

May 7, 2021

TO: Ron Messer, City Council Member, Chair  
Government Affairs Committee of City Council

FROM: Brian K. Riblet, City Manager *BKR*

SUBJECT: Government Affairs Committee Meeting of Monday, May 10, 2021

As a reminder, the Government Affairs Committee is scheduled to meet on Monday, May 10 at 4:30 p.m. as a hybrid meeting both at City Hall and via teleconference. To participate in this meeting by teleconference please use the following phone number: 1 (866) 228-9900 with Passcode: 204938. Items to be discussed include:

1. Update on the Proposed Memorial Donations Policy & a Potential Memorial Project—Staff would like the opportunity to discuss proposed revisions to the Memorial Donations/Recognition policy as well as to discuss a potential memorial project. Staff would like to obtain feedback from the Committee at the meeting.
2. Discussion of a Diversity and Inclusion Commission—Staff would like the opportunity to discuss the possible creation of a Diversity and Inclusion Commission with the Committee and to obtain their feedback at the meeting.
3. Other Business—The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an opportunity to discuss any issue or ask questions that may be on your mind.

Also, attached are the minutes from the April 12, 2021 meeting of the Government Affairs Committee for review and approval at Monday's meeting.

Should you have questions or concerns pertaining to these topics or have additional items to be discussed at Monday's meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me.

C: Mayor and City Council Members (4)  
Connie Gaylor, Administrative Coordinator  
Department Heads  
File



**GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF CITY COUNCIL**  
10101 Montgomery Road • Montgomery, Ohio 45242  
(513) 891-2424 • Fax (513) 891-2498

**Agenda**  
**May 10, 2021**  
**4:30 P.M.**

The meeting will be offered both in place at City Hall and by teleconference for those who cannot attend in person or feel safer sheltering at home.

To participate in this meeting by teleconference please use the following phone number:  
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1. Call to Order
2. Guests and Residents
3. New Business
  - a. Discussion of a Diversity and Inclusion Commission
4. Old Business
  - a. Update on the Proposed Memorial Donations Policy & a Potential Memorial Project
5. Other Business
6. Approval of Minutes–April 12, 2021
7. Adjournment

*These Minutes are a draft of the proposed minutes from the Government Affairs Committee of City Council meeting. They do not represent the official record of proceedings until formally adopted by the Government Affairs Committee of City Council.*

City of Montgomery  
Government Affairs Committee Minutes  
April 12, 2021

Present

Brian Riblet, City Manager  
Tracy Henao, Asst. City Manager/Acting Comm. Dev. Dir.  
Connie Gaylor, Clerk of Council  
Paul Wright, Fire Chief  
Matthew Vanderhorst, Community and Information Services Director

City Council Committee Members Present

Ron Messer, Chair  
Lynda Roesch, Teleconference

City Council Committee Member Absent

Craig Margolis

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The Government Affairs Committee of Council convened its meeting for April 12, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. in person and by telephone conference with Mr. Messer presiding. This remote access meeting was allowed by emergency legislation adopted last week 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.

Chairman Messer called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to excuse Committee Member Margolis from the meeting. Ms. Roesch made the motion. Mr. Messer seconded. The Committee unanimously agreed.

Service to the Community Grant Recommendation

Mr. Vanderhorst explained it is necessary for the Government Affairs Committee to review the Operation Give Back and the Montgomery Farmers' Market applications for the Service to the Community Grant and consider City staff recommendations for funding these projects.

Mr. Vanderhorst explained that in 2020, a \$2,000 grant was awarded to the Montgomery Farmers' Market. The grant provided funds to allow the organization to adjust its services to meet the Covid-19 pandemic guidelines and still offer services to the community. Grant applications were also received from Sidestreams Foundation and Operation Give Back; however, these requests were not funded. The Sidestreams Foundation project has a limited reach, and the Operation Give Back project did not serve Montgomery residents. He stated that for the 2021 grant cycle, the Montgomery Farmers' Market requested a \$2,500 grant to restart engagement programs that were put on hold during the 2020 season. These programs include entertainment, children's activities, and SNAP-EBT activities. The grant request also provides for the cost of items to help the Market manage lingering Covid-19 restrictions and protocols.

Mr. Vanderhorst explained that Operation Give Back partnered with Sycamore Bridges to submit a \$2,500 grant request for a program that they are developing jointly to address local families' mental



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well-being. The program will consist of a "Summer Kick Off" outdoor event during which registered participants will receive a package of activities for the summer. Students and families in need will be identified through connections between Operation Give Back, Sycamore Bridges, and other local support organizations. Both Operation Give Back and Sycamore Bridges support the Sycamore Community Schools student population, which includes the City of Montgomery.

Ms. Roesch stated that she feels both Operation Give Back and the Montgomery Farmers Market fit with the WeTHRIVE initiative that the City serves. She stated that she supports the recommendation for both grants and moves that the City fund both programs as recommended by staff. Chairman Messer seconded the motion. The Committee unanimously agreed,

Chairman Messer added that he spoke with Mr. Margolis who shared his support for funding both grant applicants.

#### Discussion of the Annual Boards and Commissions Training

Mr. Riblet explained that the annual Boards and Commissions Training has been evaluated by staff due to its cancellation during the pandemic. He stated that as discussed at prior meetings, the training would include updates to the dress code and meeting etiquette. He stated that also discussed was the communications between the Council Liaison and the Chair regarding appointments and reappointments.

Mr. Riblet added that typically the first week of May each year staff would conduct a Board and Commission Training event at City Hall. He explained that over the years the attendance has dwindled and there has been a lack of interest by the boards and commission members. Mr. Riblet stated that it was not confirmed if it will be held this year. He stated that similar to the Community Leadership Forum, finding topics to discuss on a yearly basis has become a challenge. He stated that at the last training conducted in 2019, Law Director Donnellon spoke to a small audience on the topic of emails and text messages being considered public record.

Mr. Riblet stated that Vice Mayor Margolis had suggested that the Chair and Council Liaisons hold discussions at the individual Board and Commission meetings and address the changes regarding dress attire, meeting etiquette and the roles of the members. Mr. Riblet stated that some suggestions from staff on how to present the trainings is to have the Law Director and himself attend the meetings or to video a presentation that could be shown at each meeting. He asked for feedback from the Committee on how to move forward this year. He stated that the highlights could be presented to the members this year by the Chair and Council Liaison and then staff could come back with proposals for next year if that is satisfactory to the Committee.

Ms. Roesch stated that she felt having the Chair and the Council Liaison discussing the changes with the members was good for this year. She stated that she felt the video was not a bad idea. She stated that she did not think having the Law Director and the City Manager attending each meeting was warranted. She suggested that the video be kept short and that it could be provided for the members and asked to be viewed on their own. She suggested waiting until next year to do the video.

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Mr. Messer stated that he agreed with having the Chair and the Council Liaison doing the review this year. He stated that it would be helpful for staff to provide a bullet point list of the updates to the Chair and Liaison to discuss with the members.

Mr. Riblet stated that staff will evaluate what to do in 2022, put suggestions together, and bring back to the Committee at a future meeting.

Ms. Roesch asked how the Board and Commission Chair updates to Council were going to be presented to Council this year.

Mr. Riblet stated that he felt the same process from last year could be followed this year in which the updates are sent into Ms. Gaylor and she could send a complete package out to all Council members. He added that he hoped in 2022 that the Chairs could present in person to Council.

#### Update on the Proposed Memorial Donations/Recognition Policy

Mr. Riblet explained that he would like to obtain feedback from the Committee regarding the suggestions for the Gerri Harbison Memorial that he has shared with them. He stated that he would like to narrow the list to the top 3-4 choices, then share that with City Council and others to determine the top choice.

Ms. Roesch stated that she felt there were a couple suggestions that could be grouped together into a memorial for Mrs. Harbison. She stated that she liked the idea of a statue of Mrs. Harbison and the Diversity and Inclusion Garden with bushes, trees, flowers and a pergola. She stated that she could see these placed in Montgomery Park in an area dedicated to Mrs. Harbison. She stated that she also liked naming a street or park in the Montgomery Quarter and the naming of the Top Dog award at the Dog Show.

Mr. Messer stated that he agreed there could be some grouping of the ideas. He stated that the Montgomery Quarter could be an important showcase whether it was a bench, garden or naming of a park.

Mr. Riblet stated that the subcommittee of staff members feels that something at Montgomery Park is fitting with the July 4<sup>th</sup> festival. He stated that something overlooking City Hall would be appropriate. Mr. Riblet stated that something at the Montgomery Quarter could be an option such as the pocket park that would be created.

Chief Wright stated that he felt the Montgomery Quarter may seem too futuristic and that he felt Montgomery Park was a more intimate area and more personal since Mrs. Harbison spent so much time there.

Mr. Vanderhorst stated that he felt the most natural place is Montgomery Park.

Ms. Henao stated that she felt Montgomery Park made a lot of sense as it would seem that Mrs. Harbison was watching over City Hall.



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Mr. Riblet asked if the Committee was comfortable with the subcommittee making the decision without additional input from the Boards and Commissions and the Chamber. He stated that staff did not want to leave anyone out of the process. He stated that the final suggestion would be sent to the full Council first.

Ms. Roesch stated that it may help to have something more concrete to present to Council that shows the dedicated area, statute, bench, landscaping and pergola. She stated she felt that should be shared with the boards and commission members as well as Council to keep people engaged in the process.

Chief Wright shared that at his church they asked for feedback on installing a memorial gardens without any set standard of the project and the feedback was not helpful. He stated that when they had a mockup prepared with a vision of what it would look like, it was better received. He stated that including pricing on the included elements (i.e., bench, landscaping, pergola, statute) would also provide people with an idea of the cost and needed funds.

Mr. Riblet stated that moving forward that a statute and a bench would include private key stakeholders such as area businesses, organizations and employee donations. He stated that staff will secure a rendering and scope of a proposed memorial and send to the Committee to make sure they are comfortable with it. After their final input, it could be sent to Boards and Commissions members and the remaining City Council members. He added that he foresaw the scope being high-level including a bench, statute, landscaping and artwork as a baseline.

Mr. Messer asked if the Arts Commission would be included.

Mr. Riblet stated that yes, that Greg Leader was on the subcommittee, but it would be shared with the Arts Commission.

Mr. Riblet shared proposed recommendations to update Policy Number VII-15: Policy for Memorial Donations/Recognition. He explained that the current version addressed using memorial funds but gave no guidelines on an amount or how to disburse the funds. He stated that a small committee of staff reviewed the policy and made a recommendation to designate \$100 per year of service towards the cost of a memorial or recognition. He stated that while reviewing the policy there were also corrections and updates made to clean up the language of the policy.

Ms. Roesch asked if staff had checked to see if there was a legal reason as to why memorial donations or recognitions could not be collected or used.

Mr. Riblet replied that he had spoken with Law Director Terry Donnellon and Julie Prickett was also on the subcommittee. He stated that he felt we were fine to revise the policy as noted on the redlined version but would double check with Mr. Donnellon.

Ms. Roesch stated that she felt it was a good use of funds to extend sympathy to an employee's family to include past and present employees and council members. She asked if there were other cities that have a similar policy.

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Mr. Riblet stated that staff has not reached out to other entities at this time, but we could do that. He stated the use of public funds in the current policy indicates that you can use funds for deceased individuals.

Ms. Roesch asked why "street" was added in the last paragraph.

Mr. Riblet explained that there did not seem to be in support of renaming a street but there was more support for the naming a new street. He explains that the policy from 2002 really limits what streets could be renamed based on the length and proximity of the street as well as the street name. He stated that it is very complex, and that the revision is a staff recommendation only. The verbiage could be changed.

Chief Wright added that staff has discussed the implications for the renaming of streets on the residents.

Ms. Roesch stated that she would not blanket all streets in the clause but does not feel so strongly about it that she would not support it.

Chief Wright stated that he did not realize how many streets were prohibited from being renamed.

Mr. Riblet stated that it was his thought, because of the strict guidelines in place, that the verbiage of the paragraph be left as is.

Ms. Roesch referred to the renaming of Ted Gregory Way as being somewhat controversial and stated that it was a very small street that did not affect any residences. She asked if the recommended changes to the policy would be circulated to City Council.

Mr. Messer stated that he supported the policy with the noted changes.

Mr. Riblet stated that it would be sent to City Council.

Mr. Vanderhorst asked if the removal of the word individuals in the first paragraph of the policy and the addition of city council members or employees limited the recognition only to those groups.

Ms. Roesch asked about individuals who have contributed greatly to the community. She stated that she would not mind renaming a street at that time in recognition of such a person.

Mr. Riblet stated that there a 2-3 levels of approval for such a request and that ultimately Council would have final authority.

Mr. Messer asked if we have an outstanding citizen, is there a recognition policy on how to honor them.

Mr. Riblet stated that typically there is a Certificate of Appreciation or a Proclamation presented but also, we could present a key to the City to them. He stated that staff has talked about the difference in service, donations, and volunteerism. He stated that staff can look further into that.



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### Surplus Equipment-Fire Department

Chief Wright explained that it is requested that the Committee designate a 2010 Ford Explorer as surplus. He stated that vehicle has a value of \$7,000 and if approved it would be placed on GovDeals.Com for auction in a "as-is" condition.

Ms. Roesch made a motion to declare the 2010 Ford Explorer as surplus and to dispose of it through GovDeals.com. Mr. Messer seconded. The Committee unanimously agreed.

### Other Business

Mr. Riblet stated that he met with Julie Machon regarding the pool operations. He stated that as of the day of the meeting, Hamilton County confirmed that they would not be limiting the capacity at municipal pools. He stated that he instructed Ms. Machon to go back to a normal pool season, selling memberships at full capacity. He stated that there would still be an encouragement to visitors to not congregate and that some safety protocols would still be in place but that masks would not be required.

### Guests and Residents

Mr. Messer asked if there were any guests or residents on the line that wished to speak. There was no response.

### Minutes

Ms. Roesch moved to approve the March 8, 2021 Government Affairs Committee minutes. Mr. Messer seconded. The Committee unanimously agreed.

### Adjournment

Ms. Roesch moved for adjournment. Mr. Messer seconded. The Committee unanimously agreed. The Governmental Affairs Committee of Council meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

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Chair