



City of Kent
Wednesday, December 14, 2022
Special City Council Meeting
320 S. Depeyster Street, Kent, OH 44240

MINUTES

President Pro Tem Jack Amrhein conducted the meeting in the absence of Mayor Fiala. He called the Special Committee Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Mr. Jack Amrhein, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Roger Sidoti

Also Present: Ms. Amy Wilkens, Clerk of Council

Absent: Mr. Robin Turner, Ms. Tracy Wallach, Mr. John Kuhar, Mr. Garret Ferrara

Committee of the Whole Chair Fiala/ Vice-Chair Amrhein

Board and Commission Interviews

Ms. Amy Wilkens, Clerk of Council, called the first candidate to the podium to speak to Council.

Board of Zoning Appeals

The first candidate was Mr. Jona Burton. City staff asked if he would reapply and serve for several months. Ms. Shaffer Bish asked if this was temporary. Mr. DeLeone asked how long he would serve and Mr. Burton replied until he started his PhD program. Mr. Sidoti if there were significant things learned during his time. Mr. Burton said there are many different types of cases that include different types of properties and uses. He's learned a lot about public safety and signage and lighting, especially in pedestrian parts of the community. He added that one of his favorite parts was visiting different parts of town that he otherwise would not have had the opportunity to visit. You feel like you know the community much better, which is really awesome.

Mr. Amrhein thanked Mr. Burton.

Board of Building Appeals

Mr. Greg Seifert came to the podium and introduced himself to Council as a dual resident. He resides in Stow, but is allowed to do service per the City's Charter. He stated he was an architect with over thirty years' experience. He has been on the board for ten years. He said they do not meet frequently due to the excellent job that is done by city staff. There were no questions from the City Council. Mr. Seifert said he heard a rumor that the Council may be considering opening other boards to non-residents. He said if that is something that has been considered, he'd strongly be interested in joining other boards. He enjoys the planning and zoning side of things and is very familiar with zoning appeals. Ms. Shaffer Bish asked if he had considered moving to Kent. Mr. Seifert said he came to Kent from upstate New York to attend school, so he considers Kent kind of like his ancestral home. He sits on the Board of Zoning and Building Appeals in the City of Stow.

Mr. Amrhein thanked Mr. Seifert.

Board of Health

Mr. Amrhein said the next applicant was Emily Mattern, who was unable to attend. She is a nurse at the Cleveland Clinic and was unable to get time off.

Mr. Amrhein clarified there are two vacancies on the board as one of the members resigned.

Dr. Evan Howe of Wilson Ave. came to the podium and introduced himself to Council. He is a new resident of the city of Kent and is employed at Akron City Hospital. He has been looking for an opportunity to serve the city in that capacity and integrate his experiences. Ms. Shaffer Bish asked if he had an interest in public health. He doesn't currently serve in any regard to public health and then reviewed his various public health interests. Ms. Rosenberg asked about his interest in working with the unhoused and he said it was an area of interest for him. In his current work with the residency program, they've played around with ways to take that into the teaching area in the residency program, but certainly here within the community, looking at the homeless population would be an interest.

Community Reinvestment Housing Council

Ms. Audrey Kessler of S. Lincoln St. is currently on the board and would like to continue her service. She said it is good to have citizen input on this as it is working.

Mr. Sidoti asked about the challenges that she has encountered over the past few years. She said Don Joseph not meeting the criteria they were supposed to meet was the one that came to her mind first. They believed they were making a good-faith effort to meet the criteria, so they were kept on. Mr. DeLeone asked how often they meet and she said once a year. She said they get a list of properties to drive by and see how they look on the outside. It's not a time-intensive position.

Design and Preservation Committee

Mr. William Dunick has been on the committee for the last three years and has enjoyed it. He reviewed his background and said he enjoys being a part of this community. Mr. Sidoti asked about the challenges of the committee. He said the last one was the south end historical district and found it interesting to learn about the history of Kent. He loves to volunteer and would be interested in other committees. Ms. Shaffer Bish asked if he had an opinion on various buildings. He said there are a lot of buildings, so that is a hard question. He likes 19th century buildings and tends to lean in that direction. Mr. Amrhein thanked him for attending.

Fair Housing Board

Mr. Amrhein said Ms. Jennifer Nichols and Ms. Laura Stephens was unable to attend and asked the third candidate to speak, Ms. Susan Roxburgh.

Ms. Susan Roxburgh said she has been on the Fair Housing Board before and on the Board of Health. Ms. Shaffer Bish asked if this was the only board she is interested in. She replied that she also applied to the Architectural Review Board, and saw they are not currently filling vacancies. Ms. Rosenberg asked what it is about this committee that is appealing. Ms. Roxburgh replied she is a sociologist, so she is interested in justice issues. She has studied mental health and stress and has done work on the relationship between housing literature and well-being.

Income Tax Board

Mr. Amrhein stated there were two applicants and that the first applicant was Ms. Denise Mote, who could not attend. He called Mr. James Maddox, the second candidate, to the podium.

Mr. Jim Maddox of Windward Lane introduced himself and stated he had recently retired and is

looking for ways to give back to the community. He reviewed his experience, stating he has served on a lot of committees in the past, including the pension committee. He has a lot of committee experience. Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish thanked him for applying and asked him if he was able to be empathetic to those coming before them with an appeal. He said he would be open-minded.

Loan Review Board

Mr. Amrhein stated there would be no interview of the candidate for the Loan Review Board.

Planning Commission

Ms. Alyssa Trivigno on Erin Drive is originally from upstate NY but has been called to return. She is interested in becoming more active in the community and would love to be a part of the potential of the town. Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish thanked her for applying and said sometimes the Planning Commission can become a pressure cooker situation and asked how she would approach a situation and how she would do under stress. She works for a hospital system and has a high-stressed job. She is used to the stress and pressure of people trying to persuade her. Ms. Shaffer Bish said she noticed her BA in legal studies and said this may be helpful. Mr. Sidoti thanked the candidate and asked for specific guidelines and asked what the relationship should be. She said she thinks it is a balancing act. RS said we have to represent everyone in the community and in many instances the PC gets caught in tricky spots. Mr. DeLeone asked about the time commitment and Ms. Trivigno said she does have the time.

Mr. Salustro on Pearl Street is originally from upstate Ny as well. He is GM and partial owner of North Water brewery. He said there should be more of a connection between the people and the city. Ms. Shaffer Bish asked about experience balancing controversial topics. He replied there has to be a compromise and that everyone is not going to get what they want and they are bound by the law.

Shade Tree Commission

Mr. John Belfiore is a current member and said they are beginning some projects. Ms. Rosenberg asked what is your favorite tree and why. He said he likes redbuds because they are native and attractive. Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish asked about tree removal and where he leans. He said he is opposed to cutting down living trees unless they become a hazard.

Mr. Tom Kiepora of Columbus Street said this has come up several times and never applied. He has been a public servant most of his career and sees this as a way to continue that. He highlighted his work experience. Mr. Sidoti asked about his career path. Ms. Rosenberg asked about his favorite tree and he replied there should be a mixture of trees. His favorite is a white oak. Mr. DeLeone asked how many trees he'd planted and he said maybe 600-700. Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish asked about tree trimming and if he had any concerns about this too. He said you have to play the hand when you deal with trimming trees.

Sustainability Commission

Ms. Judy Nelson of Wetstone drive came to the podium to speak to Council. This is the second time she has applied for the commission. She said with the attention of the city and the university giving to the topic of sustainability, she thinks now is the time to be active, especially with the KERAMIDA consultants and the climate action plan. Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish asked what she had enjoyed most in the past and what her contribution was. Judy said she enjoyed the networking in the City and collaborating with KSU. She enjoyed her work on the Ad Hoc committee. She brings her knowledge of where the committee has been.

Ms. Mary Starbuck of Woodard Ave. was the final candidate of the night. She is interested in serving on the commission. She is a member of the Kent Environmental Council. Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish asked if she had an opportunity to interact with Keramida. She asked what she could bring- a good

communicator. She is comfortable speaking to public, has passion.

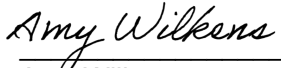
Executive Session to Discuss Board and Commission Appointments

MOTION TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS BOARD AND COMMISSIONS MADE BY Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, SECONDED by Mr. Roger Sidoti and CARRIED by a voice vote of 5-0-0.

Adjournment

MOTION TO RETURN TO THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MADE BY Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish and CARRIED by a voice vote of 5-0-0.

There was no further business and the Special Committee Meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.



Amy Wilkens
Clerk of Council

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