

A virtual meeting of the Oxford City Council was called to order by Mayor Mike Smith on Tuesday, June 2, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. The members participating were Jason Bracken, Glenn Ellerbe, David Prytherch, Chantel Raghu, William Snavely and Edna Southard.

Staff members participating were: Mr. Doug Elliott, City Manager; Ms. Jessica Greene, Assistant City Manager, Mr. John Jones, Police Chief; Mr. Joe Newlin, Finance Director; Mr. Sam Perry, Community Development Director; Mr. Chris Conard, Law Director and Ms. Mary Ann Eaton, Clerk of Council.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Snavely moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Southard seconded. The motion passed by the following roll call:

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

NAY: None (0)

ABS: None (0)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

PRESENTATION

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Mayor Smith advised the presentation would take place during public comments on Resolution Number 1.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Heidi Schran, 319 W. Withrow Street, thanked Council for their service and for allowing her to speak this evening. Ms. Schran noted with all of the horrific and disturbing events this past week she was thankful to be able to attend a vigil for George Floyd Uptown next Monday, June 8 at 6:30 p.m. Ms. Schran advised she recognized this was a complex issue which includes a lot of facets, 2 of them being institutional racism, and citizen and police relationships. Ms. Schran noted there had been disturbing and violent incidents across the country where the trust between citizens and police has eroded. Ms. Schran advised she felt one of the benefits of living in Oxford was members of the Police Division are active members of the community. Ms. Schran noted last night she was a spectator at the parade for the seniors and advised multiple members of the police staff helped facilitate the event. Ms. Schran advised Rick Butler, School Resource Officer was there and helped coordinate the tribute for Mike Davis, the former school treasurer. Ms. Schran noted the Police Chief was her son's flag football coach at one point. Ms. Schran advised she appreciates the community and the police relationships in Oxford. Ms. Schran noted the Ohio Department of Health's Director, Dr. Amy Acton, spoke on this complex issue of racism in Ohio today and reminded everyone that our children are watching us as we go through this and how we respond at this time will be what they will model their actions on in the future.

Ms. Schran advised as a parent and a teacher she knew they were very keen on how we respond at these difficult teachable moment times. Ms. Schran encouraged as many members of the Oxford area police including Miami and the township and area police and any area elected officials to actively participate in Monday's vigil and possibly take a knee for 8 minutes and 46 seconds to recognize some of the problems inherent in society at this time and our willingness to work towards finding solutions.

Mr. Patrick Meade, 100 Lantern Ridge Road, read the following into the record:

"I'm Patrick Meade, resident of Oxford for 48 years, and a member of the Oxford Police Community Relations and Review Commission. It is hard to determine what to say in a public forum at this point in America with its systemic racism and policing issues. I will leave it to more eloquent speakers and writers to do that.

I can only speak to what I know. Like all of us I am called to be involved in my corner of the world. Oxford can be a bubble in so many ways. But we have many of the same problems as the rest of our country. We can choose to make those problems worse, bury our heads in the sand, or face injustice issues, and work to improve things for everybody in our community.

I commend the City of Oxford, the police department, and the citizens for working to make Oxford a better place for everyone. In 2015 City Council created the Police Commission. Since then it has worked with the OPD on improving community-police relations and on improving the police department. We have reviewed training, use of force policies, hiring, body cameras, and other issues. The OPD also provides the commission with data on citations and arrests that include racial and age breakdowns. Chief Jones and the OPD have been cooperative in this effort.

If you read the Chief's Facebook post this week you would see that the OPD desires to work with the community as guardians. I encourage citizens to read the commission's yearly reports and the departments data reports that can be found on the city's website.

I want to encourage people who are frustrated and righteously angry about the murder of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and so many others to turn that anger into action. Become involved in the Oxford community to make it the place you want all of America to be. One way would be to become more aware of the work of the police commission. Next Thursday, June 11, at 7:00 the Police Commission will be meeting via zoom. The agenda will be; 'The current conditions of police and race in America and its implications in Oxford.' We want citizen input. We want an open and honest dialogue. Please go to the city's website next week to see how you can participate next Thursday. Please email any member of the commission with your input. Help us to make Oxford a safe and welcoming city for everyone.

I am also asking council to become more involved in our work and provide us with feedback and input.

Thank You."

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes of the May 19, 2020 City Council Virtual Meeting. (Mary Ann Eaton, Clerk of Council)

Report regarding the May 12, 2020 Planning Commission Virtual Meeting. (Sam Perry, Community Development Director)

Report regarding the May 20, 2020 Board of Zoning Appeals Virtual Meeting. (Sam Perry, Community Development Director)

A Resolution No. 7190 declaring certain property in the Police Division's possession as surplus and not needed for any municipal purpose and authorizing its advertisement and sale to the highest bidder at public auction or internet auction. (John Jones, Police Chief)

Mr. Snavelly moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Prytherch seconded. The motion passed by the following roll call:

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

NAY: None (0)

ABS: None (0)

RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE USPS

A Resolution No. 7191 of the Council of the City of Oxford, Ohio, calling on the U.S. Congress to pass funding for the United States Post Office (USPS). (Edna Southard, Councilor)

Ms. Prue Dana, 131 W. Collins Street, advised she was before Council being in grief, sadness and fear over the death of Mr. Floyd.

Ms. Dana noted she was a member of the Executive Committee of the League of Women Voters and does voter service, Sandy Woy-Hazelton does programming and Jenny Fisher takes care of administrative details. Ms. Dana advised she was representing them and the league this evening. Ms. Dana advised the League of Women Voters began over 100 years ago with women securing the right to vote noting she would speak about voting and about the Resolution for funding the USPS. Ms. Dana read the following into the record as follows:

“Butler County Error is a Warning for November

In the recent 2020 primary election, 317 mail-in-ballots will not be counted in Butler County. These ballots were postmarked before the election deadline, misplaced by the U.S. Postal Service, and delivered to our Butler County Board of Elections too late. We don't know who those voters were or how they voted, but clearly, every voter deserves to have their voices heard.

Our 2020 primary election was a bewilderment of confusion in the middle of a rapidly changing public health emergency. We were ultimately pleased that Ohio prioritized the health of the voters and poll workers, but this election clearly presents a learning opportunity.

We are 5 months away from the 2020 general election. It is clear that the COVID-19 public health emergency will continue. We must learn from the past challenges to improve the elections. Unfortunately, if the power players in Columbus and Washington do not move on these issues, the November 3 election may be even more disorderly.

Our electoral system was designed to support in-person Election Day voting. During a public health emergency, it is reasonable for many citizens to want to vote by mail. The Butler County Board of Election staff worked diligently to process the mail-in ballots during a pandemic, all the while trying to keep themselves safe. Lawmakers need to allocate funds for Boards of Elections to run a fully funded vote-by-mail program in the fall, as well as safe in-person voting with the proper protections in place. Ohioans should be able to request their absentee ballots online. USPS, a constitutionally designated institution, needs to have adequate funding and support to ensure timely delivery of vote-by mail applications and mail-in ballots.

Secretary of State LaRose requested an explanation on the error of the 317 ballots in Butler County. In response, the USPS sent a letter on May 15th describing a miss-sort of a mail tray and a promise of 'going forward, we are instituting additional protocols to ensure the timely delivery of election mail.' The corrective action described was vague and non-descriptive. We hope that Butler County voters will be given a more detailed account of the root cause of the problem and the proposed solution.

While voting-by-mail may remain the safest option for voting during the pandemic, many Ohioans will not trust the mail after this challenging primary. It is unreasonable for voters in the far corners of the county to drive to the Board of Elections Office drop box in Hamilton to drop their ballots. Therefore, we call on Ohio lawmakers to fund and require multiple drop boxes for mail-in ballots and applications for this November. There are several other what is called common sense improvements that can be made. One is early voting, another is online absentee ballot, prepaid postage and there are several others. I thank you for your time and we fully support this Resolution that is coming before you."

Mayor Smith thanked Ms. Dana for her comments.

Ms. Greene read the following e-comments into the record as follows:

Comments submitted on Friday, May 29, 2020 - 8:08pm:

- **Name:** Barbara Wickham
- **Address:** 312 Erickson Dr
- **Email Address:** barbwickham@gmail.com
- **Meeting Date:** Tue, 06/02/2020
- **Agenda Item:** Resolution to support USPS
- **Comments:** Please support the USPS

- **Position:** Support

Comments submitted on Monday, June 1, 2020 - 9:17am:

- **Name:** Margarette Beckwith
- **Address:** 4358 Kehr Road
- **Email Address:** mbeckwith@beckwithchapman.com
- **Meeting Date:** Tue, 06/02/2020
- **Agenda Item:** Support of funding the US Post Office
- **Comments:**

The US Post Office is an essential service to our country and this community. It supports business, commerce and communications of all our people.

I strongly support the US Government funding of this institution and maintain the office in our local communities. To politicize this issue, "starve" it into being bankrupt and give it to private hands will is to further undermine our democracy.

For the good of our community and country, PLEASE demand that the US Government fund this important service.

- **Position:** Support

Comments submitted on Monday, June 1, 2020 - 11:08am:

- **Name:** Marilyn A Elzey
- **Address:** 3301 Spruce Lane
- **Email Address:** marilynelzey@gmail.com
- **Meeting Date:** Tue, 06/02/2020
- **Agenda Item:** Discussion of the future of the US Post Office Service
- **Comments:**

I hope that City Council will pass a resolution, which will support funding the US Post Office Service and not letting President Trump privatize this essential service.

Ms. Amber Franklin, echoed Mr. Mead's comments with regard to the work the Police Commission has been doing with the Oxford Police Division. Ms. Franklin advised she wanted to mention something she thought of as she watched the video of George Floyd's murder on camera. Ms. Franklin noted she was a Speech Pathologist and a linguist and advised she studies accents and dialects and always pays attention to speech and to words. Ms. Franklin noted one of the things she has not heard people talk about in relation to the video is that while Mr. Floyd had the officer's knee on his neck there was another man off-camera who sounded like he was likely an African-American man who pleaded several times with George Floyd to simply get up and get in the car. Ms. Franklin advised to her it is a reflection of the internalization that marginalized people have had with the oppression they feel in society where they feel so disempowered they would rather look at someone with a knee on their neck and ask that person under their own steam to get up and get in the car rather than ask or demand the agency or the people who are oppressing that person to stop oppressing that person. Ms. Franklin noted she felt for too long in our society we have expected people who are on the fringes to pull themselves up by their bootstraps and advised she felt that was a vivid example of how not everyone can pull themselves up by their own bootstraps.

Ms. Franklin advised one of the things she appreciates about being in the Oxford community is since COVID-19 she knew there has been a lot of work with the food bank and many different organizations to help those who are marginalized and support those who are struggling. Ms. Franklin noted she wanted to continue to see that kind of galvanizing force happen around our push for more justice for people of color and for people everywhere. Ms. Franklin advised she looked forward to seeing many City Councilors at the vigil on Monday.

Mayor Smith thanked Ms. Franklin for her comments.

Mayor Smith noted at this point Council will discuss the Resolution at hand.

Mr. Prytherch thanked Councilor Southard for crafting the Resolution and thanked Ms. Dana and the League of Women Voters for their work in support of it. Mr. Prytherch advised he felt this was the perfect use of a Resolution noting Council cannot do anything locally to fund the USPS although they can ask the elected representatives to do what is right. Mr. Prytherch advised he felt the USPS was always integral to society noting with upcoming elections the mail service is more essential than ever. Mr. Prytherch suggested Council consider a similar Resolution to send to the Ohio House, Senate or Governor.

Ms. Southard advised the USPS was in jeopardy right now with the issue of privatizing, which she felt would not be good. Ms. Southard noted this was a national issue although it had local implications and advised the postal service provides benefits to individuals and to the community. Ms. Southard advised people living in a small town need the postal service for communication and noted it also provided many jobs here in Oxford. Ms. Southard noted she felt the USPS was needed to preserve democracy so people can vote by absentee ballot and so we can have voting by mail. Ms. Southard advised this was not a partisan issue it was a benefit for preserving elections and preserving democracy. Ms. Southard noted that was why it is so important now as funding for the system is being threatened at a time when a major election is 5 months away and at a time when we are dealing with a pandemic in which many people will want to vote by mail. Ms. Southard thanked Councilor Prytherch for his support of the proposed Resolution.

Mayor Smith noted he felt in the year of 2020 the postal service and voting by mail could become essential as we near the presidential election. Mayor Smith thanked Ms. Southard for bringing the proposed legislation forward.

Ms. Southard moved to adopt Resolution No. 7191. Mr. Prytherch seconded. The Resolution was adopted by the following roll call:

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

NAY: None (0)

ABS: None (0)

ORDINANCE
FIRST READING
2021 TAX BUDGET

An Ordinance Authorizing The Tax Budget For The Year 2021 And Directing That The Same Be Transmitted To The Butler County Auditor. (Joe Newlin, Finance Director)

Mr. Newlin advised this was the annual Tax Budget to be submitted for the coming year to the Butler County Tax Commission, in accordance with requirements stipulated by the Ohio Revised Code. Mr. Newlin noted approval by the legislative body is required by July 15th and it is due to the county by July 20th. Mr. Newlin advised the tax budget is essentially a preliminary budget estimate for next year. Mr. Newlin noted beginning in August staff will undertake their normal detailed line-item budget analysis and preparation spending approximately three months of intensive preparation and the final approved budget will be submitted to the County Budget Commission to replace this preliminary estimate. Mr. Newlin advised the tax budget provides the first glimpse at 2021's General Fund Budget noting staff prepared the tax budget with an approximate 0% change from the 2020 amended budget except for a few items. Mr. Newlin discussed the exceptions as detailed on pages 30-45 of Council's packet. Mr. Newlin advised the Ohio Revised Code requires one public hearing of the Tax Budget which is scheduled for the June 16, 2020 Council Meeting.

Mr. Prytherch advised Mr. Newlin has shared with Council some trends in income and other tax revenue noting there were a lot of unknowns on the revenue side. Mr. Prytherch inquired how Mr. Newlin will incorporate some trends we are seeing when the 2021 budget is prepared based on declining income tax revenues or some of the other trends. Mr. Newlin advised at that point staff will have a better idea and a clearer picture of what the income tax revenue decrease will be as well as the hotel tax revenue and local government funding.

Mayor Smith advised the second reading for the Tax Budget will be June 16, 2020.

ORDINANCES
SECOND READING

ORDINANCE
NEW SECTION 1137.10

An Ordinance No. 3569 Repealing Oxford Codified Ordinance Section 1137.10 Entitled Nonconforming Signs, And Adopting New Oxford Codified Ordinance Section 1137.10 Entitled Nonconforming Signs. (Sam Perry, Community Development Director)

Mr. Perry noted this and the next Ordinance were text amendments recommended by the Planning Commission. Mr. Perry advised the proposed legislation would allow property owners who have existing multi-family developments particularly in the Mile Square and R3MS districts to have freestanding signs if they have a large enough property. Mr. Perry advised there were no changes since the first reading of these two Ordinances and offered to answer any questions.

Ms. Southard asked Mr. Perry to explain for the public why this is coming up now and what the ramifications might be. Mr. Perry noted the process for a text amendment takes several months and advised he received a request from a property owner through a settlement. Mr. Perry advised the City relaxed temporary sign enforcement during the pandemic to encourage businesses to advertise provided it did not affect public health or safety. Mr. Perry noted the text amendment was in the process prior to that.

Mr. Snavelly moved to adopt Ordinance No. 3569. Mr. Prytherch seconded. The Ordinance was adopted by the following roll call:

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

NAY: None (0)

ABS: None (0)

ORDINANCE
NEW SECTION 1151.05

An Ordinance No. 3570 Repealing Oxford Codified Ordinance Section 1151.05 Entitled Permanent Signs, And Adopting New Oxford Codified Ordinance Section 1151.05 Entitled Permanent Signs. (Sam Perry, Community Development Director)

Mr. Perry advised he had nothing to add.

Mr. Prytherch noted the text amendments originated in part from a lawsuit with an individual property owner. Mr. Prytherch advised he was glad the code would be changed to make it uniform noting he felt it was reasonable.

Mr. Snavelly moved to adopt Ordinance No. 3570. Ms. Southard seconded. The Ordinance was adopted by the following roll call:

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

NAY: None (0)

ABS: None (0)

ANNOUNCEMENTS & COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Elliott noted the Oxford Leadership group holds a teleconference each Monday and advised he would provide an update from yesterday. Mr. Elliott noted the Butler County Board of Health updates their report each Thursday, which shows the number of COVID-19 cases within Oxford's zip code.

Mr. Elliott advised the updated figure was 22 noting it was 17 the week before. Mr. Elliott advised the total cases in Butler County according to the report is 836. Mr. Elliott noted Mike Everett, CEO of McCullough-Hyde Memorial Hospital/TriHealth reported throughout the pandemic they have had 50 persons test positive for COVID-19.

Mr. Elliott advised the City received notice from Glenwood Energy of Oxford of the elimination of the BTU adjustment rider fixed component effective June 30, 2020.

Mr. Elliott advised a Resolution to create a Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA) would be before Council at the next meeting noting the application was on file with the City Clerk.

Mr. Elliott advised the Municipal Building and other City facilities are open to the public as of June 1, 2020 noting the City required the public to practice social distancing and recommends everyone wear a facemask.

Mr. Elliott advised he expected to present the Fact Finder's report to Council at the next meeting with regard to the collective bargaining agreement between the City and the Oxford Patrol Officers.

Mr. Elliott thanked the community for organizing the vigil for Mr. Floyd on Monday, June 8, 2020 in the Uptown Park noting he felt it said a lot about the community. Mr. Elliott advised he was very proud of Oxford's Police Division and the leadership they show. Mr. Elliott noted he was also very proud of the Police Community Relations & Review Commission and advised it was a very good group of community members who discuss many important issues regarding the Police Division. Mr. Elliott advised he felt it speaks volumes of our community and how it feels about the blatant racism that occurred in Minnesota. Mr. Elliott noted Oxford does not condone racism in any form and advised the violence was a total disregard for human life.

Chief Jones thanked Pat Meade and Heidi Schran for taking the time to participate in the meeting this evening noting he appreciated their positive comments and hard work. Chief Jones thanked Dr. Franklin for her words this evening as well. Chief Jones advised Police Community Relations was ongoing work and came back in the limelight in Oxford in 2014 after the incident in Ferguson, Missouri. Chief Jones noted the Police Community Relations & Review Commission (PCR&RC) was created in late 2015 when he was transitioning to the role of Police Chief. Chief Jones advised while the in-custody death of George Floyd has brought police issues back into the limelight, constantly working on improving relationships has been an ongoing effort in the City of Oxford. Chief Jones noted the OPD and the PCR&RC members have been working on improving police/community relations for a few years and advised community policing has been a decades long effort of the Division of Police in Oxford. Chief Jones noted the work was not simple, as with every traffic stop, every pedestrian stop or every interaction with a citizen, the officer has to balance the need to enforce the law and do it in a way that is congruent with what City Council has asked OPD to do and with what the state legislators have asked agencies to do and carry it out with procedural justice in a fair manner. Chief Jones thanked his staff and the PCR&RC for continuing to do that work on a daily basis.

Ms. Greene advised she was proud to live in a community that responds so strongly to injustice.

Ms. Greene noted she serves on the Miami Safe Return to Campus Committee noting she was glad she was invited to be a part of that for the Oxford voice. Ms. Greene advised the committee has been meeting twice per week to talk about how and when to bring Miami students back noting they have discussed many scenarios.

Ms. Greene referred to the gift card program and advised the e-commerce website is delayed a little longer although staff is actively working on it and will launch it as soon as it can be done correctly and smoothly.

Ms. Greene advised she was planning to submit an Oxford Area Trails grant application on Friday.

Mr. Perry advised the Community Development Department was in the middle of their software transition noting they were rolling it out this week and getting feedback from contractors and applicants. Mr. Perry thanked Council for approving the software in the CIP noting he felt it would make the department more efficient, able to handle more volume and be more transparent with the public.

Ms. Eaton reminded Councilors to file their 2019 Financial Disclosure forms with the Ohio Ethics Commission by July 15, 2020.

Ms. Raghu noted she wanted to build on the discussion about racism and advised we know it is not just the police and she felt the police were getting so much attention right now because the racism was so tangible and so violent and caught on tape. Ms. Raghu advised we know it is pervasive, it is in financial institutions, housing, employment and it has to do with environmental justice, pollution and whose neighborhoods get polluted. Ms. Raghu noted we know it is in healthcare because we know black Americans are dying 6 times more than anyone else. Ms. Raghu encouraged everyone to look at who they are around, who they worked with, who is in the leadership meetings and who are on the boards and committees. Ms. Raghu encouraged Miami University to look at who the students are that they are bringing on board and is it a diverse mix, who are the professors being hired, who gets tenure and who is just a visiting professor. Ms. Raghu noted during the three years she has been on Council she has heard two City administrative people talk about the importance of diversity in hiring and being very intentional about it noting Chief Jones was one of them. Ms. Raghu advised that made a big impact on her a couple of years ago. Ms. Raghu advised she is proud of the things Chief Jones has said and done and she believes in him. Ms. Raghu noted she wanted people to see what Chief Jones is doing and what the police force is doing. Ms. Raghu advised she wanted Oxford to have a model police force. Ms. Raghu noted she felt it would be great to have an elected official on the Police Community Relations & Review Commission and advised she would volunteer to do so and looked forward to exploring that in the future.

Mr. Ellerbe advised he was not surprised by these situations. Mr. Ellerbe noted he was a black man and advised even though he has light skin some people have told him he was the whitest black person they ever met because of his non-regional diction and because he understands the English language fairly well. Mr. Ellerbe noted he had to deal with not being black enough for black people and also with not being white. Mr. Ellerbe advised when he sees things like what happened to Mr. Floyd he starts looking back noting two other incidents recently occurred.

Mr. Ellerbe referred to the issue with Mr. Arbery and the issue with Ms. Cooper, and noted they happened in rapid succession culminating with what everyone saw on video which was extremely blatant but very telling about how America operates. Mr. Ellerbe advised he felt Amy Cooper is the worst person in the world because she knew and understood how American law enforcement operates and used that to her advantage and said that on camera. Mr. Ellerbe noted she was bold enough and comfortable enough being able to do that which is something everyone needs to think about. Mr. Ellerbe advised in the case of Mr. Floyd the officer knew he could hide behind one particular legislative construct called qualified immunity. Mr. Ellerbe noted when everyone talks about affecting change in a positive fashion that is the first place he suggests everyone look towards because there are two words in that legislation that are very broadly interrupted and are the cornerstone of what is going on here. Mr. Ellerbe advised the two words are 'clearly established' which he felt means unless there has already been a situation where a particular act of misconduct occurred then an officer is not held responsible for their actions. Mr. Ellerbe noted as a result many of these things have gone unpunished or held unaccountable. Mr. Ellerbe advised the next level of this is what both Trevor Noah and Killer Mike the rapper talked about at length in their videos released in the past couple of days which is prosecutors are not charging these people when these actions occur. Mr. Ellerbe noted he was all for police and advised when he was younger he was not a friend of the police noting he had plenty of run-ins with them. Mr. Ellerbe advised he has dealt with many police interactions through his transition into adulthood and now he can say he is ok with police. Mr. Ellerbe added if there is a stop involving himself and police the first thing he would think about is what his grandmother Mildred Ellerbe told him 'always survive the encounter first because then you can defend yourself in court if you are lucky.' Mr. Ellerbe noted there are individuals like Amy Cooper, you may be able to defend yourself but George Floyd and Ahmaud Arbery never got that chance. Mr. Ellerbe advised he learned tactics in order to deescalate situations when officers wanted to escalate a situation with him and wanted him to give them a reason so it would fall under qualified immunity to do whatever they wanted. Mr. Ellerbe noted that should be the issue we are focusing on if everyone is upset about Mr. Floyd. Mr. Ellerbe referred to vigils and systemic racism noting he is glad to see people protest although he abhors looters. Mr. Ellerbe advised while he does not condone rioting he understands rioting is the tool of an individual that has an unfocused mind, they are upset and have operated in a hostile environment that no one seemed to notice for a long time. Mr. Ellerbe suggested rioters find protesters enjoying them noting we have seen that peaceful protest is actually making some change. Mr. Ellerbe advised the best way to protest is in November by voting out the prosecutors who are not prosecuting and the legislators who are not legislating what we want to see in our community. Mr. Ellerbe noted he wanted to be on City Council in Oxford because of some things he saw in Oxford before 2015 and was involved with in 2015. Mr. Ellerbe advised the Police Community Relations & Review Commission was formed noting he has seen an improvement. Mr. Ellerbe advised he felt there has been an improvement with John Jones becoming the Police Chief. Mr. Ellerbe noted he felt Miami University has a long way to go and he hoped they could start aligning some of those things. Mr. Ellerbe advised he felt protests and vigils are cool but the polls are where things happen.

Mr. Snavelly advised it was obvious that our nation is in crisis, the year began with news of the corona virus, the death toll began to rise in March, and now it is over 107,000 people. Mr. Snavelly noted the economic collapse was not a surprise with unemployment levels not seen since the Great Depression.

Mr. Snavelly advised if that were not enough, Americans witnessed the murder of a black man jogging in his own neighborhood by white vigilantes and now the brutal murder of George Floyd by a white officer while 3 other officers watched it happen. Mr. Snavelly noted these kinds of acts have happened before sadly and when they did there was almost in every case peaceful localized protests sometimes wider and nothing changed. Mr. Snavelly advised now we have nationwide protests by justified angry Americans and some of that has turned violent which is wrong and should not happen. Mr. Snavelly noted it was in this context that he wanted to commend the Oxford Police Chief because Chief Jones's statement was powerful, timely and it represents well the attitudes and practices of the OPD officers that he has known over the years (43 years). Mr. Snavelly referred to the vigil being held on Monday noting he welcomed it and encouraged Oxford residents to join it peacefully. Mr. Snavelly recommended that everyone wear a mask and practice social distancing. Mr. Snavelly noted the national issues will take a lot longer to resolve and advised he wanted to publically denounce the President's unwarranted violent response to a peaceful protest last night including tear gas in order to have his photo opportunity. Mr. Snavelly advised we desperately need compassionate thoughtful leadership and we do not have that now or likely in the near future. Mr. Snavelly noted what we do not need is a military response although it appears we may get it. Mr. Snavelly advised he knew he was speaking for many in our community when he says he is very angry and saddened that we are at this place, he looked forward to a new day and was extremely grateful to live in this City protected and served by the OPD. Mr. Snavelly showed everyone a pin he has had for a long time which says 'Silence is Acceptance, Speak Loudly' noting he felt we should all speak loudly on Monday but peacefully.

Ms. Southard advised she has also lived in Oxford for 40 years and has the 'Silence is Acceptance, Speak Loudly' pin. Ms. Southard noted this country and the systematic racism is not going to be solved by one action, it takes community action and we all have to work better together. Ms. Southard advised there has to be truth and dialog before there can be any reconciliation. Ms. Southard noted her hope everyone can work together more for truth and recognize that injustice to one person is injustice to everyone. Ms. Southard stated if you torture someone you have to allow them to scream which was said by the architect of the U.S. Holocaust Museum, James Freed. Ms. Southard added for those who cannot scream, we have to scream for them. Ms. Southard noted she has spent many years supporting victims of the Holocaust and reiterated we have to scream for all victims of all injustice. Ms. Southard advised we struggle with what to do and how to make things better noting every action should be celebrated and we should work together as much as we can. Ms. Southard noted in 2017 after the Charlottesville Hate March when white supremacists chanted racist and anti-Semitic slurs and killed a protester with a car, a group of citizens here got together and responded with a banner over High Street that read 'Love not Hate Oxford' which was appreciated by the City and the community and it was felt that it expressed some of our basic community values deploring hatred. Ms. Southard advised the banner was damaged by wind, it has been reprinted, and will be hung over High Street again. Ms. Southard noted the cost of the banner not including installation will be \$750 and advised many donations have been received to help pay for it. Ms. Southard noted donations will be accepted by check to Marilyn Elzey. Ms. Southard advised this work is spearheaded by Marilyn Elzey and Margarette Beckwith. Ms. Southard noted there are many things we can do to help people who are protesting such as bail funds and by making their voices heard without causing trouble. Ms. Southard advised there were other groups that might move forward with proposing other banners with different messages or may propose other actions. Ms. Southard noted she wanted to celebrate everyone who is trying to make this world a little bit better.

Mr. Bracken advised he has spoken at length on these topics on social media. Mr. Bracken noted he wanted to echo the sentiments of every one of the Councilors and staff. Mr. Bracken advised he stands in solidarity with those grieving and suffering at the hands of systemic racism and violence. Mr. Bracken noted he planned to look deeply into ways he can personally try to improve the situation and how we as a City can potentially improve the situation.

Mr. Prytherch echoed sentiments already shared. Mr. Prytherch noted he was proud to live in a community he believes is committed to social justice. Mr. Prytherch advised he felt we were committed to this not only with our words but also with our deeds. Mr. Prytherch noted some may think it is a radical project although he looked back at the U.S. Constitution and in order to form a more perfect union the first thing it says is to establish justice and then ensure domestic tranquility and later things like general welfare. Mr. Prytherch advised he felt it was the most American thing to think about how to perfect your society so that it is just. Mr. Prytherch noted that was not just about the justice system although that is the leading edge of it, it is all of the things we do in the City of Oxford. Mr. Prytherch advised he was proud to live in the City of Oxford in which policing is so thoughtful that we have a citizens review commission working with the Police Department on a continuing basis. Mr. Prytherch noted he was glad those citizens took the time to ask hard questions and advised the substance of it was to make sure policing outcomes were fair. Mr. Prytherch advised he felt Chief Jones's statement was perfectly on-point, captured all of the challenges and issues, and noted he was grateful Oxford has had a succession of thoughtful Police Chiefs. Mr. Prytherch noted he was in Hamilton with his daughter and advised she and some young people organized a protest there and he was approached by their Police Chief who thanked them for protesting peacefully. Mr. Prytherch advised it was impactful for those young people to be thanked for their protest and for the manner of their protest noting the protest towards a more perfect union is the most American thing there is. Mr. Prytherch thanked the organizers of the vigil for next Monday and thanked all of those who will participate including staff from the Police Department. Mr. Prytherch noted he takes a broad view on social justice and thinks about all of the ways in which we can be fair to people. Mr. Prytherch thanked staff and Council for bearing with the Parking and Transportation Board which is trying to approach the way we do transportation projects. Mr. Prytherch referred to the City's Complete Street Policy and noted it was really a social justice policy for fair access to the public space of the streets and safety for all.

Mr. Prytherch noted the new bridge for the Oxford Area Trail is super cool and advised in a world full of disturbing news we in Oxford are moving forward on some great projects.

Mayor Smith reminded everyone parking meter enforcement will resume tomorrow and noted people could now eat in a restaurant if they choose to. Mayor Smith advised he visited several restaurants and they all provided social distance seating and added screening in appropriate places to make sure everyone was safe.

Mayor Smith thanked staff and Councilors for their insightful comments this evening noting they were all very good.

Mayor Smith thanked the organizers of next Monday's vigil noting when they asked him to participate one of their over-riding factors was they wanted an event they could bring their children to. Mayor Smith advised he looked forward to Monday in a very safe atmosphere with very open dialog in a town where we are so lucky to have so many people that care so much about what goes on.

ADJOURN

Mr. Snavelly moved to adjourn at 8:58 p.m. Ms. Southard seconded. The motion passed by the following roll call:

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

NAY: None (0)

ABS: None (0)