RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
Minutes of London City Council Meeting
Casto & Harris Inc. Form S-301 E1412692LD
Held March 21, 2024 20

London City Council

20 S. Walnut Street, London, Ohio 43140

March 21, 2024 at 6:30pm

Minutes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Council President Peters at 6:30pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited with a moment of Silent Reflection.

Roll Call

Present - *Councilman Eades, Councilman McDaniels, Councilman Hays, President Peters, Councilwoman Treynor, Councilman Norman, Councilman Hitt, Councilman Stahl*

Absent - none

Minutes – Approval of March 7, 2024 minutes, approved by unanimous voice vote

Public Hearing – none

Communications/Announcements – none

Audience Concerns

Vincent Morse – National Safety Council. Walk safe community. Discusses how London could be a walking community and win an award from the National Safety Council. Discussed how London is growing and this is a good thing and an investment. And could benefit our downtown area. Compared London and Milford, Ohio in Clermont County and how Milford cherishes their downtown. How downtown London has lost a lot of businesses. Suggests the speed limit to be reduced on Main St from the hospital all the way through town. From 35 mph to 25 mph.

Councilman Hays – The ORC provides speed limit requirements. We are addressing these concerns in the Public Safety Committee. You are welcome to come to the meeting. It's April 9th in the conference at 6:00pm.

Councilman Norman – Tuesday the administration had a meeting with the state. It was brought up to change the speed limit from Old Springfield to downtown. The state will conduct research.

Safety Service Director Castle – I have more information to provide. In order to

change the speed limit, the city will need to do a traffic study. Once the city pays for the study, then we have to submit it to ODOT and then to City Council. More will be discussed in the Public Safety Committee.

Councilman Eades – If you have the information for the National Safety Council for the Public Service Committee, so they may research the topic and discuss any changes. It's another meeting you can attend.

Anita Likens – I'll be reading inauguration excerpts from President Reagan.

Ciera Bierbaugh – Concerns about the pickleball courts being developed at Cowling Park and how this is a safety concern with the children in the park. Draw crowds, drinking, fighting, rowdy sports environment, doubling/tripling parking, there are already teens remaining in the park after hours and keeping children to enjoy the park. This is a concern about access to the hospital. There are other parks to move the pickleball courts. Drawing unknown adults in a child friendly park. London Chapter 634.01 noise ordinance. London Chapter 634.07 noise levels around hospital. Several articles about the noise levels around pickleball games. I don't want to create a division in our community over the pickleball court's location. I think everyone in our community deserves to enjoy their sport and a family friendly park.

Councilman Norman – How long have you lived at your current location?

Ms. Bierbaugh – Six and half years.

Councilman Norman – Was the path already there when you moved there.

Ms. Bierbuagh – No.

Councilman Norman – Question your comment about strangers coming in. When we had it at the community center, it was mostly the community coming in. I don't understand where you think strangers would be coming in.

Ms. Bierbuagh – Pickleball is very competitive and that's what have traveled around to play the sports. Just because they played in the community center, doesn't mean it should be ok in a child centered place. This is an adult game.

Councilman Norman – You talked about there would be drinking. Our parks are non-alcohol areas. So that would be a problem.

Ms. Bierbuagh – It's more of them drinking before coming to play pickleball.

Councilman Norman – I appreciate that you came and voiced your concerns. I agree that this needs to be looked at.

Rob Treynor – Concerns about the proposed pickleball courts and taking out green space for these pickleball courts and putting in 8-foot-tall fences, takes a lot of the beauty away from the park. We have plenty of space in other places in town. The noise of a ball hitting the paddle is 65 decimals at 1,000 feet. That's one ball, it's

like 8 lanes of traffic on the highway. You're putting in three courts and the balls hitting at the same time could be 85 decimals at 1,000 feet away. We are looking at 14 hours a day, 7 days a week hearing this noise. It's a constant noise. Mid-Ohio raceway has a limit of 90 decimals and they are only open one day a week and only in the summer. When I worked at the press I went to a lot of planning and zoning meetings. I remember when the midget racers were coming to town. They had a limit of noise levels and since they were moving in near a residential area, they had to put sound proofing up and only race once a week. That's what this city administration and council did back then. This city decided it was too noisy and accommodated them so they can move in. At this time, I haven't heard any accommodations being offered for the noise of these pickleball courts and living that close to it will be God offal to listen to that noise. Also, there's a noise ordinance that addresses noise levels near a hospital. This noise level will be against the laws of London. Thank you for your time.

Maureen Treynor – Concerns about pickleball. I agree with everyone's concerns with pickleball. It's seeming these pickleball courts will be disconnected from other sports venues at other locations around the city. Wasn't there a basketball court there before? Why was it moved? Was it the noise levels? These pickleball courts will be an eyesore, greeted by a wall of fence when leaving the bathrooms, and it will require the removing of trees that have been there for years or some that recently been planted there during the renovation of the park. Also, I don't know how popular this sport is and what is the average age? This is a children centered park. If these courts will be open to the public year-round, who will maintain these courts. When there were tennis courts and the nets were in poor condition, people stopped using those courts. If the courts aren't maintained, it becomes abandon and that's how you get ancient courts. If it's not open to the public or offered with limitations, why build them in a high traffic area? Lastly, there are other uses in that area. Currently, the city uses that area to show their movies. It's a prime area with electric. The city could pave and paint the area for other children focused friendly games.

Safety Service Director Castle – Average age would probably be 55 to 65 years old. This location was picked over other places because of the bathrooms and electricity. There could be port-a-potties brought in, but then that's a cost.

Ms. Treynor – The bathrooms aren't open in the winter.

Safety Service Director Castle – Pickleball isn't played in the winter.

Ms. Treynor – I thought this was a year-round sport?

Safety Service Director Castle – This park was chosen for the facilities, security cameras to monitor…

Ms. Treynor – The security cameras can't see that far.

Safety Service Director Castle – We can see that far. This location was chosen because of the bathrooms and security. Also, I don't remember any trees being

removed in the plans. Recommend Council to reach out to the park people in Grove City and what they do for their six pickleball courts. And the hospital is 700 feet away from where the pickleball courts will go.

Councilman Norman – The decimals you provided, is that from inside your house. Audience member (Ms. Bierbaugh?) said yes.

Ms. Treynor – There are kids swinging on the swings for hours and I can hear it in the farthest parts of my house.

Councilman Hitt – What were the cost different from other sites, like off of Walnut?

Councilman Norman – The biggest costs were the bathrooms; which are not available at other locations. Discussions with Council and the Safety Service Director about cost differences, drainage and maybe this needs to be discussed more.

David Mars – Two issues. First, pickleball. Councilman Norman made a comment about not wanting these courts near his house and I feel all of you should consider that when making this decision. Also, this is the only location being discussion. My suggestion is to put them at Merri Mac Park. Merri Mac doesn't get used as much as Cowling Park. It's mostly from that part of that community. I'd like to see more people to Merri Mac Park and was excited when I heard about pickleball coming to our city. Possibly Merri Mac Park. I would love to see the pickleball courts to come to Merri Mac. I understand that we don't have the resources that Cowling offers. To make decisions on what resources are offered now, is not a good decision. Merri Mac is working to get bathrooms and electricity out there. It's coming, but to make decision on what's available today and not what will be available maybe by the time the courts are ready, isn't a decision or what's best for the community. As guardians of our community, this should be considered. The second thing I'd like to discuss is about moving state routes around. I'm so appreciative to Rex and others who made this happened. This is awesome!

Councilman McDaniels – I agree with everyone's concerns with the pickleball courts. But I'd like an ice-skating rink instead of pickleball courts in Cowling Park

Councilman Eades – I've been an advocate for this for years. To put something in that dead space. That's what I thought. I've heard everyone's concerns about and you brought up things I didn't think about. I'm still an advocate for it, there are professionals playing this sport. I'm still hoping we can have pickleball in the area. The bathrooms, yesterday I drove by Berliner Park. They have 30 or so fields with port-a-potties all over the area. I think we can do port-a-potties at Merri Mac Park. There are ways to put port-a-potties and make comfortable for a lot people.

Mr. Mars – I drive Berliner Park every day and you are right, but I also think about how much use Berliner Park gets and how it's benefitted Columbus. I'd love to see something like that at Merri Mac Park.

Councilwoman Treynor – You can get trailers that actually flush.

Committee Reports

Personnel & Finance Committee –

- *Councilman Eades* – Personnel, Budget & Finance Committee met on March 11th and there are number of things coming up tonight. Revenue through Feb was $3,400,000 for the year and $2.4 mil in expenses. So, we are doing good there. There's number of items tonight. Pickleball was one of them, streets, road work, and some other items come before us tonight. I do want to address one topic that came up, but you won't see legislation yet. I had a concern and we discussed. Can the sanitation department continue to run and can we afford to have the sanitation department. It's going to become a city service, not part of BPU if that goes away. It'll be a city department and it has some challenges. Billing is one. Mid-Ohio is willing to bill for sanitation and our storm sewers. There is a cost involved. Up to this point the sanitation department has to put in $70,000 to do billing and run the office. I just want to make sure our sanitation department doesn't cost us hundreds of thousands of dollars, if we have another solution. I was assured by the Auditor that they are $15,000 short, but if you take away the $70,000 that they were paying out of their funds and we do pay Mid-Ohio a fee to bill for us. There's still about $30,000 good for the year. That's not very much, it's raiser thin, but we won't go into the red to just have a sanitation department. I just wanted to share that with everyone. Also, because April 8th is the day of the eclipse, we've moved our meeting to April 15th.
- *Councilman Hitt* – Didn't attend.
- *Councilwoman Treynor* – City has demo for HR services with the Auditor's office that will increase efficiency. This will cost $6,000 and won't need legislation due to the dollar amount. Immediate need to be compliance with Mid-Ohio. Storage building at Merri Mac that needs funding, legislation is coming up. We discussed the Comprehensive Plan. We are still in the planning stage. Preparing an RFQ. Next meeting April 15th.

Public Service Committee –

- *Councilman Hitt* – Wasn't able to attend, but the next meeting is April 9th at 5:00pm in the conference room before the Public Safety meeting.
- *Councilman Norman* – Had a meeting on March 12th. I'd like to make a recommendation about posting on Facebook. There many negative posts about our Street department. Let's be adults. They are always out there working and doing things like unclogging the storm sewers. Will give the Street department. This report can be found with the Public Service Committee meeting minutes. Read Parks & Rec report too. We also discussed parking in the downtown, it's an on-going discussion. Now resolution yet. Discussed the Ward boundaries and having a work session in the future. We are going to have a recap from the townhall meeting with some of the organizers of the festivals downtown. Trying to negotiate and get something settled there.

- *Councilman McDaniels* – n/a

Public Safety Committee –

- *Councilman Hays* – Read the minutes from the last minutes. Next meeting is April 9th at 6:00pm in the conference room.
- *Councilman McDaniels* – We had a Public Safety meeting. Chief Eades was there and Chief Nicols couldn't make it, but Srgt. Cooper filled in. Read the Police Department report. This report can be found with the Public Safety Committee minutes for that meeting.
- *Councilman Stahl* – Read the Fire/EMS department report. This report can be found with the Public Service Committee minutes.

City Official Reports

Mayor – not in attendance

Safety Service Director Castle – Comment on the Comprehensive Plan. The Law Director informed me that I don't need Council to make legislation to put that out. Comprehensive Plan bid is going out and April 9th is when we'll review submittals. We'll chose a company and get a cost, then return to Council.

Councilman Eades – You've already listed the qualifications?

Mr. Castle – We're putting the ad out. We missed the deadline for this week in the Madison Messenger. I'm going to contact engineer organizations and let them know about the ad.

Councilman Eades – I was going to bring this up later, but since you mentioned it. The Mid-Ohio had an annual convention meeting just a few weeks ago. I looked at their handouts and they mentioned additional resources for planning. They may give you a list of companies who do this.

Mr. Castle – I have already done that with them. They also have an intern program. We tried to get one and didn't work out. But I did get some contacts to reach out to.

Old Business

3rd Reading

RESOLUTION 105-24 - Sponsored by Shannon Treynor - A RESOLUTION authorizing the Auditor to increase appropriations and transfer funds. There are street repairs that are needed; and the funds cannot be transferred without sufficient authorization and appropriation from Council.

Motion to adopt RESOLUTION by Councilman Treynor, 2nd Councilman Norman. The motion carried with 6 in favor and 1 against by voice vote

RESOLUTION 106-24 - Sponsored by: Andrew Hitt - A RESOLUTION increasing appropriations. The Tax Department is in need of an online software upgrade.

Motion to adopt RESOLUTION by Councilman Eades, 2nd Councilman Hitt. The motion carried with 6 in favor and 1 against by voice vote

RESOLUTION 108-24 - Sponsored by: Greg Eades - A RESOLUTION increasing appropriations. The Police Department is in need of replacing an unmarked cruiser.

Motion to adopt RESOLUTION by Councilman Norman, 2nd Councilman Stahl. The motion carried with 6 in favor and 1 against by voice vote

2nd Reading

RESOLUTION 110-24 - Sponsored by: Josh Peters - A RESOLUTION adopting the recommendations of the tax incentive review council

Motion to suspend the 3-reading rule by Councilman Norman, 2nd Councilman Stahl. The motion carried with 6 in favor and 1 against by voice vote.

Motion to adopt RESOLUTION by Councilman Hays, 2nd Councilman Norman. The motion carried with 7 in favor and 0 against by voice vote

RESOLUTION 113-24 - Sponsored by: Josh Peters - RESOLUTION authorizing participation in the ODOT road salt contracts awarded in 2024

Leave for 3rd Reading

RESOLUTION 114-24 - Sponsored by: Brent McDaniel - A RESOLUTION assessing the costs of the removal of high grass and weeds

Motion to suspend the 3-reading rule by Councilman Norman, 2nd Councilman Hitt. The motion carried with 6 in favor and 1 against by voice vote.

Motion to adopt RESOLUTION by Councilman Hitt, 2nd Councilman Norman. The motion carried with 7 in favor and 0 against by voice vote

ORDINANCE 115-24 - Sponsored by: Rich Hays - An ORDINANCE amending section 1464 of the Codified Ordinances

Leave for 3rd Reading

ORDINANCE 116-24 - Sponsored by: Rich Hays - An ORDINANCE amending section 1244 of the Codified Ordinances

Leave for 3rd Reading

ORDINANCE 117-24 - Sponsored by: Rich Hayes - An ORDINANCE amending section 1242 of the Codified Ordinances

Leave for 3rd Reading

New Business

RESOLUTION 118-24 Sponsored by: Greg Eades A RESOLUTION increasing appropriations. This money was appropriated in 2023 that was not spent and needs reappropriated

Leave for 2nd Reading

RESOLUTION 119-24 Sponsored by: Greg Eades A RESOLUTION increasing appropriations. A building at Merri Mac Park caught on fire; and the City needs to install and secure a new building to replace the one that was destroyed by fire.

Director Landon McKenzie Park & Recreation Department – We plan to move the building closer to the entrance where the cameras are located. The cost for this building is around $15,000. However, we will attempt to use all the money from insurance to increase security at Merri Mac Park.

Motion to suspend the 3-reading rule by Councilman Hays, 2nd Councilman Hitt. The motion carried with 6 in favor and 1 against by voice vote.

Motion to adopt RESOLUTION by Councilman Hays, 2nd Councilman Stahl. The motion carried with 7 in favor and 0 against by voice vote

RESOLUTION 120-24 Sponsored by: Michael Norman A RESOLUTION increasing appropriations. The City would like to build a pickleball court at Cowling Park.

Director McKenzie– We discussed this at the Public Service Committee meeting and we looked at four locations. It came down to what location had resources like bathrooms, security cameras, and electric. The locations we didn't choose would cost more money to add resources. The only thing we'd need to move at Cowling Park is the current asphalt. Multiple discussions with Council members about choosing other location and what would be needed to change from the current location.

Motion to send back to committee and remove from the Council agenda by Councilman Treynor, 2nd Councilman McDaniels. The motion failed with 3 in favor and 4 against by voice vote.

Leave for 2nd Reading (the Resolution stays on the agenda, but will also go back to committee).

RESOLUTION 121-24 Sponsored by: Shannon Treynor A RESOLUTION increasing appropriations. To comply with our contract with Mid-Ohio.

Leave for 2nd Reading

RESOLUTION 122-24 Sponsored by: Michael Norman A RESOLUTION petitioning the state for state route changes throughout the city. For safety and traffic control the City is requesting ODOT to modify State Routes throughout the City.

Motion to suspend the 3-reading rule by Councilman Hays, 2nd Councilman Stahl. The motion carried with 6 in favor and 1 against by voice vote.

Motion to adopt RESOLUTION by Councilman Stahl, 2nd Councilman Norman. The motion carried with 7 in favor and 0 against by voice vote

RESOLUTION 123-24 Sponsored by: Michael Norman A RESOLUTION increasing appropriations. Projections indicate a shortfall in funding for the Fire/EMS Division of $600,000 for the budget year ending 2024.

Leave for 2nd Reading

Round Table

Councilman Eades – First, Mid-Ohio planning has new resources available that we can tap into. Secondly, the library and Merchant Bank have glasses available for the eclipse on April 8th. Kroger has them for sale. I appreciate everyone who came to the meeting tonight and expressed their concerns. Also, for those who came and didn't speak.

Councilman McDaniels – I also want to thank everyone who came out tonight.

Councilman Hays – Thank everyone who came out tonight. I also want to thank all city employees for all they do. A few days or weeks ago, I stopped and talked to Bill Long while he was working on the street. He was on his phone, getting measurements, and costs. Shortly after I left Mr. Long a lady walked up to me and asked "Why in the hell is a city worker on his phone?". I politely explained why. This is a reminder that not everything seems as it is. Be careful making assumptions before saying something on social platforms or to other people. If you see something, please ask. Don't come down on them if you don't know what they're doing. Our people do a good job. Thank the Fire/EMS and Police departments. Thank the Lord for watching over our city. Thank our council members tonight.

Councilman Hitt – I appreciate everyone who came to tonight's meeting and I appreciate all the input that was provided. It gives us additional things to consider when we are making decisions that impact the city.

Councilwoman Treynor – There was an event in downtown London this evening, the March Shop Hop sponsored by the 1811 Downtown District (the "Bunny Hop"). It was well attended. The Easter bunny was on site. Shop owners opened their doors

participated. It was a great event.

Councilman Stahl – I thank everyone for coming out. I find it very interesting that something you don't think would be a topic like pickleball would gain so much attention. Very interesting. About 15-20 years ago the Tree Commission was planting trees and a lady called me to report that there were people drinking out there. I went to find out and what I saw was the spot that we planned to plant the tree, there were wine bottles in the hole. It must have been from back during prohibition. They had to dig them up and people assumed they were drinking. It goes to show you perception isn't reality.

Councilman Norman – Thank everyone who came out and those tuning in. There are a couple things I'd like to bring up. First, during the townhall meeting. I said to the organizers that I sent them an email from my city email and I was incorrect. I did send an email, but it came from my personal email. I want to apologize for not getting that right. Secondly, during the last meetings about a piece of legislation that was changed. I came across as accusing the administration doing something wanky and that wasn't my intention. I want to apologize because that wasn't my intent. I hope everyone has a great weekend and there are lot of Easter events going on. I do have a meeting here on Tuesday for Ward 3 and the public. No guest speaker this month. Hoping to have the Police Department come out next month.

President Peters – I want to thank everyone who came out and those who stuck around.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:55pm

Attestation: Minutes approved, filed in Auditor's Office, and posted on City of London website for public review.

Kris Miller, Council Clerk

4/4/24
Date

Josh Peters, Council President

4/4/24
Date