

A Regular meeting of the Oxford City Council was called to order by Mayor Kevin McKeehan on Tuesday, June 2, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. Those members present were Bob Blackburn, Richard Keebler, Mike Smith and Edna Southard. Kate Rousmaniere and Steve Snyder were excused.

Staff members present: Mr. Doug Elliott, City Manager; Mr. Mike Dreisbach, Service Director; Mr. Bob Holzworth, Police Chief; Mr. Joe Newlin, Finance Director; Mr. John Detherage, Fire Chief; Mr. Steve McHugh, Law Director and Ms. Mary Ann Eaton, Clerk of Council.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor McKeehan requested the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Smith moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Blackburn seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Lisa Brunckhorst, 146 Stone Creek Drive, reminded everyone Race Across America (RAAM) participants and teams would bicycle through Oxford the week of June 22nd. Ms. Brunckhorst noted Oxford had a 4 person team this year which she was part of and their charity was autoimmune disease. Ms. Brunckhorst advised Oxford's team had a 10 person crew from Oxford and Brookville who would man the RV and the follow cars. Ms. Brunckhorst encouraged everyone to follow their progress at www.raceacrossamerica.org. Ms. Brunckhorst noted her hope the team would do a good job representing Oxford.

Mr. Vincent Hand, 511 E. Chestnut Street, read the following into the record 'Good evening mayor, city councilors and staff. About one year ago I addressed council about bike lanes on Spring Street. At that time I presented signatures of more than four hundred people who supported the effort that was completed last July, when the street was repaved. Striping Spring Street to Beech was a great start. I have gone out of my way to use the lanes when I ride, and I know others do so as well. It has increased the feeling of safety for riders on that street. All of us are grateful for the work of staff and the approval of council that made it happen.

I repeat, that was a great start! But none of us thought it was the end. And yet it appears that the current year's re-paving plan does not make provision for the next stage on Spring Street. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Improvement Plan approved by Council on March 4 of last year calls for extension of bike lanes west along Spring Street to Elm in the 0-2 year time frame.

I would like to request council and staff to reconsider the striping plan for this year.

The Safety plan was adopted into the Comprehensive Plan by council last year, and according to the law director, Mr. McHugh, these plans, while not ordinances, are supposed to supply high level guidance to city officials. The Safety plan was approved by planning commission after several years of research and at least two public meetings. It has wide public support, as evidenced by comments at public meetings and the comments and the petition presented to this council last year.

According to the minutes of the March 4, 2014 council meeting, when the adopting resolution was passed by council, it was requested “that any major changes to intersections or the implementation of dedicated bike lanes came back to council individually for resolution”. Yet it does not appear that this year’s paving and striping plan received the attention and resolution requested.

One argument presented at the most recent council meeting, on May 19, 2015, was that bike lane thermoplastic striping was too expensive, at \$1500 per block. This raises several questions. I will only raise one of them tonight: Does the City intend to pay to regrind the street and *then* pay to re-strip it at \$1500 per block, once it has figured out the details of the bike lanes, OR has the Council, *without voting*, decided that it will abandon a 15-month old plan without investigating detailed solutions?

Another argument is that it is impossible to accommodate bike lanes, because Spring Street is narrow and passes through the difficult intersection at College. It *is* a difficult intersection, and bicycles will pass through that intersection whether or not there is appropriate striping to increase safety for bicyclists and drivers by guiding them through it.

Oxford is not the first city to provide striping to increase bicycle safety. Engineering guidelines such as those published by AASHTO and by the National Association of City Transportation Officials already exist, and they show how to solve exactly the kinds of problems faced here. It has all been done before. As I said a year ago, we are not doing something brand new.

Another argument is that adding appropriate bike lanes on these portions of Spring Street will decrease safety. It is hard to imagine how adding appropriate striping can decrease safety for bicyclists. Car, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic on Spring Street are likely to increase with the Miami Reserve, the relocated library and other developments along Spring Street, along with the significant increase in enrollment at Miami. We need to continue to enhance safety for all three users of Spring Street

Please reconsider the plans for striping on Spring Street and take advantage of the work that has already been done by so many in this community and elsewhere.

In closing, I would again like to thank city staff for your efforts over the past year on bicycle and pedestrian issues. I regret the added stress to you generated by having these public discussions so late in the project process.’

Mr. Hand thanked Council for their time and offered to answer any questions.

Mr. Sameer Al-Abdul-Wahid, 215 Foxfire Drive, noted he biked everywhere around town and he wanted to share his experiences and his hope biking could be improved in Oxford. Mr. Al-Abdul-Wahid advised he managed to live in Oxford without a car and he biked to work everyday, rain or snow, and bought snow tires to bike in the winter. Mr. Al-Abdul-Wahid noted for the most part it was safe and he was glad Spring Street would be repaved due to a rut he had to swerve around. Mr. Al-Abdul-Wahid advised he felt sharrows worked for the most part as 80% of drivers gave him a berth while 20% did not give him as much berth as he would like and 1% really cut it close. Mr. Al-Abdul-Wahid noted the road was not maintained for bikes at all and a tree was over-hanging on Spring Street where a bike would normally travel.

Mr. Al-Abdul-Wahid advised ideally a bike lane needed to go to Tollgate as it was a major retail destination. Mr. Al-Abdul-Wahid noted he knew there were always concerns about parking and he felt parking could be second to safety concerns. Mr. Al-Abdul-Wahid advised he would be very grateful if Oxford continued to build bike lanes as he certainly used them. Mr. Al-Abdul-Wahid offered to answer any questions.

Ms. Helaine Alessio, 50 Josie Lane, advised she attended the American College of Sports Medicine Conference in San Diego last week and was thrilled at the number of posters and presentations about bike lanes in healthy communities. Ms. Alessio noted this topic had caught a lot of attention and attraction and she kept learning about the economic benefits when towns no matter the size supported bike lanes. Ms. Alessio advised the health benefits of the communities in terms of environmental pollution as well as the health benefits of those who decided to bike instead of use a car was helping those communities in every way. Ms. Alessio noted her students collected data on bike usage this year and saw an incredible increase in bike usage especially in warmer weather and with the Environmental Science folks they were able to get a sense of the environmental impact by calculating or predicting a carbon footprint. Ms. Alessio stated she felt when Council saw the thousands of pounds and ultimately tons of carbon that was saved by people who biked instead of used a car they would be very impressed and that data would be coming forward. Ms. Alessio noted this was a nationwide trend and Oxford should not miss the train, Oxford should get on board, and possibly lead the way.

CONSENT AGENDA

MINUTES

Minutes of the May 19, 2015 City Council Work Session. (Mary Ann Eaton, Clerk of Council)

Minutes of the May 19, 2015 City Council Meeting. (Mary Ann Eaton, Clerk of Council)

REPORTS

Report regarding the May 13, 2015 Environmental Commission Meeting. (Mike Dreisbach, Service Director)

Report regarding the May 20, 2015 Civil Service Commission Meeting. (Donna Heck, Human Resources Director)

Report regarding the May 20, 2015 Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting. (Jung-Han Chen, Community Development Director)

Mr. Blackburn moved to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Keebler seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0.

RESOLUTION
CONTRACT WITH
STATEWIDE FORD LINCOLN

A Resolution No. 4919 authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract with Statewide Ford Lincoln for the purchase of one (1) 2015 Ford Interceptor Utility vehicle and one (1) 2015 Ford Interceptor Sedan and specified options at state contract pricing at a cost not to exceed \$65,520.00. (Bob Holzworth, Police Chief)

Chief Holzworth advised he was looking forward to Race Across America bicyclists coming through Oxford. Chief Holzworth noted the Oxford Police Department had a bicycle unit although it was under utilized at the present time. Chief Holzworth noted his hope to ramp up the Bicycle Unit's activity as an enforcement vehicle.

Chief Holzworth asked to remove a 2004 and a 2005 Crown Victoria from the OPD fleet and purchase the vehicles described in the proposed Resolution. Chief Holzworth advised the specifications for the new vehicles were detailed on pages 18-21 of Council's packet.

Mayor McKeehan inquired if there were any comments from the public and there were none.

Mayor McKeehan inquired what the mileage was on the vehicles to be removed. Chief Holzworth advised 57,876 and 77,363 noting engine time was quite different than mileage.

Mr. Blackburn moved to adopt Resolution No. 4919. Ms. Southard seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0.

ORDINANCE
FIRST READING

ORDINANCE
2016 TAX BUDGET

An Ordinance Authorizing The Tax Budget For The Year 2016 And Directing That The Same Be Transmitted To The Butler County Auditor. (Joe Newlin, Finance Director)

Mr. Newlin advised the Tax Budget was the first step in the 2016 budgeting process. Mr. Newlin noted the Ohio Revised Code required the legislative body to approve the Tax Budget prior to July 15th and send it to the County Auditor by July 20th. Mr. Newlin advised the Tax Budget was very preliminary and it was a tool county auditors had used historically to ensure municipalities had enough tax revenue to cover their general obligation bonds. Mr. Newlin discussed the General Fund budget analysis as outlined on pages 22-25 of Council's packet and offered to answer any questions.

Mayor McKeehan inquired if there were any comments from the public and there were none.

Mayor McKeehan noted the proposed Ordinance would be on the next agenda for second reading.

ORDINANCE
SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET

An Ordinance Amending Ordinance No. 3286. Supplemental Budget Ordinance Number 4 To Make Supplemental Appropriations For Fiscal Year 2015. (Joe Newlin, Finance Director)

Mr. Newlin discussed the items reflected in the proposed supplement budget as outlined on pages 40-41 of Council's packet and offered to answer any questions.

Mayor McKeehan inquired if there were any comments from the public and there were none.

Mayor McKeehan noted the proposed Ordinance would be on the next agenda for second reading.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Elliott advised the International Town Gown Association was holding its annual conference at George Washington University in Washington DC. Mr. Elliott noted several City officials including Alan Kyger, Jung-Han Chen and Andrew Wilson were attending the conference as well as officials from Miami University, Jessica Greene from the Visitors Bureau and Carol Michael of ShareFest. Mr. Elliott advised he attended the conference in the past and it provided an excellent opportunity to discuss and share information about common issues between institutions of higher learning and the communities in which they were located. Mr. Elliott noted Oxford ShareFest was making a presentation at the conference and he felt it was wonderful that representatives from Oxford had the opportunity to talk about a great program in our community. Mr. Elliott advised the Oxford and Miami University contingent were exploring the possibility of holding a future International Town Gown Association conference in Oxford.

Mr. Elliott noted a final application was submitted today by the Butler County Regional Transit Authority for the second round of TIGER grant funding for a local multi-model project. Mr. Elliott noted his hope there would be some success with the grant application this year.

Mr. Elliott advised a representative from IGA was going door to door in Oxford trying to get people to sign up for their electric service. Mr. Elliott noted this had nothing to do with the City's Municipal Electric Aggregation program, it had to do with the Electric Choice program offered through the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio.

Mr. Dreisbach advised Campus Avenue was closed from Spring Street to High Street for the installation of a new 12" water main and the project was 50% complete. Mr. Dreisbach noted the High Street reconstruction project was off to a great start and all of the old roadway had been excavated and the under drains were being installed today. Mr. Dreisbach advised the US 27 South project was close to being on schedule and traffic should be moved onto the new pavement and new bridge sometime in July. Mr. Dreisbach noted the biggest question mark with the project would be the necessity to close Chestnut Street at Patterson Avenue and if that were the case he hoped it would be prior to Miami's fall semester. Mr. Dreisbach advised the 2014 CDBG project would be implemented next week and new handicap ramps would be installed along the corridor of Church Street and Walnut Street.

Mr. Keebler referred to the comments made earlier about bike lanes and noted City staff advised Council there was no way to extend bike lanes through the Spring Street and College Avenue intersection without eliminating the turn lanes or widening the street. Mr. Keebler noted three travel lanes required 36 feet and the intersection was only 34 feet. Mr. Keebler advised eliminating the turn lanes would grid lock the intersection. Mr. Keebler noted the same problem would occur at the intersections of Locust and Spring and at Fairfield Road and there was no money to widen the street. Mr. Keebler advised the plan adopted a year was just that, a plan, in many ways a wish list, and until there was money to do something about the street width he did not see how the bike lanes could be extended.

Ms. Southard noted Council received 2 letters from citizens this week commending the Fire Department and specifically Chief Detherage. Ms. Southard congratulated Chief Detherage on behalf of Council for being such a good leader in the community.

Mayor McKeehan noted he took exception to the comment that Council abandoned the bike plan without voting. Mayor McKeehan advised all construction/paving projects came to Council for approval of the contracts and nothing about bike lanes was brought up at that time.

Mr. Elliott suggested skipping the intersections of College Avenue and Locust Street and adding bike lanes on Fairfield Road. Mr. Elliott noted it was successfully done on Spring Street from Main Street to Beech Street because parking was eliminated.

Mr. Vincent Hand, advised David Prytherch, Planning Commission Chair, located specific documentation for solving the space problem and inquired if that had been look at.

Mr. Dreisbach advised he discussed the matter in detail with Dr. Prytherch. Mr. Dreisbach noted Dr. Prytherch sent him a proposed solution that had a shared bike lane that would use the space of a right turn lane. Mr. Dreisbach advised going west on Spring Street the northern most lane was a straight lane not a right turn lane and the solution proposed was not acceptable and Dr. Prytherch understood.

Mr. Keebler noted concern with dedicated bike lanes on Fairfield Road because at times residents needed parking spaces for guests and parking was needed for events held at the TRI. Mr. Keebler advised bikes could easily travel along the curb out of the way of the traffic lane. Mr. Keebler suggested the possibility of adding a bike lane on one side of the road between the travel lane and the parking lane which was done in some cities. Mr. Keebler noted to add bike lanes on Fairfield Road and eliminate parking would create some discussion.

Mr. Vincent Hand, asked Council to start discussions on the bike plan earlier in the year for next year's construction season. Mayor McKeehan advised Councilors were more than welcome to discuss the bike plan when the construction/paving projects came forward.

ADJOURN

Mr. Smith moved to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. **Mr. Blackburn** seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0.