

**SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BROOK PARK, OHIO  
HELD ON MARCH 23, 2021**

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

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

Also in attendance were Finance Director Cingle, Assistant Finance Director Healy, Mayor Gammella and Law Director Horvath. Councilwoman Schmuck (7:01 p.m.).

**DISCUSSION:**

1. 2021 BUDGET

Mr. Troyer stated have communicated with quite a few of you, think basically what we have to do tonight is have a basic discussion like last week and the top priority is to call some meetings. This is a just a rehash of what Council had before there is no legislation. Call a Caucus meeting and Council meeting to get first reading; nothing can be amended because the legislation is still in committee.

Mr. Salvatore stated if Council is going to do that I would suggest picking out some dates now, in case, more than one meeting is needed to move through the process to get the legislation passed.

Mr. Scott concurred with Mr. Salvatore and suggested three dates in case three readings are needed, call a Caucus before and then move it, schedule the three special meetings.

Mr. Orcutt asked if Friday, Monday and Tuesday work with Councilmembers? Friday would be a Caucus-Council, Monday and Tuesday Council meetings.

Mr. Vecchio stated those days' work for me.

Mr. Scott concurred.

Mr. Mencini stated good with those dates.

Mrs. Schmuck stated good with the dates.

Mayor Gammella stated Friday is going to be rough, why not Wednesday, Thursday, Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday?

**Discussion: cont.**

Mr. Troyer stated can do any day but prefer to do sooner rather than later, don't want to run into another snafu like tonight.

Mr. Vecchio interjected we don't have a snafu tonight; we have what Council had asked for to finish discussing to see if there were any questions. Not a snafu it's taking care of what everybody asked for, we have the time and can get rid of any questions that may need to have answered. Have both the finance director, assistant finance director and Mayor.

Mr. Troyer stated with all due respect Council President I was trying to say we schedule a regular meeting and you insisted you can take care of it. That night the legislation was introduced with the budget and that's what we should have on the tonight's agenda.

Mr. Mencini commented this is the 2021 budget and it's very important and doesn't matter if we meet in the morning or evening, don't care what day, want to get this done.

Mr. Vecchio stated Council has received the 2021 capital from the Mayor's office let's go through some questions.

Mr. Troyer stated the only problem is Council just received the capital and haven't had a chance to transfer all the numbers.

Mr. Vecchio commented can put it on the screen.

Mr. Poindexter commented comfortable with the capital list received and think they are necessary items. My questions hinge more on adding funding for the ADA (American Disabilities Act) apparatus at the city playgrounds. Mr. Troyer mentioned in the past in discussions with the finance director about adding a fund. What I would like to see and would have made the amendment if the legislation was on the agenda to set aside possibly \$20,000.00 into a special ADA apparatus fund. To potentially match the amount, the Cooper foundation would raise. Currently, the foundation has raised \$15,000.00, set out with a goal of \$35,000.00. Any donations received between now and May 1<sup>st</sup> would get them closer to the \$35,000.00 goal. The \$20,000.00 the city would start that fund with would be in case the foundation doesn't raise any more dollars, the city could help them get to the \$35,000.00 goal for playground equipment.

Mr. Vecchio for clarification where are you proposing to amend monies from so everyone has in advance to look at?

Mr. Poindexter responded out of the general fund; \$20,000.00 for the new fund.

**Discussion: cont.**

Or if it's feasible maybe that's something Council could move from the special recreation fund.

Mr. Vecchio asked Mr. Cingle is that something that's able to be done from the special recreation fund?

Mr. Cingle responded would have to look into that but would suggest if it can't be taken out of the special recreation fund but could take out of the capital improvements fund under parks & playgrounds fund 401, line item 342.

Mr. Poindexter continued that was going to be my original amendment but talking with Mr. Troyer this past week I remember discussion where Mr. Troyer suggested starting a special fund specifically for that reason. This is something that I don't think will be one time deal I think the Cooper foundation is looking forward to doing this for several years until all the city parks are potentially compliant with all-inclusive equipment.

Mr. Troyer concurred with that and stated would like a match if the city gets a grant from the Cooper foundation for that \$15,000.00 or \$20,000.00 that the city matches it and do something nice. I would prefer that we start with one all-inclusive playground at the main campus; Mr. Cooper's proposal was putting piece in every city playground. Think it's a great idea and if the city does a match that doubles it and possibly get more donations and Mr. Cooper would have to donate to the city to match for us to match. When Mr. Thomas brought this forward years ago wish the city could have done it then but this is another chance and don't want to miss this chance, should make it happen.

Mr. Salvatore stated think we should get off the idea of doing a match and wouldn't like getting into this project and not be able to finish it due to not enough money. I'd rather go with the idea that whatever the is pledged to get this project started the city could pick up the tab to pay for the rest of it, whatever that may be, for phase one of the new park design. Rather than get saddled with a matching fund type of amount and could be \$5,000.00 or \$6,000.00 away and don't get it completed, think it should be funded and whatever is not used moves to the next project. Also, would like to set aside, talked about before, a resident assistance fund at about \$25,000.00 and ready to do that when legislation comes forward. Possibly looking at bringing back the sidewalk program this year maybe can't do \$100,000.00 or \$200,000.00 or maybe can do a first-come-first serve with \$50,000.00 set aside. Lot of people are out walking and some of the sidewalks are in bad repair and would like to be in a position to fix some of the really bad sidewalks; with a 50-50 split that the city has historically done. To Mayor Gammella where is the city at with the grass cutting program?

**Discussion: cont.**

Mayor Gammella responded grass cutting program is proceeding as normal, no changes.

Mr. Salvatore continued wanted to make sure because someone called saying there wouldn't be a program until the budget was passed. Can submit applications until the budget is finalized wouldn't want the program to stall, some of the contractors kicked off today.

Mayor Gammella commented definitely are.

Mrs. Schmuck stated good with the capital budget and would like to see the sidewalk program come back.

Mr. Troyer stated just spoke with a resident last week about bringing back the sidewalk program and thought would wait until next year, kind of getting late to do this year. Want to clarify something on the all-inclusive playgrounds the idea, which is kind of ruined at this point, is to have a match with more people donating to the Cooper foundation. Sure we can do whatever to get this done and wasn't saying we don't do something else just saying we could call it a matching, that's a moot point it's too late.

Mr. Mencini stated it looks like some are good with the capital and obviously have some other ideas and would like to ask the Mayor for next week's meetings have some of the directors' recreation or building department for any questions on itemized features on the capital.

Mr. Vecchio asked anyone in particular to have here?

Mr. Mencini continued it's the budget, not directly towards you good question, but it's the budget and there are going to be some questions. The Mayor does answer them which is fine but sometimes it's good to go to the department heads. During the budget hearings all the directors should be here at least the first one or two, later on towards the end we know where we're going.

Mr. Vecchio commented that's why I asked to reach out and make that happen to have directors there.

Mr. Mencini interjected through the budget process the directors can make these meetings, this budget is very important. Coming out of COVID-19 and know what direction we're going in.

Mayor Gammella commented Council you are welcome to call any of the directors if there are any questions, at any time. If you would like certain directors at certain

**Discussion: cont.**

meetings let my office know will have them there. Again, please call them at any time if there are any questions.

Mr. Mencini continued not here to debate I do and some of them are very good in getting back, not saying others aren't, but through the budget process a question is asked that is a reaction to another question.

Mayor Gammella commented put the meetings together if you want them all there we'll have them there but will need a schedule first.

Mr. Troyer concurred with Mr. Mencini we should probably have, when pulled out of committee should everybody there. For instance, still going through capital don't have all the numbers transferred over. For instance, when was the last time the gym floor was renovated?

Mayor Gammella responded I know it was and recently had a water problem will get with Mr. Elliott tomorrow and let you know.

Mr. Troyer stated that was covered the other day but it needs it because of a water problem and not normal wear and tear.

Mayor Gammella commented not sure about that there was a water issue and will call you tomorrow.

Mr. Vecchio stated if not mistaken that was brought last year during budget talks for the gym floor.

Mr. Troyer responded that's what I'm saying it seems like every budget.

Mr. Vecchio interjected what I'm saying is Council didn't approve that appropriation for it to be done then, that money was moved. Think it was last year and could quite possibly be the year before.

Mr. Troyer stated to Mayor Gammella line item 342 has two pickup service trucks for \$25,000,00. Is that a lease payment?

Mayor Gammella responded believe it is a lease payment but will check and get back to you.

Mr. Troyer continued those will be four-wheel drive vehicles?

Mayor Gammella responded don't know if they necessarily have to be four-wheel drive.

**Discussion: cont.**

Mr. Troyer continued they could be used for snow-plowing and other things, would think they would be.

Mr. Salvatore stated there are two pickup trucks for \$43,000.00 then there is another line item for another one for \$23,000.00?

Mr. Troyer responded yes, it comes out of the S.C.M.R. fund two pickup trucks \$43,425.00.

Mr. Vecchio stated seeing no further questions, Council what's your pleasure.

Mr. Salvatore likes Mr. Scott's recommendations for special meetings.

Mr. Vecchio mentioned Friday, Monday and Tuesday?

Mr. Poindexter - Point of clarification, this is the Mayor's budget and he is not available on Friday.

Mr. Salvatore stated call it for 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Poindexter mentioned working in Mentor don't know if I can make 5:00 p.m.

Mayor Gammella stated have an appointment at 7:00 p.m., have to be there, can do up to 7:00 p.m. or all day Friday, can do Thursday or Wednesday.

Mr. Vecchio stated no clerk on Wednesday and Thursday I'm unavailable; Friday anytime. Monday or Saturday morning works.

Mayor Gammella asked what is the earliest we can have the meeting maybe I could be there for the first part up to that especially since there will be meetings Monday and Tuesday.

Mr. Troyer - Point of clarification.

Mr. Vecchio recognized.

Mr. Troyer - we have a pro-tem.

Mr. Vecchio - we do, I'm not available on Thursday, I don't matter in this don't have a vote but what I'm saying is not available Thursday.

Ms. Blazak mentioned there can't be a meeting called for Wednesday due to the 24-hour notice per the Charter.

**Discussion: cont.**

Mr. Poindexter commented could leave work early and can probably make it.

**Motion** by Mr. Salvatore to call a special Council meeting for Friday at 5:00 p.m.; Monday and Tuesday at 7:00 p.m., correct. (see below)

Mr. Salvatore concurred.

Mr. Troyer - Point of clarification.

Mr. Vecchio recognized.

Mr. Troyer - a Caucus meeting is needed for Friday at 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Salvatore - let the President call these meetings in the proper fashion so we can get this done. If a Caucus and Council meeting, then that's what we'll have.

Mr. Vecchio - right, we can't even discuss without constantly being interrupted with our train of thought. Tom, please hold your thought for a second let a full dialogue take place before interrupting. Mr. Vecchio reiterated calling a meeting for Friday at 5:00 p.m., Monday and Tuesday for 7:00 p.m.; special Council and special Caucus meeting to have the budget placed on two special Council meetings to follow. Could have a special Council meeting on Friday if that's what Council likes.

Mr. Salvatore concurred and stated that's what I think we should do in case three readings are needed.

Mr. Vecchio reiterated calling a special Caucus meeting for Friday at 5:00 p.m., special Council meeting to follow and Monday and Tuesday special Council meetings at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Salvatore concurred.

**Motion** by Mr. Salvatore, supported by Mr. Orcutt, to call a special Caucus meeting for Friday at 5:00 p.m. with a special Council meeting to follow with special Council meetings for Monday and Tuesday at 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Troyer stated will vote for this motion but it's not the motion that you espousing.

Mr. Vecchio commented trying to ask questions with you interrupting can't even get a train of thought through.

**Discussion: cont.**

The clerk called the roll on the motion by Mr. Salvatore, supported by Mr. Orcutt, to call a special Caucus meeting for Friday at 5:00 p.m. with a special Council meeting to follow with special Council meetings for Monday and Tuesday at 5:00 p.m.

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

Mr. Vecchio for clarification Friday would be the 26<sup>th</sup> day of March at 5:00 p.m. special Caucus meeting that will immediately follow with a special Council meeting. Then on Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. there will be a special Council meeting followed by Tuesday the 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. a special Council meeting.

Mr. Troyer - thank you Mr. Council President so I guess it's bless my heart then.

Mr. Vecchio - Tom, if you were man enough you would stand up and say exactly what you mean instead of trying to be hooked on phonics, sir, that's just the facts. I'm done playing your game.

Mr. Poindexter - that's a little out of line.

Mr. Vecchio - know it's a campaign year enough is enough.

Mr. Poindexter - that's a little out of line.

Mr. Troyer - I don't know what you mean by that I'm not running for your position.

Mr. Vecchio - Tom, not running for your position.

Mr. Scott - let's move forward, let's move on.

**Motion** by Mr. Orcutt, supported by Mr. Poindexter, that it was discussed.

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



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

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

Council President Vecchio declared this meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED Michelle Blazak  
Michelle Blazak  
Clerk of Council

APPROVED April 6, 2021

THESE MEETING MINUTES ARE A SYNOPSIS, NOT TRANSCRIBED IN THEIR ENTIRETY, ALTHOUGH ACCURATE.

2,749 words

