

**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS, OHIO
MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM | 827 0685 5762
TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2021**

Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan called the meeting to order at 7:02p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Mrs. Michele Weiss
Mrs. Sandra Berry
Mrs. Barbara Blankfeld
Mr. Phillip Ertel
Mr. Justin Gould
Mrs. Susan Pardee
Mr. John Rach

Also Present: Acting Law Director Michael Cicero
Clerk of Council Kelly Thomas
Finance Director Dennis Kennedy
Fire Chief Robert Perko
Police Chief Dustin Rogers
Service Superintendent Jeffrey Pokorny
City Engineer Joseph Ciuni
Economic Development Susan Drucker
Interim Manager of Building, Housing & Community Development/City Planner Brendan Zak
Communications / Civic Engagement Michael Cook
Special Events Rachel Mullen

Council Meeting January 4, 2021

There were no corrections to the January 4, 2021 minutes.

MOTION BY MRS. PARDEE, SECONDED BY MRS. WEISS for the passage of the January 4, 2021 Council Minutes as corrected. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

Comments from Audience

There were no audience comments.

Mayor’s Report

Today, Phase 1B vaccinations began in Ohio. Ohioans 80 years of age and older who have not already been inoculated either through work or congregate care living are now able to get the vaccine. The state of Ohio is expected to receive 100,000 vaccines for this first group that numbers 420,000 people.

The overall Phase 1B includes about 2.2 million people. On Monday, January 25, vaccinations will open to Ohioans age 75 and older; On Monday, February 1, vaccinations will open to Ohioans age 70 and older; On Monday, February 8, age 65 and older.

You are encouraged to visit vaccines.coronavirus.ohio.gov to search for providers vaccinating in the current phase by county and by ZIP code. If you have older relatives who are not tech savvy, we encourage you to help your relatives navigate that site. We will also be updating our residents through the City’s coronavirus email updates and through the At Your Service newsletter.

The sooner we all get vaccinated, the sooner we can begin restoring ordinary activities. Speaking of one of those activities, it may still be January, but people are already looking forward to warmer weather. I have already begun receiving inquiries as to whether the City will be opening the pool at Purvis Park this summer. [I love the pool. So many of our residents love the pool. If there’s a way to open it safely this summer, we will.](#) Matters of public health and public safety will take precedence. It is too early to say with certainty whether we will open the pool. It is not too early to begin planning for the different contingencies under which we may operate the pool, and those plans are underway. Granted, I will note that we did that last year as well, before determining that the pool would remain closed in 2020.

We will take our guidance ultimately from the Cuyahoga County Board of Health as to whether and under what conditions we may open the pool. If the City can safely open the pool, then it is the administration’s intention to do so.

Before departing the topic of the Coronavirus and COVID-19 pandemic, I have from time to time reported on milestones to preserve them for the record. I would be remiss if I did not report for the record that since our last meeting the United States of America reached the grim milestone of over 400,000 deaths due to COVID-19 since last March. With over 2 million deaths worldwide, that is more recorded deaths than any other nation in the world. Here in Ohio, we have had over 10,000 deaths reported since the pandemic began. By way of perspective, the first three deaths here in Ohio were on March 21, 2020. Just ten months ago.

I don't have a good transition here to my next subject. The rest of my report is all much better news.

On January 7th, I named Brendan Zak as Interim Manager of Building, Housing & Community Development. This is a temporary assignment as we continue to reorganize the Building Department and the Housing & Community Development Department.

In this interim capacity, Mr. Zak shall serve officially as the department head, administering the Building and Housing & Community Development Departments and managing all personnel therein.

Mr. Zak will also be attending and participating in Directors & Chiefs meetings and City Council meetings. And he is here this evening in that capacity for the first time – welcome, Mr. Zak.

Mr. Zak joined the City as a City Planner in 2019 after having been both a Mayoral Intern and then an Urban Planning Intern under then Housing and Community Development Director Patrick Grogan-Myers, as well as completing a Cleveland Foundation Grant Administration internship with the City of Brooklyn, and serving as Youth Development Intern for the St. Clair-Superior Development Corporation. Mr. Zak was valedictorian of his class at Cleveland State University Levin College of Urban Affairs and is currently a Master of Urban Planning and Development candidate at Cleveland State University.

Mr. Zak has distinguished himself in every opportunity we have given him, and I am confident he will do here as well.

On a related note, I am delighted to announce that the City has hired Nino Monaco to serve as the City's Chief Building Official. Mr. Monaco previously served the City as an independent contractor providing these services for three months in mid-2020 after the retirement of Building Commissioner James McReynolds. Mr. Monaco's initial time here ended because, though his work and service were of high quality, we could not come to terms on an extended contract. By hiring him outright we have resolved those issues. Officially, Mr. Monaco will be working here in a part time capacity, splitting his time with similar responsibilities he holds the City of Macedonia and the Village of Brooklyn Heights. While Mr. Monaco will be working part time, his work will be focused exclusively on the role of CBO, and not on department administration, as that will be handled by Interim Manager Brendan Zak. We will continue to rely on Howard Sonenstein among others for the team approach we began developing in the department mid-last year. A job listing for an additional Building Inspector remains posted, as it has since October. Mr. Monaco has already started his work here at the City, his first day being this past Friday, January 15.

I'd like to take a moment to recognize the honorable Ann Mannen for her service to the City of University Heights. Judge Mannen is moving out of the city, and as a non-resident will no longer be qualified to serve on the Board of Zoning Appeals. I had the pleasure of working with Judge Mannen over 20 years ago as a judicial staff attorney at the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas. While I was not assigned to Judge Mannen, I worked in the chambers adjacent, saw her every day, coordinated work with her and her bailiff, Georgine Welo. I appreciate that I had the second opportunity to work with someone I respect and admire as much as Ann Mannen. Those second opportunities don't always come around. On behalf of everyone here at the City of University Heights, we wish her good health and much happiness.

Related then to that, we have an opening on the BZA for a two year seat to commence February 1, 2021. Effectively immediately, I am accepting statements of interest and supporting materials (e.g. resume or CV), emailed to info@universityheights.com. I will accept and review applications as they come in. Though the BZA has quasi-judicial proceedings, one does not have to be a lawyer to serve on the BZA. A well qualified applicant will have an interest in thoughtful land use, real estate development, knowledge of zoning and interest to learn, an open mind and an eye towards the future – especially as the City prepares to undertake a comprehensive update to its Zoning Code. More on that tonight on the agenda. Thank you. This concludes my report.

Agenda Items:**A) Motion to Approve Appointment of Kelly Jablonski to Board of Zoning Appeals**

Mayor Brennan stated that Mrs. Jablonski has served on the Board of Zoning Appeals since 2013 with distinction and noted that Mrs. Jablonski had provided a letter stating her desire to continue her position on the Board. Mayor Brennan added that Mrs. Jablonski has been an asset to the Board itself in making good observations. Mrs. Jablonski attendance to Board meetings has been very good, Mayor Brennan stated he was delighted to put her name before Council for reappointment to the Board of Zoning for another two-year term.

Mrs. Weiss added that it had been a privilege serving with Mrs. Jablonski on the Board of Zoning adding that Mrs. Jablonski does an excellent job with all of her Board of Zoning duties and was happy that Mrs. Jablonski was accepting another two-year term.

Mr. Rach commented that prior to being a Council person, he served on the Board of Zoning Appeals and during his tenure a seat on the Board of Zoning Appeals opened up and he asked Mrs. Jablonski to consider joining the Board of Zoning Appeals because her experience and development work would be an asset. Mr. Rach added that it was a pleasure serving with her on the Board and he was excited that she will be serving on the Board of Zoning Appeals for another two years.

MOTION BY MR. RACH, SECONDED BY MRS. WEISS to for the Appointment of Kelly Jablonski to Board of Zoning Appeals for a two-year term. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

B) Ordinance 2021-02 Adopting Codified Ordinance Section 212.05 Entitled “Construction Contractor Dispute Resolution and Administrative Claims Process,” and further Adopting the City’s Contractor Dispute Resolution and Administrative Claims Process Policy (on emergency)

Mr. Cicero stated that the Cedar Road resurfacing construction project would be funded by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). As a prerequisite of receiving the funds, selecting the contractor and the paying of invoices ODOT requires the City to have in place a 3-step dispute resolution process. The City has already informally created a dispute process. Ordinance 2021-02 would formalize the process where in the event of a dispute the City’s Engineer would meet with the contractor and then the next step would be the involvement of both the Mayor and Law Director. Additionally, a third step has been added to the process where there would be a neutral third party that is agreed upon by both the contractor and the City. Once Ordinance 2021-02 is passed ODOT will enter into contract with the City and fund the project.

Mr. Ciuni commented that University Heights qualifies as a local public agency to administer a construction project that is funded by ODOT. This Ordinance is just one of the mechanisms that have to be in place to receive the funding. The City has to administer the project in the same way that ODOT would.

MOTION BY MRS. WEISS, SECONDED BY MRS. BERRY to approve Ordinance 2021-02 Adopting Codified Ordinance Section 212.05 Entitled “Construction Contractor Dispute Resolution and Administrative Claims Process,” and further Adopting the City’s Contractor Dispute Resolution and Administrative Claims Process Policy. Roll call on suspension of the rules, all voted “aye.” Roll call on passage, all voted “aye.”

C) Ordinance 2021-03 Creating a Facility Capital Improvement Fund (on first reading)

Mr. Kennedy stated that Ordinance 2021-03 was discussed at the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee meetings. The Ordinance establishes a fund with strict controls on what the funds can be expended for. This will provide a source for the city accumulate resources to support, study, research, design the construction of improved or new facilities for the city. The fund will be incorporated into the 2021 Final Budget.

Mrs. Blankfeld stated that she was delighted with this recommendation and commented that creating this type of prudent reserve was a smart way to manage the City’s money. Mrs. Blankfeld also stated her delight to hear that the Mayor and Council members are discussing the establishment of additional funds such as this one to provide funding for other department needs (such as fleet management - the purchase of vehicles for police, fire, and service department) in order to best serve the residents, and so that funding does not need to be considered a capital purchase coming out of the General Fund.

Ordinance 2021-03 was placed on first reading.

D) Motion to Approve the RFP Comprehensive Zoning Code Update and Advertise for bids

Mrs. Drucker stated that this steamed from the Economic Development Committee meeting where the scope of services for the Comprehensive Zoning Code update was discussed and recommendations to the RFP were made. Mrs. Drucker noted that all of the suggestions, changes and additions from the committee meeting have be incorporated in the presented RFP.

Mrs. Weiss voiced her gratification that this was being done because it had been a longtime coming. Mrs. Weiss said that long before she was a member of Council this began and that has been six years. This is a very comprehensive RPF to the credit of Mrs. Drucker.

Mr. Rach stated that the RFP went before the Economic Development Committee twice; the first time was just an overall review of the RFP and the second time was a thorough review paragraph by paragraph and line by line. The committee provided very good input and the present RFP reflects all of the committee comments.

MOTION BY MR. RACH, SECONDED BY MRS. BLANKFELD Approving the RFP Comprehensive Zoning Code Update and to Advertise for bids. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

E) Motion to Enter a contract with GT Environmental, Inc. to survey University Heights residents regarding potential changes in City Solid Waste and Recycling Collection Methods

Mr. Pokorny stated that in accordance with previous discussions from the two public hearings concerning the city’s solid waste and recycling collection methods he contacted GT Environmental to provide a quote to provide a survey for all residents. The proposal that GT Environmental submitted provides two methods for conducting the survey. One method is via paper where there would be a cover letter, survey mailed out to every resident for completion and mailing back in the provided self-stamped envelope. The second method is an on-line method where a letter and information for the survey web link would be mailed out to every resident and then the residents would access the survey via the link for completion. In either option GT Environmental has proposed a five-task outline as to what they would provide: 1) recommend putting together a University Heights refuse collection evaluation team; 2) develop a survey team to pick questions and help guide the process of how the survey would be prepared; 3) the actual survey – whether a paper survey or on-line survey; 4) evaluation and final report of results that would also include input from the refuse collection evaluation team; and 5) provide final report to City and Council. Mr. Pokorny recommended method number 1, sending paper surveys with self-addressed stamped envelopes to all residents. The method would be easier to track and more comprehensive in making sure input is received for all those interested in providing input. The paper method is a better way of securing the information coming back, one household and one survey.

Mayor Brennan stated that the City was at a critical point in the decision-making process on solid waste collection and the method of pickup. In 2019, the City commissioned the Solid Waste Study in seeking expert analysis and advice on what the City was doing and how it could be done better. Since commissioning this study in early 2019, the City has not made capital purchases in the Service Department pertaining to solid waste pickup. Instead of following the equipment replacement schedule the City has put off purchasing new rubbish trucks and new Kubota’s. The City is now operating with the minimum number of rubbish trucks, with two trucks in such poor condition that they could break down at any time and there are no backup trucks. The backup truck that the department had is no longer operational and is being used for parts. Because the replacement schedule has not been followed the City is now in the position where if backyard pickup was kept a new rubbish truck would have to be purchased this year and every year for the next five years. Mayor Brennan stated it bared repeating, the City needs five new rubbish trucks in five years. The estimated cost of each rubbish truck is about \$246,000, so over five years it would be approx. \$1,230,000. The City also did not replace two Kubota rubbish scooters that were due for replacement in 2020 at a cost of \$16,000 each with another due this year so that would be another \$48,000. Mayor Brennan continued to say the because so much equipment is at the end of their life, new equipment must begin to be purchased this year. These purchases cannot wait another year or budget cycle. And it may necessarily mean that decisions have to be made on what kind of equipment will be purchased. From the Solid Waste Study, it is known that if the method of rubbish pickup were to be changed to curbside automatic pickup it would promote better recycling, reduce work induced injuries of work laborers, reduce labor cost and perform the functions of solid disposal and recycling at a lower cost. That money could be returned to the community in the form of increased services, better senior programming, better community programming, enhanced recreational opportunities. The work of the laborers could be redirected to better leaf pickup, better park maintenance, better public works in maintaining the roads, sewers, catch basins, better public beautification all things that the Mayor knows everyone supports but all which takes a back seat to the current four day a week, labor intensive and inefficient

method of trash pickup. Mayor Brennan stated that earlier this month, Service Director, Mr. Pokorny brought him the engineering plans to redo the intersection of Silsby, Washington, Saybrook. The new construction is to be paid for by a grant from NEORSD Sewer District. The design incorporates features meant to keep water out of the storm sewer systems and calls for moving the corners, shortening the crosswalks, extending the tree lawns and building natural areas with plantings that would thrive with stormwater. The issue is that while the City has the residents mow the tree lawns in front of their homes the City cannot reasonably expect tree lawn raingardens to be maintained by the residents so the responsibility will fall on the Service Department. We are constantly adding to the list the number of things the Service Department is asked to do and something has to give. If the workload of the department is not rebalanced, add employees or do both the Administration cannot reasonably expect the department to take on more responsibility. Certainly, the Administration wants to facilitate the decision-making process and for Council to be comfortable in that they have considered all of the relevant support needed to commit to a process one way or another.

Mayor Brennan added that his heartburn about conducting the proposed survey was that it would delay decisions that ought to be made now for the 2021 Budget, decisions that can't wait another year. The survey could be performed on a tight and ambitious schedule that would get results in time to make decisions before the end of March 2021. But when the consultants that were hired, we already had an expert opinion. Hopefully, with this survey we will have a better understanding of the opinions and concerns of the residents. Such that this Council will be comfortable in making the necessary decisions in the next couple of months that will best serve the constituents.

Mr. Gould thanked Mayor Brennan for his comments on the importance of the survey to the citizens. That was the majority opinion at the public hearings that were held where citizens were invited to give commentary. Mr. Gould stated he agreed with the Mayor on the importance of the rubbish service to the community, in that it is one of the services that the City provides that literally touches each and every household. Undoubtedly such a service creates strong opinions when the idea of removing or altering it in some way is proposed. That is why it is so important to get correct. Mr. Gould noted that his Council colleagues had varying views regarding the methods solid waste collection should occur in University Heights and the citizens have just as many views. It is important to Council to have their input heard as part of this process and to act efficiently but also act with appropriate contemplation for the needs and desires of the citizens. Mr. Gould added that this is a good first step and that he hopes Council will have the opportunity to receive input from the members of Service Committee as well as members of the community, some of which have experience with writing and distributing surveys. Mr. Gould stated that because they want to get this right and because the course of voices who will be affected the best course of action is to send this to committee for consideration and then bring it back to the body of Council once it is a little more fleshed out in a more collaborative way.

Mr. Rach stated that he was at all of the Service/Utilities Committee meetings and from the **overwhelming** feedback there was no one embracing a change and the survey will show half the city wants the change and half doesn't want a change in rubbish collection. Mr. Rach said he was not sure why a survey is being done because he has walked that streets, talked to the residents and have heard the same thing from both sides. Mr. Rach stated he agreed with Mr. Gould in sending it back to the Service/Utilities Committee to flush out further. This is a very expensive survey.

Mayor Brennan stated he attended both of the public hearings as well and did not believe that there was a good cross-section of the community, there was an outsized response with respect to one point of view in particular. Mayor Brennan said he has also walked the streets, knocked on doors and talked to folks in the community. There is a diversity of opinion. Part of what needs to be contemplated and how the questions need to be flushed out are determining priorities. There is certain cost associated with one thing or another thing, and there may be certain things you received when you do one thing versus the other. If the question is do you like backyard pickup and how much are you willing to pay for it. There were some residents at the meeting who said they would pay extra taxes to keep backyard pickup. Mayor Brennan said he was a little remised to send this to committee and not getting this done before the budget cycle. Mayor Brennan stated again that the City is at the end of the life of the rubbish trucks and if the City buys new rubbish trucks it has to buy the right kind meaning if the current method of rubbish pickup is kept then a certain type of rubbish truck has to be purchased, if the City moves to automatic pickup an entirely different rubbish truck would be purchased. The City should not want to purchase the wrong trucks and have to re-buy all new ones.

Mr. Pokorny said that the Service Department was close to a catastrophe, if one more rubbish truck breaks down the City would have to rent a rubbish truck and the cost of renting a rubbish truck will make to cost of \$11,000 for a survey look small. The cost to rent a rubbish truck would be thousands of dollars a week in order to collect rubbish. A decision one way or the other needs to be made. Mr. Pokorny said he hoped that the committee would meet soon to decide on conducting the survey or if the survey needed to be thrown away and then the decision regarding rubbish collection would be made without the input of a survey.

Mayor Brennan commented that he urges Council to pass this Ordinance now and then the Service/Utilities should meet to work in furtherance on what has been placed in the survey schedule.

Mr. Rach stated that this sense of urgency was news to him. Mr. Rach said he knew a rubbish truck was needed but this was the first time he was hearing that a fleet of five rubbish trucks are needed. Mr. Rach added that when Mr. Pokorny comes to the Service/Utilities Committee meetings he would bring a report card showing the age, make, model and condition of all the Service Department vehicles and with those reports Mr. Rach said he did not remember seeing such a dire need to replace five vehicles and hopes that Mr. Pokorny will re-evaluate the vehicles and bring the updated report cards as well as the prior report cards to the next committee meeting so that Council can see what has transpired over the last year.

Mr. Pokorny commented that the last report he provided Council was the 2019 Service vehicle report and, in that report, he recommended the replacement of a rubbish truck in 2019, 2020 and 2021. No rubbish trucks were replaced in 2019 or 2020 and no budgeting has been done in the 2021 budget for a new rubbish truck.

Mrs. Weiss said she was in favor of sending this to committee and that she was not aware of an urgency to replace five vehicles either. A committee member is an expert in surveys, that could save some money. This is the company who conducted the original rubbish report, Mrs. Weiss said she wanted to make sure this is unbiased, there are a couple of big issues that the committee needs to discuss. Mrs. Weiss added that she had confidence in Mr. Gould setting up a committee meeting next week and fast tracking this.

Mayor Brennan replied that he did not see any bias, GT Environmental had no stake in what method of rubbish pick up the City chooses. GT Environmental don't have any ties to University Heights and rubbish pickup. The City paid for the other study and the \$16,000plus that was paid for the other study had no contingency to follow their advice or not. If this is sent to committee, Mayor Brennan said he would hope that it is fast tracked because there are answers that this Council will need. The schedules for the Service Department trucks have been available to Council and previously discussed. Mayor Brennan noted that it made sense not to purchase any Kubotas or rubbish trucks for the department while the July 2019 commissioned rubbish study that was finalized in May 2020. Thus, the current need for five vehicles is a culmination or skipping replacing those vehicles during that time frame. Now it has been 3 budget cycles where Service Department equipment has not been purchased for solid waste and recycling removal. It could cost about \$50,000 a month if we have to rent a rubbish truck.

Mr. Gould stated that everyone is aware of the urgency and the potentials, and suggested that as this is fast tracked that everyone works together. Mr. Gould added that the presented proposal was a great proposal to come up with in a month's time; he just wished that the committee would have been afforded the opportunity to meet prior to the final proposal coming out. Mr. Gould said that he would fast tracked this and hopes that the Administration and Council work together to get this completed with the goal to not only complete it with urgency but with the process and the citizens they serve.

Mr. Rach commented that while he appreciates the urgency, he did not know how it would be completed before the March 31, 2021 Budget is due. This could be a radical change in the department's structure, how many people will be staff, how many vehicles will be purchased would all have to be figured out before March. Mr. Rach said he did not see how it would work with the survey going out in February, the amount of time it takes to get the surveys back, evaluated and have the result report completed.

Mrs. Pardee agreed with Mr. Rach in that this is one of the biggest services that's provided to the all residents and the decisions should be approached with care. Mrs. Pardee said she fully supported this going to committee as soon as possible and was interested in seeing more about the cited numbers and the capital listings.

Mrs. Weiss said that this is one of the biggest decisions that the City will have to make. The beauty of the Budget is that it can be amended by Council anytime, so even if it is passed in March it can be amended in April. Council and the Administration need to be able to collaborate on this together and Council should have heard about the urgency before. Mrs. Weiss agreed with this going to committee.

Mr. Pokorny addressed some of Mr. Gould concerns about timing. Mr. Pokorny stated that if this were to be approved tomorrow, it does not mean that the department will start firing staff and changing the method in which things are done. This is a process that will take a while. It takes about eight months to one year to received a rubbish truck once it is purchased. This same thing applies if things are switched to automatic pickups. All of this will take a lot of time. What is on the table right now is what the City will do regarding rubbish collection, then decide what the necessary changes, if needed are to take place. If come March, and if staff were to be laid off it would be a two-year process of change.

Mr. Rach stated that Mr. Pokorny confirmed his viewpoint that staff would have to be laid off if this change is done with rubbish pickup. Mr. Rach asked Mr. Pokorny is there would be a reduction in staff levels.

Mr. Pokorny corrected Mr. Rach and said that the discussions that were had during committee meetings was that if there was to be a reduction is staff it would be done through attrition, there was no discussion that staff would be laid off.

Mr. Rach said that the report indicated that the only savings in money would be through a reduction of staff.

Mr. Pokorny replied that was not 100% accurate. The reduction of staff over time through attrition is a method of reducing staff.

Mayor Brennan added that Mr. Pokorny had stated that in the negative – the City is not going to reduce staff.

Mr. Rach stated that if the urgency was so that this is reflected in this year's Budget, then Council needs to look at this year's Budget comprehensively in terms of salaries and equipment capital. If it is not known whether the City is buying rubbish trucks to handle backyard pickup or automatic rubbish trucks, those are big decisions that have to be made and will affect this year's budget. If the City purchases new rubbish trucks and then needs to sell them because of the change, what would they sell for?

Mr. Pokorny remarked what was more likely was that there are currently 3 rubbish trucks in the fleet that were purchased as used trucks from 2000 so they are already 21 years old. We also use those rear packer trucks for yard waste, brush and Christmas trees collection. So, if the City purchases a new rubbish truck this year it could still be used for that type of special collection.

MOTION BY MR. GOULD, SECONDED BY MRS. BERRY to refer the proposal by GT Environmental, Inc. to survey University Heights residents regarding potential changes in City Solid Waste and Recycling Collection Methods to the Service/Utilities Committee for further discussion and consideration. On roll call, all voted "aye," except Mr. Ertel, who voted "nay."

F) Motion to Approve Price Quote from Signal Service for Upgrade Pole Mounted Traffic Signal Control Cabinet to Accommodate New Pedestrian Movement at South Green and Silsby Road not to exceed \$20,722.00

Mr. Ciuni reported that in order to get the pedestrian cross-walk signal at the South Green/Silsby intersection to operate properly we need to replace the existing old controller because it can't accommodate another pedestrian push button, which is why the signal doesn't work. Mr. Ciuni also noted that the actual pole is severely leaning and would also be replaced.

Police Chief Rogers stated that Signal Service does provided the traffic signal installation and maintenance for this type of equipment throughout University Heights and the region. As a result of Signal Service's special unique skills, knowledge of the project and the University Heights traffic corridors and related signals, it would appear that this project would be an exception to the public bidding requirement because of the specific services that Signal Service provides.

Mr. Cicero added that this pertains to the "sole source" rule. The unique service provided by Signal Service Company. Mr. Cicero advised that any motion approving this item includes a provision waiving the competitive bidding procedure.

Mayor Brennan noted that the new crosswalks were a CBDG Supplemental project. The crosswalks were not hooked up right away because the City of Beachwood was working on a waterline project. It was not discovered until after the Beachwood project and the replacement of sidewalks that the existing controller would not work with this improvement.

MOTION BY MRS. PARDEE, SECONDED BY MRS. BEERY to Approve the Price Quote from Signal Service to Upgrade Pole Mounted Traffic Signal Control Cabinet to Accommodate New Pedestrian Movement at South Green and Silsby Road not to exceed \$20,722.00 and due to the unique need and purpose waiving the requirement for competitive bidding procedure. On roll call, all voted "aye."

G) Resolution 2021-04 Proclaiming January 18-24, 2021 as Community Risk Reduction Week in University Heights

Fire Chief Perko stated that the Department has been formally looking in the Community Risk Reduction for a few years. This is a data driven process to identify, prioritize risk in the community and the strategic look at the department's allocation of resources and their overall impact and the service to the community. Every year the department's call volume rises and the department reviews how it responds to those calls and how to reduce the number of calls. The community risk reduction looks at six different components: identifying the risk, prioritizing the risk, developing different strategies and litigation efforts, preparing and implementing plans, and then evaluation. The five E's of community risk reduction are: education, engineering, enforcement, economic incentives and emergency response.

MOTION BY MRS. BLANKFELD, SECONDED BY MRS. PARDEE to approve Resolution 2021-04 Proclaiming January 18-24, 2021 as Community Risk Reduction Week in University Heights. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

H) Motion to Hold an Executive Session immediately following this Regular Meeting for the Purpose of Discussing Personnel, Legal and/or Real Estate Matters

Mrs. Pardee stated the Council would like to hold an Executive Session with the Mayor and Acting Law Director to discuss personnel legal matters.

MOTION BY MRS. PARDEE, SECONDED BY MRS. WEISS to hold Executive Session immediately following this regular meeting for the purpose of discussing personnel legal matters. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

Director’s Reports

Finance Director – Dennis Kennedy reported that he continues to work of the 2021 budget including the Capital and Special Need Funds. The department dispersed the W2’s this week and the 1099’s will be completed next week. The department is also completing of the end of the year financial reporting’s.

Police Department – Chief Rogers refreshed Council on the Lexipol project which provides constantly updated policies for officers in recognizing best practices in State and Federal law as well as Ohio collaborative and Criminal Services requirements. Chief Rogers stated that for the past two weeks he along with staff members have been reviewing policy and procedures to cross-reference materials to create a new Lexipol procedure manual for the department. The manual will roll out next month for a three-month review process and then implementation. There will also be training to incorporate the procedures.

Chief Rogers also reported on a diversion program that officers can recommend or take people to for services they need and would not receive in a jail setting or emergency type setting. The facility will be operational after April 1, 2021 with the intention for voluntarily crisis intervention and stabilization services for people. Chief Rogers stated that this would have a positive impact for the community.

Fire Department – Chief Perko reported that this week the department will be rolling out various items daily on social media for Community Risk Reduction. The department will also be providing information on the COVID vaccinations on the Fire Department social media pages. Chief Perko encouraged residents to check out the COVID website for the listing of facilities in the County that are providing vaccinations or contact the Fire Department for help.

City Engineer – Joseph Ciuni reported that the City did not receive the grant from Ohio Public Works for the resurfacing of Warrensville Center Road. Mr. Ciuni added that the City did have a small grant from the County for resurfacing Warrensville and that he would be pursuing avenues for additional funding because Warrensville is a county roadway.

Communications/Civic Engagement – Michael Cook reported that he would be working on encouraging residents to work with their elderly family members in finding information and obtaining their COVID vaccination. The next newsletter will be out soon.

Economic Development – Susan Drucker reported two University Heights businesses; The Purple Elephant Herbal Commissary and Fame Studio each received a \$10,000 small business stabilization grant from Cuyahoga County.

There were no other director reports.

Standing Council Committees:

Building – Housing Committee – Mrs. Blankfeld said the committee will meet again in early February for further discuss and work on the City’s rental ordinance. **She stated that Law Director McConville was to speak with Legal Counsel for John Carroll University and that a meeting date will be set once Mr. McConville advises that said conversation had taken place.** Mrs. Blankfeld also reported that Cuyahoga County has earmarked \$2million for mortgage assistance for homeowners negatively affected by COVID. This is a one-time interest free loan through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. For additional information call (216) 600-2814.

Community Outreach – Mrs. Pardee stated that the committee met on January 11 and hosted Danielle Cosgrove, Director of the Cleveland Mediation Center. The Cleveland Mediation Center is a local center that

trains Nationally because of their expertise. Mrs. Pardee said that the committee has been exploring neighborhood mediation and how to set it up. Cases The committee did receive a price quote from the Cleveland Mediation Center to handle the city's mediation cases as needed. That cost would be \$100 per mediation and includes landlord/tenant mediation, neighbor to neighbor disputes. Larger community mediation disputes with groups or organizations \$150 per mediation; family mediations \$225 per mediation and includes custody visitation and other family related issues. This is an outstanding opportunity for the City to provide this service to residents. The committee will continue to explore this opportunity and speak with communities that use this service. The Technology Advisory Committee met on January 12 and have been working as a Citizen Commission to review the City's technology and help identify good soft/hardware process, etc. The Commission determined with the City's approval to put out an RFP/RFQ to request information from vendors concerning the audit of what the City has currently and creating a strategic design in terms of a comprehensive design for software, hardware and with an eye to future needs.

Finance Committee - Mrs. Weiss reported that the Committee met and that there will be at least two more meetings within the next three weeks to finalize the 2021 Budget so that it can be presented at the two-council meeting in March for the first and second readings for approval. The Strategic Subcommittee met and will have a follow-up meeting in the next four-weeks to finalize internal controls and then move on to the next phase the strategy.

Safety Committee – Mrs. Berry stated that the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting has been moved to March 3, 2021.

Service and Utilities Committee – Mr. Gould stated that the committee will meet in the next week to address the survey for the Solid Waste Study.

There were no other committee reports.

MOTION BY MRS. PARDEE, SECONDED BY MR. GOULD to exit Executive Session. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

MOTION BY MRS. BLANKFELD, SECONDED BY MR. GOULD to adjourn the meeting. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15p.m.

Michael Dylan Brennan, Mayor

Kelly M. Thomas, Clerk of Council