

The President called the meeting to order at 5 p.m. after the Invocation, given by Naomi Twine, and the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Clerk called the roll and the following Commissioners responded: Nikki Lloyd, Wes Poole, Naomi Twine, Dennis Murray, Greg Lockhart, Dick Brady and Dave Waddington.

City staff present: Jane Cullen – Assistant City Engineer, John Orzech– Police Chief, Rick Wilcox – Fire Chief, Matt Lasko – Chief Development Officer, Angela Byington – Director of Planning, Don Rumbutis – IT, Stuart Hamilton – IT Manager, Hank Solowiej – Finance Director, Trevor Hayberger – Law Director, Eric Wobser – City Manager and Kelly Kresser – Commission Clerk.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Tim Schwanger, 362 Sheffield Way, said \$2.8 million is being provided by the city for the design and \$4.9 million for construction of the Sandusky Bay Pathway with Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) agreements helping to pay for it (Item #2). He asked if there has been a documented determination from the Erie County Auditor's Office referencing the exact yearly value of the downtown and Cleveland Road TIF agreements. Tim Schwanger asked if the Cleveland Road TIF fund includes the increased property values for SportsForce and the indoor facility adjacent to it, and future property value increases for The Landing project. He asked what the anticipated date when monies from these two TIF funds will begin coming into city accounts and if there is an intention to spend it anticipating these agreements will be used to recoup city funds spent in the future. He does not think there is any money coming in now from these agreements and asked if the city is spending the money upfront hoping they come to fruition or if there is actually money coming in at this time.

Joy Noren with the Center for Peace Through Understanding, said she is a retired small business owner and founded and directed a language training institute which served international business for the professional community with English as a secondary Language (ESL) training for 32 years. Currently, her job is as a volunteer with the Welcoming Sandusky Task Force for the Center for Peace Through Understanding is a 501C3 non-profit corporation based in Sandusky at 431 Columbus Avenue. The Center for Peace Through Understanding initiated a Sandusky welcoming Resolution passed by the City Commission last September. Since passage, a number of volunteers have been working on behalf of the City of Sandusky with projects to promote a welcoming and inclusive spirit. Today, she is here to formalize a donation made in the amount of \$223.50 for one of their neighborhood projects. This is to plant a Peace Pole in one of Sandusky's neighborhoods. Working in coordination with Talon Flohr in neighborhood outreach, they agreed the city would pay half the cost of this Peace Pole and they would raise funds for the other half. A Peace Pole is not religious or political and is not expensive. This is a four-sided cedar pole which has the words "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in English and seven other languages of choice. There are more than 200,000 Peace Poles in 180 countries around the world located in town squares, city halls, schools and parks or any place where goodwill is communicated. They believe a Peace Pole with languages of our international residents and visitors will add to the welcoming spirit of Sandusky and is happy to report the process of raising money for the Peace Pole was very positive. The owners of 7-Eleven at Monroe and Camp Streets collected money for it in their neighborhood and would like to plant it on the west side of Sandusky near the store. The languages chosen for the pole were based on the nationalities of their customers who are both Sandusky residents and tourists on their way to Cedar Point and downtown. The funds collected were donated to the Center for Peace Through Understanding and in turn are being donated to the city. The Peace Pole is being ordered and they expect they will be able to plant it this fall and thanked the city for supporting this project. They hope it will contribute to harmony and economic development in the City of Sandusky. Dennis Murray thanked the members for their contributions to the city and for the work their group is doing.

CURRENT BUSINESS

Upon motion of Dick Brady and second of Wes Poole, the commission voted to accept all communications. The President declared the motion passed.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS**SECOND READING****ITEM #1 – Submitted by Greg Voltz, Planner****PROPOSED VACATION OF 20' ALLEY BETWEEN 1643 & 1649 CLEVELAND ROAD****Budgetary Information:** There is no impact to the general fund.**ORDINANCE NO. 19-123:** It is requested an ordinance be passed vacating a portion of an alley located north of Cleveland Road between 1643 and 1649 Cleveland Road - and between 1649 Cleveland Road and Lots 118 – 121 on South Larchmont Drive, within the city, as set forth on the vacation plat, a copy of which is marked Exhibit A-2, attached to this ordinance and incorporated herein.

Discussion: Dennis Murray said this was passed at the last commission meeting under first reading and asked if there is further debate about this proposed alley vacation. There being none, the President called for a roll call on the ordinance.

Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Nikki Lloyd, Wes Poole, Naomi Twine, Dennis Murray, Greg Lockhart, Dick Brady and Dave Waddington, 7. The President declared the ordinance passed at second reading.

ITEM #2 – Submitted by Angela Byington, Planning Director**AUTHORIZATION TO FILE GRANT APPLICATION WITH U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR SANDUSKY BAY PATHWAY PROJECT****Budgetary Information:** The total budgetary impact to the city would not exceed \$7,746,819.02, which includes a pledge of city funds for construction up to \$4,922,027.28 and design, environmental and right-of-way services totaling \$2,824,791.74. The total city cost would be paid with capital project funds pedestrian bike path construction, the downtown/Battery Park TIF fund and the Cleveland Road TIF fund. It is expected that the city will issue notes or bonds to finance the city's total cost.**RESOLUTION NO. 025-19R:** It is requested a resolution be passed authorizing and ratifying the filing of a grant application through the U.S. Department of Transportation for the FY 2019 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Discretionary program grant for the Sandusky Bay Pathway; and declaring that this resolution shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Upon motion of Dave Waddington and second of Naomi Twine, the Commission voted to approve this resolution under suspension of the rules and in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Discussion: Angela Byington said we are requesting ratification of an application for a BUILD grant. This is the second round the city is requesting to apply for as we made application last year and came close, but not awarded. If awarded, this would fund the remaining sections of the Sandusky Bay Pathway not currently constructed and not currently planned to be constructed as part of existing projects such as Shoreline Drive or Meigs Street. The grant is for construction only, not design, and the request is for 75% of the construction costs which is approximately \$14,766,000. If the city is fully awarded, the total cost for construction and design is approximately \$7,746,819. The city's share will be paid for with capital funds and various TIF funds and we will be issuing notes or bonds to finance the project. It is being requested this be passed under Section 14 of the city charter since the deadline was July 15 and we have officially applied. Wes Poole asked what we are actually getting for the \$7 million since some of the pathway already exists. Angela Byington said the sections currently under construction are Shoreline Drive, a portion of Meigs Street and the first phase which includes from SportsForce to the Cedar Point Causeway. This does not include construction on the Pier Track – it only includes going along First Street to Meigs Street. We would include the portion the city is responsible for with the design and acquisition and will be looking at the Pier Track as it relates to right-of-way acquisition and doing more detailed research on it. The sections to be constructed moving west include West Monroe Street from Water Street to and including Venice Road. This will go from the eastern end of Sandusky to the western municipal corporation through either existing

projects or a planned project Engineering has for Venice Road and all of the remaining sections. Dennis Murray said as he understands it, this is the same grant application the commission approved last year but was not awarded funding. Angela Byington said it is but the only difference is the ODOT inflator percentage has been added so the request is a little higher. Wes Poole said he would like to point out graphic representations which show the public what the city is spending their money on is a great help for getting the community to accept what we are doing as being a benefit. Matt Lasko said we anticipate our initial funds coming in during the first half of 2020 specifically from the downtown TIF fund which includes 36 different parcels subject to potential development. Each parcel may have its own 30-year window attached to it and we believe the first paying parcel will be the Schmidt Building at 246 East Market Street. This will be the first time we will see revenue from any completed projects as they run twelve months behind. Starting in 2021, we will see a much larger uptick as the City Hall project comes online from a tax payment standpoint as well as BGSU and the second phase of SportsForce. The first phase of the sports park has already been completed and is overwhelmingly outside of the city limits so it is not included in the Cleveland Road TIF. The second phase is about 95% within the city and will pay into it. We will not know the value of the downtown TIF until the Erie County Auditor evaluates the parcels included in it. The logistics and specifics about the second phase of the sports complex are the main revenue stream for the entire pathway. Dennis Murray said real estate taxes are paid in arrears and we are, in effect, earning TIF monies for projects which are part of it this year although we do not get paid until next year because they are paid one year after they are due. Matt Lasko said the best example is with the Schmidt Building which was done in 2018, but the reappraisal is occurring now and receipts will be twelve months in arrears. Eric Wobser said he spoke with the Erie County Auditor Rick Jeffrey about the valuation of the Cedar Point Sports Center and has had active conversations with the property owner for the indoor facility and while this process is ongoing, they believe the baseline will be at least half of one million dollars per year for a 30-year period. This alone is about a \$15 million potential. There is a payment in lieu of taxes to the Sandusky City Schools for ten percent of this, but this piece alone will help to backstop any of the expenses to be paid for the design of the first phase of The Landing project. Greg Lockhart said the commission has received communications about the ongoing TIF funds and whether they are taking money away from the school system or our ability to afford to pay for these things out of our capital fund. Eric Wobser said these TIF arrangements were very transparent and included about two years of conversations with the SCS Board members. Ultimately, they unanimously supported the passage of both TIF packages because they understood these projects will only pay taxes if they are able to go forward. It is easy to assume, after the fact, a project could or would have been completed without a TIF, but ultimately they could be a critical gap financing piece. The fact is ten percent of the new taxes will go to the schools for a project that may not have happened otherwise. For example, the Cedar Point indoor sports facility was probably the largest of the projects we will be paying into and will contribute over \$1.5 million to the schools over the life of the TIF. If this project were unable to go forward, the SCS would not have received any money so it is actually a net increase to the schools. In addition, the schools were very enthusiastic because they believe any direct tax revenue potentially foregone would not have been possible without passage of the TIF. It will add value throughout the city and will extend from the very western limits of the city to the eastern limits. Because we are a shallow city with regard to our depth, we are helping to connect every property in the city in a meaningful way to the lake and thinks the view of the SCS board members is the property tax growth which will come from this access more than offsets it. It was a very deliberate and transparent conversation and we spoke about it publicly with the City Commission and the School Board at public meetings. Ultimately, they said it was in their best interest and we believe it is in the best interest of the city and the schools if the projects do go forward. The schools will receive every single one of these dollars or projects which will pay into a TIF fund as payment in lieu of taxes they would not otherwise have received had these properties not been approved. Greg Lockhart asked how the city is able to afford our capital funds to be expended in the future. Eric Wobser said we dedicated one half of the new admissions tax increase for Issue 8 toward a catalytic infrastructure as Cedar Point requested. We are dedicating \$1.5 million in new infrastructure dollars which is beyond a pledge of about \$800,000 toward local street resurfacing, trees, parks, sidewalks, etc. The increase of the admissions tax was dedicated three years ago toward the construction of the pathway or other

catalytic infrastructure projects so it is “all admissions tax” funded through the capital account. We are putting these funds aside each year which are helping to pay the pathway’s portion such as Shoreline Drive, Meigs Street or Venice Road. Ultimately, the TIF’s will be able to finance most of this but there are local resources our admission tax dollars pledged to help pay for things like this. These funds are all included in the capital plan. Wes Poole said this explains why we all support the TIF project but asked if we have the money to do this. This is a finite amount of money for each of these projects based on no projections of how much money we are actually going to collect. The half million dollars a year projected from the Auditor is a start and all he is asking for is an estimate of what we think the money possibly could be to pay for this before voting for it. The schools get ten percent of whatever comes in. We all realize and expect the projects are of some value to the community, but now we are spending money based on an amount we do not know. Even worse, there is not even an estimate and this is all he is asking for. Wes Poole said unless the admissions tax has had a comeback, it was 40% down from May of last year. Admissions collections from the last report were down and these are tied to weather and a lot of other things. We should not abandon these projects, but he recognizes voting for them on pure faith, without even an estimate, is a big ask. He and Greg Lockhart support progress, but guesswork and hope is not sufficient and if we do not have any idea, maybe we need to think twice before committing millions of dollars to a study we have already been turned down for once. This needs to be thought through thoroughly. A twelve mile bike path across town is a big “get” and most places do small bits of projects when they have the money for them and evaluate which is done first based on priority of how it impacts a community. It is ambitious to go all the way across the town with one big package, but all of the money we committed at the last meeting could end up like whatever was spent in 2006 when the first bike path was planned. Wes Poole asked what happens next if we do not receive this grant or if we will be committed to something if we do not as this will determine how he will vote. Eric Wobser said he thinks we are being opportunistic in applying for these funds. How most communities do this type of thing is exactly what we have been doing. This year, the Shoreline Drive section of the pathway will be completed because we attached it to an existing project. Next year, a large segment of Venice Road will be completed and we are able to do this strategically and opportunistically because there was a planned water and sewer line project there. The following year, Meigs Street will be completed which was done through application to ODOT and included tagging along funds created for it. We see these federal funds as a way to complete another mandate we heard from the community. While not a certainty, we are utilizing the funds as pledges to match this grant for a possibility to complete the entire pathway quickly should we not be able to complete it or are not successful in obtaining the grant,. We will strategically do this project in phases but it will take as long to do it without the federal dollars. The section of the pathway currently being designed (The Landing Park), heading east to the city limits is the piece currently under design. We believe this section can be substantially completed through the funding received from the Cedar Point and sports complex TIF funds. The Cedar Point sports center or Phase I Landing projects are pieces already funded as well as Venice Road, Meigs Street and Shoreline Drive. The other dollars set aside from the admissions tax each year and the downtown TIF funds can be used in other phases. This is an opportunity to have 80% of the project funded by federal dollars which will speed it up and save us resources which could potentially be put toward other projects. Wes Poole said if what has been described were written on paper so he could look at it, this may simply be a lack of communication in terms of the way they are being presented. As he looks at what was presented today under Section 14, he cannot remember all of what was said with all of the long explanation. If this were presented in a fashion everyone could understand, it would be a much easier for him to jump onboard. He does not do well with what is unsure.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Nikki Lloyd, Wes Poole, Naomi Twine, Dennis Murray, Greg Lockhart, Dick Brady and Dave Waddington, 7. Roll call on the resolution: Yeas: Nikki Lloyd, Wes Poole, Naomi Twine, Dennis Murray, Greg Lockhart, Dick Brady and Dave Waddington 7. The President declared the resolution passed under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

ITEM #3 – Submitted by Aaron Klein, Director of Public Works**AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT WITH BARNES NURSERY, INC. FOR RUNOFF REDUCTION THROUGH STRATEGIC TREE PLANTING PROJECT**

Budgetary Information: The estimated cost of the project based on bids, including legal advertisement and recording fee, is \$86,683.15, of which \$61,683.15 will initially be paid with city funds and then reimbursed through the GLRI grant funded by the U.S. EPA and the remaining balance of \$25,000 will be paid with storm water funds from the sewer fund.

ORDINANCE NO. 19-124: It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and directing the City Manager to enter into a contract with Barnes Nursery, Inc., of Huron, Ohio for the runoff reduction through strategic tree planting project; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Upon motion of Nikki Lloyd and second of Dave Waddington, the Commission voted to approve this ordinance under suspension of the rules and in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Discussion: Dick Brady said it is important to note our Engineering Department has been very proactive for the last seven or so years on issues like this. This is a GLRI grant we have been successful in obtaining and this is a direct result of making tree planting a priority and thanked Aaron Klein for his approach as it allows the city to do a lot of things which do not have to come out of our own pockets. He read a Greek proverb today which talked about a society growing great when old men plant trees for shade they are never going to sit under and this is certainly the case here today. We are going to plant a lot of trees which none of us will really benefit from, but our kids, grandkids or great grandkids will. Greg Lockhart said this is a good product from the Engineering Department and also the Tree Commission. We will be able to fulfill these needs throughout the city. When he was on the Tree Commission, one of the biggest concerns was not only taking down trees, but replacing them. A lot of residents were concerned about falling trees or trees falling on homes or on property so this is an excellent opportunity to fill a needed gap. Wes Poole asked if the Tree Commission put together this list of where the trees will go. Jane Cullen said the members of the Tree Commission consulted with Tom Speir and the Forestry Department to select the locations and there is a list of where they will go.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Nikki Lloyd, Wes Poole, Naomi Twine, Dennis Murray, Greg Lockhart, Dick Brady and Dave Waddington, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Nikki Lloyd, Wes Poole, Naomi Twine, Dennis Murray, Greg Lockhart, Dick Brady and Dave Waddington 7. The President declared the ordinance passed under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

ITEM #4 – Submitted by John Storey, Economic Development Specialist**APPROVAL OF SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE GRANT TO LORIS PRINTING**

Budgetary Information: The city will be responsible for providing a total of \$15,000 in grant proceeds from the economic development capital projects fund on a reimbursable basis at the completion of the project.

ORDINANCE NO. 19-125: It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and approving a grant in the amount of \$15,000 through the small business assistance grant program to Loris Printing, Inc., in relation to the property located at 2111 Cleveland Road; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Upon motion of Dave Waddington and second of Dick Brady, the Commission voted to approve this ordinance under suspension of the rules and in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Discussion: John Storey said Loris Printing has been in its current location on Cleveland Road since 2012. For the past 53 years, they have been based in business in Sandusky specializing in commercial printing. Initially a Mom and Pop business, they are now in their second generation of owners of the company, Debby and Craig Hofer. The company recently acquired Lakeshore Graphic Industries, another local company, to broaden the services, offerings and expand their

coverage area. Today, the company has outgrown its space with these acquisitions and needs to expand. The building is approximately 9,000 SF, but the usable square footage within the building is 6,200 SF. This project will include a renovation and rehabilitation to allow the company to use the entirety of the 9,000 SF of the interior space which currently sits as garage storage areas and they will also be upgrading the site infrastructure and building utilities. Included in the infrastructure upgrade are electrical hardware necessary to operate their printing equipment, HVAC equipment, and plumbing and gas line improvements. This renovation will be to the northern end of the building which currently is a garage and storage area and is being done primarily to expand their existing operations and accommodate the new growth they are experiencing. This will allow the company to expand their roster of full-time employees and will permit them to grow their sales and revenues accordingly. The critical piece is the city's economic development small business assistance grant in the amount of \$15,000 which amounts to 18.6% of the total project – well below the threshold of 60% allowed under the program rules. The project was brought before the Economic Development Incentive Committee on July 9 and they unanimously approved the grant. The project will begin immediately and will be completed by the end of the year. Greg Lockhart thanked Loris Printing for continuing to do business in our city and expanding to the Hancock Street location and keep it where it has been for about 100 years. He appreciates this and said they have done good work in the community and have been a trusted source for printing for some time. Dick Brady said Loris Printing relocated to Cleveland Road a few years ago. When they did this, they had a choice to go a lot of other places other than in the city. They chose to stay here and this is the kind of thing that gets his attention and they really have 'skin in the game' here. The city is going to put \$15,000 in, but they are putting over \$30,000 into it and these are the kinds of things which make the city successful and will also make them successful. They are rolling the dice and taking a chance and this is what business people do. Wes Poole said we are all pleased someone who has been a part of our community for so long believes in us and we are more than happy to contribute to this. Additionally, the Hofer's are both big supporters of the schools and thanked them for allowing the city to be a part of this. Dennis Murray said a lot of people look at printing and think it is a dying industry but the team the Hofer's have put together are proof it is not. If one is entrepreneurial, smart and work their tails off, they can be successful. The comment about being able to stay in the community or move to greener pastures or a brand new space which did not have to be renovated is one that is important. We just saw this with Gundlach Sheet Metal who built out their space. They too saw the value of staying here and expanding their business and have added jobs. Loris Printing has also added a lot of jobs over the years and they have been quiet about it, but the city is here to toot their horn for them and thank them for what they do every day. This is difficult work and commissioners get a lot to questions about what Sandusky is doing to create jobs and spur economic development and this is a prime example of this. It is company-by-company and job-by-job and often requires a little bit of seed money on the city's part to make the financing work. We are happy to do this because it is a long-term investment in our community and we know jobs are being added at a pretty rapid clip for small businesses just like this.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Nikki Lloyd, Wes Poole, Naomi Twine, Dennis Murray, Greg Lockhart, Dick Brady and Dave Waddington, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Nikki Lloyd, Wes Poole, Naomi Twine, Dennis Murray, Greg Lockhart, Dick Brady and Dave Waddington 7. The President declared the ordinance passed under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

ITEM #5 – Submitted by Matt Lasko, Chief Development Officer

CHANGE ORDER #2 WITH BARNES NURSERY FOR DEMOLITION OF 624 CAMP STREET (TIME ONLY)

Budgetary Information: There is no budgetary impact with this legislation. This is merely impacting the deadline for completion.

ORDINANCE NO. 19-126: It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and directing the City Manager to approve the second change order for work being performed by Barnes Nursery of Huron, Ohio, for the asbestos abatement and demolition of 624 Camp Street project; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Upon motion of Nikki Lloyd and second of Naomi Twine, the Commission voted to approve this ordinance under suspension of the rules and in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter. Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Nikki Lloyd, Wes Poole, Naomi Twine, Dennis Murray, Greg Lockhart, Dick Brady and Dave Waddington, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Nikki Lloyd, Wes Poole, Naomi Twine, Dennis Murray, Greg Lockhart, Dick Brady and Dave Waddington 7. The President declared the ordinance passed under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

- Upon motion of Naomi Twine and second of Wes Poole, the commission voted to accept a donation in the amount of \$233.50 from the Center for Peace Through Understanding to go toward purchasing a Peace Pole.

Discussion: Eric Wobser said this will be the second Peace Pole in the city as there is also one in the small triangular park at the corner of Hancock Street, Jefferson Street and Huron Avenue. It will be nice to add one to the west side of town.

President declared the motion passed.

- Eric Wobser **congratulated Sgt. Ron Snyder on his upcoming retirement from the Police Department** which is effective August 7. Sgt. Snyder has spent 30 years serving citizens of Sandusky along with an additional four years of military service.
- **Police Officers will be distributing popsicles to children at the OHGo Bookmobile locations** on July 23 at Lions Park from 10:30 a.m. to noon as well as MacArthur Park on August 6 from 12:30 to 2 p.m. These are the last two dates of the year.
- The Fire Department received an **EMS grant from the Ohio Department of Public Safety** in the amount of \$2,765 which will be used to purchase equipment.
- Staff from the **Fire Department participated in The Gathering** in downtown Sandusky on July 13.
- The **tire lane on Monroe Street** has been completed between Columbus Avenue and Meigs Street. Sherman Street is scheduled to start July 22 between Pierce and Grant Streets. Another crew will be starting on Follett Street between Wayne Street and Columbus Avenue the week of July 29 which will also be a three-week project.
- A revised **utility design for the Jackson Street Pier** was finalized in late June and excavation and dewatering equipment were delivered to the site on July 5 with construction recommencing July 11. As with all projects, the schedule is updated as progress allows, but it remains dependent on utility installation and how late into the fall pavement work can occur before cold weather sets in. We intend to provide regular updates throughout the project and will let people know the deadlines for completion as we get closer.
- The next **Walk Wayne/Hike Hancock event** will be held on August 14.
- The **Planning Commission** meeting is scheduled for July 24 at 4:30 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers.
- The **Board of Zoning Appeals** meeting scheduled for August 22 at 4:30 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers.
- The **Landmark Commission** meeting is scheduled for August 21 at 4:30 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers.

- The **Public Arts and Culture Commission** meeting is scheduled for August 13 at 5 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers.
- The city continues to undertake an **analysis of all existing downtown events** including the car show with a goal of finalizing recommendations by the end of the year. The goal of this process is to balance the needs of existing events with the evolving needs of other downtown stakeholders. There have been questions within the community about plans for the downtown car show. While we had spoken with the organizers in the Spring, there have not been any formal conversations other than stating we are looking at all events to determine the best location and the best night of the week. Downtown stakeholders were contacted and we received responses from 39 of them. Our goal is not to chase off any particular event, but we hope all events continue to thrive and prosper and are trying to balance what is best for them with the change and growth taking place within the downtown. The idea of an event not having its permit renewed is not accurate and we are happy to continue conversations with the organizers and hope they will be in Sandusky for a long time. Greg Lockhart said organizers of both the car show and The Gathering will have their permits renewed but asked if staff is suggesting they be relocated. Both organizations are concerned they will have to relocate to a space which is not conducive to their events. Eric Wobser said they sat down with organizers very early on about this year and we spoke to some of the challenges we have heard from several downtown stakeholders about the event. We wanted to make sure we put forward our commitment to working with them to find ways to meet their needs. Several options have been considered including locations and the potential of shifting events to a different day of the week since Fridays are already very busy. It may not have been so years ago when the car show started. Weeknights may be the best time to allow these and we were very clear for every event this is a partnership and opportunity to make sure the event is served well as are the downtown stakeholders. We have not spoken to the organizers of the car show since the spring and this was intended to be a year-long process; no decision has been made and there is an ongoing dialogue taking place. Greg Lockhart said organizers of The Gathering have taken the position they were minimally taking up space otherwise utilized by any downtown business because of their location. The area they were in is probably one of the better areas and they were under the impression they would no longer be able to be at this location in the future. Eric Wobser said he is not aware of any specific conversation with organizers of The Gathering and cannot speak directly to this. Recreation Superintendent Jason Werling said he spoke with all of the special event organizers about the downtown area and some of the issues including the closing of Washington Street which is a state route. We are looking to each event to determine whether the impact of the event and the attendance is large enough to constitute the staff and resources to detour traffic around and outside of the downtown area. We did speak with Pastor Deb about The Gathering and she was told the city would try to make this happen this year but as we look at next year, it could be done at a different location. Greg Lockhart asked the result of this discussion and Jason Werling said a post-event meeting has not yet taken place. Greg Lockhart asked if this is about the number of staff persons available to meet the needs for this type of an event and Jason Werling said detouring traffic around the downtown is looked at. One of the other events where traffic is detoured is the annual Stars & Stripes celebration which has a pretty big following. Other events which cause a lot of streets to close down are also being looked at. John Orzech said we are looking at Washington Row and directing traffic downtown to Monroe Street and is primarily the concern to be evaluated to make sure this makes sense. We are trying to determine whether the impacts and attendance at each event are large enough to constitute the staff and resources used to detour traffic in the downtown area. We did indicate to organizers of The Gathering we would work with them for this year and will look into continuing this event in the downtown area and perhaps at a different location. John Orzech said we are really looking at Washington Row and evaluating this to make sure it makes sense. We did change the Ohio Bike Week event from using Washington Street on Friday and Saturday to only Saturday. Wes Poole said the problem here seems to be Eric Wobser is discussing this with the intention of making

a decision at the end of the year. This has come to the attention of the City Commissioners because, unbeknownst to them, staff has either said or indicated to folks things which are more definitive about what is going to happen. This is about communications. The concept of Department Directors and hourly employees working below the City Commissioners stepping up and making decisions or giving the impression they are making decision about major events for downtown needs to be looked into. People are indicating to commissioners they are being told things which are not accurate. People take what employees say more seriously than people seem to think. Eric Wobser said he has been communicating with staff throughout this process and this is the second iteration of trying to make sure we are communicating about these events to avoid misunderstandings and miscommunications. What has happened is there is a really heightened sensitivity to changes being made and we try to keep an open dialogue and have never communicated any changes were definitive. Oftentimes people are nervous and may go to a commissioner, to Facebook or other venues to express this concern. It is difficult because the second we start talking about some events is the second it becomes much more public. Unless we start talking about what is feasible for these events, we cannot have a dialogue or work with them and are trying to find this balance. Staff has been very sensitive, over a period of several years, and what is not represented in this conversation is whenever we close Washington Street through Washington Park, we hear from a number of downtown stakeholders who are frustrated with this lack of public access. Public access is a term which comes up often with this commission and if we continue to close this off, this is a disservice to our constituents who are trying to get to their businesses or are trying to utilize downtown streets. This is all about trying to find a balance and we will try to communicate. In some ways, we are getting our toe stubbed because we are trying to communicate, not because of a lack of communication. Wes Poole said he understands what the staff is trying to do and this is fine, but we should recognize what they think may have been conveyed should be compared and contrasted to what was actually said. Thoughts that staff is going out of their way to be sensitive is not supported by the feedback the commissioners get. People in the community who run these large events are perfectly competent and capable adults who are able to convey back information received from staff. He is not saying there is miscommunication, but writing this off as “people were nervous about the answer” or they are “given bad information” is not something he is prepared to support and suggests we avoid the situation where we anger someone to the point they come to the microphone and openly say this is not what happened. We do not need this to happen in these meetings and the concept where things happen in the community whereby staff needs to defend itself is not where we want to be. Management of our relationships with these various groups is for the City Manager to do and he is not going to tell him how to do it. The concept the City Manager is always right and others are wrong is different. The impact of which events occur that cause Washington Street to close in a two block area and redirecting traffic for downtown businesses depends on what the event is. These two blocks of Washington Street cannot be an issue because Cedar Point traffic has already been redirected down Monroe Street. There is a sign at Tiffin Avenue and Monroe Street telling people to turn and trying to say it is a major problem for businesses downtown for the traffic they are not getting is not something he is prepared to support. These events do not occur that often and he was downtown for The Gathering and the idea people who could not drive down Columbus Avenue to get to something in the first block of Columbus Avenue and had to drive around Jackson Street to Market Street is not supportable or that The Gathering is such a big bother for downtown. Some surveys have been done and decisions are being made based confirmation gathered which makes it all public information and he asked for a copy of the meeting minutes and whatever other information is being used to come to these conclusions. Greg Lockhart said now that we are in the planning process and the public has been contacted, he would like to see some of this information. Dennis Murray said whenever people have conversations, there will be misunderstandings and this is the reason for more conversation. A dialogue needs to begin at some point and this is good and it must continue. He accepts it will with groups who have events in the downtown. The quickest way to upend the city’s progress is to hamstring staff and if

someone misspeaks, this is something for Eric Wobser to sort out. We need to be cautious about criticizing the staff when one does not know all of the circumstances. He thinks about the city's past history and we had staff nearly in a state of paralysis in the mid- to late 2000's and he does not want to go back to this. As we have made progress, we have made it because staff has been empowered. This does not mean we do not need mid-course corrections here and there, but we want to make sure staff remains empowered.

OLD BUSINESS

Wes Poole said at the last meeting we talked about having a **presentation about changes to the Jackson Street Pier design and on Shoreline Drive**. He assumes there is a Change Order to be voted on and asked where we are on this presentation. Jane Cullen said she will check with Aaron Klein about this.

Dave Waddington asked for a follow-up regarding the **NASA intake**. Dennis Murray said we have been talking about the need for a secondary intake for quite some time and if this is a go, this is great, but if not, we need to move on to a secondary intake.

Naomi Twine said there were concerns about **residential parking at the Jackson Street parking lot** and the city took initiatives and made moves for better signage to be made and erected to help with this issue.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Dennis Murray said public comment at commission meetings is a long and cherished tradition and it is important for commissioners and staff to hear what people who appear here wish to say. This does not mean there should be an immediate answer or reaction. It takes time to process these things. The obligation of all public officers is to weigh the interests of often-competing constituencies including those here today and the 25,000 residents who are not here including those who are old enough to vote. We also have to think of our future residents as well. It takes time to gather enough opinions and research and think about the right answers. Against a lot of advice, Dennis Murray said he started answering questions raised during the Audience Participation section of the meetings or asking staff to answer questions in his role as the Commission President almost six years ago. No other community does this and for a long time, he felt it was a good innovation, but thinks this has gone too far and it has been abused on too many occasions. Public comment time is not an occasion for answering rhetorical questions, arguing policy points or rehashing issues which have already been fully addressed at these meetings even to the particular speaker's satisfaction. Going forward, we will continue as a commission to welcome the comments even if the factual points are inaccurate. This section will be limited to public comments, it will not be an occasion for individual commissioners to raise issues of old or new business as there is a separate time on the Agenda for this. Many of the questions posed during public comment time also seek information which is not at the fingertips of staff or commission. In order to answer questions regarding specific information, staff has created a new email address, askthecity@ci.sandusky.oh.us, and this icon has been added to the front page of the city's website. These questions will be answered during normal business hours and in a reasonable period of time or routed to the appropriate staff person. Both the Sandusky City Schools and Perkins Township have similar email addresses by which questions are routed to the appropriate department heads. He understands from both organizations this has worked well for the residents. He has been too lenient and takes responsibility for this as well as enforcing time limits during this portion of the meeting and this is no longer fair to the staff or to other participants including others wishing to speak. If this becomes a problem, we will not follow a confrontational approach which some jurisdictions take from time to time, but will simply adjourn. We are not going to arrest anyone, we will just conclude the meeting. Wes Poole said he (Dennis Murray) cannot just come up with a rule made up on his own. Individual commissioners who are individually elected can speak to questions brought up by the audience. He fully agrees there are some questions we do not have answers to and the public should be

told we will get back to them. As an individual commissioner, Wes Poole said if he wishes to speak, he can do so. Dennis Murray cannot restrict him from answering a question brought up at this meeting and he has a right to answer if he so chooses. Trevor Hayberger said he does not think this is what was proposed. He said as he understands it, commissioners cannot propose the question. Greg Lockhart said this potentially brings something to the floor which changes the rules set by the commissioners. Dennis Murray said there are existing rules about public participation and he has been too lax about answering questions. Greg Lockhart said he agrees about enforcing time limits and this is certainly fair, but this is the time and place for the public to ask questions and would like to see where this is in the rules. Dennis Murray said the public is welcome to ask questions, but we are not going to answer them. Greg Lockhart said he (Dennis) will not answer them, but he (Greg) will if he can. Nikki Lloyd said Audience Participation is a time for the public to express what they want to express and we allow them to have this time with a five minute restriction. Trevor Hayberger said this is not a question and answer session but the public can feel free to ask questions. Nikki Lloyd said the President is asking to follow the policy which has been in place for many years. Wes Poole said he has questions about this and the President cannot just put this on the table and not give the other commissioners an opportunity to speak to it. Wes Poole said he would like to know the answers will be posted online for everyone to see and asked what period of time they will be up for the public to read. Dennis Murray said he does not understand it this way and Wes Poole said this is about the public wanting to know what is going on and asked why a question would be answered and not posted and said this needs more discussion.

Nancy Bertsch, 105 West Water Street, thanked the city for addressing the parking situation for downtown residents. She understands this is ongoing, but said changing the signage was a huge help.

Tim Schwanger, 362 Sheffield Way, representing the Friends of the Jackson Street Pier, said two weeks ago a presentation was made about their above ground plans for the Pier. They stand by their ground since the final plans for the above ground work have not been presented by Donnelly because of the five month delay on utility work below ground. This body has the ability to direct staff and the City Manager to go back and have a sit-down with the contractor as to how to make the changes including shortening the greenspace by one third and eliminating the 3,200 SF pole barn or market pavilion which could be built anywhere along Sandusky's waterfront. This would add additional parking on the north end and maintain or retain space or location for food vendors who have been on the pier for 15± years. It has come to his attention there is going to be additional expense beyond the agreed upon amount of money the commission approved for this project with all of the redesign and engineering of the belowground work. It is not clear whether the transparency issues takes effect tonight, but asked if there is a dollar figure for a change order in the future for the five month delay. The reason he asks questions at the podium is because if one of the seven commissioners do not have the answer to a question, they would get the same answer he does. It is his understanding not all of the utility lines on Shoreline Drive are going to be buried; only the low voltage wires will be. This begs the question about tearing up sidewalks put in place as part of the Sandusky Bay Pathway which are not in that bad of shape. Nikki Lloyd has a business downtown and walks Shoreline Drive and Eric Wobser is aware of their conditions on the North side and this is a waste of money to tear up perfectly fine sidewalks. He sees asking questions online as an effort to have lack of transparency. If questions are asked and answered here, it is for the public who the commission serves, not just one person who asks it online.

Arlene Thompson, 1902 Adrian Circle, asked if the trees to be planted are dependent upon sidewalks being bulged. Residents of Adrian Circle lost nine trees because of sidewalk bulging issues. She polled her neighbors and every tree taken down should have been replaced; she should not have had to survey her neighborhood. This is the public forum to ask questions and people do not get the answers to them. The people of this city put on events like Ohio Bike Week, the car show and The Gathering because they care and love the old cars and the bikes. We put up with Bike Week a lot longer than the car show which is a lot quieter. She is not sure who the stakeholders are. She has been going to car shows for many years and this is not that big of a deal and everyone knows it. We have lost The Lunch Box and may lose something with the Cooke

Building. It is time for answers. If there are questions, these should be put on our Facebook page because the commissioners read these and keep track of what is being said. This is their forum and the Friends of the Jackson Street Pier asked for a meeting but did not receive a call. She wrote a letter to the editor for the Sandusky City Commissioners asking which one has the intestinal fortitude to say they made a mistake. The 25,000 citizens are their stakeholders, not the business owners downtown, and when someone goes into business, they take a chance. The commissioners need to start asking questions.

Deb Lusher, 3511 Matthes Avenue, said as the organizer of The Gathering, they greatly appreciate the opportunity to be a part of Sandusky and to reach out to members of the community. The event is not a religious thing and God gave her a vision to take prayer out of the four walls of the church and take it into the community and to draw it together with the church to be a part of community together. When they come together, the intention is to pray for our commissioners, for the city, for the Police and Fire Departments, schools and children. They bring it out of the four walls of the church into the community. They want to invest in the community and want to pray over the community and this is what they do at The Gathering. They feel it is important to be in the town, not at Battery Park, but where the community can see them so they can draw them in to help with addiction, homelessness, abuse and they want this opportunity to be out visually so people can see and come in. They have the opportunity to minister to them. They bring in community organizations who help with these issues and 13 organizations set up tables this year along with 14 churches of all denominations and races. They are about community, their voice matters and this is a perfect place for them and asked the city to consider not relocating them. They do this together as a community because they care about it and want to do this together.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:24 p.m., upon motion of Nikki Lloyd and second of Naomi Twine, the commission voted to adjourn. The President declared the motion passed.

Kelly L. Kresser, CMC
Commission Clerk

Dennis E. Murray, Jr.
President of the City Commission