



City of Kent
Wednesday, January 3, 2024
City Council Committee Meetings
320 S. Depeyster Street, Kent, OH 44240

MINUTES

At 07:00 PM, Mayor Jerry T. Fiala called the City Council Committee Meetings to order.

Present: Mr. Jack Amrhein, Ms. Melissa Celko, Mr. Robin Turner, Mr. Chris Hook, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Jeff Clapper, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Mr. Roger Sidoti

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. Dominique Bollenbacher, Community Engagement Coordinator; Mr. Jim Bowling, City Engineer; Ms. Joan Seidel, Health Commissioner; Mr. Nick Shearer, Chief of Police; Ms. Amy Wilkens, Clerk of Council

Committee of the Whole

Mayor Fiala opened the Committee of the Whole meeting at 7:00 pm., welcoming new council members Melissa Celko, Chris Hook, and Jeff Clapper. Mayor Fiala assures them of support and invited questions at any time.

Board and Commission Interviews

Ms. Amy Wilkens, Clerk of Council, said there was an applicant who applied for the Shade Tree Commission and the Sustainability Commission. The applicant was advised there is an opening on the Sustainability Commission. She called Julie Grant to the microphone.

Ms. Julie Grant came to the microphone and introduced herself. She shared her background as an environmental journalist and expressed interest in leveraging her knowledge for the committee's benefit.

Mr. Sidoti asked what the city could do to start nudging the needle a bit. Ms. Grant, mentions community solar projects and potential leadership in that area.

Ms. Shaffer Bish asked where she thought Kent sits with how far along we are in the climate change path. Ms. Grant discussed focusing on issues like rainwater management, wastewater injection wells, and the potential role of the city in these matters. She acknowledged her broader perspective but emphasized her need to be cautious about potentially conflicting roles due to her journalism work. Ms. Shaffer Bish said she could bring fresh ideas to complement what is already being done.

Mayor Fiala said they would discuss the application and vote on the appointment at the January 17th meeting, mentioning the significance of boards and commissions within the city.

Organization of Council

Mayor Fiala said appointments need to be made to the various committees. The following appointments were discussed and then all voted for by motion at the end of the discussion.

President Pro Tem: Mr. Jack Amrhein (M:Sidoti, S:Shaffer Bish)

Community Development Committee: Chair Ms. Gwen Rosenberg (M: Sidoti; S: DeLeone)

Vice-Chair Mr. Jeff Clapper (M: Clapper; S: Rosenberg)

Finance Committee: Chair Mr. Mike DeLeone, Vice-Chair Ms. Melissa Celko (M: Rosenberg, S: Sidoti)

Land Use Committee: Chair Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish (M: Amrhein, S:DeLeone), Vice-Chair Mr. Chris Hook (M: Hook, S: Amrhein)

Health & Public Safety Committee: Chair Mr. Jack Amrhein, Vice-Chair Mr. Roger Sidoti (No motions, to remain as is)

Streets, Sidewalks & Utilities Committee: Chair Mr. Roger Sidoti, Vice Chair Mr. Jeff Clapper (M: Clapper, S: DeLeone)

Board of Control Council Liaison: Ms. Melissa Celko (M: Rosenberg, S: Sidoti)

Board of Health Council Liaison: Mr. Chris Hook (M: Amrhein, S: Rosenberg)

Parks and Rec Board Council Liaison: Ms. Melissa Celko (M: Rosenberg, S: Sidoti)

MOTION TO APPROVE THE ORGANIZATION OF COUNCIL MADE BY Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

New City Hall Construction Update

Ms. Melanie Baker was out due to illness. Mr. Ruller updated the Council on the new city hall construction saying a transformer is expected to be set up soon. He said it was anticipated that Ms. Baker would be discussing this and would come in February with further updates.

2024 Pending List Update

Mr. Ruller began by explaining the purpose of the pending list to the new members of the Council. This list comprises referrals made throughout the year. When a motion is passed to look into a matter, it's added to this list. The Council works with the Mayor, the Clerk, staff, and committee chairs to schedule these items for discussion or action. The list is attached to their packet, and during this annual catch-up, they review the list to remove items that have been addressed or resolved. This process ensures that all pending matters are accounted for and appropriately addressed by the Council.

Administration

1. Sustainability Commission: Climate Change: Mr. Ruller explained the first item on the administration's pending list related to the Sustainability Commission. This item originally tasked the commission with devising 10 action items to combat global warming. He highlighted that the commission had fulfilled this task back in 2019 by issuing recommendations in an article for the Tree City Bulletin. However, the item was kept pending until the finalization of the climate action plan in 2023. Now that the plan is finalized, Mr. Ruller suggested that this specific pending item be removed. He clarified that the removal doesn't diminish the Council's ongoing commitment to environmental issues but signifies the completion of this particular task.

MOTION TO APPROVE REMOVAL MADE BY Mr. Michael DeLeone, SECONDED by Mr. Roger Sidoti, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

2. Senior Advisor Committee: This initiative was championed by Melissa Long during her time on the Council. She advocated for a senior center and proposed forming a senior center advisory committee. However, the Council declined the formation of the committee. There were meetings and discussions held, involving experts from the county and beyond, to explore the feasibility of senior centers. The matter was redirected to Parks and Recreation, coinciding with their ongoing master plan development. The Council decided to await potential recommendations for a senior center within the master plan. As of now, Mr. Ruller suggested keeping this item on the pending list until more information or recommendations are received from Ms. Angela Manley, Parks and Recreation Director.

MOTION TO APPROVE KEEPING ON THE LIST MADE BY Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, SECONDED by Mr. Jack Amrhein and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

3. Unattended vehicles/idling cars: This was recently discussed and addressed by the Council in the previous month's session. Mr. Ruller suggested removing it from the pending list, indicating that the matter had been resolved or adequately addressed in the recent discussion.

MOTION TO APPROVE REMOVAL MADE BY Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Mr. Jack Amrhein, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

4. Design Guideline Reorganization: Mr. Ruller recommended removing it from the pending list as it concluded a two-year process. However, Council member Shaffer Bish raised the need to continue discussing the implementation phase of these guidelines, highlighting that while the guidelines were finalized, the implementation process remains somewhat unclear. Ms. Bridget Susel said further discussions will occur in February to address this remaining aspect of the guidelines.

MOTION TO APPROVE REMOVAL MADE BY Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, SECONDED by Mr. Jeff Clapper, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

5. Discussion with Franklin Twp. Regarding snow upkeep on SR 59: Mr. Ruller said there is a recurring issue of sidewalk shoveling during winter. It's a requirement for property and business owners, but there have been varied compliance levels. Specifically, concerns were raised about a particular stretch along State Route 59, where pedestrian safety was compromised due to poorly maintained sidewalks. The council discussed bringing this up with Franklin Twp, where the property lies. They've been funding the clearing of heavily trafficked sidewalks and are awaiting a project by Jim Bowling to improve pedestrian safety in that area. The ownership of the sidewalks, and sidewalk ownership, have been identified, complicating potential solutions.

Ms. Shaffer Bish said she was concerned about waiting for the full implementation of the safety plan before addressing the safety issues in highly-traveled areas. There's a suggestion to potentially work with Franklin Township and ODOT in the interim, considering the risks posed by certain sections. However, ODOT might not be inclined to handle sidewalk-related matters due to their extensive responsibilities. She referenced the city's involvement in plowing that section, potentially suggesting a partnership for addressing safety concerns.

Mr. DeLeone said that the township could plow certain sections, but the city's snow-clearing process might push the snow back onto those areas, creating problems. This situation seems to have been a factor in moving sidewalks off Route 59 on the campus, due to challenges in clearing snow effectively without continually returning to address the same

areas.

Mr. Hook asked if the city could allocate funds to help with this. Mr. Ruller said that is the challenge, because if we do so for one area, other areas in the city will want the same. It is not fiscally possible to do so. He recognized the need for a comprehensive solution, which is currently being addressed through a multi-million dollar project led by Jim Bowling. However, the limited annual budget allocated to sidewalk maintenance poses constraints in addressing all areas needing attention.

The council decided to keep this matter on the list for further consideration, intending to revisit it once the ongoing project is well underway.

MOTION TO APPROVE KEEPING ON THE LIST MADE BY Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Mr. Jack Amrhein and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

5. Review of Planning Commission Timeline: Mr. Ruller reviewed concerns about Planning Commission timelines and an architect's input on the matter. Ms. Bridget Susel provided comprehensive emails addressing these concerns twice, ensuring the information was shared with the Council. Additionally, there has been a significant investment this year to modernize the plan submission process, shifting it online. This change is anticipated to enhance the efficiency, tracking, and overall speed of the process. He proposed to remove this item from the pending list as these advancements are expected to be game-changing.

MOTION TO APPROVE REMOVAL MADE BY Mr. Roger Sidoti , SECONDED by Ms. Gwen Rosenbeg , and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

6. Review of Roadwork Needed on Portage Street: Mr. Jim Bowling has been actively involved in discussions with contractors to establish repair methods and acquire quotes for addressing this issue. The street is a combination of asphalt and brick, both of which are showing signs of deterioration. Given the challenge posed by this situation, it's recommended to retain this item on the pending list for ongoing attention and resolution.

MOTION TO APPROVE KEEPING ON THE LIST MADE BY Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, SECONDED by Mr. Chris Hook and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

7. New Administration Building Dedication: The dedication for the new administration building involved the presentation of a plaque, which was completed last month. The process aimed to ensure that council members involved in the project could participate in the final dedication. Since this phase has been fulfilled, it's recommended to remove this item from the pending list.

MOTION TO APPROVE REMOVAL MADE BY Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Ms. Gwen Rosenbeg, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

8. Downtown Ice Rink Funding: The downtown ice rink initiative faced financial challenges, and unfortunately, due to budget constraints, it became unsustainable. Kent State University, a major supporter, faced funding cuts that affected their ability to sustain the project at previous levels. Despite efforts and discussions involving various stakeholders, including university officials and city representatives, the financial challenges persisted. Consequently, it's suggested to remove the item regarding the downtown ice rink from the pending list.

MOTION TO APPROVE REMOVAL MADE BY Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, SECONDED by Mr. Mike DeLeone, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

9. Review Neighbor Complaint Issue and City Response: The matter involving neighbor complaints, specifically accusations made against the Law Department, was addressed

through detailed explanations provided by Hope Jones via email. Based on this response and the resolution of the concerns raised, it's suggested to remove this item from the pending list. Additionally, the email correspondence can be forwarded to the new council members for their reference and awareness.

MOTION TO APPROVE REMOVAL MADE BY Ms. Gwen Rosenberg SECONDED by Mr. Roger Sidoti, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

Council

10. Parameters for low-frequency noise: This was a discussion about the general topic of low-frequency noise and has been adequately addressed. However, there's a more specific matter related to Land O'Lakes that will be further discussed in an executive session. This particular discussion about Land O'Lakes will continue separately. It was recommended to remove this specific issue from the pending list but to keep Land O'Lakes on the list.

MOTION TO APPROVE REMOVAL MADE BY Mr. Roger Sidoti SECONDED by Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

11. Proactively Addressing Race and Diversity in Kent: Mr. Ruller said efforts and initiatives to address racism, hatred, and diversity in Kent have made significant progress, including the establishment of the Community Engagement Coordinator role. With the coordinator now working full-time, it seems appropriate to remove this item from the pending list while reinforcing the ongoing commitment to multicultural issues and community-building efforts.

MOTION TO APPROVE REMOVAL MADE BY Mr. DeLeone, SECONDED by Mr. Roger Sidoti, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

12. City Flag Redesign: Mr. Ruller said we now have a new redesigned flag, so this can be removed from the pending list. Ms. Rosenberg asked where the new flag is. Many people responded that it has not been ordered yet, but will be in the new year.

MOTION TO APPROVE REMOVAL MADE BY Ms. Gwen Rosenberg SECONDED by Ms. Melissa Celko, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

13. Changes in Firework Laws: In past meetings, there were discussions and concerns regarding the changes in fireworks laws, particularly in response to community concerns about noise and its impact on pets. While the current situation seems to be manageable, there's a potential alternative with a laser light show that might be explored further. If Council members are open to waiting and observing the situation, the motion could be to temporarily remove the item from the pending list and revisit it if needed at a later time.

MOTION TO APPROVE REMOVAL MADE BY Ms. Gwen Rosenberg SECONDED by Mr. Roger Sidoti, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

14. Vape Shops and Marijuana Dispensaries: There has been action taken regarding vape shop density, limiting the number based on population. For marijuana dispensaries, the focus has been on medical marijuana, and a discussion about a moratorium on recreational marijuana until the state issues guidelines are on the agenda. If the Council feels confident about the steps taken so far, the item regarding vape shops and marijuana dispensaries could potentially be removed from the pending list.

Ms. Shaffer Bish asked about vape shop lighting, stating she was shocked they got through the Planning Commission. Mr. Ruller said there's been a recent adoption of changes in how lighting is regulated, particularly related to bright neon or disruptive lighting in vape shops. This new regulation aims to address the specific lighting concerns associated with such establishments. Ms. Bridget Susel has initiated the process by sending out notifications to

the property owners affected by these changes, ensuring they are aware of the new regulations. This ongoing process is being handled behind the scenes by the Community Development department.

MOTION TO APPROVE REMOVAL MADE BY Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish SECONDED by Mr. Jack Amrhein, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

15. 24- Hour Parking Regulations: the proposal for a test run of 24-hour parking in certain neighborhoods, requiring signatures for approval, was discussed by the Council. However, the Council decided against moving forward with this approach. Consequently, it's being suggested to remove this item from the pending list, signifying that further action on this matter isn't being pursued.

MOTION TO APPROVE REMOVAL MADE BY Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish SECONDED by Ms. Gwen Rosenberg and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

16. Land O'Lakes Noise Issue: is still ongoing, and there are discussions scheduled for the executive session tonight. As it's an ongoing matter, it's recommended to keep it on the pending list for continued attention and discussion.

MOTION TO APPROVE KEEPING ON THE LIST MADE BY Ms. Melissa Celko, SECONDED by Mr. Chris Hook, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

17. Safety Town Discussion: This was discussed last month and can be removed from the list.

MOTION TO APPROVE REMOVAL MADE BY Mr. Roger Sidoti SECONDED by Ms. Gwen Rosenberg and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

18. Noise Ordinance Review: The noise ordinance review is ongoing. Keeping it on the pending list makes sense until there's a report or further developments.

MOTION TO APPROVE KEEPING ON THE LIST MADE BY Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, SECONDED by Mr. Roger Sidoti, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

19. Fur Regulations in Kent: Fur regulations in Kent are still under review. Keeping it on the pending list until there's a report or updates would be wise.

MOTION TO APPROVE KEEPING ON THE LIST MADE BY Mr. Jeff Clapper, SECONDED by Mr. Chris Hook, and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

Community Development Committee

Chair Rosenberg opened the Community Development Committee meeting at 7:47 PM.

Recreational Marijuana Dispensary Moratorium Zoning Code

Ms. Bridget Susel, Community Development Director, addressed Council on the topic of a possible moratorium on recreational marijuana dispensaries. This is due to the recent passing of an issue related to the regulation of adult cannabis industries in the Ohio Revised Code. Time is needed to receive the approved regulations from the State of Ohio and incorporate them into local zoning codes, and allow for public hearings and council decisions, similar to what was done previously with medical marijuana regulations.

Mr. Ruller added that there are several cities in our area and throughout the state that have

done the same thing, so this seems to be kind of an emerging best practice idea. That's why it was being presented to the Council for consideration.

Ms. Melissa Celko clarified that the moratorium discussed specifically pertains to the adult cannabis industry, focusing on commercial and retail operations, rather than impacting individual use. This was confirmed by Ms. Susel.

Mr. Chris Hook asked what would be the downfalls of not enacting a moratorium.

Ms. Susel said the city might not have adequate time to establish corresponding local rules within its zoning code. This could lead to situations where state regulations might come into effect without the city having its own zoning regulations in place. The moratorium serves as a precautionary measure to ensure the local zoning code is aligned with state regulations concerning the adult cannabis industry.

Mr. Ruller added that while on vacation in Colorado, Ms. Susel looked into their zoning.

Ms. Susel's reconnaissance in Colorado showed how other jurisdictions have approached dispensary zoning. She noted that dispensaries were intentionally located away from prominent or highly visible areas, often in outlier commercial zones. She emphasized the importance of considering not only the type of land use but also its associated aspects like parking, access, delivery, hours of operation, and lighting. These elements need thorough consideration within the city's comprehensive zoning framework, especially given Kent's layout where commercial and residential areas often intersect. She added the temporary moratorium isn't about preventing the industry but about ensuring the city has the necessary time to create well-thought-out regulations that govern the cannabis industry within Kent's boundaries. This window allows the city to align its zoning codes with any state guidelines, offering a chance for careful deliberation and adaptation within the existing regulatory framework.

Mr. Hook brought up his concern about moving too slowly when the guidelines do come from the State, emphasizing the lucrative side of the business. Ms. Susel highlighted the complexities involved in incorporating adult cannabis regulations into Kent's zoning code. She emphasized that the process isn't swift, citing her experience managing state programs and the extensive timeframes associated with regulatory changes. She mentioned two potential models: one considering allowing medical marijuana dispensaries to also handle recreational products, and the other involving distinct regulations due to differences in operations. Bridget stressed that adopting regulations for medical marijuana in 2018 didn't lead to a dispensary in Kent until 2023 due to regional licensing and stringent limitations on the number of licenses issued. Anticipating a similar approach to recreational marijuana, Bridget emphasized the likelihood of regulatory constraints and limitations on the number of dispensaries allowed within a region. This cautious approach aligns with the extensive regulation expected at both state and local levels, indicating that widespread availability of dispensaries may not occur swiftly.

Mr. Sidoti said he thinks some great questions have been asked here, and we must wait until we know what the state wants us to do so that we aren't doing work that we're going to have to redo again. He said we want to make sure we get it right the first time, and he understands the moratorium sounds like we're against marijuana, but that's not what it's about. It's about getting the zoning right.

MOTION TO APPROVE A MORATORIUM ON RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA DISPENSARIES MADE BY Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Mr. Jeff Clapper and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

Streets, Sidewalks & Utilities Committee

Eclipse Event Street Closure Request and Updates

Ms. Michelle Hartman, Executive Director of the Kent Area Chamber of Commerce (KACC), was up first to address Council, and her discussion included a PowerPoint presentation **(Attachment #1)**. Michelle kicked off discussions about an upcoming event called Kent Eclipse 2024. The event has been a collaborative effort involving various organizations, including the Chamber, Main Street Kent, City of Kent, Destination Kent, Kent State University, and others, to plan an exciting event for the eclipse weekend. She said the upcoming total solar eclipse is expected on April 8th, 2024, emphasizing that this will be a rare and special event for Kent, Ohio, being in the path of totality for approximately 2 minutes and 46.2 seconds. Additionally, she highlighted the significance of this event, given that the last total solar eclipse visible in Ohio was in 1806 and the next one won't be until 2099. She also discussed the potential influx of visitors, estimating that between 139,000 to 556,000 people might come to Ohio to witness this event, with many potentially visiting Kent due to its position in the path of totality. She added that Kent won a \$10,000 grant from fifteen Main Street communities. There's also a matching grant of \$10,000 from Destination Kent, aiming to drive tourism and visitors into the city. Additionally, other grants from organizations like Kent Parks and Recreation, the Christensen Foundation, Great Lakes Science Center, and the Water Reclamation division have been secured or are pending approval, potentially bringing the total funds available for the event to around \$27,000.

Here's what's scheduled:

April 6th:

- Kent Stage: Hosting "A Dark Side of the Moon," a Pink Floyd cover band performance.
- Community Unveiling: A permanent public art mural in Heritage Park, partially funded by the grant money.
- Kent Free Library: Offering various activities starting in March, leading up to the eclipse weekend, including an Akron Zoo showcase with nocturnal animals and a glow-in-the-dark story walk at Al Lease Park.
- Kent State Hotel: Offering a solar eclipse package with a two-night minimum stay, including perks like a swag bag and access to rooms with a private terrace to view the eclipse.

Michelle Hartman then reviewed the plans for a permanent art mural installation:

- Artist Collaboration: They're collaborating with a local artist for her interpretation of the total solar eclipse.
- Location: The mural will be applied to the pump house by the river, ensuring high visibility and accessibility by foot or bike.
- Materials: It won't be traditional paint on the surface but an aluminum product, ensuring longevity and preventing fading over time.
- Funding: They're using grant funds for this permanent art mural, and they plan to have a community unveiling as a kickoff for the eclipse weekend.

On Sunday, April 7th, the planned events include:

- Meet Luna at Kent Free Library: This event seems centered around an interactive experience involving Luna, the moon.
- Laser Light Show by Laser Encore: This feature will entail a laser light show synchronized with music, held in downtown Kent. They're expecting significant crowds and have requested street closures for the event. Additionally, food trucks will be brought in to complement the offerings of local downtown businesses.

Monday, April 8th:

- Eclipse viewing areas are designated in the downtown KSU campus and city parks.
- Kent State University's activities, including planetarium shows, a keynote speech by Dr. Cunningham, an eclipse viewing party at Risman Plaza, and more.
- Blackout event: Efforts to turn off street lights and encourage businesses to shut down during the eclipse for an immersive experience.
- Additional plans involve a dedicated website, decorated storefronts, merchandise, push pin maps for visitors' origins, street closures, transportation assistance for specific groups, rebranded menu items, and commemorative items like eclipse glasses.
- The aim is to create a diverse, inclusive, and family-friendly atmosphere, fostering an unforgettable experience during this rare astronomical event.

Ms. Shaffer Bish raised concerns about traffic congestion and parking during the weekend. She asked if PARTA has been involved in the use of trolleys or encouraging people to walk to alleviate the traffic and parking issues. Ms. Hartman said that is a good idea. However, it's noted that any changes to their routes require going through governmental channels and might have limitations.

Another suggestion is to encourage walking or using alternative transportation methods for individuals living close to downtown. This could help reduce traffic congestion and parking difficulties.

Next, Ms. Joan Seidel, Health Commissioner, began her PowerPoint presentation on the Eclipse event. **(Attachment #2)**, emphasizing the persistence of people to witness the eclipse despite cloudy or overcast conditions during the 2017 eclipse. She pointed out that regardless of the weather, the eclipse event would happen as scheduled. She addressed concerns about potential cloudy skies in northeastern Ohio during the event, emphasizing that the eclipse itself would still occur despite potential weather conditions. Her highlights included:

- Expecting a significant influx of visitors, possibly ranging from several thousand to potentially tens of thousands.
- Concerns regarding transportation, traffic, and congestion, particularly in the downtown area.
- Coordination with public transportation services such as trolleys to manage increased foot traffic.
- The importance of safety measures, especially for emergency services, public transportation routes, and ensuring safe pedestrian pathways.
- Anticipating challenges with people driving through the area, potential distractions, and safety concerns.
- Preparing for potential disruptions in cell phone service due to high traffic or increased demand.

- Considering a wide range of weather possibilities, which may impact the overall experience.
- Addressing infrastructure needs, including sanitation, water treatment, waste management, and restroom facilities.
- Expect increased demand for local businesses, restaurants, and accommodation, with hotels already heavily booked.
- There are no formal campgrounds available, meaning visitors cannot camp with RVs in the city.
- Establishing incident command, task forces, and subcommittees involving various stakeholders and departments to ensure a comprehensive and safe response.
- Collaborating with Portage County EMA, Kent City Schools, Kent State University, and other community partners for coordinated planning.
- The ultimate goal is to ensure a great and safe experience for residents and visitors alike during the eclipse event.

Mr. Chris Hook asked about people bringing lawn chairs and if there would be any problems with that. Ms. Seidel said with people standing for a long period, bringing lawn chairs could be expected. Ensuring people safely view the eclipse is indeed crucial. Eye protection was discussed, emphasizing the importance of reminding people not to look directly at the sun. One suggestion mentioned was to post safety instructions around town or in specific locations to remind individuals about safe viewing practices during the eclipse.

MOTION TO APPROVE ECLIPSE EVENT STREET CLOSURE REQUEST MADE by Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, **SECONDED** by Mr. Michael DeLeone and **CARRIED** by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

Special Event Street Closure

Hope Jones stated this request came from Patti (Long) in Dave Ruller's office, as she is the person who handles special event permits. She suggested revising the code to match what is already occurring in her office. She is also proposing a 45-day submission requirement to replace the 30-day requirement. She is requesting this for events that maintain the same structure and footprint as previously approved ones (without significant changes or additional city resources), potentially allowing for administrative approval without the need for additional council review. This adjustment aims to streamline the bureaucratic process for recurring events that maintain consistent parameters, potentially reducing the administrative burden and ensuring smoother handling of event permits.

Ms. Rosenberg raised concerns about the impact of street closures on businesses, particularly regarding events that might not significantly benefit local businesses or impact them negatively. Discussions revolved around establishing a process for businesses to provide feedback or express concerns about street closures and event impacts on their operations.

Notification to Council: Suggestions were made to improve communication between the city administration and the council regarding upcoming events, especially those involving street closures. This aims to keep council members informed and potentially allow for discussions or considerations if businesses or residents raise concerns about specific events.

Mr. Chris Hook sought clarification in regard to certain language within the ordinance to ensure that it accurately reflects the intended criteria for administrative approval of recurring events without substantial changes. Ms. Hope Jones said those items would be spelled out in the ordinance.

MOTION TO APPROVE SPECIAL EVENT STREET CLOSURE ORDINANCE CHANGES
MADE BY Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, SECONDED by Mr. Michael DeLeone and CARRIED by
a voice vote of 9-0-0.

Finance Committee

Chair DeLeone opened the Finance Committee meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Health Department Grant Applications and Appropriations

Ms. Joan Seidel is seeking approval to apply and appropriate the various grant funds:

Tobacco Use 2025 Grant: A \$117,000 grant to offset an employee's salary and meet grant deliverables.

EPA Grant (Vector Control): An extension grant worth \$25,000 for mosquito program supplies, equipment, and staffing for an intern.

FDA Grant (Food Inspections): An extension grant of \$226,500 to meet federal standards for food inspections, covering staffing, operations, travel, and training.

Farm to School Grant: A new \$50,000 grant for operations, possibly intending to create a prescription food market.

City Grant Application: Seeking permission to apply for a \$15,000 city grant for enhancing and advertising the second annual Historic South Health Screening.

They're considering submitting an application for the Farm to School Grant and another for the city's \$15,000 grant for the Historic South Health Screening.

MOTION TO APPROVE HEALTH DEPARTMENT GRANT APPLICATIONS AND APPROPRIATE MADE BY Mr. Roger Sidoti, SECONDED by Ms. Gwen Rosenberg and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

Executive Session

At 9:06 p.m. a **MOTION TO ENTER THE EXECUTIVE SESSION** MADE BY Mr. Jack Amrhein, SECONDED by Mr. Roger Sidoti. Roll call was taken

Present: Mr. Jack Amrhein, Ms. Melissa Celko, Mr. Robin Turner, Mr. Chris Hook, Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish, Mr. Jeff Clapper, Mr. Michael DeLeone, Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, Mr. Roger Sidoti

Absent: Mayor Jerry Fiala

At 9:45 p.m. **MOTION TO RETURN TO THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING** MADE BY Ms. Gwen Rosenberg, SECONDED by Mr. Roger Sidoti and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0-0.

The City Council Committee Meetings adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Amy Wilkens

Amy Wilkens, CMC
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.

WATCH THE SKIES WITH US | April 8, 2024



kent total eclipse 2024

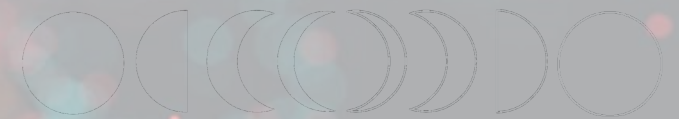
PARTNERS — PLANNING TEAM

- Kent Area Chamber of Commerce
 - Main Street Kent
 - City of Kent
 - Destination Kent Convention & Visitor Bureau
 - Kent State University Hotel
 - Kent State University
- Kent Parks and Rec
 - Kent Free Library
 - Kent Police, Fire, and EMS
 - Kent Health Department
 - Off the Wagon
 - Bell Tower Brewing



WHAT IS A TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE?

A total solar eclipse happens when the Moon passes between the Sun and Earth, completely blocking the face of the Sun. The sky will darken as if it were dawn or dusk.



kent total eclipse 2024





Last total solar eclipse visible in Ohio | June 16, 1806

Next total solar eclipse in the US | August 23, 2044

Next total solar eclipse in NE Ohio | September 14, 2099



kent total eclipse 2024

KENT IS IN THE PATH OF TOTALITY

3:14 PM | 2m – 46.2s



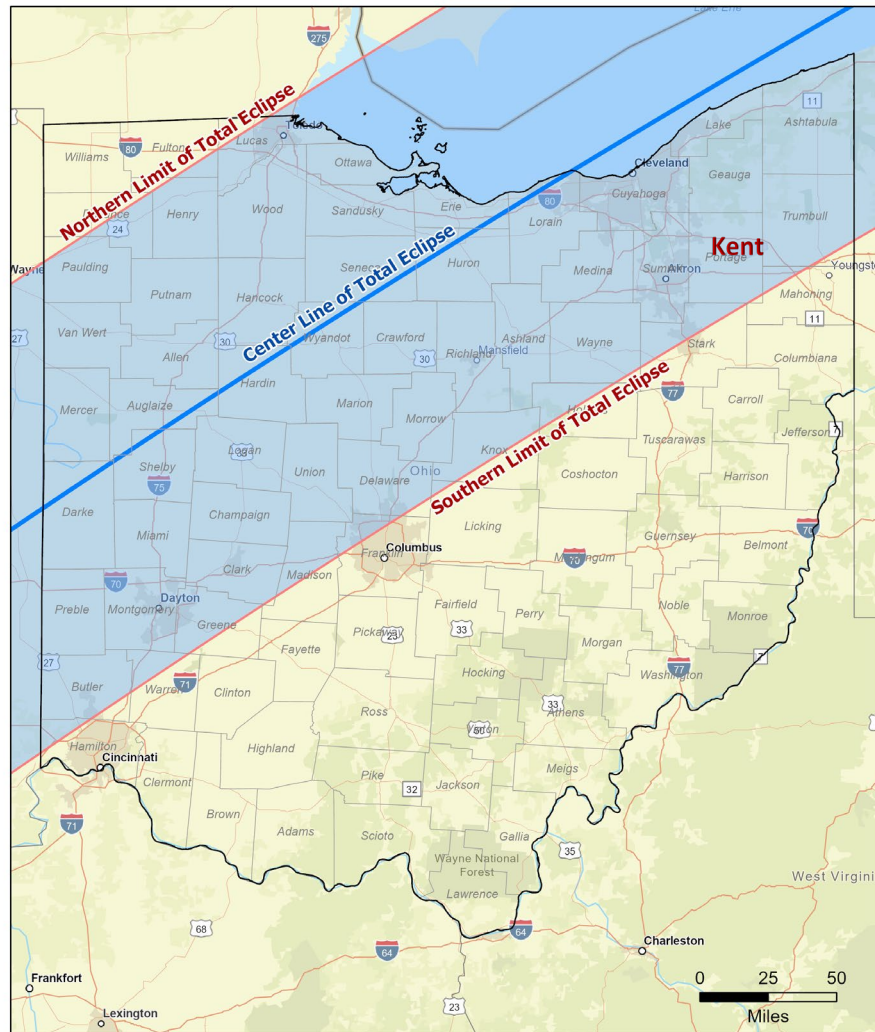
kent total eclipse 2024

ECLIPSE PATH AND STATS

- 31M people will be in the path of totality
- Low Estimate of Ohio Visitors: 139,000
- High Estimate of Ohio Visitors: 556,000
- Average of 115 mile-wide path of totality

-
- Full Duration: 2 hours, 30 minutes (1:59-4:29pm)
 - Totality in Kent: 2 minutes, 46.2 seconds
-

- Lessons Learned from 2017 Total Solar Eclipse
 - Millions of people will travel
 - People will take the shortest drive (Youngstown, Pittsburgh)



**Total Solar Eclipse Path through Ohio
April 8, 2024**



September 30, 2021



kent total eclipse 2024

SIMONS

FOUNDATION

\$10,000 Grant Winner
In the Path of Totality

DESTINATION
KENT

\$10,000 Matching Grant

NOPEC: \$3,500 Grant
(pending approval)

The Henry V. and Frances W.
Christenson Foundation

\$1,500 Grant



GREAT LAKES
Science Center

\$1,000 Grant

Kent Rotary Foundation \$ 500 Grant
(pending approval)

Water Reclamation Div. \$500

ACTIVITIES | EVENTS



kent total eclipse 2024

Saturday, April 6th:

- **Dark Side of the Moon – Pink Floyd Cover Band**
The Kent Stage
- **Community Unveiling – Permanent Public Art Mural | Heritage Park**
- **Akron Zoo: Nocturnal Animals & Glow in the Dark Story Walk at Al Lease Park | Kent Free Library**
- **Solar Eclipse Package-Two Night Minimum Stay | KSU Hotel**

Permanent Art Mural



Heritage Park

Kent Parks & Rec

Local Artist

Highly Visible

Accessible

Aluminum Product
(material will not fade)



kent total eclipse 2024



Call for Artworks

A TEMPORARY PUBLIC ART INSTALLATION IS BEING PLANNED ON SEVERAL BUILDINGS IN THE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT TO EDUCATE AND BUILD INTEREST IN THE COMMUNITY AROUND THE TOTAL ECLIPSE. THE COMMITTEE IS ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS FOR DESIGN CONCEPTS, WHICH MUST BE THE ARTIST'S INTERPRETATION OF A SOLAR ECLIPSE.

- FIVE ARTWORKS | FIVE DIFFERENT ARTISTS
- LOCAL ARTISTS FROM A VARIETY OF CULTURES, GENERATIONS, AND ABILITIES
- CHOSEN ARTISTS WILL BE AWARDED \$300 EACH + COST OF MATERIALS AND INSTALLATION
- ARTWORKS WILL BE PRINTED ON ALUMIGRAPHIC TO ADHERE TO THE BUILDING SURFACE.



kent total eclipse 2024

ACTIVITIES | EVENTS



Sunday, April 7th:

- Meet Luna the Moon – *Kent Free Library*
- Laser Light Show to Music – downtown Kent
- Street Closures for Large Crowds
- Food Trucks



ACTIVITIES | EVENTS

MONDAY, APRIL 8TH

**Eclipse Viewing Areas – Downtown
KSU Campus | City Parks**

**KSU Planetarium Shows + KSU Alumni
Luncheon + Keynote Speaker in the KIVA +
Eclipse Viewing Party on the Risman Plaza**

**Live Music or DJ at the Hometown Bank
Plaza before and after the eclipse**

Street Closures for Large Crowds | Food Trucks

LIGHTS OUT!!!!!!



kent total eclipse 2024



More Eclipse Planning...

Dedicated Website – kenteclipse2024.com

Kent City Schools - Closed April 8th

Art Galleries – Decorated Storefronts

Custom T-Shirts & Beanie Hats

Banners on the Main Street Bridge

Dedicated Photographer & Videographer

MSK 5K Run | Bar Crawl

And More Eclipse Planning...

Pushpin Maps of the U.S. Around Town

Bury a Time Capsule | Countdown Clock at Hometown Bank Plaza

Eclipse Glasses – Off the Wagon | KSU | Kent Free Library

KSU – Aeronautics & Engineering | Wick Poetry Center

Transportation Assistance – Kent Senior Housing & Portage DD

Businesses – Rebrand Menu Items | Special Events | T-Shirts

Portable Toilets | Dumpsters | Parking | Traffic Patterns

Proposed Downtown Kent Road Closures

April 7th: 4pm – 10 pm

Laser Light Show | Food Trucks | Safety

April 8th: 3am – 10 pm

Music | Food Trucks | Eclipse Viewing
Info Booth | Safety



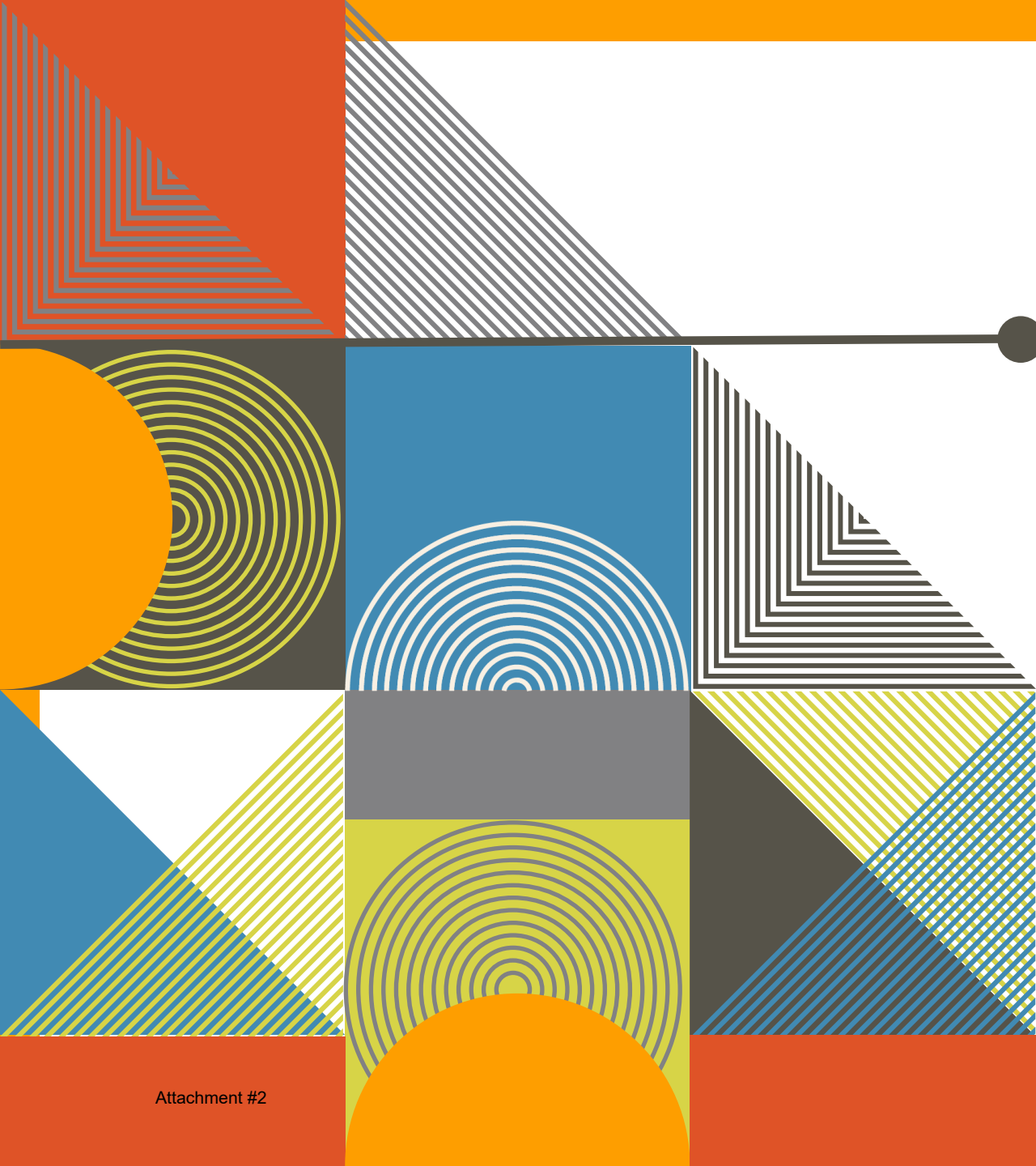
TAKE AWAYS:



- **KENT IS IN THE PATH OF TOTALITY!!!!**
- **ONCE IN A LIFETIME EVENT FOR MANY!**
- **ONE OF THE LARGEST TRAVEL EVENTS IN THE U.S. EVER!**
- **PEOPLE WILL COME!**
- **PLANNING DIVERSE, INCLUSIVE, FAMILY FRIENDLY EVENTS OVER THE WEEKEND SO PEOPLE WILL STAY AND WATCH THE SKIES WITH US!!!**

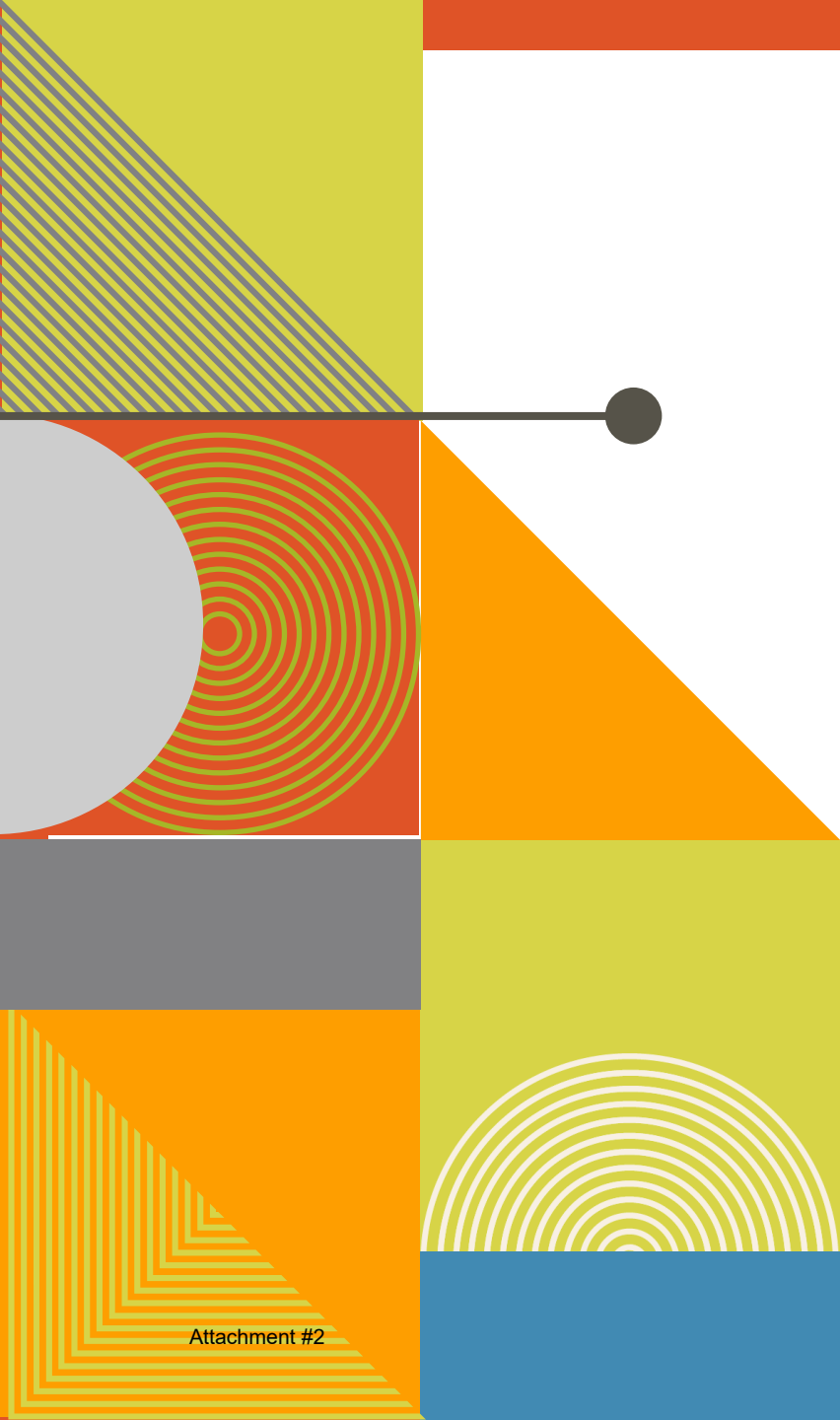
***“Experience Totality – Above You, Around You,
Within You!”...Dr. Kate Russo***





2024 ECLIPSE PLANNING UPDATE FOR KENT CITY COUNCIL 01.03.2024

JOAN C. SEIDEL
HEATH COMMISSIONER



Attachment #2



Homestead National Monument - 2017

MULTIPLE SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

MASS GATHERINGS

- Expect more people than you would think
- Closed streets & bridges
- Planned emergency routes
- PARTA Routes
- Unsafe driver behaviour
- Cell towers overwhelmed, communication problems
- Weather concerns

SANITATION

- Increased demand on water treatment
- Increased demand on reclamation
- Need for port-o-lets throughout downtown
- Trash pick up

FOOD/HOUSING

- Increased demand on restaurants and grocery stores
- Hotels already 95% booked in our area, 100% elsewhere
- No campgrounds in Kent

CITY RESPONSE

INCIDENT COMMAND

- Meeting with department heads
- Subcommittee and taskforce meetings
- Meeting with Portage County EMA
- Attending Eclipse specific tabletop exercise

PARTNERING WITH

- KACC/MSK
- KSU
- KCS

WORKING TOGETHER

- For safety and a great experience!





THANK YOU

Joan C. Seidel MA, BSN, RN, CIC, FAPIC, GRMS

Health Commissioner

Kent City Health Department

Joan.seidel@kentohio.gov

330.678.8109