City of Kent

Wednesday, February 1, 2023

City Council Committee Meetings

320 S. Depeyster Street, Kent, OH 44240

MINUTES

7:00 P.M. COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Call to Order

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

Also Present: Mr. Jerry T. Fiala, Mayor and President of Council; Mr. Dave Ruller, City Manager; Ms. Hope Jones, Law Director; Ms. Bridget Susel, Community Development Director; Ms. Melanie Baker, Service Director; Mr. Jim Bowling, City Engineer; Ms. Joan Seidel, Health Commissioner; Ms. Rhonda Hall, Budget and Finance Director; Mr. Nick Shearer, Chief of Police; Mr. Bill Myers, Fire Chief; Mr. John Seidel, Civil Service Coordinator; Ms. Amy Wilkens, Clerk of Council

Absent: Mr. Garret Ferrara; Ms.Tracy Wallach

<u>Committee of the Whole</u> Chair Fiala/Vice-Chair Amrhein

Proposed Changes to the RLF Loan Review Board

Ms. Bridget Susel began by reviewing the responsibilities of the Loan Review Board, which includes reviewing applications from qualified businesses seeking federal economic development loan funding to help with start-up costs.The Board consists of five members that consist of three experienced commercial loan officers from local banks, one local realtor and one local attorney. It was manned with that composition for some time. Currently, there are three members and one lending representative has to excuse himself, and due to this, they do not have a quorum. They now have the opportunity to adjust their board members. She explained the challenges faced in finding volunteers that meet these requirements and is requesting the specified number of candidates for the above listed be eliminated and the board composition be amended to list five members from any of the three identified categories. She asked if Council had any questions.

Mr. Kuhar asked if the real estate candidate had to be licensed. She said they would be open to commercial real estate.

Ms. Shaffer Bish asked about residency. Ms. Susel said they have to work in the city. She said the attorney would need to have their business in Kent or live in Kent.

Mr. Turner asked who established the composition. Ms. Susel said the Revolving Loan Fund is business loans and they need to be able to read financials. Mr. Turner asked if it was established by the Federal Government. She said what they are changing is the number. They want to be able to mix it up within the three categories.

Mr. Kuhar asked about including a CPA. Ms. Susel said they could amend that to include a CPA because the City is now self-managed.

MOTION TO APPROVE PROPOSED CHANGES TO LOAN REVIEW BOARD MADE BY Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, SECONDED by Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish and CARRIED by a voice vote of 7-0-0.

Board and Commission Interviews

Mayor Fiala asked Clerk Wilkens who the first candidate was to be interviewed. Ms.Wilkens called Patricia Lowery to the podium. Mayor Fiala asked Ms. Lowery to introduce herself to Council and provide any information in regards to her application to the Loan Review Board.

Ms. Lowerey introduced herself as a resident on Yacavana. She said, given that she had already decided to be on the Loan Review Board, and heard there was a new opening on the Board of Zoning Appeals, she would like to apply for the Loan Board. She gave her educational background and is happy to be back in Kent and looking forward to getting involved. She has a license to practice law and asked Council for questions.

Ms. Rosenberg asked what it was that made her decide to serve. She said she gave her granddaughter's answer "Grandma, you know you can't stay out of anything." She thought it would be a nice introduction back into the community.

Ms. Shaffer Bish asked her what she liked about the changes in Kent. She said she was pleased with all of the changes.

Mayor Fiala asked if there were any further questions from Council, and there were none. He said Council will vote in two weeks on the appointment and thanked Ms. Lowerey for applying.

Update on the New City Hall Project

Ms. Melanie Baker, Service Director, said the steel and crains arrived on site in January and will be delivering steel twice a week. She showed a look at Council chambers, the secondary stair well, and the construction of all three floors. **(Attachment #1)**.

She added the gas line was extended last week. She said they are really moving along and things are moving fast. She is feeling a little more comfortable with meeting deadlines. They will be raising the signed beam next week and will let Council know the date and time if they would like to attend.

There were no further items to be discussed, and the Committee of the Whole adjourned at 7:20 pm.

<u>Community Development Committee</u> Chair Kuhar/Vice-Chair Rosenberg

Mr. Kuhar opened the Community Development Committee Meeting at 7:20 pm and introduced the first speaker, Ms. Bridget Susel, Community Development Director.

Haymaker Farmers Market SubLease (Bridget Susel)

Ms. Susel returned to the podium to discuss the annual approval of the Haymaker Farmers Market Sublease. It cannot be done as an unauthorized item due to it being a sublease. This year's outdoor season will begin the first Saturday in April and extend through the last Saturday in November. She would like to request Council's approval, with emergency clause, for the renewal of the sub-lease with the Haymaker's Farmer's Market. She asked if Council had any questions.

Mr. Sidoti asked if every year we had to get a lease with the railroad. Ms. Susel said because we are doing a sublease, their legal team needs to take a look at it.

MOTION TO APPROVE HAYMAKER FARMERS MARKET SUBLEASE MADE BY Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Mr. Jack Amrhein and CARRIED by a voice vote of 7-0-0.

There were no further items to discuss, and the Community Development Committee Meeting adjourned at 7:22 pm.

<u>Health and Public Safety Committee</u> (Chair Amrhein/ Vice-Chair Sidoti)

Chair Amrhein called the Health and Public Safety Committee Meeting to order at 7:22 pm and asked Ms. Joan Seidel, Kent City Health Department Commissioner, to speak on the first item on its agenda.

Health Department PEP Grant Opportunity

Ms. Joan Seidel, Kent City Health Commissioner, said the Health Department and the IT Department had identified a safety need for improved security of their operation. She said panic button installation would increase security because they deal with cash and irate customers. Panic buttons would improve time for safety forces to render assistance in the event of an emergency. The Health Department applied for a grant from the Public Entities Pool (PEP) for $1,000. She is requesting approval to accept the grant if awarded and allow IT to appropriate the funds for the request. She said the deadline was in between meetings, so she went ahead and applied for that. She asked if Council had any questions.

Mr. Kuhar asked if the panic buttons tie into an existing security system. Ms. Seidel said it did not. She said it would go directly to dispatch.

There were no further questions from Council and no questions from the audience.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT PEP GRANT APPLICATION MADE BY Mr. John Kuhar, SECONDED by Ms. Gwen Rosenberg and CARRIED by a voice vote of 7-0-0.

Ohio First Responder Grant Opportunity (Chief Shearer)

Chief Shearer and Chief Myers noticed this grant opportunity last year. Annual Wellness checks, cell phone application wellness options, and training were the three wellness items included in the grant. He became aware from the Ohio Emergency Management Agency that the Kent City Police Department had been awarded $102,500 in grants to develop wellness programs for the benefit of first responders and their families. He is requesting council to approve and accept this grant and sign a grant agreement with the Ohio EMS. There is no match from the City. He asked if Council had any questions.

Mr. Kuhar asked about annual wellness checks and if our medical insurance covers this. Chief Shearer said this is for mental health and wellness and has checked with the unions, which they have the support of. The chief said they know statistically about 4 officers may have thought about suicide and the culture of the profession makes it taboo to speak about. He said everyone will now be told they have to do this. Chief Myers said there has been no resistance to this from firefighters.

Ms. Shaffer Bish said she wanted them to know there is a grant Coleman Services received for mental health awareness and said it is something they can work with safety forces on. Chief Shearer said this has to go out to competitive bidding.

Mr. Sidoti thanked the chiefs for doing this and said that the mental well being of officers is important and they deal with very stressful issues.

Ms. Shaffer Bish said first responders are under a lot of stress and a lot stays in your body after an event. She said it is important to look at holistic help as well. She applauds the chiefs for doing this.

Mr. Kuhar said, over the past few years with the pandemics, civil unrest and all that is going on in our country, this is very important for our safety forces.

Mr. Ruller added the Governor's budget presentation was yesterday and the state is looking at funding from the state to support local municipalities.

There were no further questions from Council and no questions from the audience.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE OHIO FIRST RESPONDER GRANT OPPORTUNITY MADE BY Mr. John Kuhar, SECONDED by Mrs. Gwen Rosenberg and CARRIED by a voice vote of 7-0-0.

There were no further items on the agenda for the Health and Public Safety Committee and it adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Streets, Sidewalks & Utilities Committee (Chair Sidoti/ Vice-Chair Wallach)

Chair Sidoti called the Streets, Sidewalks and Utilities Committee to order at 7:35 pm and introduced Mr. Jim Bowling, City Engineer, to present its item on the agenda.

Freedom-Portage Bike & Hike Trail Construction, Maintenance and Use Agreement with Summit MetroParks

Mr.Jim Bowlling, City Engineer, said he included in Council's packet the Freedom/Portage Trail Connection Maintenance and Use Agreement between Summit Metro Parks and the City of Kent. This agreement sets the terms for an off-road bike/hike trail connection to be built between the Freedom Trail and the Portage Bike and Hike Trail along Middlebury Road. There will be a new trail bridge crossing the CSX's railroad tracks. There is no funding required from the City of Kent, and it is being sponsored, managed and funded by the Summit Metro Parks. He asked if Council had any questions.

Mr. DeLeone asked if the bridge was going under the bridge. Mr. Bowling said the trail will cross Middlebury with a new bridge over the bridge.

Ms. Rosenberg said this is fantastic and the fact it is happening. She asked how long it would take. Mr. Bowling said they are going to go out to bid this spring, but they need to work with the railroad. July 2023-June 2024 to get under contract. With supply issues, it could take a while to get the bridge.

MOTION TO APPROVE FREEDOM PORTAGE BIKE & HIKE TRAIL AGREEMENT MADE BY Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, SECONDED by Ms.Gwen Rosenberg and CARRIED by a voice vote of 7-0-0.

Hearing no further business, the Streets, Sidewalks and Utilities Committee Meeting adjourned at 7:39 pm.

Finance Committee (Chair DeLeone/Vice-Chair Wallach)

Chair DeLeone called the Finance Committee to order at 7:40 pm and introduced the first speaker, Ms. Melanie Baker, Service Director.

NOPEC Event Sponsorship Grant

Ms. Melanie Baker said that NOPEC has a sponsorship grant program where they give back to the community. Our grant is now $3500 and we would like to request Council to give that to Kent Skates. She is asking for the Council's approval, with an emergency clause.

MOTION TO APPROVE NOPEC EVENT SPONSORSHIP GRANT MADE BY Mr. Jack Amrhein, SECONDED by Ms. Shaffer Bish and CARRIED by a voice vote of 7-0-0.

Budget Appropriation Amendment

Ms. Rhonda Hall referenced her memo dated January 24, 2023 in regards to the first budget appropriation for the year. She asked if Council had any questions.

There were no questions from Council or the audience.

MOTION TO APPROVE BUDGET APPROPRIATION AMENDMENT MADE BY Mr. John Kuhar, SECONDED by Ms. Gwen Rosenberg and CARRIED by a voice vote of 7-0-0.

Hearing no further business, the Finance Committee adjourned at 7:41 pm.

MOTION TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION tO DISCUSS BOARD AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS MADE BY Mr. Jack Amrhein, SECONDED by Mr. John Kuhar and CARRIED by a voice vote of 7-0-0.

MOTION TO RETURN TO the REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MADE BY Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Mr. John Kuhar and CARRIED by a voice vote of 7-0-0.

There was no further business discussed and the meeting adjourned at 8:51 pm.

Amy Wilkens

Amy Wilkens
Clerk of Council

Any person who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication or a modification of policies and procedures to participate in any City or City Council public meeting or event should contact the Clerk of Council at 330-676-7555 or councilclerk@kent-ohio.org. Any request for auxiliary aid or other accommodation should be made as soon as possible, but no later than forty-eight hours prior to the event.

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Kent, Ohio

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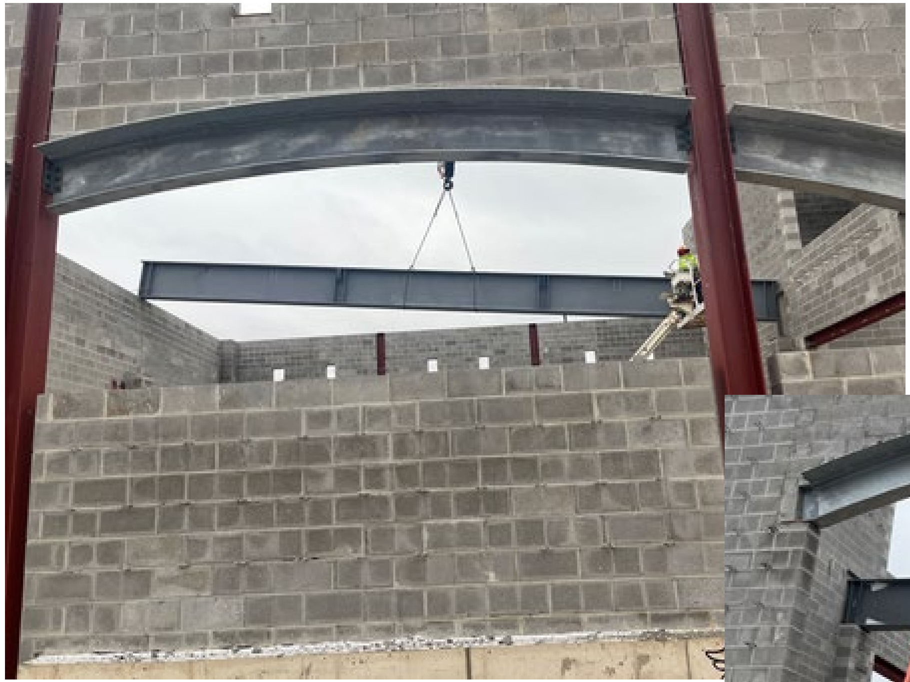
Steel and Cranes

Arrive on Site




Selinsky FORCE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1/23/23, 9:21 AM


1/23/23, 10:51 AM


1/23/23, 10:51 AM


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Saving room for the last beam!

Beam signing 1-18-2023