

Chairman Harris called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Members present: Anthony Harris (Chairperson), Taylor Sutphen, Alexandria Esposito, Daniel Williams,

Ex-Officio members and staff present: Blake Harris (City Commission liaison), Jim Green (Interim Fire Chief), Ronta Hill-Morton (Community Impact Officer), Jonathan Holody (Community Development Director), Naomi Twine (City Commissioner)

Members absent: Valerie Cruse (Vice Chairperson), Vilicia Cade, Daryl Murphy

CURRENT BUSINESS

Updates from Community Development Director Jonathan Holody

Mr. Holody introduced himself to the Committee and said that he would be filling in today as the City is working to find a new City Commission Clerk. He then stated that the City has recently hired Marcus Harris, to fill the role of the City's first Diversity and Economic Empowerment Manager. He will work in the City Manager's office and will assist City residents understand opportunities available for employment in the area and making sure that the City is creating an inclusive environment for City employees as well. He will start working for the City on Monday, September 13th, and will be working with the Community Relations Commission closely.

Chairman Harris stated that since the Community Relations Committee only meets quarterly, he used to receive email updates from time to time from past Commission Clerks. He asked what everyone's thoughts were on doing a zoom meeting once a month or sending an email once a month. Ms. Twine stated that a zoom meeting or email would be considered a public meeting as long as there is enough members on at the same time constituting a quorum. She said that she could provide updates every now and then to the chair person or whomever would like one on an individual basis. She said that Blake also could do that as the City Commission liaison of this committee, as well as Marcus Harris, after he starts.

Mr. Holody let the committee know that there are several meetings coming up that the Community Development Department has been working to put together. First, the City is hosting neighborhood meetings where residents can come and hear about projects the City is working on and give input on what they would like to see happen in their neighborhood. They will take place on Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm and the following Thursday morning at 10:00am. The first meeting took place last week, and the last meeting will take place the first week in October.

Mr. Holody explained that the second meeting he wanted to share with the committee is the meeting for Cold Creek residents. There will be a meeting September 21st, at 5:30pm for the residents in the Cold Creek area to attend, at the Sandusky Career Center on Venice Heights Boulevard. This meeting will be held to discuss the property that is for sale in that area and

answer any questions residents may have regarding those sales.

The next set of meetings Mr. Holody wanted to share with the committee is about the proposed transient rental overlay districts. He explained that two City residents have proposed to staff and Planning Commission about areas in the City where they would like for the City to allow transient rentals. Transient rentals are places where people can stay in a residential area, for less than 30 days. The first meeting will take place Monday, September 20th at 6:30pm at the Fire Station on Market St. The second meeting will take place Monday, October 4th at 6:30pm at the Fire Station on Market St. Staff sent notices to residents in the areas of where the proposed transient rental overlay districts are, but anyone is welcome to attend. There is also an on-line survey posted on the City's website where people can give input on transient rentals.

Mr. Holody then explained that the Community Development Department is currently hiring for a Transit Administrator, so he asked the committee to spread the word on that.

One last update from Mr. Holody, is that the City continues to take applications from local businesses for the Economic Development Fund grant program and anticipates having funds again in 2022 and asked the committee to continue to spread the word on that program.

New Business

City Commission liaison Blake Harris stated that Devon Johnson, founder of the Proud Fathers Foundation is hosting a Family Fun Day event at Lion's Park on Saturday, September 18th at 4:00pm. There will be lots of games and they will be grilling burgers.

Chairman Harris explained to the committee that a gentleman named Danny Johnson, whose parents lives on Farwell Street, has been emailing him about his parent's driveway apron that is in poor shape and they believe it was damaged by the City snow plows. He said that he put Mr. Johnson in touch with the Public Works department and found out that the driveway aprons are the responsibility of the owner, unless they can prove that they were in fact damaged by the snow plows. He said he hasn't heard from him since, but this is one of the reasons he thought it would be good for members of the committee to be able to share information when people come to them with questions or concerns. Mr. Daniels stated that the committee could always put together a special meeting if needed and as long as enough members could attend. Ms. Esposito stated that when Marcus starts, she thinks it would be great if he could email the committee once month like past Commission Clerks did with updates on events that are happening and then maybe that could prompt committee members to remember if there have been any questions or concerns residents have approached them with and then let Marcus and the chairman know, in order to determine if a special meeting is needed or if committee members can just direct a resident to City staff that can help them. Ms. Twine reminded the committee that even responding to emails and conference calls can be considered a public meeting if there are enough members are on the email or call constituting a quorum, and currently public meetings have to take place in person now, but yes, that could be something Marcus can help coordinate.

Interim Fire Chief Jim Green stated that the Fire Department has recently hired their first female firefighter in 30 years. They do have a couple of guys that have put in for resignation so they are hiring for those positions currently.

Mr. Sutphen mentioned that Dr. Cade had brought up at a previous meeting about a Juneteenth celebration and he believes COVID might have derailed that, but asked if anyone has heard anything. Mr. Daniels stated that there was an event this year at the Pier and he was there. Chairman Harris stated that it may be a good idea to talk to the Recreation staff who put that celebration together to coordinate and have one big event for the whole City instead of having several smaller events all over the place. Blake Harris said that he can ask the Recreation staff to reach out to this committee before planning next year's event so that they can be involved.

Community Impact Officer Ronta Hill-Morton stated that since the end of June the Police Department has hired three officers.

Chairman Harris asked if Mr. Holody if he could give an update on the neighborhood meetings before the next meeting.

Officer Morton stated that the Police Department does have an event coming up called Sub Zero with a Hero, which will take place tomorrow night at Toft's Dairy from 5-7pm.

Ms. Esposito asked what the committee thought about the concerts at the pier that took place over the summer. Chairman Harris said he thought there could have been more diverse talent at the concerts, but he thought the turnout was good at the concerts and the movies. Ms. Twine said she thought there was a diverse group of bands that performed, but with COVID she thinks that probably made things difficult for staff to put together. Mr. Williams stated that one thing he noticed, was that it would be nice if there was one place where people could go to find what is going to be happening at the pier. He said that since there were two different concert series being put on by two different organizations, sometimes it was difficult to find the information. Mr. Holody stated that is a good suggestion. Chairman Harris said that maybe that is something the Register can put in the paper month by month.

The next meeting is December 8, 2021 and it will be in person.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion of Daniel Williams and Blake Harris, the members voted to adjourn at 5:50pm.



Attest: Jonathan Holody
Community Development Director
Date:



Anthony Harris
Chairperson
Date: