



# SHAKER HEIGHTS

**SAFETY AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MINUTES  
FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 2020  
8:00 AM  
VIA ZOOM MEETING**

Members Present: Robert Zimmerman, Council Chairperson  
Sean Malone, Council Member  
Carmella Williams, Council Member  
Earl Williams, Council Member  
Jonathan Hren, Citizen Member  
James Sammon, Citizen Member  
Patricia Speese, Director Public Works  
Patrick Sweeney, Chief of Fire  
Jeffrey DeMuth, Chief of Police

Others Present: Mayor David E. Weiss  
Jeri Chaikin, Chief Administrative Officer  
Joyce Braverman, Director of Planning  
Kelly Baker, Recording Assistant  
Barbara Bradley, League of Women Voters  
Frank Miozzi, Director of Information Technology

The meeting was called to order by Council Chair Robert Zimmerman at 8:18 am.

## **APPROVAL OF MARCH 6, 2020 MEETING MINUTES**

Council Chair Zimmerman asked if there were any questions, changes or additions to the March 6, 2020, Safety and Public Works Committee minutes. There being only a few spelling errors, a motion was made by Council Member Carmella Williams, it was seconded and the minutes were approved.

## **RECOMMENDATION TO AWARD DESIGN CONTRACT FOR LYNNFIELD/CHAGRIN INTERSECTION**

### **Joyce Braverman, Director of Planning**

Director Braverman explained how the city has received grants in the amount of \$200,000 dollars to make improvements to the Lynnfield/Chagrin intersection. She advised that in 2004 the city did a city traffic signal upgrade and at that time the signal was removed. The resident have been asking for a better, safer way to cross this intersection, so the city put out a request for proposal. There was only one response received after sending it out to seven or eight consulting firms. The request asked for the design of enhancements at this intersection to improve the means of crossing for pedestrians and bicycles. The study will look at what is the best way to improve pedestrian access, which may include a traffic signal.

Director Braverman stated the grant funding has to be closed out by March of 2021, which means in our climate, construction needs to be completed by December 2020. The budget is appropriated. They have \$230,000 toward this already, have accepted the grants totaling \$200,000 and have \$30,000 in the capital budget for design and engineering. She also stated the Planning Department will put in a little over \$4,000 from the departments operating budget.

The team that Director Braverman said was chosen was GPD, which is the city's engineering firm. The sub-contractor that GPD has chosen to work with is akPlans which is the city's former principal planner Ann Klavora. The law director stated there did not appear to be any ethics issues with using akPlans but he would look further into the matter and if he found there to be an ethical matter, they would just go with GPD and not use akPlans.

Council Chair Zimmerman asked when this item would appear before council and Director Braverman indicated they are proposing June 8<sup>th</sup>, however if there needs to be more time they will delay until next council meeting, but that would definitely delay the process. Director Braverman stated that the selection committee that consisted of Public Works, Police and Planning all recommend entering into the contract with GPD and that there are some "if authorized" services totaling about \$9,000 and would like to contract for those and only use them if needed.

Council Chair Zimmerman asked if there were any questions and Council Member Malone asked what Ms. Klavora's role would be in this process. Director Braverman stated Ms. Klavora's role would be to run and promote two public input exercises which will be trickier in the current health crisis so they would mostly be done remotely. Council Member Malone then asked if it was in the memo what her compensation would be and why does Director Braverman think there was only one proposal. Director Braverman stated that the compensation was not listed in the memo but was in GPD's proposal and it was about \$5,000.00. She continued to state that she spoke with other firms that did not submit proposals and they generally said that the fee was too small. Citizen Member Hren stated that his firm didn't submit a proposal because it does take a fair amount of expense to put a proposal together and Director Braverman stated they understood the expense so they put in their RFP that they only had to submit a letter instead of a full proposal.

Mayor Weiss stated that this intersection has been discussed on and off for a number of years, since the traffic signal was removed. He stated that the good news was that Director Braverman was able to find the funds for this, but the bad news is the tight time frame in which they have to get this done.

Council Chair Zimmerman asked for a motion and Citizen Member Sammon made the motion and it was seconded and the motion carried.

### **SHAKER/WARRENSVILLE INTERSECTION CONTRACT MODIFICATION – EUTHENICS INC. FOR DESIGN SERVICES**

#### **Joyce Braverman, Director of Planning**

Director Braverman stated that Euthenics, Inc. has been designing the Shaker Warrensville intersection improvements. Through the design and cost estimates they became aware that they didn't have the budget to complete the project. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) was asking for some upgrades and the residents were looking for landscape improvements. She explained that they applied and received a grant from Ohio Safety funds for \$374,000 to put toward this project. With the additional funds, Euthenics was asked to design additional work such as the

landscaping and video detection cameras for example. Euthenics asked for a fee increase of about \$17,000, however they only had \$5,870 in the current budget so they agreed to that fee increase. Director Braverman is asking to modify the contract in the amount of \$5,870 and they will move forward with this to council on June 8<sup>th</sup>.

Council Chair Zimmerman asked the committee for any questions or comments on this request. There being none, he asked for a motion. A motion to approve was made by Council Member Carmella Williams and it was seconded and the motion carried.

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATE**

#### **Patrick Sweeney, Fire Chief**

Chief Sweeney started by discussing the impact of operations due to the significant world changing events. In late February is when the concern from the health department and the first patients in Ohio were identified so they started thinking about how this pandemic would impact our City operations. The fire department oversees emergency management and is responsible to make sure the city has a plan to keep things moving. The meetings started with Fire, Police, Communications and Public Works but then incorporated all departments and an organizational chart was developed to have a unified plan. They assigned each person to a task, not just for your department but to shift into managing tasks not in their usual responsibilities.

Chief Sweeney announced who was on the team and what roles they played. Jeri Chaikin, CAO as the Liaison between all departments and outside agencies; Julie Voyzey – Director of Communications and Marketing became the Public Information Officer; Police Chief DeMuth oversaw operations, not only in the police department but in Public Works, Fire and with Dispatch; Patricia Speese, Director of Public Works filled the role as the Logistics Officer and managing public buildings and the supplies that we would need so all employees would have PPE and the buildings would be sanitized regularly as well as oversaw the opening of the fire station at City Hall; Joyce Braverman, Director of Planning was overseeing employees and businesses; John Potts, Director of Finance oversaw the finance sector making sure all the financial needs of the city and all departments continued to operate smoothly as well as maintaining payroll processes; William Gruber, Director of Law oversaw the administrative component with operations in the city with Human Resources, Information Technology and Court Departments. And most of this work had to be done remotely.

It was further explained that the city needed to interact with agencies outside of just the City Services, such as schools, libraries and courts. They were included in the Organizational Chart. Chief Sweeney stated how he worked with the county Fire Chiefs to engage with the Cuyahoga County Emergency Operations Center. The concern was collectively across the whole county as well as in the City of Shaker Heights that they would be overwhelmed with the number of potential COVID-19 patients. Chief Sweeney worked with the cities hospital partners to develop protocols for the paramedics and firefighters on how to provide patient care and transport services to suspected or confirmed COVID-19 positive residents. They had the PPE on hand in case they had to use it before this pandemic, but had to shift gears to use it for almost every call they went on. He continued to state that there is an inventory of all PPE for all the county Fire departments and so they collectively pulled equipment and disbursed it so every department had what they needed.

Chief Sweeney talked about the internal operations in the city and how they met every day remotely at the beginning and as time went on they got into a rhythm and switched to three days a week then

to weekly, and now are meeting every other week. He indicated that this means things are in place and feel they no longer need these meetings as frequently as they were.

Chief Sweeney discussed a request they received on top of all that was going on to be on standby for any civil unrest situations in the City of Cleveland. Fortunately, the Cleveland Fire Department was able to keep up with what fires that had and our services were not needed to assist.

### **POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATE**

#### **Jeff DeMuth, Police Chief**

Chief DeMuth talked about one of the more important events in this whole pandemic was rapidly closing city buildings three days after we put our team together and by March 16<sup>th</sup>, most city employees were working remotely from home. One of the most difficult things for the police department when they have crisis or critical incidents they need to reach out and touch people and talk to them and they can't do that now. The department had two scares the first week with two officers who had all the symptoms of COVID but tested negative which caused some stress among other officers. In the department the shift supervisors would take temperatures when the officers would arrive one at a time. The officers would enter, get their gear and go to their vehicle before the next one would enter, all the while the officers who were getting off shift were sanitizing the vehicles for the next shift. At that point he stated they had very little supplies to sanitize anything.

Chief DeMuth went on to say that as a police department they were extremely low on PPE and inadequate to respond to things that they needed to respond to, which was a concern. Calls for service that could be handled by phone were handled by phone, including not serious police reports.

Chief DeMuth explained that he had a personal mission to have the Cuyahoga County Board of Health to release the addresses of positive COVID cases. They said it was confidential information and he stated that they deal with confidential information on a daily basis. He expressed that the County withholding that information was not doing anything to prohibit the spread of the virus. He stated it was fortunate that Dr. Amy Acton released her order mandating the release of that information to police and fire departments to be prepared.

Chief DeMuth also stated that authorized an emergency on call scheduling policy, which reduced manpower requirements and allowed excess sworn officers to be on call and respond from their homes if they were needed. In April the Battelle Corporation, thankfully, came up with a procedure to sanitize N95 masks. The department turned our masks over the Ohio State Highway Patrol and they would transport them to get them cleaned and return them back to the department.

At the onset of the pandemic, Chief DeMuth stated that they had suspended all specialized training for the EDGE Specialized Units but because it is so necessary, they have currently resumed training.

Chief DeMuth said they worked closely with Law to determine what state mandates applied and how they applied to the Police Department. They decided to change the way they write traffic tickets, they now issue citations without transferring materials back and forth such as licenses.

Chief DeMuth added that Patti and the Public Works Department were instrumental in helping the police department keep the building sanitized because they still needed to have the public come in the building.

## **PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT UPDATE**

### **Patricia Speese, Director of Public Works**

Director Speese stated that it was incredible to work with such a professional group of individuals, from the Mayor, City Council to the Chiefs, CAO and all other staff. The Public Works Department has a good relationship with a company that provides PPE because they need it routinely for the sewer department, refuse department and numerous other activities in our department. So we were able to get a good supply early on. That, she said came to a standstill the later part of April but is starting to improve in the past week or two.

As far as the Public works staff, Director Speese stated that of the ninety employees, eight worked remotely and the rest had to be on site. Custodians were brought in during the day instead of second shift in order to have them concentrate on disinfecting every high touch area throughout the buildings until the buildings were shut down. Public Works staggered punch out time for employees to avoid more than 6-8 employees at one time congregating, started taking temperatures, changed work groups, and social distanced vehicles so that only one person was in a vehicle at a time. The one unique thing for the department was the refuse department. The refuse increased by 40% during the month of March and April. Director Speese stated that during that time she had to increase the manpower dedicated to refuse collection. She added that her focus was on not disrupting the residents and trying to keep services as normal as possible. To add to the difficulties at the end of March the city experienced a 100 year storm event that wreaked havoc and they had to take care of some sewer issues during that time.

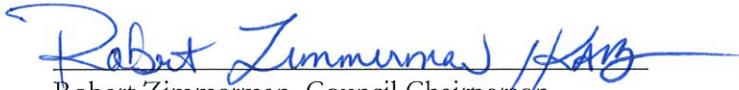
Director Speese talked about the logistics stating how she worked with numerous departments and had secured a very good supply of disinfectants and sanitizing solution. She spoke about the challenges with setting up Fire Station III in such a short time frame. Also, the Public Works Department was able to get a lot of its road projects underway since the traffic was so light. Director Speese stated that they were able to secure disposable masks for anyone entering the buildings once they are open. Chief Sweeney received from the State of Ohio some washable masks. Overall, she stated that they have been able to keep everything running smooth and efficient.

Council Chair Zimmerman asked for any questions to the Chiefs and Director about the presentations. Council Member Earl Williams asked CAO Chaikin and Director Speese how increase spending for PPE is going to impact their budgets. He wanted to know if there was a need to prepare to shift money to provide long term PPE equipment and what kind of other costs do they anticipate being needed. CAO Chaikin stated that they are keeping track of all the costs they are accruing for the COVID-19 response and hopefully when this gets near its end she stated they will be looking at lessons learned and what is needed to be better prepared for the next emergency response no matter what kind of response it is. She further stated that if they need anything else they would need to come back to council on that, however, she said they are concerned about loss of revenue and presented to council a plan to reduce the budget by more than \$5,000,000 this year. She indicated that they are keeping track of everything they are spending and what they would need going forward.

CAO Chaikin asked Chief Sweeney to speak about a grant he obtained on behalf of other fire departments. Chief Sweeney explained that FEMA came out with grant opportunities for COVID-19 and the city made application for this grant that represented 33 communities in Cuyahoga County to take advantage of funding for PPE. He stated he received a verbal notification that it would be awarded this week, which he noted was quite expedient. The total amount for the grant was about

\$200,000 for PPE for all the municipalities. Chief Sweeney is also looking at a public assistance grant.

Council Chair Zimmerman thanked everyone for participating.  
Meeting adjourned at 9:13 am.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert Zimmerman" followed by a stylized flourish.

Robert Zimmerman, Council Chairperson  
Safety & Public Works Committee