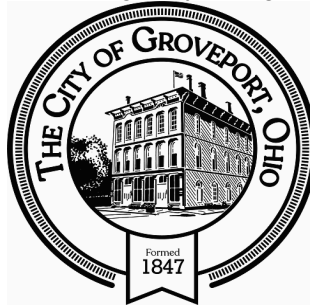


City of Groveport

655 Blacklick St.
Groveport, OH 43125
614.830.2052
www.groveport.org



Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 20, 2023

5:30 PM

Council Chambers

Committee of the Whole

Mayor Lance Westcamp

Council Members - Jean Ann Hilbert, Ed Dildine, Shawn Cleary, Becky Hutson, Scott Lockett & Jack Rupp

I. Call to Order

Committee Chair Hilbert called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Staff Present: BJ King - Administrator, Kevin Shannon - Law Director, Jason Carr - Finance Director, Jeff Green - Development Director, Steve Farst - City Engineer, Casey Adams - Chief of Police, Seth Bowers - Recreation Center Director, Mindy Kay - Clerk of Council

Guests Present: The Guest Book is on file with the Clerk of Council.

Public Service Director - Brian Strayer , Stephen Moore - Chief Building Official, Tom Walker - Director of Golf, Seth Bowers - Recreation Center Director, Jessica Wyke - Community Affairs Director, Steve Farst - City Engineer, Bob Dowler - Director of Transportation, - Personnel Director, Trevor Swackhamer - Director of Technology, Ruthanne Sargus Ross - Clerk of Council

II. Moment of Silence

Committee Chair Hilbert asked everyone to join her in a moment of silence.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Chief Adams led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Roll Call

Present: 6 - Cleary,Dildine,Hilbert,Hutson,Lockett, and Rupp

V. Approval of Minutes

The May 15, 2023 Committee of the Whole Minutes stand approved as submitted.

[#116-2023](#) COTW Minutes May 15, 2023

Attachments: [COTW Minutes 5.15.2023.pdf](#)

VI. Business of Guests

A. Madison Township Fire Chief Robinson

Chief Robinson informed Council that Battalion Chief Mark Ballenger has announced his retirement after 27 years of service. Chief Ballenger is also retired from the Air Force. His last day will be July 7th. Chief Robinson wished him and his wife all the best in the next chapter of their life together. He said it is very bittersweet for us and he will be sorely missed. He went on to say the Madison Township Fire Department is going to be working with Groveport Madison schools with the Stop the Bleed program. They will be providing training to the school staff in the event that there is an unfortunate situation and there are injured children and staff. They will be able to apply tourniquets and bandage wounds until the Fire Department could get there and get people safely out. The plan is to roll that out later this Summer and into the Fall. We're going to do the "train the trainer" method, which means our people will train their people and then from there they can train their schools individually. He said he's really looking forward to that and knows that Deputy Superintendent Smathers has gotten some grant money to provide those kits for the classrooms that include the tourniquets and bandages. We're doing inventory of what the classrooms already have and they will be able to use the rest of the grant money to purchase additional supplies. He said this just another prime example of our partnership with the schools as we continue to work with Madison Township Police and Groveport Police on our rescue task force training. He then thanked the City of Groveport for inviting the Madison Township Fire Department to participate in the Fourth of July festivities. He said they will be in the parade and their Honor Guard will be participating as well. Council Member Rupp inquired about any plans for the retirement celebration for Chief Ballenger. Chief Robinson said that at the July Trustee meeting, we will be presenting him with a flag that we give our retirees. He said he has not yet heard anything as to any other specific plans. He added that for those who didn't know, Chief Ballenger and his wife suffered a devastating fire at their home a couple months ago. The house was a complete loss but fortunately they found a builder that has already started the rebuild process. They are moving along with that very quickly and Chief Ballenger is heavily involved. With that said, he thinks the timing for anything other than the rebuild is kind of up in the air. Nothing has been made official but as more information becomes available it will be communicated to Council. Mr. Rupp added that when Chief Ballenger was hired he worked for him on his unit. Chief Robinson said that he is a special individual and has been a great asset to the department. He will definitely be missed. Fortunately, he has done a really good job mentoring and coaching others in the many positions and responsibilities he's had. We are very confident in those who are moving up to take his place. He brought a lot of value to the department. Council Member

Hilbert asked Chief Robinson to express Council's congratulations and gratitude to Chief Ballenger.

[#117-2023](#)

MTFD Monthly Report

Attachments: [MTFD Monthly Report.pdf](#)

VII. New Business

VIII. Unfinished Business

IX. Ordinances and Resolutions

A. 3rd Readings

[Ord. 2023-023](#)

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING AND DEDICATING AS PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS THE WATER MAIN AND HAYES ROAD ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS CONSTRUCTED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CA VENTURES, PROJECT SUNSHINE DEVELOPMENT

Sponsors: Lockett

Administrator King reminded Council that this relates to the CA Ventures development that occurred on Hayes Road and Pontius Road for a warehouse. That has been constructed, the public infrastructure has been put in place. This was at no cost to the City, as it was all privately funded. This ordinance is just that next step now that it is sufficient to accept as public infrastructure, which would become the City's to use in the future if need be. He then said that City Engineer Steve Farst is present if Council has any questions from a technical standpoint regarding this ordinance. Council Member Cleary asked if this was an additional building. Mr. Farst explained that this is a single building. He added that It's on the south side of Hayes and that the infrastructure that's being dedicated has all been built and installed. The whole process has been all laid out in the executed development agreement between the City and the developer. Mr. Cleary then asked if there was an additional Traffic Impact Study done on this. Mr. Farst said there was in the very beginning. It showed that there was not a need to do any kind of intersection improvements for adding turn lanes. The County wanted to see the travel lanes made more consistent with the development road standards that we have today. This ordinance actually accepts road widening, adding extra width to the travel lanes and adding a paved shoulder.

A motion was made by Council Member Lockett, seconded by Council Member Dildine, to recommend approval to the City Council. The motion carried by the

following vote:

Yes: 6 - Cleary, Dildine, Hilbert, Hutson, Lockett, and Rupp

B. 2nd Readings

[Ord. 2023-022](#)

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE RECODIFICATION, EDITING, AND INCLUSION OF CERTAIN ORDINANCES AS PARTS OF THE VARIOUS COMPONENT CODES OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF GROVEPORT, OHIO AND THE DECLARATION OF AN EMERGENCY

Sponsors: Hilbert

Law Director Kevin Shannon stated that this is the yearly update of our code. It encompasses everything from the previous year and first couple months of this year. We've already gone through the processes we needed to do as far as indicating to the public that it is on file and available to be reviewed if they have any questions.

A motion was made by Council Member Hutson, seconded by Council Member Cleary, to recommend approval to the City Council. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Cleary, Dildine, Hilbert, Hutson, Lockett, and Rupp

[Ord. 2023-026](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ADMINISTRATOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH GROVEPORT MADISON SCHOOL DISTRICT TO PROVIDE A SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER.

Sponsors: Dildine

Attachments: [Ord. 2023-026 Exhibit A.pdf](#)

Administrator King said that the City currently provides one school resource officer to Groveport-Madison school district. The school district currently pays 69% of the cost for that officer. They have approached the City and requested a second officer if the City is able to do it. He said it is not a guarantee that we would. He said he has concerns about our current workforce and taking someone off the street, but at the same time, if we don't have someone available we can hire somebody. The problem with hiring somebody is the contract is only three years. He thinks that will make it hard to recruit somebody. He added that to his understanding the school board has approved this contract as presented to Council tonight. He then turned the discussion over to Police Chief Adams to talk about any challenges or benefits he foresees. Chief Adams said that the Police Department has been going back and forth on what they want to do with the contract for the past three months. He

said that he and Mr. King met with township and school officials when it was proposed to bring in a second officer. It was asked of us how quickly we thought we could have somebody in place. Chief Adams said he reflected on this time last August when the Police Department had postings for three positions. We didn't get the positions filled until the end of last year beginning of this year. They are not out of their FTO until March. He said he had informed Mr. Smathers and Mr. Grube in their meeting that we're looking at the first quarter of 2024 at the earliest if we are permitted to hire to replace the officer that'd be going into the school and having another street officer to cover the officer in the school. Currently we officer Boso, who has been through the SRO certification course and another officer going in July. We will then have two officers who can apply for the positions if we decide to have a second officer. He said it will be a three-year contract, however, at the end of each year the City will have a meeting with the school district to go over the contract and do any fine tuning if necessary in order to make sure it is working for both entities. Something else to consider is we would need a second vehicle for the second officer to be able to travel to the elementary and middle schools. He said he looked at the breakdown of what officer Boso does when he's not at the school. About 50% of the time he's on the street and the other 50% he is either using his time off or going through training. He does not typically use any vacation, comp or personal time during the school year. He waits until the schools are on their winter or summer breaks. There is also training that the school district is paying for. Chief Adams added that the school district currently pays 69% of the cost for an officer, however it is being raised to 70%. That also includes the equipment. The breakdown of the school's costs per officer is in Chief Adams' report. Deputy Superintendent Smathers approached the podium and stated that the school district is trying to increase its collaboration and partnership. He said that is has been a year-to-year MOU (memo of understanding). He added that the school would like to do a three-year contract, but typically does not do contracts past three years. We went with a three-year contract to show our commitment to the City and our partnership and we did the same thing for Madison Township. Madison Township did just pass and the board approved it. He clarified that there are a couple things he's talking about, including extending the MOU, raising it to the 70/30, including some of the ancillary items that are costly and adding an SRO (School Resource Officer). We were interested in adding an SRO but only as to what the City can or cannot do. He said the school is willing to hire another SRO only if the City is willing to as well. There's no pressure and if it's in early 2024 that is fine. The MOU also talks about what it looks like for a SRO and our partnership, and also spells out their expectations. When we add the new

SRO, we would assign this person to the south district schools and help out at the high school. From what he understands, Officer Boso would stay at the high school. Madison Township is going to add a high school SRO then they would have another one patrolling the north side of the district. Chief Adams said he had spoken to Madison Township Police Chief York, who squashed rumors that since they don't have a Detective Bureau, Groveport would have to handle all felony cases at the high school even if it is a Madison Township case. Chief York has spoken to Franklin County Sheriff Baldwin. Sheriff Baldwin confirmed with Chief York that Franklin County would handle the felony cases in Madison Township so the Groveport Detective Bureau is not handling all the felony cases. Council Member Cleary commented that might be a little confusing. Chief Adams agreed and said that's when you have two different departments. He added that he expressed his concern to Chief York for equal distribution by having a Groveport officer and a Madison Township officer at the schools. He stated what he found with only having Officer Boso there, he was in the office over half the time doing reports. This will relieve some of that pressure and allow there to be an officer out there at all times. Council Member Hilbert stated that she thought there already was a Groveport officer and a Madison Township officer at the high school. Chief Adams said under this MOU there will be. Up until now there has been an officer there in the morning and one in the afternoon as school lets out. A Madison Township officer would come as needed. Superintendent Smathers confirmed that there hasn't been an SRO from Madison Township specifically assigned to the high school. Mrs. Hilbert asked why, to which Mr. Smathers said the Groveport SRO was assigned at the high school and Madison Township patrolled the north side of the district. We had Groveport Officer Herrera visiting schools on the south side and sometimes Lieutenant Short, but if necessary Officer Boso could also visit one of the south schools. Mrs. Hilbert asked Mr. Smathers if he thinks some of the problems we've been having would have been avoided if we'd had two officers there all along. He said yes and that's what we're trying to do now. He added that he wasn't here for the beginning of it, but thinks it's because Groveport-Madison high school is within the City that we had a Groveport police officer there and at all the schools up north. We had a Madison Township officer come help at the start and the end of school. He then commented that the partnership has been amazing. If we needed somebody we could call or the police departments would call each other and figure it out. We made it work but the extra officers are needed and that's why we're asking for them. Chief Adams stated it was also discussed that the second officer would probably start off in the morning at the high school, then head to the other middle and elementary schools. In case something happened both

officers, up north and in the south, could come back to the high school to give extra patrol other than the Groveport and Madison Township officers that are already there. Nothing will change with Officer Herrera because he's handling court duties and will be helping out at the Christian school, Easton career center and the Charter schools. His presence has been very well received especially at Madison-Christian and the career center. Mrs. Hilbert stated the residents of Groveport will also be very well protected at this time. Chief Adams agreed that if we get an extra officer to replace the one going into the schools, we would have a sergeant and four patrolmen assigned to each shift. Administrator King said there are a lot of moving parts with this and reiterated that Groveport is going to provide a second SRO to Groveport Madison school district. As we've talked, our current staffing would not be able to absorb that so we would have to ask Council to expand the level of the police force by one in order to hire somebody. This way we can provide that SRO to the school and still have the same level of service on the street. Mr. Cleary stated that earlier it was said this would be a three-year contract. If you hired an officer but they weren't guaranteed a job in three years because of the contract. However, in those three years we're looking forward to some retirement. He said also by the way the City is growing we'll probably need more officers by then anyway so if we go to hire he would throw the three-year contract completely out. Mr. Dildine and Mrs. Hilbert both agreed they wouldn't take a job for three years either. Mr. King said that's the support that Council would be able to provide with the expansion of the police force knowing that it is a permanent position. Mr. Dildine said having two officers in the schools will also help take the burden off street officers having to come to the schools for calls. Now things can be handled at the school without backup. He added we need to be proactive instead of reactive and he likes the three-year contract as opposed to a one-year contract. We can't exactly forecast how it will be in three years but we ought to be able to absorb them after three years in some way. Chief Adams stated if we don't count the current officers that are eligible for retirement right now, we will have two to three officers who will be eligible to retire in the next three to five years. One of those could be Officer Boso so we need to start planning for that position down the road anyway. Mr. Cleary stated that knowing this, we need to make sure we don't end up being shorthanded. Chief Adams said he was given leeway with not rushing to get that officer into the school. We will make sure that officer is trained and on the street, first. Mr. Cleary then said he is concerned that there will be confusion with using Franklin County's Detective Bureau. He said before you know it we'll have more than one case and we won't always get the same detective. Mayor Westcamp asked Mr. Smathers about the status of the security at the high school.

Mr. Smathers said they have five full-time security personnel and are hiring five more. The Mayor then asked what happens when one of them call in sick. Do you have a replacement? Mr. Smathers said there is no replacement. He said there have been some offers that were accepted and are pending approval from the board, then we will have ten safety and security officers. All ten will start at the high school. The Mayor asked if they'd be able to go to other schools. Mr. Smathers said yes and added that there will be a total of seven at the high school and three can then go to the elementary schools. Council Member Rupp stated he agrees with Mr. Cleary's concern with confusion over Franklin County handling certain cases and asked if there was a way for us to develop a process or algorithm as to how things get done. Mr. Smathers said we already do go by address because Columbus, the County, Madison Township and Groveport are all involved. Depending on where the address is and the incident happens determines which bureau and detective will take the case. There is a lot of communication and collaboration and it seems to work. He said he sees where one could think it'd be confusing but it actually works out. Chief Adams brought up the Madison Township officer that was assaulted at the high school toward the end of the year. He said the County handled that investigation because it was a Madison Township officer that was assaulted and Madison Township is contracted with Franklin County to handle their investigations. Franklin County is also doing this with Canal Winchester schools since they don't have their own detective bureau. Law Director Shannon said one thing to keep in mind is we have the same Prosecutor's Office as the County handling the prosecution of the cases and they do a very good job of coordinating with the detectives. If it's a juvenile county case it goes to the County Prosecutor and if it's an adult felony case it also goes to the County Prosecutor's office. They may be different divisions but all fall under the same umbrella that they operate under which should alleviate any communication concerns.

A motion was made by Council Member Dildine, seconded by Council Member Rupp, to recommend approval to the City Council. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Cleary, Dildine, Hilbert, Hutson, Lockett, and Rupp

[Ord. 2023-027](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ADMINISTRATOR TO SOLICIT PROPOSALS AND TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE COMPANY OR FIRM THAT SUBMITS THE MOST BENEFICIAL AND/OR ACCEPTABLE PROPOSAL TO THE CITY FOR PLANNING SERVICES WITH RESPECT TO THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF "AREA C".

Sponsors: Hilbert

Administrator King said that if approved this would authorize us releasing an RFP and receive proposals for firms to develop a plan for development of area C. We can decide based on what's going on in the region what the best use of area C would be and if we want to continue down the warehouse path or look into other types of uses whether it's tech or research and development. That's what this would authorize us to do.

A motion was made by Council Member Hutson, seconded by Council Member Dildine, to recommend approval to the City Council. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Cleary, Dildine, Hilbert, Hutson, Lockett, and Rupp

X. Financial Report

Finance Director Carr said one of the highlights from the May 2023 Financial Report was that income taxes were \$437,000 higher when compared to May of 2022. We've collected 49% of our budget so we're 30 days ahead when it comes to budget vs actual. The Golf Course and Rec center operating receipts were \$96,000 and \$41,000 rounded higher respectively compared to the prior year. Interest revenue is outpacing the budget. He said he had previously expressed concerns to Council about our sewer fund balance through May 2022 we're flat. We've had some changes in collections and in expenses and when you put April and May together we're the same as last year.

[#118-2023](#) Financial Report

Attachments: [Financial Report.pdf](#)

XI. Other Business

XII. Reports

A. Mayor - Lance Westcamp

Mayor Westcamp thanked Mrs. Hilbert for filling in at the event at the school while he was out of town.

B. Administrator - BJ King

Administrator King stated we didn't have any major issues with the Air Show. He said traffic seemed to flow well and gave kudos to Chief Adams and his staff. He then said our Recreation center Director Seth Bowers is in attendance and as part of his report there will be a

discussion about the entry requirements for the aquatic center. We've received some feedback about us requiring proof of custody and we want to see if we're headed in the right direction with this. We've had this in place for several years. Mr. Bowers has provided us with stats and information regarding this discussion.

C. Director of Law - Kevin Shannon

D. Director of Finance - Jason Carr

E. Chief of Police - Casey Adams

Chief Adams spoke about the Air Show and how it was very uneventful for the Police Department. He said they actually pulled back on two-thirds of the overtime come Saturday morning. Franklin County ended up pushing all the traffic north on Alum Creek Drive, which was really good for us. Some people parked at the warehouses on Rohr road, lessening traffic as well. He went on to say that he and Lieutenant Short had a faith leaders meeting out at Madison-Christian last Tuesday. They spoke about security concerns and brought in a security consultant to help guide them through some of their concerns. They also asked if Lieutenant Short would go through and evaluate their churches and see where there may be vulnerabilities with their entrances and exits. He said they were very excited and receptive about having women's self defense classes at the churches as well. He then drew Council's attention to the new City Police Department flag. It's been two years since Chief Portier retired and that was the last flag we had so we wanted to update it and incorporate our new patches.

[#120-2023](#)

PD Council Report

Attachments: [PD Council Report.pdf](#)

F. Economic Development Director - Jeff Green

Mr. Green informed Council that the two new businesses are coming along well. He said we have two contractors working on the bids now and he met with one of them on-site today. The site is ready and should be easy for them to do. Mayor Westcamp asked if Mr. Green and City Engineer Steve Farst about a house that had been torn down on Saltzgaber road. Mr. Farst said he'd look into it but stated he had received some questions several months ago about access to utilities. He said the property would have to be annexed into Groveport. He and Mr. Green informed the Mayor that no further inquiries had been made

since.

[#121-2023](#)

EDEV Council Report

Attachments: [EDEV Council Report.pdf](#)

G. Public Services Director - Brian Strayer

Council Member Dildine directed a question about the Public Services report to Administrator King in Mr. Strayer's absence. He stated that under Water Treatment & Distribution there were several shut off tags. He asked if the City provides residents with any information about assistance from Human Needs or something of that nature. Mr. King said the City has its own program. Finance Director Carr said the tag itself that is put on the door makes no reference to an assistance program. We have information at the office. Mr. Dildine asked if an assistance letter is something we could look into. Mr. Carr said we could provide a pamphlet. Some of the rules did change because of Covid. Mr. Dildine said we should try to help provide information to our residents when they're getting services shut off. Mr. Rupp asked if we handle our shutoff process the same way the City of Columbus does. Mrs. Hutson and Mr. Cleary said Columbus just shuts it off. Mrs. Hilbert added that they don't provide assistance either. Mr. King stated the City of Columbus does not go to that extent to provide information on assistance but at the same time the City of Columbus doesn't go to the extent to do a lot of things basically because of their volume. Mrs. Hutson said Groveport is just more taken to provide assistance and it's a wonderful thing. Mr. Carr explained the process. He said the bills will go out July 1st with a payment due date of August 1st. You have two weeks to pay if you're late. Then late bills go out and you then have a week to pay. After that week is up you get a notice that your water is going to be turned off., You also get a notice that is has been turned off. We can provide the pamphlet on the first notification or the second or both. He said to be honest it's usually the same people who are getting turned off. Mr. Kind said we can certainly send out a pamphlet and he thinks it makes sense to send it on the first notice in case it takes time for people to make arrangements. Mr. Carr added that the City does have a hardship process as well and we do allow people to submit an application to make that payment over three months. We allow that one time a year. Mr. King said that will be part of the information we provide to people in the pamphlet.

[#122-2023](#)

PS Council Report

Attachments: [PS Council Report.pdf](#)

H. Chief Building Official - Stephen Moore

[#123-2023](#) B&Z Council Report

Attachments: [B&Z Council Report.pdf](#)

I. Director of Golf - Tom Walker

[#124-2023](#) GOLF Council Report

Attachments: [GOLF Council Report.pdf](#)

J. Recreation Director - Seth Bowers**1. Discussion of Aquatic Center Entry Regulations**

Administrator King lead the discussion by saying with the pool opening and being very busy so far this year, we have received some feedback from residents about our requirements for entry to the pool. One of those requirements is that if somebody is bringing kids they have to show proof of custody, in order to take responsibility for that kid to come in. We require the id cards. He said we have heard some feedback via social media that nobody carries proof of custody papers and people think it is ridiculous that the City is doing this. Mr. King said he wanted to take the opportunity to open this discussion with Mr. Bowers here. There are things we could do to improve our policy but he isn't quite sure on how quickly they're going to be able to be implemented. He said his goal in this is to try to get pool entry requirements to a point where we can be consistent and not have to revisit the subject every year. He then asked Mr. Bowers to walk through the requirements we currently have in place, why we have those requirements, and the impact they have had. Mr. Bowers presented Council with an information packet and directed them to the first page, as it discusses what we've changed this past summer compared to the previous summer. The Rec Center ID process is the same as it was last summer. What we did change was where we sold the Rec Center IDs. We currently sell the IDs at the outdoor pool. This allowed us to open up additional work stations in the Rec Center to help with the line. If you recall, last year we were experiencing long waiting times and we've been able to greatly reduce that this summer. We've gone from two work stations to four for processing Rec Center Ids. At the outside pool, we essentially have two lines instead of three from last summer. We have our season pass holder line where anyone with a

season pass can come scan in their ID and enter the pool. If a patron already has their Rec Center ID they can go into the day pass line where they can purchase a day pass and enter the pool. He said the next page shows the day pass sales, daily visits and membership sales. Compared to last year our day pass sales are up by about 15%. Our daily visits, which include both day pass and season pass visits, has gone up 39% and this is only within the first fifteen days of opening. Our membership sales are up as well by 32%. He added that Chief Adams also has pulled the reports for the crime rate over the past years and asked him to share his findings. Chief Adams stated he went through the years 2018, 2019, 2021 and 2022. He skipped 2020 because of Covid. In 2018, from Memorial Day to Labor Day we had 49 calls to service. In 2022, we had 22. This is a 55% drop in calls to service. Last year we only took two reports and those were criminal trespass orders. In 2021 we did have more activity, probably two-thirds of the calls were from Memorial Day to July 1st where we had a special Council meeting. Afterwards, it suddenly dropped really quickly with having the IDs and being able to identify people. It's made our jobs a whole lot easier if we do have to answer a call to service. Council Member Rupp asked if he solely relates the drop to the implementation of the IDs. Chief Adams said yes and looking back to his years on the street he saw a lot of those calls. One in particular being where a two year old was left at the pool because the parents forgot him. They realized their child wasn't in the car and came back. There were several instances of children not being supervised by a parent or legal guardian. They were being dropped off and essentially turning it into a public daycare. He said he hasn't seen these types of calls in the last couple years since that special meeting where we changed a lot of the rules. The typical calls we do get are things like a stolen cell phone or stolen cash. We don't see the disruptive calls where a lifeguard is being threatened or there's another type of assault. At the most, we see people being disruptive in the line because they're tired of waiting. Council Member Lockett said he's really pleased with the way the process is working and with the policies we've put in place. His concern is with the things we are requiring, and doesn't see why we can't make it all virtual to the point where we have a kiosk. Patrons could just go to the kiosk and provide the needed information, reducing the amount of face time between the customer and the employee. It would take some of those young employees out of harms way, so to speak. He said there seems to be a couple issues, the first being the person who shows up with kids they don't have custody or any responsibility for. The second issue is grandparents brining in their grandkids without the parent there. He asked how the parent should handle that. He added that he had been a part of IEP meetings over Zoom where the parent was able to

electronically sign the documents, send them in with proof of ID and never had to meet face to face. He said something like that could be implemented at the Rec Center where the parents can do everything online and essentially not even need to show up unless they're picking up their ID card. He asked Mr. Bowers if he has looked into any programs where we can do that, whether with a kiosk or online. Mr. Bowers said that was a great point and actually that is the direction he thinks we should head as well. There are municipalities that are currently doing that, such as the City of Westerville. He said at the end of his packet he shows examples of what they're doing. The City of Columbus has their leisure pass, where in order to get into their outdoor facilities, anyone that is a City of Columbus resident needs to obtain the leisure pass online. They do require the leisure card application. The account needs to be created by a parent or guardian. The parent or guardian also signs off on the liability paperwork and they pick the card up from one of the community centers in the City of Columbus. The City of Westerville is another great example, as they use RecTrac. Our Recreation Center uses RecTrac as well and one of the nice things with going to the Rec Center IDs is our process is now much more streamlined. Whether you are getting a membership, a day pass, or an Outdoor Aquatic Center Membership, we require the same things. It's all in the one software database where their key fob stores all of that data. We've also looked into the possibility of providing the option for reservations. All of the information for each type of pass is stored on the key fob. Once the individual registers their information, everything can be done electronically from that point. Mr. Bowers then directed Council to the Online Forms Module portion of the packet. He said he'd like to discuss maybe implementing this toward the beginning of next year so that we're ready for the outdoor pool year of 2024. We do need to obtain two modules in order to make this work. The first one is online forms. This will give us the ability to have patrons electronically doing up for a Rec Center ID. They'd be able set up their account with us and then upload their liability forms, ID, and proof of custody if needed. They can submit their residency verification as well for the resident discount. From there, our staff will review the forms to make sure they are correct and accurate. The resident will receive an email and can track the progress of their submission through their account. If there is an issue our staff will reach out to the resident and let them know if anything needs to be corrected and resubmitted. Upon approval, the resident will be able to purchase day passes and memberships for the Rec Center and Aquatic Center online. In order to do that, we would need the Access Tickets Module. It is another portion of RecTrac that allows us to print tickets for day passes. These could be printed by the resident at home or they could simply scan in their key fob upon entry. If we ever

wanted to expand it, we could. We could do it for reservations at the Log Cabin or any of the parks. Mr. Bowers then directed Council to the last page of the packet where there are examples from the City of Westerville's website. They have a resident and a non-resident day pass just like we do. If a person is not flagged as a resident, they will not be able to purchase a resident day pass. He then said he received a quote for the two modules. It would be \$6,500 up front and an additional \$4,000 annual fee that we would add to the yearly RecTrac budget. Mr. Lockett asked if this will do everything we want it to do or if there was anything missing. Mr. Bowers said he'd like to dive deeper into the technology side with RecTrac and involve our IT Director, but from what he's seen and talked to RecTrac about, this would encompass everything we need and meet our current standards. Mr. Lockett then asked if the tickets needed to be printed or if patrons could show them on their phones. Mr. Bowers said he thinks they can but will double check. The ticket data would be on the key fob as well. Mr. Dildine inquired if Mr. Bowers had been in contact with the other municipalities who use RecTrac and asked about their capabilities and what they use RecTrac for. Mr. Bowers said he's been in touch with the City of Westerville to see how well it works from their perspective and the feedback is that it's working very well. Mrs. Hilbert asked if he's looking at January to start everything. He replied that he'd like to put it in the budget for next year. We'd need a couple months at the beginning of the year to put in some back-end work and set it up properly. His goal is to have it by spring before the outdoor pool opens so we can test out selling memberships at the Rec Center first. This way, we can figure out any bugs before the summer rush at the pool. Mr. Lockett asked what Council can do to ease the process for this year and help resolve some of the issues that are arising now. Mr. Bowers said what he's noticed is that our incidents have decreased so our process is good. We were able to get the lines shorter by opening up the additional workstations. Last summer the wait time was a lot longer than this summer. Mrs. Hutson stated it looks like the revenue is up and the problems are down. Chief Adams added that this year we've only had one call to service. Mr. Lockett then brought up the discussion of grandparents who are bringing grandkids to the pool and the parents are not there to sign the waiver. He asked how we are dealing with that and what the solution would be for that issue. Mrs. Hilbert suggested a notarized paper or something in hand that gives them the authority over the safety of the children. Mr. Bowers asked if Law Director Shannon would like to speak on the liability side of this issue. Mr. Lockett said if people planned ahead they'd have that paper Mrs. Hilbert was talking about but most people don't do that. Mr. Shannon stated he believes that one way to deal with this is that we could allow them into the pool that day

and have them sign off on a form stating they are the grandparents and they have been given custody of the grandchildren. Mr. Lockett said he thinks that is a good idea to do until we can get everything up and running online. Mr. Shannon said given that circumstance, we'd hate to turn them away. Because they are the grandparents, we could have a document or them to fill out in order for them to enter that day, and give them 24 or 48 hours to bring in the correct documentation. Mr. Bowers said that might put out frontline staff in a precarious situation. Say, we do allow them to sign on this document in order to get in, and they come back without the correct documentation again another day expecting us to let them in. It puts staff in a sticky situation where we're making exceptions for some but not all. Mr. Dildine said we try to get information out but sometimes the process is so cumbersome the information doesn't get through. We will get people who late until the last minute to get everything done. We need to find a better way to distribute information, and as we streamline the process it should all be better. He said his other concern is that he doesn't like the idea to turn anybody away. Do we let them in ten times? No. We let them in once and after the 48 hours they don't have the correct documentation they are not allowed in. He said he thinks grandma showing up with two grandkids and getting turned away causes more problems than making them come back with the proper paperwork. Mr. Rupp suggested those types of situations could be handles by a supervisor. He understands not putting young employees in harms way. Mrs. Hilbert said that letting grandparents in by just signing a paper but having others show their proof of custody doesn't go over well either. Mr. Bowers agreed and said we can't make an exception for some and not all. Mr. Carr made the point of it being hard to know if it's been 48 hours and asked how they would be notified that someone has already filled out the form once before. He said he was thinking this is a more manual process that we'd have to track outside of the system and asked if that was the case. Mr. Bowers said we have an emergency notification system that they use when they want to flag someone. He does however envision this being a more manual process where staff would have to log who has signed off on the document and who needs to bring in the proper paperwork separately from RecTrac. This will be more difficult for staff to track. Mr. Lockett said once we go online that won't be an issue. Mr. Dildine asked how many people we're turning away. Mr. Bowers said he doesn't have exact numbers but we do unfortunately turn people away. He said it could be for a number of reasons though, like not having a photo ID. That is a common occurrence. Mr. Dildine states that we put ourselves in this position by creating the rules they created due to the problems that we had. Luckily because of our stipulations, our number of incidents have been down. He said we built it for people to enjoy and we

keep turning them away because of some of our more strict and cumbersome processes. Mr. Bowers explained he did look into what other municipalities with outdoor pools are doing and they're all very similar. Some are stricter than us. For example, in Gahanna nonresidents can purchase a day pass only if you're accompanied by a pool member. Otherwise they have to have a season pass. Jackson Lake State Park requires liability waivers and parent or legal guardian presence. A signature is required as well. At the YMCA of Central Ohio, you have to be accompanied by a current YMCA member who is in good standing, present a photo ID, agree to have your photo saved in the system and complete a guest pass form. The City of Hilliard has a visitor pass that is associated with the RecTrac account, so they use RecTrac just like us. They require an adult who is 18 or older as the responsible party, visitors must present their key fob to enter the facility. We allow anyone 14 or older into the facility if they have already been in our system. They may come in without an adult. We do require individuals 14-17 to have an agreement on file. He said he thinks that's where rules are heading, and that it's becoming a more common practice to have a system in place where we know who's in the facility. Our process is a one-time process. It's not an annual or a two-year process, so if they're in our system they can purchase day passes for the rest of the season and for seasons to come as well. Mr. Rupp asked if the City will house the data from RecTrac or in a data center RecTrac has. Mr. Carr said we could sign a contract with RecTrac but we currently have the data on our servers. Mr. Rupp said his only concern is with hacking. We're going to have bank information and other personal information and it puts us at a risk. Mr. Carr said we had a three-year contract but it was \$45,000. At \$15,000 a year, it does free up space on our end plus a little more security. For the most part, we just didn't see the need to spend \$15,000 to have information stored off-site. Mrs. Hilbert inquired if we will have all the same forms, requirements and policies in place as we do now. Mr. Bowers confirmed it will all be the same. Mrs. Hilbert said in the meantime employees can apologize to patrons and say this is the policy that's in place. Mr. Lockett asked if it's the custody waiver that is causing us problems. Mr. King said it is the proof of custody because we've had to turn people away. Mr. Lockett then inquired if they sign a waiver stating they have custody, it would relieve us of the liability. Custody is a big issue, even in the schools because sometimes the child just happens to live at grandma's and grandma does not have legal custody. It could be a whole host of different factors, but if someone signs a document stating they have responsibility over the child, does that relieve us of liability? Mrs. Hilbert then said think about them getting injured at the pool. Mr. Lockett then brought up the issue of parents and children who have

different surnames and how we prove custody in that situation, and again asked if the City is relieved of liability if the parent signs off stating they are the parent or legal guardian. Law Director Shannon stated that if someone is making a representation that they have custody/care/control and are the legal guardian of the child that would relieve us of legal responsibility. Mr. Lockett said that may be the solution to some of the problem because my wife has a different last name than me, but she never carried around any documentation stating she's the mother of our kids. We've never had to prove that. How would she prove she has custody? Mrs. Hilbert revered back to having a notarized document. Mr. Lockett said then you have to go to the bank and get a notary and that is just cumbersome. Mr. Dildine said he doesn't like the idea of turning people away over a simple thing. Mrs. Hilbert and Mr. Lockett then asked Mr. Bowers how many people get turned away per day. Mr. Bowers said we could start tracking that to determine a number. It would be for different reasons. Mrs. Hilbert asked for clarification that any person has to get an ID card first before they can enter. Mr. Bowers said she is correct. Mrs. Hilbert then said when they get that card, they show all their information at that point in time. Mr. Dildine said this is for the people who did not fill out the proper paperwork prior to the pool opening. These people are coming up to the counter to try to get into the pool and we're telling them no. He then reiterated he does not like the idea of turning anyone away. He understands we have rules in place and we follow them, but there's got to be a way. He said he doesn't care if they are coming from far away or the house next door. If someone comes to our pool we need to find a way to either let them in for that day. We're not talking about someone coming in with 17 kids, we're talking about grandma having her grandkids for the day. We're taking way too many steps and in today's world, the feedback will be online. If we turn one person away, it will turn away many more. He concluded by saying if grandmas keep getting turned away, how do we fix that? Mrs. Hilbert inquired if the people who get turned away for lack of necessary paperwork end up coming back. Mr. Bowers said they do come back and we're able to process it at that point. Mr. Shannon said that the negative social media feedback mostly occurred in the first couple weeks of opening. Mrs. Hutson agreed and said we're not seeing it anymore. Mr. Lockett said he's heard a lot of it face to face from aunts, grandparents and others. He said it is a difficult situation but would also hate to turn them away. Mrs. Hilbert asked if a liability waiver needs to be signed for the Rec Center as well. Mr. Bowers said yes. Mrs. Hilbert said if it works for the Rec enter it ought to work for the pool. Mr. Bowers said the goal was to streamline it all into one. Mr. Lockett said we know what the goal is, but what is the short-term goal? Administrator reeled it in by stating we have

rules in place that were adopted by Council. In order to change those rules Council will have to take some sort of action, whether it is an ordinance or a motion to change them. If we wanted to move forward with doing this and having a liability waiver where somebody says they're responsible for the child. He said he likes the idea of it being just for a single day instead of having them come back in 48hrs because that will be a nightmare to track and leaves it open for human error. If we want to go the route of the liability waiver for a day, we should still require the ID cards and have all that information in the system. Then, If by signing the waiver it releases us of any liability, we would still the information and know who is coming in. Mr. Shannon further clarified that we're talking about a situation where someone could say their son has given them the authority to have the grandchildren. We're not talking about the minivan mom. Administrator King agreed and said we could even put a cap on the number of kids a person can sign for. Mr. Dildine stated if they took the time to have the passes then the information is already in there. Mrs. Hilbert agreed and said they have to have an ID card in order to buy a day pass, so they've already gone through all that. It should be said at that time that if people want to bring their grandchildren they will need to have documentation or sign a waiver. They need to know up front that they need to have something. Mr. Lockett said that grandparents are not going to necessarily get the parents to sign a waiver ahead of time. He said he doesn't want to cause Mr. Bowers any more problems because he's in a tough situation and doing a great job out there. We're seeing a vast improvement to everything out there, it's just this small portion we're trying to tweak. Administrator King asked Mr. Bowers what his thought are on having the process in place for this year while we work toward the online system next year, that everyone must have an ID card. Then, if someone doesn't have custody papers whether it be grandma, aunt, big sister or cousin, they sign the waiver taking responsibility. Mrs. Hilbert suggested offering a week pass for those family members who have the kids over summer or for a week. Mrs. Hutson said she likes that idea to have a special pass. Mr. Bowers stated his concern there would be keeping track of that. Administrator King said if we want to go forward with this process to please speak up. He said he knows it's going to be hard because in reality we don't know that it's truly the grandma, but we will have ID on every person who enters the pool. Mr. Lockett said if we have a special form they should have to write down the relationship to the child. Administrator King agreed and said it's just like filling out your emergency contact form at the doctor where you have to list the relation. Mr. Dildine then said if grandma or grandpa take responsibility for the kids they should be able to get into the pool that day. They can go to the Rec Center and get an ID card if they don't already have one. Their

information is in the system and they've already signed liability paperwork. What else do we need to do in order to get them in that day? Mr. Bowers said his main concern with the paperwork is where we draw the line. There are pools where a person who is 18 or older can sign off on liability paperwork. He said he's not sure that would necessarily cover us from a liability standpoint. Mr. Shannon said he's not comfortable saying that would cover us with just anyone who is 18 or older saying they're responsible for the child. Mr. Bowers said that makes him feel like we're making exceptions for some but not all if we're going down the route of allowing grandparents to sign off on grandchildren vs someone else who is 25 and wants to do the same thing. That would be difficult to navigate. Mr. Dildine said we can leave it like it is and work toward going all online next year. He expressed again how he doesn't like turning anyone away and that information needs to get out to the public. He added if we wait two months before the pool opens to implement the online system, it's not going to work. He said if Council has to approve it early so the groundwork can be done prior to January 1st he's sure there's money in the budget somewhere for it. Anything we can do to get this ready and streamlined ahead of time is best. He added that he thinks it would help tremendously to get the word out online so people can have their paperwork ready prior to coming in. Mrs. Hilbert suggested posting on the website. Mr. Dildine suggested an email blast, the newspaper or even a mailer to the residents. Mr. Bowers informed Council that the Rec Center uses Facebook and can certainly continue to communicate information that way. Mr. Dildine expressed that if the proper information had reached the public in a timely manner before the pool opening, we could have avoided a lot of these issues. Mr. Lockett asked Mr. Bowers if we are able to email a form to a parent to electronically sign and send back. Mr. Bowers said we have the liability paperwork in pdf form on our website so that's another thing that we can tell people as well. Administrator King said we could definitely put blasts out on social media stating what our requirements are to get in. He then said we could absorb the \$6,500 somehow this year to go ahead and get the process started. We can launch it January 1st and have it ready to go instead of starting the process January 1st. Mr. Lockett said it would really be beneficial to the Rec Center even in the winter because people still go there on a daily basis. Mr. King agreed and said it is certainly important to do so the staff can learn it and be ready to go sooner rather than later. Mr. Rupp asked Mr. King if he believes that, between himself, Mr. Shannon and Mr. Bowers, we could come up with a waiver process that might simplify this for the remainder of the year. Mr. Shannon stated that he could draw up a form to allow them to cover both the liability issue and make the representation that they have been granted care/control/custody of the

children but that's all he can do. He can draw up a form but there will still be other issues as Mr. Bowers has raised. It will get them in for that day and they will not get turned away. He said it'd been indicated that there would be a way to flag it if they came back to the Aquatic Center again, still without having turned in the documentation they were supposed to before. Mr. King said if we go that route and Council takes action, he would want to do it just for a day. He doesn't want a situation where people are asked to return in 48 hours because chances are they won't. That may be the one day they have to come to the Aquatic Center. When we go this route, we're going the route of taking peoples word for it, and that's ok because we can't say we don't believe them. It would have to be anybody who wanted to have that waiver for that day would have to sign off and take responsibility for that. Mr. Shannon said it's a one-shot deal. They come in, the issue is there, they have to fill out the paperwork and go through the process of getting an ID card and day pass. It gets put on the tickler system for when they come back in, they had their one shot and now we need the paperwork. Mr. King agreed and stated it would need to be told to them that next time they come they need to bring x y and z. Mr. Bowers said we could come up with process but it does leave room for some human error there. We would need to rely on our front desk staff and the notifications. There are some checks and balances that we can put in place from an administrative standpoint. If this is the route we go he would suggest it only be a one-time occurrence, and for individuals 18 and older. Mr. Shannon added that we're dealing with someone who is representing that there's some sort of familial relationship involved where they have been granted care/custody/control of that child for that day. Mrs. Hilbert said that could easily be someone who is 18yr old. Mr. King stated it could be an 18yr old who is babysitting for the day. Mrs. Hilbert suggested we leave things how they are and just get everything ready for when it's online next year. Mr. Cleary agreed Council should revisit this because of all the ideas that have been introduced. Mr. Shannon stated that if we get into a situation where someone says they're babysitting it opens us up to all kinds of issues. Mrs. Hilbert asked Mr. Bowers to keep a tally of how many people are turned away so Council can have a better idea of how many people are being affected by this.

Mr. Dildine introduced a new topic of discussion that two people had expressed concerns to him about. When you renewed your membership either at the Rec Center, you were given the option of a free Rec center pass or a pool pass. You got four passes you could choose from. The Rec Center quit honoring the free pool passes. The concern was that the City did not provide any notification that they were ending the program.

When the passes were handed out they did not have an expiration date on them. He said he'd like to come up with something to where people could bring those in and get them honored or stamped with an expiration date. Mr. King explained that the reason we got away from those is because one of the recommendations in our audit report was that any free passes given out should be numbered, that way we can track them. That has since been implemented at the Golf Course with free passes. The passes need to be numbered and dated. Mr. Dildine suggested we honor the passes that were already given out or it can be turned in for a new one that is numbered and has an expiration date. He said that this year if someone has a pass that we gave them we should honor it. After this year any pass that is not numbered is null and void. People spent money to get those passes. Mr. Carr said there were passes handed out driven by the audit recommendation at the Golf Course. There were also passes handed out as welcoming gifts to new businesses. This goes back years and years. He said that Director of Golf Tom Walker does his own prenumbered passes that he hands out. He had asked Mr. Walker if he still sees the unnumbered passes come up and if he was taking them. Mr. Carr said the Golf Course was in fact still taking them because nobody told them they weren't supposed to. He said it would be easy to implement the acceptance of numbered passes at the Rec Center so we're still doing the program. Mr. King suggested accepting the unnumbered passes this year, or make it so people can trade them in for numbered ones. That is the reasonable approach. If they're numbered we can track them and people won't be able to make copies of them either.

[#125-2023](#)

REC Council Report

Attachments: [REC Council Report.pdf](#)

K. Community Affairs Director - Jessica Wyke

[#126-2023](#)

CA Council Report

Attachments: [CA Council Report.pdf](#)

L. City Engineer - Steve Farst

[#127-2023](#)

ENG Council Report

Attachments: [ENG Council Report.pdf](#)

M. Director of Transportation / Senior Services - Bob Dowler

[#128-2023](#) DOT Council Report

Attachments: [DOT Council Report.pdf](#)

N. Personnel Director / Human Resources - Joyce Myers

[#129-2023](#) HR Council Report

Attachments: [HR Council Report.pdf](#)

O. Director of Information Technology - Trevor Swackhamer

[#130-2023](#) IT Council Report

Attachments: [IT Council Report.pdf](#)

P. Clerk of Council - Mindy Kay

Q. Council Members - Jean Ann Hilbert, Ed Dildine, Shawn Cleary, Becky Hutson, Scott Lockett and Jack Rupp

XIII. Adjournment

Council Member Cleary made a motion, seconded by Council Member Hutson, to adjourn at 7:25 p.m. All in favor stated AYE, None Opposed. Motion passed.

Jean Ann Hilbert, President Pro Tem

Mindy Kay
Clerk of Council

PLEASE NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM. A RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE DURING REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS.