

CITY OF OAKWOOD  
STATE OF OHIO  
FEBRUARY 1, 2021

The Council of the city of Oakwood, State of Ohio, met in a work session at 6:30 p.m. in the second floor training room of the city of Oakwood, 30 Park Avenue, Oakwood, Ohio, 45419. Council then met in a regular session at 7:30 p.m. in the council chambers of the city of Oakwood.

The Mayor, Mr. William Duncan, presided, and the Clerk of Council, Ms. Lori Stacel, recorded. Mayor Duncan opened the meeting by asking all present to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance.

City Council was present at City Hall while respecting social distancing guidelines. Four staff members were present and dispersed throughout the room. The meeting was streamed live from the Oakwood city website and telecast live on Cable Access Channel 6.

Upon call of the roll, the following members of Council responded to their names:

- MR. WILLIAM D. DUNCAN.....PRESENT
- MR. STEVEN BYINGTON .....PRESENT
- MR. ROBERT P. STEPHENS.....PRESENT
- MRS. ANNE S. HILTON.....PRESENT
- MR. CHRISTOPHER B. EPLEY .....PRESENT

Officers of the City present were the following:

- Mr. Norbert S. Klopsch, City Manager
- Mr. Robert F. Jacques, City Attorney
- Chief Alan Hill, Public Safety Director
- Ms. Lori Stacel, Clerk of Council

The following visitors registered:

- Mrs. Healy Jackson, 118 Lonsdale Avenue, Oakwood, OH 45419
- Mrs. Leigh Turben and Family
- Mr. Brian Barr, *Oakwood Register*

Mrs. Hilton advised Council she had read the meeting minutes of the January 4, 2021 regular session, work session and executive session, January 12, 2021 executive session and January 20, 2021 executive session. Mrs. Hilton reported she found the minutes correct and complete. Therefore, it was moved by Mrs. Hilton and seconded by Mr. Epley that the minutes of the sessions of Council aforementioned be approved as written and the reading thereof at this session be dispensed with. Upon a viva voce vote on the question of the motion, same passed unanimously and it was so ordered.

STATUS REPORTS

Mayor Duncan presented the following list of reappointments to various citizen committees:

Andy Aidt to the Planning Commission; Kevin Hill to the Board of Zoning Appeals; Dr. Elizabeth Maimon to the Oakwood Board of Health; John Jervis (Precinct A) Bill Frapwell (Precinct B), Yusaku Kawai (Precinct D), Ella Himes, Ellen Fodge, and Doug Kinsey (Precinct E), Chas Kidwell (Precinct F) and Pete Luther (Precinct G) to the Budget Review Committee; Arik Sherk to the Tax/Water & Sewer/Assembly Appeals Board; and William Stephens to the ADA Compliance Board.

It was moved by Mayor Duncan and seconded by Mr. Stephens that the aforementioned appointments be confirmed. Upon a viva voce vote on the question of the motion, same passed unanimously and it was so ordered.

Mayor Duncan noted that there are several other vacancies on the citizen committees. City Council and city staff are in the process of identifying citizen volunteers for appointment at the March 1 Council meeting.

VISITORS

Mayor Duncan shared that there are a few visitors in attendance in council chambers, members of Leigh Turben’s family. Also, given the status of COVID-19 in Montgomery County, visitors were invited to call in to the meeting telephonically to address City Council.

No visitors wishing to address City Council.



LEGISLATION

AN ORDINANCE  
 BY VICE MAYOR BYINGTON NO 4931  
 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION I, 2021 ORIGINAL  
 APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE NO. 4925, TO PROVIDE FOR THE  
 APPROPRIATION OF:

AN ADDITIONAL AMOUNT OF \$37,559.33 TO BE EXPENDED  
 FROM THE FIRE INSURANCE TRUST FUND AS A RELEASE OF  
 SECURITY FOR THE REPAIR OF RESIDENTIAL PREMISES  
 DAMAGED BY FIRE;

FOR THE CITY OF OAKWOOD, STATE OF OHIO, DURING THE  
 FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2021.

A copy of the ordinance, having been placed on the desks of each member of Council prior to introduction, was read by title.

Vice Mayor Byington explained that this is a supplemental appropriation ordinance that is necessary to address fire insurance proceeds that came into the City's possession after Council adopted the 2021 budget and appropriation ordinance.

As required by the State of Ohio, Oakwood established a Fire Insurance Trust Fund in 1981. The fund functions much like an escrow account except that it is non-interest-bearing. When a property in the city is damaged by fire, the property owner's insurance company sends a portion of the insurance proceeds to the City. The City holds it in the Fire Insurance Trust Fund until repairs are completed, and then it is turned over to the insured property owner, minus any costs the City might incur to secure or make the structure safe before repairs are completed.

In December, there was a fire at 502 Volusia Avenue that resulted in an insured loss, and the City recently received \$37,559.33 from the owner's insurance company. This supplemental appropriation will allow the City to disperse that money to the property owner after the repairs are completed and making any deductions required by law.

Thereupon, it was moved by Vice Mayor Byington and seconded by Mr. Stephens that the second reading be waived and that the ordinance be passed tonight.

Upon call of the roll on the question of the motion, the following vote was recorded:

MR. WILLIAM D. DUNCAN.....	YEA
MR. STEVEN BYINGTON .....	YEA
MR. ROBERT P. STEPHENS.....	YEA
MRS. ANNE HILTON .....	YEA
MR. CHRISTOPHER EPLEY.....	YEA

There being five (5) yea votes and no (0) nay votes thereon, said ordinance was declared duly passed and it was so ordered.

STAFF REPORT

Public Safety Department Presentation: Chief Alan Hill, Public Safety Director, referenced a PowerPoint presentation and updated Council on the following topics: Crime Statistics; EMS Trends; Fire Trends; Personnel Changes; In-service Training Program; the Citizen Police Academy; and Ohio Collaborative.

Oakwood experienced a 55% increase in reported larceny offenses. The 2020 clearance rate for these offenses was 52.7%, which is about 30% higher than the national average of 22%. The primary reason for the significant increase in larceny offenses was due to the reported theft of political signs. Overall, the Safety Department took approximately 35 theft of political yard sign reports, and the majority were cleared by five juveniles (ranging in age from 14 – 17 years old) being charged in multiple incidents.

In 2020, Oakwood experienced a significant increase in automobiles thefts. There were 13 total reported auto thefts and the normal yearly average is one to two. Of the 13 vehicles stolen, each vehicle was unlocked with keys inside the vehicle. These vehicles were easy targets that did not require the use of forced entry. All 13 vehicles have been recovered. In total, five cases have been cleared by either arrest, or another agency pursuing charges against subjects apprehended inside the vehicle, and crime lab results are pending in several others. Chief Hill encouraged residents to always lock their car doors.

Oakwood experienced a decrease in overall traffic enforcement activity in 2020. This was directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the limited enforcement activity that occurred during certain months of 2020.



Medic runs in 2020 were lower than the past five years, including Oakwood's mutual aid medic run requests to other jurisdictions. There were zero mutual aid medic responses to Oakwood from other jurisdictions in 2020.

The Oakwood Public Safety Department responded to two significant structure fires during 2020 that resulted in substantial damage/loss to both properties. These two incidents accounted for approximately 95% of the 2020 total fire loss. The Oakwood Public Safety Department continues to maintain an exceptional response time that is well below the national average.

Dispatcher Cherie Muceus retired on December 31, 2020 with over twenty years of service to the city of Oakwood. Dispatcher Muceus was the primary dayshift dispatcher, and also served as the LEADS Tac Operator. Dispatcher Sara Murphy was hired on November 30, 2020. Dispatcher Murphy arrived with a tremendous amount of dispatching experience working for the city of Middletown as a police, fire, and EMS dispatcher. Dispatcher Murphy has completed her field training program and is working on her own.

The Oakwood Public Safety Department has a comprehensive in-service training program covering all three disciplines. Over the past five years, the department has averaged 3,356 hours of in-service training annually. The training is done through online continuing education, classroom training and practical training exercises. The 2020 police training to note are: Racial Profiling for Traffic Stops and Field Contacts; Cultural Diversity; De-escalation for Law Enforcement; Psychological Compliance and De-escalation; and Journey Through Cultural Competency. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Oakwood Public Safety Department continued to maintain ongoing training.

The Oakwood Public Safety Department hosted its third Citizens Police Academy (CPA) in 2020. The 2020 program was slightly modified to reduce the number of student participants to allow for social distancing. The CPA is a great program for citizens, as well as the Safety Department. The CPA is free of charge, and the next academy is scheduled for the fall of 2021.

The Ohio Collaborative was established in December 2014 and was created to oversee implementation of recommendations for statewide policing standards in a variety of areas. Although voluntary, the Ohio Collaborative certification process provides for an independent review of a police agency to demonstrate transparency, modern methods and standards, and open critique and feedback from accessors. The Oakwood Public Safety Department continues to demonstrate compliance with all collaborative standards and most recently received certification for "Vehicular Pursuit" and "Safe Policing for Safe Communities."

Mayor Duncan reiterated the importance of locking your car doors any time you're away from your vehicle.

Mr. Stephens shared that he continues to receive compliments from Oakwood citizens about the Oakwood Public Safety Department. Mr. Stephens thanked Chief Hill for his leadership, and thanked all of the officers for their hard work.

Chief Hill closed his comments by sharing that members of the Oakwood Public Safety Department are receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

#### RESIGNATION AND APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL MEMBER

Mayor Duncan shared that on November 3, 2020, Councilmember Chris Epley was elected to a judicial position on the Second District Court of Appeals. Before he can begin that position, which starts on February 9, 2021, he must resign as a member of City Council.

Mr. Epley read the following:

*"On December 7, 2020, I submitted my letter of resignation with this evening, February 1, 2021, as my last meeting. I have enjoyed my six and a half years on Oakwood City Council. Thank you, Mayor Duncan, Vice Mayor Byington, and Council Members Rob Stephens and Anne Hilton for selecting and appointing me in 2014 to fill a vacant seat. And, thank you to the citizens of Oakwood for electing me again in 2015 and 2019.*

*I feel honored to have served during the longest council meeting in history and more recently, the shortest. I'd like to thank my wife Eileen and our kids Jack and Lily for supporting me throughout the years.*

*City Manager Norb Klopsch has been with the City since the early 90's and continues to lead this city with professionalism and patience – we are in good and steady hands under his stewardship. I know the city will continue to prosper with the addition of Leigh Turben to Oakwood City Council. Welcome, Leigh.*

*On Monday, February 8, I will be sworn in as Judge of the Second District Court of Appeals and my first day on the bench will be the next day, Tuesday, February 9.*

*Again, thank you for the opportunity to serve – it has been a rewarding experience."*



Councilmember Epley tendered his letter of resignation to Mayor Duncan.

Mayor Duncan reviewed the letter and announced that Mr. Epley has tendered his letter of resignation, to be effective immediately upon acceptance by Council. He then asked for a motion to accept Councilmember Epley's resignation.

It was moved by Vice Mayor Byington and seconded by Mr. Stephens that the resignation of Mr. Epley be confirmed. Upon a viva voce vote on the question of the motion, same passed unanimously and it was so ordered.

Mayor Duncan confirmed that the motion carries and Mr. Epley's resignation is complete. Oakwood City Council now has a Council vacancy.

Mr. Epley stepped down from the dais. He observed the remainder of the meeting from the audience.

Mayor Duncan continued. Under Section 2.04 of the Oakwood City Charter, Council is responsible for the selection and appointment of a person to fill the vacancy. Mr. Epley's term would have lasted through the end of 2023. But under the Oakwood City Charter, the appointment of his replacement is valid through the end of the current year only. The unexpired remainder of Mr. Epley's term – which is all of years 2022 and 2023 – will be on the ballot in November of 2021.

Anticipating this vacancy, Council made a public appeal for prospective candidates to submit applications during the month of December. This was announced through a December 3, 2020, press release. There were 14 applicants.

Minimum qualifications to be appointed to Council include being a registered voter and being an Oakwood resident for at least two years prior to being appointed. Beyond the minimum qualifications set forth in the City Charter, Council felt it was important to select a candidate with a demonstrated record of service to and involvement in our community.

Consistent with the Ohio Sunshine Law and Oakwood Administrative Code, Council met in executive session on January 12 and January 20 to review applications and letters of recommendation.

All of the City Council candidates were outstanding, but one candidate in particular stood out, based on demonstrated record of service to, and involvement in, the Oakwood community.

Mayor Duncan then asked if anyone on City Council would like to make a motion for a nomination.

Thereupon, it was moved by Vice Mayor Byington and seconded by Mrs. Hilton that Mrs. Leigh Turben be appointed to fill the council vacancy.

Upon call of the roll on the question of the motion, the following vote was recorded:

MR. WILLIAM D. DUNCAN.....	YEA
MR. STEVEN BYINGTON .....	YEA
MR. ROBERT P. STEPHENS.....	YEA
MRS. ANNE HILTON .....	YEA

There being four (4) yea votes and no (0) nay votes thereon, said appointment was declared duly passed and it was so ordered.

Mayor Duncan recognized and introduced Mrs. Turben's family in the audience. Thereafter, Law Director Rob Jacques administered the Oath of Office to newly appointed Councilmember Leigh Turben.

Mr. Klopsch removed Mr. Epley's name plate from the dais and replaced it with Mrs. Turben's name plate. Mrs. Turben then took her seat on the dais with her fellow council members.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS – Mr. Klopsch welcomed Mrs. Turben to City Council. He then reported on the following:

City staff continues to provide essential public services through the pandemic. The City has had several employees test positive for coronavirus, some with symptoms, some without. Fortunately, all employees have fully recovered and returned back to work.



The Oakwood Inclusion Coalition (OIC) had its first general membership meeting on Wednesday, January 27. About 100 people attended the virtual meeting via the Zoom platform. The OIC’s success will depend on being able to connect with a broad base of Oakwood citizens and bringing varied voices and opinions to the table to discuss difficult topics and issues. This is a meaningful organization for Oakwood to help address inclusion, diversity and equity. The OIC will meet on a quarterly basis. The next meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 28. Mr. Klopsch recognized Josh Green for volunteering his time to create the OIC website at [www.oakwoodic.org](http://www.oakwoodic.org).

The Public Works Department put in quite some overtime hours to address the snow and ice conditions over the past weekend. As a reminder, to the extent possible, vehicles should be removed off of the street when heavy snowfall is predicted. It is safer and easier to remove snow when the streets are clear of vehicles.

Mr. Klopsch closed his comments by sharing that he and Finance Director Cindy Stafford are finalizing the 2021 budget book. The document should be posted on the City website either later this week or early next week. The budget book contains a lot of valuable information about all matters related to city finances.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Leigh Turben thanked Council for the opportunity to serve on Oakwood City Council. She said that it is an honor and privilege to serve the Oakwood citizens.

Mr. Stephens shared that it was an honor to serve with Judge-elect Epley over 6 ½ years and thanked him for the professionalism and wisdom he brought to Council. Mr. Stephens welcomed Mrs. Turben to City Council and said that he looks forward to working with her.


Vice Mayor Byington thanked all of the citizens who applied for the vacant city council position. The applications demonstrated talent, skill, dedication and a love of the Oakwood community. Vice Mayor Byington commended Mrs. Healy Jackson, an applicant who was in the audience, for everything she does for the community. Vice Mayor Byington congratulated Mr. Epley for being elected as a judge and said that he believes Mr. Epley will do great things. Vice Mayor Byington closed his comments by welcoming Mrs. Turben and stating that he is looking forward to working with her.

Mr. Klopsch publicly recognized Mrs. Jackson for her contributions to the Oakwood Inclusion Coalition.

Mayor Duncan added that Mrs. Jackson also serves on the Oakwood Planning Commission.

Mayor Duncan opined that Mr. Epley will be a great judge because he has the ability to look at both sides of an issue logically and without bias or prejudice. Mayor Duncan stated that Mrs. Turben has been active with the Oakwood Historical Society and was a member of the 35-member Budget Review Committee. He said that he looks forward to working with her. Mayor Duncan shared that he officiated his first 2021 wedding ceremony. He noted that he does not charge for his services, but asks that a donation be made to the Oakwood Historical Society. Mayor Duncan closed his comments by saying that he looks forward to continuing to serve the city of Oakwood.

The public meeting concluded at 8:17 p.m.

  
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MAYOR

ATTEST:

  
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CLERK OF COUNCIL