

FINDLAY CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR SESSION

JULY 2, 2024

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

ROLL CALL of 2024-2025 Councilmembers

PRESENT: Bauman, DeArment, Frische, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Warnecke, Wobser

ABSENT: none

President of Council Harrington opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence. Filed.

ACCEPTANCE/CHANGES TO PREVIOUS CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES:

Councilman Palmer moved to accept the June 18, 2024 Regular Session City Council meeting minutes, seconded by Councilman Bauman. All were in favor. Filed.

ADD-ON/REPLACEMENT/REMOVAL FROM THE AGENDA:

Councilman Russel moved to add-on the following on tonight's agenda, seconded by Councilman Hellmann. All were in favor. Filed.

ADD-ONS:

1. Letter from City Engineer Kalb – Traffic Utility Truck and Equipment (**REPORTS OF MUNICIPAL OFFICERS AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS** section).
2. Letter from City Engineer Kalb – WPC Sanitary Sewer Pump Repairs (**REPORTS OF MUNICIPAL OFFICERS AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS** section).
3. Ordinance No. 2024-082 – Traffic Utility Truck and Equipment (**LEGISLATION** section).
4. Ordinance No. 2024-083 – WPC Sanitary Sewer Pump Repairs (**LEGISLATION** section).

PROCLAMATIONS: none

RECOGNITION/RETIREMENT RESOLUTIONS: none

PETITIONS: none

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

President of Council Harrington pointed out that there are two (2) individuals wishing to speak towards agenda items this evening:

1. Kim Meador - Ordinance No. 2024-079 (*purchase of Findlay City Schools property on Foraker Avenue*) – (**LEGISLATION** portion of tonight's meeting)
2. Melanie Delgado – A.F.T.E.R. Hours Task Force reopen letter (**NEW BUSINESS** portion of tonight's meeting)

President of Council Harrington will call them up to speak when that agenda item is addressed. Filed.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

email from Don Bruce, President/CEO of Findlay-Hancock County Alliance – downtown park. Filed.

REPORTS OF MUNICIPAL OFFICERS AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS:

Service-Safety Director Martin – moratorium on recreational marijuana

The City of Findlay Administration is requesting a 12-month moratorium on the cultivation, processing, and dispensing of recreational marijuana. During this past November 7, 2023 election, recreational marijuana was approved by the voters of Ohio. At this time, the State of Ohio is working through the rules and regulations related to recreational marijuana. The purpose of this moratorium is to allow time for the City to consider regulations in regard to the cultivation, processing, and dispensing of recreational marijuana. Service-Safety Director Martin anticipates that the City of Findlay will have discussions on this topic in the fall of 2024 and that it is requested that legislation be adopted on an emergency to enact a moratorium in order for the City of Findlay to consider the ramifications of recreational marijuana and potential zoning changes that may be considered. This is the same process the City of Findlay followed when they addressed the State passing legislation around medical marijuana. Ordinance No. 2024-081 was created.

discussion:

Councilwoman Frische moved to read the letter in its entirety, seconded by Councilman Wobser. Ayes: 7. Nays: 3. The Council Clerk read the letter in its entirety.

Councilman Russel asked Council if this is something that would be appropriate for the PLANNING & ZONING COMMITTEE to address in their July meeting. Councilman Bauman, Chair of the PLANNING & ZONING COMMITTEE, replied that he would be open to that because what the Administration is proposing of where dispensaries can cannot be allowed, etc. would involve PLANNING & ZONING. Mayor Muryn replied that is correct, but that the Administration does not have enough from the State of Ohio. Per the law, they have to give clear guidance to the Department of Commerce in September which is when the City of Findlay will be able to start to issue licensing and are still up in the air on what the regulations are, what ability the legislators may give local communities of what to put in place, so she would like that conversation to happen during a PLANNING & ZONING COMMITTEE meeting, but that there will probably not be more information available yet this month. Additional information will most likely be available in August or September. Originally, the City of Findlay thought this was covered with the existing moratorium, but that was not the case and want to put protections in place as the City has already begun to get phone calls from individuals and organizations interested in establishing dispensaries. It is the decision of Council if the City of Findlay is going to allow that.

President of Council Harrington asked Councilman Russel if he wants to make a motion to have this referred to the PLANNING & ZONING COMMITTEE. Councilman Russel replied no. Filed.

Board of Zoning Appeals minutes – May 9, 2024. Filed.

President of City Council Harrington – Local Board of Tax Review appointment

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 718.11 (A)(2)(HB5), the legislative authority of any municipal corporation that imposes tax on income shall maintain a local Board of Tax Review of which two (2) members shall be appointed by the legislative authority of that municipal corporation. President of City Council Harrington recommends that Tim Gephart be appointed to continue serving on this committee effective immediately through December 31, 2025. Mr. Gephart is co-owner of Knueven Schroeder & Company, is a Certified Public Accountant, and member of the Ohio Society of CPAs and the American Institute of CPAs, and has indicated a willingness to serve in this capacity. This appointment requires Council's confirmation.

discussion:

Councilman Wobser moved to accept this appointment, seconded by Councilwoman Warnecke.

discussion:

City Auditor Staschiak pointed out that while wrapping up the City’s audit and while reading this today, he thinks it would be good if Council requested at least one a year, from an ordained committee board that are in the ordinances, that those committees report to Council that they had a meeting which makes them in compliance with the City’s ordinances. Or a final report at the end of the year that states they complied with all of the ordinances the City has. It was learned this year that the City was not one hundred percent (100%) in compliance with the Records Commission’s meetings because of missing one meeting. Instead of having two (2) meetings a year, only one meeting was held which caused him to think how many elected officials currently serving have perused through the City’s ordinances to know what some of those different boards are and what the requirements are for their meeting schedules and reporting. The State Auditor does look at it and the City Auditor’s Office received a management comment on it this year in the City’s audit. There would be some value in making sure individuals are aware that they should provide to Council at least one report a year as the boards and positions are filled.

Councilman DeArment asked how many boards there are. City Auditor Staschiak replied several (i.e. Park and Recreation Board, Airport Board, Local Board of Tax Review, etc.).

Mayor Muryn added that many of the boards/committees/commissions only meet when necessary. For example, the Local Board of Tax Review only meets when an appeal comes up, so she would not recommend making it a requirement that they have to provide a report because they may not necessarily meet. She can provide a list of boards to Council. She predicts there are approximately fifteen (15) or sixteen (16) that appointments are made to.

All were in favor of this appointment. Filed.

City Engineer Kalb – Traffic Department utility truck and equipment

As discussed in the Capital Improvement Plan meetings, the City of Findlay Traffic Department is looking to add a utility pickup truck to the fleet. This new truck will be used for daily operations that do not require aerial work. At this time, the Traffic Department uses the large bucket truck for daily repairs and call outs. This new utility truck will greatly reduce the wear and tear on the large bucket truck. The City of Findlay Traffic Department has found a vehicle that fits the department’s needs. Legislation authorizing the Mayor, Service-Safety Director, and/or City Engineer to enter into contracts and to appropriate and transfer funds so that the they may purchase this new pickup truck. Ordinance No. 2024-082 was created.

FROM: Traffic and Signal Lights #22043200-other	\$ 70,000.00
TO: Traffic Utility Truck and Equipment	\$ 70,000.00

Filed.

City Engineer Kalb – WPC sanitary sewer pump repairs

The City of Findlay Water Pollution Center has been working with Buckeye Pumps to repair two (2) pumps within the sanitary sewer system. One pump that is being repaired is from the Bright Road pump station and the second pump is a Return Activated Sludge (RAS) pump. There normally are four (4) pumps ready for use at the Bright Road pump station, but due to repairs on a number of pumps, that location is down to only two (2) pumps, so the City of Findlay is working with Buckeye Pumps to ensure that the pumps are repaired in a timely manner.

Since these pumps are replacements/repairs of the existing system, it is desired to utilize the restricted funds from the Saratoga Interceptor Restricted Account to cover the repair cost from Buckeye Pumps. Due to the repair cost being close to the bidding threshold, it is desired to waive the formal bid process so that the City of Findlay can utilize Buckeye Pumps if additional repairs are needed. Legislation authorizing the Mayor, Service-Safety Director and/or City Engineer to waive all formal advertising and bidding requirements and enter into contracts, as well as appropriate funds. Ordinance No. 2024-083 was created.

FROM: Sewer Fund – Saratoga Interceptor Restricted Account	\$ 70,000.00
TO: Water Pollution Control #25061000-other	\$ 70,000.00

Filed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

The **WATER AND SEWER COMMITTEE** met on June 12, 2024 to discuss extending sanitary sewer to properties within the City that are on a septic system.

We recommend the Administration prepare a detailed analysis of properties that do not have sanitary sewer connections.

Councilman Palmer moved to accept the committee report, seconded by Councilman Bauman. All were in favor. The committee report is accepted. Filed.

LEGISLATION:

RESOLUTIONS:

RESOLUTION NO. 021-2024 (no PO) **requires one (1) reading** *first reading - adopted*

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE EXPENDITURES MADE BY THE AUDITORS OFFICE ON THE ATTACHED LIST OF VOUCHERS WHICH EITHER EXCEED THE PURCHASE ORDER OR WERE INCURRED WITHOUT A PURCHASE ORDER EXCEEDING THE STATUTORY LIMIT OF THREE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$3000.00) ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH OHIO REVISED CODE 5705.41(D).

Councilman Wobser moved to adopt the Resolution, seconded by Councilman Palmer.

discussion:

Councilwoman Frische asked if the City is anywhere close to closing the George Martens cases. Law Director Rasmussen replied that the City received a twelve thousand dollar (\$12,000) bill from Spengler Nathanson. Councilwoman Frische asked if the City is close to settling all of Mr. Martens' cases. Law Director Rasmussen replied that he cannot say that the City will not be sued again.

Mayor Muryn added that Council has been updated on Mr. Martens' cases, but that open litigation cannot be discussed in a public setting. The City is working to mitigate the case as soon as possible, but that it is a contentious situation. Nothing further can be shared in a public setting beyond that. Council should have an update from outside counsel in the near future on some of the efforts they have taken to mitigate ongoing expenses.

Ayes: Bauman, DeArment, Frische, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Warnecke, Wobser. The Resolution was declared adopted and is recorded in Resolution Volume XXXV, and is hereby made a part of the record.

ORDINANCES:

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-078 requires three (3) readings

second reading - adopted

(FDY Airport Masterplan Advertisement)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR AND/OR CITY ENGINEER OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO, TO ADVERTISE FOR STATEMENTS OF QUALIFICATIONS AND ENTER INTO CONTRACTS FOR MASTERPLAN ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE FDY AIRPORT MASTERPLAN PROJECT NO. 35243500, APPROPRIATING AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS THERETO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Councilman Russel moved to suspend statutory rules and give the Ordinance its third reading, seconded by Councilman Bauman. Ayes: DeArment, Frische, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Warnecke, Wobser, Bauman. The Ordinance received its third reading. Councilman Palmer moved adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Bauman. Ayes: Frische, Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Warnecke, Wobser, Bauman, DeArment. The Ordinance was declared adopted and is recorded in Ordinance Volume XXIII, Page 2024-078 and is hereby made a part of the record.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-079 requires three (3) readings

second reading

(purchase of Findlay City Schools property on Foraker Avenue)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH FINDLAY CITY SCHOOLS FOR THE ACQUISITION OF THE PARK PROPERTY LOCATED ON FORAKER AVENUE, FINDLAY, OHIO, PARCEL NO. 600001008634 CURRENTLY OWNED BY FINDLAY CITY SCHOOLS.

discussion:

Kim Meador - Ordinance No. 2024-079 *(purchase of Findlay City Schools property on Foraker Avenue)*

Ms. Meador thanked Council for the proposed purchase of the Foraker Street Park from Findlay City Schools. It will be a great investment for the City of Findlay. The park that the City is purchasing is centrally located in the West Park area with a beautiful green space, contains a covered shelter house, picnic tables, grills that were just recently put in, beautiful playground equipment, a basketball court, and lighting that was just put in year ago. It does not have a tennis court like the newspaper said it does. It never had one. There was a baseball diamond there a long time ago, but does not have one now. West Park residents use the park for numerous different activities. In August, there will be a night out event, and in September, some youth soccer kids will be there in that she too will be playing soccer with them. The Courier newspaper stated that it was a residential property at one time, so there is a concern that it could be sold for housing. It is her hopes that all of Findlay's beautiful parks always stay parks. She would like to see a pickleball court there.

Second reading of the Ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-080 *(Tappan St vacation)* requires three (3) readings

first reading

AN ORDINANCE VACATING A CERTAIN PORTION OF A CERTAIN STREET (HEREINAFTER REFERED TO AS THE TAPPAN STREET VACATION) IN THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO.

First reading of the Ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-081 requires three (3) readings

first reading

(marijuana 12-month moratorium)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TWELVE (12) MONTH MORATORIUM ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ANY CULTIVATION, PROCESSING, OR DISPENSING OF RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA FACILITIES IN THE CITY OF FINDLAY IN ORDER FOR THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO TO CONSIDER THE RAMIFICATIONS OF RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA AND POTENTIAL ZONING CHANGES THAT MAY BE CONSIDERED, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

discussion:

Councilman Wobser asked if the State Legislator will not have their guidelines done until September and if Mayor Muryn is confident that nothing will come out prior to that. Mayor Muryn replied that no dispensaries can be opened without a license from the Department of Commerce. The Department of Commerce has stated that they will not issue any until September. She is not confident that there will be any additional guidance from the Legislator that would further help protect the City of Findlay, but that she is confident that they will not be allowed to issue any licenses until at least September. She is comfortable with allowing this Ordinance to receive one more additional reading and then Council can decide if they want to expedite.

First reading of the Ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-082 *(Traffic utility truck and equipment)* requires three (3) readings

first reading

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR AND/OR CITY ENGINEER OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO, TO ENTER INTO CONTRACTS FOR THE PURCHASE OF A NEW UTILITY PICKUP TRUCK FOR THE CITY OF FINDLAY TRAFFIC SIGNALS DEPARTMENT, APPROPRIATING AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS THERETO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

First reading of the Ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-083 requires three (3) readings

first reading - adopted

(WPC sanitary sewer pump repairs)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR AND/OR CITY ENGINEER OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO, TO WAIVE FORMAL ADVERTISING AND BIDDING AND ENTER INTO CONTRACTS WITH BUCKEYE PUMPS, INC. FOR REPAIRS TO SANITARY SEWER PUMPS AT THE CITY OF FINDLAY WATER POLLUTION CONTROL CENTER, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THERETO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

discussion:

Councilman Greeno asked for additional information. He is aware of what kind of pumps this is for and how critical these pumps are, but would like additional information. City Engineer Kalb replied that the critical one is the Bright Road pump. Four (4) pumps are normally ran at that pump station, but are currently down to two (2). One is already in repair that should be coming back in the next couple of weeks, and another one went down resulting in only two (2) running right now. During high rain events, it is common to run three (3) pumps during that time to keep up with what flow is coming from the east into that pump station. Only running two (2) pumps during high rain events will stress them. One of the two (2) pumps that is in service right now has some problems with it in that it triggers off and on similar to an oil pump in that the oil set up in it is triggering it off and on. There are one and a half (1 ½) pumps that are confident running right now, but having two (2) pumps out for repair is critical because the Bright Road one is very critical.

This was an add-on letter tonight because he was out of the office all last week and was not able to get this to Council. There have been a lot of rain events on the east side of Findlay this year, so it is crucial that these pumps are functional. The pump that is to go out for repairs via this Ordinance has an eight to ten (8-10) week timeline for parts which means it is a minimum of eight to ten (8-10) weeks before all four (4) pumps are functioning.

City Auditor Staschiak noted that the City Auditor's Office worked with the City Engineering Office to ensure that this Ordinance is written in the way it should be, and that because of bid limits, City Engineer Kalb has the freedom to make those emergency repairs. This Ordinance allows to provide for a "what if" case even under the bid law. Councilman Greeno asked if this request is allowed to come from the Saratoga Interceptor Restricted Account. City Auditor Staschiak replied yes. Everything in this Ordinance is good and proper and is written in a way that the City Engineer will not be restricted by the bid limits down the road should another emergency happen.

Councilman Hellmann asked how the rain water affects the sanitary sewer system. City Engineer Kalb replied that there is older housing in Findlay that may not have down spouting, and even if they are hooked into it or if footer drains are hooked into it, that the City's long-term control plan is working on and getting all of that out. During rain events, infiltration from storm water is what is draining into it. In some cases, pipes are broke where rain water is getting in or seeping in through groundwater. The City's water plant normally operates at ten million (10,000,000) gallons a day, but when there are heavy flows, it operates north of forty million (40,000,000) gallons a day because of water coming in from the river and because of infiltration from other areas. It is an older system that the long-term control plan is trying to solve as much of it as possible. Councilman Hellmann asked if the City ends up processing all of that rain water. City Engineer Kalb replied yes. The City is spending a lot of money on a long-term control plan that will benefit the City in the long run because the City would not be treating storm water in a sanitary system. It is not just that area, but is everywhere. Trying to find those infiltration is tough to do.

Councilwoman Frische knows that there have been issues at the Bright Road location for a long time and that City Engineer Kalb explained where it is at.

Councilwoman Frische moved to suspend statutory rules and give the Ordinance its second and third readings, seconded by Councilman Greeno. Ayes: Greeno, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Warnecke, Wobser, Bauman, DeArment, Frische. The Ordinance received its second and third readings. Councilman Greeno moved adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Hellmann.

discussion:

Councilman Wobser pointed out that it costs seventy thousand dollars (\$70,000) to repair a pump and asked what the cost is to purchase a new one. City Engineer Kalb replied over one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000). This seventy thousand dollar (\$70,000) request is for two (2) of pump repairs and is depending on what needs to be done to them. Depending on the size and what they are pushing through (speed of pump flow). Councilman Wobser asked if protocol is to have four (4) pumps ready to go at any point in time, but that they are down to one and a half (1 ½). He asked if one needs to be in inventory. City Engineer Kalb replied that one went through capital this year to have on spare that wasn't for the Bright Road pump station, but that he is looking into having pumps readily available to try to avoid this same situation. Pumps go down quite often because they push a lot of stuff down through them. One of the pumps being used is a spare which is why there are problems with it.

Mayor Muryn added that this was part of the discussion last week which is why WPC Superintendent Beach did a full assessment when it was discovered that some of the backups are old repaired pumps that may not be as reliable as the City would like them to be and may be coming back to Council to get some additional improvements, especially with lead times.

Councilman Greeno noted that one of pumps discussed tonight is in the WPC plant. The critical one is at the Bright Road pump station and that the one at the plant needs to be put in service in order for the whole system to be working properly.

City Engineer Kalb informed Council that the pump price for the one for Spring Lake was four hundred seventy-seven thousand dollars (\$477,000) for one pump.

Ayes: Hellmann, Niemeyer, Palmer, Russel, Warnecke, Wobser, Bauman, DeArment, Frische, Greeno. The Ordinance was declared adopted and is recorded in Ordinance Volume XXIII, Page 2024-083 and is hereby made a part of the record.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

OLD BUSINESS:

Councilwoman Frische pointed out that Mayor Muryn had commented that the public has called in and asked about having facilities via Ordinance No. 2024-081 (*marijuana 12-month moratorium*) and asked if it is an issue to wait on passing the Ordinance if no one can do anything because there is no permitting by the State yet. Mayor Muryn replied that is correct that there is no permitting by the State, but that the public is calling the City asking what the City's guidance is. Councilwoman Frische asked if there is any risk at this point. Mayor Muryn replied no. At this point in time, the City is not concerned about anyone being able to open because they cannot get a license through the State and that the City has to sign off indicating that they are meeting certain requirements, one being that they are complying with zoning. Filed.

NEW BUSINESS:

City Auditor Staschiak noted that the Auditor of State has issued a bulletin and requirement for all public offices and all City employees that they complete required online fraud reporting and training. President of Council Harrington replied it is an eight (8) minute online course that he took last night. The City Auditor's Office is putting a compliance process together for this because the City Auditor's Office will be audited on it to make sure it is set up and cannot allow someone to claim they watched a video, but didn't. This one is a critical one that the State is going to put a lot of effort into that compliance. Filed.

City Auditor Staschiak thanked Project Manager Hohman for the Popular Annual Financial Report that he placed a copy at each Councilmember seat tonight. It is now a part of the annual audit process that Council will see every year. He had a conversation with Bond Counsel on very important summary numbers on the City's financials that comes out of the City Auditor's Office that is quoting percentages, etc. while the City has the type of debt that it has, meets certain rules and standards in that he decided that this is the best way to do that. It is very handy and is very clean. It is a great community document that will be available to the community that is posted online. It breaks down not only what the City is doing with the operations, but also the real estate tax.

It talks about when a real estate tax dollar comes in, how it breaks down for the community and what percentage the City receives out of each dollar that comes in. He was pleased to work with the State contracted audit firm Julian & Grube on this that they put together. It is in align with what Mayor Muryn has worked very hard to ensure that the standard logos and colors were used to keep everything uniform for the strategic planning initiatives. Filed.

Councilman Wobser pointed out that three (3) times over the last seven (7) days during the business week, traffic on Sandusky Street, from Blanchard Street to East Street, has been backed up from the traffic light all the way to East Street up from approximately 4:00pm-6:00pm which is before Marathon is let out. He wanted to make sure City Engineer Kalb was aware of it and asked if there is anything that should be done about it. City Engineer Kalb replied that everything was put according to how it was supposed to be, but has noticed that Sandusky Street is backing up causing East Street to back up. He contacted them of the problem to see if there is any kind of timing that can be done. The City does not want to put that one in free-float mode and then everything north and south of it is out of coordination. He is working to see how to change that timing due to the traffic.

Councilwoman Frische asked when the City Engineer is going to present on the traffic study for Blanchard Street. The study did not list how many bikes were on the path, but did talk about accidents, traffic flow, etc. The main comments she has received from constituents is that they want it back to the way it used to be, and the positive and negatives of the turn lane. She asked if the City Engineer is going to give a report to all Council. City Engineer Kalb replied that he sent the report out, but that everyone might not have received it because it is a very large file, so some may not have received it. Data was compiled before construction, during construction and after. Traffic has decreased down through there. One reason is because some will change their route, working from home, etc. This was after the COVID-19 pandemic, so a lot of those traffic patterns could change from that. The main goal of that whole project is a safety corridor to make it safer through there. Before construction, there was an average of forty-four (44) crashes per year. Over a two (2) year span during construction, there were roughly one hundred six (106) crashes down through there. He has a breakdown of what they were from per Police data, but then once the construction was completed, a traffic study was done showing a decrease in crashes. It went from approximately forty-four (44) crashes per year to thirty-eight (38). The main goal of that corridor even though it was a lane reduction within that reconfiguration was to make it safer down through there. There was recording of pedestrian and bicycle crashes there before and after. It went from two to one and was still capturing from before the construction and still seeing a decrease. The study did not just look at vehicles before construction, but looked at both aspects of it. The reasoning of that project was to make that safer because of the crashes that were experienced there such as rear-ending and side-swipes which is what that center turn lane is doing. It is allowing the turning vehicles to get into the center of the road so that when they stop, they do not have to worry about cars rear-ending them and gives them time to make a better reaction and decision time. It is a safer corridor there from what was done. From the City and ODOT's eyes, that is a successful project.

Councilman Palmer asked how traffic flow has been affected on Blanchard Street since that took effect. City Engineer Kalb replied that intersections are scored by the level of service, how long they have to wait at intersections. At the intersections, the majority of the level of service has increased (is better) with one that decreased. Of what ODOT was projecting from the original study of what traffic will be seen and due to the timing, traffic flow there has improved.

Councilwoman Frische it was referenced in the study that motorists did change their routes and referenced COVID, etc., but that motorists are changing their routes because they do not like being on Blanchard Street because of inconvenience. Safety is still an issue. The Sandusky Street intersection was the biggest issue. The rest of them did not have much delay. She asked if it is something Council can recommend and take care of that one section from Sandusky Street up to Sixth Street for bus routes, trash company stops, bus stops, etc. because motorists have changed their routes because of having to wait because of the inconvenience of the change. She asked if the elevation letters were sent out to the thirty-five (35) property owners since the last City Council meeting. Mayor Muryn replied yes. She heard from a number of residents on Blanchard Street along that corridor that have said it has worked much better and has been much safer for them getting off of their properties. As she herself has drove through it, and that her mother lives in the area, it works much better. It was not a bike lane project as it was communicated and what some focused on. It was a safety process. There cannot be a random left-hand turn lane show up out of anywhere. When she goes through that intersection on a regular basis, left turn lanes and signals are extremely important through that corridor. Some tweaks and adjustments that need to be made as motorists get used to it, but that overall, it has done exactly what it was designed to do and has worked well. The change in traffic has not been overly significant and will see motorists come back to it.

Councilman DeArment noted that he drives that route multiple times per day and thinks it is great. It is easier. The sight lines are better. It is easier to navigate. He has ridden his bike on it multiple times. He feels safe on it. Traffic is not going fast past him. It is a great project. Filed.

Melanie Delgado – A.F.T.E.R. Hours Task Force (*letter listed as a **WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS** above*)

The A.F.T.E.R. Hours Task Force formed in May 2022 on recommendation from the business community aimed to challenge the status quo of the Findlay-Hancock Community by energizing, modernizing and diversifying the area to attract and retain young professionals. The Task Force comprised of young professionals working in Hancock County submitted their findings in a comprehensive report to key local entities. The report covered seven (7) key areas: retail and restaurants, entertainment and nightlife, housing, recreation, infrastructure and services, regional connectivity and community, and office culture. To ensure the report becomes more than a theory, a subcommittee of young professionals including some from the original group was established. This subcommittee is working to present actionable recommendations to relevant community stakeholders aiming to transform ideas into impactful initiatives. Recreation was deemed the number one (#1) priority for the young professionals. The committee came up with three (3) recommendations:

1. Indoor recreational facility that is free or minimal membership cost to enter with pay-to-play for certain activities provided having amenities like multi-purpose fields, coffee shop collaboration, social area, climbing wall, equipment rentals, etc.
2. After reviewing the proposal for the downtown park district north of the river, the committee felt that this would be a huge benefit for the attraction of and retaining young professionals.
3. Top amenities the group recommended for the park were: multi-purpose green space, safe bike and walking path connectivity, outdoor amphitheater, food and beer garden, and being well lit at night.

A one-stop shop for locating and signing up for the various recreation leagues in the community is another item the committee would like to see materialized. Today, it is difficult to identify who to contact, especially for some of the less formal recreation opportunities. Volosports.com is a good example of what this could look like. The committee is requesting City Council read the above into the next meeting minutes and take into consideration the recommendations in bullet point #2 for the future downtown park which they feel would be a valuable asset in attracting and retaining young talent into this great community. In addition, they have requested other community leaders to take the ownership of bullet points #1 and #3 listed above.

discussion:

Councilman Russel thanked Ms. Delgado for coming to Council tonight. He appreciates what the A.F.T.E.R. Hours Task Force has presented with their initial report and also with this. A lot of this has been heard through the Strategic Planning effort. Volo Sports is something he did not know of until this letter. He asked if the one-stop shop that Ms. Delgado referred to is for recreational sign-up as there are multiple different entities that provide recreational opportunities. The City of Findlay is just one entity. He asked Ms. Delgado if the suggestion is more all encompassing of both public and private recreational opportunities presented under one umbrella. He asked Ms. Delgado to expand on it and how the City can help. Ms. Delgado replied that the committee's point of view for that is that is hard to find recreational leagues for softball, baseball, kickball, pickleball, etc. The only way to sign up for those types of recreational leagues seems to be via social media, so they would like a one-stop shop where there are links housed on a website that someone can simply click where they want to sign up for a league that will list what dates and times of when they meet. Councilman Russel noted that Volo Sports that Ms. Delgado mentioned is for bigger communities. He asked if the committee came to the conclusion that Volo Sports is a solution of how it could work here in Findlay. He asked if her friends use Volo Sports, have experience with it and if so, how it meets the needs of young professionals. Ms. Delgado replied that she has not personally met someone that uses Volo Sports and is just a website that the committee came across in researching to find something like it and felt that it was a good resource. It doesn't have to be Volo Sports, but something along those lines is the idea.

Councilman Wobser thanked Ms. Delgado for bringing this forward. He read the report back when it was distributed and thinks it is very interesting. He asked what age group this is for. Ms. Delgado replied she is not sure. Councilman Wobser asked if there is an age cut off. Mayor Muryn replied that Findlay young professionals is under forty (40). Councilman Wobser asked Ms. Delgado if her study is for individuals out of college ages twenty-two (22) through forty (40). Ms. Delgado replied that is correct. Mayor Muryn added that the initial group of the A.F.T.E.R. Hours Task Force was individuals that were not originally from Findlay and under the age of thirty (30). They were the initial grouping, but that the Findlay young professionals are now very involved in the new task force who are between eighteen to forty (18-40) years of age. Councilman Wobser asked what percentage of Findlay's population would this encompass. Mayor Muryn replied approximately thirty to forty percent (30-40%) are under forty (40) years of age. Those under the age of twenty-one (21) is approximately fifteen percent (15%). Exact figures are listed on the Strategic Planning document. Councilman Wobser replied that is a good indication of where Findlay's population is and what they are asking for. One of the major issues Findlay has is retention. The Task Force has ideas of how to attract people in and retaining them once they get here. That group is very important to the City because they pay income tax and are the lifeblood of the community staying vibrant and new.

Conversations sometimes get caught up about recreation with many thinking it is not worthwhile, but have to look outside of the older professionals demographic who might not think this is a great idea, but have to look past that into the idea of how to sustain Findlay for the next fifty (50) years which is when these items become front and center and have to be considered over a long period of time.

Councilman Hellmann pointed out that Ms. Delgado mentioned that item #2 is for the City to take care of, which is the downtown park, which is probably a project that is appropriately assigned that way. He asked what the opinion or thoughts of the group were regarding that downtown park, good, bad and indifferent. Ms. Delgado replied that the main thought was that after the committee met, that if young professionals could have this park, they wouldn't ask for anything else. They would be content with this park, and that all of their other suggestions would be thrown to the back. Councilman Hellmann asked if it is that important to the group. Ms. Delgado replied yes. If they could have this one thing, they would be pretty content.

Councilman Russel noted that Council heard from two (2) citizens today who both stated the importance of parks, be it West Park or downtown. Parks and recreational infrastructure play a very vital role in retaining and attracting work force, even for a place for kids to place soccer. He has heard this conversation with citizens over and over again. Filed.

Councilman Russel moved to adjourn City Council at 6:49pm, seconded by Councilman Bauman. All were in favor. Filed.

CLERK OF COUNCIL

PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL