

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

**The Clerk called the roll and the following Commissioners responded: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady.**

**City staff present: Eric Wobser – City Manager, Brendan Heil – Law Director, Don Rumbutis – IT Technician and Stuart Hamilton – IT Manager, Jason Werling – Recreation Director, Arin Blair – Chief Planner, and Cathy Myers – Commission Clerk.**

**City staff via teleconference: John Orzech – Assistant City Manager, Michelle Reeder – Finance Director, Jonathan Holody – Development Director, Jared Oliver – Police Chief, Aaron Klein – Public Works Director, Josh Snyder – Assistant City Engineer, Jim Green – Acting Fire Chief.**

**Upon motion of Dave Waddington and second of Naomi Twine, the commission voted to approve the minutes of the October 11 regular meeting and suspend the formal reading. The President declared the motion passed.**

#### **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Dr. Marsha Cooper, 620 Harborside Drive, a long-term resident of Sandusky, said she is here to both praise our Commissioners and raise a couple questions. Dick Brady asked if Dr. Cooper had anything to ask about specific agenda items. She believes we have enormous accomplishments downtown and is pleased with the bike path etc., Sports Force and many of the amenities we have in our town located on Lake Erie that she considers jewels. So many Midwestern cities are spiraling in a downfall Sandusky is not. She is proud to show her friends and family when they come to visit, she thinks that in growth and resources we have done well, we culturally have the State Theatre, which we are now renovating, which she appreciates. We have also had quite a few people like Mr. Mylander, the Lange Trust and various philanthropists that give donations and stay here. She has elected to stay here because of the green space, being an avid cyclist and is happy about the bike path and has been on it a million times. She is not sure if this is really an agenda item or not, but the area where she lives, the homeowner's association had a meeting and there is something called eminent domain. Again, she is supportive of the bike path. At our Association meeting, it was said that the city was going to move about 92 fir trees, not only are they a privacy fence for our environment, but they said that they were just going to be bulldozed down. Also that the City was not going to reimburse us for that, but just give us funds to put up a very flimsy fence. So obviously, that got everyone's attention in her development, when we are going to be given just a small amount of funds for a flimsy fence. It was also said that the City will not budge, and each of us will probably have to kick in a couple thousand dollars to put up a proper masonry fence. We really do not think that is fair. If the City has money to give to downtown businesses and large grants, why could the City not pony up with additional funds so we could put up a proper fence not made of aluminum slats? The other point of discussion is the recreation center, many have been trying to champion this for many decades, we know Norwalk has built the Ernsthausen Community Center in '94, and many think – why cannot we do that? Hey, why cannot we get an ice skating rink – that would make our day? Years ago, the whole Midwest was going down, losing businesses, not just here, everywhere. We ultimately lost many small companies here but we managed to bring some things in to replace them. We want to hold on to our green space. I was told that the City wanted to take out Battery Park and that would be less space for locals, because many spend a lot of time down there, we hope we do not lose that.

Sharon Johnson, 1139 5<sup>th</sup> Street, said she would like to comment on the Cedar Point deal. The City is just coming out of a financial crisis and we hear about this deal, and it seems like the City never learns a lesson. We are on a spending spree here and we are addicted to spending. We burned through Issue 8 and several years of increases in water and sewer, burned through all that money. I think this is nothing but a bailout for the City, Cedar Point and the State Theatre. She said she is not in favor of \$1.25 million for the next 20 years going to Causeway Drive. That belongs to Cedar Point, we have no obligation on that roadway, Cedar Point did not take care of

that roadway – they neglected it. Now they have a lot of money to put into it. She is not especially thrilled with the State Theatre getting \$150,000.00 for the next 10 years. Our streets look like crap. The State Theatre needs to be self-sustainable, after all these years they still are not. The State Theatre depend upon people to get them through. Their benefactors have passed away and now the City is going to be a donor. The 8% admission tax is nothing but recycled money back to Cedar Point. Most of the money is going back to Cedar Point and their projects. She does not like to see the City bullied by developers, where they come to us and they say “Well, if you don’t do what we want you to do - we are going to pick up our marbles and go home.” That is not right. We also hold the bag on the deck. We have Battery Park and the Justice Center on the table for redevelopment still. We have too much on the table. \$4.5 million – you think that is a lot of money? That is a drop in the bucket. We are going through the money like crazy. The thing I am concerned about is that this deal is so big, that there is not going to be any wiggle room of a possible COVID shut down or recession. We are maxed out in creative financing. You try to go behind our backs and increase the income tax and that does not work. Look at Cedar Point and the City griped about 1% tax on admission tax a few years ago and now the City is doubling that. Last, but not least, while listening to the Finance Committee, I just want to bring this to your attention, two members on that committee voted for this deal, I know they are recommending – but still they voted. One member is on the board of the State Theatre and the other member is an employee of Cedar Point. I do not think that is right, and I do not think Cedar Point should have a seat on the Finance Committee. That is inappropriate. Thank you.

Tom Baskin, 815 Bardshar Road, states it seems the more things change the more they stay the same. We could have done this in 2014; everyone knew Cedar Point paid higher taxes, than all their other locations, except maybe one. In March 2014, Andy Ouriel wrote an article regarding Mr. Brady. He quoted Mr. Brady as saying: “The admissions tax issue creates potential conflict of interest for myself, as he has owned Brady Sign Company and Brady Electric, Inc., for 34 years, both of these companies have been a vendor to the largest contributor to the admissions tax collected by Sandusky Cedar Fair. Due to this potential conflict of interest, he may have to refrain of discussing or voting on the admissions tax issue.” Four months later, Tom Jackson quoted Mr. Murray; “I am finished representing Cedar Fair in my law practice so I can address the revenue issue adding that they hope to hike the admissions tax from 3% to 6%, which means a solution, must be found quickly, doubling the tax is a bad idea.” Murray argued, “It is too much and places the entire burden on replacing lost revenue on our largest corporate citizen and risks alienating and even causing them to move their headquarters. Cedar Point would not put it that way, but it is no secret either, but it is also reasonable that they will actively oppose a 3% increase. Since 2014, attitudes have changed, but conflicts have not, as far as he knows. I believe Section 243 of the Charter says that no commissioner or family of a commissioner can benefit from any of the contracts or deals made by the City. In 2014, it seemed to indicate that Mr. Murray did not feel he could even speak about it, but somebody did a lot of negotiating, because this is a huge deal. He thinks that the public does not have all the information yet, but it almost looks like Cedar Fair has written this deal themselves, because they are getting a lot of this tax money back. All the streets that appear to be benefitting from this are just the thoroughfares that will get people to and from Cedar Point. As far as the Rec Center - that is long overdue, that could have been in 2014 if we had gone to the increased tax then. If we had, all of you would be able to aim that money exactly where you want it. In this deal – Cedar Fair has already decided where the money goes. He hopes that we will get some more information but it will be too late for anyone to speak on it. I still see the same conflicts the Commission had in 2014 in 2021.

Brent Gardner, 831 Cedar Point Road, said he is here to speak in favor of the ordinance change that involves changing the elevation for the flood plain from current city ordinance to 577.2 federal flood elevation. The fact that we are two foot higher than what the federal FEMA requires puts us in a difficult position. When someone wants to make an alteration or improvement to a home and wants to stay true to the architecture and the style of that home, maybe installing an elevator for a handicap person - so they can stay in the home, maybe adding a detached garage for them. Many are not able to that without an extreme amount of effort. What he means by that is, normally you have to take it to an appeals process to get it done. If that elevation is going

to be higher than the FEMA floodplain requires but lower than what the City requires, it puts us in a situation where we are not compatible with the federal government. It really halts many from developing. I will use my own addition for example, that is what really brought it to light. When we put an addition on our home, it took almost 60 extra days to get through the appeals process to get it approved. The City employees in the Planning Department – they are great people – they worked very hard to get it approved for us. We really appreciate that. But that extra time to get scheduled for a meeting, and go through the process to get it appealed and be successful – that time delay more than doubled my lumber bill. It was not \$1,000.00, it was 10's of thousands of dollars in increased costs. I think it would behoove us to follow the FEMA regulations of 577.2 instead of us being at some other elevation, two feet higher than that. I appreciate your consideration of passing the legislation on that issue. Thank you for your time.

Chris Parthemore, 111 E. Madison Street, said he is here to address Agenda item 1; it has been evident for a while now that the City Commission supports the Arts. It is evident in public art and in the formation of an Arts Commission, and in the art exhibit in the City Hall hallway. The arts need advocates and people want to live in a community where the arts are valued. On behalf of the State Theatre, He would like to say thank you to the Commission and Mr. Wobser and his staff for their continued commitment to the arts and to the community.

Tom LaMarca, 206 48<sup>th</sup> Street, remarked about item 7, the fair housing program for home improvement monies, where \$34,833.00 for a single-family home, which \$32,833.00 was paid out of the CHIP fund. He said he would like to know how someone qualifies for this fund for home improvement. Items 1, 2 & 3, have impeccable timing because the commissioners have never favored an admissions tax increase at Cedar Point or a Recreation Center and suddenly we have a “done deal” with Cedar Point that makes such things possible. The Recreation Center never became a popular item until the Ice Cream Socials when the citizens kept prodding certain members of the Commission - suddenly they considered to push it through. That is an observation, He is sure the citizens are excited to hear the about face on these projects and He is happy to see that we are finally going to talk about a Recreation Center, and determine a site and see what goes into it. Item 9 – the EMS Fund, used to have a million plus dollars in it, and see we are purchasing a Pumper from the General Fund. He is just curious to see whether we have the \$642,000.00 in the General Fund available to pay for that pumper, and questions what happened to the EMS Fund.

Tim Schwanger, 362 Sheffield Way, said he has a few questions on agenda items. Item number 1, 2 & 3; the admissions tax increase and ordinances, his question is; why is number 1 being passed as emergency, yet items 2 & 3 are first readings. After watching the Finance Committee Meeting from last week and during Mr. Wobser's presentation, it was indicated that many details and complex issues remain to be addressed. What great timing, eight days before the election. Sandusky collects the admission tax and under the new increase, which appears that 20 million dollars of that admissions tax increase, is going back to Cedar Point for their private roadway. The City is constructing a small bike path, which obviously is not going to cost \$20 million. Can we get an explanation on that? In return, Sandusky gets a flooded pier - the G. A. Boeckling Pier & building which obviously need some renovation. In reading between the lines – the City will be using admissions tax money for that project potentially as well. The other issue is Sandusky Drive-In, property that in 2007 was purchased for \$460,000.00 by the Trust for Public Lands for the City as a permanent – not so permanent now – conservation easement. That shoots the idea that conservation easements are forever. The original ordinance states: Revenues for general municipal operations includes maintenance, capital improvements, new equipment and other expenses of the City for government functions. The new ordinance is like a spider web of could be's, may be's, will be's and might be's. The State Theatre, and we still have Mr. Parthemore here somewhere, he made a statement for the paper that they were well insured for the damages. A Go Fund Me account was created for the Theatre. I think a local non-profit opened an account at one of the local banks. A million-dollar grant – I wish someone tonight would comment where we are with The State Theatre needing that money. Is that gap financing for construction? Did they not raise enough money or were they not insured? The new agreement gives \$150,000.00

a year towards the State Theatre for 10 years at \$1.5 million, if he is reading this right. Is that going directly to the State Theatre, or is it for programming at the Jackson Street Pier or some other function? On number 9, last question, as Mr. LaMarca stated, \$642,000.00 for a new pumper out of the capital fund, are we selling notes and bonds for that? Are we paying cash for that? Are we using the EMS Fund for that? Is the EMS Fund bankrupt?

Steve Poggiali, 1033 Wayne Street, said he thinks the Cedar Point deal is a good deal. He thinks what everybody is failing to realize is that this is a situation where many of these things will be paid for by other people's money. You know anytime you can pay for many things by people who come into the community, it frees up funding for other projects. To comment on the Rec Center, the reason the Commission may not have settled on the Rec Center was that they did not have the funds up until this point.

### **SPECIAL PRESENTATION – ICE CREAM SOCIALS, Arin Blair, Chief Planner**

Thank you President Brady and fellow Commissioners, residents, staff and everyone who came to these meetings. It was great to get out into the neighborhoods and talk with people. Also thank you to the Police Department, the Fire Department, the Community Development Department who helped us hang 4,000 tags on resident doorsteps to invite them this meetings series. We have a brief summary of the top finds of what we heard. They are all together in one list of the top 8 findings, but we also have some take-a-ways for you if you want to read this presentation later about each of the parks. The purpose of these meetings was to celebrate accomplishments that happened over the past 5 years as we see this process takes a lot of people, it takes residents, and Commissioners, elected officials, volunteers, staff, to make these accomplishments happen. While we look backward 5 years, what did we do, what did we accomplish, and looking forward 5 years, what is our plan? We want to get out into the neighborhoods to listen and learn from residents. We want to understand what is on the top of people's minds and what are we going to focus on in the future. We were represented by multiple departments to answer direct questions, so people were able to show up and have a conversation and have questions answered when they got there. We brought a bunch of stuff with us. Because we wanted to have questions answered and things to present. We have the citywide poster we showed on the previous slide; we had a poster for each of the neighborhoods. These were the 6 neighborhoods identified in the Bicentennial Plan for investment in the Sandusky Neighborhood Initiative. That is why we focused on these specific neighborhoods. They are really a pilot and proxy for the whole City. We had some handouts with information and we had a visioning board to talk about and gather feedback about what is on people's minds, what for the future, and what is the next big project or big investment they would like to see in the next 5 years. We had individual comment sheets, so if folks wanted to write down a long question, or give us their information, we were able to collect those as well. We conducted the meetings in 6 locations, we had 12 scheduled meetings, and we ended up cancelling one because of inclement weather. We held 11 events. We hosted the ice cream socials on Wednesday evenings and then we did a follow-up on Thursday mornings so residents had more than one opportunity per neighborhood to attend. Again, we had a member of the staff departments at each meeting and we saw all the City Commissioners, thank you once again - that came out and joined us, and a number of other commissioners from other boards and commissions. We had 120 residents by our count. We documented 225 comments from those residents. Within those comments, some of which are multiple topics, we analyzed each topic that came up on those comments and we found 275 ideas within those comments. We foiled those into 8 big themes, with some examples to share with you today. The top 4 got the highest number of comments. We will walk through those first four. The top (30%) comment we heard was about wanting Commission to keep investing in Parks and Recreation. This includes the park amenities, improvements, connecting bicycle connectivity throughout the neighborhoods, and the pathway, continuing to produce the events and programs that have been happening and the need for a Recreation Center came up quite a number of times. Second (24%) was to continue paving the streets and focusing on pedestrian safety. We received many specific questions about when we were going to repave certain streets and timelines, could a crosswalk be added, four-way stops and such. A walkable city is surely on people's minds. The third (16%) was to insure housing options and beautify neighborhoods – this had to do with code

enforcement, grant programming, and things to help the existing homes continue to look nice and be comfortable and safe. Also to redevelop some new housing options in neighborhoods, housing affordability today and long-term. The fourth big theme was (10%) promoting local business and economic advancement. There were comments pertaining to programming for entrepreneurs, job training for individuals, business incubation to help businesses grow, and fostering new retail options like grocery stores came up a number of times, new restaurants and small business. The next four, we heard a lot of keep up the great work, excitement and gratitude for the City overall, including recent projects, events and investments. We heard about increasing the sense of safety in neighborhoods, a lot of those comments were about increasing street lighting, and adding lighting to parks also some things about solving neighbor conflicts. Attracting redevelopment in larger sites such as Sandusky Plaza came up a number of times. Also beautification of underutilized spaces. Finally, continuing to incorporate environmental sustainability, including flood erosion, mitigation, and continued investment in our water and sewer services and the water quality in the Bay. Therefore, what we will do with this information from a staff prospective and from a City Commission prospective is to use this neighborhood feedback when setting our budget priorities and policy direction. In addition, when we are planning events and projects over the next 5 years and evaluating the existing programs that we have and how we will continue to improve the programs in the future. Arin thanked everyone who participated in these meetings – it was so valuable to have these conversations. If anyone would like to view or download this presentation, it is posted on [www.CityofSandusky.com/neighborhoods](http://www.CityofSandusky.com/neighborhoods).

*Comments:*

Dave Waddington commented that this was a good presentation but hoped going into the future that we could have more contact in the neighborhoods, and maybe go back. During the winter, especially with COVID, it is tough right now. He would like to see more follow-up and have a larger number of residents to hear their concerns. Some of the residents could not make it because of the time and work. Going forward any information we can get and build off of to come up with a good composite of what we really want to do for residents, and safety is one of the top things. Arin Blair responded that she would love to get out more and have conversations, She was happy to help facilitate or create a meeting to listen. It was great to have the feedback to talk about what was wanted and what we really need to do.

Wes Poole thanked Arin Blair for the summary, and requested besides putting the presentation on the website if she forward all information which lead to the summary, including all 275 comments that were made. Arin Blair responded that she had a methodology that is a description of how we got to these results, and how they were quantified. Just a short summary of the top things of each.

**President Brady announced the opening of a PUBLIC HEARING**

Proposed Amendments to the Planning and Zoning Code, Chapter 1157 – Floodplain Administration, Josh Snyder, Assistant City Engineer. There are a few changes specific to Chapter 1157 that he would like to point out – updates to the flood plain maps designating areas of Sandusky. With technology, FEMA, and better information, new maps are generated. We have been sitting on a preliminary new flood plan map since 2019, FEMA has told us numerous times it is going to become effective, but time and time again these dates have come and gone. We know it is coming, and associated with the new map is coming a new terminology and definitions. The bulk of updating our ordinance is in order to meet FEMA's model ordinance and their language and terminology. That is the bulk of the changes from our previous Chapter 1157, which is from 2008. A couple other items to note specifically sections that we have amended; we have removed the 2-foot freeboard. In 2008, the City decided to make the standard higher than what FEMA says. The term is freeboard, above and beyond the standard. We also updated sections of this chapter so that we can do repairs on city property more quickly, particularly along the shoreline. There are also some amendments that were made at the recommendation of the Planning Commission, several Planning Commission meetings heard this, and they combed over it thoroughly, one of the suggestions that was made is terminology regarding the 100-year flood, also known as the 1% annual chance flood. The other change that was incorporated at the

request of the Planning Commission was how a variance would be sought and how the Board of Zoning and Appeals would review it.

*Comments:*

Mike Meinzer agrees with Mr. Gardner from earlier this evening, that the 2-foot flood plain “freeboard” restricts new development. However, for folks in town that do live in the flood plain, which a lot of Sandusky is, it is really restricted for minor improvements or modifications to their homes. I tried to look through Planning Commission agenda and minutes and look for the u-tube videos, maybe Dennis Murray or Eric Wobser would be able to help with it. I see the reduction of improvements from \$5000 to \$2500. I believe \$2500 is a minor improvement to have to go through the flood plain process. You cannot put a roof on for \$2500. I just wondered what the thought process was for reducing from \$5000 to \$2500 for the permit process. Dennis Murray said he did not recall the answer specifically for Mike Meinzer’s question coming up at the Planning Commission meetings. I think that was part of the legislation presented to us. The Planning Commission did debate this at many meetings – I think 4 maybe 5. I do agree with Josh Snyder’s presentation. While we were under the 2-foot freeboard people applied for variances and they were always granted. I do also agree with comments Mr. Gardner made really these are such particular decisions as to where you are in the flood plain and what your plan for construction is. It is best to know what the flood plain is so they can make their own assessment of costs and benefits. President Brady asked Josh Snyder if he knew why there was the change in the permit process. Josh Snyder commented that it was a FEMA update. Previously any maintenance or structural work \$5000 or greater required the permit, and the homeowner had to go through the process. They are lessening that, I am guessing that they are auditing this and made the change themselves. To Mike Meinzer’s point, \$2500 does not go very far, but then \$5000 does not either with most construction. Wes Poole pointed out, just for clarity, that the change was a FEMA change, not the Planning Commission change.

**President Brady, hearing no further questions or comments, declared this Public Hearing closed.**

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**The President asked if the commissioners wished to remove any of the items on the Consent Agenda. There were no requests to do so.**

**ITEM A – Submitted by Aaron Klein, Public Works Director**

**APPROVAL TO SUBMIT ODNR URBAN TREE CANOPY GRANT**

**Budgetary Information:** The estimated cost of the project is \$20,000, of which will initially be paid with City funds and then reimbursed through the grant program, their match is 50%.

**RESOLUTION NO. 043-21R:** It is requested a resolution be passed approving the submission of a grant application to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, for financial assistance through the Urban Canopy Restoration Grant Program for the 2022 Urban Canopy Project; and declaring that this resolution shall take immediate effect in accordance with section 14 of the City Charter.

**ITEM B – Submitted by Aaron Klein, Public Works Director**

**PURCHASE OF ROCK SALT FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2022**

**Budgetary Information:** Funds for the purchase of bulk rock salt are routinely budgeted in the Street Fund each year. The total allocation for 2022 would be \$112,500.00.

**ORDINANCE NO. 21-148:** It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and directing the City Manager to purchase bulk highway deicing rock salt for the Division of Streets & Traffic to be used in the calendar year 2022 from Compass Minerals America, Inc. of Overland Park, Kansas; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

**ITEM C – Submitted by Cathy Myers, Commission Clerk**

**NEW LIQUOR PERMIT FOR SIP & SPIN, LLC**

**Budgetary Information:** There is no budgetary impact for this item.

**Notice to Legislative Authority for a new D1** (*beer only for on premises consumption or in original sealed containers for carryout only until 1 a.m.*) **and D3** (*spirituous liquor for on premises consumption only until 1 a.m.*) **liquor permits for Sip & Spin, LLC dba Sip & Spin located at 151 East Market Street.**

**ITEM D – Submitted by Michelle Reeder, Finance Director**

**BUDGET AMENDMENT #4**

**Budgetary Information:** Appropriation amendments are required to update the 2021 budget. Funds include: General Fund, Park & Recreation Fund, and Capital Projects.

**ORDINANCE NO. 21-149:** It is requested an ordinance be passed adopting Amendment No. 4 to Ordinance No. 21-003 passed by this City Commission on January 11, 2021, making General Appropriations for the fiscal year 2021; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

**ITEM E – Submitted by Aaron Klein, Public Works Director**

**RATIFY EMERGENCY PURCHASE OF MUFFIN MONSTER GRINDER**

**Budgetary Information:** The total cost for the purchase of a CMD2410-XD52 Upgrade Muffin Monster channel grinder from JWC Environmental is \$21,381.00 and will be paid with Sewer Funds.

**ORDINANCE NO. 21-150:** It is requested an ordinance be passed ratifying the emergency purchase of a Muffin Monster channel grinder for the Venice Road Pump Station; authorizing and directing the City Manager and/or the Finance Director to expend funds to JWC Environmental of Santa Ana, California, in the amount of \$21,381.00; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

**ITEM F – Submitted by Jared Oliver, Police Chief and Jim Green, Interim Fire Chief**

**ANNUAL PAYMENT TO ERIE COUNTY FOR 911 SERVICES**

**Budgetary Information:** The total amount of this expenditure is \$16,502.47. The replacement cost is \$9,076.36 and the maintenance cost is \$7,426.11. The cost will be paid with funds from the Police Department's 2021 Operating Budget in the amount of \$8,251.24 and from the EMS Fund in the amount of \$8,251.23.

**ORDINANCE NO. 21-151:** It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing payment for replacement and maintenance costs for the calendar year 2022 pursuant to the 9-1-1 agreement between the City of Sandusky and Erie County; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

**Upon motion of Mike Meinzer and second of Dave Waddington, the Commission voted to accept the Consent Agenda and declare all ordinances and resolutions as drafted and presented to the City Commission under the Consent Agenda and shall take effect in full accordance with the Section reflected in the ordinances or resolutions whether they be in accordance with Section 13 or Section 14 of the City Charter. Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady, 7. Roll call on the ordinances, resolutions and liquor permit: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady 7. The President declared the ordinances and resolutions contained in the Consent Agenda passed in full accordance with the city charter.**

**CURRENT BUSINESS**

**Upon motion of Dave Waddington and second of Dennis Murray, the commission voted to accept all communications. The President declared the motion passed.**

**REGULAR AGENDA**

**ITEM #1 – Submitted by Michelle Reeder, Finance Director**

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) WITH CEDAR POINT (RELATING TO TAX ORDINANCES)**

**Budgetary Information:** Any budgetary impact of the contemplated expenditures are offset by the revenue from the increased admissions and parking taxes.

**ORDINANCE NO. 21-152:** It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and directing the City Manager to enter into a memorandum of understanding with Cedar Fair L.P. relating to certain collaborative economic development efforts within the City of Sandusky; 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 Blake Harris, the Commission voted to approve the ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.**

**SPECIAL VIDEO PRESENTATION, CEDAR POINT, Carrie Boldman, VP & General Manager**

President Brady introduced a video presentation by Carrie Boldman, Vice President and General Manager of Cedar Point. As we have done in 50 years, we will continue to make significant investments in the region. Over the past decade our parent company, Cedar Fair has invested more than \$370 million in Cedar Point, to enhance its long-standing reputation as America's premier amusement park. Going forward, we intend to continue investing in our park, our workforce, and our infrastructure – to make sure that Cedar Point remains a multi-day destination that delivers fun, immersive experiences that our guests have come to expect. We believe this long-term partnership with the City of Sandusky will solidify our shared interests and enhance community resources, and attract even more visitors from around the country to our tourism driven region.

Eric Wobser said he is excited to be here to talk about the outlying partnership that is on the agenda. We have 3 pieces of agenda items tonight and to give context as to why we are here tonight, we need to take a step back and focus on 2014 and the passage of Issue 8. There was a lot of controversy in Sandusky at that time of how to deal with the revenue losses and the staff losses, and the inability to provide services as we came out of the 2008 recession. As of 2014 there had not been a solution delivered by community leaders on how to provide that revenue or how to lift Sandusky out of the difficult times it was facing. The City had gone from 300 employees to 200 employees, and at that time a General Fund that was slightly over \$15 million and facing a deficit when he was hired as City Manager of an additional 1.5 and 2.3 million dollars going into 2015. In addition, there was a group of residents that looked to double the admissions taxes at that time on Cedar Fair. At that time, Cedar Fair did not have confidence in the community and the entire business community adamantly opposing any raising of any admissions taxes, in a community that at that time sat at 1.5% income tax and had never voted to raise their own local income taxes. The City Commission asked if he would begin conversations with Cedar Fair and if a compromise could be developed, and they did, and that compromise became Issue 8. That was, if you remember, a 1% increase in the admissions tax, linked to voters agreeing to pass a .25% income tax increase for Sanduskians for the first time at the ballot. In addition, when we began those discussions with Cedar Fair they said they were willing to invest in the City, but the City had to prove that it could be a reliable partner. In addition, because they bring in over 99% - nearly all of the revenue that is generated from admissions tax comes from those who are buying a ticket to Cedar Point. It important to them that they saw some of that revenue invested in publically beneficial items, but that were also in areas of interest for Cedar Point so that we can continue to build on and grow our destination economy. We passed that and put it on the ballot and it passed with nearly 60% of the vote in 2014. In addition, we have made a lot of progress over that period. We have created new programs for neighborhood investment, we brought back tree programs that did not exist for over a decade, and we brought back sidewalk programs that did not exist for over a decade. We tripled the amount of resources that we are investing in local streets; we built a real code compliance program with a real registration program so that we were inspecting every house once every 3 years in the entire city of Sandusky. We renovated a dozen neighborhood parks, when we had spent a dozen years and had only renovated one park in the entire city of Sandusky. We built a Community Policing Division that



did not exist when we had difficulties nationally with public safety over the last few years, Sandusky actually fared quite well compared to many other communities, and how we were able to get through those difficult times. If you read the front page of the paper today, you will see our Community Policing Division on the front page for building a partnership with Sandusky City Schools – a new athletic program –, which is a new flag football league which will be expanded. We also built from a one-person Recreation Division a 3-person Recreation Division, all of which served our neighborhoods and that built some award winning programs coming out of the Recreation Division, none of which existed before the passage of Issue 8. In addition to those neighborhood investments that we made through the passage of Issue 8, we also put funds specifically from the admissions tax, not from income tax, into economic development. We have seen over \$300 million in public and private funds invested into the City of Sandusky throughout that time, including the creation of a new university program in partnership with Cedar Fair. That was a \$15 million investment. The first higher education investment into the City of Sandusky in generations. Therefore, we are proud of the progress we have made with Issue 8, both in our neighborhoods with those programs that did not exist and in the economic development of the City. This summer the City Commission asked me again to begin conversations with Cedar Fair. This time in those conversations, they wanted me to look at how we could insure Cedar Fair remained committed to the partnership that we had started with Issue 8, and how we could potentially bring new resources to build on the success of Issue 8. They wanted to make sure again supported by Cedar Fair. They did not want to go back to the times of 2014 where we were at war with the company that everyone outside of Sandusky saw as synonymous with Sandusky. Therefore, we began to sit down at that time and very fortunately, in the last 3 months we have been able to put together, working very hard for 3 months, we would have loved to bring this to the community much quicker than that, but this is how long this complicated deal took. We are proud to bring for your consideration to the City Commission tonight a transaction that at the high level, which is a continued corporate presence for Cedar Fair in Sandusky. They told us they intend to maintain a comparable amount of employees in the City of Sandusky. They are actually pondering a new office space off the peninsula within the City of Sandusky. In addition to that, over half of the new revenue, which again I remind you, is nearly 100% paid for by visitors to Cedar Point, over half of the new revenue will go towards infrastructure needs of the City of Sandusky. In addition to that, the other half of the revenue with the spirit of Issue 8 goes to projects that are mutually beneficial, meaning there is a great public benefit to these projects that I will go into more detail about tonight. In addition to that, they also will support the long-term vision of Cedar Fair for how they can continue to thrive in the community. However, it is important to note that none of the investments that are being made in mutually beneficial projects between the City and Cedar Point are actually being made on the peninsula. They are being made in our community. They are being made to create stronger connections between Cedar Point and Sandusky. In addition, they are being made to leverage new investments into the City outside of the peninsula that will grow our tax base over time. Therefore, I am very proud to present this, and to give you a little more detail tonight. However, it did take a lot to come together. In addition, here is that 50-50 split, 34% of this, a little over a third, will go into the needs for our streets, our safety, our parks and pathways. This is what we are hearing from our public that they want to see. 16% will go towards construction of a new Recreation Center for Sandusky. In addition, he stated that this City Commission has been asking for a Rec Center for much longer than the last few months, as the neighborhood meetings. He was instructed by the City Commission to get a planning process for a Recreation Center which we have done so. It was Mr. Poggiali who mentioned in his remarks tonight, saying wanting a Rec Center is one thing, but actually finding the resources to build a Rec Center is a very different thing. It was a very high priority of the Commission when he was instructed to go into these negotiations with Cedar Fair to insure that a Rec Center was front and center, so we could finally put to bed how we could finance a Rec Center for Sandusky. We think that this split is fair, because Cedar Point will be paying for 99% of the new revenue and that our community will see its neighborhoods invested in through the Rec Center, the streets and safety, the parks and pathway projects. In addition, this makes for stronger connective tissue between Cedar Point and the surrounding community. Just a little bit of highlights, the one thing that Cedar Point gets out of the Recreation Center is naming rights for a 20-year period. Again, they will be funding virtually the entire construction of

the Recreation Center. Therefore, we believe it is appropriate that we grant them the naming rights. They have placed no restrictions, other than asking for naming rights, on the location or what goes into that Rec Center. That will be part of a process that we will begin as soon as possible and by early next year at the latest to identify the right site and to identify the right program. To identify the right site and program there will be extensive community involvement, determining what the right program is for that. Then we will go forward to construct that Recreation Center. In addition, we will have new revenue for repairing streets, new revenue to meet the capital needs of our safety departments, we will have new revenue to maintain our parks and properties, and new revenue that will go towards construction of the Sandusky Bay Pathway and again none of these projects are restricted by Cedar Point. All of that comes to our community, paid for – not out of local taxes – but instead from revenues nearly 100% by Cedar Point. Secondary, and this was the piece of this he has heard other people say, why is any of this being invested in anything that Cedar Point wants, these are tax dollars, yes – they are tax dollars – but remember, we are passing this tonight, you saw the video with the General Manager of Cedar Point, Carrie Boldman endorsing this partnership. The reality is that the Commission instructed me when sitting down with Cedar Point to do the best deal that would bring the revenue to the City for mutual goals, but also to maintain and sustain the partnership with Cedar Point. We think we can accomplish more together, than we can by fighting with each other. That is the big distinction as to why we compromised in 2014 and why we are compromising in 2021 because we are able to not only bring revenue to the City for these important goals, but we are maintaining a partnership with our largest and best-known employer and institution in the City. And so with that the causeway is nearly 70 years old, it became very apparent early in these negotiations that replacing it and improving the Cedar Point causeway was by far the most important priority and critical to forging an agreement on this partnership. What we asked Cedar Point for is part of reinvesting in the causeway was that we created an extension from the Sandusky Bay Pathway so that you have public access all the way, not only on the causeway, but to Cedar Point Park and to Cedar Point Boardwalk with adequate parking facilities. We can create access to the beach, access to the Boardwalk, access to the Park, for individuals who are riding bikes or walking. Currently you have to drive to Cedar Point; you are not permitted to bike or walk on the Cedar Point Causeway. We are going to change that with this project. We are also going to be burying electrical utilities, remember Cedar Point had to close for a day a few years ago because a windstorm had knocked them down. We will be able to modernize that; we will insure there is modern water and sewer infrastructure. They are also adding an additional lane, which will be reversible; so on the way in it will allow traffic to go towards the park and in the evening's traffic will come away from the park. We also asked and received assurances that we will be able to utilize that lane for public transportation as well as other buses that will be able to better access more seamless connections to Cedar Point. In addition to that, and this was important to Cedar Point, they wanted to insure that we continued to diversify the economy. They asked this same thing us as part of Issue 8. A modest amount of these funds will go towards creating a destination related economic development, predominately along the waterfront from downtown to the Cedar Point Sports Center. We do not have a program in place for that yet, but we know that this revenue will be dedicated to providing that. That was an important thing for Cedar Point, and we have heard many times from the public they want to see water taxi connections once again go back and forth on a more frequent basis between downtown Sandusky and Cedar Point. There is funding committed to bringing water taxi service back and we are looking to take on the Boeckling property from Cedar Point as part of this deal, which we think is one of the most strategically important properties in the entire City. The Boeckling sits at the center of our waterfront and is the one place where regular waterfront transportation between Sandusky and Cedar Point Islands can exist. It is the only place in Erie County able to provide that transportation. We think it is critical for us to be able insure that we continue to maintain ferry service through the Jet Express we will be able to control our own destiny through that. There is public resources through the State, potentially from the Federal Government, that we can bring to restoring those docks that Cedar Point might not have access. It provides a great port that the revitalized Boeckling Building for that new water taxi service. Finally, the State Theatre program came up tonight. Again, this was a request from Cedar Point; they said that they had been approached by the State Theatre about contributing significantly for the revitalization of the State Theatre. It

was Mr. Schwanger that asked about the State Theatre, and yes, the State Theatre does have insurance. What the insurance provides is enough to put the State Theatre back to its condition before the storm, they had always been planning a large renovation and capital campaign as they approach their centennial, which takes place in 2028. Therefore, they took the opportunity of needing to rebuild - not to just replace the existing infrastructure of the Theatre, but to make those improvements, so they are in the quiet phase of a capital campaign. Cedar Point said if we are going to be paying more taxes, could these taxes help us to make the gift we have been asked for from the State Theatre. Based on the large context of \$4.5 – 5 million annually in perpetuity we felt like it was important to honor that request of Cedar Point as part of their side of the ledger of this agreement. In addition to that, the City wants to support the State Theatre because it is a critical year-round asset. Therefore, those items came up in this agreement. And again the City Commission, based on the parameters placed was to bring resources back to the City that could build on the success of Issue 8, but to do so without breaking the line of the partnership between us and Cedar Point and to maintain that corporate presence. We believe we have been able to accomplish all those goals. It has certainly been a busy 3 months to get to this place. It is going to be even a busier several years to implement all of this. However, Eric Wobser said he is proud of the leadership of the City Commission, and grateful to Cedar Point for their willingness to pay this much more in tax revenue, and thinks that this absolutely will build on the success of Issue 8, and position Sandusky for success for the next 20 years and beyond.

*Comments:*

Naomi Twine commented that she is appreciative of Cedar Fair, and Eric and City's staff work with coming to this agreement, and fully supports it. It will be something that will affect this community for many, many years to come in a positive way, and appreciate Eric's words tonight; he brought a lot of information. Of course, that was not widely known. As we continue to build our relationship with Cedar Fair and the City, these are important foundational things that we need to continue to build upon in order for all of us to be successful. So again, thank you, and thank you to Cedar Fair. She fully supports this legislation. Mike Meinzer wished to speak on the public comments, it is not reality thinking that we could have presented this in November, and he is not up for re-election, and can guarantee this conversation and negotiations have been going on for a long time. It is complicated and there are a lot of moving parts. That was not a correct statement tonight about this legislation. We should all recognize in this community that Cedar Point is the golden goose and we need to work with Cedar Point on how to alleviate congestion and get more customers into that park and yes they will benefit from some of the tax dollars that they are going to contribute. This is not diminishing Firelands Hospital, LEWCO, K&K and all the other small businesses in this town but if you live here, you have to recognize that our livelihood is encompassed by Cedar Point. He was not always sold on the idea of a Rec Center because of sustainability, how do we keep it going, the operation of it. This is a done deal. We are going to have a lot public planning. We are going to have a lot input, a lot of discussion, and we are going to try to resolve it. In the end, if it is sustainable, and we can all come to some sort of agreement on how we operate it, it is great for our community, there are not any bad parts of this. Thank you Mr. Wobser for negotiating this. Dennis Murray shared a little bit of context, that he thinks may be interesting, he does not think he has shared this story publically before. In 2014 after he was newly re-elected to the City Commission, it was during one of the polar vortexes we had, he received a call from the new CEO of Cedar Fair asking if he wanted to have lunch. They had lunch at the old Lunch Box, and he asked the things you would expect him to ask in talking about ways the City could improve our relationship with Cedar Point, what we could do better, how we could better support their business, and obviously improve revenues into the City. He said, that is not why he was here, he was here to ask what Cedar Point can do for the City of Sandusky. He was very surprised by this new approach to this relationship between the City of Sandusky and Cedar Fair. He really wanted a partnership. And at that same time a lot of people were asking before the election and once in office – why is it that the City cannot have good relationships – good partnerships – with the local businesses and the surrounding governments? He said if we behave responsibly, be a responsible government for an extended period, we will get there. One of the questions that has been asked is – Why this partnership now? A lot has changed. Mr. Wobser alluded to that. Back in 2014, we were back up against a wall. We did not

look like a solid player to be partners for an extended period. We are in a different place today. That is a big part of why we are seeing Cedar Point approach this as a partnership. This is a public/private partnership. It is a give and take partnership. Cedar Point supported a huge increase in taxes for benefits for a period of time, some 10 years, and some 20 years. More than half of that goes to improvements to drive economic development and the rest is for the City to use as it sees fit, including the Rec Center, and after that, it is all ours. One of the great legacies that this partnership leaves to the future of the City of Sandusky is that money will be available through admissions taxes and parking taxes, really in perpetuity essentially. In terms of the Rec Center which has been discussed at this table for at least 2 years, and recalls Mr. Wobser introducing the State of the City speech in 2018, halfway through the year celebrating the Sandusky Bicentennial. In addition, he posted a friendly challenge, but it was a challenge, we really do need to get a Rec Center done. We need to figure out a way to fund the construction, and fund the operations. Mr. Meinzer is exactly right; those two go hand in hand. Until we have a solution – we got one leg down – talked about all the ways to deal with the second leg. We will find something that works. However, that is right; we have to have the funding because we all know what happens to Rec Centers if they do not have sustainable funding. If an economic downturn comes then the Rec Center closes, and deteriorates because it does not have money for capital improvements, and so on and so forth. He is happy we are able to achieve that at this point. We do want to address a couple other thoughts that came up. Issue 8 is not out of money, the City is not out of money. Accepting the pandemic Issue 8 agenda generated more money than was projected at the time. This partnership, what he calls Partnership 2021, will have the same results. What is currently projected at \$4.5 million, but in relatively short order we will see that grow, certainly over the 10-year period, and 20-year period. Water and Sewer funds are not out of money; we are spending the money as projected by our rate study and as required by the EPA. We are doing exactly what we said we would do to improve and to protect water safety. We would all like to have lower water and sewer rates, we sure would, but the EPA is requiring communities around the country to make these expenditures. If you Google water rate increases and complaints, it is a universal concern, but clean water is also a universal concern, without that we do not have much else. He does support this, it is a complicated deal, and it does have the necessary give and take that makes a good partnership. It did take time because details had to be worked out. We will be implementing this as Mr. Wobser indicated for years to come. In addition, that is as it should be. You cannot decide everything – each detail – of something this large in a single document, in a single day, in a single meeting, or in a single vote. He has likened it before to getting married; if you wait to get married until you know how the marriage is going to go, what job you are going to have, what job your spouse is going to have, what your children are going to look like, where your grandchildren are going to be employed, you will never get married. You have to take some steps forward, and this is a grand step forward. He is glad he got married, He is glad he had children, and glad he went to law school, he didn't know how it all was going to go, but he is also glad he ran for City Commission, it has been an interesting ride too. With that, he casts a vote in confidence of the City's future. This will take us to places and accomplishments we could not really dream we would be able to do. Blake Harris stated that Mr. Murray beat him to the punch, with many of his comments. That being said, he will echo what he mentioned, this new deal, when he first found out about it, he did not know what a ten out of ten deal looks like, but he did think this has the makings of it. Again, it is just a testament to what has been happening since 2014, in terms of how far we have come as a community and as a city. For Cedar Point being reluctant to do that deal several years ago, to now having the utmost confidence in us, kudos to everyone really in this room – the Commissioners, the staff, Eric – our City Manager – he cannot say how proud he is of him and this deal. This is great with Cedar Point sewing into our community, we are going reap the benefits going forward. He cannot wait to see what the future holds for our City as we continue to move forward. Wes Poole asked why the Commission needed to address this under emergency, he does not need to know right now, but he does want to know before we vote. We had admissions taxes through COVID go way down, what is the plan if the revenue does not cover all this debt. Eric Wobser addressed the question stating that the only fixed revenue in this agreement that would be something that we pay each year, regardless of collection, is the \$1.25 million for the Causeway and the \$700 thousand for the Rec Center. These 20-year commitments would equate to about \$1.95 million annually. In

addition, the 10-year commitment, which would eventually be contracted as a naming-rights agreement between the City, the State Theatre and Cedar Point. So slightly over \$2.05 million allocated of what has been conservatively estimated to be about \$4.5 million collected. Only about 40% of this would be at risk. We have contemplated a baseline amount that Cedar Point would pay each year, regardless of that collection, even in the pandemic – which is the only time we have seen significant change, we would have hit that percentage – or ratio of \$2 million. Again, Mr. Murray stated that we think \$4.5 million over the life of this agreement is relatively low. As attendance and admissions pricing goes up it brings more revenue back to the City. Again, we were very clear, that only about 40% of that total collection is dedicated toward long-term debt service. The rest of this we will have to figure out. The amount will go up, and the amount will go down based on what the total collection is. It is just like the rest of our income tax stream; our lodging tax, our income tax, every tax that we collect is subject to that economy. We do have debt at the City, historically, and we have found ways to meet those debt service payments even when the economy has fluctuated. However, we think a 40% total is conservative and we will be fine. Wes Poole asked if it does not cover, would the payments come out of the General Fund. Eric Wobser replied Yes, but we have a better than 2 to 1 coverage ratio. Wes Poole stated that he was not concerned about the risk; he just wanted to know that we recognize how we are going to make this work. The water taxi that you alluded to, the Jet Express, the Jet has been doing this for the last couple of years. Eric Wobser said that we have had good preliminary conversations with the owner of the Jet, and we want to keep the Jet. We see the water taxi service as being separate from what the Jet is doing, which is a higher end, bigger boat service. The Jet may or may not end up being the provider of that. We have not made a decision yet, but we did through Sandusky Transit a few years ago do an estimate of what providing a water taxi line would serve – which is what \$150 thousand is based on. However, yes, the Jet is a very important part of our future. That is partially why we wanted to take ownership; we knew there were some needed repairs that this agreement might be able to provide. It would also bring State capital dollars to help make some of those repairs as well. Wes Poole asked if the \$150,000 is to be spent on what – repairs to the dock? Eric Wobser replied No, the \$150 thousand is outside of the scope. However, there is potential of us receiving the Boeckling Building, which could potentially become the site of the water taxi service. The water taxi service could potentially be run from Castaway Bay or from the Sports Center, but we are predominantly looking to build that historic connection from downtown first. That is what the \$150 thousand supports and based on the market study what it would cost to run that line back and forth on an annual basis between Cedar Point and downtown seasonally, running approximately during prime hours every 30 minutes. Wes Poole asked what they are projecting in terms of use, how many people would they move back and forth across there, to make this water taxi work. Eric Wobser responded that we believe a minimum of 50 per boat trip would be what the boat could sustain. So approximately anywhere between 500 – 1000 visitors to the park a day. But one thing that we want is on the busiest days when cars are backed-up from Cedar Point, is that moving just 500 cars off of the causeway - whether through the buses that the new causeway could support or through the biking/walking path which could potentially get 50-100 people there per day. Then additionally if we are running water taxis every 30 minutes – that is potentially 50 more people per boat. That could make a significant difference in traffic. We have heard from the public that this could be an important amenity for locals that want to work at Cedar Point, and that is what historically what the boat had been used for – for people who did not want to deal with traffic, can walk downtown, ride their bike downtown, jump on the boat and get to work. Again, once we have a hotel, and we have a burgeoning vacation rental market in downtown Sandusky, we think we could see revenue go up because the water taxi would be an important piece of infrastructure for those who can now hub their trip out of downtown, and support local businesses in the city as opposed to on Route 250. Wes Poole asked what the baseline is for the actual movement of people back and forth by the Jet is for the last 2 years. You are talking about transporting 1000 people a day, what have they done up to now, so we know specifically what numbers we are talking about. Eric Wobser responded that he did not have specific information from the Jet, but we can find that out. However, he pointed out that the Jet is a more expensive service, and did not run quite as regularly; it was focused on the connection to the islands, as opposed to the park itself. It did not run on Saturdays, which is the busiest day where Cedar Point has the biggest need for

transporting people there in ways other than by a car and that is because the ticket to Kelly's Island and Put-In-Bay were much more expensive. The Jet did not want to give up a seat that could be sold to someone that is going to buy a more expensive ticket to the islands. In addition, we know Saturday is the day that service would be the busiest. Wes Poole stated he believes the key to all of this is that we invest money in things that are going to be successful at some point. He is trying to figure out what our vision is in terms of the likelihood of what makes these things work. He questioned that the Jet is not taking nearly a 1000 people a day. In addition, to not know their numbers is surprising, and asked if there is somewhere in this that we will support this as a losing operation, if it is not successful? What you would like it to be is wonderful. The concept of bringing another 500 cars downtown that we have no parking for and that they will spend money – the Jet charges \$10 per person and \$7 for children over 12, if you have a season pass it is free to park at Cedar Point, area we going to do this for less than the Jet has been charging? Eric Wobser stated that very few public transportation systems actually cover their cost of operations through revenue. But we know that Sandusky Transit is a public good, and the \$150,000 investment in this is meant to support what we believe is the appropriate amount of public backstopping of providing this mode of transportation for employees, for visitors, for economic stimulation that will connect from downtown to there. Wes Poole stated that he just wanted to be careful, because you ask me about numbers. And he wanted to be sure that we are using good numbers as well. Of the 500-1000 cars that we would dissuade, not all of them would be specifically taking the water taxi to Cedar Point. Many of them could be on the new bus access that would come to Cedar Point on the newly built causeway, but not every guest to Cedar Point drives themselves there individually in a car, so that wouldn't mean 500 new cars downtown. President Brady asked Mr. Poole how many more questions he had. He stated that all Commissioners were given this information two weeks ago and he could have scheduled a meeting with Mr. Wobser on his schedule and timeline to address any issues, but Mr. Poole did not. Wes Poole asked that if a conclusion was not reached after discussion of the Recreation Center, where would this money go? Are we locked in to spending this money for this purpose? Eric Wobser responded that we fully intend, and fully believes the Commission supports the construction of a Rec Center. In the situation in which a Rec Center is not built for whatever reason, it states that the City will work with Cedar Point to deliver naming rights to a comparable location within the City. We do not know what that would be, but that is the only commitment that we have said. That was the one piece of this agreement that was important to them. So again, we are entering into a MOU, which creates certain responsibilities of the City to Cedar Point, and when signed by Cedar Point, from them to the City. Each one of these pieces to this transaction is likely going to require legislation at future dates so that the community can weigh-in and the Commission can weigh-in, and that's just the nature of the complexity of the amount that we are doing this. Again, there is an absolute commitment of the staff based on the absolute commitment we have heard from the vast majority of the City Commission. That they want to see a Rec Center built in the City of Sandusky – and that is what we will do. Wes Poole stated; it appears that the numbers work well here and has great potential to be great for the community; the devil is always in the details and these individual projects need to be worked out. Mike Meinzer questioned what if the community could not come together and agree what the Rec Center looks like, what it is for, whom it is for, how it operates – will Cedar Point take back their 14 million dollars? Eric Wobser replied no. However, we would enter into an agreement with them, this is how we build a trusting relationship with them, with the MOU we would use a portion of these new revenues to construct a new Rec Center and Cedar Point would receive naming rights. Acknowledging that some of that may fall out of our control, that if we are unable to build a Recreation Center that we will work with Cedar Point to identify a comparable naming rights opportunity. That is what we owe to Cedar Point, but what we owe to the community is much greater than that – and is a Recreation Center. He does not think there is a Commissioner here or a person on staff that is not fully committed to engage in a community with those new revenues to get something done that is sustainable, that also delivers on the commitment that we are making to the citizens of Sandusky. Dennis Murray commented on the same point that Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Wobser, and Mr. Poole were making, that the problem with a Rec Center is it is kind of a nirvana, it can mean a lot of different things to different people. So we need to go through a process. He said he has no preconceived perception of what it is going to look like or

what amenities it will have. He would love to go through a public planning process and from a very short conversation with Mr. Wobser about this; he presumes that we are going to go through with a menu – if we want this, that is what it will cost, if we want that, that is what it will cost. In addition, we will go through to find out what is most important to everyone, and the answer is going to be different for different neighborhoods and different age groups. We will have to come up with something we can afford and that meets the needs most of the folks too that live in the City. We will go through that process and he is certainly committed. Eric Wobser responded that he had a re-scheduled catch-up with the Men’s Fellowship at the Erie County Senior Center at the corner of Meigs and East Water Streets today, and it almost became an impromptu planning session for a Community Center. They were telling us exactly what they wanted to see. In addition, he told them we would be back very soon – and can guarantee that there is a lot of ownership of what this should be. We are excited to begin that process. President Brady stated that the Commission sent Mr. Wobser to Cedar Point after an Executive Session on July 11, and he returned this deal on October 11, about 90 days. What took you so long? (laughter) As exciting as this legislation is, we are probably getting pretty close to the end of high-fiving each other. This Commission, the 7 members, will be credited with delivering \$100 million to this community over the next 20 years. Without one dime of those dollars falling as a burden on taxpayers. That is huge. Future Commissions will be judged by how they chose to spend those dollars, for the benefit of each and every resident, in each and every segment of this community. Getting this deal over the finish line, which Eric has done. It certainly is important because it changes the trajectory of this city for decades to come. It is important to all of us to be a part of this tonight. President Brady said he is more proud of this Commission, and of this body, than any group of people that he has dealt with.

**Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady 7. The President declared the ordinance passed under suspension of the rules in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.**

**ITEM #2 – Submitted by Michelle Reeder, Finance Director**

**PARKING TAX ORDINANCE -FIRST READING**

**Budgetary Information:** Initiating a parking tax will raise revenue received in the City’s General Fund.

**PASSED AT FIRST READING:** It is requested an ordinance be passed amending Part One (Administrative Code), Title Nine (Taxation), by adoption of New Chapter 189 (Parking Occupancy Tax) of the Codified Ordinances, in the manner and way specifically set forth hereinbelow.

**Upon motion of Dennis Murray and second of Naomi Twine, the Commission voted to approve this ordinance at first reading.**

*Discussion:*

Wes Poole asked if this legislation would create any more work or difficulty for tow truck operators that park cars. If you tow a car in and store it for 3 days, it is covered under this parking tax. Would there be extra administrative issues for this? Cedar Point will probably have an app that handles this. Some businessmen in Sandusky, they are going to be affected by this. Brandon Heil, Law Director, responded that the hypothetical scenario that Mr. Poole described would not be subject to the parking tax. They are not charging someone to park, they are towing someone’s car, and that person would have to pay a fee to get his car out. They are not paying for the use of a parking space that would be covered under this. Wes Poole questioned if towed cars would be affected because of the portion of the law that states storage. Parking facility means any building, garage, structure, premises, parking lot or any other place that 3 or more vehicles are owned or operated by patrons other than the operator and are stored or parked for any period of time for a charged fee or other consideration. That is what tow truck operator’s do, and that they are burdened enough with the system, and do us a good favor. They have small businesses and come out all hours of the night. They have to fight with people to get their money, and he

questioned whether or not, this could be worked out by the next reading. Let us give them some consideration. Brandon Heil stated he would look into it, but he does not think what Mr. Poole is describing fits the definition of our parking tax. We can get a firm answer about that. However, the tax is meant to cover a charge for parking. A lot that has more than 3 spaces is considered a commercial parking lot, parking garage, parking storage facility, and they charge someone to come and park their car there – that is what this tax covers. It does not cover towing someone's car and then they have to pay a fee to get their car back. Wes Poole stated that he is ok with that as long as the next Law Director does not get to re-interpret that definition.

**Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady 7. The President declared the ordinance passed at first reading.**

**ITEM #3 – Submitted by Michelle Reeder, Finance Director**

**ADMISSIONS TAX ORDINANCE – FIRST READING**

**Budgetary Information:** An increase to the admission tax rate levied will raise the revenue received in the City's General Fund.

**PASSED AT FIRST READING:** It is requested an ordinance be passed amending Part One (Administrative Code), Title Nine (Taxation), Chapter 195 (Admissions Tax) of the Codified Ordinances, in the manner and way specifically set forth hereinbelow.

**Upon motion of Naomi Twine and second of Dave Waddington, the Commission voted to approve this ordinance at first reading.**

**Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady 7. The President declared the ordinance passed at first reading.**

**ITEM #4 – Submitted by Joshua Snyder, Public Works Engineer**

**CHAPTER 1157 FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION AMENDMENTS – FIRST READING**

**Budgetary Information:** There are no fees associated with making these administrative changes.

**PASSED AT FIRST READING:** It is requested an ordinance be passed amending Part Eleven (Planning and Zoning Code) Title Five (Additional Zoning Requirements), Chapter 1157 (Flood Damage Reduction) of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Sandusky in the manner and way specifically set forth hereinbelow.

**Upon motion of Naomi Twine and second of Dave Waddington, the Commission voted to approve this ordinance at first reading.**

*Discussion:*

Wes Poole stated in regard in the change in the freeboard that he believes that having the freeboard at 2 feet above was written to protect people willing to take risks that are building in areas that are prone to flood, ultimately the next owner ends up paying for it. Alternatively, they walk away from it and the City is responsible for it. That is the reason it has been written that way. It applies to big projects more than anything else. We recognize for those in a home who have always received a waiver, the risk is less. When you are a homeowner that puts a small investment in a garage or something and are willing to take the chance that it might get flooded, it is not likely to be catastrophic. He is going to vote to change this. However, we have not lost any development because of it. We have just agreed on a MOU for a piece of property that floods - The Boeckling Pier where the Jet Express sits. He is not sure if that is good or not. We are no longer required by law to raise that up above the flood plain and it is still going to flood. It stayed covered by water for several months last year and was unusable. Now we have decided we are going to become the owners of that. He would suggest that this change has risks.



**Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady 7. The President declared the ordinance passed at first reading.**

**ITEM #5 – Submitted by Aaron Klein, Public Works Director**

**EMERGENCY PURCHASE OF SODIUM PERMANGANATE FOR BIG ISLAND WATER WORKS**

**Budgetary Information:** The cost of \$36,981.00 to procure 35,220 pounds of sodium permanganate (NaMnO<sub>4</sub>) would be paid with funds from the Big Island Water Works Plant's operating budget. Although \$76,992 (12,000 gallons) was approved via Ordinance 20-163, this will be the only purchase of this material during the current budget cycle. Therefore, the net savings in 2021 for this material will be \$40,011.00.

**ORDINANCE NO. 21-153:** It is requested an ordinance be passed ratifying the emergency purchase of 35,220 pounds, more or less of liquid sodium permanganate from Bonded Chemicals, Inc. of Columbus, Ohio, for use at the Big Island Water Works Plant; authorizing and directing the City Manager and/or Finance Director to expend funds to Bonded Chemicals, Inc. of Columbus, Ohio, in the amount of \$36,981.00; 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 Blake Harris, the Commission voted to approve the ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.**

*Discussion:*

Dennis Murray stated that the greatest supply chain disruption comes to Sandusky, and that is what this is. Hats off to the Engineering Department, to Mr. Klein and his team for getting on the phone right away because any other way we would be waiting for our sodium permanganate, and then we would have a real problem.

**Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady 7. The President declared the ordinance passed under suspension of the rules in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.**

**ITEM #6 – Submitted by Jason Werling, Recreation Superintendent**

**IRONMAN EVENT AGREEMENT**

**Budgetary Information:** The total host fee of \$75,000 is paid over three years at \$25,000 per year and will be paid out of Recreation or Capital Funds.

**ORDINANCE NO. 21-154:** It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and directing the City Manager to enter into a host venue agreement with World Triathlon Corporation and Lake Erie Shores & Islands for services related to hosting Ironman 70.3<sup>®</sup> Ohio Triathlon events for the Recreation Department; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

**Upon motion of Naomi Twine and second of Blake Harris, the Commission voted to approve the ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.**

*Discussion:*

Dave Waddington talked with a couple Commissioners today and tried clear up actual total cost of \$25 thousand a year. He asked if Mr. Werling of the Recreation Department, could speak on the costs of policing at this event. Jason Werling responded that we hosted a similar event with a Triathlon in the past. It was a full triathlon, which is double of what the 70.3 event is. In conversations with Sheriff Sigsworth and with City Services with that event that lasted 12 hours, the cost of services were in the \$5000-\$6000 range. In this case, we are partnering with Lake Erie Shores and Islands and the City will be responsible for safety within City limits, and Lake Erie Shores will handle safety services that are outside of the City limits. The biking portion would be

going into Erie and Sandusky County. Then the swim portion would happen in the City, and the running portion 13.1 miles would happen within the City and Perkins Township. We do not foresee anything more than that \$5000 range for each of those services. The event would run from 7am – 3pm. Which has led to reduced costs compared to the last event of this nature. Dave Waddington asked about whose responsibility liability and cleanup after the event would be. Jason Werling responded that it would be a shared responsibility between both. The Ironman team pulls the cones and barricades; there is also a volunteer component, and a Grant funding component up to \$20,000.00 for cleanup. Wes Poole remarked that he thought hosting this event was incredible. He has attended Ironman events and whatever minimal expense we have to incur for this is going to be well worth it. If we do this very well – it will draw many people that are going to spend a lot of money here, give us a lot of publicity and television coverage. He could not say enough about Jason and the good work he has done with his staff the last few years. Truly innovative and groundbreaking events he has brought here that are so different. We need to do “Wow”. Not just, “get by”. In addition, this is truly a wow event and hopes the community will get behind it and support this event. President Brady commented that in the literature provided it lists exactly what Mr. Poole states about that economic benefit to the host city was in the millions of dollars. Jason Werling remarked that they proposed an 11 million estimate of host city revenue. Dennis Murray commented that he completely agrees with Mr. Poole on two things; first when the City got back on its feet in 2014 one of the first green shoots, Mr. Werling, in particular, started doing things that we had not done in many years, many things we have never done before and most communities aren’t doing. That is awesome to what he brings to the City, for our youth and for our adults as well. The second thing is whether the investment made sense, until I saw the estimates of how much revenue it could garner for our area. We will get our fair share of that piece, the other thing that Mr. Poole began with is that when we bring all these people into our community – who take a look. We always need more people to move here, and to bring their families here. I think this is a great opportunity to highlight our City. He stated he supports this. Mike Meinzer commented that when this came up he talked to Dave Waddington, being on the Rec Board, Mr. Waddington and he both agree that Jason is a good hire. Mike stated has worked with the City his whole life – and Jason works from dawn to dusk. This event puts Sandusky on the map and Mike stated his son has participated in Ironman in the past, and he thinks it will draw a lot of attention. President Brady commented that this is programming as we spoke about earlier with the State Theatre of a different kind, and with this Jason Werling, you are certainly raising the bar.

**Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady 7. The President declared the ordinance passed under suspension of the rules in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.**

**ITEM #7 – Submitted by Nichole Grohe, Community Development Programs Administrator  
PAYMENT TO JENMET CONSTRUCTION FOR SERVICES RELATED TO CHIP PROGRAM**

**Budgetary Information:** The City will issue payment in the amount of \$32,833.00 to Jenmet Construction, LLC for using federal housing program income funds. There is no impact on the City’s General Fund.

**ORDINANCE NO. 21-155:** It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and directing the City Manager and/or Finance Director to make payment to Jenmet Construction, LLCC of Lorain, Ohio for services related to the Community Housing Impact and Preservation (CHIP) Program; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

**Upon motion of Naomi Twine and second of Blake Harris, the Commission voted to approve the ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.**

*Discussion:*

Dennis Murray stated he had the same question that was asked earlier tonight, whether this was all going to one home or not, and this is not the case. He asked if Mr. Holody is available to answer the question as to how these funds are expended and what they go toward. Jonathan Holody, Community Development Director, explained that these funds are typically expended directly from the county via contractor, but in this case, this is part of our match towards the program. Therefore, we are distributing these funds directly to the contractor. This is all part of the CHIP program which resulted out of a partnership that we entered into with Erie County and the cities of Huron and Vermilion back in 2019. That partnership was successful in obtaining over \$1 million in CHIP funding from the federal government over \$300 thousand of that has been spent in Sandusky to fund home repairs, down payment assistance, and partially funding construction of a new home for Habitat for Humanity. These programs are income eligibility based, so homeowners have to meet eligible guidelines. Homeowners that are interested in these programs can apply directly through Great Lakes Community Action Partnership or GLCAP, they do have an application on their website. We also collaborated with this group again this year to apply for funds for 2021 and we should hear back any day now if that grant has been awarded. In the meantime, GLCAP is creating a waiting list for participants with this new round of funding. Any interested homeowner should contact GLCAP by phone or visit their website if they have any issues they are welcome to contact our office. President Brady said he was still wondering if all the \$32,000.00 went into one home on Timber Lane? Jonathan Holody answered that President Brady was correct, that was our portion of the cost of the work that was done on Timber Lane. The total project cost was over \$33,000.00. This was a full comprehensive rehabilitation of that house addressing all safety related items at that owner occupied location. The work included a full renovation of the electrical system, the boiler system; and a wheelchair ramp was installed. Essentially a full restoration of that house to address all life safety issues for those homeowners.

**Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady 7. The President declared the ordinance passed under suspension of the rules in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.**

**ITEM #8 – Submitted by John Orzech, Assistant City Manager****NATURAL GAS AGGREGATION AGREEMENT WITH CONSTELLATION**

**Budgetary Information:** There is no direct impact to the General Fund.

**ORDINANCE NO. 21-156:** It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and directing the City Manager to enter into a third amendment to the endorsement agreement with Constellation NewEnergy – Gas Division, LLC, for the City’s Natural Gas Aggregation Program; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

**Upon motion of Blake Harris and second of Naomi Twine, the Commission voted to approve the ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.**

*Discussion:*

Wes Poole inquired what the benefit was of doing this. John Orzech replied that Tom Belish, our broker that has been with the City a number of years, is in the audience and will be able to address this question. Tom Belish, President of Buckeye Energy Brokers, stated that a couple years ago we locked in the City’s electric program in a long-term agreement. Last year we did the electric aggregation agreement. Now commodity prices have gone up. We heard earlier tonight how lumber prices have gone up, and natural gas prices have gone up as well. We wanted to do something creative to help lower everyone’s gas bill. The upcoming winter can be expensive – so what we will do is start a fixed price in April. We will set that on the market price, hopefully soon. It is a December start, so we really need this to pass so we can get this program running before cold weather hits and meet the deadline. In the winter 7 cents per ccf, guaranteed savings over Columbia Gas. The typical user uses about 200 ccf each winter month; they will save \$14 savings per month. Therefore, for 4 months it would be a \$56 savings. No one needs to buy from

Columbia Gas this winter; they should be in the City's program and save about \$56. Then we have a lower price after that. This program is guaranteed to save residents. If there is someone who does not like the program, they can opt-out free at any time. It is an opt-in program, we will send out letters to residents and they must call in to join. President Brady inquired if he was using Columbia Gas pricing as a benchmark, and no matter where Columbia Gas goes with their pricing – you are going to be 7 cents lower. Tom Belish responded that was correct. Typically in the past we have done a fixed price and it is simpler, but this winter with prices we hesitate to lock into a long-term fixed rate at a higher rate and then if they drop we are not really doing anyone any favors or savings. Dennis Murray commented that his wife was very fastidious about comparing things, every couple of years she gets out the mailers concerning electric and gas pricing. In addition, he always tells her to just go with the City's gas and electric aggregation programs, they are always better. After she gets it all done, she always says she hates when he is right. Mike Meinzer stated he used to get many questions about this as well, but now the City has negotiated with the firm for a variable rate. In the past, they always negotiated a fixed rate. We do not know what prices are going to be – but we know we can save with this group rate. Wes Poole asked what the process was to sign-up or access this program. Tom Belish explained that at the top of the bill it lists the supplier and states the rate. It should say Constellation. It is easy to join, just call them and they would be happy to get you enrolled. There will be letters coming to residents soon to explain the program and with information to opt-in. The electric is opt-out and the natural gas is opt-in. We never put it on the ballot is the difference. On 2001, the electric was placed on the ballot. Dennis Murray asked if in the future the Commission could be informed of the percentage of the residents participating in the aggregation programs.

**Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady 7. The President declared the ordinance passed under suspension of the rules in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.**

**ITEM #9 – Submitted by James Green, Interim Fire Chief**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT PUMPER PURCHASE**

**Budgetary Information:** The total amount for the 2022 Sutphen Heavy Duty Pumper purchase is \$642,345.00 through the Ohio State Cooperative Purchasing Program Schedule contract #800814. The cost of this purchase will be paid from Capital Funds.

**ORDINANCE NO. 21-157:** It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and directing the City Manager to enter into an agreement for the purchase of a 2022 Sutphen Heavy Duty Pumper with custom Sutphen Monarch Chassis through the State of Ohio Department of Administrative Services Cooperative Purchasing Program from Sutphen Corporation of Dublin, Ohio; 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 Blake Harris, the Commission voted to approve the ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.**

*Discussion:*

President Brady asked if the Finance Director could explain how we are paying for this purchase. Michelle Reeder, Finance Director, responded that we would like to order this pumper now; it is going to take about 16-19 months before we receive it. With that, we have until 2023 to finalize the funding for this. We do have available capital funds, the EMS capital funds, safety capital funds. That is part of the partnership that you are considering with Cedar Fair. We will have additional capital dollars in 2023 that we could put towards this pumper. It is not a general fund expense. Wes Poole wanted to be clear that the City was going to pay cash for this pumper. Michelle Reeder said that is the preferred method, and that we should be able to.

**Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady 7.**

**The President declared the ordinance passed under suspension of the rules in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.**

**ITEM #10 – Submitted by Stuart Hamilton, I.T. Manager, Jared Oliver, Chief of Police, Jim Green, Interim Fire Chief**

**PURCHASE EMERGENCY RADIO SIMULCAST SYSTEM FOR POLICE AND FIRE**

**Budgetary Information:** The total cost of the emergency radio simulcast system will be \$99,612.26 which includes a credit of \$2,500.00 for the old voters, voter cards, module, repeater, and miscellaneous accessory equipment, and will be paid from the Capital Fund.

**ORDINANCE NO. 21-158:** It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and directing the City Manager to dispose of personal property as having become unnecessary and unfit for City use pursuant to Section 25 of the City Charter; authorizing and directing the City Manager to expend funds for the purchase and installation of an emergency radio simulcast system through the State of Ohio Department of Administrative Services Cooperative Purchasing Program from VASU Communications, Inc., of Avon, Ohio, for the Police and Fire Departments, and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter. **Upon motion of Dennis Murray and second of Blake Harris, the Commission voted to approve the ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.**

*Discussion:*

Dennis Murray commented that we are very fortunate to have a very forward thinking team, IT Manager, Police Chief, and Fire Chief, looking forward to how it is that we will be able to provide this base communications system for years to come integrating future technology as it becomes available. This is not the kind of thing we would have done ten years ago. Over the course of time, because we have the right equipment to adapt to what is coming down the line, this will end up saving us money and provide us much better service.

**Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Naomi Twine, Dave Waddington, Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wes Poole, Dennis Murray, and Dick Brady 7. The President declared the ordinance passed under suspension of the rules in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.**

**CITY MANAGER’S REPORT**

- Sandusky Fire Department received a donation of \$30.00 from Dave and Linda Speer in memory of Dennis Bird. **Naomi Twine made motion to accept this donation, seconded by Dave Waddington.**
- Thank you to the Merry-Go-Round Museum and Barnes Nursery of Huron for the coordination and donation of the tree that will illuminate Schade-Mylander Plaza throughout the holiday season. The tree will arrive Downtown during the first week in November. **Dennis Murray made motion to accept this donation, seconded by Dave Waddington.**
- Thank you to The Friends of the Greenhouse for the purchase and installation of a new Modine unit heater to replace one located in the Palm Room of the Greenhouse that was out of service. Gundlach installed the unit on October 21<sup>st</sup> and the in-kind donation totals \$3,012. **Dave Waddington made motion to accept this donation, seconded by Naomi Twine.**
- Lisa Loesser was commissioned as a Reserve Police Officer on Thursday, October 14. We look forward to working with her.

- The contractor for the Causeway Wetlands project will be mobilizing on November 1 to begin construction. Staff has met with Cedar Point to coordinate logistics. All work is anticipated to be completed during the winter and early spring.
- The drop-off area for bagged leaves is now open and located near the Marquette Drive entrance to the City Service Center. For questions about the City's curbside Leaf Collection Program, visit our website or call 419.627.5829.
- Staff is preparing a grant application to the US E.P.A. for up to \$500,000 to fund environmental assessments of public and private brownfield properties in the community. The application is due December 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Engineering staff are excited to add certain blocks of Finch, Cable, Adams, Dorn and others to the 2021 resurfacing plan because our past efforts came in under budget. These streets needing repair came up in the Ice Cream Socials and we are happy to announce they will be added to the neighborhood-repaving list this year.
- An event celebrating the dedication of Talon Florh Park will be held on Tuesday, October 26 at 4:00 pm at the park, which is located at the intersection of Cleveland Road and Erie Boulevard. All are invited to attend this special event.
- Requests for Qualifications for the Columbus Avenue Streetscape Project and the Southside Neighborhood Plan are due October 27. Staff expects to make recommendations to award the contracts to the selected contractors in December.
- The next **Arts and Culture Commission** meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 16 at 5:15 PM.
- There is a Special **Landmark Commission** meeting scheduled for Wednesday, October 27 at 7:00 PM.
- The next **Board of Zoning Appeals** meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 24 at 4:30 PM.
- The next **Planning Commission** meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 27 at 5:00 PM.
- Sandusky Recreation would like to remind city residents of this week's Halloween events:

The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Witches Walk will be Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> from 5 to 10 p.m. Proceeds from the event benefit Meals on Wheels and Sandusky Rec's Summer Youth Program.

The Cedar Point Trick or Treat will be the same night from 6 to 8 p.m. The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Downtown Sandusky Trick or Treat will be Saturday, October, 30 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will kick off with a parade and a pumpkin drop at noon. The Downtown Trick or Treat Cruise is sold out. The Citywide Trick or Treat will be Sunday, October 31, from 5 to 7:30 p.m. We encourage all participants and residents to stay safe this Halloween season.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

There are no items of Old Business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Blake Harris shared information about Issue 2. The basic defensive position is that electoral structures have little provable effect on policy outcome such as the allocation of resources, zoning, and the distribution of city services. That said; there are a few points he would like to make in defense of at-large systems. If an established area of a city or particular group over represented on this city council should it be up to other areas or other groups to organize or mobilize behind their candidates. After all, if there is sufficient citizen interest then electoral re-arrangements are perhaps unnecessary. His fear is that wards could quickly become barons and the politics of spoils could soon develop, in other words, the parochialism of district-based council members may prevent a view of the City's interest as a whole. Moreover, resolution of issues by consensus of compromise, which is customary in most cases in at-large systems, can be replaced by either stalemate or self-interested logrolling, thus creating greater disputes among council members and replacing the more consensual style of politics. The available evidence is that service distribution patterns in cities are not effected in any significant way by changes in electoral structure. However, much more significant are the features of bureaucratic organization, and other aspects of city administration. Thus if the purpose of the attack on at-large elections is to affect policy outcomes then it is misdirected. Those seeking to change the allocation of city resources or to change policy outcomes will do better to organize politically and improve their influence by established meetings. Lastly, counsellors elected at-large will continue to promote policies generally in line with the average voter's preferences, whereas policies advocated by ward-based council will be more closely tied with particular interest groups within their district. As a result, ward counsellors will be more focused on their districts, whereas at-large representatives will be more in-tune to the general interest of the city. To end his remarks, he is pleased to announce that everyone is invited to attend an organization he helped found called Minority Business Empowerment Team. They will be hosting a second networking event at the Marketplace of Noble Crafts. This particular event is really a special one, as they look forward to celebrating and empowering mothers and women in business, which he stated is something that should certainly be celebrated far more often. This event will feature personal and professional development exercises, some awesome guest speakers, a live DJ, and a cash bar. A special announcement will be made that evening of how they look to further assist minority businesses in our area. Please check this organization out on Facebook and anyone can also RSVP on the link. Wes Poole spoke about Issue 2; he thinks people should vote yes for Issue 2. He disagrees with Commissioner Harris, in terms of his portrayal of the problems that we are likely to have. Fortunately for the City of Sandusky, because we are a diverse city, and people live diversely across the city, what all these individual neighborhoods or would be wards need is very similar, including downtown. The likelihood of some small group of small-minded people as you see in much bigger cities where they are segregated in terms of where they live and they have a lot of different needs. We do not have that problem in Sandusky. The issue with the at-large system that we have now, this change to a ward system will have 4 wards that overlay ovetop of the 3 at-large commissioners. That should bring a more diverse conversation. Our state representative comes from a ward, actually a district. The concept of having districts is not really strange or unreasonable, we do that at the state house. We do not vote for everyone that is down there representing us and making laws at the state house and we do not have to do it here. What happens in our system is that with a city of 24,000 people with 15,000 voters; you can be elected with 950 - 980 to 1200 votes. What that means is at the end of the day you are not accountable to anybody. It is just too low. What adding 4 wards will do – is it will insure that at least 4 of the Commissioners will have to listen to somebody. They will not come from a group that they represent through social media, or whatever connections they have whether its businessmen or church groups, or whatever it could be. People will have someone in the neighborhood to talk to who has to listen. 85% of what we do is wrote, we go 7-0 in favor of almost everything we do. We do deserve an opportunity that for the 15% of the things that we actually have an opinion about – they need to be heard. When Commissioners are voting with rules that say they do not have to answer questions by people who come to the meeting, and all of those kinds of things that are trying to limit the conversation. He stated he was at a public meeting – one of the ice cream socials – and a citizen was told he could not speak there because he did not live in that neighborhood. It is a public meeting. That is bullying that should not be done. Some may have only been interested in taking the information and used it from people who live in the

neighborhood, who happen to support them, but the concept of telling someone who geographically lived across the street or did not live in whatever small group was not allowed to speak. That is what we are trying to avoid here. Everyone gets a say and it is time somebody steps up and says that besides myself. Dennis Murray replied since they were debating Issue 2, he would like to speak to that for a moment. Issue 2 would be a mistake. The voters of Sandusky have refused to adopt it twice in 20 years. In addition, it has been disapproved something like 2 to 1. We have many years where we had enough candidates and maybe one to create some kind of a race. Thank goodness, we have races these years. We have good conversation, and he stated he valued that, as a manner of good government. What we see repeatedly in local communities that are small communities like ours, where they have a ward system, is no one runs. The rest of the commissioners or council members are making appointments to those positions. He does not think that is appropriate either. If we are going to have the community represented at its fullest, it would be by representatives that are selected from the entire community. As to congress and the general assembly being models – those are not models that he would want to see us emulate. They are very different because they are much larger areas and that is the only way they can draw people from across the state and from across the country. To suggest that we will not repave Venice Avenue because the 3 commissioners from the other wards just do not favor that, but they all recognize it is a good project. I think that is a mistake. That is the kind of thing we see happen in Cleveland, in Toledo, all the time. There is infighting in terms of what they want for their particular ward. We do not need those kind of divisive politics in Sandusky. We are divided enough as it is. He recommends voters to vote against Issue 2. Blake Harris just wanted to say one last thing, since he had been elected and where he came from has never left me. Whether he lives downtown or behind a gate, he just sits in this seat here. He has never forgotten where he came from when he began this whole process. He has represented far more than just one group. He displays that every time he sits down in this seat, and as well through his efforts within the community.

#### **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Melvin Smith, crossing guard at Mills and Pierce Streets, stated that cars are running stop signs left and right. He has almost been hit twice and so have students. They need a police cruiser to sit there at all times. He has told the principal about it, and he told him to bring it to the next Commission meeting. Half the time people do not want to listen. They are speeding through a school zone that is only 25 mph. The cars are going at least 30-35 mph. President Brady replied that the Commission would pass this issue on to the Police Chief.

Tom LaMarca: questioned whether this relates to City business, but that Mr. Harris opened the can of worms about Issue 2. He will vote, at least his opinion on Issue 2, the residents need the opportunity to vote. They need to take a strong look at Issue 2. Let us have some wards, and a representative in 4 districts, and 3 people at large. Maybe we will have a more open discussion, and we will not have people cut off while they are making a comment. We all have an opinion on this. At the Charter Review Committee when the ward system came up and it was moving along fairly well, then he realized that there were more people that may be related to others, than not, who had their side already picked, and their minds made up before the discussion even began. Wards do have a place, and many communities have been in a ward situation. Bellevue is a smaller city than ours, but they have a ward system and they also have more industrial employment than Sandusky does today. We have let our industry go by the wayside and have chosen to be in the recreational business. The recreational business is a good thing. Cedar Point is a great neighbor, a great partner for the City. However, we cannot keep putting all of our eggs in one basket. We went through COVID. There is a new amusement park coming to the center of Ohio in the coming year, at least they are going to start construction on it. They are investing a billion dollars on an amusement park that will be in direct competition with the people we are trying to partner with here.

Tom Baskin, 815 Bardshar Road, states he did not intend to extend this meeting. When it was said earlier tonight that it has never passed – it did pass in November 1973. The existing Commissioners then brought a completely new initiative in the May primary of 1974 and they



worded it such a way that the public did not understand in what they were voting for, and they got it through. They went from the lowest voter turnout in November 1973 to an even lower one in the May of 1974, and erased it before they could even let the lines dry. In the 1964 Voting Act, I know many of you are too young to be familiar with it, maybe you went over it in the school system, at large systems were frowned upon, specifically for minority groups, and it was used in the south to keep them from having a voice. Here in this city, we have 3 people living on the water, we have no one- he stated he thought Naomi Twine was the farthest west at Columbus Avenue. Naomi replied that no, she lives on Hayes Avenue. There is no center of town, south of town, west of town representation. He stated that we all know there is a City Commissioner candidate that was recruited by the City Commissioners. Therefore, it is not an open program – wards will make it open. The biggest weakness of this City is the government allows no debate. No good government can exist without debate. Poor Mr. Poole over there, we see him get his head smashed in, and it happened again tonight. If we get a ward system we are going to have debate. We are going to get a ward system. It is just a matter of time. If some Commissioners make it through this time, then they will be term limited out. The people of the City want it. The biggest problem is the low voter turnout on these off-year elections. That is why some people get in with 800 votes; Mr. Murray set the record with 2200 votes last 2019 election. Mr. Waddington stated he had just short of 5000, to correct Mr. Baskin. On one serious note, be careful with the deal on the Cardinal store. He stated he has done extensive investigation on the two purchasers, and they will sue you. They tried to buy 100 acres from Exxon Mobile in California, about the same time they were coming here, they failed to come through with funds, Exxon Mobile said ok, we are going to keep your earnest money because you didn't come through with funding. They declared force majeure based on COVID, the original purchase price was \$4.2 million – they sued Exxon Mobile for almost 9 million. They tied them up in court, it was put aside to mediation. We are in the same situation here – they ripped us off for \$9000.00 and we have \$139,620.00 in an account just sitting there. They are going to be coming for that, they have not touched the property in 2 years, and their plan is to split that up kind of like the bottom of Market Street. You can buy into your stall for \$25,000.00-\$50,000.00 and then you are going to pay them rent based on your sales. It is not going to fly there. It was never really a valid business plan. Now that they have the City on the line, we should not give them a dime; we already have, but be careful because they do not hesitate to sue. Then by the time you get out of that, it is going to cost you more than what they paid for the building. He stated he can distribute packets if they are wanted, probably in the next 2 weeks. Six weeks after they bought Kreimes, they bought a postal building in Toledo – near Cherry Street Bridge – in an opportunity zone. They are \$14,000.00 behind on those taxes. They were \$27,000.00 behind on their taxes until someone started saying let us get an update from these people. I understand the Commissioners have a lot on their plates, but do not lose sight of that, because they will burn us as they have burned others.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Upon motion of Naomi Twine and second of Blake Harris the Commission voted to adjourn at 7:38 pm. The President declared the motion passed.**



Cathleen Myers  
Interim Commission Clerk



Richard R. Brady  
President of the City Commission