

City of Gahanna

*200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230*



Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 12, 2009

Immediately Following Previous Committees or

7:30 PM

Council Committee Rooms

Committee of the Whole

Thomas R. Kneeland, Chair

Beryl D. Anderson

Thomas C. Evers

Shane Ewald

John R. McAlister

Nancy R. McGregor

David L. Samuel

Members Absent: Shane W. Ewald and Thomas C. Evers

Members Present: Thomas R. Kneeland, John McAlister, Nancy R. McGregor, Beryl D. Anderson and David L. Samuel

Additional Attendees:

Terry Emery, Karl Wetherholt, General Jim Williams, Chief Dennis Murphy, Kristen Treadway, Jerry Isler, Angel Mumma, Isobel Sherwood, Tony Collins, Tom Weber, Mayor Stinchcomb, Grant Reveal, Dr. Hugh Clark, Press.

Director of Human Resources:

Kneeland called the meeting to order. Mayor said Treadway would like to introduce our new IT Director, Grant Reveal. Treadway said after several hundred resumes and a long process, we have chosen Grant Reveal as our new IT Director; he has a good background; he is a graduate of Franklin University and has worked at OSU; he was also interviewed by Kneeland. Reveal said he is glad to be here; feels fortunate to get the position; would be glad to set up meetings and get to know everyone; has an open door communications policy and would encourage back and forth discussion; let me know any concerns.

PRESENTATION - Office of the Mayor:

Resident Survey - Dr. Hugh Clark, CJI Research Corp.

Kneeland said Dr. Clark is here to provide feedback on the resident survey. Mayor said Braun will introduce him. Braun said Dr. Hugh Clark is here from CJI Research Corp. to present the highlights from the survey conducted in November; there were 3 objectives for this; first to follow up on the Parks Master Plan; second to assess residents' priorities; and to determine their level of satisfaction with current projects including Creekside; then to have a baseline for basic City services for future comparison; tonight Dr. Clark will present key findings in his power point presentation; each of you will get a complete copy of the full survey to read at your discretion; we can then come back and meet as a group or individually to discuss the CJI Research; we have kept the contact information if we need to follow up on an issue; or if we decide we want to do focus groups we can. Dr. Clark made his presentation; a copy is available in the Council office.

McAlister clarified the number of registered voters sampled (920) as compared to the general population. Samuel asked how many calls had to be made to reach someone to sample. Clark said it is about a 10 to 1 ratio; he did receive word that Gahanna was quite a cooperative group. Weber said you get more responses from registered voters; those who are non-responsive would also not bother to vote. Braun said everyone will also get a full list of the comments made; if you have a question, send it to me and I will compile and document the questions and determine next steps. Anderson asked if there were any elaborations in the "Not Sure" category. Clark said no; the only item associated with that is the number of years lived in Gahanna; shorter times generated "Not Sure" responses.

Kneeland said the next step is for us to review our copy; this is the first survey we have done; do we have plans to do this on a regular basis? Mayor said I see this as

baseline; I would like to continue to do studies every other year, or 3rd year, to revisit our issues; Council can think about what they would like to do on regular basis. Kneeland said he wanted Clark to know he was surprised and pleased with the material; most of these surveys are nothing more than good bedtime reading; this is interesting information; what would we do differently on a future survey; is there a different way to choose called parties; can we change the scope or quantity of questions? Clark said to make results comparable it is important to stay with the same methods; there are technical issues that could change methods in the future like the age of people and use of cell phones; those are really only wrenches. Kneeland said to that end, are there values in using other methods like web forms. Clark said yes, sometimes; web surveys in general are not useful unless the sample can be controlled; they are more of a public relations tool and are not representative of the public like the controlled sample used here which was the voting public; if you develop a list of email addresses of residents, then there are ways to do a valid survey using that and it is actually less expensive than a telephone survey; we do that for associations and hospitals where valid email lists are available. Kneeland said an email survey is what I am interested in hearing about. Clark said they are not too complicated; there are a lot of issues to survey that way; you could spend time at a city park to collect park visitors email address to evaluate those services; traffic problems can be looked at via concentrated areas of employment; there are ways to do a narrow survey which is valid.

Weber said don't you believe this survey is skewed toward older voters since that is who votes and has telephone land lines. Clark said no; it is weighted by age; we have been carefully monitoring the market growth of folks who have cell phones only; this is not affecting results yet; in 5 years, maybe. Anderson asked if responses from each ward were cut off when the same number of replies was obtained. Clark said yes they were cut off and then combined statistically. Braun said we put an online version of the survey out on the web; those results are not mixed with the official ones but I have those as well; the wards were not determined for that one. Mayor said for some folks who had an issue with the report and felt it was not statically valid, it is interesting that we received similar responses. Clark said the web survey has value for public relations and it gives an outlet to folks to show you care.

Braun said the team talked about timing; we did this survey at the beginning of a recession and during a presidential election so consider that as well. Mayor said as an added comment about the PIO (Public Information Officer) need being supported by the survey, this survey was done well before we went that direction; all comments are in the results; the question about income tax surprised me; there were so many people that got the question wrong; we need to spend time to educate folks; I found that to be a very interesting part of the survey. Samuel said it is interesting to note the priorities from this sample match our priorities from when we met last year, like adding walking and bike paths. Clark said he would urge caution in terms of priorities; the statistics did not do us any favors and do not point out any remarkable order of business; bike trails matched the community center in order of importance.

McGregor said the tax issue raised by the Mayor is also a problem for schools; the County Treasurer needs to develop a way to state where the tax money is going; if taxes are escrowed, which the majority do, folks don't see a breakdown; they don't notice when it is in a mortgage payment; folks should receive a statement to say where their tax dollars went. Samuel said we can make a recommendation that the new PIO, when hired, put that information on the City web site; we could also provide information on changes and grants just so folks get an opportunity to see some information on City finances. Mayor said we have been looking at that as well as our tax methods; I encourage the leadership of Council to bring to committee meetings any ideas that will let the public know where Gahanna tax dollars go and how little we get.

ISSUES - From Office of the Mayor:**CIC Appointment Confirmation - Bob Moorehead**

Mayor said she sent a memo about her CIC appointment; Bob Moorehead has redone his work schedule so he can serve; he would be reappointed next meeting; like to confirm that appointment and rename him.

Recommendation: Motion Resolution on Consent Agenda.

ISSUES - From Clerk of Council:**Public Defender's Contract**

Sherwood said Woodward had provided details of the Public Defender's Contract previously; she just received it last Wednesday; FYI it will be on the agenda; she had not requested a waiver but it will be retroactive to Jan. 1.

RECOMMENDATION: 1st Reading with waiver of 2nd reading and emergency, Consent Agenda.

Various Resolutions - Board & Commission Members

Sherwood said the Boards and Commissions reception will be January 27; normally we do resolutions for those not coming back; I will need 6 done this year; the reception is 5:30 to 7 P.M. McGregor said is it at the Golf Course. Sherwood said no it is here (City Hall) because of a schedule conflict; any responses please let me know. Mayor said the CIC meeting is a conflict but no change is planned. Sherwood said the resolutions will be on the agenda next week; don't forget Monday is a holiday, Martin Luther King Day, so our meeting is Tuesday.

RECOMMENDATION: 6 Resolutions, Consent Agenda.

Meeting Adjourned.

Della Brandenberger, Reporting