

CITY OF OAKWOOD
STATE OF OHIO
MARCH 1, 2021

The Council of the city of Oakwood, State of Ohio, met in a work session and executive session for personnel matters 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
MRS. LEIGH TURBEN	PRESENT

Officers of the City present were the following:

Mr. Norbert S. Klopsch, City Manager
Mr. Robert F. Jacques, City Attorney
Mrs. Jennifer Wilder, Personnel and Properties Director
Ms. Lori Stacel, Clerk of Council

The following visitors registered:

Ms. Debra Edwards, Oakwood Historical Society
Mrs. Phyllis Miller, 109 Oakwood Avenue, Oakwood, OH 45409
Mr. Kent Miller, 109 Oakwood Avenue, Oakwood, OH 45409

Mrs. Hilton advised Council she had read the meeting minutes of the February 1, 2021 regular session and work session and the February 22, 2021 work session and executive session. Mrs. Hilton reported she found the minutes correct and complete. Therefore, it was moved by Mrs. Hilton and seconded by Mr. Stephens 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

2021 State of the City Address – Mayor Duncan gave the following address:

“Members of City Council, honored guests, City staff and citizens of Oakwood:

Despite a worldwide pandemic, government mandated shutdowns, school closings, social and political unrest, endless admonitions to wash your hands, wear masks and social distance, the city of Oakwood has adapted and persevered. Accordingly, and on behalf of Oakwood City Council, it is my honor to proclaim that Oakwood continues to be the premier residential community in the Dayton region. The State of our City is Oakwood Strong.

We have this distinction because of our beautiful neighborhoods, our excellent public schools and library, unmatched city services, including public safety, public works, recreation and leisure, and most of all because of our citizens.

Community Ambience

Community ambience is the character and atmosphere of a place. All our traditions and community events were affected by the pandemic. 2020 will forever be defined as before March 8, 2020 and after March 8, 2020. Cancelled or altered events included our new resident breakfast, Care Walk, That Day in May, the Tree City USA awards program, Oakwood Community Center programs, weddings and blanket concerts at Smith Gardens, Oakwood High School graduation, the ice cream social, the family fall festival and the holiday of lights. Restaurants and small businesses closed, and the Oakwood Life magazine that started in 2011 is no longer published. Even the Oakwood Register ceased publication for about 10 weeks.

Nonetheless, our city adapted and persevered. We displayed American flags on Far Hills Avenue as a sign of unity. City Council proclaimed the Oakwood Neighborly Salute where citizens would greet their neighbors each evening at 6:00pm during the shutdown. We adapted and created new traditions including a motorcade parade honoring the 2020 Oakwood High School senior class along with pictures of our graduating seniors on Shafor Blvd. We also organized drive by events for our popular ice cream social and the holiday of lights.

City Services

While I believe all business is an essential service, there is no question police, fire and EMS services are essential, as is our refuse program, water and sewer services and other governmental and infrastructure services. We determined immediately these services could not be delivered to our citizens remotely. We established procedures to continue to provide essential public services and to protect our outstanding city employees. We did this with limited visibility of the effects the pandemic would have on our finances. More about this later.

I am proud to report we met the challenge. On behalf of all citizens of Oakwood, we commend our outstanding City of Oakwood employees for their service to our community. To quote City Manager Norbert Klopsch in his year-end memorandum to our employees "We have dealt with the challenges of the year, each in our own way. Yet, we also rallied together, recognizing that the work we do is essential to the health, welfare and safety of the citizens and businesses we serve in our community; and that our work directly impacts the everyday lives of the people we serve."

We will issue our 2020 Annual Report to every household soon. This report provides an abundance of information about our city and the services we provide to our citizens. Accordingly, I will not repeat tonight the good news found in the report. Please read this interesting report at your leisure.

Neighborhoods

We have outstanding diversity in housing choices. Although most of our housing stock is over 75 years old, our homes and properties are better maintained than any other city around and our home values prove it. In 2020, 88% of Oakwood home sales were higher than the County appraised value. Oakwood property values increased by \$39 million dollars in the past year based on the 2020 Montgomery County reappraisal. This is not solely due to macro-economic conditions. It is because of our good governance, excellent public schools, responsive city services and community ambience.

Financial Stewardship

Under the leadership of City Council, our outstanding city staff and the advice and counsel of our 35-member citizen Budget Review Committee, we met the challenges to our financial stability. In April 2020 we were faced with a 10% to 20% revenue loss due to the pandemic. We immediately reduced capital and other expenditures until we had more visibility on our revenue streams. Thankfully, our income tax receipts rebounded in the second half of 2020. We were also thankful for revenue from federal CARES Act funding and Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation rebates. Accordingly, our revenues exceeded our expenses in 2020 and we anticipate this will also occur in 2021.

Well Governed, Well Managed and Financially Strong

As I begin my 18th year on Oakwood City Council and my 12th year as your Mayor, I am also honored to serve with my fellow members of Council. Steve Byington begins his 14th year as a member of Oakwood City Council and his 12th year as our Vice Mayor. Council members Rob Stephens and Anne Hilton begin their 12th year on City Council. Former Council member Chris Epley served seven years on City Council and we congratulate him on his election to the Second District Court of Appeals. He will be an outstanding judge. We welcome Leigh Turben to complete Mr. Epley's unexpired term. Council member Turben's previous Oakwood community service includes the Wright Memorial Library Advisory Council, the Oakwood Budget Review Committee and the Oakwood Historical Society Board of Directors. She will be an outstanding member of Oakwood City Council.

This Council, like those that preceded it, operates in a collegial style and everyone believes in doing the right thing for the citizens of Oakwood. We listen to one another, no one has hidden agendas, and we believe in community service.

When I joined City Council in 2003, it was my belief that Oakwood was well governed, well managed and financially strong. I still hold that belief and will continue this tradition.

With the help of Oakwood City Council, city staff and the citizens of Oakwood, we will continue to be well governed, well managed and financially strong.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve you."

Council Committee Assignments – Mayor Duncan explained that there are several committees of Council that consist of two members that meet as needed to discuss various topics. Mayor Duncan indicated that Council decided to leave the majority of the committee assignments the same as last year, with the exception of Mrs. Turben continuing with Mr. Epley's previously assigned committees. Also, Mrs. Turben is replacing Mrs. Hilton on the Historical Society, and Mrs. Turben is replacing Mayor Duncan as the alternate on the First Suburbs Consortium. The committee assignments are as follows:

2021 COUNCIL COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

William Duncan, Mayor	Steve Byington, Vice Mayor
Court Liaison	Anne Hilton, Chair Leigh Turben
Finance	Steve Byington, Chair William Duncan
Law and Minutes	Anne Hilton, Chair Steve Byington
Planning and Zoning	Steve Byington, Chair Leigh Turben
Public Properties	Leigh Turben, Chair Rob Stephens
Public Utilities/Waterworks/Sewer	Leigh Turben, Chair Rob Stephens
Safety and Traffic	Rob Stephens, Chair Anne Hilton
Streets and Alleys	Rob Stephens, Chair Anne Hilton
Community Relations/Promotion & Appointments	William Duncan, Chair Steve Byington

Regional Agencies - Council Representation

Miami Valley Communications Council	Rob Stephens Leigh Turben, Alternate
Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission and Transportation Committee	Steve Byington William Duncan, Alternate
EMA Regional Advisory Council	William Duncan Norbert Klopsch, Alternate
First Suburbs Consortium	Steve Byington Norbert Klopsch Leigh Turben, Alternate
South Suburban Coalition	Alan Hill William Duncan, Alternate

Boards, Commissions and Citizen Ad Hoc Committees

Planning Commission	Steve Byington
Beautification Committee	Rob Stephens
Sister City	Anne Hilton
Historical Society	Leigh Turben

Note: The Mayor also serves as ex-officio member of each Council committee.

It was moved by Vice Mayor Byington and seconded by Mrs. Hilton 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.

Citizen Committee Appointments – Mayor Duncan presented the following list of reappointments and appointments to various citizen committees:

The reappointments of Katy Dalrymple to the Beautification Committee; Kip Bohachek (B), Larry Lamb (E) and Susan Herman (E) to the Property Maintenance Board; and the appointment of Erika Endsley to the Budget Review Committee (C).

It was moved by Vice Mayor Byington 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 April 5 Council meeting.

VISITORS

Historic Marker Project – Debra Edwards, Oakwood Historical Society – Debra Edwards, preservation chair of the Oakwood Historical Society, referenced a PowerPoint presentation and briefed Council on the Historic Marker Project.

The goal of the Historic Marker Project is to share and make more widely accessible to the public, Oakwood's rich and interesting history, and to help preserve this history for current and future generations. The first two historic markers are recommended for placement at the Runnymede Playhouse and the Town of Oakwood.

The Runnymede Playhouse was originally part of the Talbott family estate and was used as an entertainment center for the Oakwood community. During World War II, the playhouse was used to produce the radioactive element Polonium that was a necessary part in the atomic bomb. The installation of a boulder marker is recommended in the City right-of-way where the original playhouse was located.

The Town of Oakwood was established by four men in 1872. Ms. Edwards displayed a historical map from 1875 showing the original plat for the Town of Oakwood. She noted that it would be great to install a historic marker in early 2022 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the town's first platting.

Ms. Edwards shared that the Historic Marker Project is a long-term endeavor that is entirely dependent on private donations. The project proposes to install one historic marker per year. Other Oakwood sites for historic marker consideration are: The Kramer Pleasure Gardens, Four Mile Tavern, First School, First Library, Schantz Grove/Lookout Tower, The Woodlands Indian Mound, Schantz Historic District, Long-Romsper Homestead and Hawthorn Hill.

The state of Ohio has a historic marker program consisting of 150 + historic markers in the Greater Dayton area. There are currently two sites in Oakwood that would qualify for a marker through the State of Ohio Marker Program.

The proposed markers would be designed with similar bronze plaques. The design includes an oakleaf pattern border, the city of Oakwood logo and the Oakwood Historical Society logo. Ms. Edwards displayed an image of a proposed marker that was designed by Mr. Kent and Mrs. Phyllis Miller.

The markers will have different display types depending on the marker location. Ms. Edwards displayed images of the different types of markers such as a boulder marker, free-standing marker, sidewalk embedded marker, and a wall-mounted marker.

Ms. Edwards commented that the project has already received a sizable donation and asked for the City's assistance to help make the project a success.

Mr. Stephens asked if the plaques would be different sizes.

Ms. Edwards answered yes. She explained that each plaque would have different dimensions, values and price points. The project team is gathering information, including quotes, and looking into simplifying the design to help reduce the costs. The proposed marker plaque for the Runnymede Playhouse has been quoted at around \$3,000.

Mr. Stephens asked about the expected timeline to install markers for the list of recommended locations.

Ms. Edward shared that the marker locations would be considered on a year-to-year basis.

Mrs. Hilton asked if Dayton History has been involved with this project.

Ms. Edwards confirmed that Dayton History is involved in the project and they will continue to work with them moving forward.

Mrs. Turben thanked Ms. Edwards for presenting the Historic Marker Project information. She recognized Ms. Edwards for her initiative and for bringing forward the project concept. Mrs. Turben also thanked Mr. and Mrs. Miller for their creative work on the plaques.

Mayor Duncan asked where Four Mile Tavern was located.

Ms. Edwards shared that it was located near Peach Orchard and Far Hills, close to where Flyboys is today. There is a good picture of the Four Mile Tavern in the *Oakwood: The Far Hills* publication.

There were no other visitors wishing to address City Council.

LEGISLATION

AN ORDINANCE
BY VICE MAYOR BYINGTON NO 4932
AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION I, 2021 ORIGINAL
APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE NO. 4925, AND ANY EXISTING
SUPPLEMENTS THERETO, TO PROVIDE FOR THE
APPROPRIATION OF:

AN ADDITIONAL AMOUNT OF \$225,000.00 TO BE EXPENDED
FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND IN CONNECTION
WITH THE 2021 ASPHALT PAVEMENT PROGRAM;

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 to increase the funding available for this year’s Asphalt Pavement Program.

The City includes funding in the budget every year for a variety of capital improvement projects, including maintenance and repair of our streets. Last year was a bit different due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When the budgetary process was worked through last year for 2021, Oakwood, like many cities, anticipated an unknown drop in year-end tax revenue due to the effects of the pandemic. Accordingly, the decision was made to scale back the scope of several capital improvement projects scheduled for 2021.

As it turns out, the City ended 2020 in better financial condition than expected. Quarterly estimates paid in 2020 for 2021 indicate that tax revenues have not been impacted to the degree that was projected. There may still be a drop as 2020 tax returns start coming in, but not as severely as anticipated.

As a result, the City Manager has recommended changing the scope of the 2021 Asphalt Pavement Program back to what was originally planned before the downscaling of capital improvement projects. This will allow the City to make all the necessary and appropriate repairs in timely fashion.

This year’s budget appropriation included \$200,000.00 for the 2021 Asphalt Pavement Program. This supplemental appropriation will make an additional \$225,000.00 available, for a total project cost of \$450,000.00 allowing us to restore the original scope of the 2021 Asphalt Pavement Program.

Thereupon, it was moved by Vice Mayor Byington and seconded by Mrs. Hilton 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
- MRS. LEIGH TURBEN.....YEA

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

A RESOLUTION

BY MR. STEPHENS

NO 1881

A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE NECESSITY OF IMPROVING CERTAIN STREETS BETWEEN CERTAIN TERMINI IN THE CITY OF OAKWOOD, OHIO, BY LIGHTING THE SAME WITH ELECTRICITY.

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

Mr. Stephens explained that this is an annual resolution that is the first step of Oakwood's 2022 street lighting program.

Oakwood is required by law to pass several pieces of legislation to provide street lighting each year. The first is this resolution, declaring the necessity of street lighting throughout the city. Mr. Stephens shared that he will also be introducing as a first reading tonight the second piece, the "Ordinance to Proceed" for the project, but City Council will not vote on that ordinance until the April meeting. The third piece of legislation, an ordinance to levy assessments for certain street light costs, will be introduced as a first reading at our April meeting, followed by a final assessment ordinance to be introduced in July.

Thereupon, it was moved by Mr. Stephens and seconded by Vice Mayor Byington that the resolution be passed.

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
MRS. LEIGH TURBEN	YEA

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

AN ORDINANCE

BY MR. STEPHENS

NO 4933

DETERMINING TO PROCEED WITH THE IMPROVEMENT OF CERTAIN STREETS BETWEEN CERTAIN TERMINI IN THE CITY OF OAKWOOD, OHIO, BY LIGHTING THE SAME WITH ELECTRICITY.

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

Mr. Stephens explained that this is an annual ordinance that is the second step of the 2022 street lighting program. It is the ordinance that authorizes the City to proceed with the project.

This was a first reading of the ordinance, so Mr. Stephens made no motion.

AN ORDINANCE

BY MR. STEPHENS

NO 4934

AN ORDINANCE TO LEVY SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OR RECONSTRUCTION OF SIDEWALKS AND APPURTENANCES THERETO IN THE CITY OF OAKWOOD, OHIO.

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

Mr. Stephens explained that this ordinance is the third piece of legislation for last year's Sidewalk Repair Project authorizing the assessment of the sidewalk repair costs that have not already been paid directly by affected homeowners.

This was a first reading of the ordinance, so Mr. Stephens made no motion.

STAFF REPORT

Personnel & Properties Report: Mrs. Jennifer Wilder, Personnel & Properties Director, referenced a PowerPoint presentation and updated Council on the following topics: zoning and property maintenance, the pre-sale/rental inspection program, the Vectren gas line improvement project, development/construction updates, business updates, personnel updates and an update on the City website.

The Zoning Department exists to protect Oakwood residents. By enforcing the Zoning and Property Maintenance Codes of the city of Oakwood, the City is working to protect property values. This is done by reviewing & analyzing land use, zoning proposals, requests, and administering permits for improvements made to properties. The Zoning Department's number one goal is compliance with the Council-approved Oakwood Zoning Code and Oakwood Property Maintenance Code.

Mrs. Wilder encouraged residents to contact the Zoning Department before taking any steps on property improvement projects. She explained that Mr. Ethan Kroger, the code enforcement officer, will meet residents at their property and walk them through the permitting process so that residents have a clear understanding of the requirements.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the Oakwood Zoning Department stayed busy and issued 351 permits in 2020. This work represents over \$14 million dollars being reinvested into the community. \$10 million of those investments are related to the Oakwood School updates at the Jr/Sr High School and Smith School.

The Zoning Department also administers a Pre-sale and Rental Inspection Program. This program was established in 1968 to ensure that properties are code-compliant at the time of sale, or brought into compliance shortly thereafter. The COVID-19 pandemic did not slow down the real estate market in Oakwood. Pre-Sale and rental inspections increased to 458 in 2020. During the March – June timeframe, inspections consisted only of outside evaluations and city staff returned to completing full interior inspections in July. This program is especially important to a community like Oakwood with an aging housing stock, further protecting property values by ensuring homes are maintained throughout the transfer of property. Inspections are scheduled once a completed application is received. An inspector will meet the property owner or agent and perform a brief inspection of the interior and exterior of the property for compliance with the building, zoning, and property maintenance codes. This includes confirming placement of smoke detectors, hand rails, and other safety requirements, as well as general property maintenance concerns. Also the inspector will verify that HVAC equipment has been properly inspected through the city of Kettering's building department. Once an inspection is complete, and any violations are remedied, an occupancy certificate is generated which is necessary for closing on the property.

In addition to ongoing property maintenance efforts, the Zoning Department annually conducts a city-wide automobile tour to identify violations of the Oakwood Property Maintenance Code. Property owners are sent a letter advising them of the violation(s) and establishing a date to complete the repair(s). During the COVID-19 pandemic, only significant property maintenance violations were addressed through normal code enforcement procedures. A city-wide property maintenance review will be conducted in the spring of 2021. In 2020, code enforcement resources were instead directed toward assisting businesses with recovery from government mandated shutdowns and social distancing requirements due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the City's Law Director suspended prosecution of temporary sign code violations in Oakwood's business zoning districts, thereby allowing businesses one extra sign to communicate their open status to customers and other passers-by. Additionally, the City created a temporary outdoor seating permit process to help restaurants with limited indoor seating options due to social distancing requirements. This spring, city staff will return to their annual city-wide automobile tour to identify violations of the Oakwood Property Maintenance Code. Property owners are then sent a letter advising them of the violation(s) and establishing a date to complete the repair(s).

Between April and October this year, Vectren will replace underground gas distribution pipes and home service lines in specific areas that were identified in two project areas. Project Area A includes work on Ridgeway Road from Park Road to the southern border; Fairforest Circle; Oak Knoll from Ridgeway west to Deep Hollow Lane; and Deep Hollow Lane. Project Area B includes Triangle and Orchard; Shroyer between Triangle and Orchard; and also includes work on the alleys in the areas. In all work areas, Vectren is installing new polyethylene pipes in place of old steel and cast iron pipes and is moving indoor gas meters to outside wall locations. This is the continuation of a multi-year Vectren infrastructure replacement project in Oakwood. Oakwood residents personally affected by the work will receive detailed information from Vectren. Vectren pipeline project maps are available on the City website or on Vectren's website.

Element Oakwood, which was approved by Oakwood City Council in 2017, is located at 310 Old River Trail, across from the Old River Sports Complex. The 84-unit condominium community features a variety of sizes ranging from one bedroom to two bedrooms with a den. Leasing is currently underway in the west building and move-ins began in January 2020. The construction is expected to be complete this summer.

Pointe Oakwood construction began in 2009. There is currently one house under construction, and only two lots remain undeveloped.

Since March of 2020, the following businesses have opened their doors in Oakwood: The Spicy Olive, located at 2510 Far Hills Avenue; Studio 77 Home Design, 2405 Far Hills Avenue; Indie West Studios at 2400 Far Hills Avenue; and OI Medical Aesthetics, 2523 Far Hills Avenue.

The City continuously monitored and responded to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. City staff found ways to continue to provide the services upon which Oakwood residents rely. The City provides essential services such as water, law enforcement, safety services and emergency medical treatment. The City also provides quality of life services like trash collection, street maintenance, outdoor recreation, and zoning services, all of which require in-person attendance.

As the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance and health department directives evolved, city staff found ways to continue operations while keeping staff and residents safe. City staff reacted quickly and put temporary leave policies in place so that employees could take care of themselves and their family members if affected by COVID-19. While city facilities were closed to the public during the shutdown period of the COVID-19 pandemic, city staff found ways to meet Oakwood resident's needs.

City staff also made physical changes to city facilities. A new drop box was added to the lobby of the city/public safety building so residents could continue to drop off hard copy materials to staff. During the shutdown, barriers were installed at all of the public facing entry desks to protect both the staff and the residents, so city facilities could reopen when allowed. Cleaning schedules, were changed, and employees started sanitizing frequently used areas. Smaller meeting areas were closed and larger areas were rearranged to accommodate social distancing. Inspection procedures were adjusted as needed, and virtual meetings were conducted as much as possible.

City staff adjusted inspection procedures as needed, and conducted phone or virtual meetings as much as possible. All Oakwood employees have continued to find ways to do their job, and serve the Oakwood community. The staff at the Oakwood Community Center worked and planned for weeks to find a way to make the 2020 pool season happen.

Mrs. Wilder then reviewed the 2019/2020 employee retirements and hires. Refuse Foreman Ken Perkins retired with 30 years of service. Public Safety Lieutenant Jeff Yount, Sr. retired with 31 years of service. Public Works Motor Equipment Operator Shawn Huffman retired after 31 years of service. Water Plant Superintendent Gary Dursch retired after 14 years of service to Oakwood, and 30 years of prior service in other communities. Public Safety Dispatcher Cherie Muceus retired after 22 years of service. New hires include: General Service Worker Daryn Weatherspoon; General Service Worker Jonathan Wissinger; Public Safety Dispatcher Sara Stimson-Murphy; Water Plant Technician Chris Branscomb; and General Service Worker Tristen Hayslett.

The City is currently recruiting for seasonal positions in the following areas: Day Camp Counselors, Boulevard and Smith Gardens Maintenance; Public Works Laborers; and Pool Concessions and Lifeguards.

Clerk of Council Lori Stacel joined Mrs. Wilder to provide an update on the City website.

Mrs. Wilder reported that in April of 2019, city staff partnered with ProudCity to do a complete overhaul of the Oakwood city website, the design of which was almost 20 years old.

Mrs. Wilder and Ms. Stacel created the website in just 90 days, and the new website was released to the public in June of 2019. During the website creation, Ms. Stacel and Mrs. Wilder partnered with city department heads to create a website that provides a better way for residents, businesses and visitors to access city news, announcements, and information online in a manner that was not available on the old website.

Mrs. Wilder commented that it is hard to believe that creation of the new website started two years ago. It is amazing to see how much the content continues to grow and evolve daily.

Ms. Stacel provided an overview of the content and features available on the City website. The website can be accessed by visiting www.oakwoodohio.gov. The website offers many great features including a powerful search engine available on each page; an alert bar that can be displayed on each page of the website to relay important information; easy access to frequently asked questions; and issue reporting.

The main landing page provides a snapshot of news and announcements, and upcoming meetings and events. The community page is designed to provide information about Oakwood for visitors, those looking to move to Oakwood, or looking for employment within Oakwood. The department pages provide all of the details regarding resident services. Contact information is also available for elected officials, city staff and all city departments.

Mrs. Wilder shared that website usage reports are pulled on a weekly basis to help determine the content that is featured on the City website. Over the past year, 86,000 users have visited the City website and there have been 124,000 browsing sessions. Over the past month, the website usage reports show that the most common inquiries are "How do I apply for a zoning permit?" and "How do I pay my property taxes?" The most popular website searches include: OCC information, income tax information, employment application and recruitment announcements, and trash & recycling information.

ProudCity's website and social media recently featured the city of Oakwood and shared the experiences and the journey that brought about Oakwood's new website, designed to better serve Oakwood residents.

Mrs. Hilton asked for additional information on the frequently asked questions.

Ms. Stacel explained that the frequently asked questions on the website are broken down into several main categories. Each category includes a list of the most common questions and answers. The questions and answers are reviewed and additional questions are added based on the website usage reports, current events, and from direct feedback or requests.

Mayor Duncan thanked Mrs. Wilder and Ms. Stacel for their efforts in updating and improving the City website.

Mrs. Hilton asked how long the temporary outdoor seating permit process will last.

Mrs. Wilder shared that the outdoor seating permit process will end when the emergency status of the COVID-19 pandemic ends.

Mrs. Hilton asked how outdoor seating permit requests will be handled after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mrs. Wilder explained that there are some places, such as Central Perc, that do not need an outdoor seating permit due to their location and the space needed. The temporary permitting process was created for larger areas that used parking lots or tents for seating. If outdoor seating continues to be requested beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, the Oakwood Zoning Code may need to be updated to address the use of outdoor seating.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS – Mr. Klopsch began by thanking City Council for their support in changing the scope of the 2021 Asphalt Pavement Program back to what was originally planned before the downscaling of the project due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Klopsch then provided an update on the following items:

The 2021 Asphalt Pavement Program bid opening was on February 25. There were two bids received. The project will be awarded to JR Jurgensen. The work will likely take place between June and August.

Mr. Klopsch recognized the Public Works Department for dedicating countless hours and working continuously to address the recent snow and ice events. The Public Works Department continues to review their snow and ice protocols to find ways to provide premier services to the community.

City staff is working to finalize the 2020 Annual Report. The report will be delivered to every property owner and business in Oakwood at the end of March or at the beginning of April.

The Leisure Services Department is preparing the city parks so they are ready to open in April. They are also planning for the upcoming summer swim season at Gardner Pool. Pool protocols

will be similar to last year. City staff will continue to evaluate the pool protocols and make adjustments as needed. Mr. Klopsch commended Leisure Services Director Carol Collins and Program Supervisor Karen Earley for working so hard to open Gardner Pool last year.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Leigh Turben thanked everyone for such a warm welcome to City Council. She thanked Mr. Klopsch and Ms. Stacel for coordinating orientations, tours and sharing information to help her get acclimated to being a member of City Council.

Mayor Duncan reported that the Oakwood Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) was created 45 years ago. The CIC has been inactive with zero activity since it was created. The Ohio Auditor of State recently audited the CIC, and in the course of their review, determined that the CIC did not formally adopt its own public records policy. City staff disputed this conclusion because the Oakwood CIC is comprised of the same leadership as the City and that the City's fully compliant public records policy also applies to the CIC. The Ohio Auditor's concluded that this was a "significant compliance or accounting issue." Mayor Duncan stated that it is impossible for an inactive 45-year-old organization to have anything significant. Mayor Duncan asked the Auditor's to review their conclusion. He has not received a response. Mayor Duncan suggested that the Ohio Auditor of State concentrate their efforts to correct the massive unemployment claims fraud. Mayor Duncan closed his comment by sharing that he received the first COVID-19 vaccine shot this past Saturday. He encouraged people to get a vaccine if they are eligible.

The public meeting concluded at 8:31 p.m.



MAYOR

ATTEST:



CLERK OF COUNCIL