



Council Chambers

April 9, 2019 ~ 7:30pm

A) CALL TO ORDER

The Council for the City of Norwood met in regular session on the above date with Mrs. Donna Laake presiding. The meeting opened with a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

B) PRAYER

C) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

D) ROLL CALL

On roll call, the following members answered present: Mr. Bonsall, Mr. Clark, Mr. Thompson, Ms. Stevenson, Mrs. Hanrahan, Mr. Sanker, and Mr. Breadon.

Mrs. Laake extended get-well wishes to Mr. Stith, who was unable to attend the meeting because of an illness; she also extended a note of congratulations to Mr. Bonsall and his wife on the birth of their son, Noah. Mr. Bonsall stated both mother and baby are doing well, and he thanked everyone for the well wishes and notes of congratulations.

E) AMENDMENT OF AGENDA

On a motion by Mr. Breadon, seconded by Mr. Bonsall, it was moved to amend the agenda as follows: add an administration report from Mayor Williams addressing two letters he sent to Council, and add a Parks, Recreation, Streets, and Infrastructure Committee report. All members present voted, "Yes."

F) MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

On a motion by Mr. Clark, seconded by Mr. Breadon, it was moved to approve the minutes of both the March 12, 2019 meeting and the March 26, 2019 meeting, as if read. All members present voted, "Yes".

G) REQUEST TO ADDRESS COUNCIL ON AGENDA ITEMS

There were no requests to address Council on agenda items.

H) REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

1) Economic Development and Community Engagement: 4/4/2019

Re: Committee Goals

On a motion by Mr. Breadon, seconded by Mr. Thompson, it was moved to accept the committee report.

Mrs. Hanrahan raised concerns pertaining to the zoning amendment regarding murals; she doesn't want to see a mural that someone would see as ugly or offensive. Mr. Hanrahan raised questions pertaining to the content of the murals, who approves the content, and who serves on the board approving the content. Mrs. Hanrahan stated ArtWorks is a wonderful organization, but everyone has an opinion of what is considered "art." Mrs. Hanrahan raised concerns regarding the maintenance of murals, graffiti art, lighting, and repair to potential vandalization of murals; concern should be for the city and not ArtWorks grant funding. If Council is going to do this, they must do it right; she doesn't believe the plan is ready to go before the Planning Commission until it has clear and defined language. Mr. Bonsall asked Mr. Moore about the process of amending something once it has been approved by the Planning Commission; Mr. Moore replied by stating Council can make changes to it and come up with amendments.

Ms. Stevenson stated the introduction of the amendment document has guidelines defining the difference between signs and murals; there is a longer document available if anyone wants to read the defined differences. This committee has talked with ArtWorks since August 2018; this is not an effort to implement murals solely with ArtWorks. Prohibited murals are also provided in detail; there is not a board that governs the murals as a third party, as that would fall within the realm of Council. The property owner would have to give permission and agree to the mural being painted on their property. Ms. Stevenson stated there is a section that discusses Mrs. Hanrahan's maintenance concerns. Ms. Stevenson shared her email address for anyone who wants to share recommendations or has questions: LStevenson@norwood-ohio.com. Ms. Stevenson asked Mayor Williams for his comments on the matter of murals. Mayor Williams stated there is a lot to be considered and it will take a lot of input to ensure a right decision; this will be a very touchy and inclusive process. Mayor Williams will recommend the Planning Commission adjust the time of their meeting, to allow the public to attend the meeting to speak for or against murals. The Planning Commission will hold as many meetings as possible to discuss this matter. Ms. Stevenson asked how much more preparation is needed prior to submitting the plan to the Planning Commission; Mayor Williams replied by stating he was unsure but

recommends more than one Planning Commission meeting and then adjust the plan accordingly, based on resident feedback at public hearings.

Ms. Stevenson stated no contracts are in place, nor is there any pursuit of contracts; the committee is trying to create definitions and establish guidelines for outdoor murals. Ms. Stevenson reviewed several definitions and described what is allowed and applicable by permit; there is no intent to judge murals on their content.

Mr. Thompson read the definition of graffiti; he also stated we will never have consensus in a community or a committee of "what is art." Mr. Thompson advised not falling into the trap of defining "good versus bad" art; he suggests following the process of going to the Planning Commission and allowing discussion to take place via public hearings.

All members present voted, "Yes."

2) Parks, Recreation, Streets, and Infrastructure: 4/9/2019

On a motion by Mr. Clark, seconded by Mr. Bonsall, it was moved to accept the committee report and to request a letter be sent to the Safety-Service Director, asking for a new street audit.

Mr. Clark stated having a new street audit is a good idea, given that the current street audit is outdated, and money is being moved into a street fund for street repaving.

All members present voted, "Yes."

I) SECOND/THIRD READING OF ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS

There were no second or third readings of ordinances or resolutions.

J) INTRODUCTORY READING OF ORDINANCES

1) ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE/SAFETY DIRECTOR TO SELL SURPLUS REAL PROPERTY BY INTERNET AUCTION AND TO ENTER INTO AN EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO SELL AGREEMENT WITH KELLER WILLIAMS/PINNACLE GROUP TO CONDUCT THE AUCTION DURING CALENDAR YEAR 2019 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Clark stated he will abstain from voting on this ordinance because of his full-time job.

Mrs. Laake stated there were questions raised about a current and former police officer benefiting from this auction, because they are real estate agents; Keller Williams is a large international group with over 165,000 agents, and the police officers in question are not associated with the Pinnacle Group. Mr. Moore stated numerous auction firms within the tri-state area were contacted; only two of them replied with an expressed interest. At the time this was initially discussed, the city could not move forward until the back-taxes on these properties were paid. There is no rush in passing this ordinance and having only the first reading tonight will be sufficient; this ordinance authorizes the auction process to move forward.

On a motion by Mr. Sanker, seconded by Mr. Thompson, it was moved to hear the first reading of the ordinance.

Mr. Bonsall thanked Mr. Moore; he also appreciates Ms. Worley for waiting and believes she is a great choice. Mr. Moore confirmed the properties are now tax-exempt. Mrs. Hanrahan stated this was not something that was rushed through; everything was evaluated before moving forward with each of the properties. Mayor Williams thanked Mrs. Laake for her earlier clarification and for taking the time to investigate the questions that were raised.

Mr. Clark abstained from voting; all other members present voted, "Yes."

2) ORDINANCE TO CHANGE APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE YEAR 2019, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mrs. Laake confirmed there is a new exhibit that was placed on everyone's desks this evening; there were a few changes made. Mrs. Laake clarified that the Financial Recovery Plan is based on a cash basis; appropriations are based on accrual basis. Normally, the appropriations ordinance will match the Financial Recovery Plan. For 2019, there are \$200,000 worth of encumbrances in the Financial Recovery Plan from 2018 that are not included in the appropriations ordinance, because they were carried over from 2018. Mr. Thompson asked about the need to pass this ordinance tonight; Mr. Bonsall recommends passing the ordinance tonight, as it will match the Financial Recovery Plan. Ms. Stevenson asked about the list of changes within each key; Mrs. Laake reviewed all the increases and decreases for each of the keys contained in the exhibit. Mr. Breadon thanked Mr. Stith for the hard work he put in to making the updates to the appropriations exhibit.

On a motion by Mr. Bonsall, seconded by Mr. Thompson, it was moved to suspend the rules and hear all three readings of the ordinance. All members present voted, "Yes."

On a motion by Mr. Bonsall, seconded by Ms. Stevenson, it was moved to pass the ordinance. All members present voted, "Yes."

3) ORDINANCE PROMOTING THE "CITY WIDE STREET SALE" MAY 3rd – 4th 2019, AND ABATING ALL PERMIT FEES ASSOCIATED WITH THE SALE.

On a motion by Mr. Thompson, seconded by Mr. Sanker, it was moved to suspend the rules and hear all three readings of the ordinance, with the first reading in its entirety. All members present voted, "Yes."

On a motion by Mr. Bonsall, seconded by Mr. Breadon, it was moved to pass the ordinance. All members present voted, "Yes."

4) ORDINANCE PROMOTING THE "CITY WIDE STREET SALE" SEPTEMBER 6th and 7th, 2019, AND ABATING ALL PERMIT FEES ASSOCIATED WITH THE SALE.

On a motion by Mr. Thompson, seconded by Mrs. Hanrahan, it was moved to suspend the rules and hear all three readings of the ordinance. All members present voted, "Yes."

On a motion by Mr. Bonsall, seconded by Mrs. Hanrahan, it was moved to pass the ordinance. All members present voted, "Yes."

INTRODUCTORY READING OF RESOLUTIONS

There were no introductory readings of resolutions.

K) ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

Mayor Williams referenced an email he sent to members of Council on March 27th; he read the text of the email in its entirety. Mayor Williams suggests Council consider hosting a Committee of the Whole meeting to discuss an earnings tax increase; Cincinnati is currently at 2.1%, but according to Mayor Williams, they could potentially increase it to 2.4%. Mayor Williams believes Norwood should consider an earnings tax increase from 2.0% to 2.3%. Mayor Williams questioned the ability of an earnings tax issue being placed on the ballot that would exempt Norwood residents from a potential increase. Mayor Williams stated raising income, while also lowering operating costs, are needed to maintain city services; if possible, look at the additional income going toward capital improvements.

Mayor Williams also provided an update on negotiations and distributed a packet; one item within the pack discusses "Mutually Agreed Dispute Resolution Procedure." The city has nothing to give and the state says the city must follow the Financial Recovery Plan; the city is following what the state is telling them to do, with regard to following the plan. The city has to attempt to solve this issue on their own; the city and the bargaining units will be forced to sit down and talk or move on to a conciliator. Mayor Williams is hopeful that if the bargaining units agree to this, Council will then pass a resolution stating they will honor the decision of the independent conciliator. This action is the last attempt to try to civilly solve the differences; if this is the desire of Council, Mayor Williams will instruct attorneys to move forward. Mayor Williams stated he is hoping for a "spirit of cooperation" and will encourage everyone to work harder and be flexible. Mr. Sanker expressed interest in possibly inviting Ms. Babcock (with Clemans, Nelson, and Associates) to attend a future meeting to address Council on this matter; he agrees the city is at an impasse. Mr. Moore provided an overview of the current process: the city sends notice to the unions that they are ready to negotiate; if the city and the bargaining units are at an impasse, it then goes to fact-finding, where hearings take place and exhibits are provided; the fact-finder's report is then released; if Council or the union objects to the fact-finder's report, it then goes to a conciliator. This new process would eliminate the fact-finding process and go straight to conciliation. Mr. Sanker suggests Council think this over and let the administration know their decision.

Mr. Bonsall stated he appreciates Mayor Williams attending the meeting and addressing members of Council with ideas for consideration; these are items Council must seriously consider. The reason the city is in a financial crisis is because the city does not have the management rights to dictate staffing, unlike most other cities in Ohio; 60%-70% of the budget is forced to pay salaries. Mr. Bonsall stated that at some point in the past, an elected official decided to put staffing minimums in the contracts, and it has binded every Council since then. Mr. Bonsall confirmed there are \$7.6 million in capital expenditures for needed items within the Financial Recovery Plan; that is all put in jeopardy if an unfavorable decision for the city comes back from the conciliator. Mr. Bonsall stated the reason residents see Victory Park pool closed, Burwood pool closed, and other deterioration throughout the city, is because this Council and previous Councils were unable to fix them because of collective bargaining agreements; if this is rushed through and an unfavorable decision is made by the conciliator, all of the needed improvements will have to be set aside. Mrs. Hanrahan asked about a special meeting being called for the purpose of having executive session; if so, Council should consider doing so to meet with Ms. Babcock.

L) OTHER REQUESTS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

1) **Jay Brock** **Re: 562 Cleanup**

Mr. Brock, of Cathedral Avenue, addressed Council regarding the amount of trash along SR 562; the on-ramps and exit-ramps are in need of trash removal. Mr. Brock stated he walks Montgomery Road and regularly picks up trash to help with the aesthetics of the city; there are others in the community

who are happy to help. Ms. Stevenson mentioned the 562 cleanup that is already planned in conjunction with Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Keep Cincinnati Beautiful. Mr. Bonsall provided the cleanup details: April 13th, from 9am – 1pm, any interested volunteers should meet at the Seymour Avenue ODOT garage, at 1400 Seymour Avenue. The Norwood Senior Center bus will be used to transport volunteers to the various cleanup sites; Keep Cincinnati Beautiful and ODOT will provide safety training for all volunteers. United Dairy Farmers is a presenting sponsor and made a \$15,000 donation toward the project.

2) Lisa Ramstetter Re: Solutions for litter/garbage, parking, street lights, and roads

Ms. Ramstetter was no longer in Council Chambers.

M) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Bonsall stated the comments he made earlier were general frustrations of being an elected official in Norwood; they were not directed toward any of the ideas shared by Mayor Williams.

Mrs. Laake stated she attended the Duke Energy meeting; it was an open discussion. She shared the frustration of residents who are not pleased with how Duke “butchers” trees. There was discussion about the gas pipe-line; they are decreasing the size and the pressure of the pipes, doubling the thickness of the pipe, and burying the pipe deeper in the ground. There was also discussion about Duke leaving streets in better condition when they make cuts for gas-line repairs.

Ms. Stevenson mentioned the revised Standing Rules of Council. Ms. Stevenson had a question pertaining to executive session, and if a motion can be made with the session being held at a later date or time; Mr. Moore replied by stating a motion is needed prior to entering executive session at that meeting. Mr. Moore also confirmed that special Council meetings have been held for the purpose of entering into executive session.

N) NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Hanrahan commented on the two big rounds of storms that recently came through Norwood; Elm Avenue was flooded, and she stopped to help. Mrs. Hanrahan stated there were several other residents who assisted with clearing the drain on Elm Avenue; she requested the Clerk of Council draft a letter thanking the young men for their help with this matter. Mrs. Hanrahan shared the names of the young men: Christopher Taylor, Nicholas Taylor, and Zachary Hammond. Mrs. Hanrahan stated Mr. Breadon and his wife were also out surveying damage and asked if there was anything they could do to help.

Ms. Stevenson stated she had been contacted by two residents regarding Cincinnati’s Tobacco-21 (T21) policy change, in which merchants cannot sell tobacco to anyone under the age of 21; she would like to recommend the topic be referred to the Housing, Health, and Public Safety Committee for consideration.

Mrs. Hanrahan announced a Housing, Health, and Public Safety Committee meeting will take place April 17th, at 6:00pm in Council Chambers; Building Department fees will be the only agenda item.

Ms. Stevenson referenced Paycor’s agreement and clause regarding the hiring of Norwood residents; she has met with Paycor representatives. Paycor will be holding a hiring fair in late July or August.

O) COMMUNICATIONS

1) Mayor Thomas F. Williams Re: Mayor’s Court Fines March 2019

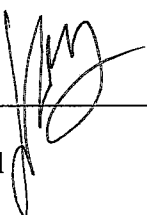
On a motion by Mr. Clark, seconded by Mr. Breadon, it was moved to receive and file the report. All members present voted, “Yes.”

Q) EXCUSE ABSENT MEMBER/S


There were no absent members.

R) ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Bonsall, seconded by Ms. Stevenson, it was moved to adjourn. All members present voted, “Yes.”



Joseph S. Geers
Clerk of Council



Donna M. Laake
President of Council