

A regular meeting of the Oxford City Council was called to order by Mayor, Mike Smith on Tuesday, June 1, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. Members present were William Snavelly, Jason Bracken, Glenn Ellerbe, David Prytherch, Chantel Raghu and Edna Southard.

Staff members present were Doug Elliott, City Manager, Jessica Greene, Assistant City Manager, Joe Newlin, Finance Director, John Jones, Police Chief, John Detherage, Fire Chief, Casey Wooddell, Parks and Recreation Director, Sam Perry, Community Development Director, Chris Conard, Law Director and Mary Ann Eaton, Clerk of Council.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Snavelly moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Southard seconded. The motion passed 7-0-0.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

#### **PROCLAMATION**

#### **“RELAY FOR LIFE DAY OXFORD”**

Mayor Smith read the Proclamation and presented it to Ms. Karen Martino who thanked Mayor Smith and Councilors for proclaiming Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup> as "Relay for Life Day" in the City of Oxford.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **REPRESENTATIVE THOMAS HALL**

#### **HOUSE DISTRICT 53**

**Representative Thomas Hall**, thanked Council for the opportunity to introduce himself noting his office was dead-set on having these meetings, whether an open Council Meeting or Town Hall in the community to hear from constituents and understand what they are trying to accomplish and to try to be the best voice possible for House District 53.

Representative Hall advised he was born and raised in Madison Township, attended Madison High School and went on to further his education at Miami University. Representative Hall noted his experience at Miami was something he will never forget and he felt having Miami University in Oxford was something Council should be proud of. Representative Hall advised being in the State Capital he meets people everyday who are Miami University graduates which he felt is a testament of what a phenomenal college exists in District 53.

Representative Hall provided background on his political career noting he ran for Township Trustee as he believed local government will always be the best government and advised the only way he had a chance to win was by going door to door. Representative Hall advised through that experience he learned more about the township and more about what people were saying and he felt the testament of going door to door still holds true today. Representative Hall advised even through the pandemic he was able to get out and knock on doors and talk with voters all across the district.

Representative Hall noted District 53 was going to hold many Town Hall meetings and outreach sessions this fall and advised he wanted to have a continuous conversation in Oxford to discuss policy and what can be done to improve the City of Oxford and District 53. Representative Hall noted District 53 has 5 pieces of legislation, two of which have passed out of the House currently and 4 pieces are still being drafted. Representative Hall advised he would stay for the full meeting this evening and would be glad to meet with Councilors afterward to answer any questions. Representative Hall noted as he serves as Oxford's state representative he wanted to make sure he was the true voice for Oxford and for the entire district.

Mr. Prytherch thanked Representative Hall for visiting Oxford noting he did not believe Oxford's last representative made it to Oxford. Mr. Prytherch advised he did not feel the relationship was what it should be between a town and their representative. Mr. Prytherch noted people can disagree politically but he felt it was in Oxford's best interest to have good representation in Ohio District 53 and Representative Hall needs a strong Oxford.

Mayor Smith thanked Representative Hall and Representative Hall advised he looked forward to any questions after the meeting.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Ms. Ella Cope**, 417 Sandra Drive, advised she was the creator of the Change Makers of Oxford mural, which was opened in 2019, has been on display directly across the street for the last two years and was recently de-installed. Ms. Cope noted she has been informed that PACO voted to reinstall the mural on the east-facing wall of the Municipal Building. Ms. Cope advised she was excited about the mural's new home and its continued future in the City of Oxford. Ms. Cope noted her hope the mural continues to educate people and provoke people to think about the complex and difficult history of civil rights and social justice work in Oxford, Ohio. Ms. Cope advised she hoped the City continues to support and be interested in preserving and protecting public art in Oxford, Ohio. Ms. Cope noted she believed public art is what gives a town its character and allows a town to express its personality and its identity. Ms. Cope advised she felt public art should be preserved and encouraged by officials such as City Councilors. Ms. Cope thanked Council for their support.

Mr. Snavelly thanked Ms. Cope noting it was a marvelous mural and noted Ms. Cope should be very proud of it. Mr. Snavelly advised Council was very proud of Ms. Cope for putting it forward. Mr. Snavelly noted his hope it was the beginning of a trend of more public art in the Oxford community.

Ms. Cope noted her hope it was the beginning of a trend. Ms. Cope advised Council also needed to thank Joseph Prescher. Ms. Cope advised while she created the concept for the mural and did research and fund-raising, Joe did the final design and painted the mural himself. Ms. Cope noted her hope people remember the great work he did on the project.

Ms. Southard advised Council was very proud of the Public Arts Commission of Oxford, which was formed a few years ago and is encouraging public art in the community. Ms. Southard noted her hope Ms. Cope's mural was the first of many public art projects.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Minutes of the May 18, 2021 City Council Meeting. (Mary Ann Eaton, Clerk of Council) pg6

Ms. Southard moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Snavely seconded. The motion passed 7-0-0.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

#### **RESOLUTION** **PURCHASE OPTION**

A Resolution No. 7300 authorizing the City Manager to negotiate an Option to Purchase the Nelson Morrow Building from the Board of Education of the Talawanda City School District. (Doug Elliott, City Manager)

Mr. Elliott advised this was a follow-up to the discussion regarding the contract with AECOM Technical Service, Inc. to construct the rail platform. Mr. Elliott noted the proposed Resolution would authorize him to negotiate an option to purchase the Nelson Morrow building from the Board of Education of the Talawanda City School District. Mr. Elliott advised this action would further construction of the Amtrak passenger rail platform on the CSX line. Mr. Elliott advised presently the Board of Education was getting an appraisal of the property noting the City may do so was well. Mr. Elliott advised the proposed Resolution will ensure all of Council is in agreement with staff moving forward with the negotiation of an option to purchase the building. Mr. Elliott noted the purchase would be contingent upon the City receiving state and/or federal funding to finance the property.

There were no comments from the public.

Mr. Prytherch advised he appreciated Council considering the proposed Resolution noting when Council started talking about Amtrak in that location they felt it was ideal. Mr. Prytherch advised he appreciated the effort.

Mr. Ellerbe noted he was glad to have another opportunity for town/gown partnership.

Ms. Southard moved to adopt Resolution No. 7300. Mr. Prytherch seconded. The motion passed 7-0-0.

**RESOLUTION**  
**ADA TRANSITION PLAN**

A Resolution No. 7302 of Oxford City Council adopting an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan. (Jessica Greene, Assistant City Manager)

Ms. Greene advised the City should have previously had this plan in place noting the City has been working on ADA compliance and improvements for many years and have spent millions of dollars on it although never adopted a plan which is required by the American With Disabilities Act. Ms. Greene advised the City used the services of a Miami University Political Science class who did an assessment of some of the City's facilities, created a list of areas that need improvement and created a draft ADA Transition Plan. Mr. Greene noted staff recommends Council's approval of the Transition Plan and advised under this plan a self-assessment of City facilities, communications and practices for engaging the public would be done every few years to make sure no one is barred from participation in any way. Ms. Greene offered to answer any questions.

There were no comments from the public.

Ms. Southard congratulated staff for this effort noting she felt it was excellent and advised Council need to help those who are not as abled as they are.

Mr. Prytherch and Mayor Smith commended the effort as well.

Mr. Snavely moved to adopt Resolution No. 7302. Ms. Southard seconded. The motion passed 7-0-0.

**RESOLUTION**  
**GRANT APPLICATION**

A Resolution No. 7303 authorizing the City Manager to apply for Butler County Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus funding (CDBG-CV). (Jessica Greene, Assistant City Manager)

Ms. Greene advised the Butler County Commissioners established a special Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus Fund noting they were asking Cities to apply for funds for longer-term recovery and revitalization of low to moderate-income areas. Ms. Greene advised she was proposing a continuation of Oxford's Small Business Grant Program with a stipulation that most of the funds need to go directly to non-owner employees. Ms. Greene noted if awarded, the Oxford Chamber of Commerce has agreed to be a partner and will help facilitate this grant program.

There were no comments from the public.

Mr. Prytherch noted this dovetails with what Council has talked about before and advised this was a different pool of money, which was why Council was able to budget less out of the recovery funds.

Mr. Snavely moved to adopt Resolution No. 7303. Ms. Southard seconded. The motion passed 7-0-0.

**RESOLUTION**  
**OKI GRANT APPLICATION**

A Resolution No. 7304 of Council authorizing the City Manager to submit a grant application to the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana (OKI) Regional Council of Governments requesting funding from the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program and authorizing the City Manager to secure through property tax levy funds a 40% local match for the engineering, design and construction of the Oxford Area Trail System (OATS) from Peffer Park to the Talawanda Middle School. (Jessica Greene, Assistant City Manager)

Ms. Greene advised the proposed grant was for Phase V of the Oxford Area Trail which will close the gap between the east and west sides of town noting it involves a railroad crossing and steep topography and advised it will be ADA compliant.

Mr. Ellerbe recused himself as he lives near the proposed section of trail.

Ms. Greene advised this was a very expensive segment of trail, which will come up the hill to Chestnut Street and connect to the future multimodal facility. Ms. Greene noted she was asking for a larger grant match for this segment to score better with OKI as she was trying to be strategic in getting funds for the trail program.

There were no comments from the public.

Mr. Snavely noted he felt the OATS trail was one of the best things going in Oxford in many ways and advised Ms. Greene deserves a lot of credit for sheparding it along. Mr. Snavely noted it helped everyone in town who was willing or interested in walking or bicycling. Mr. Snavely advised he felt the trail was a community treasure and Council should support it.

Ms. Southard advised she was delighted with the trail and was honored to walk it almost every day. Ms. Southard noted she felt it added to the quality of life in Oxford.

Mr. Elliott referred to the title of the proposed Resolution and Section 3 and suggested the word "secure" be replaced with the word "utilize" since the City already has levy funds. Mr. Snavely made the friendly amendment.

Mr. Prytherch noted this segment would connect the heart of town with the high school, which is a public safety problem that has made him uncomfortable since the high school was constructed along the railroad tracks directly south of town. Mr. Prytherch advised this is what he voted for in the levy, to use the money to secure the big money through grants such as this.

Mr. Snavelly moved to adopt Resolution No. 7304. Mr. Ellerbe seconded. The motion passed 6-0-0.

**RESOLUTION**  
**MOON CO-OP LOAN AGREEMENT**

A Resolution No. 7305 authorizing the City Manager to amend the loan agreement between the City of Oxford and Moon Cooperative Services, Inc. (Jessica Greene, Assistant City Manager)

Ms. Greene advised in 2011 Moon Co-Op entered into an agreement with the City of Oxford for a loan from the revolving loan fund noting in 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 it was amended to be interest only. Ms. Greene advised in 2016 a new loan agreement was established which was meant to be for a year although it continued through 2020. Ms. Greene noted a new amortization schedule has been established which the Moon Co-Op Board is in agreement with. Ms. Greene advised the new loan requires interest and principle payments noting staff recommends approval of the proposed Resolution.

Moon Co-Op members Ms. Raghu, Mr. Prytherch, Ms. Southard and Mr. Snavelly recused themselves.

There were no comments from the public.

Mr. Ellerbe moved to adopt Resolution No. 7305. Mr. Bracken seconded. The motion passed 3-0-0.

**RESOLUTION**  
**SRO AGREEMENT**

A Resolution No. 7306 authorizing the School Resource Officer Program Memorandum of Understanding between the Talawanda City School District and the City of Oxford and authorizing the City Manager to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the City. (John Jones, Police Chief)

Chief Jones advised the proposed Resolution would authorize the City Manager to sign the agreement with the Talawanda School District for the City to provide three School Resource Officers. Chief Jones noted it was essentially the same agreement that has been signed the last few years with some changes in the rate. Chief Jones noted the proposed agreement was approved by the Talawanda City School Board at their May 17 meeting.

There were no comments from the public.

Mr. Snavelly noted he has only heard good things about the program.

Mr. Prytherch advised Council heard at their last meeting that school safety and policing were top issues for community members.

Mr. Prytherch noted he supported the partnership between the City and the school district.

Ms. Raghu inquired how many arrests have taken place in the schools and Chief Jones advised not many. Chief Jones noted OPD was compiling a public records request for Talawanda's Superintendent and would provide that information to Council as well.

Mr. Snavelly moved to adopt Resolution No. 7306. Mr. Ellerbe seconded. The motion passed 7-0-0.

## **RESOLUTION**

### **NIC AGREEMENT**

A Resolution No. 7307 authorizing the City Manager to enter into a new agreement with National Inspection Corporation for Chief Building Official/Plans Examiner, and Building Inspection Services for the City of Oxford. (Sam Perry, Community Development Director)

Mr. Perry advised the proposed Resolution represents a change in the Community Development Department's operations. Mr. Perry noted the City has contracted with National Inspection Corporation (NIC) for over 20 years and advised the agreement has been tweaked over the years. Mr. Perry advised for the last couple of years he has wanted to bring code enforcement back in house and have more direct supervision over that function. Mr. Perry noted the agreement has been renegotiated and he planned to bring in a fulltime staff person to perform code enforcement duties. Mr. Perry advised the building inspection and plans examination will continue with NIC without interruption.

There were no comments from the public.

Mr. Prytherch noted his support for bringing this function back in house.

Mr. Snavelly moved to adopt Resolution No. 7307. Ms. Southard seconded. The motion passed 7-0-0.

## **ORDINANCE**

### **FIRST READING**

### **CONDITIONAL USE APPLICATION**

An Ordinance Approving A Conditional Use Permit Application To Allow A Restaurant And Place Of Worship To Be Located At 22 N. College Avenue Oxford, Ohio, 45056 With Conditions. (Sam Perry, Community Development Director)

Mr. Perry advised the proposed Ordinance was a recommendation from the Planning Commission to approve a Conditional Use Application, which is a zoning action to allow a use that may not be allowed administratively without a public hearing. Mr. Perry noted the use proposed by Pastor Tom Ellis and the non-profit is to convert a building that was not previously used as a church into that function. Mr. Perry advised 22 N. College Avenue has been vacant as the Sushi Nara Japanese restaurant closed in June of 2020. Mr. Perry noted the Planning Commission found the proposal to be a good adaptive reuse of the building with a coffee shop on the bottom floor and the upstairs area would be used for worship functions. Mr. Perry discussed the two waivers and one condition for approval as recommended by the Planning Commission and outlined on page 80 of Council's packet.

**Mr. Tom Ellis**, advised he was the Pastor of the Calvary Church in Springdale, Ohio and thanked Council for considering the proposal this evening.

Ms. Southard advised she felt this was an excellent reuse of the historic building, which needed to be preserved. Ms. Southard noted she felt it would be good for the economy and good for the community.

Mr. Snavely advised he felt it was a good use of the property and noted some concern with the availability of parking spaces which Mr. Perry and Mr. Prytherch addressed.

Ms. Raghu noted she felt combining a coffee shop and place of worship was an interesting concept and inquired if the coffee shop was a separate entity and Mr. Perry advised yes.

Mr. Ellerbe and Mayor Smith noted their support for the proposal.

## **ORDINANCE**

### **SECOND READING**

### **SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET**

An Ordinance No. 3622 Amending Ordinance No. 3600. Supplemental Budget Ordinance Number 4 To Make Supplemental Appropriations For Fiscal Year 2021. (Joe Newlin, Finance Director)

Mr. Newlin addressed his staff report as presented on pages 116-118 of Council's packet and offered to answer any questions.

There were no comments from the public or from Council.

Ms. Southard moved to adopt Ordinance No. 3622. Mr. Snavelly seconded. The Ordinance was adopted by the following roll call:

AYE: Mr. Ellerbe, Mr. Prytherch, Ms. Raghu, Mr. Snavelly, Ms. Southard, Mr. Bracken  
Mayor Smith (7)

NAY: None (0)

ABS: None (0)

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Elliott welcomed everyone back to in-person meetings.

Mr. Elliott provided an update from the Regional Income Tax Agency noting their service has proven to be very effective and efficient in the collection and administration of the City's income tax.

Mr. Elliott provided an update on the City's Electric Aggregation Program.

Mr. Elliott advised at the next meeting a presentation will be made regarding water softening alternatives.

Mr. Wooddell advised today was opening day of the Aquatic Center and if you missed it, you missed the best cannonball by Mayor Smith. Mr. Wooddell noted it was also the first day for summer camp. Mr. Wooddell encouraged everyone to attend the Freedom Festival on July 3 at the Oxford Community Park from 5-10 p.m. with fireworks at 10:00 p.m.

Mr. Perry advised Andrew Wilson who was the City's Technical Assistant served his last day on Friday and went on to work for the City of Hilliard as GIS Administrator. Mr. Perry noted Andrew had a great career with the City of Oxford for the last 15 years.

Chief Jones referred to page 4 of Council's packet and advised the June 7 Oxford Parking and Transportation Advisory Board was meeting virtually, not at the Courthouse.

Ms. Raghu thanked Representative Hall for attending the meeting this evening noting she would like to speak to him after the meeting because he is very pro-safety. Ms. Raghu noted a Work Session would be held before the next Council meeting on June 15 to hear from some people who are being harassed locally which is something not unique to Oxford, it is a districtwide problem. Ms. Raghu advised she would like to pick Representative Hall's brain about what he could do from the State Legislature to try to build a culture that is safe for everyone, and in particular LGBTQ, people of color, marginalized community members, and women who do not feel safe.

Mr. Ellerbe thanked Representative Hall for attending the meeting this evening.

Mr. Ellerbe noted he looked forward to getting Phase V of the Oxford Area Trail that connects the eastern, western and south sides of the City done.

Mr. Ellerbe advised he was glad to see everyone back in town and smiling faces he can actually see.

Mr. Snavelly noted he was glad to be back for in-person meetings. Mr. Snavelly thanked Representative Hall for being in attendance as Council appreciated it. Mr. Snavelly encouraged Representative Hall to keep listening.

Ms. Southard thanked Representative Hall for being in Oxford and noted it was nice to see everyone in person. Ms. Southard advised everyone still needs to be careful, stay safe and take care of each other.

Ms. Southard noted a lot of construction was going on in town and advised all the information about road closures etc. was on the City's website and on Miami University's website and encouraged everyone to stay informed that way.

Ms. Southard advised a lot of work has been done on City Boards and Commissions in terms of strategic planning in preparation for the Comprehensive Plan update. Ms. Southard noted she looked forward to making good things happen for the community.

Mr. Bracken encouraged everyone to get vaccinated noting we were not through this yet and people were still vulnerable.

Mr. Prytherch noted it was a pleasure to see everyone in person noting we were starting to put the pandemic in the rearview mirror. Mr. Prytherch advised he felt Council helped get the community through and it was critically important for Miami University to have a good or at least a decent year. Mr. Prytherch noted it was tough for businesses but most of them survived. Mr. Prytherch advised he was excited about the American Rescue Plan Act funding and a variety of other initiatives.

Mayor Smith advised on June 4 the Metro Parks of Butler County was opening their Mill Race Preserve area on Four Mile Creek at 3:00 p.m. beginning at the Black Covered Bridge.

### **ADJOURN**

Mr. Ellerbe moved to adjourn at 8:38 p.m. Mr. Snavelly seconded. The motion passed 7-0-0.