

MT. HEALTHY CITY COUNCIL MEETING

April 16, 2024

The council meeting was called to order at 7:11 p.m. by President of Council, Ross Bittner, followed by the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mrs. Lingo, Mr. Parsons, Mrs. Dosa, Mr. George, Mr. Young, Mrs. Rissel

Absent and Excused: Mr. Roetting

A motion to excuse Mr. Roetting was made by Mr. George with a second by Mrs. Rissel. A 6-0 aye vote carried the motion. Mr. Roetting was excused.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Mayor Jennifer Moody and City Manager Scott Bauer.

WORK SESSION MINUTES:

A motion to approve and adopt the work session minutes as printed for the April 2, 2024 council meeting was made by Mrs. Dosa with a second by Mr. George. An aye vote carried the motion 6-0. *Work session minutes were adopted.*

MINUTES:

A motion to approve and adopt the minutes as printed for the April 2, 2024 council meeting was made by Mr. Young with a second by Mrs. Lingo. An aye vote carried the motion 6-0. *Minutes were adopted.*

CORRESPONDENCE: A list has been provided to council of bands playing at the park for the summer series. This runs June 7, 2024 - August 30, 2024.

GUESTS, SPECIAL EVENTS:

Rob and Eric from PES (Playground Equipment Specialist):

There is an opportunity to put independent pieces into the park area temporarily as the community works to create a plan for structure(s) long term. This would be a low cost advantage that could be used as early as this summer for a year or more depending on city needs. These pieces are new to the market this year and have only been used for trade shows. Once the decision to move forward has been made, PES will come into the space to make sure that all safety guidelines have been met. This could be up to 4-5 independent pieces. There is also the possibility that if the community loves a structure, but it doesn't work in the larger picture of the permanent plan of its current location, it could be relocated to a different space within the community.

There may be possible sponsors that would be able to provide funding for pieces of this playground equipment.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Kathryn Cupp: (Joseph Street): There is a concern on Joseph street about reckless speeding between the stop signs on the block. There are a lot of children who live on the street who play outside. There is increased foot traffic and bike traffic in the summer going to the pool and park. The hope is to explore options, possibly speed humps to make sure that an accident doesn't happen.

WeThrive is doing a walkability study with the intent of learning more about traffic patterns, traffic calming, and what could be done to improve this issue not only on Joseph Street but on streets throughout the community.

Jim Rahn: (Madison Avenue): A constant walker in the community, he noticed construction pickup trucks at what was once the Red Line. He questioned the people who were there and they said they had plans to put a brewery in that location. The city owns it with the intention of demolishing the building. The question and concern is why are people looking around in a city building if the plan is to demolish it. The City Manager responded that the building was purchased a month ago by the city with the intention of demolishing the building. That still is the intention. About a week or two after closing he received a call from a person interested in starting a brewery in that location. As the City Manager, even though the plan for that building is demolition, if there is an investor interested in the property he feels his role is to hear them out and bring it to council for any final decision. This was a lifelong dream of the person interested in the building even though it is in need of renovation work throughout the entire building. The City Manager made it clear to this person that it would require a lot of renovation and that the idea would need to be sold not just to city council but also to the community in the event that they were still interested. The City Manager still plans to hear the interested party out and see their business plan.

Dawn Walter: (Elizabeth Street): Came to council with a few questions. She talked with the City Manager in January about speed humps, one of which would be on Adams. She was curious why it hadn't yet been installed. The response was that they will not be installed 12 months out of the year, and will be taken up in the winter months to allow snow plows to easily navigate the roads. The ones the city purchased do require approximately 300 screws to anchor into the road, the intention is for them to be picked up and possibly moved around the community. The intention was to wait until springtime when the weather is better and there is no longer a threat of snow. Another question was about policing. She had heard that the community only has 2 officers on duty at a time but we had the police levy that passed which she assumed meant that we would be able to have more police on duty. The property taxes also increased, so the question is do we not have enough officers to allow for one officer patrolling specifically to write tickets. The City Manager responded that we have anywhere from 2-4 officers on shift. When we go up to 4 it is typically on the weekends. The investment in the speed humps is one way the city is trying to address speeding in the community. The levy was in place for 20 years, it was an additional levy because it failed the first time. The benefit was to keep the status quo. It had to go on the ballot as an additional levy, but it was something we have already had in place in the past.

Mr. Parsons commented that the teardown for the Red Line building is something we go through the Port Authority and submit a grant for. Once the grant period opens up a grant will be submitted to tear the building down; however they are full for the 2024 year so it will not be decided until 2025.

Mayor Moody commented that the building has a bad history and if someone wants to look at it it isn't hurting anything for them to look. It is hard to imagine that a brewery would thrive or be welcomed in that space, however. When in discussions about funding, code enforcement, and economic development the council agrees that there is a need to come up with a plan in the city for what properties in the future will be used for. The city's intention was to purchase property for sight control, especially from landlords living outside the state not taking care of the property and creating a blight in the community.

Mara Harperink: (Adams Road): Purchased Tom's Barber Shop and did the rehab about a year and half ago. Interested in looking at the Red Line building for the opportunity to rehab and look into the commercial opportunities for bringing in businesses or residential.

The plan continues to be to tear it down, but anyone with interest in pouring the money required into salvaging the building is welcome to contact the city.

Dave Osterday: (Roettle): An architect practicing for 20 years, he is currently sitting on the Planning Commission. One of the things he would like to address is that aside from the rules that Mr. Parsons mentioned in talking about this building is that there are also the basic building codes that whatever went in would have to be brought up to safety codes, parking rules, etc. A lot of other communities in the Cincinnati area have gone to great efforts to come up with a master plan, strategy, and understanding of what is in the community currently, what the community doesn't have and where something the community could use would go. What he would encourage the community and city to continue to consider is having a master plan, a strategy in place for the city and a good, solid urban plan and to move forward with implementing that.

Andy Grube: (Joseph Street): How many speed humps were purchased? The answer was that the city currently owns a single set, one for each lane of the same street. The hope is to purchase more in the future, but there is not currently a specific number that are planned to be purchased. This set was purchased with the intent of seeing how it affects traffic and add them as the city can.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Beautification: Denise Lingo: A call for a beautification committee meeting at 6:30 on May 7, 2024 in council chambers. The committee will be purchasing 18 hanging baskets this year. The meeting will discuss which plants to purchase for Heritage Park and other locations around the city. There is a truck that will water plants, which will help a lot in the summer months.

Business Partnership: Paul Young III: Attended the Business Association Meeting on April 15, 2024. Positions need to be filled include the Vice President and Treasurer. Meetings have been moved to every other month, so the next meeting will be the second Monday in June, 11a.m. at the Community Room in the park. Scholarship money will be given out to Mt. Healthy high school seniors this year. President Dwight

Moody also had a guest speaker at the meeting, Wanda Walker Smith, Director of the Small Business Development Center in Cincinnati. She talked about what they offer; delivering professional individualized business advertising, technical assistance, pre-venture entrepreneurs in assisting small businesses with capital, general management, improvements, and general help in their business. You can look them up for more information at SBDC.gov.

Economic Development: Paul Young III: Angilos's Pizza facade improvements should begin in the next few weeks. Hamilton County has provided the grant money for the improvements and 3rd Century Mt. Healthy has spent a lot of time getting things in order to get started, especially getting bids for the business. A few weeks ago there was a meeting with the Port Authority. They provided more information about other things they could do to help with the city. Things that they suggested the city make sure they have in place: a code enforcer, architectural review board, and that codes are up to date. They also stressed the benefit of having "shovel ready" properties and projects, which are projects the city hopes to complete and things are ready once funding is secured. When money becomes available through the Port Authority, it's possible that they could by-pass other communities who are not ready if our city is.

Finance: Bob Parsons: Call for a committee meeting April 30, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. in the City Manager's office to discuss how the city budget will be impacted by the new firefighter contract and number of new firefighters.

Library: Kisha Dosa: The library had a great turnout for the eclipse party in the park. They had approximately 225 people attend throughout the event. They had games, crafts, snacks and button making. There are pictures in the library and online. The construction fencing is up with work beginning on the interior and exterior of the new library building.

Parks: Kisha Dosa: Council members have a flier for the summer concert series on their desk, which can also be found online. These concerts are free to the public and start Friday, June 7, 2024 and run until August 30, 2024. Council members are encouraged to sign up for park concert duty. There is also a proposal to do a pre-concert social event before the first concert on June 7th held at the Community Room at 6:15 until the concert begins. A proposed incentive would be for the first, possibly 25 people who come would receive a complementary charcuterie box and a city magnet. This event would invite the community in to see the pool, discuss what's happening with the park and how they can get involved. This would also allow for community members to share ideas of what they would like to see at the park. Mrs. Dosa would like to see 3 or 4 pieces of play equipment go into the park. The slide, climber and one of the loop structures are the things that seemed to be best for the space. PES shared earlier in the meeting that they would need to come in and measure to see exactly what would fit properly in the space. The hope is to do as many as can fit in the area safely. PES stated again this evening that it can take up to 3-4 weeks once a decision is made for installation. They will make sure that ADA and other safety requirements are adhered to. They will also maintain the structures once installed. At the end of the year we can purchase the structures at a 30% discount. There is a potential opportunity to have these structures sponsored. Mrs. Dosa is in the process of writing letters to potential sponsors with the hope of moving forward quickly. A meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. on April 30th for the Parks Commission in Council Chambers.

Safety: Joe Roetting: Absent.

Schools: Cordel George: Mr. George and Mayor Moody attended the school board meeting on April 15, 2024 at the Board of Education. Mt. Healthy City Schools have been in a financial crisis. Because of this, hard decisions are going to be made. At this meeting, the Mt. Healthy City School board voted to approve the rearrangement of the student population. 1-4th grade will attend school at North Elementary, 5-8 will attend what is currently South Elementary, and 9-12 will be at the High School. The school board is asking for community support through this process.

Streets: Peggy Rissel: Forest-Madison and Harrison continue to be worked on.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Jennifer Moody

As a past administrator, listening at the School Board meeting was gut wrenching. The Mt. Healthy school system is in a deficit for a little over \$11 million dollars from now until the end of the school year. The state does not come in and give a blank check. They come in and save the school district and then put in place some harsh plans that have to be followed in order to get the schools out of the financial deficit. They form a commission governed by the state department and the Governor. The Mayor appoints one person and City Manager, Scott Bauer has been appointed and accepted the appointment. They are looking for people with a financial background. A cover letter and resume was also submitted by a local business person. This commission has to happen very quickly. We are the only school system in the state of Ohio in this situation. There is a lot of pointing blame currently, but state auditors have come in and will do a thorough investigation of how money was managed. People on this commission will give 3-4 years commitment to fixing this problem. There is a continued search for parents who will have children in the school system for the next 3-4 years with a financial background. Community members can also fill out an information sheet and participate in future committees that will work towards fixing the situation. This will impact the city budget, because the largest employer of the city is the school district. There will be a plan to pay the money back to the state, as well as making sure that the district is solvent. It should be important for the city to have the school system be its best for kids, families, as well as the teachers who work hard for our district.

Thanks to Kisha Dosa for working so hard on the playground and parks projects. The hope was that we may be able to get grant funding through WeThrive, however they no longer do grants aimed at parks. Olivia from WeThrive did forward to Mayor Moody, which was then forwarded to Mrs. Dosa other grant opportunities.

An email was sent from a woman in a nearby neighborhood with the Ohio State Extension Service that received a small grant through WeThrive with the expectation that part of that funding would go to a neighboring community to host a gardening class for children ages 7-12. At the WeThrive meeting, Jacqueline who works with youth in our city will work on getting that grant for the local kids. If anyone is interested in joining the grant opportunity and/or have children in this age range, there are a few locations in town being considered.

The second council meeting in May, Mayor Moody will bring Mel who works at Tikun Farm. 18 students will start a landscaping program that will train and certify them. This is through a Talbert House and USDA grant. Through this grant the students are being paid \$75 per day to do landscape work. Mayor Moody has encouraged Mel to speak with Justin at the maintenance department to get some landscaping help this summer in our parks and city. Eventually, they may open services up to residents, giving a price for landscaping needs residents may have and doing landscaping in resident's yards. They

have already been working at Trinity Lutheran Church's community garden. They also have a composting program where they have compost bins in that garden and will mix the compost for residents to take if they are a part of the program. These people will be trained in heavy equipment and in getting a landscape certification.

WeThrive had 12 people at the meeting this evening. There was a discussion about the work they have been doing about this community being a walkable community which addresses safe walking, speed humps and other things the city needs to continue to look at. There was a gentleman in attendance from Hamilton County Planning and Development. This could be a great partnership between the city and WeThrive to find ways to collaborate.

The Mayor attended a conference in Centerville, OH for elected officials. An outstanding event that allowed for the attendees to download all of the presentation slides from the entire conference. Although it was a Dayton area event, it was not specific to Dayton and there were a lot of takeaways.

Mayor Moody was also approached by a gentleman from the Governor's office who is part of an initiative to go out and learn about cities and townships in the state of Ohio. His predecessor only went into large cities, but as a city council person in Xenia he has made a choice to specifically target smaller cities. He will be meeting with the Mayor on May 21, 2024 and wants to learn more about the strength and struggles of our city.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT: Scott Bauer

The firefighters union voted in favor of the part time contract.

An update on the Werner property nuisance: The city will go through the ORC (Ohio Revised Code) instead of the Mt. Healthy nuisance code, as the ORC has more teeth. Spoke with the law director and lawyer who both feel confident that it will help in the eviction, with the priority being to make sure that everything is done according to the rules.

An update on the Clovernook incident that took place. This was not a random act. The sheriff's office has a crime scene unit that came out to help, with 4-5 people dedicated just to this case.

The northern section of Harrison and Forest Ave are torn up for the water projects. The hope is that by the end of the summer everything will be completed. The southern section of Harrison from Compton south is also anticipated to be worked on as well. Mr. Bauer spoke with Hamilton County in regards to the CDBG funds which was what the public hearings were about, as well as CDAP funds, meant for larger infrastructure funding. The understanding is that on April 30, 2024 there will be a discussion with commissioners and at this point they have never turned down a project presented. The funds are available for the projects being submitted, so it's very likely we will receive the funding. The AFG safer grant was submitted which was written for full time fire department personnel, which would cover salary and benefits. The fire engine grant was also submitted.

A citation comparison was made and will be distributed to council. This is a snapshot of what other communities are charging for citations to determine if our community is in line with what other communities are doing. The Historical Society had roof work completed.

ORDINANCES:

24-2040 An Ordinance Authorizing the City Manager to Execute an Agreement Between the City of Mt. Healthy and the International Association of Fire Fighters #5403, Representing a Bargaining Unit of City Employees in the Classification of Full

Time Fire Fighter. Motion to adopt ordinance was made by Mr. Parsons with second by Mrs. Rissel. Roll call vote of 6-0 carried the motion. **Ordinance 24-2040 was adopted.** This ordinance number (24-2040) was used in error and is now changed 24-2043.

24-2041 An Ordinance Vacating an Alley Located Between 7401 Bernard Avenue and 7367 Bernard Avenue. Motion to suspend two reading rule made by Mr. Parsons with second by Mr. George. Roll call vote of 6-0 carried the motion. Two reading rule suspended. Motion to adopt ordinance made by Mrs. Lingo with second by Mrs. Dosa. Roll call vote of 6-0 carried the motion. **Ordinance 24-2041 was adopted.**

24-2042 An Ordinance Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the City of Mt. Healthy and the Mt. Healthy Part Time Fire Fighters AFSCME, Ohio Council 8, AFL-CIO. Motion to suspend two reading rule made by Mr. Young with second by Mr. George. Roll call vote of 6-0 carried the motion. Two reading rule suspended. Motion to adopt ordinance made by Mrs. Parsons with second by Mr. Young. Roll call vote of 6-0 carried the motion. **Ordinance 24-2042 was adopted.**

RESOLUTIONS: None.

OLD BUSINESS: Mr. Bauer has a meeting on April 30, 2024 to discuss opportunities for FCC to create a soccer field in the community.

NEW BUSINESS:

A motion to allow the City Manager to apply for the CDBG grant for the full projects totalling \$300,000 previously discussed was made by Mr. Parsons. An aye vote carried the motion.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Lingo with second by Mrs. Rissel. An aye vote carried the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.



President of Council, Ross Bittner



Clerk of Council, Sara Danks