISLATION**

**A Resolution Recognizing The Month Of May 2021 As National Historic Preservation Month in The City Of Montgomery**

Mayor Dobrozsi assigned the legislation to Vice Mayor Margolis.

Ms. Henao explained that this Resolution, if approved, will recognize the month of May as National Historic Preservation Month in the City of Montgomery.

Ms. Henao reported that building on the importance of landmark buildings, she worked with Sarah Fink in the Recreation Department to develop a Landmark Program similar to the Junior Park Explorer program where children are provided with a workbook in which they will go throughout the city to locate the landmark buildings and learn about their history in a fun interactive way. The children would then earn patches similar to the ones they can earn through the Junior Park Explorer program.

Vice Mayor Margolis stated that he thought that was great news. He added that since the 1970's both volunteers and elected officials have had the foresight to purchase buildings with the idea of preserving them as landmarks.

**An Ordinance Providing for The Issuance of Not to Exceed \$7,500,000 Of Notes by The City of Montgomery, Ohio, For the Purpose of Making Public Infrastructure Improvements Within the City**

Mayor Dobrozsi assigned the legislation to Mr. Suer.

Ms. Smiddy explained that, if approved, this Ordinance would approve the refinance of \$7,500,000 in outstanding Notes which were issued in 2020 in anticipation of construction in the Montgomery Quarter. She stated that with interest rates remaining favorable, it was recommended by our bond underwriter that we renew the Notes for another year. Eventually the Notes will either be paid in full or incorporated into a long-term bond. To timely issue the Notes, the Ordinance is not being proffered as an emergency, but Council will be asked to waive the second and third reading of the Ordinance so it will take effect the first week of June in anticipation of a closing on the new bonds.

Mr. Messer stated that with the interest rate being 4% currently and refinancing to 3% per annum, would there be a difference at maturity.

Ms. Smiddy referenced current market conditions and explained it is estimated that we could refinance at almost 1% lower than current rates.

Vice Mayor Margolis asked the source of the funding for the refinance of the notes.

Ms. Smiddy replied that it comes out of the General Fund.

Mayor Dobrozsi stated that at the time of the vote on this Ordinance he would recuse himself due to possible professional conflicts as it funds the construction of the Montgomery Quarter.

**A Resolution Authorizing The Administration To Apply For And Administer Funding From The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021**

Mayor Dobrozsi assigned the legislation to Mr. Suer.

Mr. Riblet explained that, if approved, this Resolution will allow the City of Montgomery to participate in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and affirming that any funds received will only be applied to eligible expenses. He added that The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 was signed into law by President Biden on Thursday, March 11, 2021. The \$1.9 trillion Coronavirus rescue package aims to fuel the nationwide recovery from economic impacts of the pandemic through direct payments to individuals and families as well as funding to essential state and local government services. State and local governments recipients will be able to use the funds to cover eligible costs incurred until December 31, 2024. Mr. Riblet explained that it is anticipated the City of Montgomery would receive a total of approximately \$2.1 million dollars with 50% being delivered no later than Tuesday, May 10, 2021 and the remaining 50% will be delivered no earlier than one year later.

Mr. Suer asked Mr. Riblet if he was anticipating using the funds for another business grant program.

Mr. Riblet stated that potentially those funds could be used for that purpose. He stated that staff would be viewing an upcoming webinar that will provide information on the permitted uses for the funds. He stated that he understood the guidelines to be restrictive at this time but would know more after the seminar and will bring that back to Council at a future meeting.

Mr. Messer asked if the business grant program was an eligible expense.

Mr. Riblet replied that he understood the eligibility to be limited to water and sewer infrastructure, broadband costs and to assist non-profits and businesses. He stated that he believed those guidelines may be broadened as it is so restrictive that it would inhibit many entities from participating in the program. He stated that we may have more ability to use the funds than expected at this time.

### **ADMINISTRATION REPORT**

Mr. Riblet reported the following items:

- The next City Council Business Session is scheduled for Wednesday, May 5 immediately following a CIC meeting at 6:45 p.m.
- Mr. Riblet requested a CIC meeting to be held prior to the May 5 Business Session to be held at 6:45 p.m. He stated that a motion could be made to commence with the Business Session at the completion of the CIC meeting.

Mr. Cappel made a motion to commence with the May 5 Business Session at the completion of the CIC meeting. Vice Mayor Margolis seconded. City Council unanimously agreed.

- The Financial Planning and Planning, Zoning and Landmarks Committees will meet on May 3 at 4:30 and 5:30 p.m., respectively. The Law and Safety Committee has cancelled their meetings for May.
- Mr. Riblet stated that the Government Affairs Committee will meet on Monday, May 10 at 4:30 p.m. The Parks and Recreation and Public Works Committees have cancelled their meetings for May.
- John R. Jurgenson resumed work this past weekend now that Duke Energy is substantially complete with the 12-inch gas main replacement. The construction activities of Phase 3 are expected to last until sometime mid to late-May then go into Phase 4.
- In the past, Mr. Harold Thomas provided a generous gift to our Police Department at the end of 2019 and one of the items recently purchased was a drone. The department has received their new drone and Officers are now in the process of achieving their FAA part 107 certifications for drone flight.
- A contract with Cincinnati Bell Smart City in the amount of \$49,621 was signed to provide Public Wi-Fi to included Swaim Lodge and Swaim Park, Terwilliger Lodge and most of Dulle Park, and in our downtown area from CVS south to the Triangle Point Park and from Main Street to the Shelly Lane Parking Lot area. The amount of the contract includes a one-time capital installation cost of \$21,181 with the remaining \$28,440 providing the initial three years of service.
- The new Community and Engagement Coordinator, Amy Frederick, will be starting on May 10. Amy has over 20 years of experience as a news producer and radio reporter, first with WXIX-TV and then with Cox Media Group Ohio. Amy has extensive experience managing and creating content for various social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter.
- 237 photos were submitted into the annual Arts Commission Photo Contest which is 17 less than our average number received. For a second time, the number of student entries exceeded the number of adult entries. Judging took place on Wednesday, April 21. Photos will be displayed at Terwilliger Lodge on



Saturday, April 24 from 12 to 5 p.m. and anyone may stop by to see the exhibition (no registration is required). A virtual awards presentation will be held on Sunday, April 25 at 2 p.m.

- All of the qualified Board and Commission members who are to be inducted into the Volunteer Walk of Fame have confirmed their attendance to the May 19 ceremony. As there are 7 inductees this year, staff would like to confirm a 6:00 pm start time for the ceremony planned to be held in Montgomery Park (weather permitting).

City Council confirmed the 6:00 p.m. ceremony time. Vice Mayor Margolis made a motion to commence with the May 19 Work Session at the completion of the ceremony. Ms. Roesch seconded. City Council unanimously agreed.

- The Sycamore Master Facility Milestone presentations will be held on May 5 at 10:00 a.m. at EH Greene and 11:00 at the Junior High School. Sycamore has asked that attendance be limited to two people at each session. Mr. Riblet asked those on Council who were interested in attending to let Ms. Gaylor know.
- Happy Birthday Wishes were extended to Mr. Donnellon and Vice Mayor Margolis for their April birthdays.

Mr. Riblet requested an Executive Session for matters related to Preparing for Negotiations with Public Employees.

#### **LAW DIRECTOR REPORT**

Mr. Donnellon reported that while we are seeing vertical construction at the Montgomery Quarter, there is still work going on behind the scenes to file tax exemptions so as the buildings come online service payments can begin.

#### **CITY COUNCIL REPORTS**

##### **Mr. Cappel**

Mr. Cappel reported that at the April 17 Shredding and Recycling event approximately 295 cars came through the Public Works lot. He stated that 8,600 pounds of paper was shredded, Four (4) Junk King trucks were filled with electronics, the cardboard dumpster was filled as well as the bed of a 1 Ton truck. He stated it was a very successful event.

##### **Mrs. Bissmeyer**

Mrs. Bissmeyer reported that she attended the Hopewell Cemetery Revolutionary War Grave Marking ceremony on April 17 and remarked on how well attended it was and impressive of a ceremony it was.

##### **Mr. Messer**

Mr. Messer reported that the Government Affairs Committee met and discussed the following items:

- Operation Give Back and Montgomery Farmers Market were both approved for the Service to the Community Grant and will receive \$2,500 each.
- A 2010 Ford Explorer was declared as surplus for the Fire Department and will be placed on GovDeals.com for auction. The vehicle was estimated at a value of \$7,000.

- The Montgomery Pool will be opening for its regular season on May 29 with no limits on the capacity as approved by the Hamilton County Public Health Department. Safety Guidelines will still be encouraged, but no masks required.
- A discussion of the annual Boards and Commission training was held, and it was decided that the Council Liaison and Board and Commission Chair will conduct a brief update to their respective members to remind them of dress code, meeting etiquette and roles of the member. Staff will come back with recommendations on the method of training for 2022 at a future meeting.
- A discussion on the suggestions for the Gerri Harbison Memorial was held at which time a list of items was presented as received from Boards and Commission members as well as the Chamber. 3-4 choices were discussed, and staff will have a rendering and scope of the project prepared to bring back to the Committee and ultimately to B & C members and Council.
- The Committee and staff reviewed a revised Memorial Donation Policy. Mr. Messer asked Mr. Riblet to elaborate on the revisions.

Mr. Riblet explained that since the current Memorial Donation Policy was 20 years old, staff felt it was prudent to provide suggestions that would update the policy in accordance with current policies and practices. He stated that a red-lined version would be shared with all Council so they could provide feedback and then a final draft would be presented to Government Affairs at the May meeting.

**Ms. Roesch**

Ms. Roesch stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission is hosting a Night Sky program in Montgomery Park the end of September/first of October where participants will use telescopes to identify the constellations. She stated that this was a very popular program when last held.

Ms. Roesch stated that the Beautification and Tree Commission is planning the annual Marigold Planting project but with a different process this year that will include Montgomery Elementary planting at Swaim Park.

Ms. Roesch stated that Beautification Day is planned for May 15 and that Shawn Cooper is working to recruit and schedule volunteers for that day. She stated that City Council's beds were in front of City Hall and then in front of the Recreation Annex building.

**Mr. Suer**

Mr. Suer stated that he also attended the Hopewell Cemetery ceremony and remarked on how educational the presentation was for the large crowd that attended. He stated it was quite impressive. He thanked Ms. Gaylor for coordinating the event.

Mr. Suer asked if there has been any contact with the City of Blue Ash regarding the annual Memorial Day event.

Mr. Riblet stated that he knew the parade had been cancelled but thought the ceremony at the town square was still being held. Mr. Riblet stated that he would follow up with Blue Ash and let Council know of any arrangements.

**Mayor Dobrozsi**

Mayor Dobrozsi provided an update on Issue 7 which passed in May of 2020 regarding the Metro bus line expansion. He stated that the funding from the Issue would support 75% transit and 25% roadways. He explained that along the BRT (Bus Rapid Transit Line) there would be stops in Sycamore Township that would extend to the Montgomery Quarter. He stated that with the expansion there is the expectation of more ridership. He stated that when the final report was completed, he would send to City Council.

**MINUTES**

Vice Mayor Margolis moved to approve the April 7, Special Session, Public Hearing and Work Session minutes as written. Mr. Messer seconded. City Council unanimously agreed.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Mayor Dobrozsi shared an email he received from Scott Anderson, a 2019 MCLA Graduate, thanking the City for the business grant funding given to Toast & Berry during the pandemic. Mr. Anderson also extended his condolences in the loss of Council Member Harbison.

**GUESTS AND RESIDENTS**

Mayor Dobrozsi stated that there were no visitors in City Hall and asked if the guests and/or residents on the phone line who would like to speak. He asked for them to state their name and address and to adhere to the three-minute speaking rule. There was no response.

Roberto Rivera stated he was on the phone line.

Mayor Dobrozsi asked if there were any other guests or residents on the phone. There being no response he closed the floor to public comment.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mayor Dobrozsi stated that as Mr. Riblet had requested an Executive Session for matters related to Preparing for Negotiations with Public Employees, he asked for a motion to adjourn into Executive Session.

Vice Mayor Margolis made a motion to adjourn into Executive Session for matters related to Preparing for Negotiations with Public Employees. Mr. Cappel seconded.

The roll was called and showed the following vote:

PRESENT: Dobrozsi, Margolis, Cappel, Suer, Bissmeyer, Roesch, Messer (7)  
ABSENT: (0)

City Council adjourned into Executive Session at 8:04 p.m.

City Council came back into Public Session at 8:24 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Dobrozsi asked if there was any further business to discuss in Public Session. There being none he asked for a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Cappel moved to adjourn. Mr. Suer seconded. City Council unanimously agreed.

City Council adjourned at 8:24 p.m.



Connie Gaylor, Clerk of Council