



**CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
December 1, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

A regular Zoom meeting of Powell City Council was called to order by Mayor Frank Bertone on Tuesday, December 1, 2020 at 7:29 p.m. City Council members present included Jon C. Bennehoof, Frank Bertone, Tom Counts, Heather Karr, Brian Lorenz, Melissa Riggins and Daniel Swartwout. Also present were Andy White, City Manager; Yazan Ashrawi, Legal Counsel; Megan Canavan, Assistant City Manager; Stephen Hrytzik, Chief of Police; Karen Sybert, Finance Director; Jeffrey Tyler, Community Development Director; Elise Schellin, Development Planner; Chris Huber, City Engineer; Aaron Scott, Assistant City Engineer; Karen J. Mitchell, City Clerk; and interested parties.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Mayor Bertone opened the citizen participation session for items not included on the agenda. Hearing none, the Mayor closed the public comment session.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: November 17, 2020

MOTION: Councilmember Counts moved to adopt the minutes of November 17, 2020. Councilmember Bennehoof seconded the motion. By unanimous consent of the remaining members, the minutes were adopted.

FIRST READING: ORDINANCE 2020-30: AN ORDINANCE MODIFYING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2020. (MEMO)

Andy White, City Manager: This Ordinance is seeking appropriation of the Cares Act funds, which, by legislation order, have been adopted and approved for deposit within the Coronavirus Relief Fund 260. Through guidance we received from the Treasury, law enforcement salaries compensated from March 2020 to present are eligible expenses for the Coronavirus Relief fund. We have deposited those funds and the Finance Director is not crediting those eligible costs from police/law enforcement wages to this fund thereby freeing up a significant amount of financial resources to the general fund. This legislation seeks Council's approval of an appropriation of \$200,000 as seed money for the first installment of the Small Business program. I think I previously noted to you that we are upwards of 30 applications with the maximum award of \$10,000. Compliments to Council and Staff for working on this to be able to infuse that type of capital into the community which is a significantly and appropriate step. I hope this is something we can build upon going into the future with the CIC. I also wanted to recognize their effort as well in accommodating this program.

The Mayor opened this item to public comment. Hearing none, he closed the public comment session.

MOTION: Councilmember Counts moved to suspend the rules regarding Ordinance 2020-30. Councilmember Lorenz seconded the motion.

VOTE: Y 7 N 0

MOTION: Councilmember Bennehoof moved to adopt Ordinance 2020-30. Councilmember Counts seconded the motion.

VOTE: Y 7 N 0

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Development Committee: *Next Meeting: December 1, 2020, 6:30 p.m. We spent the majority of the meeting discussing the Cares Act funding and what projects that would go to. Staff and Committee are working on implementing portions of the Keep Powell Moving Plan that this Council worked on in 2015-16. We have directed Staff to move forward on some*

items, including developing standards for wayfinding signage, parking improvements around 44 N. Liberty and the former Jeni's Ice Cream building, and a few other items I suspect Andy will talk about in a few minutes during his report. These are action items that will provide tangible benefits to the residents. It is nice that we have these funds to move forward with and take opportunities to put these plans into action. For so many years funding has been such a tough and significant issue for us.

We also authorized Staff to begin to look into an agreement to extend our broadband service underneath the CSX railroad tracks. As many of you remember, a few years ago we studied this in Operations Committee and tried to get that underway, not as much for our residents but for our Police Department and their ability to transfer reports back and forth to the county officials. Therefore, it is exciting to see so many of these things come together.

Finance Committee: Next Meeting: December 8, 2020, 7:00 p.m. We will be talking about the income tax restructuring.

Operations Committee: Next Meeting: December 15, 2020, 6:30 p.m.

Planning & Zoning Commission: Next Meeting: December 9, 2020, 7:00 p.m. At last month's meeting, we saw a proposal for a sketch plan for the property at 80 Olentangy St. It was previously the Day Dream Inn, but is now being proposed as a private social club. This will be going through HDAC and followed up on at P&Z.

Powell CIC: Next Meeting: December 22, 2020, 6:00 p.m. We met last Tuesday evening and discussed a number of items. As Andy said, we received over 30 applications for grant funding. It is really a program that has been a collaborative effort thanks to Staff. It is good to see our community reaching out to utilize it.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT/CITY CALENDAR

Mr. White: I would like to recognize Jeff Tyler, our new Director of the Community Development Department. We have made many inroads there so far. The vacancies we have had within the department are manifesting themselves now that we have some more dedicated personnel. Jeff has done a very nice job getting into each of the departments. There is still some restructuring going on and still some changes to come to improve upon, but I look forward to making some additional modifications within that outlet of the organization.

I have talked to some of you about potentially getting together with Jeff in the next couple of weeks. If you are comfortable, I know Jeff would love to entertain some conversation and get to know all of you on an individual basis. I will send out an email to remind you so you can begin that communication.

We did talk a lot about some unique opportunities that we have right now based on the work that has been done prior and the unique position the City's in with not just the Cares Act dollars, but the dollars saved in 2020 which are significant. The dollars that Staff and Council have worked on prior to my tenure to offset some of these significant costs in capital, Sawmill Parkway's resurfacing for example, and the amount of money that came in to pay [is one part]. In addition, a competitive market, getting out early and being able to award a competitive bid, has put us in a position to make some strategic decisions. At a committee level and internally, we have talked about the Community Attitude Survey. There will be another Zoom call tomorrow to provide some additional input on this matter. The Wellness Feasibility analysis is gaining traction. We got support out of Development on that, and we have the funding available to pay for it.

There are a number of items coming up that I think we can do some good with, but I do not want to take away from the fact that we still have a challenge regarding resource allocation and the collection of revenue. To Councilman Count's conversation about what we will be discussing in the next Finance Committee, which is a modification to the City's income tax for placement on an upcoming ballot to put Powell into a competitive scenario with the surrounding communities in Central Ohio – closer to that 2% range, but also modifying the credit. That is something that is also a competitive motivating factor.

I think as we move forward from Staff's review, there is really an opportunity to capture dollars that are being exported from the City of Powell back to the City of Powell. In doing this, this creates an economic development atmosphere that allows us to be competitive as a partner of choice for development on our perimeter or development within our interior. We have a lot of excitement going on and there are significant development efforts going on right now as we speak, but there are also the opportunities that are coming throughout the downtown area and our perimeter that I believe would be well suited at a different tax structure than we are at right now. To that end, we will be having a conversation. The Finance Director has reached out and is collecting information from RITA to be able to account, to the best of our ability, what any modification to the income tax structure and increasing the credit will effect on each class of wage earner. I know it must be frustrating as a municipality, but also for the community at large to read a great plan like Keep Powell Moving and maybe not take away from the conversation that these are big, huge policies and they take very lengthy conversation, due diligence and due process to make happen. When we were talking about it earlier tonight and looking back at the plan itself, some of the called out provisions that you have already accomplished are significant. There has been a significant amount of headway accomplished in a very competitive and tight market in terms of what we bring in for all these projects. Moving forward, we will try to articulate to the community the investment policies that we are looking at.

We have some funds available that are collecting next to nothing in interest right now. What we talked about during Development Committee tonight was that our targeted investment approach would be to bring a return both direct and indirect for the community's benefit. That is the conversation that I think we will be having some more of in the Finance Committee. Please plan to attend if you are able to do so.

I wanted to throw a quick shout out to our Services crew. We had a first snow event of the season. Staff was at it yesterday afternoon, went home at the normal hour, but came back in about 3:00 a.m. this morning. That is my first experience through the effort and I thought it was well done. I know they are looking at that and working with Jeff and having conversations with GIS about possibly doing some different things going forward, but all told, kudos to our services crew for a job well done.

Megan and Chief have been working with Liberty Fire Department and the township's staff regarding Holidays in Powell and the Santa Porch Parade that is scheduled for Saturday. A couple of different logistical issues came up and I thought Staff adequately handled those and am pleased to be able to promote another service model in this weird climate that we are trying to promote public events in. Staff is dialed in and we get curveballs thrown at us occasionally, but I just wanted to acknowledge that effort. Hats off to Staff for keeping up with it.

One of the other things we talked about in Development Committee was parking within the old part of the community. There are a number of developments that being pursued right now. There has been conversation in the public that there is a restaurant going into the former Jeni's Ice Cream parlor. There is an expired parking agreement that the City had signed off on some years ago with an LLC that is no longer in operation. I do not know what is going to shake out on that. Jeff, Elise and I had conversations with some of the ownership representation earlier today. We want to see a productive business enterprise within that vacancy right now, but we also want to be careful of the City's responsibility to our constituents. To that end, we will be working with them and probably be coming back to you for input and direction. However, it is exciting that there is another business coming into the downtown to offset some of the other investments that are coming on further to the north. There are many conversations going on right now and I find that exciting.

It is going to be prudent to look at some of the parking studies that have previously been done. I know that Staff had undertaken a significant effort and gone through a stepped off approach. I think there is a report that Elise had provided to me today and another one I found that I think will be a good starting point on where we need to go. Mostly, I think we are going to have sit down and think about a parking management plan within the downtown to accommodate some of the development that we see coming on the horizon. That is another item we will be working on to accommodate a return to normal here, hopefully as early as this Spring with the availability of a vaccination. We want to be prepared for a policy recommendation for Council to act upon to be ready for what I hope will be a strong resurgence in response to the community that has been pent up this year.

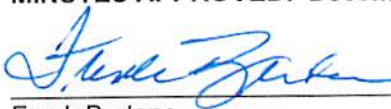
OTHER COUNCIL MATTERS

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Councilmember Bennehoof moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m. Councilmember Counts seconded the motion. By unanimous consent of the remaining members, the meeting was adjourned.

MINUTES APPROVED: December 15, 2020

 12/16/2020
Date

Frank Bertone
Mayor

 12/17/2020
Date

Katen J. Mitchell
City Clerk



Jon C. Bennehoof

Tom Counts

Heather Karr

Brian Lorenz

Melissa Riggins

Daniel Swartwout