

MINUTES
OAKWOOD CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
AUGUST 24, 2020

The Council of the city of Oakwood, Ohio, met in a work session at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2020 in the council chambers of the city of Oakwood, 30 Park Avenue. The Mayor of the City, William Duncan, presided.

Council members in attendance were Mayor William Duncan, Vice Mayor Steve Byington, Councilmember Rob Stephens, Councilmember Anne Hilton and Councilmember Chris Epley. Staff in attendance were City Manager Norbert Klopsch and City Attorney Rob Jacques. Also in attendance were Public Safety Director Alan Hill for a discussion on recent thefts of yard signs and flags, and Finance Director Cindy Stafford for a discussion on CARES Act funding.

Mayor Duncan called the work session to order at 5 p.m. and began the meeting with a discussion on recent thefts of yard signs and flags. Chief Alan Hill provided a briefing on thefts of yard signs, particularly Black Lives Matter and Biden/Harris signs, and gay pride flags. As with all criminal activity, the Oakwood Public Safety Department will conduct a thorough investigation and is confident that the department will identify those persons involved. Based on security camera footage from several residential properties, it is believed that teenagers are responsible for these thefts. Chief Hill also commented on his preliminary estimate of the cost to purchase in-car and body cameras for Oakwood Public Safety Officers. Additional research is being conducted to determine exact costs. Chief Hill departed the meeting at 6 p.m., at which time Finance Director Cindy Stafford joined the meeting. Mrs. Stafford provided an overview on CARES Act funding. The funding is provided by the Federal Government and is distributed through the state of Ohio. Basic criteria for use of these funds include the following:

1. Expenses must be necessary and incurred due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.
2. Expenses must not be accounted for in the budget approved in December 2019.
3. Expenses must be incurred and paid during the period March 1, 2020 through December 30, 2020.

The city has already adopted the required legislation necessary to receive and use the funds. Staff is planning to use the funds to pay for unbudgeted administrative leave for city employees; for increased costs related to cleaning, sanitation, safety barriers, and signage; for expenditures related to telework and remote capabilities within the city, including IT and hardware costs; for expenses to build "Zoom Rooms" in the city council chamber and the great room at the OCC; and for costs to install touchless faucets at several city facilities. Thus far, approximately \$45,000 has been spent for items that are reimbursable under the CARES Act. The estimated cost of the two "Zoom Rooms" is \$55,000. The estimated cost to install touchless faucets is \$20,000. Mrs. Stafford concluded her comments by mentioning that the Auditor of State recently opined that certain capital expenses may not be eligible for CARES Act funding. Additional clarification from the Ohio Auditor must be received before the city will proceed with building the two "Zoom Rooms" and installing the touchless faucets. Mrs. Stafford departed the meeting at 6:25 p.m. Mr. Klopsch then asked Law Director Jacques to provide an update on the status of COVID-19. Mr. Jacques commented on the cases in Montgomery County and most recent directives from Governor DeWine and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH).

Mayor Duncan then led a discussion on the following agenda items:

- COUNCIL COMMITTEES

- Court Liaison, Mrs. Hilton

- Zoom for Arraignments: Mr. Klopsch reported that the Oakwood Municipal Court is now using Zoom technology to conduct video arraignments of jailed defendants. The use of Zoom technology eliminates the need to consider purchasing other video arraignment equipment.

- Planning & Zoning, Vice Mayor Byington

- 201 E. Schantz and 429 Ridgewood: Mr. Klopsch mentioned that staff is planning to have land use cases previously approved 201 E. Schantz and 429 Ridgewood presented again to the Planning Commission for reconsideration. 201 E. Schantz was previously approved for construction of a carriage house, and 429 Ridgewood for a lot split. Both approvals are over one year old and neither property owner appears to have interest in moving forward on the projects. Vice Mayor Byington suggested that letters be sent to the property owners before scheduling the Planning Commission hearings.
 - Oakwood Schools: Mr. Klopsch mentioned that the schools erected two large tents at the Junior High/High School property for outdoor education. One tent measures 40'x 40' and the other measures 30' x 60'. Mr. Klopsch approved this temporary use consistent with Council legislation adopted at the July 20 public meeting. These uses are necessary to address social distancing requirements associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Public Properties, Mr. Epley

- W. Schantz and Far Hills Property: Mr. Klopsch commented on a project under consideration to improve the city-owned land at the northwest corner of W. Schantz and Far Hills. City staff, along with Councilmember Rob Stephens, is in discussions with the Oakwood Rotary Club and Oakwood Investment Group (OIG) to explore a cooperative venture that would result in creation of a passive park at this location. It is anticipated that a large portion of the cost for this project can be paid through a Rotary grant and funding from OIG.
 - Gardner Pool: Mr. Klopsch reported that the pool will close on Labor Day, as in previous years. It was not possible to find sufficient staff to keep the pool open for two additional weeks as had been previously discussed.
 - Electric Charging Stations: Mr. Klopsch mentioned that the city is joining a group of other communities organized by MVRPC to apply for an Ohio EPA grant for installation of electric vehicle charging stations. Staff identified three sites in Oakwood. These include the city parking lot off Orchard Drive in the Far Hills Business District, the OCC parking lot, and the Wright Library parking area off Telford Avenue. If approved, it is anticipated that the grant will provide sufficient funds to construct all three charging stations. The city would pay the monthly electric costs, but most of the cost would be offset by user fees. The grant application is due on September 30, 2020.
 - Orchardly Park Fence: Mr. Klopsch reported that staff is planning to replace a very old chain link fence between Orchardly Park and the property at 339 Wonderly.

- Orchardly Park Operations: Mr. Klopsch noted that staff has communicated with several property owners around Orchardly Park regarding concerns about park operations. Staff is considering possible hours of operation for the basketball court to address neighborhood concerns, particularly regarding noise.
- Shafor Park Flag Pole: Mr. Klopsch shared that an Oakwood resident recently contacted him to discuss ideas for installing a new flag pole at Shafor Park. This would be an Eagle Scout project. Staff will meet with the Oakwood youth to discuss details.
- Public Utilities/Waterworks/Sewer, Mr. Epley
 - Public Works Storm Sewer: Mr. Klopsch explained that a storm sewer pipe at the Public Works Center at 210 Shafor is in need of replacement. The pipe serves as a discharge line for filter regeneration from the 210 Shafor Water Softening Plant. After approximately 30 years of use, the pipe has become blocked from scale deposits, primarily calcium. The estimated cost to replace this pipe is \$145,000. This is an unbudgeted expense. Mr. Klopsch will make a recommendation on whether to use dollars that would be available in the 2020 Capital Improvement Fund, or whether a supplemental appropriation should be made with the cost charged to the Water Fund.

Councilmember Epley departed the meeting at approximately 6:45 p.m.

Council then continued discussion on the work session agenda items.

- Public Utilities/Waterworks/Sewer, Mr. Epley
 - Gary Dursch Retirement: Mr. Klopsch noted that Water Plant Superintendent Gary Dursch has announced his retirement. He will depart on December 31, 2020. Mr. Klopsch is working with Personnel Director Jennifer Wilder and Public Works Director Doug Spitler to backfill the position.
- Streets & Alleys, Mr. Stephens
 - Street Lights: Mr. Klopsch shared that 100% of the city's streetlights are of the High Pressure Sodium (HPS) technology. More and more streetlights throughout the region are being replaced with LED technology. Staff is working with Miami Valley Lighting to develop a plan to address this technology migration. Given the residential nature of Oakwood, the softer light provided by HPS fixtures remains a preference. That said, it is anticipated that LED technology will continue to evolve such that soft light LED fixtures will be available in the future.
 - Legislation Regarding Debris and Site Visibility: Mr. Jacques discussed two pieces of legislation planned for the September 21 council meeting. One addresses the removal of debris from tree trimming operations conducted by utility companies or their contractors, and the other addresses tree and bush trimming on private property that is required as a safety measure in site visibility cases.
- REGIONAL AGENCIES
 - MVRPC, Vice Mayor Byington
 - August 6 Resolution: Mr. Klopsch commented on the August 6 MVRPC meeting where the Board of Directors tabled a resolution that would declare racism a public health emergency. By a 20-14 vote, the board members present voted to table the matter so that additional discussion can take place.

- MISCELLANEOUS

- Rotary Yard Sign Project: Mr. Klopsch explained that he recently met with members of the Oakwood Rotary Board of Directors, along with several new club members. The new member group had plans to conduct a yard sign project to thank first responders (police, fire and EMS) for their work during the pandemic. Mr. Klopsch expressed concern that installation of these signs may be viewed by some as opposition to the Black Lives Matter signs, and that this is unfortunate because the first responders deserve recognition. The Oakwood Rotary Club has put this project on hold.
- Ice Cream Social: Mr. Klopsch noted that the drive-thru Ice Cream Social is scheduled from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Sunday, August 30. Mr. Stephens and Mrs. Hilton mentioned that they are available to greet participants and serve ice cream.

There being no other business, at 7:37 p.m. Mayor Duncan adjourned the meeting.



Mayor

ATTEST:



Clerk of Council