

President Brady called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. followed by the Invocation, given by Mr. Brady and the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Clerk called the roll and the following Commissioners responded: Blake Harris, Mike Meinzer, Wesley Poole, Dennis Murray, Dick Brady, Steve Poggiali, and Dave Waddington 7.

City staff present: John Orzech – Interim City Manager, Colleen Gilson – Interim Asst. City Manager, Cody Browning – IT Manager, Don Rumbutis – IT Technician, Brendan Heil – Law Director, Michelle Reeder – Finance Director, Jared Oliver – Police Chief, Mario D’Amico – Fire Chief, Aaron Klein – Public Works Director, Debi Eversole – Housing Development Specialist, Arin Blair – Chief Planner, James Stacey – Transit Administrator, Jason Werling – Parks & Recreation Superintendent, and Cathy Myers - Commission Clerk.

Upon motion of Mr. Poggiali and a second by Mr. Waddington, the commission voted to approve the minutes of the March 27, regular meeting and suspend the formal reading. President Brady declared the motion passed.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

INTRODUCTIONS: New Police Officers; Spencer O’Connell and Thomas Williams

Police Chief Oliver introduced the two newest hired officers. Spencer O’Connell was hired last month and has been a reserve officer for Sandusky for eight months. He is a US Marine Reserve and in his last year at Ohio State University obtaining his bachelor’s degree. He was a Cedar Point Security officer prior to working with us. Thomas Williams started with us last week and came from the Erie County Juvenile Justice Center where he worked since 2018. He graduated from the Police Academy last year through Lorain Community College Police Academy. They are both in the field training program and will train four months with our officers. This brings our numbers to forty-eight police officers. The Police Department is still actively recruiting five more full-time officers.

CURRENT BUSINESS

Upon motion of Mr. Waddington and a second by Mr. Murray, the commission voted to accept all communications. President Brady declared this motion passed.

President Brady asked if anyone would like any items moved from the Consent Agenda to the Regular Agenda. None heard.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

ITEM A – Submitted by Cody Browning, IT Manager

MUNICIPAL CONDUIT LEASE TO EVERSTREAM SOLUTIONS

Budgetary Information: The cost for this lease agreement is charged yearly with a total cost over a 12-month period of \$715.00. This will be paid by Everstream Solutions LLC, to the City of Sandusky.

ORDINANCE NO. 23-085: It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and directing the City Manager to enter into a municipal conduit lease agreement with Everstream Solutions LLC of Cleveland, Ohio, for the lease of City conduit in the right-of-way on Shoreline Drive; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

ITEM B – Submitted by James Stacey, Transit Administrator

ADOPTION OF UPDATED FACILITY MAINTENANCE PLAN FOR STS

Budgetary Information: There is no impact to the Sandusky Transit System’s or City of Sandusky’s budget.

RESOLUTION NO. 015-23R: It is requested a resolution be passed approving and adopting an Updated Facility Maintenance Plan for the buildings and land commonly referred to as the Amtrak Station as required by the Federal Transit Administration and Ohio Department of

Transportation; and declaring that this resolution shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

ITEM C – Submitted by Jason Werling, Recreation Superintendent

PERMISSION FOR GRANT APPLICATION TO ERIE METROPARKS FOR RECREATION

Budgetary Information: The Sandusky Recreation Department is applying for all three of the three levels of grant funding with priority to the highest level. Pickleball Courts at Venice Park - Back in 2018, the Recreation Department was approached by SportMaster of Sandusky in providing a location for free surfacing of a pickle ball court within the city. The former tennis court at Venice Park was selected as the best location because of the demographics of the area. We are requesting grant funding of \$7,412 from Erie MetroParks for the estimated \$15,000 project. Two other projects to be determined will be submitted with the application upon approval of the Recreation Board at their meeting on April 12, 2023. The additional two grant requests will not exceed the \$1,000 and \$3,000 limits for a maximum of \$11,412 requested from EMP.

RESOLUTION NO. 016-23R: It is requested a resolution be passed authorizing the submission of a grant application to the Erie Metroparks Board of Park Commissioners for financial assistance through the 2023 Local Park Capital Improvement Grant Program for the Recreation Department; and declaring that this resolution shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

ITEM D – Submitted by Debi Eversole, Housing Development Specialist

ACQUISITION OF FOUR PARCELS INTO LAND REUTILIZATION PROGRAM

Budgetary Information: The cost of these acquisitions should be limited to transfer fees and will be paid out of the Land Bank expense account. Expenses will be recouped at the sale of the property. The taxing districts will not collect the approximate thirteen thousand six hundred sixty-five dollars (\$13,665.00) owed in delinquent taxes.

RESOLUTION NO. 017-23R: It is requested a resolution be passed approving and accepting certain real property for acquisition into the Land Reutilization Program; and declaring that this resolution shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Upon motion of Mr. Poole, and second by Mr. Murray, 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 shall take effect in accordance with the Section reflected in the ordinance, whether it be in accordance with Section 13 or Section 14 of the City Charter. Roll call on the motion: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. Roll call on the ordinances and resolutions: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. President Brady declared these ordinances and resolutions passed.

REGULAR AGENDA

ITEM 1 – Submitted by Debi Eversole, Housing Development Specialist

APPROVAL OF GRANT AGREEMENT WITH KAGLAND

Budgetary Information: The City will be responsible for providing a total of \$15,000.00 in grant proceeds from the Community Development Capital Projects Fund on a reimbursable basis, payable upon completion of the project and proof of incurred expenses.

ORDINANCE NO. 23-086: It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and approving a grant in the amount of \$15,000.00 through the Housing Development and Beautification Grant Program to Kagland, LLC, in relation to the property located at 1012 Columbus Avenue; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Upon motion of Mr. Waddington, and second by Mr. Harris, the commission voted to pass this ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter. Roll call on the motion: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. President Brady declared this ordinance passed.

ITEM 2 – Submitted by Scott Kromer, Streets & Utilities Superintendent

PERMISSION TO AMEND CEMETERY RULES AND REGULATIONS

Budgetary Information: The revenue that is generated due to changes to after-hours charges and the future sales of unused lots will be deposited into the General Fund and applicable endowments.

ORDINANCE NO. 23-087: It is requested an ordinance be passed amending the rules and regulations for the Oakland Cemetery and Memorial Park in the manner and way specifically set forth hereinbelow; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Upon motion of Mr. Harris, and second by Mr. Poggiali, the commission voted to pass this ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Comment:

President Brady shared by way of clarification he had the opportunity to meet with Chairman of the Cemetery Board, Mr. Zeiher, this afternoon. Mr. Zeiher explained that his communication to our City Manager was misrepresented by himself – the Cemetery Board is not interested in tracking staff overtime. That is tracked by the superintendent. The Board would like to be notified of funerals that last past 3:00 p.m. on a weekday or weekend. Mr. Waddington added that burials must take place within fifty years. The booklet may need to be updated. The City Manager may extend the deed by twenty-five years. The cemetery is updated in the GIS system that logs in all plots. Mr. Murray stated everyone should go on a Library Cemetery Tour, there are some really neat facts and people. It was adopted in State law a few years ago to dispense of empty plots.

Roll call on the motion: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. President Brady declared this ordinance passed.

ITEM 3 – Submitted by Scott Kromer, Streets & Utilities Superintendent

APPROVAL TO PURCHASE SINGLE AXLE TRUCK PACKAGE FOR NEW SEWER/MAINTENANCE FREIGHTLINER

Budgetary Information: The total cost for one (1) Single Axle Truck Equipment Package shall not exceed \$86,025.00 and will be paid from Sewer Capital Funds.

ORDINANCE NO. 23-088: It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and directing the City Manager to purchase a single axle truck equipment package from Henderson Products Inc. of Bucyrus, Ohio, through the Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Program for the Sewer Maintenance Division; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Upon motion of Mr. Poole, and second by Mr. Poggiali, the commission voted to pass this ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Comment:

Mr. Murray asked for clarification of what this item was for. Mr. Klein stated that when we purchase a truck we are really just purchasing the chassis of that vehicle. We need to outfit it with the snowplow package and dumpster package.

Roll call on the motion: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. President Brady declared this ordinance passed.

ITEM 4 – Submitted by Josh Snyder, Public Works Engineer

AWARD 2023 LOCAL STREET RESURFACING CONTRACT TO PRECISION PAVING

Budgetary Information: The City has elected to award the base bid (see Exhibit "A"), plus Alternate B (Ogontz St. – Cleveland Rd. to Fifth St.), Alternate C (Reclaimite surface sealer) and Alternate E (Fire Station #7 parking lot/driveway). The total construction cost shall not exceed \$761,363.90 and will be paid entirely with American Rescue Plan Act Stimulus Funds. The award amount is \$743.10 (.10%) less than the estimated and previously approved project cost in Resolution 010-23R.

ORDINANCE NO. 23-089: It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and directing the City Manager to enter into a contract with Precision Paving Inc., of Milan, Ohio, for the 2023 Local Street Resurfacing Project; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Upon motion of Mr. Harris, and second by Mr. Poggiali, the commission voted to pass this ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Comment:

Mr. Orzech stated he received a question from a resident, Mr. Schwanger, who asks why we spent 1.7M last year on street resurfacing and now we are only doing \$750,000 this year. Mr. Orzech explained that the City Commission had determined when the ARPA Funds came that we were going to have 5M of those funds dedicated to street resurfacing. The Engineering Department in planning frontloaded those years so the first and last year more would be spent. We are now at about 3.1M, and next year will finish out those funds. We are certainly committed and on track to finishing these resurfacing projects. Mr. Poole stated that we were lucky to receive those funds and we are obligated to repair the streets. Going forward he looks forward to the conversation where we are going to find more funds to spend on street resurfacing, and where priorities lie in spending.

Roll call on the motion: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. President Brady declared this ordinance passed.

ITEM 5 – Submitted by Josh Snyder, Public Works Engineer

AWARD FIRE STATION #7 ROOF REPAIR CONTRACT TO B & B CONSTRUCTION

Budgetary Information: The total construction cost for this roof work shall not exceed \$24,864.00 and paid for with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Stimulus funds. The award amount is \$24,864.00.

ORDINANCE NO. 23-090: It is requested an ordinance be passed authorizing and directing the City Manager to enter into a contract with B & B Construction Inc. of Doylestown, Ohio, for the Fire Station #7 Roof Repair Project; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Upon motion of Mr. Waddington, and second by Mr. Poole, the commission voted to pass this ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Comment:

Mr. Klein stated that the engineer was right on what was expected of this project, but the bids were pretty competitive, the highest bid was right in the range of the estimate. We have checked into this contractor – they have done this work before, and we are confident they can do a good job at this price.

Roll call on the motion: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. President Brady declared this ordinance passed.

ITEM 6 – Submitted by Megan Stookey, Project Manager

PERMISSION TO BID 2023 SIDEWALK REPAIR & REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Budgetary Information: The engineer's estimate for the 2023 Sidewalk Repair & Replacement project is \$189,235.75 which shall be paid for with \$99,896.67 Capital Projects Funds (Issue 8 Infrastructure), \$29,487.00 American Rescue Act Funds and \$59,852.08 Capital Improvement Funds.

RESOLUTION NO. 018-23R: It is requested a resolution be passed declaring the necessity for the City to proceed with the proposed 2023 Sidewalk Repair & Replacement Project; approving the specifications and engineer's estimate of cost thereof; and directing the City Manager to advertise for and receive bids in relation thereto; and declaring that this resolution shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Upon motion of Mr. Meinzer, and second by Mr. Poole, the commission voted to pass this ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Comment:

Mr. Murray inquired how long we would continue this 100% cost absorption by the City. In many cities sidewalk repairs are the responsibility of the property owner. We have been doing this to catch up. In the past inappropriate trees were planted that caused the sidewalks to heave. It wasn't the fault of the property owners. He wondered where we were in the process of getting caught up with that. It feels that we have made a lot of progress. At some point we need to move to a 50-50 share with property owners. He wanted to plant a seed that sometime in the near future whether next year or the year after that we need to move to a split cost program. Mr. Klein stated he could email the Commission more information, and the list right now is at .5M. Some of these are city owned properties – like parks. Most would be considered residential. Every time we pass this type of legislation we get inundated with calls and that list grows immediately. He supports moving to the program Mr. Murray suggests. This year we are concentrating on those that are heaved two inches or more, as those are serious trip hazards. It is always a balancing act fixing the worst and the ones who have been on the list the longest. Mr. Murray further inquired if someone calls do they get put on the list, or does someone from staff inspect before they are placed on the list. Mr. Klein stated one of the two inspectors does confirm the work and sometimes there are entire blocks that need redone because it does not make sense to piece new ones into the mix of old ones. Mr. Waddington stated we did well over 6000-7000 six years ago – we went around investigating complaint-driven damaged sidewalks. President Brady commented that it appears we are doing as much footage of repairs as we have in the past. Is that a result of us jumping from location to location. Mr. Klein stated we always jump locations but that simply the price of concrete has gone up, the cement is starting to stabilize, so is asphalt. We have a high engineer's estimate because the ones in bold are the ones that Forestry are getting out there quickly to remove the trees prior to the repairs. We will work with property owners if they would like to have another tree replanted. Ultimately it is the city's decision whether we want the tree replanted there or not. Mr. Poole wished to add that when we started this program he recalled he asked and Mr. Klein indicated it was probably a ten-year process, at the rate we are going. We are like four years into this. When it is completed just take a walk down Erie Street or Second or Third Street, we still have a lot to do. In spite of all the money it costs, the city planted trees in locations that caused damage. This will be over when we have taken care of all of it. Mr. Meinzer stated we used to have a full-time sidewalk inspector that would go around and mark the sidewalks. It may have involved curbs and gutters as well. The new streets have not addressed these. Mr. Poggiali recalls this as well, and they were assessed to the property owner. At one point we used Block Grant Funds, but we cannot assess back those funds. Mr. Poole stated that perhaps this is something we need to do for the community. What else is better to spend the funding on. If the goal is to attract people into the community, then sidewalks are a great incentive. We may have to rethink the way we do business.

Roll call on the motion: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. President Brady declared this ordinance passed.

ITEM 7 – Submitted by Jared Oliver, Police Chief

PERMISSION TO SUBMIT GRANTS FOR SPD BALLISTIC VESTS

Budgetary Information: The total cost for this purchase will not exceed \$11,450.00, of which up to seventy-five percent (75%) will be reimbursed through funds received from federal and state grants. The required local match of the costs will be paid out of the Police Department's operating budget.

ORDINANCE NO. 23-091: It is requested an ordinance be passed approving and ratifying the submission of grant applications for financial assistance to the Office of the Attorney General through the Ohio Law Enforcement Body Armor Program and to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) through the Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Program; authorizing and directing the City Manager to purchase ten (10) Level IIIA Soft Panel Ballistic Vests and External Carriers from Lucky Stone of

Huron, Ohio, for the Police Department; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Upon motion of Mr. Harris, and second by Mr. Poggiali, the commission voted to pass this ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter. Roll call on the motion: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. President Brady declared this ordinance passed.

ITEM 8 – Submitted by Aaron Klein, Public Works Director

AMENDMENT TO WPCLF LOAN AGREEMENT FOR THE MILLS STREET & ULTRAVIOLET PROJECTS

Budgetary Information: With \$4.05M in principle forgiveness and significant interest rate discounts, the terms of the loan agreement will be around \$39M, over 30 years, with an interest rate of around 1.32%. Given these terms, repayment from the Sewer Fund would be approximately \$1.5M annually.

ORDINANCE NO. 23-092: It is requested an ordinance be passed amending Ordinance No. 23-076, passed on March 27, 2023; approving a modified Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) agreement between the City of Sandusky, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Ohio Water Development Authority (OWDA) to finance the cost of the design, construction, and inspection of the Mills Street High-Rate Treatment Project and the Ultraviolet (UV) Disinfection Refurbishment Project; and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Upon motion of Mr. Meinzer, and second by Mr. Poole, the commission voted to pass this ordinance under suspension of the rules and in full accordance with Section 14 of the City Charter.

Comment:

Mr. Orzech wished to thank staff involved with this project. We have an opportunity to be successful partners with Erie County and offer them the opportunity to have a low-interest loan that we had applied for. We added them and their portion of the projects to the loan. The County Commissioners voted last Wednesday for certain things they would commit to for the city. There has been litigation and attorneys that have been making a lot of money, we are at a point that we can turn the page. We have a substantial agreement with Erie County and will put all this into an agreement addendum and come back to Commission when completed. He thanked the Commission for extending an olive branch to Erie County to get this sewer agreement locked in. Mr. Murray stated we are raising the lid to include Erie County in this loan and there have been many conversations moving us in the right direction. Mr. Orzech also stated that we do have a safeguard, we are not taking the loan out tomorrow, so if for some reason we can not come to an amicable solution and this fell apart, which he does not anticipate, the citizens would not be funding the entire project, we would only be funding our portion. Mr. Poggiali stated that anytime we can work with the county it is a good thing, and this is just another example of us working with them and it is a start of better things ahead. He thanked both staffs their hard work and due diligence, and both commissions for their open minds in pursuing this. President Brady stated that staff made this possible, and he is optimistic that we have only some small few hurdles to overcome to get this across the finish line.

Roll call on the motion: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. President Brady declared this ordinance passed.

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

NEW & OLD BUSINESS

ADMINISTRATION

- The Spring City wide clean up Drop-off Day has been scheduled for Saturday, April 22 from 8 am until 11 am at the Shelby Street Boat Launch. For more information visit www.cityofsandusky.com/cleanup.

- The Spring Yard Waste Drop Off will be Saturday, April 29 from 8 am – 4 pm and Sunday, April 30 from 10 am – 4 pm. Residents are invited to drop off residential yard waste at Barnes Composting located at 1630 Camp Road, Huron.

FINANCE

- The deadline to file 2022 municipal income tax returns is April 18, 2023. All individuals and businesses can utilize the Regional Income Tax Agency's website at www.ritaohio.com to file their taxes.

PUBLIC WORKS

- A reminder that annual spring cleanup of Oakland Cemetery & Memorial Park starts on April 17. Residents and patrons are asked to remove anything they wish to keep prior to this date. To allow sufficient time for cleanup, new cemetery decorations can be placed starting April 24.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- The city is in receipt of an Economic Development Transfer (TRES) form from Sandusky Book Bar LLC. The permit is coming from MDA Enterprises LLC DBA Habanero, of Cincinnati, Ohio. From their application to the state, Sandusky Book Bar LLC estimates they will invest \$100,000 in this project, create 4 jobs at their facility with the intention to grow, and generate an additional \$22,275 in sales tax. The business is a coffee shop, bookstore that will also have a small bar. The owner intends to be open daily from 7am-8pm. It is requested the City Commission, by motion, provide authorization to sign off on the TRES Transfer form indicating the City of Sandusky endorses and acknowledges this transfer will be for an economic development project which will benefit the community. This proposed TRES transfer will come back to the City Commission one additional time in the near future (by the Division of Liquor Control) for one more step where the city will indicate whether a hearing is requested prior to being authorized by the State. **Upon motion by Mr. Meinzer, and a second by Mr. Poggiali, the Commission voted to provide authorization to sign off on the TRES transfer form on this development.**

Comment:

Mr. Murray inquired where this development was taking place and by whom. Mr. Orzech stated it will be located at the former YMCA where Ahner Sheet Metal is located, it is a family member of that business. **Roll call on the motion: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. President Brady declared this motion passed.**

- The Housing Development and Beautification grant program is now closed. The city received more than enough eligible applications within the first three weeks of opening the program to fully commit to the initial and added budget allocation. We are pleased to announce that during the 2023 program year, the City of Sandusky assisted over 120 citizens to repair or improve their property or acquire a home for owner occupancy within the city. The program sparked over \$3.4M in private investment for residential property improvements and welcomed 20 new homeowners to the city. We are excited to see all the improvements and will continue to work with our Code Compliance team in assisting homeowners with maintaining their property free from violations.

PLANNING

- As part of the City's preservation design guidelines update, members of the public are invited to a community open house on Wednesday, April 19, from 5 – 7 p.m. in the Commission Chamber at City Hall. There will be a short presentation as part of the Landmark Commission Meeting at 5 p.m. after the adjournment of the meeting there will be a series of activities to get input on the future of historic preservation in Sandusky.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Murray stated we need to have conversations about where we are with the VRBO and transient rentals process and where we want to apply the Economic Development funds. He thinks we are at the point where VRBO's in the city can support themselves on their own and it may be time for us to consider refocusing that program to just properties that are owner occupied or they are full-time rental properties. By continuing to support VRBO rental we are continuing to support a dynamic that we see unfold nationwide where we are funneling money into properties used by visitors but to the detriment of the citizens. We needed to do this for a period of time, but he believes we have reached that tipping point. He is stating he believes it is time to bring this to a close. President Brady stated he hopes there is support for that concept from Commission and that they can unify behind the idea of returning to a need based and transformational project. Oftentimes he feels people show up in the City for this funding as if it were a cash payment. He hopes we are sending a message to our Economic Development staff that we want to refocus these efforts and change that dynamic. Mr. Meinzer added he preferred to provide these funds to homeowners and the elderly. Mr. Poole stated he supports this and it is in keeping with the idea that we are proposing a moratorium on overlay districts as well. Mr. Murray stated that one of the recruiting obstacles we have is that we do not have enough rental properties. With have something like a 4-5% vacancy. Thirty-six percent of the country are renters. Mr. Meinzer stated that rental properties are not kept up to standards within the city. All rentals should be inspected inside and out. Mr. Murray stated that when we adopted the rental registration inspection program – we had nothing to go on. There was quite a lively debate with the landlord community about the initial proposal which was to inspect inside and out. Politics is the art of the doable. We decided at the time to do the doable – which was to inspect the exterior. His understanding is that we can see that there are interior violations from the exterior. Then we have cause to inspect the interior. But he hoped we would get to the point that we would discuss inspecting the interior as well. He thinks we should. Mr. Waddington inquired if that was a motion. Mr. Murray stated no, that it was a discussion to give staff some guidance. Mr. Poole stated that Mr. Meinzer was simply stating that it was under control of this table to come up with a solution for long or short-term rentals and how they maintain their property and how it affects the housing stock in our community. Short term rentals are disrupted due to the character and fabric of a residential neighborhood. They are inconsistent with land uses that are intended for residential zoned areas and increase the price of housing for Sandusky residents by removing housing stock from the for sale and long-term rental markets. He believes that any economic benefits of opening our residential areas to tourism are far outweighed by the negative impacts to our neighborhoods and local residents. There is no significant advantage to tourists staying in transient rental units rather than motels. He was open to short term rentals in houses that were dilapidated and fixing them up would positively impact the neighborhood that otherwise would not have happened. We need to think about how this impacts the neighborhoods. Mr. Poggiali stated that in 1989 when that program started, it was fashioned to get the buy-in from the rental property owners. We developed a housing court, that they could handle their own evictions – that is why they bought into the program. At that time, we were inspecting properties interiors, he did not know what happened somewhere along the way. His thought on rental housing is that no matter what you call it, it is rental housing. The entire time he has been involved with the city and lived in the city. He has always heard people say “I don't want to live in Sandusky there is too much rental housing.” So, no matter how you fashion it, or what you call it, it is just more rental housing. He is also glad we are having this discussion. President Brady stated in looking at our conversation tonight it seems we want to strengthen our Code. He asks staff to think about what has been said tonight and come back with some suggestions as to how to do that. Some changes are needed. We have an opportunity to try catch a falling knife, that is what we have right now. The list for transient rental permits is as long as his arm right now. It is time for review.

President Brady stated that the Cemetery Board stated they meet twice yearly. Mr. Zeiher believes that is not enough. The Cemetery Board requests that they meet at least quarterly. **Upon motion by Mr. Waddington, and a second by Mr. Poggiali, the commission voted to increase Cemetery Board meetings to at least quarterly.**

Comments:

Mr. Poole stated that can meet weekly if they have something to talk about.

Roll call on the motion: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. President Brady declared this motion passed.

Upon motion of Mr. Poggiali, and second by Mr. Murray, the commission appoints Eliot Dyer to the vacant position on Landmark Commission.

Comment:

Mr. Poole stated that he would like the Commission to be informed of future appointments applications prior to the meetings. Ms. Blair stated that Eliot Dyer is a staff member of the Erie County Health Department, he has lived in Sandusky since 2016, he is a young professional that is passionate for the historical preservation character of the city, and strength and vibrancy overall of the city. He was highly recommended by Commissioner Whaley and Chairman Griffiths. He is a hard-working young man, he does not come in with a depth of experience, but we are blessed to have expertise on that commission already.

Roll call on the motion: Mr. Harris, Mr. Meinzer, Mr. Poole, Mr. Murray, Mr. Brady, Mr. Poggiali, and Mr. Waddington, 7. President Brady declared that motion passed.

Comments:

Mr. Poole commented that he had the opportunity to sit in a presentation from our Transit Superintendent, Mr. Stacey, at the Senior Mens Club. He did an excellent job. If there are other groups in the community that want to learn about Transit, you should contact him to come speak to your group.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion of Mr. Meinzer, the Commission moved to adjourn at 6:04 p.m. President Brady declared the meeting adjourned.



Cathleen A. Myers
Commission Clerk



Richard R. Brady
President of the City Commission