

**CITY OF INDEPENDENCE
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
MAY 19, 2020 4:30 P.M.
VIA ZOOM**

Vice Mayor Grendel called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m. Present were Council Members, Kathleen Kapusta, Tom Narduzzi, Kenn Synek, Jim Trakas, Dale Veverka and Chris Walchanowicz. Also present were Mayor Gregory P. Kurtz, Finance Director Vern Blaze, Law Director Gregory J. O'Brien, Procurement Coordinator Dennis Zdolshek, Recreation Director Tom Walchanowicz, Police Chief Michael Kilbane, Fire Chief Steve Rega, Service Director Leon Karas, Human Resource Director Letitia Linker, Communications Director Alla Lora and Community Services Director Marilyn Senick.

Vice Mayor Grendel said this our second Strategic Planning meeting of the year. I am glad everybody made it, and our Directors are here too and our guests here from the City that are listening in.

The first thing I want to do is just housekeeping. I want to set a time limit so this way we know we are going to go strong until a certain time; and then if need be with Council's permission or the majority of Council, we can always continue this next Tuesday. So, this way we don't have to worry about going too long or getting drawn out. I was thinking either 6:00 p.m. or 6:30 p.m. What is Council's preference because we have a short meeting after this too.

Councilperson Narduzzi said I would say 6:00 p.m. Dave, and then we will have our short meeting. That will probably last another 15 or 20 minutes I would think.

Vice Mayor Grendel said very good. That is what I was thinking, and then continuing on next Tuesday because we don't have, Planning Commission is in 2 weeks; so we have some time before the next Council meeting. Usually your attention span and everything, an hour and a half or so is very strong. Any feedback from other Councilpersons?

Councilperson Kapusta said I think it sounds good Dave.

Vice Mayor Grendel asked 6:00 p.m. sounds good to everybody? This way we will go into our Special meeting.

Councilperson Synek said I would just point out that the agenda for the regular meeting says 7:00 p.m. so that is what we advertised to the public is a 7:00 p.m. start time.

The Clerk of Council says actually I changed that, and on the calendar and the website it says immediately following Strategic Planning.

Councilperson Synek said okay, then we are good. Thank you.

Vice Mayor Grendel said I saw that too.

The Clerk said that was a default with the program.

Vice Mayor Grendel said so what we will do everybody is we will go hard until 6:00 p.m. We will follow the agenda, do the best we can; and what's left we can have a week from today at 4:30 p.m. Hopefully with two hour and a half sessions, I think we can be able to cover this and keep on point. Any other questions regarding that?

Just the other thing, is Council good to meet next Tuesday at 4:30 p.m. if we decide to do so after the meeting? There are no problems with that?

Several people replied no.

Councilperson Walchanowicz asked do you think since we cut it to an hour and a half, if there's any of these on the agenda we can have answers to by the end of the week, if we could hop around instead of following 1 through 12.

Vice Mayor Grendel said well the most pressing is getting back to a routine with us. So, we will try to skip around, and some of these are overlapping too; but Chris you have a good idea. If there's something that is pressing, make sure you make it known to us and we will hit that topic. We will try to get as many as we can. We will probably be seeing some people here for the holiday, and we want to make sure Council is informed to spread what the Administration has planning or at least starting to plan for the summer.

We will get started, and the first item on the agenda is the Administration's plan moving forward from June until the end of the year regarding City special events; and I guess we can start right with Memorial Day. Mayor, I know that the City does have a program planned for the square and maybe we will start from there. Other things I mentioned are the pool, summer programs such as summer playground and camps and everything, the re-opening of the Civic Center, the Fieldhouse, any plans or thoughts about the Fourth of July fireworks, Home Days. We can go beyond that, but I think that is the most urgent right now. We have our fall programs, but that's still out in the distant future; and who knows what with the Coronavirus what will happen in the next few months. Hopefully, we will be planning those things, but I think Mayor I will turn this over to you as far as what the Administration plans in the short term here.

Mayor Kurtz said thank you Vice Mayor, I appreciate that. Thank you Council and welcome to all those residents and friends who are interested in knowing where we are going.

As many of you know, there are ongoing guidance and regulations and collaborations with respect to the State's guidance. We have several slides that Tom can show you in a few minutes if necessary, Restart Ohio fact sheets. We will get some of that information, the CDC regulations which the Governor has put in play. My phone started ringing off the hook last Thursday when the Governor announced some of these tentative dates; but the primary concern for us is going to be safety. We are going to have protocols in place before we open any of our facilities.

Regarding the special events, Memorial Day is a modified short service at the Soldier Memorial. There will be social distancing. There will be chairs six feet apart, no band. All City personnel will practice social distancing, and it will be very abbreviated. There will be no service and no parade.

You asked about the Fourth of July. There are no fireworks going to be on the 2nd of July which we have done for the past 10 years or so. We will postpone those until later in the year.

Home Days would be the next event. That's going to have some modified schedule, but quite frankly it's just too soon to really give a full analysis and a clear direction on that one. We may do something. We are looking at a variety of options. Our teams are meeting continuously to talk about where these opportunities could present themselves. We might do something in the park, a modified schedule downtown; but that's for down the road.

Suffice to say, for this weekend coming up, there will be a very abbreviated schedule. We will put it on YouTube so there will be community participation for those who really want to observe this ceremony and realize the importance of it. There will be some ability on our website to communicate. That is a priority for us.

Regarding the change or the explanation from the Governor's office last week which everybody is very concerned with, what is the City doing relative to its facilities, the pools, the Civic Center? I talked to Superintendent Hegedish today, and we are in sync in terms of being able to use the Shared Use Facility and possibly even use part of the high school during this modified time period. We have also agreed that we are posting signs. They will be up this Friday where they regulate, they tell the people that these are for Independence residents, and you have to have permission from the Recreation Director. The Superintendent has agreed to let us post the signs on the high school field, the baseball field and the football field. You try to extend the courtesy to people as a community effort, and then we have people who come and do some vandalism.

We have teams from outside of the City that are utilizing our facilities. We need to stop that, and we will do that by taking these intermediate steps. Hopefully, that will manage the situation.

If you follow the Restart Ohio fact sheet, and the CDC regulations, they give you parameters. We can exceed those parameters. In our conversations with the Recreation Director, and I will ask Tom in a minute to elaborate on that; we are going to look at a way so that we can safely and functionally systematically open our facilities that is safe for the public. I caution everyone that it's going to be a reduced version of what we are traditionally able to do which is wide open and have a lot of fun. There are certain restrictions to residents that will be the priority. We may have to do time slots at the Civic Center at times, and we may have to adhere to certain protocols, like there will be no showers, no clean outs for people. I don't want to get into the details, in the weeds; but suffice to say, we are going to look at every component of opening these facilities. We are going to do it in a systematic fashion and a time period that makes it good for us to not only have protocols and safety mechanisms in place, but we will also have personnel. We have to bring personnel back, train them to these new protocols.

One thing for the Finance Department, we are going to pay our people, these part-timers to come back more money instead of the \$8.75, it's going to be \$10.00, \$11.00. We haven't settled it. It depends on the kind of response we get, but I think it's the right thing to do for the people who are going to be responsible, have a different layer of responsibility when they come back and help us.

These are little things we are doing to make the system more functional, but it's going to be a work in progress. I will rely on the Directors to give the final stamp of approval in terms of how we are going and a time period. Suffice to say, we are getting everything read, and Tom if you want to take a minute and you want to elaborate on that, be my guest.

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said thanks Mayor. Since late Friday when all the guidelines came out, our team, Cee, April, Eric, Linda, we have all put our heads together. We are working on protocols for opening our two main facilities, namely the outdoor pool and the Civic Center. We have been working on an outline of the changes we are going to have to make to protect both our employees and the citizens. We all feel fairly confident that we can do that. We are fortunate in this regard in that we have large facilities and a small community. So, our outdoor pool, again that is a large facility. We have a lot of grass space. We have two big pools. So, we are fortunate.

I talked to the Mayor in depth in regard to the big thing of not allowing guests into either of the facilities. So, going forward at least for this year, we are going to pull back on that policy that residents are allowed to bring guests in; and we are going to keep both facilities as residents only. So, that in itself should cut down a good part on our volume of people coming in.

There's going to be, I know Marilyn is having trouble getting on this Zoom meeting, but there is going to be a modified summer camp and summer playground, possibly that their staff and their team is working on that. We are going to have time slots for all those camps and the summer playground when they do go down to the pool so that we can still have room for our residents to come in and use it.

Mayor Kurtz said and in addition to that, I mentioned that we talked to the Superintendent; and he's wide open to us using more of the Shared Use Facility if demand and the protocols demand that we have more space for the size of the different activities and people that we are looking at having available, depending on our staff. He has been 100% supportive if we need additional rooms at the Shared Use Facility. So, we are going to have ample space. It's a matter of the space, the program, the number of participants, and also the number of people who are going to help as part of growing the team back to where it meets the minimum requirements for these protocols.

Vice Mayor Grendel asked Mayor are we looking at the middle of June, or how long do you think it will take to get these protocols and everything, the communication to our residents and everything up to speed.

Mayor Kurtz said well our goal is sometime in June to have the pool open, the Civic Center; and again it's going to be in a very measured basis initially so that we can work the bugs out of these different safety protocols.

Community Services Director Senick said again we are all in agreement with what the Mayor is saying and Tom. A lot of, we are starting to see what type of staffing we could get in. Initially, I don't know if we will be up and running by the middle of June; but we are possibly looking at starting after July 4th with our camps. By then we really have to follow a strict protocol in what we have to do with spacing and staffing; but my staff has hit the ground running. We are going to do our very best to get that up and running as soon as possible.

Mayor Kurtz asked Marilyn as of today what is the number of people who have signed up for these programs if we are able to implement them?

Community Services Director Senick said well we have approximately 115 in summer playground, and we have capped that because you could take 130 because we are looking at spacing; and then summer camp we have about the same amount, 120.

Mayor Kurtz said so Members of Council, that gives you a flavor of what we need to prepare for and knowing that these facilities will be like an accordion that we potentially have room to expand; that will dedicate how, and the number of people who we can bring on board to manage these programs will be very important for us to administer them. That gives you a flavor as to the timetable we are looking at.

Community Services Director Senick said summer playground normally begins at the end of June, and summer camp in the middle of June. So, again meeting with the staff to see where we are at; but we are trying to best serve our residents because as you can see, they have registered their children. Last Monday was registration for the first time for summer playground, and they signed up 115 children. That was last Monday. So, that gives you the flavor that they do want to come back.

Mayor Kurtz said Kathleen you had something.

Councilperson Kapusta asked having looked at the regulations, would I be accurate in saying that we would anticipate not only as you said Mayor a higher wage for these staff members, but additional numbers of staff to comply with all of these?

Mayor Kurtz said yes. The thought was we would need more people because of the limited size of the groups. After talking with the Superintendent, he has opened up the Shared Use Facility for additional space. Now we have to see if we can match that with the number of people, it's going to take more people than we traditionally utilize.

Mayor Kurtz asked any other questions at this point?

Vice Mayor Grendel said I had a question regarding the Little League baseball programs that we have for the kids. Is there going to be a league or travel league or anything like that Tom?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said yes. Dmitri and I are working on that right now. We had a meeting with the surrounding communities yesterday, and we have another one planned for tomorrow. Today we had a meeting with the Recreation Directors from all of northeast Ohio. Again, what we are looking at doing is trying to keep, take care of the residents and trying to not inject a whole lot of non-residents into our facilities. So, we are looking at possibly not having the travel this year and having a modified Little League with our whole in-house City.

Vice Mayor Grendel asked would we have for the younger ones a t-ball program too? How young are you going to go?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said as long as they are in school, that's one of the Governor's guidelines. You can't have the pre-school. So, we won't be able to have our Kick Start t-ball program; but we will have some t-ball all through Pony Leagues. That is what we are looking at.

Councilperson Narduzzi asked Tom was that the feeling with all the other mayors as far as having the travel league not coming to their cities? I was on the phone with Coach Crooks today, and his big dilemma is that if other cities are having the travel leagues and have access to their fields; and Independence doesn't, it puts our kids at a disadvantage. We would have to possibly pay to use other facilities or travel to out of town weekends. So, his concern was that if everybody is doing the same thing, it's all good; but if it's just going to be Independence backing out of the travel baseball, it's going to cause a problem for Independence travel teams.

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said I can answer that Councilperson Narduzzi. Right now Nordonia, Lakewood, North Royalton, Broadview Heights, Bay Village and Westlake dropped out of the travel league. I just got that confirmed, and I think more are going to come. I talked to Brecksville today, and now Brecksville took a little different stance; but that was six that I just named off. So, I think most cities will follow suit because everyone wants to contain their residents in their own cities and try and stop the spread of everything.

Councilperson Narduzzi said can I ask, what was Brecksville's philosophy on this?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said they are saying that the travel parents will sanitize the dugouts. They will sanitize the bats. He is saying that their parents will get involved and do all these protocols, and he didn't seem that concerned. I think after they find out about all these other cities that are dropped out, I think there will be a change.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said there's been a huge drop in the Emerald Necklace Girls Fast Pitch Charter. A lot of cities have dropped their travel as well. The girls are affected highly. I am a travel coach, and I know Tommy Dominic is playing travel; but I have had a couple of girls already, their parents pulled them from my team because they don't want them around other City

kids. On behalf of my opinion with the health and safety of our kids, I think not having travel is probably a good idea for this year.

Vice Mayor Grendel said Jim I think you had a question.

Councilperson Trakas said a couple of quick questions for you. In terms of the vulnerable populations and senior citizens, how are we treating that? I have grave concerns about having any of these things go forward to be quite honest with you, but if you want to do it, I guess we just have mitigate the risk. What about seniors? Could I go and see my kids' ballgame or you know my grandkids ball game? What about our policy as it relates to senior citizens and vulnerable populations mixing with other individuals at public events as well as at our facilities?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said there are a lot of restrictions Jim. They will have to bring their own chairs, and you are going to have to sit six foot away from each other along the fence lines watching the games. That's how it's going to be this year. Your answer as far as a grandparent coming up; it would be their choice, but again they have to abide by the six foot social distancing, and they will not be able to get close to the kids who are playing. They have to sit along the fence lines.

Vice Mayor Grendel asked and Tom how about the teams on the bench because the bench only has so much room. Are some of the kids going to have to sit in the stands?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said yes, exactly. We are going to have x's on the bench. We are going to measure out six feet, and they will have to go outside of the dugout, possibly on the existing bleachers.

Councilperson Trakas asked so what about the pool? People tend to congregate at the diving boards and the kiddie pool. How are we going to enforce the social distancing there, and then how do you not mix younger people and vulnerable populations there? What is our strategy on that?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said we are looking at having different times for senior citizens or compromised immune system people that they can come and swim during certain times. We are going to have markings on the ground by the diving boards, and we are going to have separate staff who will be monitoring social distancing around the pool.

Vice Mayor Grendel said this is probably a question for Greg O'Brien. Are we going to have some kind of waivers or that signed by people utilizing our programs in that they agree from a liability standpoint? They are coming in with their eyes wide open. Nobody has forced them to be here; but we don't want to take liability if somebody gets sick and then they sue the City for whatever. I would like to make sure the people know what the risk is, at least confirm that they have read the guidelines and going to abide by them so that we have a more orderly running of these events and everything.

Law Director O'Brien said Tom and Marilyn will have to confirm this, but I believe anybody, especially our residents who get a pass, what's baked into our application is a fairly robust waiver which it would apply here to this incident. I think it's very good practice; however, from a policy standpoint for enforceability is to either post or provide this information in maybe the newsletter about these policies that are going to be in place and that reserving the right of the City to remove someone in the event they violate them. That's a decision for the Mayor and his team; but I think that would be a good communication tool. From a liability standpoint, it sounds like we are following that, and that's going to be my advice no matter what, that we follow the CDC and State of Ohio and our County Health Department. As long as we do the bare minimum, it doesn't sound like the Mayor is doing the bare minimum; it sounds like he's doing much, much more on steroids. As long as we meet the bare minimum, we should be fine.

Vice Mayor Grendel said I would like to have the ability if somebody just pays no attention to the guidelines and things that we set up; that they would be removed because we don't need to have any kind of, we want them to respect their fellow residents and enjoy the programs but not to get out of hand as far as having a big group together or doing things that are against the proper protocol.

Mayor Kurtz said your point is well taken, and we are jumping around on the agenda so that's good. We will blend a lot of these things into this conversation; but educating people is important. If people don't want to respect the environment that we create, then they will probably be excused from their environment. If they make a mistake, and we educate, and they conform, perfect. That's what we will be doing. If in fact that changes, then obviously they will be escorted or asked to be removed. When we have that many people who are going to use the pool for example, they have to follow protocols. I have talked to a number of the senior population, and they are offering suggestions of different time slots to go in and socialize. They miss, I don't think people realize the gravity of this isolation and impact it has had on every age group in this community. We are committed to giving people hope and the opportunity to utilize these resources, but in a fashion that is commensurate with the mandates or the minimum guidelines.

For example, other communities are using our facilities for the baseball field, the football field; and again in talking with the Superintendent, we agreed that we are going to post signs that should be up by this Friday, right Tom? They will be posted this Friday just saying that these fields are for residents only and that you have to contact the Recreation Director to utilize the facilities. We have agreed to put them on the football field and the baseball field. We are going to monitor that through the Rec Department and through the Police Department. Just as an educational tool, again we are going to be able to use all these facilities, but they are for Independence residents. That's the highest priority.

Councilperson Kapusta asked will facilities be used like our pickle ball or our bocce, would people bring their own equipment or how is that going to be regulated?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said they will still be able to use the tennis courts and pickle ball courts, those are open. The bocce ball the same thing, you bring your own balls. Those are on your own.

Councilperson Kapusta asked will we have signs posted there though Tom? Will we have signs posted there about non-resident usage? It's harder to control I realize.

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said well we haven't posted at the bocce ball courts yet. We did do it at the tennis/pickle ball courts. We will get signs for the bocce ball courts yes.

Councilperson Kapusta said thank you.

Councilperson Walchanowicz asked Tom, how is it going to work for Little League when the City provides the bats, the helmets and part of the protocol is there is no sharing of that stuff? How are we going to get it to the parents who sign their kids up that hey you want to play, you are going to have to provide your own tools to play the game?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said we are going to say that. Everybody is to buy their own bat and helmet. We are going to say if there's any hardship cases, we will look into that on a case-by-case basis. We will handle that on our own. We will help them out.

Mayor Kurtz said we did have a funny little YouTube we were going to try to play. I don't think we can queue it up. It is just comical, some of the wipes, and the bats and how to throw a pitch; and you have to stop and get the ball and wipe the ball off before you throw it to first base. It was a take off of some of the challenges we are going to have; but if we could pull it up before the end of the meeting, we will because it is funny. It emphasizes the seriousness of this thing and the nature of this; and when it comes to the Civic Center, we know the seniors. There is a certain segment of the population, and what we have discovered through this is that there is a certain segment of the population who has no fear, and the other extreme there are those who are on lockdown. So, when we talk to the seniors, when they pull in to grab their lunch, some of them are chomping at the bit; they also want to respect the protocols and safety. So, it's going to be a very fluid dynamic. I just say this, safety is going to be the priority, and I am very confident that as we work through this that we are going to have protocols in place just like we did with our employees working every day here and in the different departments. You establish protocols, and we are blessed to be able to say that we have been pretty resilient to this point. We hope to incorporate those and be a model for other communities, but again this is going to be a slow layout. We are not going to deliver this like a light switch.

That should give everyone a flavor as to the fact that we are intending to open. We will do it on a timely basis as quickly as we can, at least to try to get a flavor of how people are reacting. There are going to be new regulations and new minimum standards to protect the residents. If it doesn't work, then it doesn't work; but until we can't see our clear path, we intend to follow a slow introduction and delivery and see how that plays out.

Again, I say it, but I am going to put an asterisk, if there is a mandate that comes down from Columbus, it could shut everything off, postpone anything. Keep that in mind. This is very fluid.

Councilperson Veverka said I guess my question relates to a person who might be a chronic problem. Do you have some idea, for example, if somebody gets a warning, will we have a way of keeping track of somebody who needs extra attention or possibly to be excluded?

Mayor Kurtz said there's a protocol in place now if someone is unruly. We have the backup as always calling the Police Department to come over and help us if it's something our management team can't administer, we always have that backup. We track those, you make a mistake, you make a mistake, you learn. We don't condemn people over the first situation; but we will be tracking. If there is a problem, then they will be restricted or have their pass revoked.

Councilperson Veverka said excellent. The tracking issue is the one I was concerned about because individuals getting a warning here, a warning there, a warning everywhere, and we really need to focus on those people who are of the greatest concern because they are the ones who are in contact with the most people that they shouldn't be.

Mayor Kurtz said one of the challenges, when you have kids and water, you are going to have a lot of energy; and so we are not absent minded or negligent of that, we just know that there's going to be a lot of education and this process is going to take more than just let's start the game and go full blast.

Vice Mayor Grendel asked is the Fieldhouse going to be open during this time Tom or not?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said we are going to keep it closed. It's going to be for the summer camp. They are going to need time to prepare that facility, and that facility is only going to be for summer camp. We already talked to Tony, we are not going to have any outside rentals. Those Tucker Neale basketball, anything like that, we are not having any outside events there for at least the next two or three months.

Vice Mayor Grendel said summer camp will be sometime in July.

Councilperson Trakas said I have a couple of other quick questions. So, I know with our employees we are doing temperature checks; and I think that's highly prudent. What about guests who come in? I think if you are going to do it for employees, you should do it for guests as well because if they are ill they may not know they are ill. That way we could help them out making sure they can get checked out; but at the same time, they don't get other people ill while they are there. Is there any thought to that protocol?

Mayor Kurtz said we are looking at scanning machines. Tom, do you want to elaborate?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said we are looking at these square scanning machines at our facilities, and we are getting pricing on them now. There is a six to eight week delivery on these

because a lot of the amusement parks are buying them up, a lot of the big places are buying them up. So, I don't know if we will have them in place for opening when we do open; but in the long term that's what we are looking at.

Mayor Kurtz said Tom, I can't believe you didn't buy one.

Councilperson Kapusta asked so if you open prior to those machines coming in place, there will be mechanisms though for doing temperature checks for the camp participants right?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said yes, we have the handheld thermometers. We will have them in all the facilities, yes.

Community Services Director Senick said before the campers come into the building, their temperature will be checked. What's going to happen is the parents will pull up in their cars, we will check their temperature; and if there is any issue, then they will go back with their parents. We will not be at this time letting the parents in the building. We will be taking them ourselves into the building and checking their temperature and getting their hands washed.

Councilperson Trakas said my second point about that is Dale we have had at the Community Services Committee a few times these types of discussions. We have very good intentions about people coming into these places; but then a lot of people sneak in. We have people who well I'm a cousin of so and so; and we don't really have a great way of checking those people out. I mean I agree with where you want to go in terms of not having people from outside of the community; but we have a lot of people who are slipping in right now. So, I just urge to have extra safeguards in place, and these people who are calling up and saying well my grandkids are in town, but they don't really live in town. They really live somewhere else, and we are winking and giving a nod; I don't want any winks and nods. I think we have to really enforce this thing really vigorously. If that angers some people, it angers some people; but that's part of it.

I think another protocol we need to be looking at is people who are traveling, and this has to be an honesty policy; but if you travel to a place, that's what started this whole thing. You have people traveling to places that may not have the same protocols that we have, and I don't know what you do about that. Are there any thoughts to that? I don't have an answer, but I know there should be one.

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said well I can assure you we are going to have tight policies here. We will not let anybody into these facilities who are not a resident and who do not have passes for these places. I will assure you that because all of our staff, this is very serious stuff. We are not going to mess around. We don't want someone in here who shouldn't be. I have a good commitment from my staff.

Councilperson Kapusta asked so when we have our summer camps going on, our playgrounds, and they are in the Civic Center, will that be limited just to the campers, or will the people who used to come and sit in the atrium still be allowed to sit there?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said Kathleen, we are still looking and ironing out all those details; but we are going to try and keep the kids, I don't want to speak for Marilyn, but I think we are going to try and keep the kids away from the seniors the best we can. Obviously, we don't want that exposure.

Community Services Director Senick said that's why we are looking at the additional classrooms. We have the Old Rec building available to us at this point. So, once the seniors come back and we make that decision, we do plan on keeping them separated.

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said and another thing, that's why we are not booking any of our facilities for anything else at this point. The pavilions are not being booked as of right now. Marilyn's rooms are not being booked. The Elmwood Rec is not being booked. We are trying to save everything to see what we need for all of our programs.

Vice Mayor Grendel said I was going to ask, is there going to be any change to our fee structure? What we charge like for a pool pass or things of that nature? Is it going to stay as it has in the past just from a financial standpoint? Any changes?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said I didn't get to talk to the Mayor about that yet, but we are hoping to open. It all depends on when we open. If it's a late opening. We are trying to get as early in June as we can; but it all depends on when we open I think is what it's going to be.

Councilperson Kapusta asked Tommy do you actually have under the guidelines a limitation on numbers per square footage of the area or do you just eyeball it and say we have enough?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said April figured this all out. We have our numbers that we can let in to that facility. It's basically 50% of the Fire Code, and like at the outdoor pool, if we did go with that 50%, for the main pool we can allow 310 people in. The activity pool would be 178; and we are actually going to go down to 25%, which is 155 for the main pool and 89 for the activity pool. If we keep this to our residents, we should be okay with those numbers.

Vice Mayor Grendel asked another thing Tom, are we going to have concessions? Are they going to be selling food and everything at the pool and likewise at the ball games?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said we are going to have a limited menu. We are not going to have fountain pop, we are going to have all bottled pop. We are going to have packaged food, packaged chips. We will have the ice cream. The ice cream is a big hit, but we are going to consolidate the toppings. We are going to exceed the Board of Health's regulations.

Mayor Kurtz said I want to show you something. The Mayor displayed his phone showing the YouTube video to everyone. This is the protocol we are going to have to follow.

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said he's getting his can of Lysol and spraying. He sprays himself down.

Mayor Kurtz said okay, we all know what we are going to do now, right?

It's just to give you a flavor of what we are up against.

Vice Mayor Grendel said Gaylord Perry would like that. He could doctor the ball up, and nobody would say anything.

Mayor Kurtz asked any more questions along the lines of protocols and safety and some of the challenges? You have presented a number of different concerns and suggestions; and those will be incorporated into our protocols. Again, the other thing I can't stress enough is this is a time we are going to use our assets for our residents, for our teams, for our residents. Sure, it's going to upset some people, but until we are comfortable, we are going to make sure it's just for the people who we are primarily responsible for. If in fact we see everything is working, and State and Federal Government doesn't change things; then we will be in a position to adapt quickly. Initially, you have all made good points about how we have to ensure people have a safe and good experience.

Vice Mayor Grendel said and Mayor, if I may ask on behalf of Council, once these things start coming together; and you have the protocols, I would like to have a meeting so that the Council can be aware of everything. We disseminate information to the residents too, and it's good that we are informed. I know you can give it to us in writing, but it would be nice to have maybe an hour meeting so that we are not passing misinformation, that we are part of your Administration, your team so that we can be passing accurate information and be kind of a conduit for the Administration and our Directors and everything.

Mayor Kurtz said our goal is to make sure that each of you have the answers to questions when residents give them to you. That's why I think that the agenda expanded so much because you are getting questions, and you want to make sure that you have answers for your constituents.

One of the things we are looking at is videos. We are going to potentially create some visual aids to make sure that you see what we are planning on doing. Then you can either be a conduit to express that to others as you talk to people or you direct them to the website or different areas so that we can communicate thoroughly.

Vice Mayor Grendel said very good. So, these will be located on our website, and we will have it as soon as it is available.

Mayor Kurtz said that's the goal is to continually, every week we want to tell people what we are doing with the facilities, protocols, safety. We want parents to be comfortable when they come to one of the facilities. We want the elderly populations to be comfortable when they come to the facility. We want to introduce people back into these wonderful amenities that we have instead of feeling that they have to stay locked down. It's going to take a learning curve. There's going to be a lot of different things we need to do to raise people's comfort level; but we are confident that we can do that. We have the right people.

Councilperson Kapusta said the modifications, just like what Community Services staff did with the lunches last Friday and then throughout the rest of this month. I have heard very positive things about it. A lot of people didn't know about it even though you had announced it Mayor and things. I think we are going to see that continue to grow too. It's just something different for the people.

Mayor Kurtz said well it's going to be interesting next weekend, not this weekend coming up when it's free on May 29th.

Councilperson Kapusta said I heard 500 or so people.

Community Services Director Senick said there were 450.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said I have one last question for your Mayor, and it goes back to the baseball. Me being the community rep for Independence, I have to let the main Emerald Necklace Board know whether or not we are going to have that travel. So, I just want to, if we have an idea if that's a yes, where you are definitely not having it because I need to notify them as soon as possible.

Mayor Kurtz said well I think like the Director said, we are talking to some of the coaches; and we should quickly be able to determine how and when we can do something and what we are going to do. So, you will be the first call.

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said hopefully tomorrow we should make that decision for sure Chris.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said okay, thanks.

Mayor Kurtz said so to sum up several of the bullet points of the agenda; we are intending to follow the State minimum guidelines. We are going to enhance those. We believe that we can be more nimble, more effective in educating people, letting people enjoy these assets and resources that we have. We are going to lose some revenue in terms of some of the utilization of these facilities, but we believe that by reinvesting in our population and making sure they have a good experience, that's going to be our primary objective and make sure it's a safe environment for everybody.

Vice Mayor Grendel said very good. Mayor, just to change it a little bit, you had mentioned the fireworks are not going to go on; but you might have something later in the year such as like September or that or is it out completely?

Mayor Kurtz said we are not eliminating, when you get yourself two or three or four months down the road, the end of August. It's really tough at this point to shore up and make definitive points. So, we are going to be flexible. I think therefore we have the ability because of our size to have some flexibility; and if we determine later in the year that we can't do it in a very

organized fashion, my goal is to make sure it's for the residents of Independence. If I can create a venue for the residents of Independence, then that will be my primary objective, and there's ways we are looking at doing that. Rather than have a fully announced event, we will announce for our residents and find ways to do that. That is just speculating at this point.

Vice Mayor Grendel said I see, and there's no problem with our contract that we have with the company that provides the fireworks and that.

Mayor Kurtz said the reason why we are still motivated to do something is that we do have a \$5,000 deposit; and so I would love to do something, some modified form of fireworks. We will not know that until later in the year.

Vice Mayor Grendel said I see.

Councilperson Kapusta asked Mayor you did not mention about summer concerts, on or off for this summer? Have you made any decision?

Mayor Kurtz said right now it's just too soon. So, if there's an opportunity that when you can social distance, a modified smaller form of Home Days where we can have seats six foot apart; and we have a venue that the people are entertaining us can do the same thing, we can create from a hygiene standpoint a safe environment, that may be something we can do.

Right now, our highest priority is the pool and the Civic Center and the baseball fields, our assets, utilizing them and making sure that we create an opportunity to get our people engaged.

Councilperson Trakas said Mayor I would strongly urge suggest that on mass gatherings, I just don't think that's a good idea to go forward; and I know a number of communities have cancelled all summertime activities. I understand you want flexibility, but for the life of me, getting a lot of people together, whether they are socially distanced or not, I think we just saw the example of when the restaurants opened up what people did when they got out. A lot of these folks are putting themselves at risk, and we saw what was going on. You had people who didn't follow any of these protocols; and I think it's really hard to enforce that. Outdoor activities where you are getting large amounts of people, and when you can control it in a Civic Center or in a Recreation building, at City Hall, whatever, that's a little bit different type of situation. I don't see how it's possible to do that, and I have been really following this closely. I think we really ought to consider, what's the risk of putting our people at risk for allegedly some fun? I think we ought to be smart about this, and even on the other end of it is encouraging people to come. I know people have signed up for these programs. We don't know what this thing is like, and it's incurable. You have people are putting themselves at risk; and time and again, we find that they have infected themselves and others. I just think we need to be really cautious about mass gatherings.

Mayor Kurtz said we are looking at a little different perspective. We are looking about YouTube and some other way to take an entertainment to the masses without having them all gather in one spot. Sorry if I didn't explain that enough.

Councilperson Trakas said that's great. That would be great. What you just talked about is super. What I thought I heard you say was that we were going to limit it. I think it's really hard to have large amounts of people to be limited like that; but thank you for that because that's actually great.

Mayor Kurtz said again, this is all a work in progress. We are working on all of these different venues simultaneously. Some will come to fruition, some won't. Safety and security is the number one highest priority. So, if there's nothing else along that, again I can't tell you enough about, say enough about how our personnel, our departments, all of our people are really working hard. We are managing flood issues. Our safety forces are making sure that we are safe, and we are paying attention to the business at hand. We are getting the job done. All of our departments are really working hard.

Now Rec and Community Services are working double time to see how we can safely open up our facilities with protocols that promote security and hygiene.

Vice Mayor Grendel said thank you Mayor. I believe now we can move on, and I think the Finance Director did provide us kind of an answer to Agenda Item Number 2. Vern, you did send us something; and that's the City financial planning moving forward for the balance of 2020 and the budget process for 2021. So, Council if you could refer to the handout that Vern provided us, it gives kind of a timeline from now until the end of the year; and it does discuss different objectives. Vern, I will let you have the floor here for this.

Finance Director Blaze said thank you Vice Mayor. You said it well again, just like our last meeting. You have the outline in bullet point format. It's one page. You had it since late last week. So, I always take umbrage when I go to a presentation and conference and somebody pulls up a Power Point and they just start reading from a Power Point. I didn't need to go to the conference to do that; so I am not going to go and re-read every item. I will just open it up to questions, comments, concerns, suggestions, ideas, discussion, whatever is on Council's mind regarding the outline that I presented last week.

Vice Mayor Grendel said and we do have on the agenda today, although we probably won't get it discussed until next Tuesday, the overview of the inside millage. I think Kenn wanted to have the floor for about 10 or 15 minutes on that. So, I believe we will probably do that next week Kenn because we will voting on the 2021 Tax Budget at the June meeting; but I think that's a pressing matter to get approved by June, right Vern as far as that goes?

Finance Director Blaze said that would be ideal. I will be totally upfront with you the deadline to submit it to the County isn't until July; but I believe the July Council meeting is as late as it can be this year in July. It's on July 14th. That doesn't leave me any margin if by chance that I

don't get for affirmative votes; so I would much prefer the June regular meeting or at worst a special meeting in late June. We have enough time. It's not technically on First Reading, but we have introduced it already. We will have another opportunity to talk about that again next week. We have other time between the June 9th Council meeting. So, I think that issue will get more attention this year than it has gotten in probably the last decade, all the tax budgets combined. I think we will have done it justice by that point; but it's certainly in Council's hands if you want to adopt it at the June Council meeting.

Vice Mayor Grendel said and I do plan on calling another Finance meeting sometime in June, either a week or two weeks after the regular meeting. Again, to keep dialogue going, and we will have an idea at that time how the summer programs are going Mayor, and we will have more of an idea of the financial effect on the collections and things of that nature too. We will definitely have a Finance meeting, besides having next week's discussion on the Tax Budget.

Any questions for Vern? We have all had that for a few days now, the schedule for the rest of the year. Are there any questions regarding that?

Mayor Kurtz said a couple of things. It's May 19th, and just to reinforce the fact that we have a lot of things to do by these openings of different things sometime in June. Also, if maybe the Finance Director could just take a minute for the benefit of those who are part of this tonight that didn't get the data that he submitted. Maybe he could just tell them we are down a half a million dollars for the year to date, things like that Vern.

Finance Director Blaze said I'm like Albert Einstein, he said I don't keep all that stuff in my head. I don't have that right in front of me. In a nutshell for those who haven't read either the Legislative Reviews, my reports at the last few Council meetings or the Friday evening updates. Those are my three primary means of communication with the community.

We have weathered the Coronavirus pandemic financially as well as anybody to date. We are on a lag as far as receiving revenue, which are primary revenue source is municipal income tax, and the income tax that we received here in May generally was withheld from employees who worked in Independence in March. There's roughly a 60 to 90 day delay between when payroll taxes are withheld to them getting forwarded to the Regional Income Tax Agency the following month. Then they are forwarded to us the month after that.

So, the key months coming up are June, which will reflect the business activity for April which was virtually as low as it could be probably because that was a full month of a shutdown in the State of Ohio except for the essential businesses. So, that's going to show up we are believing in the June revenue. May's will show up approximately in July, and May since some businesses have started to open and business activity is starting, has maybe hit rock bottom and has turned the corner, there will be a slight uptick. So, we are really hoping that the worst of it as far as the revenue standpoint for the City will be next month in June, and only because we are in that delay. June's revenue for the City will reflect business activity from a couple of months ago generally.

Vice Mayor Grendel said and Vern to go over your memo, we are down \$551,472, but you did note on a few occasions that RITA had to give a \$500,000 net profit tax refund back. So, you take that out of the equation, and we would be down about \$50,000 only; and I know that it was a big factor. We were down in May considerably, but it would have been a little bit better had we not had to give back that \$500,000. That would have occurred no matter what. I think too when you compare us to other communities, I think Westlake looks like on your chart, was hit the hardest. I could imagine if American Greetings and some of the other big companies they have; but Seven Hills was down more than us and Broadview Heights also. Brecksville was almost identical with the percentage loss we had. So, it appears that the only communities that didn't get hurt too badly are Brooklyn Heights, Cuyahoga Heights and Valley View; and that's because their businesses probably opened up or didn't completely shut down. They have a different kind of economy than what we have on Rockside.

Finance Director Blaze said they might be a little bit more manufacturing, distribution, warehouse type operations so it's tough to perform those remotely; and they are not retail. So, they weren't shut down as far as the malls or bars and restaurants. So, that's why I think the three villages held up pretty good in percentage terms; but we are doing as well as anybody is right now. Councilperson Synek obviously with his accounting background and practice background with taxes; we also emphasized that since the State pushed back the tax filing deadline from April 15th to July 15th this year, that's another reason that our revenue stream will be a little bit different for the next few months because we didn't get that big hit that we usually get when people file in April. We usually have a pretty good month of collections in May and June. We are probably not going to see that. Well, we didn't see it in May. We probably won't see that in June; but on the flip side there's always some good news too. It's not huge, but we have a couple components of our debt to others, and that's the long term bonds, the short term notes.

We have some OPWC loans, Ohio Public Works Commission; and we get some of that money sometimes from the State. That's really advantageous because it's truly zero percent interest, and we just have to pay principal back. We were just notified today that the principal payment due this year at 2020, the State is deferring, and it won't be due until 2021. It wasn't cancelled out, but it's another tool in our toolbox to give us a little more breathing room that we don't have to make this \$100,000 OPWC payment this year. We will have to make two of them next year. It's not a forgiveness, but anything you could defer when your revenue is a little bit pinched helps.

Vice Mayor Grendel asked any questions for the Finance Director from Council?

Councilperson Kapusta said Vern thanks for the articles that you have been sending with the narratives like from Crain's and things. Those have been very informative. I had recently read one maybe a day or two ago also that said that some of the companies, just like you indicated and the articles indicated, yes some of them may be looking at reducing their footprint because they could have more employees work from home. Others may look at increasing their footprint so they could bring the employees back, but with the adequate spacing. The other component of the

article was it said that some employers are now using software to track their employees at home. They are able to do screen shots. They are able to count strokes in the computer. They take pictures of them every x number of times. So, I think that as much as we would like to say that this is working, I think there's going to be some bugs to be worked out too. I think productivity is probably the greatest of those.

Finance Director Blaze said oh for sure. In summary, my only goal in sending those out is to say look nobody really knows what's going to happen with the office market in our City, in northeast Ohio, in this country. Everybody can write articles. Everybody can speculate, but I do think it's a safe assumption to say it's going to change going forward in some form or fashion; and we as community leaders should just plan for that change, whatever it is so that we are not caught flat footed and that we are proactive to the best degree we can and yet anticipate a few different scenarios and work with the incoming Economic Development Director, the Planning Department, Council, the Mayor, the business community and say okay look here's the threat, how are we going to turn that into an opportunity? It's exciting frankly. It's challenging, but it's exciting too.

Mayor Kurtz said along that line just to take us into another a blended agenda, your point is well taken that we don't have the answer; but we are going to create a bold strategy relative to economy development. We have Jessica Heyser coming on the first of June. We are already having robust discussions with the various departments to see how we can integrate and create a new dynamic. We also will be coming to Council, and I think it's something we are going to have to look at long term in terms of how we utilize some of our raw land and how we go to business over the next five, ten, twenty, thirty years. The cookie cutter and the traditional office building will not be the single source of revenue or the highest source of revenue. We are going to have to diversify. We are going to have to be more creative, and it's going to take a lot of future thinking with a vision to really take advantage of our location, which I still think is a driver for our success.

That being said, we are still talking with our business community. Jessica is excited to come on board. She has a number of different things she wants to do to enhance our communication and effectiveness with our business community. So, while we are communicating with them, we learn from them every day. I have meetings with different aspects of our business community and find out where their drag is, where they are excited, where their employees and the ones who work at home and how there is a certain segment of the employees, they excel in that environment. The majority of them do their job like they normally would, and then there are the laggards who don't keep up; but as Councilperson Kapusta said, they can track all that. So, what they are finding out is that it's going to change their dynamic of how they go to business. Losing that culture, losing the idea, the synergy they create by working that environment is the trade off of why they need to come back in their office.

So, we are monitoring that, and we have some ideas. These ideas are going to be put in place for a long five, ten, twenty year strategy, not just a one or two month strategy. We are doing things that we believe are going to set the stage in the future. We believe our business community is

going to play a vital role in that as we look to that to expand, to stabilize and help us create this new dynamic together. That's where Council is going to have to play an important role. We will further define that throughout the year and throughout the next years.

That should give you a flavor of what we are doing in terms of our coordinating with the business community. Any other questions on that one?

Vice Mayor Grendel said Mayor we do have an Economic Development meeting scheduled. I think Kenn scheduled it for the third Tuesday in June. So, maybe at that time the Council can meet your new Director and get a little idea of what ideas she has. Maybe we can roll out some of these things at that time. Give her a chance to get her feet wet and just give a chance for us to get on board with the programs that your Administration is going to be initiating and be a part of that like you said require that team on that.

Mayor Kurtz said it's exciting. We are excited about it, and we think it's going to be very good for this community going forward with this car wash approach to service and serviceability.

I also want to just say that right now we are constricted. The communication and the ability to service is being constricted to the Mayor's office and because of the dynamic. So, I have people working, putting a lot of hours into make sure that we don't miss the beat in terms of service and serviceability; but once we get to the point where we can open that back up and be totally effective with all of our departments, it's going to be an exciting dynamic. I think by the 23rd of June the goal should be to have some, give you a flavor of what we have experienced and where we are at today and then where we are going to be in the future.

Vice Mayor Grendel said very good.

Councilperson Trakas said I have a couple of questions for both Vern and the Mayor. First off, in terms of some of the suggestions we heard about the opening process and protocols and constructing up new areas and changing things out and hiring more staff, do we have a budget or any type of estimated budget as to what we are looking at as to what that costs?

Finance Director Blaze said I think it's still preliminary in that regard, but I guess my knee jerk would be look the Rec Department part-time staff has not been working for almost two months now; and if the pool doesn't open up until mid June, you had a long delay there where there were no wages being paid. Then it's going to be a limited season so maybe we have a few more people, and we are paying them a few more dollars; but we are not paying them as long as we would in a typical season. So, maybe it all washes, and it's no more than what is appropriated right now.

Mayor Kurtz said and overtime is down in some of these departments, like the Police Department; so I don't see that as being a major factor going forward.

Councilperson Trakas said I just wanted to know what the number might be, understanding that we are saving money. We are also losing money on the other end of it.

The second question I had related to that, are the PPP funds that businesses received, the individuals are being paid through I think June. Are those taxable? Are we seeing that people are being paid for not working? Are those taxable numbers? I guess as correlated to that is if that is taxable, and we are reaping the benefit of that; if those businesses or some of them don't open up, I guess that would be my concern is that we are seeing an artificial number now. So, I don't know the answer to that Vern. Is the PPP taxable? Would we derive the benefit from that?

Finance Director Blaze said I would defer to the CPA on the call.

Councilperson Synek said so the whole thrust of the PPP is to accept the proceeds are used to pay payroll during the eight week period after the loan proceeds are received, it becomes forgivable. So, there's a huge incentive for employers to keep people on the payroll even if the business might have little or no revenue due to the shutdown. It will have a significant, positive impact. How much we won't know until this is all over, but on balance it's far better for Independence if the PPP was implemented because like I say, it is designed to keep employees on the payroll at their normal pay scale for businesses that are suffering.

Councilperson Trakas said the question is so people are paying taxes because it's a regular payroll, but I guess my concern is if they don't, if some of those businesses don't open, then that was kind of an artificial bump because the Government gave them money for several months to operate; but if they don't open back up again and they lay people off afterwards, then we are looking at a different financial situation. Is that correct?

Finance Director Blaze said that might be a fair assumption, but I have to think with the Governor's comment that after a certain point this month, 91% of the businesses in Ohio are either eligible to be open or 91% of the economy is back. I don't know if you are a restaurant or a bar, and you have been closed down since mid-March, and you have been given the green light already to do carry out, and next week you can do in facility dining, why would you close up? Why wouldn't you just open up and start trying to get your business back?

Councilperson Trakas said well the Restaurant Association of Ohio says that they think 25% of all restaurants will close; so there's also been comment that other small businesses wouldn't be able to recover from this. I guess that's what I'm trying to anticipate is not necessarily now, I just think this could be an artificial bump. Then maybe in the fourth quarter we may see a dramatic decline if indeed that does happen. This is speculation, but I was just trying to find out how the process worked, and I think we have to account for that.

Finance Director Blaze said sure and that just gets to the need for another meeting later this month, next month, over the summer to talk about the future; whether it's financial, economic development and what are the contingency plans should it get as bad as in the fourth quarter as you described Councilperson. I think we could hope as much as we want that it's at the bottom,

and now things will slowly start to turn over the summer and that will result in enhanced business activity. That will result in enhanced tax revenue to local taxing districts; but we don't know that for sure yet. So, all we could do is hope that's the case and plan for it if it's not.

Vice Mayor Grendel said right now it's total speculation, so we won't know until we go forward and see when these businesses come back. Hopefully, the majority of them will, but there's really no way we could have a crystal ball and tell. The ones that did receive the money kept their payrolls. I would think the City tax would be applied to that. So, we wouldn't lose anything from that. Hopefully, those companies that took the money there, they will keep their businesses open. That is the whole purpose of that is to keep their business opened and be able to hit the ground running. So, if it's a competent business, they are going to be on good grounds.

Just like the Mayor, you have been planning with your Directors, and these companies have to be doing the same thing to thrive or to survive with their operations.

Mayor Kurtz said absolutely. They are trying to sort through this like everybody else.

Councilperson Veverka said one of the additional issues has to do with the extra Federal money. So, beside unemployment which is not very much, a lot of the restaurant workers are actually making more when they are not working; and that basically causes a dilemma for restaurant owners. They need to decide if they are going to train new staff until at least the end of July because their trained staff are earning more money not working. So, do they train new staff, and then what do they do after the first (inaudible)? It's a very complicated situation as far as the restaurant business goes.

Councilperson Kapusta said it was my understanding though too Councilperson Veverka that if you were offered your job back and did not take it, that you would no longer be eligible for the unemployment. That is what I had heard.

Mayor Kurtz said that's right.

Councilperson Veverka said correct.

Vice Mayor Grendel said I think we discussed Agenda Item 3 as well as 6; but Agenda Item 4 which is status of the services provided to the residents. We talked about Community Services and Rec Department. The Service Department, and Mayor you might want to expound if we had additional flooding, I believe we did over the weekend with all the rain again and how we stand up there. There are some hot spots, so we need to really put our attention to it. I think the Scenicview area got hit badly again.

Mayor Kurtz said I am happy to report that we did not only, working two shifts, by going to two shifts; it makes us much more efficient when we have a flooding situation or some power outage. Our response time is immediate, and so we are able to go to a site and manage it more effectively than having to call people back in.

Scenicview, we did have the same situation again; and this time we were able to get in and diagnose the problem. Here we had a plugged manhole with debris from the creek from I-77. It lodged itself in the manhole, and once we got that cleaned out, it's gone.

With the rain we had again yesterday, we had no problem. So, we believe that we have solved the problem. We are going to put a grate, do some creek cleaning further from the mouths of these inlet pipes. We are going to go through each manhole and check to see if everything is clean and clear and take cameras. I believe that we finally solved the problem on the Scenicview/Timberlane/Ranchview area.

The Valley Woods, by going up and checking the grates before the event, we didn't have anything significant there. We do have a lot of different areas where the water is just ponding on properties. We are looking at doing some cost sharing. That was suggested, and we are going to continue to look at how we can stretch our tax dollars, solve problems and with sewer and that storm sewer water in the basements being the highest priority.

Vice Mayor Grendel said very good. Thank you Mayor. I see that looking at the clock it's 5:53 p.m. I believe going back to our agenda, Item 5, protocols and precautions for City owned property. I know Jim that was on your wish list. Has that been answered to your satisfaction? Do we need to address it a little further?

Councilperson Trakas said it sounded good, and I think it's still a work in progress; but it's a work in progress which is important. Now we are just looking for an update.

Vice Mayor Grendel said very good.

I think at this point, looking at our agenda, we have Items 7 through 11 that maybe we can handle next week. With the legal ramifications, I would like to make sure that we have a little review of that by Mr. O'Brien maybe. I would like to have an update from our safety forces and our leaders there in the safety departments that would discuss what special problems or issues that maybe this has produced. We might not want to even find out how involved. Greg, I think you get calls from people all the time reporting to you with groups of people together and want the Police to break them up maybe or to cite them and that. Maybe just kind of a review of how far the City goes in the social distancing and trying to enforce some of the State guidelines; we could discuss that next week.

We do want to set at least 15 minutes aside Kenn for your presentation on the inside millage; and then I know Kathleen you had the City Recycling Program. So, maybe if we could have an update on that. I think we have all seen what happened in the City of Cleveland. The recycling was going right in where the garbage was going. We just want to get an update on that program from Leon maybe or Mayor from yourself.

Then I don't know if we need to go into Executive Session as far as the possibility of other real property purchases and that. That's something that can be an Executive Session topic, and Mayor

I don't know if you would feel more comfortable in that setting as opposed to having an opened setting discussing that.

Mayor Kurtz said that might be a more appropriate one. We have a couple of minutes before 6:00 p.m., and it won't take long for Leon to outline the Recycling Program if you want to consider it.

Vice Mayor Grendel said if he's been hanging on, we might as well get Leon on board and get a report from him.

Service Director Karas said so the recycling consortium, we are part of the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District Recycling Consortium; and every so many years we go out to bid. It's typically like a three year bid with a one year option. So, we are up now for bid. Over the last five years or so, the recycling market has kind of fallen apart a little bit. In the past we were getting thousands of dollars a year. We would be selling all of our recyclables, and now last year we got \$476 back. We are doing about 724 tons a year in recycling. When we go out to bid, the Solid Waste District is anticipating that we will no longer receive revenue for our recycling. We are going to have to pay for our recycling to be processed. We currently use Kimble Companies. We take our material to them, and then they sell it to a processor. They process it and then sell it to an end user; but right now they are anticipating, based on what the numbers that they are looking at, is that recycling is going to cost the City anywhere between \$50 to \$75 a ton.

I know the City of Cleveland had a bid out, and it came back at \$100 a ton. The reason that Cleveland's was so high was because Cleveland's waste, their recycling is a little bit more contaminated than normal. So, ours is relatively clean. We have never had any issues with contamination. By contamination I mean just other waste mixed in with it, just regular household food waste or whatever. We are probably looking at somewhere between \$50 to \$60 a ton as a cost that the City is going to have to pay for recycling moving forward.

Vice Mayor Grendel said so that will be something that the City will have to include in our budget if we decide to continue that program, which I think from an ecological standpoint I would rather continue it and everything. I know in our family, and most families in town, we have gotten used to breaking down what is garbage and what is recyclable and everything. So, I would hate to see that end at this point, but we have to see how much the cost is going to be too I believe.

Councilperson Kapusta said I brought it up also because there was a January 18th article in Cleveland.com that talked about the City of Brookpark; and they have taken a vote with their Council to actually put a moratorium on the recycling program in their city just for the reasons that Leon is saying. They had indicated in the article that they got a bid of \$124 a ton for the cost.

So, I just wanted us to be on top of it and be aware of it; and somehow maybe even in the back of our burner here because we have so much on our plate, to remember that we did put, and I know

it's been put on hold by the State too. At some point and time probably we will need to look too, even at our plastic bag issue that we put a moratorium on until July of this year.

Vice Mayor Grendel said thank you Kathleen. Any other questions?

Councilperson Trakas said it's the intent of the Utilities Committee to delve into this more and maybe there are some things we can change about the program. Yesterday it was reported that Brecksville had a 1,800% increase in their recycling costs. So, one of the things that drives this is dirty products. So, way we used to do it where we separated everything individually was a far less dirty process; so that drives some of the cost of this thing. Utilities Committee is going to try to have a session devoted to finding some solutions as well here coming up in the next couple of months.

Vice Mayor Grendel said very good Jim. We will pick up that subject in your committee.

Law Director O'Brien said I have done some work for the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District, saw Leon at a meeting. We represented the Geauga/Trumbull Solid Waste District for over 25 years. The big reason, it will be a substantial cost that you should anticipate is because the market has dried up. China used to take most of the recycling, and that is non-existent. To your point, although the bottle recycling is going into landfills, it's actually being used as a liner to separate. It is going to somewhat of a recycling use, not for (inaudible).

Vice Mayor Grendel said thank you Greg. Any other questions for Leon at this time? Jim, we will pick that subject up with your committee.

Councilperson Synek said I had a question for Leon. If recycling costs \$50 a ton, what is trash cost per ton?

Service Director Karas said right now we are paying with Rumpke right around \$46 a ton. So, garbage right now is going to be less expensive to dispose than recycling will be.

Councilperson Veverka asked what is the yearly tonnage?

Service Director Karas said recycling is about 780 tons a year. It's a lot of tonnage.

Councilperson Kapusta asked Leon, that's just our recycling?

Service Director Karas said that's just our recycling, that's all the recycling we do, that's what we collect in the blue hooded carts.

On the white goods and the metal items that we collect, that is processed separately. This is just the stuff that we are collecting in our carts.

Councilperson Kapusta said Leon, I would also like to acknowledge your staff relative to the collections. Having driven around the City, everybody and their brother took the opportunity of this time to clean out their houses, and not only for the regular trash but for all the special pickups. Your department has been outstanding in that; so thank you.

Service Director Karas said thank you Kathleen. I will let them know.

Vice Mayor Grendel said they have been wonderful because we have kept them busy ourselves.

Mayor Kurtz said we had the recycling this weekend, paper recycling, shredding. Tommy, how many trucks did we use?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said we filled two trucks up on Sunday, and then another truck on Friday with just our own City recycling, shredding. It was the most I have ever seen. I ended up staying myself because our staff was so overwhelmed. The line was out to 21. It was amazing how many people came.

Vice Mayor Grendel asked don't we have two recycling days last year Tom? I think we have one in the spring and one in the fall. Are we planning on maybe having that again in the fall or not until next year?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said I am going to suggest we have another one in the fall like we did last year.

Vice Mayor Grendel said very good.

Mayor, I think that takes us, we have items; and Debi if you can for next week's agenda probably Items 7 through 11 we will need to put on for next week's agenda, minus Number 10 for the Recycling Program. If you have any other things you wish to add for next week, send me an e-mail or send an e-mail to Debi and myself too so this way the agenda for next Tuesday's meeting, if it's agreeable. Again, when we limit it from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. I think it works better. This way we know we can be precise and not carry on or get off track.

I believe it's a good place to stop and then maybe leave Strategic Planning meeting and have our Special Council meeting.

Mayor Kurtz said that's a good point to stop, and if somebody wants to add something to next week's agenda, we can do that. We will just be fluid just like we are with our City right now. We are just going to be fluid in terms of our meetings and how far we can advance each one of these agenda items.

Vice Mayor Grendel said and Mayor I think maybe the first thing on the agenda will be an update on progress because you will probably be one week further along; and any update we can

get it from our Department Heads. I thank you for having everybody ready today, and you did a great job going over everything.

Mayor Kurtz said they are a great group, and I tell you what, they have the best interest of this community at heart; and they work really hard at it. They have been so dedicated and focused on making sure what we do, we do right. It's really something you would be all proud of. I can't say enough about the vast majority of employees that are just so dedicated to work through some of these situations. So, with that we will end this Strategic session.

Vice Mayor Grendel said I just have one thing too Mayor, I think this Monday's special program for Memorial Day, it will be a good test to see. We are going to have a modified setup and see how people obey. We will have a pretty good idea how that goes for future endeavors I think too.

Mayor Kurtz said it won't be the same. I don't think we are going to have the massive crowds or the parade; it's going to be different, but you know what, remember it's a ceremony not a celebration. It's something to remember and pay respect; and I am hoping that we can put that altogether in a respectful, dignified fashion.

Vice Mayor Grendel said very good. Thank you Mayor.

Moved by Kapusta, seconded by Walchanowicz to adjourn the Strategic Planning Committee meeting of May 19, 2020. Voice Vote: 7 yes/0 no; motion carried.

The Strategic Planning Committee meeting was then adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

Debra J. Beal, Clerk of Council
Minutes Unapproved at time of Release 05/20/20
