



City Council Meeting Minutes

Friday, February 26, 2021

9:00 AM

1) Bexley City Council Retreat Workshop

ROLLCALL: President Feibel, Matt Klingler, Troy Markham, Richard Sharp, Jen Robinson, Jessica Saad and Monique Lampke.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mayor Kessler and Bill Harvey.

ABSENT: City Attorney, Marc Fishel

A) The Mayor, City Council, City Auditor and City Attorney will assemble for a planning session to discuss vision, goals and direction for the future of the City of Bexley. There are no planned deliberations and no decisions will be made regarding any specific subject. General discussions regarding goals and direction will occur. This is a workshop and there may not be an opportunity for public comments.

2) 9:00 - 9:45 am - 2021 Strategic Goals for the City including diversity, equity and inclusion, surveys and website updates.

Ms. Lampke said this workshop is for general discussion for the Council Members but may not have an opportunity for public comments.

Mr. Sharp said Council will not be making any decisions during this retreat.

CIC Historical update will be moved to 9:45 a.m. because Mr. Nate Green will be joining us. Ms. Lampke said it has been such a pleasure and honor to serve with all of you during such a difficult year.

Mayor Kessler highlighted some of the Strategic Goals for the City. He discussed the updating of the Strategic Plan to include the amendments that City Council approved. He said the original plan was created in 2017 and he is firmly committed to refresh this plan. Further discussion regarding goals that are ongoing, aspirational and completed.

A) Overview of 2021 Strategic Plan concept and timeline (additional resources link: [website plans folder](#))

3) 9:45 am - CIC

Mr. Nate Green and Mayor Kessler explained the history of the CIC. Mayor Kessler said the CIC was initially recommended in an earlier plan and the Land Use Strategy. The goal was to promote economic development and we pursued that in 2012. We were in the process of redeveloping our City Hall building and bringing in a grocery store. Mayor Kessler explained the CIC can negotiate with property owners and partners that the City is prohibited to pursue. This is approved by the State to provide different tools. He said they agreed on a plan for 2011 for the Land Use Strategy. Further discussion regarding the membership being 40% of Council Member Chairs, Auditor, Mayor and City Attorney along with the other members.

Mr. Green continued the discussion of the powers and duties of the CIC. He was one of the first members in 2012 and currently serves as the Chair. The CIC owns the Bexley Square and we have a property manager. We have members from different backgrounds who are very intelligent and have a lot of experience. Todd Friedman has been a valuable member as far as real estate transactions. Bexley Square allows us to do other things within the city. We are a non-profit but we have to use the funds for the functions and duties laid out in the plan. Mr. Green said the CIC worked on the Ferndale/Mayfield area in 2017. We own a few apartment units in that area to be able to clean up this property due to the environmental contamination. Those two properties will be demolished.

One of the other corridors we are focusing on is Cassady Avenue where we purchased a building. We are hoping to get some more commercial activity in that area. This building has a different property manager than Bexley Square does. Discussion continued regarding the impact of CIC projects.

Discussion regarding remediation of Mayfield/Ferndale area. Mayor Kessler discussed the buildings located on concrete and that had two feet of new top soil added.

4) 10:00 - 10:45 am - Safety and Health Discussion including:

A) Livingston Avenue

Mayor Kessler said the City of Columbus would like to extend any traffic calming measures to James Road. We had put a bid out for this project for the City of Bexley previously prior to the City of Columbus speaking out about the desire to continue these improvements. Mayor Kessler said it did open the lid up on the traffic study which Columbus has agreed to pick up the additional cost. Mayor Kessler explained the timeline in detail. He said Elena Andrews will be serving on our side of the committee. She is both a trained architect and a landscape architect that helps us with organizational side of the Tree and Public Gardens Committee. She has a very solid planning background. She was the Chair of the Commonwealth Jeffrey Mansion Plan. The Steering Committee she will be serving on along with Andy Bashore and himself. Further discussion on the duties of the Steering Committee.

There will be multiple public meetings held as part of this timeline. They will create a Draft Plan and will eventually be approved by various governmental entities.

B) Regional Crime

City of Columbus has provided additional presence on Livingston but it is an infrastructure issue. There is an increase in speeding since the pandemic. Columbus is taking it seriously and the Columbus Council members are very aware of the issues and have become a "co-leader" now. We have had multiple meetings with the Columbus Police but we all believe that infrastructure changes are required. There has been some talk about a volunteer control but some of the stories over the years and they are not the best attempt to lower crime. Discussion regarding cross-walk volunteers for Livingston during peak hours of the day for pedestrians but Mayor Kessler said the research shows that these types of accidents are happening at different times. Discussion continued regarding the problems with juveniles and the crime rate. Mayor Kessler said it is an issue beyond the judicial system.

C) Virtual vs. In Person Meetings

Discussion was held regarding virtual vs. in person meetings held by City Council. Ms. Saad wanted to revisit when we would be able to get back together in person for Council meetings. Mr. Sharp suggested offering Zoom to continue even when we meet in person because it is convenient for residents. Discussion continued regarding the risks of gathering in a room together, the length of potential exposure (even with masks) over 15 minutes and suggested we wait until we are all vaccinated at a minimum. She also suggested discussing this topic with the COVID-19 Task Force as well.

Mayor Kessler said the task force will strongly urge us to wait until the general population has had a vaccine. It is strictly up to Council to make this decision but he will not be present until he is officially vaccinated. Mayor Kessler said he thinks communication over Zoom without a mask is more efficient than wearing a mask in person. Ms. Lampke agreed with Mayor Kessler and said she is still limiting her activities. She does miss the in person component as well, but she has noticed that we have more public participation during Zoom meetings.

5) 10:30 - 10:4 am - Break

6) 11:30 - 11:45 am - Training for Boards, Commissions and Committees

Mayor Kessler said there will be an Ordinance to eliminate the alternatives and change to the majority of quorum vs. the total of members. The Board members are a different culture than City Council members. They are volunteers and are not always able to attend meetings. Ms. Lampke said she does appreciate the Board members and volunteering. She asked if it was possible to consider adding the email address of city staff members for each committee or board, ex. Rec. Board? Mayor Kessler said yes, it is a legal issue as well. It is not prudent to provide board members contacts outside of a hearing for residents. Ms. Lampke suggested adding the elected officials group email address to the web site. Mayor Kessler suggested a "form" type of correspondence on the web site to help direct communication.

Discussion continued regarding training for board members. Ms. Robinson would like to add the implicit bias training for members once a year or even with each term.

7) 11:45 am - 12:00 pm - Wrap Ups

Ms. Lampke thanked everyone for their input and open mindedness to discuss issues. Mr. Sharp suggested surveys for people who visit the City, perhaps included in the Juneteenth event.

Mayor Kessler wanted to discuss communication a little further. He said it has been a challenge for him regarding the developments, but again from whose perspective? It would not be

appropriate to have it from the city's view point. He is very open to discuss any suggestions. Ms. Robinson said since COVID, people are taking to social media and it is a reminder of the challenge. Mayor Kessler said the Buzz has become so unmanageable because he can't effectively communicate through that forum. There is a little bit a void there, but we have our official channels of communication and he does try to emphasize and educate residents of those sources.

Ms. Lampke thanked everyone for their time and services.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Saad and seconded by Ms. Robinson. Voice Vote - ADJOURNED
at 11:48 p.m.