

**WOOSTER CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**May 18, 2020**

Due to the Stay at Home order, this city council meeting was held via a Zoom conference call. The recorded video of the meeting is available on the City of Wooster YouTube channel.

**I. ROLL CALL & ORDERING OF AGENDA**

President Mike Buytendyk called the teleconference meeting of Wooster City Council to order at 7:30 p.m. Lynne DePaulo, Council Clerk, called roll with the following members present; Craig Sanders, Bill Bostancic, Jennifer Warden, David Silvestri, Jon Ansel, Scott Myers, and Mark Cavin. City Administration present: Mayor Bob Breneman, Finance Director Andrei Dordea, Director of Administration Joel Montgomery, Law Director John Scavelli, and Development Coordinator Jonathan Millea.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Councilman Silvestri moved to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2020 meeting, seconded by Councilman Cavin. Upon voice vote, the minutes were approved unanimously.

**III. COMMUNICATIONS FROM MAYOR/ADMINISTRATION**

Mayor Breneman congratulated Wooster City Schools levy had officially passed and was certified by the Board of Elections.

Mayor Breneman announced the decision to open Freedlander Pool for the summer with a start date of June 15<sup>th</sup> and remaining open until August 15<sup>th</sup> seven days a week from noon to 9:30 p.m. Christmas Run Pool and the Knights Field Sprayground will remain closed for the summer.

Several organizations have been working together to address the homeless issue. The Salvation Army, One-Eighty and the Housing Coalition along with the city's administration, have determined that a daytime facility may be a viable option. The Salvation Army will have a daytime area at their building where the homeless can gather, do laundry, and shower. The group is working on funding ideas and working with the county, churches and other organizations to develop the program and funding.

Wayne County and the CAW/M are trying to grow the transportation program county-wide and are looking into possible partnering with SARTA (Stark Area Regional Transit Authority).

The Downtown Streetscape project is progressing; however, the company supplying the bricks is located in Michigan where manufacturing has not opened up yet. The brick shipment has been delayed. Simonson Construction continues to work on other aspects of the project, but it is unknown when the bricks will be delivered.

**IV. PETITIONS/COMMUNICATIONS FROM PUBLIC - NONE**

**V. COMMITTEE REPORTS; PUBLIC HEARINGS - NONE**

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE**

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

1. First Reading – ORDINANCE No. 2020-17

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH TIMOTHY ENTERPRISES LLC AND CALIBER HOLDINGS CORPORATION FOR COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA TAX INCENTIVES, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY (Ansel)

Councilman Ansel began by describing the CRA as a capital investment along SR585. It is a request for a 10-year 50% CRA to build a new 12,150 SF auto body repair center. He went over the figures associated with the

tax abatement and job creation. He asked Mr. Millea for his input on the proposal and why this is a unique project.

Mr. Millea said this is a large magnitude project. Typically the city's CRA have been used to create housing stock and job creation. Wooster is currently third in the state in the number of CRAs. With consumer-driven business, which this project will be, that is a realm the city has abated before, but it always included a building renovation. When talking about new construction the abatements have focused on primary focused employment. This project is unique because it is consumer-driven, but is brand new construction. This is a concern to city staff, along with how late the city was brought into the process; the employer and the landlord are not affiliated and is this appropriate for a CRA.

Mr. Ansel said now council understands why this is a unique request/project. We recognize the significant investment of this initiative. It is allowed and permissible.

Councilman Ansel motioned to suspend the rules, seconded by Councilman Sanders. Upon roll call motion to suspend the rules failed 3-4. (Sanders – yes; Bostancic-no; Cavin -no; Warden – no; Silvestri – yes; Ansel – yes; Myers - no)

Mr. Bostancic likes the project, but is it in the spirit of the CRA? He is not sure about building in a greenfield area. Mr. Ansel stated that others in the area had utilized the EZ at 100%; he likes the CRA at 50%.

Mr. Millea stated an EZ is dedicated to primary employment; most of the revenue comes from outside of the city. A CRA is the only program to allow consumer-driven industry – retail tax abatement. The project fits that requirement.

Ms. Warden said that Nagy's is a very important business to the community. She does not want to set a precedent by authorizing this CRA. Ms. Warden asked Mr. Nagy if the expansion/building hinged on receiving the abatement. Mr. Nagy said no.

Mr. Myers also said he appreciated Nagy's. His concern is this creates a competitive disadvantage to other businesses in the body shop industry.

Mr. Silvestri asked Mr. Ansel for clarification on the abatement numbers. Looking at the numbers, this is an empty field currently; he thinks it's a repurpose of the property and even with the abatement we'll receive more tax dollars than we are now.

Mr. Bostancic said that even though the school levy passed, he does not want to set a trend or precedent either and the schools need the tax revenue. He also said that although the project does meet the requirements of the CRA, it is councils' responsibility to decide and approval is discretionary; he feels this is not in the spirit of the CRA and council is obligated to look at it more closely. Mr. Myers said he agrees that council needs to discuss this further.

Mr. Ansel requested the matter be considered to have its first reading.

## **VIII. MISCELLANEOUS**

Many councilmembers wished everyone a safe Memorial Day and to remember our veterans.

Several members commented on the opening of Freedlander pool and on the homeless daytime facility. Councilman Myers suggested a downtown handwashing station.

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Councilman Ansel moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Silvestri. By voice vote, the motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

  
Michael G. Buytendyk  
President of Council

  
Lynne DePaulo  
Clerk of Council

