

**XENIA CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 24, 2021
6:00 P.M.**

Pastor Todd Martin, Liberty Worship Center, provided the Invocation.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: All present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance led by Vice President Levi Dean.

B. CALL TO ORDER: President Wesley Smith called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

C. ROLL CALL: Vice President Levi Dean, Councilman Thomas Scrivens (arrived at 6:04 p.m.), Councilwoman Rebekah Dean, Councilman Cody Brannum, Councilman Will Urschel, and President Wesley Smith were present. Mayor Sarah Mays was absent.

Motion by Councilman Urschel, seconded by Councilwoman Dean, to excuse Mayor Mays from the meeting due to her participation as a counselor at church camp. No comments followed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: L. Dean, Scrivens, R. Dean, Brannum, Urschel, Smith

Nays: None motion carried.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Councilwoman Dean, seconded by Councilman Brannum, to approve the June 10, 2021, minutes of the Regular Meeting as written. President Smith entertained comments. No comments followed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: L. Dean, Scrivens, R. Dean, Brannum, Urschel, Smith

Nays: None motion carried.

E. SPECIAL PRESENTATION(S): None.

F. AUDIENCE COMMENTS: President Smith invited anyone wishing to speak to come to the podium. No one came forward to speak. He noted no correspondence was received via email or otherwise.

G. OLD BUSINESS:

1. President Smith presented **ORDINANCE 2021-14 ACCEPTING THE ANNEXATION OF 24.544 ACRES OF LAND IN XENIA TOWNSHIP TO THE CITY OF XENIA, OHIO**, originally introduced by Councilman Urschel on 06/10/2021, and it was read for a second time.

Motion by Councilman Urschel, seconded by Councilman Scrivens, to adopt Ordinance 2021-14. President Smith entertained comments. Brief comments followed. City Manager Brent Merriman said staff has been asked to reach out to Xenia Township regarding annexation efforts, and he drafted a letter to Xenia Township regarding this annexation. Unfortunately, he recently realized that the letter was not mailed. He mailed the letter, along with his apologies, today. Councilman Urschel said he has been attending Xenia Township meetings and has spoken with Township Administrator Alan Stock about this annexation, and the Township is well informed. He did not

believe there are any issues. He personally thinks this annexation is a great opportunity for that building on the edge of town, which is in great condition, to be occupied and productive. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: L. Dean, Scrivens, R. Dean, Brannum, Urschel, Smith
Nays: None motion carried.

2. President Smith presented **RESOLUTION 2021-Y PROVIDING FOR ASSESSMENTS TO BE LEVIED AND AUTHORIZING THE FINANCE DIRECTOR TO CERTIFY THOSE ASSESSMENTS TO THE GREENE COUNTY AUDITOR**, originally introduced by Mayor Mays on 06/10/2021, and it was read for a second time.

Motion by President Smith, seconded by Councilman Urschel, to pass Resolution 2021-Y. President Smith entertained comments. No comments followed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: L. Dean, Scrivens, R. Dean, Brannum, Urschel, Smith
Nays: None motion carried.

H. PUBLIC HEARING(S):

1. President Smith presented **ORDINANCE 2021-15 AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF XENIA, OHIO, TO ESTABLISH I-1 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT AS THE ZONING DISTRICT FOR TWO NEWLY ANNEXED PARCELS TOTALING 18.499 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, INCLUDING 855 LOWER BELLBROOK ROAD AND GREENE COUNTY PARCEL ID M36000200230000500**, originally introduced by Councilman Brannum on 06/10/2021, and it was read for a second time.

Motion by Councilman Brannum, seconded by Councilman Urschel, to adopt Ordinance 2021-15.

President Smith opened the public hearing at 6:08 p.m. and invited those in favor of the zoning designation for the newly annexed land to come forward to speak. No one came forward to speak. He then invited those opposed to the zoning designation for the newly annexed land to come forward to speak. No one came forward to speak. He closed the public hearing at 6:09 p.m. and entertained additional comments or questions. Hearing none, he asked for the Roll Call.

The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: L. Dean, Scrivens, R. Dean, Brannum, Urschel, Smith
Nays: None motion carried.

2. **Introduction of Resolution 2021-Z Approving the Estate of Charles W. Strausburg's Renewal Application for Placement of 32.654 acres of land, located at 817 Upper Bellbrook Road, in a CAUV (Current Agricultural Use Valuation) Agricultural District.** President Smith entertained introduction of Resolution 2021-Z as presented.

Councilman Brannum presented RESOLUTION 2021-Z APPROVING THE ESTATE OF CHARLES W. STRAUSBURG'S RENEWAL APPLICATION FOR PLACEMENT OF 32.654

ACRES OF LAND, LOCATED AT 817 UPPER BELLBROOK ROAD, IN A CAUV AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT, and it was read for the first time.

President Smith asked if he should conduct the public hearing first or ask staff to give the report. Law Director Donnette Fisher said either the staff report can be given first or the public hearing can be conducted first. President Smith asked Assistant Finance Director Jason Lake to provide his report.

Mr. Lake said this resolution approves the renewal application filed by the Estate of Charles W. Strausburg to keep 32.654 acres of farmland at 817 Upper Bellbrook Road in the Current Agricultural Use Valuation (CAUV) program, which evaluates land based on its current use versus its “highest and best” potential use. The CAUV program results in a substantially lower property tax bill for farmers. To qualify, the land must either be 10 or more acres and must be exclusively dedicated to commercial agricultural use, or if under 10 acres, devoted exclusively to commercial agricultural use and produce an average yearly gross of at least \$2,500. Council’s approval of the renewal is required under ORC 929.02, and Council must hold a public hearing on the proposed renewal. Approval of this application will allow the land to continue to be taxed at its current agricultural use valuation under Ohio law. City staff requests the public hearing be held on June 24, 2021, and that the Resolution be approved upon its second reading on July 8, 2021.



President Smith opened the public hearing at 6:11 p.m. and invited those in favor of the CAUV application to come forward to speak.

Ross Apple, 805 Upper Bellbrook Road, said he is Charles W. Strausburg’s stepson, and he will be the owner of the property. The property has been an agricultural use for as long as the family has owned it, and he intends to continue its agricultural use. He would appreciate Council’s approval to renew the CAUV.

President Smith then invited those opposed to the CAUV application to come forward to speak. No one came forward to speak. He then entertained any additional comments.

Ms. Fisher said typically public hearings are scheduled for the second readings; however, due to the timeline per State statute, the public hearing had to be held within 30 days of receipt of the application.

Councilman Scrivens said the City is satisfying the requirements of the ORC, and Mr. Apple wishes to continue the agricultural use; therefore, he supports the renewal.

Councilman Urschel said the CAUV designation is critical for those farmers who are actually farming the land. Otherwise, the property taxes would be too cost-prohibitive and would put farmers out of business. This is a common practice all across the townships in Greene County, and there is no reason it should not be done with farmland located inside the City limits.

President Smith closed the public hearing at 6:14 p.m. and thanked Mr. Apple for his attendance.

I. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Introduction of Ordinance 2021-16 Accepting the Annexation of 2.2946 acres of Land at 800 Hedges Road in Xenia Township to the City of Xenia, Ohio. Mr. Merriman said the Greene County Commission has approved the petition from the property owner for annexation of 800 Hedges Road from Xenia Township to the City. Pursuant to ORC 709.04, City Council has 120 days from this point to either accept or reject the annexation. Council has previously approved resolutions providing a statement of services and a statement regarding zoning buffers in compliance with ORC requirements. It is noted that the applicant is seeking Conditional Use approval from Planning and Zoning Commission at their July 1 meeting to utilize two existing yurts and a camper as a campground for transient guests through AirBnB services. Campgrounds are allowed per the zoning code as a Conditional Use in A-1 Agricultural Districts, which is the automatic zoning assignment this site will receive if accepted for annexation. Staff sees no concerns with the zoning or the conditional use for the campground services. Should Planning and Zoning approve the Conditional Use, it will be conditioned upon City Council's acceptance of the annexation. As articulated previously, staff supports this minor annexation and recommends introduction and ultimately approval of Ordinance 2021-16 to facilitate this.

President Smith entertained comments or questions.

Councilman Urschel said this ordinance accepts the annexation; he asked if the planned use would need to be approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission or if that was automatic with the A-1 zoning designation. Mr. Merriman said as noted, the applicant is seeking a conditional use at the July 1st Planning and Zoning Commission meeting. If approved, the conditional use would be contingent upon the final approval of Ordinance 2021-16 to accept the annexation.

Councilman Scrivens said the subject property is surrounded [on three sides] by land located inside the City limits, and there is no reason why the City should not accept the annexation. Mr. Merriman agreed, noting the land is surrounded mostly by undeveloped, agricultural land.

Councilman Urschel said in talking with Township representatives, there seems to be some contention, including among the neighbors, regarding the proposed use. He assumed if the neighbors had any issues with the intended use that they would need to attend the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on July 1. He asked if the surrounding property owners were notified of that upcoming meeting. City Planner Brian Forschner said per the Code, the City is required to send public hearing notices to adjacent property owners for conditional use requests. Those notices were mailed, published on the City's website, and posted in the lobby of the City Administration Building. The meeting is open to public, and anyone is welcome to attend.

Hearing nothing further, President Smith entertained introduction of Ordinance 2021-16 as presented.

Councilman Scrivens presented ORDINANCE 2021-16 ACCEPTING THE ANNEXATION OF 2.2946 ACRES OF LAND AT 800 HEDGES ROAD IN XENIA TOWNSHIP TO THE CITY OF XENIA, OHIO, and it was read for the first time.

2. RESOLUTION 2021-AA AUTHORIZING THE SUBMITTAL OF AN APPLICATION TO OPWC'S STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND/OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS, AND THE EXECUTION OF ANY REQUIRED CONTRACTS, FOR THE PROGRAM YEAR 2022 (PY 36) BELLBROOK AVENUE (COLORADO DRIVE TO WEST CORPORATION LIMITS) IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Mr. Merriman said Round 36 applications for State Issue II funds are now being accepted by the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC). Staff evaluated options and the Engineering staff is recommending an application to request funding for the rehabilitation of Bellbrook Avenue from Colorado Drive to the West Corporation Limits. These funds would be paired with funding to be requested through a separate program with MVRPC, and if awarded for both, rehab of Bellbrook Avenue will be able to be completed in its entirety. Staff is also including in the application funding for the installation of a radar detection system on the traffic signal at the Colorado/Bellbrook intersection to improve stop light sequencing and timing to allow better traffic flow, especially during PM peak hours. Staff is requesting this resolution be approved as an emergency to allow staff time to complete all necessary due diligence and submit the application before the deadline.

President Smith entertained comments or questions. Councilman Scrivens said he would have liked City Engineer Chris Berger to be present this evening. Mr. Merriman said he gave Mr. Berger the evening off due to his commitments the following day.

Councilman Urschel asked if the City would be receiving a substantial amount of the State's funds for this project, i.e., 90 percent. Mr. Merriman said he believed that was correct.

Hearing nothing further, President Smith entertained a motion to pass Resolution 2021-AA as presented.

Motion by Councilman Brannum, seconded by Vice President Dean, to pass Resolution 2021-AA. President Smith entertained comments. No comments followed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: L. Dean, Scrivens, R. Dean, Brannum, Urschel, Smith

Nays: None motion carried.

3. Introduction of Resolution 2021-BB Adopting the 2022 Tax Budget of the City of Xenia, Ohio, and Authorizing the Finance Director to submit it to the Greene County Auditor. Mr. Merriman said an annual benchmark for Council in June is consideration of the Tax Budget for the ensuing fiscal year. This year, like last year, requirements for tax budget submittal to the Greene County Budget Commission have been waived as entities continue to manage fallout from the pandemic. However, administrative leadership again this year, like last year, have decided in the interest of best practices to proceed with the tax budget development process as usual even if formal submittal to the Budget Commission is not required. Staff presents the 2022 tax budget for Council consideration and we recommend introduction of resolution 2021-BB to accept the tax budget. We remind our constituents that the tax budget does not authorize any expenditure but rather establishes the blueprint for our final budget for next year. The tax budget as presented shows all funds in positive territory, however, we readily acknowledge that evolving impacts from the pandemic and broad policy changes being pursued in Columbus create much uncertainty regarding revenues for 2022. The tax budget as presented shows expenses totaling \$64,897,797.58,

which would include projected grants, transfers and so forth. The proposed final budget will be presented to Council no later than October 31st. Staff will also now continue with development of the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) which will be presented to Council no later than October 1st. He respectfully recommended City Council introduce the resolution for consideration.

President Smith entertained comments or questions.

Councilman Scrivens asked what happens to the 902 Fund (unclaimed funds) over the year period. Mr. Lake said if the funds are not claimed, they are transferred to the General Fund.

Councilman Urschel said from the County's perspective, the tax budget is typically required to determine property millage. Mr. Merriman said it is correct that one aspect of the tax budget is used to set the rates for millage, and he believed those procedures are occurring even though the formal process is not being followed this year. Councilman Urschel said if the County is not using the tax budget as an input this year and they are able to proceed, especially with determining the inside millage, as usual, he asked if they really need to go through this process in the future. Mr. Merriman said he cannot answer that question other than to say the City has a great relationship with the County Auditor, and nothing changed based on the last year's streamlined process. He noted that would be a great question to ask next year. Mr. Lake reported the inside millage amount has not changed in decades.

Hearing nothing further, President Smith entertained introduction of Resolution 2021-BB as presented.

Vice President Dean presented RESOLUTION 2021-BB ADOPTING THE 2022 TAX BUDGET OF THE CITY OF XENIA, OHIO, AND AUTHORIZING THE FINANCE DIRECTOR TO SUBMIT IT TO THE GREENE COUNTY AUDITOR, and it was read for the first time.

4. Administrative Motion Appointing Kasey Bottorff to the Vacant Seat on the Planning and Zoning Commission. Councilman Brannum said there is one vacancy on the Planning and Zoning Commission, which has been advertised on the City's social media outlets, website, and government channel. Four individuals expressed interest in filling the vacancy, and he respectfully recommends the appointment of Mr. Kasey Bottorff to fill a vacant term expiring on December 31, 2024. His background check has been processed and is satisfactory.

President Smith entertained comments or questions. Hearing none, he entertained a motion.

Motion by Councilman Brannum, seconded by Councilwoman Dean, to appoint Mr. Kasey Bottorff to the Planning and Zoning Commission, with a term expiration date of December 31, 2024. Brief comments followed. Councilman Brannum said Mr. Bottorff is present in the audience this evening. He shared that Mr. Bottorff is newly engaged and a first time homeowner in Xenia. He is very family oriented, and he looks forward to working with him on the Planning and Zoning Commission. President Smith thanked Mr. Botorff for being present this evening and for volunteering to serve. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: L. Dean, Scrivens, R. Dean, Brannum, Urschel, Smith

Nays: None motion carried.

5. Administrative Motion Authorizing the Purchase of a Brush Truck Chassis from Stoops Freightliner-Dayton through the ODOT Cooperative Purchasing Program, and a Bed, Brine & Anti-Icing System Unit from Henderson Products, Inc., through the Sourcewell Purchasing Program. Mr. Merriman said staff is requesting authorization to move forward with the purchase of components necessary for the replacement of the brush truck in the Public Service Department. The unit being replaced is a critical front line vehicle, which is a 2002 model that has exceeded its useful life and is in an advanced state of disrepair. Both the CIP and budget approved by Council for this year included funding of \$150,000 for this replacement purchase. Staff is requesting approval of an administrative motion to allow the acquisition of a chassis from Stoops Freightliner-Dayton in the amount of \$82,791, and a bed, brine and anti-icing system unit to be purchased from Henderson Products, Inc., in the amount of \$64,476. The chassis purchase from Stoops Freightliner-Dayton will be made through the ODOT Purchasing Program, while the purchase of the bed, brine & de-icing system units from Henderson Products, Inc., will be made through the Sourcewell Purchasing Program; both are approved competitive procurement means. If authorized this evening, the estimated delivery date is not until August 2022 due to materials shortages and production delays, so staff urges Council to allow them to advance the purchase now so they can secure the vehicle as soon as possible for next year's season.

President Smith entertained comments or questions. Hearing none, he entertained a motion.

Motion by Councilman Scrivens, seconded by Councilman Urschel, to approve the purchase of a Brush Truck chassis from Stoops Freightliner-Dayton through the ODOT Cooperative Purchasing Program (at a not-to-exceed cost of \$82,791), and the purchase of a bed, brine & anti-icing system unit from Henderson Products, Inc., through the Sourcewell Purchasing Program (at a not-to-exceed cost of \$64,476). No comments followed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: L. Dean, Scrivens, R. Dean, Brannum, Urschel, Smith

Nays: None motion carried.

6. Administrative Motion Authorizing the Execution of Addendum #4 to the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Agreement Between the City of Xenia, Ohio, and Central State University for a One-Year Extension. Mr. Merriman said the City has provided EMS and fire services to Central State University since 2012. The City and University have subsequently executed extensions of the contract for the continuation of services. As the agreement and service arrangement has been beneficial to both CSU and the City – and as its current term expires at the end of June 2021 – staff recommends this evening that Council authorize another one-year extension to the service agreement. Upon review of service demand and costs for service provision, staff believes that no increase in the contract amount is warranted at this time.

President Smith entertained comments or questions. Hearing none, he entertained a motion.

Motion by Councilman Scrivens, seconded by Vice President Dean, to authorize the City Manager to execute Addendum No. 4 to the CSU Fire/EMS contract for a one-year extension of services from July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022. Brief comments followed. Councilman Scrivens asked how the amount of the contract was determined. Mr. Merriman said the original amount was based on an analysis done prior to the initial contract, which suggested the amount would give the City enough additional revenue to make it feasible after covering expenses. Over the years, the expense

and transports from Central State have actually declined, which as a result has reduced the service demand. President Smith noted the university is currently on summer break, and along with the campus being closed last year due to the Covid-19 shutdown, the numbers should have considerably decreased. Mr. Merriman agreed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: L. Dean, Scrivens, R. Dean, Brannum, Urschel, Smith

Nays: None motion carried.

7. Administrative Motion Approving the Schedule of Bills in the amount of \$848,661.72.

Mr. Lake respectfully requested the payment of bills in the amount of \$848,661.72. He noted there are several debt service payments on this schedule of bills, which have contributed to the large amount.

President Smith entertained a motion.

Motion by Councilman Urschel, seconded by President Smith, to approve the schedule of bills in the amount of \$848,661.72. President Smith entertained comments or questions. Councilman Scrivens asked about the payment for emergency medical services listed on page 4. Mr. Merriman said the City is responsible for medical treatment for prisoners when they are in the City's custody. When they are transported to the Greene County Jail, the responsibility is transferred to the Greene County Sheriff. President Smith noted the expense was for \$59.35. He thanked Mr. Lake for filling in for Finance Director Ryan Duke as he is recovering from knee surgery. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: L. Dean, Scrivens, R. Dean, Brannum, Urschel, Smith

Nays: None motion carried.

J. APPOINTED OFFICIALS REPORTS

President Smith asked Ms. Fisher for her comments. Ms. Fisher said she filed a claim on behalf of the City of Xenia against Purdue Pharma as part of their Chapter 11 bankruptcy. She provided a brief background of the case along with an update that she just received earlier in the day. She noted the multi-district litigation (MDL) was filed by (mostly) state attorney generals, including the Ohio Attorney General. There are many lawsuits filed against Purdue Pharma that amount to trillions of dollars in claims. However, in response to the MDL lawsuit, a settlement plan has been presented, and the parties are divided between consenting states and the non-consenting states. Regarding the bankruptcy case, there are public creditors (states, counties, local jurisdictions), who are split into two groups (consenting and non-consenting), and there are private creditors (hospitals, insurance companies, people who were directly injured). The settlement plan has to be voted on by July 14, 2021, which would be for \$4.5 billion in the aggregate, with \$4.275 billion coming from Purdue Pharma and the owners of the company, the Sackler family, only putting in \$225 million. She noted the most important aspect of the settlement plan is that the private creditors and the public creditors are in agreement as to how that money is distributed with the bulk of it coming to the public creditors. As part of the plan, the ownership of Purdue Pharma will transfer to a trust that is controlled by the public creditors per a trustee. The assets and any money that is made by Purdue Pharma as it continues will then go to the public creditors, and \$6 million of that will have to be spent on drug recovery and anti-opiate medications to help combat the crisis. The group, The Official Committee of Unsecured Creditors, wrote a 24-page letter in support of

adopting the settlement plan solely in an effort to get the case settled and to get money to local jurisdictions. She noted the Sackler family transferred \$10 billion dollars away from Purdue Pharma and into their private accounts between 2008 and 2017. Unless the Department of Justice goes after the family members for fraud, she believed it would be very difficult to get any of that money back. She said a number of groups are against the settlement plan because the Sackler family would only be required to pay \$225 million; however, the Sackler family would be completely out of Purdue Pharma if the settlement plan is approved. If the settlement plan is not approved, then the agreement between the private creditors and the public creditors—which took a year to come to fruition—is off the table, and litigation could go on for many, many years. She reiterated she has to submit the City’s ballot by July 14th and noted the State of Ohio Attorney General’s Office would be voting for the settlement plan. She offered to make available to Council any of the documents with regard to the case, the settlement agreement, and the 24-page letter of support.

President Smith asked Ms. Fisher if she had any idea how much money the City of Xenia would receive. Ms. Fisher said there are many claims, and the City of Xenia’s claim number is 143,148. So out of \$4.5 billion, she filed the City of Xenia’s claim in the amount of \$15,972,325 (based on Xenia’s population, run numbers, overdose numbers, etc.). While it was very unlikely that the City of Xenia would receive that amount, there is a good chance that some money will be received. President Smith thanked Ms. Fisher for doing her homework. Ms. Fisher acknowledged the Fire Division staff who helped her with the statistics.

President Smith entertained other comments or questions. Councilman Scrivens said even though the City is one of almost 144,000 claims, money is on the table and they need to take advantage of this opportunity.

Councilman Urschel thanked Ms. Fisher for filing the claim on the City’s behalf. He agreed that the City of Xenia is small when considering the breadth of the overall claims, but the City of Xenia has a vote. He agreed with Councilman Scriven; this may be the City’s only chance to receive any funds, and they should move forward and submit an “aye” vote on the settlement plan.

Motion by Councilman Urschel, seconded by Councilman Scrivens, to authorize the Law Director to respond with an “aye” vote to indicate support of the settlement plan with regard to the Purdue Pharma lawsuit. Brief discussion followed. President Smith asked if there was any other alternative. Ms. Fisher said this is a vote on the settlement plan, and it is possible that it could be voted down. If it passes, the City could see some money within the next two years. There is also an objection deadline of July 19th, and if the plan receives enough aye votes to pass and objections are filed, it could take the court some time to settle. It was basically a “wait and see” scenario. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: L. Dean, Scrivens, R. Dean, Brannum, Urschel, Smith
Nays: None motion carried.

President Smith asked Mr. Lake for his comments. Mr. Lake had nothing further to share.

President Smith asked Mr. Merriman for his comments. Mr. Merriman reminded everyone that next weekend is the City’s Independence Day Downtown “Red, White, and Blue” Block Party and the Sonnycalb Fireworks Festival at Shawnee Park on Friday, July 2nd. In preparation for the event,

there will be some road closures in the downtown area beginning at noon on the day of the event. Lots of activities are planned for the block party including a corn hole tournament, food trucks, a Jeep show, a 4 Paws for Ability meet-n-greet, merchant sidewalk sales, etc. He was excited that many downtown merchants and other community groups and businesses are sponsoring different aspects of the downtown activities, which will start at 3 p.m. and conclude at around 7 p.m., at which time activities will transition to Shawnee Park with additional food trucks and live entertainment including the Band of Flight. He noted the fireworks are a rain or shine event and would only be delayed to the next evening in the event of very severe weather with lightning. He thanked all the participants of this year's Citizens Academy, which is a great opportunity for the City to be as transparent as possible on topics such as financial information and how Xenia local government works but also to provide citizens with a unique up close and personal view of fire, police, dispatch, and public services so they can understand City governance. He noted the Police Division would be doing its own Citizens Academy in the coming months, and information on how to sign up would be shared soon. Regarding the Public Service Department, he made a presentation on the improvements at Shawnee Park, including some before and after photos (after photos shown below):



Mr. Merriman said the Public Service workers cleaned up the areas around the walking bridges, resurfaced and repainted items including the donated benches, power washed the white fence, cleaned up the area by the bike trail at the historic rail bridge culvert, some concrete work was completed, etc., all of which resulted in a significantly improved aesthetic difference. He was extremely proud of their effort, their craftsmanship, and the quality of their work—particularly the concrete work—has been exceptional. President Smith thanked Mr. Merriman for the report and the Public Service workers for all their extra work. Councilman Urschel was impressed that they got so much done before next weekend's events.

K. REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS: None.

L. COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilwoman Dean said she was looking forward to celebrating her favorite holiday next weekend, which is Independence Day, and celebrating their freedom.

Councilman Scrivens congratulated the owners of Five Points Café, who just received a grant from Ohio's Bacon and Egg Producers. He extended condolences to the family of Bishop Herman Honaker, who was 99½ years old. He was glad to hear that Mr. Duke survived his surgery. Mr. Merriman said he was able to visit with Mr. Duke recently, and he is doing well. As Councilwoman Dean mentioned, he was also looking forward to the Independence Day celebration, getting things back to normal, and an opportunity for the City to show its hospitality and pride. Speaking of pride, the curbs and sidewalks need a little more care with regard to knocking the weeds down. If the weeds are not permitted to grow, they would not break up the concrete. He felt a few summer student workers could use string trimmers to accomplish the task. He also suggested posting the street banner application information online because several people are looking to purchase a banner. He inquired about the outdoor recreation grant funds that are available, which was mentioned at their last Council meeting. Finally, he suggested getting a group photo of the Citizens Academy participants. Mr. Merriman said he would see what he could do.

President Smith said Councilman Urschel had an update on the recreation grant and asked him to provide an update.

Councilman Urschel said based on the research done by staff, they learned that the City of Xenia unfortunately did not qualify for the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership funds. However, there are some smaller grants that may be available based on Xenia's population. He said Xenia has four Council seats on the November ballot, including the Mayor's seat, two 4-year terms, and one 2-year term (the remaining two years of the late Dr. Edgar Wallace's term). He encouraged citizens to consider putting their names on the ballot, noting sometimes they don't have enough people on the ballot for the number of seats available. He commended Ms. Fisher for putting together a packet of information for the Board of Elections to provide to those pulling City of Xenia Mayor/Council petitions. He said one of the greatest freedoms they have is the freedom of petition, and they should not take that lightly. He noted that tonight at 7 p.m. (already underway), a meeting was called by Pastor Dan Jordan and a number of local pastors will be talking about how the faith community can engage with folks who are in poverty, addiction, or homelessness situations. He then excused himself from the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

Councilman Brannum asked Mr. Merriman if he had any idea when annual paving would begin. Mr. Merriman said there are several different contractors due to the nature of the projects, and he believed some work would begin at the end of July and the rest would be the beginning of August. Councilman Brannum noted that an individual brought to his attention a situation with an electric pole located at the edge of Central Middle School and the football field at Edison and Monroe. He said a pole was snapped off and another pole was added and attached to the snapped off pole, which looks pretty tacky. He asked if someone could reach out to DP&L about it. Mr. Merriman said he would look into it.

Vice President Dean had nothing further to share.

President Smith agreed with Councilman Urschel regarding his comments on citizens' ability to serve on City Council. It is an honor and a privilege to serve on City Council and serve the City of Xenia. He thanked those present in the audience and those watching from home. He wished everyone a Happy Independence Day, noting the City's holiday festivities are scheduled for Friday, July 2, starting at 3 p.m. in the downtown area and then moving to Shawnee Park at 7 p.m. and capping off the night with fireworks at 10 p.m. He commended Councilman Urschel for his work with the individuals staying at Bridges of Hope, who are volunteering every Saturday, and he believed Wednesdays also, to pick up trash in the City. He noted they are planning to help clean up after next Friday's holiday event. He said he provided his fellow Council members with packets regarding the Appointed Officials' annual evaluations. He asked them to return that information on or before their next meeting on July 8th.

M. EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

N. WORK SESSION: None.

O. ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Councilwoman Dean, seconded by Councilman Brannum, to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 7:12 p.m. No discussion followed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: L. Dean, Scrivens, R. Dean, Brannum, Smith

Nays: None motion carried.

Michelle D. Johnson
City Clerk

Wesley E. Smith
President, Xenia City Council