

FINDLAY CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR SESSION

AUGUST 20, 2019

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

PRESENT: Frische, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Ostrander, Russel, Shindledecker, Slough, Watson, Wobser

ABSENT: Harrington

President of Council Monday noted that Councilman Harrington notified him that he would not be present at tonight's meeting, therefore, if there are no objections from Council, he is excused. No objections given. Councilman Harrington is excused.

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

ACCEPTANCE/CHANGES TO PREVIOUS CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES:

Councilman Slough moved to accept the August 6, 2019 Regular Session City Council meeting minutes, Councilman Hellmann seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried. Filed.

ADD-ON/REPLACEMENT/REMOVAL FROM THE AGENDA: none

RECOGNITION/RETIREMENT RESOLUTIONS: none

PROCLAMATIONS: none

PETITIONS: none

Blanchard River Watershed Partnership (BRWP) Watershed Coordinator Lauren Sandhu

The Blanchard River Watershed Partnership (BRWP) is a community-based volunteer 501(c) (3) organization that seeks to address problems and concerns that affect the health of the Blanchard River Watershed and educate all citizens about the dynamics of the Blanchard River and its tributaries. The BRWP members and Board of Directors include interested citizens, local government agencies, educators, representatives of industry and other stakeholders who have come together with one goal in mind: to improve and maintain water quality within the watershed.

One of the main ways to achieve improved water quality is through the development of watershed action plans (WAPs). The BRWP received endorsement for two (2) watershed action plans in 2011 and 2012. After the endorsement of these two (2) WAPs, designed to outline the process for restoration activities, the BRWP was able to write or assist with grant writing that results in the award of over \$8,000,000 in funding. The U.S. EPA now requires that Nine-Element Nonpoint Source Implementation Strategic Plans (NPS-IS Plans) be written in place of watershed action plans. The NPS-IS Plans are written at the sub-watershed level, which are smaller and more focused areas within the Blanchard River Watershed, as opposed to the areas that the WAPs were written for. With the Blanchard River Watershed, there are thirty (30) subwatersheds, which are referred to as HUC-12's (Hydrologic Unit Codes).

With the new requirement from the U.S. EPA to develop plans that align with the nine-element plans, the focus of the BRWP is now on developing NPS-IS plans for individual HUC-12's in the Blanchard River Watershed. An NPS-IS Plan was written for The City of Findlay Riverside Park HUC -12 in 2018 and received official approval from the OEPA and U.S. EPA on February 20, 2019. As a result of the approval of the Riverside Park NPS-IS Plan, federal and state nonpoint source funding opportunities can now be pursued by the BRWP to complete the projects and objectives outlined in the plan. The main project outlined in the Riverside Park NPS-IS Plan involves the removal of 97,000 cubic yards of sediment from behind Riverside Dam and within the Old Reservoir Area, in addition to modification of the dam to allow fish passage and provide water level control.

Sediment has collected behind the Riverside Dam across the Blanchard River for the last several decades. An estimated seventy thousand (70,000) cubic yards (CY) of accumulated sediment covers roughly eleven (11) acres of surface area behind the dam. In addition, there is another estimated twenty-seven thousand (27,000) CY of mostly organic debris collected in the roughly four (4) surface acres of the Old Reservoir for the City of Findlay on the north side of Riverside Park. There is a wall or weir that separates the river and the reservoir area. The City of Findlay maintains a backup waiver intake for drinking water in the area. The sediment build-up threatens the ability to use this backup site. Modifications of the Riverside Dam, along with the removal of the sediment and debris behind the dam, will re-establish the aquatic habitat and recreational use in the area. In-stream sediment collectors and use of Best Management Practices on the surrounding agricultural fields will help prevent the sediment from accumulating again.

The Old Reservoir was an excellent fishing area at one time, but now has an average water depth of only three to four feet (3-4 ft). Two (2) sediment islands have developed in the area as well. Both of these sediment islands are close enough to the shore that kids can wade across the water to them during low water and play, creating a potentially dangerous situation.

In 2016, the City of Findlay and the Hancock County Commissioners hired Hull & Associates from Toledo to do a Sediment Management Assessment Study of how to best remove the debris and sediment from behind Riverside Dam. The study notes that “the area of the river in the vicinity of the park is impaired by sediment accumulation behind the Riverside Dam, which was constructed in the 1800s and within the adjacent Old Reservoir Area. Aquatic habitat has declined as a result, and the ability to navigate canoes or kayaks in this area is being hampered by the resulting shallower depth. Sediment must be dredged from behind the Riverside Dam and within the Old Reservoir Area to provide better recreational access to the river and improve habitat.”

Ms. Sanhu’s letter seeks formal approval from the City of Findlay and City Council to allow the BRWP to pursue this project, officially titled “The Ecological Restoration of the Riverside Dam and Reservoir”. If formal approval of the pursuit of this project is received, the BRWP will begin to seek grants and other funding sources to begin the project. An engineering study will be conducted and the OEPA, ODNR Division of Wildlife and Fisheries, U.S. Army Corps, and Hancock County Floodplain Administrator will be consulted to ensure proper completion of this project. They believe addressing the Riverside Park impairments will improve both the ecological, recreational and aesthetic value of the historic Riverside Park. The BRWP is requesting authorization to pursue funding and development needed for this project, on behalf of the community.

Discussion:

Councilwoman Frische recalled Phil Martin presenting to City Council on this project a few years ago and asked if the BRWP has received any funding. Ms. Sandhu replied that the biggest part of the funding was to get the NPS-IS Plan for Riverside Park written in 2018. Funding was used for the watershed coordinator’s time to write the NPS-IS Plan. Each plan typically takes about 130 hours to write. In terms of funding for Engineering studies or funding for any other aspect of this project, it would be as soon as next spring before they could seek grants.

Councilman Russel asked if the City has funded studies in that area and provided samples to see what the level of algae is. Safety Director Schmelzer replied that it was designed to provide an overall idea on ways to remove sediment, as well as a ballpark cost. When pursuing grant funds, the scope is not always known, nor how much funding is available. This project has been talked about for a couple of years now. In 2016, the City and County hired a contractor to provide an estimate on the amount of sediment there is, which is stated in Ms. Sandhu's letter as seventy to ninety thousand cubic yards (70,000-90,000 cu yds), as well lists the possibilities of how to remove it, and ballpark costs. There were some other scope items that were not addressed (i.e. mussel survey, in-depth habitat examination, etc.) that would have to be done when approaching it. He is pleased to see this moving forward. It has been talked about for many years. In 2016, this was a two and a half million dollar (\$2,500,000) project to remove the sediment. This is something that would be beneficial to pursue grant funding for. This is part of what the City funds when they fund the Blanchard River Watershed Partnership. The City's funding for it is a relatively small amount each year that we get a lot out of.

Councilman Wobser noted that the Reservoir has lost a lot of depth. Ms. Sandhu mentioned the ability to use the input for the water plant that is located there and asked if that is something that might be done at any point in time. Service Director/Acting City Engineer Thomas replied it is a backup in case the City could not pull from the Reservoir, but the City would not want to use it unless they have to because the water in the Reservoir has been sitting there and is not the same as what is coming out of the river. In order to use it, the chemical feeds would have to be adjusted which would take some time to figure out. It is there as a backup for a worst-case scenario. Councilman Wobser asked if it has been tested recently. Service Director/Acting City Engineer Thomas replied that it has not been tested recently.

Councilman Russel asked how Council should go about showing their support on this. He asked if it should be legislation, voice vote now, or if the minutes from tonight's meeting is all that is needed. Law Director Rasmussen replied that it will be in the minutes. When it is closer to formalizing the request, then a formal process of legislation will be needed or a letter authorizing the BRWP to proceed on the City's behalf.

Councilwoman Frische asked what is needed for the grant writing process. She asked if legislation is needed, a letter, or if this documented conversation is all that is needed. Ms. Sandhu replied that this conversation is great and then when the BRWP applies for the grant, a letter is all that is needed.

Councilman Hellmann requested the Mayor put a letter together expressing Council's endorsement of this. He asked if a voice vote is needed to do so. He feels it is a great project to move forward with. Councilman Hellmann moved to support the BRWP applying for said grants, seconded by Councilman Slough. All were in favor.

Councilman Watson pointed out that he is the Council representative for the BRWP which is a fantastic group. It is one of those groups that are behind the scenes. The BRWP is focused on water quality in the community. They provide a lot of volunteer hours. Filed.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Richard Kozlowski withdrew his request to speak regarding the proposed project for Riverside Park waterfront stating that he filled out a form to speak in case there were any details from the past that Ms. Sandhu might not have recalled. He withdrew his request to speak. Filed.

Hancock County Public Health Commissioner Karim Baroudi – support of bike/share lanes along the Blanchard St/Lincoln St project

Mr. Baroudi thanked Council for all the work they have done since 2016 on the complete street project. He provided research that had been done on why it is good to have bike paths, pedestrian paths, and safe streets. The Hancock County Public Health wants to encourage its citizens to walk and be active, as well as for automobiles using the same routes. Mr. Baroudi provided copies of the summary of results of the 2018 health assessments that was released in April this year that the Hancock County Public Health conducted in the fall. It outlines the health of Hancock County's population stating that seventy-two percent (72%) of our population is overweight or obese which is very important to the topic that is being discussed tonight and throughout the community. Hancock County is well above what the state average is and the national average is for those two (2) combined statistics. Hancock County Public Health has been working closely with the City on a lot of initiatives such as keeping our population active to keep them moving, to provide facilities, and make it easier for our citizens to walk, especially the younger generation who spend a lot of time on electronics and indoors. The Hancock County Public Health wants them to get outdoors to prevent them from being a statistic. The overweight category from the same survey that was done in 2015 has now moved to the diabetic category. Something at the prevention level needs to be done. Public Health is in the prevention business. One way to prevent diabetes is change some behaviors that is not done in doctor's offices, but is done in City Council where the tools are provided to go out and walk and ride bicycles so that they can be active. He encouraged Council to keep the project on track. There is Federal money tied to the project. The Hancock County Public Health has also applied for a Healthy Community grant with the Ohio Department of Health that is contingent on the bike path and the complete street projects being done. Other funds are also contingent on what is being done with this project.

Discussion:

Councilwoman Frische asked what grant funds are contingent on the City using the safety grant for Blanchard Street. Mr. Baroudi replied that Hancock County Public Health applied for one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) a year for five (5) years to provide health educators and health workers that will help the population come up with an initiatives from walking challenges between communities being active on trails that are available to educating schools on what is available in the City and are connected to the County and parks. Councilwoman Frische asked what would happen if this did not follow through completely. Mr. Baroudi replied that they will not deliver on the grant and will probably lose the funding. Councilwoman Frische asked if that is all contingent on the entire project or just one section of the bike path. Mr. Baroudi replied that it is just one part of the grant. The grant helps the health educators to provide health paths. It is not the whole project, but if that tool is not available to the health educators, they will probably lose funding. Councilwoman Frische feels that the Blanchard Street project weighing in on the Hancock County Public Health grant is somewhat political and asked if the grant was originally factored into the Blanchard Street project.

She was under the impression that it was only going to go to Sandusky Street and was not part of the safety grant. She asked if the original grant would still take care of the requirement that the Hancock County Public Health needs. While most support bicycling and walking, the location of the path has brought a lot of concern to the community. The project should not be driven by grants and should not move backward when it comes to healthy living. Mr. Baroudi replied that he is before Council tonight for the health connection to the bike paths and is looking at initiatives and programs. Public Health depends on grants. The complete street program is part of the Public Health grant application, so when something affects that project, it affects their grant funding. Hancock County Public Health is probably not the only non-profit or government agency that is counting on that project being done. They thought it was a done deal back in 2016. He does not want to get into the politics of it. He wanted to inform Council on the results of the assessment.

Councilman Wobser pointed out that the community is questioning the need for bike lanes and noted that Mr. Baroudi had commented that there is a direct correlation between having a bike lane and community health levels. He asked Mr. Baroudi to cite something that shows that is true. Mr. Baroudi replied that he does not have that research with him tonight, but can share the information that research states is connected with it. When a survey is done, followed by a plan to deal with the priorities that came out of that survey, they do research to see what has worked and what has not worked in other communities to bring those initiatives here. Those are called evidence-based initiatives. They research communities like Findlay to see what happened there when they put in bike lanes. He is not aware of any research in Findlay that could back up any claim, but there is plenty of national research that will back it up. Mr. Baroudi replied that representatives from the Hancock County Public Health will be at tomorrow's Blanchard Street/Lincoln Street project meeting to listen to citizen concerns and explain what will happen if the project does not go through. The research was cited by the Hancock County Public Health during a 2016 City Council meeting when they testified to the project.

Councilman Watson noticed that there is a lot more red in the comparison of the 2018 numbers and table compared to 2015 and compared to previous years. He asked if community health has declined overall in the last three (3) years. The overweight category has moved into the obese category. Mr. Baroudi replied that is correct. From 2015 to now, many of the population that was overweight has now moved to the obese category as well all the health problems that come with it. Councilman Watson asked if the community has had a decline in the last three (3) years based on this data. Mr. Baroudi replied that is correct.

Councilwoman Frische would like to have the other agencies that are contingent on this grant be conveyed during tomorrow's meeting. Per the Hancock County Public Health's statistics, bike paths have been implemented, but obesity continues to increase. The community's focus of the Blanchard Street project is how that street fits into this. She asked if it is implying that our citizens cannot get healthy and if they will be able to continue to bike if the bike paths are not installed on Blanchard Street. It is her hopes that tomorrow's meeting will not divide the bicyclists and motorists. She hopes that everyone will come together. The statistics that the Hancock County Public Health has provided are important and need to relate to this specific project, especially when Findlay already has bike paths and sharrow lanes, yet obesity has increased despite those projects. It is important for Council to know what other agencies are going to be impacted.

She would like Mr. Baroudi to contact the grant representatives for this and ask what the answers will be in regards to the Hancock County Public Health's one hundred thousand dollar (\$100,000) portion. Mayor Muryn replied that this is the first time she has heard of this. She has not heard of other organizations reaching out to let the City know how projects like this will affect them. When they submit applications for grants, they are asked to talk about anything that correlates with that project that is going on in their community. Unless they notify the City, there is no way to know what other organizations are putting on their grant applications. Filed.

Scott Fenimore – bike path

Mr. Fenimore is bothered by the proposed bike path. He asked if any counts have been taken on the amount of cars and bicycles that travel on Blanchard. Mayor Muryn replied that a bike study has not been done that she is aware of, but there has been a safety study on the corridor when Blanchard Street was complete, which included vehicular traffic counts. Mr. Fenimore asked how many cars travel there. Mayor Muryn replied that she does not know exactly how many, but can get that number to him. Mr. Fenimore anticipates that there are approximately one thousand to one thousand five hundred (1,000-1,500) vehicles a day compared to maybe one (1) bicycle, and asked if the City is going to upset up to one thousand five hundred (1,500) drivers to please one (1) bicyclist, which is not realistic. He is not concerned with the grant money involved with this project. Findlay has their own money to take care of themselves. Findlay has a YMCA and health establishments for citizens to exercise. He does not understand why anyone wants to compromise the health of the City of Findlay because of a bike path. Mr. Fenimore has been a citizen of Findlay his entire life and can only recall two (2) Mayors that have been one (1) term Mayors because they did things that Findlay citizens did not like. He hopes Mayor Muryn does not become another one (1) term Mayor.

Discussion:

Mayor Muryn informed Mr. Fenimore that she would be happy to sit down with him and go through the study. This plan was originally planned due to the safety of that corridor and the number of accidents. Mayor Muryn replied that she would be happy to sit down with Mr. Fenimore and go over that information. Mr. Fenimore pointed out that when the islands and the bumpouts were put in downtown that the City had stated that Blanchard, Western, and Broad would take over all the traffic from Main Street, but there is still a lot of traffic from 7:00am until 9:00am on Blanchard Street on two (2) lanes, not just one (1), but two (2) lanes. If it goes to one (1) lane, there will be backed up traffic from one end to the other. Mayor Muryn replied that she would be happy to go through the Engineering study that shows that it will be more efficient. Mr. Fenimore added that it will create a bottleneck. When he was a young man, people came to visit his parents who commented that Findlay was fortunate to have such a wide Main Street. Lima, Bluffton, and Fostoria do not have as wide of a Main Street as Findlay does. They have narrow Main Streets. Every road leading into Findlay in the morning is a steady line of traffic coming into this town because we are a great town. Findlay is fine where it is at.

Renee Leguire – bike path

Ms. Leguire feels it is ridiculous to take a four (4) lane (she asked if it is considered a 4-lane or 2-lane thoroughfare since it is 2-lanes one-way and 2-lanes the other way) and make it just one (1) lane each way. She feels it is ludicrous and is taking from the safety of drivers and the those who travel on that street. Findlay already has bike paths that are not used or are not being maintained presently. When the government gets involved in things they have no business getting involved with, it is not a wise thing. Government needs to be kept limited. She has talked with many about the bike path including those who do not receive the newspaper. She spoke with someone who travels down Blanchard Avenue to go to work. Even though Main Street would be closer for her to travel, she does not like going down Main Street because of the lights and the islands. She travels Blanchard, but can no longer do so and takes Main Street which is a hindrance to her because it takes her longer to get to work. She thinks it is ridiculous that the City would even consider limiting that thoroughfare to two (2) lanes. Findlay is not a climate where citizens bike year around. She visits her children in Arizona where they have bike paths that do not hinder the drivability of drivers, but having them in Findlay would hinder those who are driving. She asked why the City has not looked at Brookside Drive or the Fairgrounds. She asked if the Fairgrounds receive funds from a bed tax. A path through the Fairgrounds would be safe as there is not a lot of car traffic there. Findlay needs to keep Blanchard Avenue the way that it is for the safety of its citizens and pursue another avenue. She asked where the grant money comes from. The more the citizens ask the government to do things for them, the bigger the government becomes. She does not like big government. She likes limited government. She does not want the government telling her she has to get out and walk. She does not want to be forced to do something that she does not want to do. Telling her she has to is not right. They need to step back and figure out what is best for the community as far as limiting the scope of our government.

Discussion:

Service Director/Acting City Engineer Thomas replied that there are two (2) grants. Part of it comes from the Ohio Department of Transportation, and the other is a Federal grant from the Federal Highway Administration that they give to ODOT where ODOT administers it for them. Ms. Leguire asked if the State is still twenty trillion dollars (\$20,000,000,000,000) in debt and asked where the money comes from.

Councilman Watson asked Ms. Leguire if she has reviewed the traffic study that is online. Ms. Leguire replied she has not. Councilman Watson replied that the traffic study was done by the Traffic Engineering Company. Bike lanes aside, the current plan would make Blanchard Street safer by reducing the number of accidents and increase traffic flow. Road diets have not worked in some cities such as Los Angeles, but when looking at cities comparable to Findlay or mid-size cities, road diets reduce the amount of lanes, in this case from four (4) to three (3). It will increase traffic flow. Some may think that having less lanes will not increase traffic flow, but is car intuitive. Engineers have done the counts and have done the study resulting in better traffic flow on Blanchard and will reduce the number of accidents. He looks at numbers, facts, and studies. No one will be forcing anyone to walk or bike. By making the bike lanes and pedestrian walkways more available will hopefully bring positive impacts on public health. He recommended that Ms. Leguire review the study, at least the executive summary, which makes for good reasoning as to why the road diet works for the situation on Blanchard Street.

Mayor Muryn added that the original plan that was looked at was not to make any changes and to maintain the four (4) lanes and add in a shared use path where the sidewalk is in that area, however, because of the high percentage of crashes in that corridor, they made the current recommendation of dedicated left turn lanes with dedicated left turn signals to eliminate motorists turning across oncoming traffic that they cannot see causing t-bone accidents and motorists that are in those three (3) lanes that are getting rear-ended. The current configuration that was recommended was for slow-moving traffic to move out of those three (3) lanes to keep the through lanes moving and decrease the number of crashes because the slow moving traffic is getting out of the way. The bike lanes are subsequent to that because instead of narrowing the entire roadway and spending more money to repair or extend residence's driveways and fill in that area, there will now be more space that is not going to be used by vehicular traffic that will be utilized as an amenity by the community which is where the bike lanes came in. She thanked Ms. Leguire for her feedback and noted that it is government's responsibility to look at all streets and paths for public safety in which this is a safety concern. Conversations on this project have taken away from the safety aspect, which is why the City is recommending this change for the sake of adding bike lanes. She asked Ms. Leguire to share that information and take some time to read through the materials.

Councilwoman Frische pointed out that the original grant, not the ODOT grant, was not going all the way out to Tiffin Avenue. She asked if it was originally ending at Sandusky Street. Service Director/Acting City Engineer Thomas replied that it was originally going to end at the river where the existing bike path is. Councilwoman Frische asked if that existing grant included traffic signal upgrades. Service Director/Acting City Engineer Thomas replied no. Councilwoman Frische asked if the original plan was to have sharrow lanes and only going to Main Cross. Service Director/Acting City Engineer Thomas replied that originally, sharrow lanes were not going to be done and instead widen out the exiting walkway, but when the City met with ODOT, they pointed out that there are areas where the sidewalk is so close to the curb that it would have to go through everyone's driveways and would have to make sure every driveway that we touch is ADA compliant in which the majority of them currently are not and would have to get work agreements and/or easements from all the property owners and go as far back as we had to in their driveways to make the adjustments to make them ADA compliant. ODOT suggested we look into sharrow lanes which is how the sharrow lanes came up. The majority of the consultants that would do the sharrow lanes suggested reconfiguring the roadway because of the amount of traffic, the number of accidents and the length of driveways. Reconfiguration does not work everywhere. It works where there are a lot of driveways and a lot of congestion which is why it will work on Blanchard Street. Councilwoman Frische explained that the safety grant takes it all the way out to Tiffin Avenue, thus doing more road, as well as the traffic light upgrades for the additional two million dollars (\$2,000,000). She asked if the traffic flow to have designated turn lanes was figured into the study and what happens traffic-wise on Blanchard, the fairgrounds, and large events with traffic coming in and out of downtown when work is getting in and out, plus all the curb cuts for the concern of traffic flow. Mayor Muryn replied that it was not specifically ran during the fair. The study was ran during the peak hours for multiple days. Any time ODOT is providing funding, they look at it on a twenty (20) year projection to see if the changes should be made if the infrastructure that is being put in is not going to withstand the growth rate for the community. They applied it to a 2039 traffic volume percentage to see what the overall traffic flow impacts. The bike path would not go to Tiffin Avenue. It would go to Center Street and connect over to Riverside.

Ms. Leguire asked if a study was done on the safety of Main Street before the islands and bumpouts were done. Mayor Muryn replied that a safety study was done. Ms. Leguire replied that it seems like it is less safe now on Main Street than it was before. A lot of things look good on paper, but when getting down to the nitty-gritty, it is not the same. She does not want to read a 150-page study. Mayor Muryn replied that the study for this is not that long. The safety of downtown has been better even though there have been some incidents. If motorists run red lights and speed, etc., we cannot control everything. There still are additional improvements downtown that need to be made and will continue to improve safety such as the dedicated turn lanes, left turn signals that have not all been installed.

Councilman Shindledecker noted that the function of City Council is varied in many ways. One important function is to listen to the people. Councilmembers were elected because the citizens were confident in their judgement. He feels the downtown project was a good one, but many disagree. He does not favor the Blanchard Street/Lincoln Street project. While there are some that like to complain about everything, there are a number of those that he respects that have some misgivings to the project. In its original form, he was not opposed to it. He was not enthused with it, but went along with it. He does not support it in the form it is now. While he is aware that the City could lose a great deal of State and Federal funds by shelving the project, it is the best thing to do. He understands the State's figures on the number of traffic accidents would be reduced from thirty-nine (39) to thirty-one (31) over a period of years if this project is done, but he is concerned with the safety of putting in a bike lane in four (4) locations: 1. Martin Luther King Parkway where it joins up with Blanchard Street because there are three (3) or four (4) streets that converge at that location. 2. Blanchard Street and Blanchard Avenue. 3. Wyandot Street as it is only about a block and a half from an elementary school. 4. Sixth and Blanchard Streets where there are many young people on bicycles going to the playground and Emory Adams Park for soccer and baseball, etc. There are some changes that are being considered there. In this case, the City needs to listen to the public in which the public is overwhelmingly opposed to it which includes more than those that chronically complain about everything. He opposes this plan somewhat reluctantly and does not support it.

Councilman Russel spoke in favor of the project, however due to problems with his microphone, his comments were not recorded.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: none

REPORTS OF MUNICIPAL OFFICERS AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS:

Safety Director Schmelzer – gas aggregation

In reviewing bids for gas aggregation with the City's consultant, Independent Energy Consultants, the best pricing came from Volunteer Energy. The contract price will be lower than what the rate has been for the past two (2) years. The aggregation program will function as it has in the past with residents having the ability to opt out of the program for no charge at any time. Notifications will go out in September with review and opt out period to follow so the program can be in place in December. Legislation to renew the natural gas aggregation agreement is requested. Ordinance No. 2019-067 was created.

Discussion:

Councilwoman Frische asked that the letter be read into the record, seconded by Councilman Russel. All were in favor. The Council Clerk read the letter in its entirety.

Councilwoman Frische noted that there is usually discussion with citizens after this is done every couple of years in which they are aggravated about having to opt out of something instead of opting-in and asked why the City is negotiating contracts for this. She asked for an explanation on why they have to opt-out. She asked if the City receives any kickback from it and/or if it benefits the City, what is the benefit to the City in getting in the middle, and why they cannot opt-in instead of opting out. Safety Director Schmelzer replied that the law does not permit the aggregation program to be run on an opt-in basis. The City does the aggregation programs because a few years before he was on the Administration, City Council passed an ordinance stating that the overwhelming support for an aggregated utility program was what the citizens wanted. Since then, the City has pursued bids that can be done on a one (1), two (2) or three (3) year timeframe. With natural gas priced where it is right now, the consultant has advised the City to pursue a three (3) year contract in which he agrees with. Any citizens who wants to participate in this program can do so automatically and then simply opt-out if they want to change their provider. Given the fact that the price is lower than what can be obtained in the apples to apples market, it is financially beneficial to most citizens to participate which is the reason why the aggregation programs are obligated to be opt-out so that most can take advantage automatically. Some will want to try to time the market and get their own provider, which was important to the City as an Administrator some years ago, to make sure there is no early termination fee. At one point, it was fifty dollars (\$50.00). Under this aggregation program, citizens can take advantage of it and stay with it as long as they want or opt-out if they want to.

Councilman Watson asked if it is a variable rate to whatever the index is. Safety Director Schmelzer replied that is correct. The City will sign a variable rate contract and then the consultant takes a look at the trends in the market into the best ability that they have and will send an email to the City to let us know that it is the best time to lock in a price at which it becomes a fixed price. The aggregation programs always start from a legislation standpoint with a variable rate formula. Councilman Watson asked if the City will then lock into it whenever the rate is best. Safety Director Schmelzer replied that is correct. The proposed rates is approximately seventeen percent (17%) less than the rate has been for the last two (2) years. Filed.

Human Resources Director Essex – Third Party Administrator

Ordinance No. 2019-068 and Ordinance No. 2019-070 are on the August 20, 2019 City Council meeting agenda to change the City's Third Party Administrator (TPA) for workers' compensation to CompManagement. Through the administrative process, it has been determined that a change of provider is warranted. The City of Findlay has chosen CompManagement as the best company to provide its TPA services. They offer opportunities to improve the City's options for management of workers' compensation. City administration is confident that switching to CompManagement will increase efficiency, technological capabilities and value received for the cost to the City.

TPAs provides pertinent information needed for day to day administration of the City's workers' compensation to include claims management, hearing representation, evaluating Bureau of Workers' Compensation rates and invoices, educational opportunities and safety assistance.

Ordinance No. 2019-068 authorizes the Mayor to enter into an agreement with CompManagement as the City's TPA for management of their workers' compensation. Ordinance No. 2019-070 is to appropriate four thousand nine hundred five dollars (\$4,905.00) for CompManagement's annual fee. Ordinance Nos. 2019-068 and 2019-070 were created.

Discussion:

Councilwoman Frische asked that the letter be read into the record, seconded by Councilman Hellmann. Ayes: Frische, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Ostrander, Wobser. Nays: Russel, Shindledecker, Slough, Watson. The Council Clerk read the letter in its entirety.

Councilman Wobser asked if this is a company that that the City went with a few years ago. City Auditor Staschiak replied that it is the company that he had recommended to Council two (2) years ago. Councilman Wobser asked if this is the company that the City replaced and now wants back. Mayor Muryn replied that the City was having some issues with the previous TPAs in getting some of the data back that was needed and they did not properly handle the resolution of some of the long-term claims. TPAs are easy to switch. At that time, CareWorks had a better opportunity, so the City went with them. This year, given the different EMR rating and the overall premiums, it made sense to go back with CompManagement. Who the City's TPA will be will be looked at year to year. Councilman Wobser asked if this is the exact same argument that took place when the City switched from them the first time. The numbers were the same last time and the former Administration did not like the way the TPAs were being handled, and are now right back where we started. He does not understand what is being done. Mayor Muryn replied that there is new data. Previously, LML was going . . . Councilman Wobser noted that the TPAs were handed over to the Administration from the Auditor's Office, but now want to go back to the way the Auditor's Office did them two (2) years ago. Mayor Muryn replied that the Administration will continue to manage it and will have a different case manager through CompManagement. There are no issues with who is handling it. It is just a matter of new data, new information, and looks to be the best deal at this time.

Councilwoman Frische noted that this was very vocal with the previous Mayor. The reason she went with CareWorks was because the National League of Ohio Mayors was endorsing it. She asked if the League is back to endorsing CompManagement or if Mayor Muryn took her own lead and made the decision to switch. Mayor Muryn replied that the Ohio Municipal League has resolved their issues, but are not recommending CompManagement at this time. She is following the recommendation of the City's Human Resource Director Don Essex who did a comparison of the different entities. The company that owned CompManagement has now also purchased CareWorks, so CareWorks may end up being the better option next year. When there is not a whole lot of variance in services overall, if the City can save money, they will look at that option again. Councilwoman Frische replied that the variance was that the City is in a better pool group coming back this way than the pool group we were in. She asked if this takes some of the stress off of Human Resources having to manage some of those duties or if he is still overloaded with his responsibilities. Mayor Muryn replied that Human Resources Director Don Essex will continue to be intimately involved in those. Having his involvement on the Administrative side will be very beneficial.

Councilman Shindledecker pointed out that the fact that the Administration and the City Auditor are on the same page with this eases his mind. He is not opposed to making the change, but would not like to vote on it tonight. He would first like to see some comparisons on the weights and the amount of time to resolve some of the cases they have had compared to the first time dealing with CompManagement, which was one of the reasons why the City switched from them. He is not opposed to it, he just prefers not to vote on it tonight until they see some figures to back up this change. This request looked odd on the surface because we made the change from them two (2) years ago and are now coming back. Safety Director Schmelzer asked what looks odd. Councilman Shindledecker replied the fact that Council was so enthused about going to CareWorks from CompManagement two (2) years ago and now are going back to CompManagement. Safety Director Schmelzer replied that the City can change TPAs every year if it is financially beneficial to do so and/or if the level of service that the City is getting from the TPA is not satisfactory. Councilman Shindledecker replied that he would like to see the figures on that. Safety Director Schmelzer replied he can forward a comparison to Council if they want it. There was much ado about the switch. This belongs with HR. Managing claims out of HR is not a bad thing which was hashed over at nausea last time. HR Director Don Essex has done a great job. Since there is an agreement as an entity to move towards CompManagement, we should go ahead and do so. If next year the situation changes, the Administration will advise Council of the same thing. Switching TPAs has to do with the level of service, the information received back from the TPA, and the cooperation with the TPA outside of pricing. The way the City saves money on this is mitigating claims and managing them in an addition to being in the City's pool. There is some timing associated with this. The City Auditor has already stated that he is in consensus with the Administration on this, so this should be passed.

Councilwoman Frische is pleased to see that the Administration and Auditor are working together. It makes sense. She does not see any reason to wait. It is a timing issue. She does not see how there would be any additional information or other numbers as there were only two (2) last time. If those are not resolved by now, they may never be resolved. Law Director Rasmussen replied that those have been successfully resolved. They turned out very well. With the merger of the two (2) TPAs, CompManagement is going to be the public entity pool and CareWorks, under another name is going to be taking care of private entities. The pool is much bigger now than it was even a year ago, and the EMR number is much lower, so it is the best bet. City Auditor Staschiak added that the timing is important on this as it is already in effect or should be in effect because the deadline was a month or so ago. The faster the legislation is passed, the better. Having access to the group that the City has will show a significant reduction in outside attorney fees and premium over time. He did not participate directly with the HR Director on this. It does not matter one way or the other if this should be an HR function. Throughout the state, there are a lot of Auditors and there are a lot of HR officials that handle this. Long term, it is his hopes that Council will look at the function of HR as he would like to see it stand a little more independent than it does as it would behoove the whole City and would give the HR Director a little more freedom than he has. It is great what is happening and Council does need to move forward quickly on this and does not believe anything will change in terms of what Council will see when the numbers come in.

Councilman Shindledecker noted that he was not opposed to this, but is concerned that it has come to Council rather late. If the Administration is on the same page, then he will not oppose emergency legislation. Filed.

Findlay Municipal Court Activities Report – July 2019. Filed.

Findlay Police Department Activities Report – July 2019. Filed.

Findlay Fire Department Activities Report – July 2019. Filed.

City Auditor Staschiak – summary financial reports

A set of summary financial reports for the prior month follows including:

- Summary of Year-To-Date Information as of July 31, 2019
- Open Projects Report as of July 31, 2019
- Cash & Investments as of July 31, 2019
- Financial Snapshot for General Fund as of July 31, 2019

Filed.

Board of Zoning Appeals minutes –July 18, 2019. Filed.

Mayor Muryn – discontinuation of estimated tax waiver

Since 2009, the City of Findlay has utilized the practice of waiving estimated payments as set forth in accordance with the Codified Ordinance of the City of Findlay 194.07(F)(1), Ordinance No. 2015-101, and Resolution No. 036-2009. The purpose of this practice was to limit refunds, decrease the number of excessive overpayments, and stabilize the overall revenue of the City. Despite the effectiveness of stabilizing city revenue, there continues to be a negative perception of this practice. It is clear that we have not effectively communicated its value or the consistent application of the process across all eligible entities. Mayor Muryn has been working the Auditor Staschiak over the previous few weeks with the intention of continuing the process of waiving estimated income tax payments in a more structured fashion, however, throughout the process it has become clear that to implement a process that meets the standards of the community, it would cause an extensive administrative burden. This, coupled with the fact that the City now has an appropriate financial reserve to cover any unexpected refunds and has a two (2) year budgeting process and clear mechanisms for managing variances in revenues, the City will not be greatly hindered by the discontinuation of this practice. After great examination of the existing practice, lengthy discussion with the Income Tax Administrator and in light of the City's current strong financial position, the Income Tax Administrator has been instructed to disregard Resolution No. 036-2009 and related subparagraph 194.07 (F)(1) of the Codified Ordinances. This recommendation was shared at the August 7, 2019 Income Tax Board meeting with the following approved motions:

- 1) Motion to recommend to City Council that the City of Findlay no longer waive estimated payments, recommend that City Council change language of windfall provision in Ordinance 193.12(c) to read "Any time more income than anticipated is received in the General Fund in any given calendar year, Council may, on its own motion, transfer a lump sum from the General Fund to the General Capital Improvement Fund.", and recommend that City Council add language to the Ordinance to not allow the Income Tax Administrator to waive estimated tax payments prior to a formal adoption of a policy by the Income Tax Board.

- 2) Motion that Taxpayers not currently in the estimated tax waiver program will not be allowed into the program and Taxpayers currently in the estimated tax waiver program will be responsible to begin making estimated payments for Tax Year 2020.

Additionally, per recommendation of the Income Tax Administrator we will be administratively requesting that Taxpayers currently waiving estimated tax payments make the appropriate extension payments by April 15th, 2020 for tax 2019. In the coming weeks, our Tax Department will be in contact with the affected taxpayers and communicate a process to begin making estimated payments for tax year 2020. By the reports my administration submits to City Council each month, we will continue to closely monitor the City's revenue and business tax variances closely to ensure the City does not repeat the mistakes that brought about the need for this practice in 2009.

Finally, related to this change, I am also recommending the following changes to further insulate the City of Findlay from future revenue fluctuations and provide further flexibility in managing the financial health of the City of Findlay:

- 1) **REFUND BUDGET:** increase the annual refund budget as part of the annual budget review.
- 2) **MODIFY COF 193.12:** the windfall provision cannot remain in place as we transition back to estimate payments. Further, the focus on fiscal responsibility and capital funding has made this practice unnecessary. (Addressed by ITB at meeting)

RECOMMEND: 193.12(c) Read as "Any time more income than anticipated is received in the General Fund in any given calendar year, Council may, on its own motion, transfer a lump sum from the General Fund in any given calendar year, Council, may, on its own motion, transfer a lump sum from the General Fund to the General Capital Improvement Fund."

- 3) **ONE TIME NOTIFICATION:** Notify all Taxpayers currently carrying a credit balance of \$20 or greater, of said balance, on or about February 17, 2020.
- 4) **REGULAR NOTIFICATION:** Notify all Taxpayers with a carryforward credit balance of \$10,000 or greater, of said balance, on or about February 17 each year.

Filed.

Treasurer's Reconciliation Report – July 2019. Filed.

Traffic Commission minutes – July 15, 2019. Filed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

The **PLANNING & ZONING COMMITTEE** to whom was referred a request to review the proposed zoning map revisions. *We recommend further discussion to take place at future meeting(s).*

Councilman Slough moved to adopt the committee report, seconded by Councilman Russel. All were in favor. Filed.

The **PLANNING & ZONING COMMITTEE** to whom was referred a request from David Rader and Brian Rader to rezone 726 South Blanchard Street from C1 Local Commercial District to R4 Duplex/Triplex. *We recommend to approve as requested. Ordinance No. 2019-069 was created.*

Councilman Slough moved to adopt the committee report, seconded by Councilman Hellmann. All were in favor. Filed.

A **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE** meeting was held on Tuesday, August 13, 2019 to discuss the City's mid-year review.

Councilman Russel moved to adopt the committee report, seconded by Councilman Shindledecker. All were in favor. Filed.

LEGISLATION:

RESOLUTIONS:

RESOLUTION NO. 020-2019 (*DFID – renewal petition*) requires three (3) readings
second reading

A RESOLUTION DECLARING IT NECESSARY TO PROVIDE ENHANCED PUBLIC SERVICES IN THE DOWNTOWN FINDLAY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Second reading of the Resolution.

RESOLUTION NO. 021-2019 (*no PO*) requires three (3) readings
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).

First reading of the Resolution.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-051 (*Utility Billing software*) requires three (3) readings
third reading – tabled after third reading on 8/6/19

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO, TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT OR CONTRACTS WITH MUNI-LINK FOR THE UPDATING OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY'S UTILITY BILLING DEPARTMENT'S SOFTWARE, APPROPRIATING AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-052 (*E. Bigelow Avenue Waterline Replacement Project*) requires three (3) readings
third reading - adopted

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING FUNDS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Councilman Slough moved to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Watson. Ayes: Frische, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Ostrander, Russel, Shindledecker, Slough, Watson, Wobser. The Ordinance was declared adopted and is recorded in Ordinance Volume XXI, Page 2019-052 and is hereby made a part of the record.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-053 (*Capital Improvement Appropriation for June Allocation*) requires three (3) readings
third reading - adopted

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Councilman Slough moved to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Wobser. Ayes: Hellmann, Niemeyer, Ostrander, Russel, Shindledecker, Slough, Watson, Wobser, Frische. The Ordinance was declared adopted and is recorded in Ordinance Volume XXI, Page 2019-053 and is hereby made a part of the record.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-056 (*DIFD postage costs*) requires three (3) readings

second reading

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING FUNDS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Second reading of the Ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-057 (*DFID - certify assessments*) requires three (3) readings

second reading

AN ORDINANCE DETERMINING TO PROCEED WITH THE PROVISION OF THE ENHANCED PUBLIC SERVICES IN THE DOWNTOWN FINDLAY SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Second reading of the Ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-058 (*AEP easements*) requires three readings

second reading – adopted during OLD BUSINESS

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO, TO EXECUTE EASEMENT AGREEMENTS PER LOCATION WITH AMERICAN ELECTRIC POWER FOR THE RELOCATION OF TRANSMISSION LINES LOCATED ON CITY-OWNED PROPERTY, IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE THE MAUMEE WATERSHED PROJECT TO ENABLE LEGAL ACCES FOR MAINTENANCE PURPOSES, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-060 (*2019 Annual Manhole Adjustment Program*) requires three (3) readings

second reading

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Second reading of the Ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-061 (*2019 Annual Sewer Televising*) requires three (3) readings
second reading

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING FUNDS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
Second reading of the Ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-064 requires three (3) readings
(*MWCD/ODNR state funding for continued flood mitigation efforts*)
second reading - adopted

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE MAUMEE WATERSHED CONSERVANCY DISTRICT AND THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR THE CONTINUATION OF FLOOD MITIGATION EFFORTS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Councilman Russel moved to suspend the statutory rules and give the Ordinance its third reading, seconded by Councilman Slough. Ayes: Niemeyer, Ostrander, Russel, Shindledecker, Slough, Watson, Wobser, Frische, Hellmann. The Ordinance received its third reading. Councilman Russel moved to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Wobser.

Discussion:

Safety Director Schmelzer thanked Steve Wilson, the Conservancy District, and the State of Ohio for working with the City on this and allowing the benching project, and the dollars that are being spent for the benching project, to count as the match for the fifteen million dollars (\$15,000,000) in Capital Funding that is coming from the State of Ohio.

Ayes: Ostrander, Russel, Shindledecker, Slough, Watson, Wobser, Frische, Hellmann, Niemeyer. The Ordinance was declared adopted and is recorded in Ordinance Volume XXI, Page 2019-064 and is hereby made a part of the record.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-065 (*safety upgrades to Police cruisers*) requires three (3) readings
second reading

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO, TO WAIVE FORMAL ADVERTISING AND BIDDING REQUIREMENTS, AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT OR CONTRACTS WITH D.R. EBEL, FOR THE MANADATORY SAFETY EQUIPMENT UPGRADES TO THE CITY OF FINDLAY POLICE DEPARTMENT'S NEW CRUISERS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
Second reading of the Ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-066 (*Bricker & Eckler LLP invoice*) requires three (3) readings
second reading

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING FUNDS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
Second reading of the Ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-067 (*gas aggregation*) requires three (3) readings

first reading

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO SUPPORT THE CONTINUATION OF A GOVERNMENTAL NATURAL GAS AGGREGATION PROGRAM WITH OPT-OUT PROVISIONS PURSUANT TO SECTION 4929.26, OHIO REVISED CODE, DIRECTING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE A SUPPLY AGREEMENT AMENDMENT WITH VOLUNTEER ENERGY SERVICES, INC. TO CONTINUE A NATURAL GAS AGGREGATION PROGRAM BEYOND NOVEMBER 2019 WHEN THE CURRENT SUPPLY AGREEMENT ENDS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

First reading of the Ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-068 (*TPA agreement*) requires three (3) readings

first reading - adopted

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO, TO CONTRACT WITH COMPMANAGEMENT AS THE THIRD PARTY ADMINISTRATOR (TPA) FOR THE CITY OF FINDLAY'S HEALTHCARE PLAN, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Councilwoman Frische moved to suspend the statutory rules and give the Ordinance its second and third readings, seconded by Councilman Hellmann. Ayes: Russel, Shindledecker, Slough, Watson, Wobser, Frische, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Ostrander. The Ordinance received its second and third readings.

Councilwoman Frische moved to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Slough.

Discussion:

Mayor Muryn pointed out that the Ordinance states that this is for healthcare, but actually is for Workers' Compensation Management. Law Director Rasmussen replied that is a clerical error and that he will change it to state Workers' Compensation Management.

Councilwoman Frische moved to amend the Ordinance to reflect the verbiage change, seconded by Councilman Russel. Ayes: Slough, Watson, Wobser, Frische, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Ostrander, Russel, Shindledecker. The Ordinance is amended.

Councilwoman Frische moved to adopt the Ordinance as amended, seconded by Councilman Slough. Ayes: Slough, Watson, Wobser, Frische, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Ostrander, Russel, Shindledecker. The Ordinance was declared adopted and is recorded in Ordinance Volume XXI, Page 2019-068 and is hereby made a part of the record.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-069 (*726 S Blanchard St rezone*) requires three (3) readings

first reading

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 1100 ET SEQ OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO, KNOWN AS THE ZONING CODE BY REZONING THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED PROPERTY (REFERRED TO AS 726 S BLANCHARD STREET REZONE) WHICH PREVIOUSLY WAS ZONED "C1 LOCAL COMMERCIAL" TO R4 DUPLEX/TRIPLEX.

First reading of the Ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-070 (*TPA appropriation*) requires three (3) readings
first reading - adopted

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING FUNDS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Councilman Russel moved to suspend the statutory rules and give the Ordinance its second and third readings, seconded by Councilwoman Frische. Ayes: Watson, Wobser, Frische, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Ostrander, Russel, Shindledecker, Slough. The Ordinance received its second and third readings. Councilman Wobser moved to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Slough. Ayes: Wobser, Frische, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Ostrander, Russel, Shindledecker, Slough, Watson. The Ordinance was declared adopted and is recorded in Ordinance Volume XXI, Page 2019-070 and is hereby made a part of the record.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

OLD BUSINESS

Councilwoman Frische asked for updates to tabled Ordinance No. 2019-051. Service Director/Acting City Engineer Thomas replied that a meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 23, 2019 with Water Department employees, the City Auditor's Office and the Administration to verify that everyone is on the same page and answer any questions before the Administration comes back to Council and asks for Water and Sewer. Councilwoman Frische asked if anyone has met with or talked with any other cities to see what they have and how it has been working for them. City Auditor Staschiak replied that the first visit will be on Thursday in Michigan. There have been some emails going back and forth. There is another visit coming up and there will be some discussion on it Friday. They are making progress.

Councilwoman Frische noted that she had made a motion to suspend the rules of Council and give Ordinance No. 2019-058 its second and third readings during the last City Council meeting on August 6, 2019, but the motion was defeated. She asked if discussion is needed with American Electric Power (AEP) on where they are going to put the poles and if there are options to weigh in on. Safety Director Schmelzer replied that this is a good option for us. The alternative is to leave the poles, foundations and huge mounds of earth around the poles in the benching area which would look ridiculous. There is an easement now and would like to move the poles out of that area so that it does not look ridiculous and will define their easement rights. It is a good thing all around for the City. Councilwoman Frische asked if the large metal poles will be what will go in. Safety Director Schmelzer replied that is correct.

Councilwoman Frische moved to reconsider Ordinance No. 2019-058, seconded by Councilman Hellmann. Ayes: Frische, Hellmann, Niemeyer, Ostrander, Russel, Shindledecker, Slough, Watson, Wobser. The Ordinance is being reconsidered. Councilwoman Frische moved to give the Ordinance its third reading, seconded by Councilman Slough. Ayes: Hellmann, Niemeyer, Ostrander, Russel, Shindledecker, Slough, Watson, Wobser, Frische. The Ordinance received its third reading. Councilwoman Frische moved to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Hellmann. Ayes: Niemeyer, Ostrander, Russel, Shindledecker, Slough, Watson, Wobser, Frische, Hellmann. The Ordinance was declared adopted and is recorded in Ordinance Volume XXI, Page 2019-058 and is hereby made a part of the record.

Safety Director Schmelzer noted that Councilman Slough was also in attendance at the Jefferson School Plan meeting yesterday. A plan was put together in conjunction with Findlay City Schools for Jefferson Schools to re-route some of the traffic to hopefully alleviate some of the stacking off of Sixth Street. This project has been talked about for years and has been part of discussions with the Traffic Commission and is now a tabled item. The schools would like to begin to communicate what is going to be done around that school as soon as possible. He discussed this with Dennis McPheron today and is going to email the exhibits that were used during the Traffic Commission meeting to him, as well as what is planned for signage so that they can post it and mail it out to the parents. The minutes from the Traffic Commission meeting have not been approved yet, but given the amount of time spent on this plan and the fact that Findlay City Schools is in support of it, he is asking Council for their approval to go ahead and proceed with giving them the material for them to communicate it to the parents. Councilwoman Frische asked for additional detail on what is going to be done. Safety Director Schmelzer replied that there currently is a lot of stacking on Sixth Street going to Washington because motorists try to use Seventh Street and Fairview. This plan will take that traffic to the south which adds approximately two (2) blocks worth of stacking off of Sixth Street to the drop-off lane, then will go north on Maple Street to an area that has been striped right in front of the school entrance. The school has agreed to staff that so that cars can move through there and drop off their kids in a safe manner, then dismissed to go north to Seventh Street which will largely serve now as just the way to get out. Right now, it is a free-for-all. It will not be a situation where someone will be able to drive through and simply drop their child off, but will eliminate the largest concern of traffic stacking up on Sixth Street. It will also eliminate the traffic that currently mingles with the bus route and can delay the buses up to fifteen to twenty (15-20) minutes. Discussions have been objective around those concerns.

Councilman Russel asked if someone will be placed at Seventh Street and Washington to direct cars to keep going south instead of turning onto Washington. Safety Director Schmelzer replied that cars will turn onto Washington. Parents will be directed from multiple directions. Those coming in from Main Street will want to turn onto Fairview. Those coming in from Sixth Street will want to turn onto Washington and go south to Fairview, then north to Maple. The exhibits will guide motorists what way to go and show no parking signs, arrows for buses and cars. The school wants to start communicating this as soon as possible.

Councilwoman Frische is in favor of pursuing anything that is need for this and to include Council in the emails and provide a copy of the exhibits.

Councilman Russel asked if the plan and/or exhibits will be placed on the City's website. Safety Director Schmelzer replied they will to help reinforce with the resources he has. He informed Mr. McPheron that he would be providing the information to Council and would get the exhibits to him to discuss how to ensure how as many as possible will be informed about it.

NEW BUSINESS


Mayor Muryn invited everyone to the Blanchard Street/Lincoln Street Open House meeting tomorrow, August 21, 2019. There will be different stations with exhibits and information around the Council Chambers. City representatives will be throughout to answer questions. Questions will need to be in writing to accommodate ODOT's standards as the City has to submit them to ODOT as part of the project. She asked that anytime someone shares information with a Councilmember that they be asked to submit it in writing so that it can be forwarded to ODOT.

Mayor Muryn invited Council to the Kawaguchi City exchange students reception on the evening of Thursday, August 22, 2019. She asked that any Councilmember that is able to attend to contact the Mayor's Office so that a headcount can be given to the University who is hosting it.

Councilman Slough asked where the downtown benches have gone and if they will be put back. Safety Director Schmelzer replied they are currently being stored at the Street Department and will be put back. There still is some work that needs to be done around the crosswalks in finalizing where some of those slabs and placement are going to be done with hopes of being done by the end of summer.

Councilwoman Frische asked for an update on the Main Street crosswalk lights. Service Director/Acting City Engineer Thomas replied that he has talked with the manufacturer and contractor who have differences in opinion on who is responsible to fix it. He is working with them to get that taken care of. Mayor Muryn added that the lights seem to be working the majority of time. She asked that when anyone notices them not working or flashing inconsistently without someone walking through to let Service Director/Acting City Engineer know so that he go out and check on it.

President of Council Monday adjourned City Council at 8:32 pm.


CLERK OF COUNCIL


COUNCIL PRESIDENT