

**REGULAR CAUCUS MEETING  
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BROOK PARK, OHIO  
HELD ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2020**

The meeting was called to order by Council President Vecchio at 7:00 p.m., the clerk called the roll and the following Members of Council answered:

**SCOTT, SCHMUCK, ORCUTT, TROYER, MENCINI, POINDEXTER, SALVATORE**

Also in attendance were Mayor Gammella, Law Director Horvath, Finance Director Cingle, Recreation Department staff Danny Colonna, Recreation Director Elliott and Economic Development Commissioner Adams.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS:**

1. Regular Caucus meeting held on October 13, 2020.

Mrs. Schmuck stated there is a typo on page 19 under Planning commission motion change Mr. to Mrs. Schmuck.

**Motion** by Mr. Poindexter, supported by Mrs. Schmuck, to approve as printed.

**ROLL CALL: AYES:** Poindexter, Schmuck, Scott, Orcutt, Troyer, Mencini, Salvatore

**NAYS:** None. The motion carried with the correction.

Mr. Troyer commented these minutes are a synopsis of discussions people can listen to the recording of the meeting.

**DISCUSSION:**

1. TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE UPDATE. **In attendance:**  
**Ms. Holly Klingler**

Ms. Klingler thanked Council and the Mayor for this opportunity and stated she is one member of the Technology and Innovation committee who have been researching and evaluating of electric vehicles for possible use as city vehicles. In the past, electric vehicles were not a viable option because they were expensive upfront and return on investment not being good due to very low range. In the last few years' electric vehicles have advanced to the point where their not only a viable and competitive option but are potentially cost-effective and, in the long run, save taxpayers' dollars. Rather than sacrifice some of the performance and range there could be additional benefits. The committee did a 11-page document and want to highlight some things that were found starting with a police department in Bargersville, Indiana are competitive to Brook Park and reaching out to the police chief the department opted to change some of their police fleet to electric vehicles using the Tesla Model-3's. The intention was between five (5) or six (6) years the department wanted to save taxpayers' dollars using electric vehicles. The Tesla's were retrofitting to be used as police vehicle saving taxpayers' dollars within two (2) years with the overall savings after six years per vehicle was over \$20,000.00, with the breakdown being gas, oil, insurance. The Bargersville police department

**Discussion: cont.**

used Dodge Chargers which is comparable to Brook Park's Ford vehicles being used now. The price was \$25,000.00 and the cost upfront with electric vehicles are more monies but much cheaper than they used to be. The electric vehicle currently is \$38,900.00 and what's interesting is fuel cost and maintenance. The City of Bargersville allotted \$7,000.00 approximately for gas and only used \$1,728.00 in electricity saving between one-half or one-third savings on gas versus electricity. The more the vehicle is used the more savings so when vehicles are running idle more money is being saved since the vehicle is not using gas. The only upfront profit not seen with a gas-powered vehicle is the electric charger that ranges between \$500.00 to \$2000.00, Bargersville had for \$1,200.00. The most important part is that one-year maintenance is about \$2,000.00 for the gas vehicle and zero (\$0) for the electric vehicle, that goes as the wear and tear happens less pieces and parts makes for a big savings. Bargersville is using low-end vehicles and the committee would opt for the same for Brook Park with the mileage range is 263 miles and would only want a 90% charge to keep the battery optimal. In the winter it lowers in range a little but ultimately even if looking at 175 to 200 it's still totally viable. The Ford vehicles the city uses have a zero (0) to 60 of about 8.8 seconds and with this would be 5.3 seconds actually having much better range and performance. Especially police vehicles the city would want them quick so not sacrificing range or performance in fact it increases. The biggest thing is the next two, in my opinion, this is the top safety pick of 2020 and recently in the news there was an unfortunate situation in Columbus where a driver was driving 70 mph and was hit by a pickup truck driving 70 mph in the opposite direction and both drivers walked away with minor injuries; this is one of many examples. This is extremely safe and a non-validated article states this having the highest rating of any car by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and what the city wants for city employees. What really makes this stand out with the Tesla 3 is there is a Ford Mach E coming out in 2021 and more expensive and not a lot of information on the vehicle. With the model 3 safety and surveillance is key and especially with replaced vehicles there are cameras on the front, back and side of all vehicles that constantly runs and records everything from all angles whether in the vehicle or not. If there is an incident with the there is opportunity to have recorded and the owners will be notified of somebody attempting to damage the vehicle. Another incentive from a cost-effective is that the Tesla model 3 tops the list of cars that holds their value. The model 3 retains 90% of its value after three years which is unheard of for any vehicle. Gas powered Ford sedans only retains about 61% of its value after three years. When speaking with Bargersville representatives he informed me that the cost-savings depending on gas was anywhere between 18 to 22 months. Well within two years and almost \$22,000.00 per vehicle in savings and retains value whether being sold or used for other options. The benefit to the environment is fantastic and any electric vehicle being produced there is a 50% reduction in emissions and even lower when the vehicle is produced and being used. The vehicle gets over the air and features being like a new car every few months.

**Discussion: cont.**

Tesla is actually known for having auto-pilot and self-driving using cameras and sensors to notice pedestrians, animals, trash cans in the road and provide warnings, extremely safe. I personally own a Tesla model 3 for two years and the only thing I had to do with the vehicle is rotate the tires and include wiper fluid. Used to drive a gas-powered vehicle and had a gas cost of \$120.00 and my electricity is about \$30.00 to \$35.00. My opinion not only the taxpayers' savings of it paying for itself within 18 months which is in and of itself phenomenal of a \$21,000.00 savings. Bargersville is smaller than Brook Park so our city would actually get more use and more savings. My opinion is the tremendous amount of safety and surveillance that goes with this to keep employees and city workers safe, is a phenomenal deal.

**Questions:**

Mr. Salvatore thanked Ms. Klingler for an excellent presentation. One question was answered with the vehicles going 140 mph.

Ms. Klingler responded the base model can go 140 mph in 5.3 seconds.

Mr. Salvatore asked is there anything special for police officers in the necessary upgrades?

Ms. Klingler responded Bargersville says they were completely fine and the base model met their needs. However, can go up to the Performance model 3 that gives 165 mph in 3.1 seconds.

Mr. Salvatore continued is there a backup unit inside the vehicle for the power to continue in instances of hot pursuit or in the middle of a crime scene?

Ms. Klingler responded the vehicle has dual motors so if anything occurs whether mechanical or software supported the vehicle can run on a single motor, whether rear or front.

Mr. Salvatore stated in your report it was mentioned that the gas engine has about a \$2,000.00 expenditure per year, where the electric vehicle had \$0. Is that for brand new gas and electric vehicles.

Ms. Klingler concurred, Bargersville compared apples to apples and eventually the Tesla Model 3, Dodge Charger or Ford Mach 3 would need additional maintenance but because of less pieces and parts to the electric vehicles, it is much less overall.

Mr. Poindexter thanked Ms. Klingler for giving the presentation and wanted to bring this forward so Council has this information. It's not like changing the entire fleet today and turnover to the new generation of vehicles. It is something to consider

**Discussion: Questions; cont.**

during budget talks and the city looks into replacing vehicles and another option when the city starts the gradual turnover. Maybe not in police performance vehicles but maybe on auxiliary, building or other city vehicles i.e. fire department chase vehicle. It doesn't have to be for a hot pursuit vehicle and maybe the technology is all the way there for Council to feel comfortable. The technology committee wanted to provide Council with the information discovered because it is promising especially as the city's budget tightens year after year; the city must come up with ways to stretch the dollar.

Ms. Klingler commented as Mr. Poindexter mentioned from a budgetary perspective the average current vehicle, gas or electric, continues to rise between 36 and 38. The electric vehicle is 38 and is coming down in cost but gains additional benefits i.e. cost-effectiveness of electricity over gas. It is impressive that the City of Bargersville was able to save \$21,000.00 and the more used the more cost-savings the city has. The City of Bargersville didn't expect the vehicles to be comparable but wanted maybe over four or five years to have cost-savings and thoroughly impressed with the fact the savings happened within two years.

Mr. Poindexter commented that the Mayor informed the technology committee that the city is looking into grants for two electric chargers for electric vehicles.

Mr. Orcutt stated to Ms. Klingler great informative presentation when it comes to saving the city money and increasing efficiency is a win situation. How many idle hours or miles would the vehicle get before needing to be recharged?

Ms. Klingler responded the range would be 260 and ideally don't want to charge to 100% to assist the battery. What I do is go home and park the car and plug it in and haven't been to a gas station since July, 2018 and it's phenomenal. After the 240+ it would depend on how long it takes to run down.

Mr. Orcutt asked how long would it take, if at 50%, to charge to 90%?

Ms. Klingler responded depends on what the charger is and how fast; usually 32 to 40 mph for recharge. If needed can go to supercharger to 100 mph.

Mr. Orcutt asked when mentioning the superchargers is that a higher end of the example given of \$500.00 to \$2,000.00?

Ms. Klingler responded the supercharger is being developed by commercial and industrial. If the city has a standard 240 laundry plug that is already set up for car chargers for electricity. The vehicles can be charged on a standard 110 but only get three to five mph; not necessarily a viable option. 240 line can charge 32 to 48 mph.

**Discussion: Questions; cont.**

Mr. Scott thanked Ms. Klingler for the presentation. In the City of Bargsville did city mechanics have to be retooled and retrained to work on vehicles or are the cars sent out for servicing?

Ms. Klingler responded Bargsville haven't reached that point yet due to not needing service. People can be sent to a place on Bagley Road for the Tesla model S and X which currently holds the market. There are not a lot of fully electric vehicles on the market just yet but are coming soon. There are certified Tesla service locations all over Ohio and there seems to be an opportunity for mechanics and dealerships to ultimately gain knowledge of fixing and maintaining the vehicles.

Mr. Mencini stated great informative presentation, the example used was a community in Indiana that could have a population of 2,000 and the circumference of the recreation center complex. The City of Brook Park has 80% of homes in one certain block and you did mention safety a lot which was good to hear, for any employees there is no cost for safety and agree with Mr. Poindexter to test on building department or supervisor vehicles. My question is there a community in this area that may be looking at to do the same thing?

Mrs. Klingler responded I wanted to compare Bargsville with Brook Park. Bargsville have about 8,500 people with the city being about five miles and looking at Brook Park we are about 7.5 miles with 18,000 people. As far as safety wise that is one of the reasons for me for having the Tesla is the insurance policy. The reason why is the Tesla being so much faster of a vehicle my insurance and as the City of Bargsville demonstrated their insurance is lower; reason being the car is an extremely safe vehicle. The vehicle has features in it already that allow for a certain level of safety that can't be found in a car otherwise. To my knowledge there is no city in the surrounding area that is doing this, that's why this would be phenomenal and commendable to Council, Brook Park and Mayor to consider. Once looked at there are a lot of benefits to this once the situation is evaluated.

Mr. Troyer thanked Ms. Klingler for coming and presenting to Council. How long does the battery usually last as far as needing replacement and what is the cost?

Ms. Klingler responded in the past those batteries degraded very quickly. There was a Tesla vehicle used as a taxicab and charged to 100% constantly, even though that is not advisable, reached one million miles.

Mr. Troyer asked what was the timeframe?

Ms. Klingler responded think it was very quickly because the Tesla model S has only been out since 2013.

**Discussion: Questions: cont.**

Mr. Troyer continued the Bargersville police department hasn't had to change any batteries, correct?

Ms. Klingler concurred and stated just made the news that the city was saving money so much faster than realized; have had for about 2 ½ years.

Mr. Troyer commented about mentioning these police vehicles would be great because of the instant speeds for chases and running traffic control and told technology wasn't there yet and that was only a few months ago. My concern is the city having an engine plant as a revenue generator located in the city and hoping that the city can use their products soon. There may be an issue where the city would have to look at the miles traveled with the units in a day. In eight hours I can travel 250 miles easily so there might be a need to have more chargers. Did that subject come up at all and it depends on the city's patrol? Also, how are the vehicles heated in the winter and how much drain that might be. There is a lot of things to look at to make this work and do know for pursuits it is great. There are two motors and a battery and electric motors last a long time.

Ms. Klingler stated you are actually correct its instant torque and I'm a big proponent and always say if anybody wants to try what it's like, happy to do it, because it is instant torque and very quiet. Bargersville used the base model and there is a more expensive model and can gain more range with it. Model 3 came out 2 ½ years ago and since then there has been incremental but significant additions to the point it's over 300 miles.

Mr. Troyer asked if Bargersville police department have any issues with running out of electricity before the shift ended?

Ms. Klingler responded no, there was no issue comparable to the Dodge Chargers.

Mrs. Schmuck thanked Ms. Klingler for coming and giving the informational presentation. My question is if there is an emergency where do people plug the cars in when low on charging?

Ms. Klingler responded if there is a low charge and not at home there are supercharger option, which more and more are occurring. That is why this is fantastic that the city is considering electric chargers because of more electric vehicles being there. Electric charger locations are popping up at Walmart, hospitals, restaurants and hotels but the benefit the vehicle has, even though not ideal. If running out of gas you take the gas can to be filled up with electric vehicles as long as there is a 110 charger can plug in to get enough for where you need to go. Hopefully, as the electric vehicles become more popular it's going to be as rampant, as not more, than gas stations. That could be an issue if this

**Discussion: Questions: cont.**

happens on the highway or someplace where can't be plugged in, that could be a problem and need to be towed.

Mr. Vecchio thanked Ms. Klingler for a great presentation and my background is in the automotive industry being electric and hybrid vehicle certified. A few concerns I've had with electric vehicles for our safety forces, especially fire department. Vehicle fires occur quite often with gasoline powered vehicles and also happens with electric vehicles. The problem for firefighters coming up on a scene don't know it's an electric vehicle, per-say, without proper training. To put out an electric vehicle is somewhere in the range of 2,000 to 2,500 gallons of water versus a gasoline vehicle. One of the things being seen is re-ignition of the batteries due to containing power-cell that reignite and being combustible; also police officers in a chase there is tendencies for accidents. The cost associated with an electric vehicle is coming down greatly and is the wave of the future. If not mistaken there are 1,250 1,500 charge cycles is the expectancy of the battery module in the electric vehicles, with replacements in the range of anywhere from \$3,000.00 low-end to \$7,000.00 just for the components, there are some things to consider. The response of the vehicle, the instantaneous acceleration is amazing and the towing capacity from them is amazing, so there are definite things there. Our local automotive supplier of the big three in our city will hopefully get something so the city can get on board.

Mayor Gammella stated the technology committee does a great job and are featured in the Municipal magazine showing the city being on the cutting edge and want to thank the committee. A few things, being from Ford Motor I can say in the next three or four years a good deal of Ford vehicles will be electric; F-150, Expedition and everything, this is the wave of the future. Internal combustible engines are now known as ice engines and in 10 to 15 years will become less and less. That's why the big push to get electric vehicles at Ford Motor cis because they have 1/3 less moving parts. To Mr. Mencini the chargers are standardized where a Tesla or Ford will fit in the same charger. Also, to Ms. Klingler's point these chargers will be seen more and more on the turnpike and different areas and eventually will be a normal way of life. Think the city should start out slow maybe with the building, recreation and service department cars for a gradual transformation.

**Motion** by Mr. Poindexter, supported by Mr. Mencini, that item number one was discussed.

**ROLL CALL: AYES:** Poindexter, Mencini, Salvatore, Troyer, Orcutt, Schmuck, Scott  
**NAYS:** None. The motion carried.

**Discussion: cont.**

2. RECREATION DEPARTMENT APPLYING FOR A CUYAHOGA COUNTY GRANT. **In attendance:** Recreation Director Mark Elliott and Recreation Staff Member Danny Colonna.

Mr. Colonna appreciates Council for the invite and the main goal is to give some input on a grant the center is trying to achieve. Before doing that the grant is a Cuyahoga County Supplement Grant Program and the reason the department is going after this grant is earlier this year. Recreation Director Elliott discussed with Council a campus central park plan which is, obviously, a large project and think from Council's standpoint take a look at different aspects of the project i.e. where to start and whether done in phases. Recreation staff has been looking at opportunities to get funding for that project for different aspects of the project. This supplement grant is one of those grants that qualifies for some of the work and project that is part of the whole concept. A little background the Cuyahoga County Supplement Grant Program back in 2016 the County Council funded this grant through casino dollars. This grant supports community based development projects and is available to all Cuyahoga County communities with criteria that must be met in order to go after this project. The application deadline is January 8, 2021 and there are 23 grants available which is a good thing for the city to move forward with getting one of these grants. The maximum dollar amount is \$50,000.00 and if the city is successful the program term for the city to obtain these dollars is from March 1, 2021 through February 28, 2022. The grant is awarded on a reimbursement basis only meaning so there has to be a commitment on the city's end through a resolution. The whole goal in wanting to speak to Council is one of the key parts of this grant process to apply for as well as the criteria for it is the city would need a resolution from Council; authorizing the request for the funding. If it is Council's desire to move forward and try to obtain these dollars to put forward to a specific area of the whole central park project. Three bullet-points to be included in the resolution are program description; what, where, why and how of the project, the activity impact in the community and this grant of \$50,000.00 and supplement program is geared around health and wellness and fits perfect with the city's project due to the number of items in the project. Some of the items for this project is the walking track, towpath, fitness equipment so these dollars could be used in many ways and want to put in the resolution the activity impact. Also, activity implementation, schedule of milestones where to start, what time of year to start, what the city forecasts on completion of the project. After the resolution process the city would have to take a look at having a virtual public meeting presentation, due to pandemic, to the residents to provide input, voice opinions and things of that sort. Many communities are going after this grant and handling the public meeting virtually, due to the situation with the pandemic.

Mr. Elliott stated as Mr. Colonna mentioned the requirements for this grant is a

**Discussion: cont.**

resolution and public meeting as well as a letter of support from the Mayor and how the project is defined specifically and what will go into the project. The department will get a cost estimate and provide support documentation to go with the grant to the county to see that the cost and pricing is in line. Also, the city will have to show the activity location map and the renderings seen this week in the Mayor's newsletter will be the same renderings the city will be able to present and turn in as part of the application package to the county. Between now and January 8, 2021 it is the department's job to work on making sure all the boxes are checked with all the required information with the supporting resolution being the most important. As Mr. Colonna mentioned this grant is administered on a reimbursement basis and if the city is fortunate to get the \$50,000.00 grant the city would pay with funds and turn paperwork into the county for reimbursement.

Mayor Gammella would appreciate all Councilmembers' supporting the required resolution and will do the letter. This is a \$50,000.00 grant that would definitely help the community.

**Questions:**

Mr. Orcutt stated with the 23 grants available is it first-come first-serve?

Mr. Elliott responded the reason to approach Council now is this is time sensitive with the deadline date of January 8, 2020 by 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Orcutt continued how does the city choose what applicants receive the grant money?

Mr. Colonna responded speaking with county individuals this will be reviewed by their committee and truly believe the city would be put in a strong situation. A good example is the City of Fairview Park is going after this grant and had their public meeting on October 19<sup>th</sup> and looking for the grant to cover some playground equipment needs, a pavilion and to utilize for women's locker room at the police department. Speaking with county officials and what Council has helped put together with this whole campus plan. I think it's a great opportunity for the city to go to the top of the list as far as consideration because of the detailed layout of the project and the number of different aspects that apply to health and wellness in the community. A number of communities that are going after this grant are to fix up playground equipment, some odds and ends jobs. I think Brook Park will favor because of the details and layout of this project. The county did not provide any input of having a big project like this one it would go to the top of the list everyone was told all applicants will be reviewed by taking a look at the concept and what it means to the community and the impact it will have on the community. One thing county officials mentioned is the use of whatever the city is doing, for instance, the city was looking at fitness equipment along the tow path and things of that sort

**Discussion: Questions cont.**

that will be utilized by individuals in the community is definitely a huge criterion for this grant.

Mr. Elliott commented there are 59 communities that make up Cuyahoga County and there are 23 grants awarded, no community can receive more than one of those grants per year. There is a number of cities in years past that have already received this grant and think Brook Park is positioned very well and have a great chance to be awarded one of the grants. There are other things the board will be reviewing and they encourage regional collaboration. The city, City Council, the Mayor and have already done some things that helped support the city's position, for example, is the agreement between the city and the Berea City Schools. There was collaboration and all these good things happened with the new elementary school opening and the city obtained 28 new acres of property, 18 on the city campus, which prompted the put together of this plan and the county likes to see that kind of regional collaboration and/or partnership especially with the city and the schools.

Mr. Orcutt concurred and stated with the renderings and the investment in future park should help the city.

Mr. Vecchio asked did the city apply for this grant in 2019 and if the city didn't why not?

Mr. Elliott responded it was too late in the time limit and date there wasn't enough time to get all the necessary documentation together.

Mr. Poindexter stated the Mayor's newsletter was received this week and those renderings are out of this world. Council received the map last year for the vision of the city campus really couldn't tell what it would look like but to see the 3-D renderings is amazing. Several calls have been received from residents when the city will start on this project. Very thrilled to see the Amphitheater going in think it will be a great asset to bring the community together for concerts, musicals and performances the opportunities are endless.

Mr. Troyer commented just a thought of the all-inclusive playground idea that may help with getting the grant.

Mr. Elliott commented that he met with Mr. Cooper of the Cooper Foundation a few weeks ago and talked about a play area for his organization, another partnership. Mr. Cooper and his team working with the city can be part of this grant and the county likes to see that, positions the city in a good spot and would include that in the grant.

**Discussion: Questions: cont.**

Mr. Colonna commented to Mr. Troyer that is a good point and what can be done is when going through the process of applying under the topic of activity that type of equipment would have a huge impact in the community and would boost the chances and will be implemented in the application process.

Mr. Poindexter commented that a message was received from the Cooper Foundation that over \$700.00 has already been raised for the costs of the equipment.

Mrs. Schmuck stated this grant is a great idea and happy to see the city moving forward.

Mr. Mencini stated as a thriving community there has to be amenities and this Council has not forgot about the issues of streets, flooding or low employees and will not use COVID-19 for that excuse with the budget coming forward; Council will work hard to bring some things to our residents also. To have a project like this can be seen from I-71 and Engle Road and received good responses from the Mayor's recent newsletter. My question to Mr. Colonna is how will the city pay for this and also want the public meeting to hear what the public has to say, very important. Commended the staff for going after this grant to try and do something for the community. Are there other grants that can be looked at or other things the city can do going forward?

Mayor Gammella responded definitely other things are being looked at and currently green space is at the top with getting grants for trees and things of that nature. The collaboration shown not only with the schools but with the Aerozone property other communities Brook Park will be put on the map with this project.

Mr. Colonna stated to Mr. Mencini this is one of many grants to go after and are looking at all aspects. When looking at a project like this and was in a situation being a former Councilmember with having a campus plan. Obviously, the city can't put a lot of money into this to make it happen all at once but Mr. Elliott has looked at the number aspects of this entire project. I think what the city wants to do is make a small commitment of phases for each part of the project and think the health and wellness part is a great spot to start. When looking at the amphitheater and things of that sort this whole project is not only health and wellness but also pulls in some economic development and enhances the community in a number of ways and brings people to the community. When speaking of funding from experience different aspects are looked at as the project of a whole and what is committed to do in 2021, 2022 and so forth and after a three to four-year period this can be accomplished and made a reality. The city will continue to look for grant dollars for this project and will apply for everything that can coincide with this project and are looking at every possible avenue and making sure the deadline

**Discussion: Questions: cont.**

is met in applying for these grants.

Mr. Salvatore stated this is a great idea looking back and forward at the same time and one of the most important things for a community is to have park of this nature. Will certainly bring people together and adds to the desirability for someone to want to move into the community when seeing a park of this magnitude. The city is on the right track and needs to establish a footprint of what the project should look like and then move slowly with doing in phases. Thank you to Mr. Colonna and Mr. Elliott for doing the necessary work to get this grant and know the city is waiting for a grant from the state for the amphitheater.

Mr. Vecchio asked Mayor Gammella if there is an approximate total cost for this campus park proposal? To look at the great ideas spoken of about phases and economic impact the city has with other things going on for a possible breakdown.

Mayor Gammella responded there is but here is the issue with that. The city will do this in phases over the next four, five, six or eight years. One issue is the cost of materials with the pandemic but do know the city has to get started with this project. There are things that can be done with the landscape barriers and trees that the city can control costs on for this long-term project. There is an amount in mind and know what the city is looking at but hopefully prices will come down.

Mr. Vecchio asked do we know what the cost is today and obviously know about the issues with materials across the country. Is there a general idea of a cost today and obviously will have supplemental costs whether positive or negative for the future?

Mayor Gammella stated will provide the information.

Mr. Troyer stated along with that there are also going to be concerns with maintenance and upkeep once completed, are there any numbers on that? Also, will need to hire more service department workers to take care of this.

**Motion** by Mr. Mencini, supported by Mrs. Schmuck, that item number two was discussed.

**ROLL CALL: AYES:** Mencini, Schmuck, Scott, Orcutt, Troyer, Poindexter, Salvatore  
**NAYS:** None. The motion carried.

**Discussion: cont.**

3. 2020 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECAP AND 2021 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORECAST. **In attendance:** Economic Development Commissioner Adams.

Mr. Adams reported 2020 has faced the city with dramatic challenges but with constant contact with local businesses and working with leads for new businesses the city was able to, at this point, bring in 11 new businesses to the city. Two businesses began in 2019; Company Wrench completed and opened in 2020 with \$1.6 million-dollar construction. Zoom Car Wash began in 2019 and completed in 2020 with \$1.19 million-dollar construction. A new business is Classic Westside Mazda was originally going to build on the former Skateland property but occurred is one of the front landowners decided not to sell. After meeting with Classic Mazda representatives the former Nissan dealership was viewed and moved forward with the purchase of that property with a \$2 million-dollar renovation ongoing in phases. There is a new store Common Threads moving in Brookgate shopping center which is a general goods store. Also, there is an addition to the city's west end located at 2000 Aerospace Parkway with the Federal Aviation Advisory (FAA) relocating one of their administrative offices. With the former Fredrich's moving company a new buyer will be bringing in EGI Environmental Group and also on Keystone Parkway there is a brand new building for Corrigan Worldwide properties that started in 2019 and built in 2020 with a \$4.6 million-dollar construction project. XCEL Fluid Group is new acquisition to the community and purchased a building on West 137<sup>th</sup> \$1.4 million-dollar investment. IPS Integrated Power Services located at 5170 West 130<sup>th</sup> Street is fully operational and expanded into Brook Park. The former building located at 5281 Engle Road is a commercial tire corporation and one of the newest companies is called Max-R located at 22800 Cedar Point Road that works along with NASA Aerospace. There are other businesses in negotiations but due to confidentiality cannot speak too at this time.

Mr. Mencini thanked Mr. Adams for coming and asked what is the Common Threads business coming in?

Mr. Adams responded they sell and market clothing and general housing goods.

Mr. Mencini stated I hear there is activity at the former Place to Be restaurant? What is coming in there?

Mr. Adams responded that is one of the new businesses that is currently in the early stages and purchased by Education Alternatives; the school located at on Smith Road. The school will be using this place for private preparation of meals for the schools in the area. The school serves quite a few school districts and is in charge of feeding the children going through daily education. The school will be using as

**Discussion: cont.**

part of the training location for high-school students to learn culinary arts to a certain degree.

Mr. Mencini asked with these businesses what is the city looking at in terms of income tax collections? Are there any numbers?

Mr. Adams responded overall there are approximately 242 new jobs being created with the largest being the FAA which will take the city to 45 jobs, once buildout is created. Corrigan Worldwide Properties will fluctuate once the buildout is completed with the rerouting of trucks for the Northeast Ohio area. Classic Westside is in the area of 35 jobs projected; Zoom Car Wash has both full and part-time jobs; Company Wrench has 12 jobs and when added all together there are 242 jobs full and part-time, majority being full-time.

Mr. Mencini asked how is the city advertising for these companies, are you visiting these businesses, Brookgate and industrial parkway? Is the city reaching out to the companies that are in the city?

Mr. Adams responded with COVID-19 there had to be changes with the personal situations to email and follow-up when calls come in person, if possible. Definitely, many phone calls and Zoom conferences have been taking place with the larger administration areas. A lot of complaints are fielded in the business community and the city was very involved early on helping people solve problems that COVID-19 created; as far as PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and PPP funding to make sure that applications and/or any other assistance and was able to get answers for answers from the county and state.

Mr. Mencini commented COVID-19 is going to change a lot of things not just business, schools or lives. What is the city going to do for the future with the way businesses might be? Is the city preparing for that and how will the city look for businesses now with COVID-19? What is the long-term plan?

Mr. Adams responded the city has been doing that since the start of COVID-19 by continuing to advertise, answer phone calls, talk to individuals, follow-up on inquiries and let people know what is available. A lot of properties in Brook Park are privately owned and advertised by commercial entities. The realtors have been working very hard to bring people to Brook Park and I meet with them along with Building Commissioner Hurst to go over the layout, zoning and incentives.

Mr. Orcutt thanked Mr. Adams for coming, one question is with the 242 new jobs coming into the city. Can you provide what the average pay is per employee?

Mr. Adams responded I would put the average around \$45,000.00 to \$50,000.00

**Discussion: cont.**

because the weight is on the higher-end than lower-end.

Mr. Scott thanked Mr. Adams for coming, my question is what is going on with the former BP gas station, tanks have been removed, has there been any other progress?

Mr. Adams responded the former BP gas station is owned by a large corporation and took 2 ½ years and an enormous amount of pressure from the Mayor's office to the State of Ohio Attorney General's office to the Department of Development with help from the city's building and law departments to force the company Crossroads America to remove those tanks; that own over 4,000 gas stations very difficult to reach and when making contact always speaking with someone new. After assistance from Representative Sweeney's office and law and building they were pressured to take out the tanks. Simultaneously, I've been working with three local developers who are very interested in that location and get calls quite often that are put in touch with the buyer's representative. There were three deals submitted to them with two deals rejected and claim of working on a third deal. The next plan with enormous pressure is to tear down the existing structure and there are demolition funds leftover but can't bring them unless the property owner agrees. There have been some talks of a Starbucks or upscale eatery at this location and the city is working towards having for this community. The city hasn't given up it's just a constant struggle with this landowner. There are also some issues with the title when purchased originally from BP and part of the reason this company is slow to move. At one point it stated that if that location was never a petroleum based company that BP could reclaim the property; BP has no desire to do so and are still working through that. The good news is there are very interested buyers who are financeable and keep Council posted.

Mr. Scott continued that COVID-19 affected the move into the former Harpo's location but that is still in progress, correct?

Mr. Adams responded a company called Coaches, who owns nine eateries, with Brookgate being tenth location. Due to the pandemic all nine of those restaurants have been closed down. That being said the person still owns the location and still has intentions to move forward and Glimcher Group (Brookgate Shopping Center owners) has had discussions with them but no contract to date and think there could be a 2021 happening for that location.

Mr. Troyer thanked Mr. Adams for speaking to Council. A few questions, the properties on Sheldon and Burton have they been advertised or placed on the MLS (Multiple Listing Service)?

Mr. Adams responded legislation is being worked on to have that done along with

**Discussion: cont.**

legislation to advertise city-owned commercial property. There was a strong inquiry from a builder-developer of housing for two city locations.

Mr. Troyer continued any updates on the Ford (Motor) property?

Mr. Adams responded that is private property and can say that Ford Motor has had major inquiries with that property and hopefully will have good news in the near future.

Mr. Poindexter stated to Mr. Adams my questions are with the Opportunity Corridor and Technology. Nice to see businesses taking interest at the corridor. How much space is the FAA taking in the 2000 Aerospace building?

Mr. Adams responded there is a small portion being used by the Aerospace Alliance but the majority of the building will be going with the FAA direction. The first and second floors are being redone to accommodate the FAA; the entire building will not be filled.

Mr. Poindexter clarified there will space to lure another company to the location.

Mr. Adams responded depends on the business, there will be space through Chelm properties, again this is private property. The city does everything possible but are limited with resources due to COVID cutbacks and funding in economic development. Grants are not something that can be brought to the table currently but there are other things the city can do to work with them based on their needs and with utilizing partnerships with TEAM NEO and Jobs Ohio, for finding funds.

Mr. Poindexter continued the Technology Corridor and Aerozone Alliance is a focal part of Brook Park and would like to see something rolling over the next few years.

Mr. Adams commented over the last six months there have been two major site visits to the location, looking at available parcels. Both have chosen other communities and in both instances what occurred was the value of land and willingness of the area to reduce that cost significantly; one company would have brought 110 jobs and the other company would have brought 200 jobs. That is one of the reasons for the legislation to move forward with hiring outside commercial brokerage to begin the marketing of that 28 and 4.85 acreage that the city has. Actually the city has 17.3 with ten acres of that owned by Chelm properties. It is my understanding Chelm is looking to market their end on a separate situation. Being in the Opportunity Zone puts the city in a good spot with that area being advertised through the city's website but through the world wide web utilizing GCP (Greater Cleveland Partnership) as well Team NEO. There are some wetland issues and the city has executed wetland delineation working with a company. The footprint did grow but changed and their

**Discussion: cont.**

have been some law changes that took place in the State of Ohio as well as at the federal level. Under the past administration to make it easier to develop those areas as opposed to what they were 18 months ago. Making the land more viable for sale but also has to have the right buyer to understand the technicalities that goes with the purchasing for future development of that area.

Mrs. Schmuck thanked Mr. Adams for bringing new employment into the city. One comment would like to see a business that is family-friendly and growing up in Brook Park there was Skateland and putt-putt, these may not bring in money but is something the family can go and do.

Mr. Adams commented having Coaches come to the city that would have been a family oriented business having a small to medium impact on the community but would have brought more people to Brookgate. Also there was talks of focal points for families to take their children to on the weekends.

Mr. Orcutt asked Mr. Adams how many employees does the FAA currently working in Brook Park?

Mr. Adams responded currently there are 25 working remotely and come through the office on a weekly basis; are phasing into that location to 40 employees total.

Mr. Orcutt continued does the economic development department have a written strategic plan.

Mr. Adams responded the department has what is called the master plan that was done in 2012 that is followed. The Mayor and I meet on a monthly basis to discuss issues of what is being looked at to do on the four main corridors. There is the light industrial on Brookpark and Eastland Roads; west-end opportunity zone and TechPark area as well as the industrial area on Engle Road and all important roadway on Snow and Smith Roads as well as West 130<sup>th</sup> Street. Aware of some open spots and constantly speak with owners of those properties on a bi-weekly or monthly basis. The problem the city has is dealing with private owners and private property but stand ready to assist with any incentives i.e. Community Reinvestment program. One business not mentioned is the former Strawberry location who is currently working through the process. Also, the former Subway on West 139<sup>th</sup> and Brookpark Road will have a new eatery as well as a cannabis shop looking to open on Brookpark and Smith Roads.

Mr. Orcutt continued with the 2012 master plan that is being followed what are the priorities in that plan?

Mr. Adams responded the zoning is the next feature that has to be revisited that

**Discussion: cont.**

Building Commissioner Hurst is working diligently on, to match up with the current needs, as the city did years ago with the Brookpark Road Corridor. For new car dealerships and that zoning has worked out well instead of running into spot zoning. Also, working with a potential new buyer to try and alleviate the Travelodge situation the city is dealing with. That would allow the city to begin to plug and play the types of businesses that can go in locations and allow for advertisement in a different way.

Mr. Orcutt continued does the city have a website that is constantly being updated and improved to provide appropriate information for potential developers; or people who want to invest their business in Brook Park?

Mr. Adams responded there is the economic development tab on the website and links that show available properties that is updated on a bi-weekly, monthly basis.

Mr. Orcutt asked besides the website what else is being done to promote the city?

Mr. Adams responded one of the question earlier was about retention and the city has been very successful with that. It's constant communication via phone and emails to meet with individuals to see what the problems are and try to help overcome. As far as a different level of approach for advertising the community those are the main ones at this point.

Mr. Orcutt continued for the outside I would think that, for transportation purposes, this would be very welcoming to additional manufacturers to the community, always a big asset being close to the airport and interstates.

Mr. Adams interjected that is one of the top five reasons Brook Park is chosen for location of businesses.

Mr. Orcutt asked what is being done to retain and sustain current businesses?

Mr. Adams responded contact, problem solving and working with the business owner.

Mr. Vecchio stated to Mr. Adams, where is the Common Threads store moving into at Brookgate?

Mr. Adams responded the open space next to the former Harpo's that is currently being built out, facing Harpo's on the right.

Mr. Vecchio continued is this a thrift store or actual clothing store or retail shop?

**Discussion: cont.**

Mr. Adams responded the store is a resale shop but upscale and deal with clothing that has not been worn before.

Mr. Vecchio continued staying in the same complex, the city lost Advanced Auto Parts on the corner. What is being done to attract some of the people reaching out and landing them on that corner, that is a focal point of Brook Park at Smith and Snow. Years ago it was Parrason's Restaurant or something else spectacular before getting into the auto parts industry.

Mr. Adams responded working with the Glimcher Group to actively advertise that location of Brookgate and have informed me that they are currently working with a possible interested tenant in that corner.

Mr. Vecchio stated would like to see something very attractive there that would also force the hand to reface that entire complex bringing to today's standards. Additionally, with the Sheldon-Smith strip is the city doing anything to help getting businesses in there or helping the ownership move forward with changing to something else? Has the city contacted them?

Mr. Adams responded the contact has been made the problem is the owner doesn't want to do anything with that, at this point in time. The city has to begin looking at that from a different avenue as to condition.

Mr. Vecchio stated speaking of city properties before is the MLS being used currently?

Mr. Adams responded no, the city is looking at legislation to do just that.

**Motion** by Mrs. Schmuck, supported by Mr. Orcutt, for a five-minute recess.

**ROLL CALL: AYES:** Schmuck, Orcutt, Scott, Salvatore, Poindexter, Mencini, Troyer

**NAYS:** None. The motion carried at 9:00 p.m.

**Motion** by Mr. Mencini, supported by Mrs. Schmuck, to go back to the regular order of business.

**ROLL CALL: AYES:** Mencini, Schmuck, Scott, Orcutt, Troyer, Poindexter, Salvatore

**NAYS:** None. The motion carried at 9:05 p.m.

2020 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECAP AND 2021 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORECAST - Economic Development Commissioner Adams: cont.

Mr. Adams stated page two outlines grants the city is dealing with currently, first one written in 2019 and received in 2020 being for a NOACA (Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency) grant for the second senior bus in the amount of

**Discussion: cont.**

\$63,326.00 that will be received in 2020. Second grant is a Cuyahoga County Planning grant initiated in 2019 and awarded in 2020 in the amount of \$27,000.00 for planting a healthy urban tree growing project throughout the city, focusing on the municipal campus. The city is in possession of master plan for the trees and will be utilized along with the municipal park program. The city also has a grant from the Department of Justice in the amount of \$69,353.00 for the purchase of 36 body-worn cameras for police force; officers are beginning to utilize those cameras today and am working with the federal government for reimbursement of that funding. A NOPEC grant was awarded for \$5,000.00 for the mobile phone charging system located at the recreation center. The city wrote a CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) in the amount of \$150,000.00 was written in 2019 and used in 2020 for a new fire paramedic vehicle that will be delivered in first quarter of 2021. The total cost was \$276,000.00 with \$150,000.00 being put forth by the grant. The city recently applied for a State of Ohio EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) grant in the amount of \$86,874.00 for two stand-alone electric vehicle charging stations located on the main campus; one across from the library and the other between former Brook Park Memorial School and recreation center.

Mr. Mencini asked for clarification of that grant amount.

Mr. Adams responded there are two grants totaling \$86,874.00 with the two electrical charging stations, known as EV charging stations. One station will be able to service four vehicles and the other station will be able to service three vehicles. My office assisted with the Ohio Cares Act funding requests and was involved in setting up the request and filling out applications. Also, worked with local businesses and the State of Ohio and Cuyahoga County for PPE equipment and PPP program for the funding mechanisms for both the small and medium sized businesses. The last thing the city was able to do before CARES Act funding the city was utilizing a lot of hand sanitizers and requested and received a donation of \$24,000.00 for hand sanitizers from Ques Industries located on West 140<sup>th</sup> Street. Three of these grants are in the management phase which includes follow-up, paperwork and ordering, insure delivery on time and reimbursement.

Mr. Poindexter stated to Mr. Adams in addition to these grants was there any grants the city applied for and not awarded over that period of time. Also, were there any grants that the city missed the opportunity?

Mr. Adams responded the city has successfully since 2018 written grants and received an essence of \$1,140,260.93 in grants through the economic development department. Very proud and that is a lot of money for the people of Brook Park. Also, assisted in writing a \$2 million-dollar bill grant for the recreation department indoor pool that is still pending in the State of Ohio for the 2022 budget year. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 that program the State of Ohio has drastically cut

**Discussion: cont.**

that program.

Mr. Troyer clarified didn't the city give Ques Industries a grant a while back?

Mr. Adams responded yes, prior to me coming in office, since that they have added two additions to their building and wanted to give back to the city.

Mr. Vecchio stated there has been three rounds of the Coronavirus supplemental fund and have not seen Brook Park on any of them, did the city not apply for them? Local cities such as Middleburg Heights and Fairview Park have received but not Brook Park.

Mr. Adams responded yes, that is the Cares Act funding?

Mr. Vecchio responded no, there is a supplemental fund that could be used for different things with most being small amounts. A lot of these went to safety forces and different entities throughout different cities to be used in different areas.

Mr. Adams responded will check on that, thought that was all part of the Cares Act Funding, it's called supplemental funding.

Mr. Vecchio clarified Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental funding.

Mr. Adams stated there was funds received from the county.

Mr. Vecchio concurred and continued this comes down to local governments for all sorts of stuff listed. There were three different rounds with the last one being late September, early October. Spreadsheets of the amounts are available of the cities that received this supplemental funding and Brook Park is not on any of the three rounds.

Mr. Adams stated it wasn't missed some of those were targeted but will get the information and provide a report.

Mayor Gammella commented a lot of those cities being spoke of have their own grant writers, that's why it's imperative Brook Park have one, many staff members are pulling double duty with writing of grants.

Mr. Vecchio responded that can be discussed at another time because I disagree with you in that statement, for a later time. To Mr. Adams, in addition to this question, what is done to research these grants? Is there a formula or setup a database reminder, or anything of that nature, i.e. reaching out to Baldwin-Wallace University or the city's technology committee? Has there been any reach out for the

**Discussion: cont.**

city to get reminders so nothing like this is missed?

Mr. Adams stated the administrator for the city on the grant system on the federal, state and county databases. The county has two grant rounds per year, it's a hybrid year with Cares Act funding. You track those and also try to find foundational grants that are available to companies located in the community; so far haven't been successful with that. The city is working with Ford to bring in a foundation grant for some funding hopefully for the park area as well as another local company.

Mr. Mencini stated early on with the Cares Act a lot of businesses had the opportunity to get some monies from the grants. To Mr. Adams on that have any businesses called for assistance with grants or suggested anything? Has the city reached out to local businesses?

Mr. Adams responded there have been at least five emails directed to all city businesses as well as informational letters of the available situation. As of now you're referring to the PPP funding and there are ten city businesses that have applied and successfully applied and received funding. Yes, there is follow-up with questions received and get them anything possible to help them survive this pandemic situation. There are also local businesses that are reaching out to help each other.

Mr. Vecchio clarified those funds come through the Office of Criminal Justice services and an idea as to what has taken place: Fairview Park police department received \$12,000.00, City of East Cleveland received \$5,000.00 and Middleburg Heights received for pandemic preparation in the amount of \$15,665.00. The Salvation Army was also able to receive monies just under \$75,000.00. That's one of my reasons for Brook Park not being there.

Mr. Adams commented that would be mostly PPE initial funds and the police department has filed their annual grant for bullet-proof vests. I go through these on a bi-weekly or monthly basis to see what is available and how to apply for them. A lot of it is, unfortunately, the way the bills are written it's designed for certain areas and segments of the federal government, especially with population. The State of Ohio is a little more generous but with the pandemic has cut back on some grant programs and telling cities there will be a bigger amount in 2021; cities are being insured that there will be more dollars for research and application.

Mr. Vecchio asked Mr. Adams with the CDBG fund is that applied annually?

Mr. Adams responded no, the city applied and received twice; receiving \$150,000.00 and using \$21,000.00 for the purchase of three police cruisers. Also,

**Discussion: cont.**

received \$150,000.00 which is going towards the purchase of a new paramedic vehicle for fire department to serve the residents of Brook Park.

Mr. Vecchio continued there is also available a supplemental grant program through CDBG isn't there?

Mr. Adams responded yes, but I didn't work on that one last year.

Mr. Poindexter stated if Council comes across a lead for grants that can be always be forwarded to the economic development commissioner or Mayor's office. Those jobs are full-time with economic development trying to retain and attract businesses and those grant may be missed. If there is a lead forward to help the city move forward I would like to see the city get some of those monies.

Mr. Mencini stated when the pandemic started I suggested a citizen's committee, there are a lot of people that want to reach out.

Mr. Scott stated in conclusion I was asked to do a forecast that is difficult to do based on the situation that we're all dealing with personally or business-wise. Working with several teams of people. One being Team Neo (Northeast Ohio) that are affiliated with Jobs Ohio through the Ohio Department of Development and fully funded through the State of Ohio general fund. Also, GCP (Greater Cleveland Partnership) and in speaking with them this is the review received for Northeast Ohio as of June 29, 2020. Fast-forward three months some of these things have already occurred as well as some negative things that have occurred. The economic review takes a look at potential performance of the Northeast Ohio economy through 2025. Calculations of projections based on that June annualized national local projection of employment, gross domestic product (GDP) from Moody's analytics Team NEO shared the following insights. Gross domesticated product for Northeast Ohio and the United States is projected to recover by 2022. Realizing the last quarter there was a 33% bump in GDP for the nation as a whole but regionally are lacking behind but that doesn't mean we won't catch up. After losses in years 2020 and 2021 by year 2022 the USGDP is projected to be 5% higher. Northeast Ohio is 3% higher than 2018 considering these are post COVID-19 shutdown numbers. These projections increase to 14% and 9% by the year 2025 so a continuing growth pattern. Employment for both the United States and Northeast Ohio is projected to recover more slowly than the GDP though some indicators show it is increasing at a better rate than that. In Brook Park major corporations are still in the city with many working a second shift. Small businesses are repeating themselves back into the workplace and Brook Park does have a large contingent of office workers still working from home which is a little distressing; especially when looking at situations involving income tax. With the United States projected to recover by year 2023 and Northeast Ohio by year 2025 in subsequent discussions

**Discussion: cont.**

and Zoom meetings with the Department of Development they're seeing it more rather around the year 2024. Driver industry are the ones that impact the most and will be impacted by the pandemic by both GDP and employment; for year 2023 the projected year over year losses include a 9.1% drop in GDP and 5% loss for manufacturing; that is important to Brook Park due to the many light manufacturing companies. The city is hoping to work with heavy manufacturing relocating to the community plus Ford Motor Company and in some sense NASA falls into this with manufacturing. A 6.1% drop in GDP and 4.2% loss in employment cutbacks. The city hasn't seen that with NASA due to the contractual and prior increase to \$1 billion-dollars in their funding cycle that allows NASA to move forward with their contractual phase, good news for the city. With a 2.4% dip and 4.4% loss for the healthcare sector don't want to say the city isn't heavily impacted by that the city is. Because many city residents working hard through this pandemic are looking at some employment issues and the city is working diligently to see what can be done to help these individuals if, in fact, changes do occur. Even though there is an upswing in pandemic numbers at this point long-term is still unknown. Northeast Ohio's manufacturing sector that accounts for 20% of the region's GDP will be impacted in year 2020. For example, transportation and equipment is projected to drop 19.5% year over year, fabricated metal products will be down almost 17%. The city has some of those factors involved but also impacts trucking and logistics and seasonal as well as long-term construction jobs. Employment projections losses with year over year drops including a 10.3% for non-metallic mineral products which is more of an impact for residents that work in those types of industries along with 9.6% fabricated metal products. To finalize, the city has retail and the best way to sum it up is there is no denying the large scale shift from in-store shopping to online shopping, however, neighborhood shopping is considered to be a recovery growth phase; Brookgate is considered a neighborhood shopping center. I've had many conversations with the Glimcher Group and they are working tirelessly to try and keep everything they own working and they are committed to Brookgate shopping center, as well as Brook Park. There have been discussions with businesses outside of the State of Ohio to attract new individuals to Brookgate. From talking with business owners many if not the great majority are in a positive mood and the biggest negative would be another lockdown. There are four major components of commercial industry; one is industrial properties, office properties, retail and multi-family, otherwise known as apartments. Two of the four are up industrial and the multi-families are doing well but a different story when it comes to office and retail. The city has to be aware of these numbers but don't have a direct impact on them but do see situations and once any type of foreclosure, rental issue or eviction taking place the city has to take steps to not only help the individuals survive, in my opinion.

Mrs. Schmuck thanked Mr. Adams for his report as well as the hard work on the grants.

**Discussion: cont.**

**Note:** Due to Council President Vecchio not being able to be heard through Zoom Council President Pro-Tem Salvatore took over chairing the meeting.

**Motion** by Mr. Poindexter, supported by Mr. Troyer, that item number three was discussed.

**ROLL CALL: AYES:** Poindexter, Troyer, Mencini, Salvatore, Scott, Schmuck, Orcutt  
**NAYS:** None. The motion carried.

4. AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH DRIVEOHIO AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Introduced by Councilman Poindexter

Mr. Poindexter stated this is to put Brook Park on a very short list of communities to allow companies that test autonomous vehicles and different types of transportation technology. This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) would allow certain areas of the city to be used for those testing purposes.

Mr. Mencini asked Mr. Poindexter for an explanation of the testing of vehicles; would the location be on I-71 or Snow Road. Does the city have to let residents know?

Mr. Poindexter responded the MOA would explain what the requirements the city has, what requirements DriveOhio has as well as the requirements of the testing companies. The city would be responsible to let the residents know what areas are being used. When DriveOhio gave the presentation in front of the Innovation & Technology committee the Mayor suggested the area from the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) station down Engle Road, back to the Opportunity Corridor to NASA's gate and back around, like a loop. DriveOhio seemed to like that area because of the different traffic patterns with the airport, with the first-mile last-mile dynamic when taking public transportation and having to walk a mile or two and maybe an autonomous vehicle could serve as a fill-gap. Nothing has been finalized this puts Brook Park on that list and when a company would like to do some testing must meet with the city officials explaining the area and what will be done; with that information being given to the residents.

**Note:** Mr. Vecchio's issues were resolved thanked Mr. Salvatore for stepping in and chaired the rest of the meeting.

Mr. Salvatore asked Mr. Poindexter the legislation and MOA includes the entire project?

Mr. Poindexter concurred and stated there are still details of the particular project that would have to be worked out. This allows the general permission to do this with the city having the control over the location and time of day.

**Discussion: cont.**

Mr. Troyer expressed concern to Mrs. Horvath about liability to the city; is the city covered?

Mrs. Horvath responded to Mr. Troyer I think primarily the liability would be with whatever companies are testing this type of equipment. The city allows them to operate in the city and at most if the city was named it would be secondarily. I will check with the city's insurance to make sure that coverage would be provided. This is an opportunity for the city to move forward by doing something progressive and there are always risks when trying to change something or move forward with new technology. I am pretty well-assured that the risk of entertaining this would be more in balance with the insurance coverage the city would have but will confirm.

Mr. Orcutt stated to Mr. Poindexter reading the legislation and agreement when testers are referred is there somebody in the vehicle?

Mr. Poindexter responded in some cases yes and some cases no. It depends on whatever test is being setup and however long the test is being done. There may be times when the testers are riding along in the vehicle even though that vehicle is autonomous, depends on what type of testing the companies will be doing.

Mr. Orcutt asked how often do the companies plan on being in Brook Park.

Mr. Poindexter responded there is no clear plan, at this point, this puts Brook Park on a list of willing cities to allow for the testing. Most of the current testing is below Interstate 70, delegated to Southern Ohio. There may be one town west of Columbus that does this testing so Brook Park would probably be the first city in the northern part of the state allowing for testing. One advantage Brook Park has is the climate is different than Southern Ohio i.e. lake effect snow and ice which are things that may be looked as an advantage for testing.

Mr. Orcutt asked how long has DriveOhio been testing?

Mr. Poindexter responded DriveOhio started by executive order under the former state governor and the current governor decided to keep the program going, around for three or four years.

Mr. Orcutt asked how many accidents have been reported through testing?

Mr. Poindexter responded none, that I'm aware of, not in Ohio. There has been attended vehicle accidents out west several years ago.

Mr. Orcutt commented want to make a point this does seem a little dangerous

**Discussion: cont.**

especially for a city like Brook Park having 50' frontages and little children playing. In favor of automation and technology but would like to do more research on this.

Mr. Poindexter interjected that is the reason for discussing this to get questions answered before next meeting or first meeting in December. So everyone is comfortable in supporting this legislation when the time comes. Secondly, the Mayor and technology committee had the same concerns and DriveOhio is competent in this technology and why the Mayor suggested highlighted area on the west end because there isn't a lot of population of children along Route 237, Brookpark Road and Aerospace Parkway; those areas are pretty much isolated and not very busy. The airport area gets busy and that's one of the things that peaked the interest of DriveOhio was going past the airport with different traffic patterns and such to see how technology related to traffic. Representatives of DriveOhio that gave the presentation was fairly competent that humans are more likely to make a mistake than their programs and there is data to back that up.

Mr. Orcutt commented would like to see test results in areas like Brook Park with climate of snow and lake effect if this has been done in areas with the same climate. One other question, is the city responsible for notification to the residents this is going to occur?

Mr. Poindexter responded in the MOA section 3 - Municipality Obligations provides the city's entire list of obligations.

Mr. Orcutt clarified how are the residents notified through literature?

Mr. Poindexter responded could be any means chosen i.e. red alert, putting on the website.

Mr. Orcutt asked the city would be responsible for paying for the notification?

Mr. Poindexter responded the city already pays for red alert so it wouldn't be an extra expense. The question was asked during the presentation how much would this affect a motorist driving on the same road and DriveOhio representative assured me that no one would probably even notice they were there.

Mr. Orcutt commented central dispatch would probably get many phone calls.

Mr. Poindexter responded that is one of the items DriveOhio is responsible for is training the city's safety personnel on how to encounter those vehicles.

Mrs. Schmuck stated DriveOhio is great for Brook Park, website is impressive. The testing being done is basic safety, mobility access, reliability and talent. To Mr.

**Discussion: cont.**

Poindexter this could also be a resource to help train law enforcement officers.

Mr. Poindexter clarified training on how to deal with autonomous vehicles, due to being unmanned.

Mrs. Schmuck continued am concerned about the residents and sounds like a great honor for Brook Park, as long as kept away from the residents.

Mr. Poindexter reiterated that is why the Mayor suggested the west end of the city less populous. The way I see this is as the testing would commence people would be more comfortable after interacting with them. Perhaps, there could be a community circulator to take people from a park on the west end to another park or grocery shopping; the opportunities are endless and the city can really benefit from this program.

Mr. Vecchio stated to Mr. Poindexter, some things I know about autonomous vehicles for clarification are: The accident statistics for an autonomous vehicle versus human vehicle are almost two to one, in less severe accidents. The autonomous vehicle was programmed to obey the speed limit, stop signs and so forth. The accident statistics don't share if it's the cause of the autonomous vehicle, cause of the human in the other vehicle or what may have taken place. That is some of the problems that are there and obviously somebody drive by an autonomous vehicle and ask what is that and lose sight of the road. Those statistics are not narrowed down to the exact cause but are almost two to one higher. I have to share in the concerns of Mr. Orcutt and others that residents whether be children at home or motorists driving anywhere where there is an autonomous the possibilities of an accident. The State of California mandates that a human being be in the autonomous vehicle and I would feel more comfortable in Brook Park that there is a human being in the autonomous vehicle to help prohibit that. The last thing is with the area of the Aerospace Parkway area wouldn't this have to be a collaborative effort with the City of Cleveland since some of those roads belong to the City of Cleveland? Some of these things the city needs to delve into.

Mr. Poindexter commented that's the reason this was placed on the agenda, so Council can come to some kind of consensus by the first meeting in December. Each testing case will have a specific set of parameters this is just boiler-plate information to put Brook Park on the list. If the city doesn't like the testing facility or company that comes forward with an idea the city says no, you will not test here. This gives Brook Park a seat at the table to see what they want to do and go from there.

Mr. Orcutt asked if the city receives any funds from this program?

**Discussion: cont.**

Mr. Poindexter responded the MOA doesn't secure any funds for the city, doesn't obligate the city for any funds to DriveOhio or any testing facility. Typically, depending on what type of testing is being done may bring in some general revenue. DriveOhio is part of the state government so there may be some funding there that could be given to the city.

**Motion** by Mr. Troyer, supported by Mrs. Schmuck, to place on the November 17<sup>th</sup> Caucus Prior to agenda under discussion.

**ROLL CALL: AYES:** Troyer, Schmuck, Scott, Orcutt, Mencini, Poindexter, Salvatore

**NAYS:** None. The motion carried.

**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE - CHAIRMAN, MENCINI:**

1. ORDINANCE NO. 11137-2018, PROVIDING FOR THE SUBMISSION TO THE ELECTORATE OF AMENDMENTS TO ARTICLE IV, SECTION 4.01 AND SECTION 4.02 OF THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF BROOK PARK AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Introduced by Councilmembers Salvatore, Orcutt, Scott and Stemm.

Mr. Mencini stated this has been in committee for quite a while for discussion.

**Motion** by Mr. Troyer, supported by Mrs. Schmuck, to place back in committee.

Mr. Salvatore thanked Mr. Mencini for bringing out, this has been on several past agendas and back to committee. During this meeting there has been discussions on how to bring money back to the city, cutting expenses, creating jobs and this legislation will save the city money; if passed long ago the city would already be saving money. All this does is reduce the size of Council by one member and allowing the Council President to vote, this system works fine in the City of Middleburg Heights and think it's a good idea. If nothing else the residents should have the opportunity to have this appear on the ballot and let them decide what should be done.

Mr. Orcutt thanked Mr. Mencini for bringing this out and stated as one of the sponsors introducing this legislation. This is important to me because it's something that would help the city and is a proactive way for Council to save money to be put in other areas where it can be used i.e. flooding or streets. This isn't a lot of money but over time a street can be done in over a decade. This is something that is being discussed with a new Council and if there are any questions am available. The core of this is Council start with themselves by looking at how to save the community money and will reiterate what I stated in August, 2018. We need to look in every department, need to see how much money is being spent in departments and see what we are getting out, this needs to be done across the board. Brook Park needs to streamline and move forward with a lot of items that hasn't been getting done.

**Legislative Committee - Chairman, Mencini: cont.**

This piece of legislation starts with Council and then move forward looking at the other departments.

Mr. Poindexter stated my stance on this legislation has not changed, the more representation given to the residents the better. If not able to speak to their ward Councilman, for whatever reason, they have a choice of contacting three other Councilmembers, think the dynamic works. Would like an impartial Council President running the meetings, which is a tough job, shouldn't worry about taking sides and all the dynamics that comes with that. Not in support from the beginning.

Mr. Scott stated being an original sponsor not ready to move forward right now.

Mr. Orcutt clarified for the residents each and every time Council has a meeting the Council President per City Charter may have to vote if there is a tie.

Mrs. Schmuck stated three Council at large members is a nice number to have being residents have a choice, nice dynamic.

Mr. Vecchio stated the dynamic currently set is best as Mr. Orcutt stated the Council President may have to vote in the case of a tie; having an impartial Council President is the best.

Mr. Mencini thanked Council for their input and agree with Mr. Orcutt is that everything has to be looked, this being one of them. Not a fan of this legislation because it's always been this way and seems to work well. The prior Charter Review Commission brought something similar to this that didn't get much too much traction.

The clerk called the roll on the motion by Mr. Troyer, supported by Mrs. Schmuck, to place back in committee.

**ROLL CALL: AYES:** Troyer, Schmuck, Scott, Mencini, Poindexter, Salvatore

**NAYS:** Orcutt, Salvatore. The motion carried with a vote of 5-2.

2. A RESOLUTION URGING THE OHIO LEGISLATURE TO ADOPT HOUSE BILL 308, COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS THE FIRST RESPONDERS PTSD BENEFITS BILL SPONSORED BY REPRESENTATIVE TOM PATTON AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Introduced by Councilman Troyer.

Mr. Vecchio asked with my background, is there any idea what will this legislation do with Worker's Compensation claims?

Mr. Cingle responded I attended a seminar about a year ago when this topic was discussed and the attorney that was presenting concern was this would dramatically

**Legislative committee - Chairman, Mencini: cont.**

increase Worker's Compensation claims. In 2019, the City of Brook Park paid \$277,000.00 to the Bureau of Worker's Compensation. The presenting attorney's other concern was that it's difficult to diagnose where PTSD originally occurred.

Mr. Vecchio continued that is information I've heard before and Council may want to have Mr. Cingle. Human Resources or Mayor's office contact the Bureau of Worker's Compensation for true and accurate numbers prior to moving forward.

Mr. Troyer - thank you Mr. Chairman, for the ambush and stated you and Mr. Vecchio had that all figured out.

Mr. Mencini - no I didn't.

Mr. Vecchio - excuse me.

Mr. Mencini - hold on.

Mr. Vecchio - Mr. Troyer, Mr. Troyer.

Mr. Mencini - Councilman Troyer stop right there, no we didn't.

Mr. Troyer - why did you go to him then you always go to the sponsor.

Mr. Vecchio - Mr. Troyer, I had my hand up, sir.

Mr. Mencini - stop, (Mr. Troyer) you have the floor.

Mr. Troyer continued the story behind this a month or so ago an email was sent from the City of Berea that passed this. That email was sent to the Council clerk who forwarded to all Councilmembers. I put in a request for legislation to be drafted and without me seeing it the legislation was introduced and placed in committee. There are no numbers on the substantial increase in Workmen's Compensation if there were numbers that could be discussed. All I know is our first responders are worth whatever it takes to protect them and keep them safe and help them out. Would like to get this done, again, we have to look out for our first responders and that's what this does. If you're not going to come up with some actual numbers of the possible costs I don't think that's an issue.

Mr. Poindexter stated I can't believe the argument against this legislation is worrying about the costs going up for people on the job being hurt on the job, are we living in crazy town? I work a dangerous job and have the potential to be hurt, maimed or killed every single day and would be totally floored if my employer said I can't pay your Worker's Compensation claim it's too much money. What are we

**Legislative committee - Chairman, Mencini: cont.**

thinking about here if these people are getting PTSD from the job they should be granted every ounce of funding that we can give them, they are putting their life on the line for us. I can't believe that's the argument right now that these people put their lives on the line but it may cost too much money for them to be treated. I fully support this, fully support Workers Compensation to the fullest. If someone is going to their job to support their family and get hurts on the job or some kind of condition because of their job they should be taken care of. That's what we need to do.

Mr. Orcutt stated to Mr. Troyer you beat me to the punch on this, I also submitted an email to the law department for this legislation. I think this is something that will be very helpful and is there for the right purposes. I heard this discussion and surprised it's gotten as heated as it is but will say. If people are out there doing something where they are committing fraud that's wrong; there should be a process to protect the monies, there. If there is an issue of the city's safety forces have an issue with PTSD then we have to support them, this is coming from someone that did two tours in Iraq. There are things that happen on the job that psychologically change people and am in support of this and don't think Council should be screaming and yelling it's a Resolution. The State House will deal with this and it's something I think we should back them and make sure we're always looking out for our safety forces.

Mrs. Schmuck stated I am a first responder and would like to make a motion to place this on the November 17<sup>th</sup> agenda.

Mr. Mencini stated won't be as dramatic as Mr. Poindexter.

Mr. Poindexter - didn't mean to do that, I apologize if I offended anyone.

Mr. Mencini continued you're fine and I concur with my colleagues; Councilmembers Poindexter, Orcutt and Schmuck. Until you give me statistics to tell me different when you're dealing with injuries such as this. Let's be honest, I think there is only one of us working in the medical field now. We don't know none of us are experts on this so we have to take care of number one first responders and employees, anything can happen at any time and that's our job as Councilmembers.

Mr. Salvatore stated as previously stated this is a Resolution supporting HB 308 and don't know why we're having this lengthy discussion on this; should be moved to the agenda and vote your conscious.

**Motion** by Mrs. Schmuck, supported by Mr. Troyer, to place on the November 17<sup>th</sup> Council agenda.

**ROLL CALL: AYES:** Schmuck, Troyer, Mencini, Poindexter, Salvatore, Scott, Orcutt  
**NAYS:** None. The motion carried.

**NOTE:** EXECUTIVE SESSION - COLLECTIVE BARGAINING MATTERS - PER MAYOR GAMMELLA:

**Motion** by Mr. Poindexter, supported by Mrs. Schmuck, to go into Executive Session for Collective Bargaining Matters.

**ROLL CALL: AYES:** Poindexter, Schmuck, Scott, Orcutt, Troyer, Mencini, Salvatore  
**NAYS:** None. The motion carried at 10:33 p.m.

In attendance: Councilmembers, Mayor Gammella, Law Director Horvath and Finance Director Cingle.

**Motion** by Mr. Troyer, supported by Mr. Mencini, to go back to the Regular Order of Business.

**ROLL CALL: AYES:** Troyer, Mencini, Poindexter, Salvatore, Scott, Schmuck, Orcutt  
**NAYS:** None. The motion carried at 10:59 p.m.

There being no further business to come before this meeting a **motion** by Mr. Troyer, supported by Mrs. Schmuck, to adjourn.

**ROLL CALL: AYES:** Troyer, Schmuck, Orcutt, Scott, Salvatore, Poindexter, Mencini  
**NAYS:** None. The motion carried.

Council President Vecchio declared this meeting adjourned at 11:03 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED *Michelle Blazak*  
Michelle Blazak  
Clerk of Council

APPROVED *February 26, 2021 - moved from 3/9/21 Caucus due to technical difficulties*

THESE MEETING MINUTES APPROVED BY BROOK PARK CITY COUNCIL ARE A SYNOPSIS, NOT TRANSCRIBED IN THEIR ENTIRETY, ALTHOUGH ACCURATE.

14,521 words

