

**ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED  
AT THE CAUCUS PRIOR TO THE COUNCIL MEETING  
TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2021**

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**

**DISCUSSION:**

1. ZOOM 2021 CAUCUS - COUNCIL MEETINGS (Councilman Mencini)

Mr. Mencini stated once again last Tuesday ran into more problems with Zoom the reason I brought this forward is to get these things corrected, hopefully soon the move will take place to go back to the chambers. This can't keep happening with the budget coming forward and am told a good share of people that do watch the meetings. Very important that if Council is going to have Zoom meetings they are proper with everyone having access to the meetings. The other item is basketball games are going on, BoxCast and should be no excuses. The city pays good money to the IT department and have a committee that works on this and is doing their due diligence now but can't have this anymore. Wanted to bring this out to let the residents know Council is frustrated with this as well as many other things.

Mr. Vecchio stated just for a Point of Clarification with Zoom itself there is not a problem with Zoom. There have been some issues with internet connections due to weather and problems with BoxCast with livestreaming along with the city's website; Zoom itself works fine but there are other technical areas.

Mr. Mencini stated to Mr. Vecchio there's no clarification, there have been two meetings that have gone awry i.e. people freezing and a lot of things occurring. My point is this can't be happening anymore and should probably have someone from the IT department in attendance tonight to explain exactly what has been occurring, a professional. There are a lot of communities, school boards and companies are doing good with their Zoom and have the proper people handling it, this city is paying people good money and to say it's a correction, no, this community deserves that, otherwise think about getting back to the chambers. Know there could be problems there and get that but can't keep having these problems anymore.

Mr. Poindexter concurred with Mr. Mencini and stated can't have these problems. That's why the technology committee was started because the city's technology is lacking. The city's website is built on WordPress technology that is going obsolete; within the next six months the city's website potentially not even work because of

**Discussion: cont.**

updates and other stuff. Need to start addressing problems before and not after that's why by committee a lot of these issues can. The problems aren't from committee or with the time with the pandemic. It's because the city let technology lapse so long and now need to catch up and the more it lapses the more catch up will be needed. The technology committee is a good start but is just a resident committee and can't dedicate full time to fix all the city's technological issues. The committee had a meeting last week and talked with the city's IT consultant and are heading in the right direction but it's going to take time prior to getting all these issues ironed out. In favor of returning to Council chambers but there will still be issues with that not everyone is comfortable and will not force anybody back to chambers that are not 100% comfortable in returning.

Mr. Orcutt stated last week I brought up the point of doing hybrid meetings with some people in the chambers allowing the residents back in and had discussions with Mr. Vecchio and Poindexter. Have either one of you had any discussion moving forward with that and, if so, what is the timeline to be able to do a hybrid meeting?

Mr. Poindexter responded there were some preliminary discussions with some members of the technology committee and with the city's IT consultant. We believe that the technology is there to hold hybrid meetings with the way the chambers is set up with the screens. The theoretical idea and would have to do a test run to see if it were to work. Basically, have a laptop set up where the meeting in the chambers is a person on Zoom, one screen would be the chambers using the dongle. Allowing anyone in the audience to see the members who are remote that's one potential way. Would have to do a dry-run to work out any kinks that may occur during the process.

Mr. Orcutt asked Mr. Vecchio is there a timeline for that test run to be done?

Mr. Vecchio responded would need to get everybody set together, obviously, the person puts all the electronics together in the Council chambers. Would have to schedule with him to see what he will charge and would have to be something Council would have to provide for and appropriate. Then, in turn, once all those pieces are put together like Mr. Poindexter mentioned would have to run the trial run through making sure all the kinks are worked out. To put a timeframe on this I would say 30 days estimated guess with putting everyone's schedules together.

Mr. Orcutt clarified to get to the test run?

Mr. Vecchio concurred.

**Discussion: cont.**

Mr. Orcutt asked that would be with Council approving the monies to be able to have the hardware and wiring installed?

Mr. Vecchio responded if I'm saying 30 days would be if the everything is aligned but the thing is to get the contractors lined up to do so. Would have to get bids, whatever his bid may be, brought to Council, monies appropriated and approved at a Council meeting. Once all those things are done then the work begins.

Mr. Orcutt stated think there has been enough time to do this already, personally, and think we should start moving on it as soon as possible and try to beat that deadline. This has nothing to do with members that can't make it back to chambers, completely understand and respect that. But there are members of the community that do want to get back to chambers, want the microphone back. Certainly hoping that can happen a lot quicker than 30 days.

Mr. Vecchio commented let's not forget there is still the availability for residents to speak during this whole time. There is another provision as discussed when setting this up with Council the easiest way was the phone call. It can also be set up for residents to have the link to also remote in to show their faces; there are two variables there that can be done. Setting all those pieces together with Council, the technology committee, the outsiders all have to be approved.

Mayor Gammella stated technology is constantly changing and evolving and we have to keep up with it. There were discussions with the city's IT people and Baldwin-Wallace College who helps the city. The website will be redone but it's going to cost money that will be included in the upcoming budget. The budget is extremely tight but fortunately found a little bit more money for roads and flooding issues. Agree with Council this is an issue that needs to be addressed and there is nothing wrong with the technology except it's old and will be taken care of.

Mr. Troyer stated the most recent issue with meetings were the livestreaming, my understanding had nothing to do with Zoom. Hopefully, the fix the Mayor just talked about will take care of that problem too. Back six or eight months ago there was discussion of a hybrid version and then things became worse and I wasn't very vocal about it. But, any time in the last four or five months I would have voted to go back in chambers with stipulation of people that can't or don't want to. At any time, the vote comes up requiring the Council President to get this done with the help of the IT department to get the hybrid set up I will vote yes; any time the vote comes up to go back to the chambers I will vote yes.

Mr. Poindexter stated I feel that the technology already exists in the chambers to do what is needed. Don't know if it's going to be much of an infrastructure update

**Discussion: cont.**

as much as an education update for teaching how to use to full capacity. Think the technology is there just need to learn how to use it to do what we want to do. Another point that we must make certain before coming to chambers is the cleaning and COVID-19 restrictions need to be fully followed before coming back, not just for Council but also the residents. Need to make sure there is a good cleaning schedule that is documented that the chambers are good to go prior to coming back those things that need to be done.

Mr. Vecchio commented to Mr. Poindexter good point, that is something that Council, I'm one person, we're a body all together including the clerk is nine people and the Mayor makes ten, Council has to figure out those parameters and I would implore Members of Council to get together with some of that stuff, to figure out the correct parameters. There is a lot of information out there however things are done everything has to be in place. Think everyone has their work cut-out for them, myself included, with trying if we go to hybrid or whatever we do it all has to be figured out. I don't know if the hybrid would run from in chambers or out of chambers, have no idea what's going to work. Would like to have some professionals from that aspect to find out information and now it's a matter of finding out who those professionals are.

Mr. Orcutt recommended at the Planning commission meeting to separate on the dais some commission members sit where the directors sit at Council meetings.

Mr. Vecchio interjected let's hold off on that discussion and figure out the Zoom portion and line up everything we need to do. We could go back and forth on that but think we need to get all those items on paper and present it.

Mr. Orcutt commented it was just a ten-second suggestion, we're going on one year.

Mr. Troyer commented we're not Texas but they just removed all their COVID rules, no masks and no distancing. Residents I talked to want us back in chambers that's what I'm looking for and anything I can do to make that happen I will do.

Mr. Salvatore stated the technology is there, we could meet from the chambers, we could do a hybrid system, we can do just about anything. I think the most important thing that's been brought up before and Mr. Poindexter brought up earlier. The most important thing is to do this in a safe fashion to make sure when the chambers are opened up and go back in there. There is a schedule for cleaning before and after each usage, some kind of protocol to control people coming in to make sure to be able to enforce the COVID-19 restrictions while meetings are going on. You're going to have to look at the possibility of a Sargent-at-arms or

**Discussion: cont.**

something in place to make sure everything is being followed properly. The one thing Council doesn't want to do and certainly not rushing into anything because it's taken a while to get to this point. As Mr. Troyer stated we're not Texas but around the country the experts are saying don't do anything rash, slow down let's get the vaccines into as many bodies as we can. This isn't any type of race but do know we need to get back in chambers and as long as it is done right I'm all for going back in but let's do it right and safe for everybody, not just City Council but everybody.

Mr. Mencini stated I agree with Mr. Vecchio we've covered a lot of this and can cover a lot of this as we get going here, very thankful for this healthy discussion. As far as talking about keeping the room clean let's be honest there's one person in that room now and going into the gym there's about 40 or 50 people. Planning and Zoning has been meeting in the chambers for well over six months and think the recreation staff or cleaning crew would do a very good job.

Mr. Troyer stated just a thought maybe the Mayor or Mr. Orcutt, being on the Southwest (hospital) committee can do something to get Council the vaccine sooner but not before the city's safety forces. Maybe that could help with some of the people concerned about coming back making sure they get the vaccine as soon as possible, to avail some of the issues.

**Motion** by Mr. Mencini, supported by Mr. Orcutt, that this was discussed.

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

**Motion** by Mr. Salvatore, supported by Mr. Orcutt, to place the Addendum on the agenda.

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

2. A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HOUSING COUNCIL ON THE CITY OF BROOK PARK'S COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA (CRA) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Introduced by Mayor Gammella.

**Motion** by Mr. Poindexter, supported by Mrs. Schmuck, to place tonight's Council agenda under letter M.

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

**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.

There being no further business to come before this meeting a **motion** by Mr. Salvatore, supported by Mr. Orcutt, to adjourn.

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

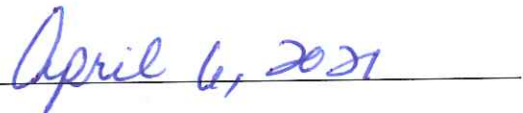
Council President Vecchio declared this meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED



Michelle Blazak  
Clerk of Council

APPROVED



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

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