

Oakwood, Ohio

June 2, 2015

The Oakwood Citizen Budget Review Committee met at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 2, 2015. The meeting took place in the city council chambers, 30 Park Avenue. The following people attended:

Budget Review Committee

Steve Brooks	Michael Hayes
James Broz	Ella Himes
Charlie Campbell	John Jervis
Phil Chick	Bill Lockwood
Dave Dickerson	Pete Luther
Dan Ferneding	Skip Ordeman
Ellen Fodge	Mike Ruetschle
Bill Frapwell	Michael Vanderburgh

Oakwood City Council

Mayor William Duncan  
Vice Mayor Steve Byington  
Councilmember Rob Stephens  
Councilmember Anne Hilton  
Councilmember Chris Epley

City Staff

City Manager Norbert Klopsch  
Assistant City Manager Jay Weiskircher  
Leisure Services Director Carol Collins  
Public Safety Director Alex Bebris  
Finance Director Cindy Stafford  
Law Director Robert Jacques

Mayor Bill Duncan opened the meeting with a welcome and self-introductions. He then explained that Mr. Klopsch will be providing a briefing this evening on the status of city finances and on several key projects.

Mr. Klopsch then provided a briefing addressing the following items:

- 2014 FINANCIAL AUDIT: The Ohio Auditor of State has completed the field work for the audit of Oakwood's 2014 finances. The final report has not yet been published, but staff expects an unqualified "clean" opinion.
- 2015 FINANCIAL REPORT – THRU MAY 31, 2015: Mr. Klopsch noted that the city has provided public services at a lower annual cost in each of the last six years between 2008 and 2014. Through the first five months of 2015, revenues and expenses in the Non-Enterprise Funds and the Water, Sanitary Sewer and Stormwater utilities are in line with budget projections.

- FAR HILLS AVENUE BUSINESS DISTRICT TREE PROJECT:** The street tree project was completed over the past three months and includes eight different tree species. The original project was planned for two phases, with phase one in 2015 (\$65,000) and phase two in 2016 (\$65,000). Staff determined that the project was better completed in one single phase and was done so with the capital expense for the tree and electrical system rebuild at \$72,000. Related project costs included \$10,000 for irrigation system repairs; \$4,600 for tree and stump removals; \$4,900 for miscellaneous landscaping; and \$1,000 for repairs to the timber wall. The total project cost is approximately \$ 92,500, significantly lower than the original \$130,000 estimate.
- OLD RIVER FIELDS/TURF TASK FORCE/OAKWOOD UNITED SOCCER:** The Oakwood Schools recently appointed a 10-member "Turf Task Force" charged with studying options for building an artificial turf athletic field in Oakwood. This was done at the encouragement of a group of Oakwood citizens with the name "Oakwood Athletic Project". The two sites being studied are Mack Hummon Stadium at the Oakwood Junior/Senior High School and the Old River Field facility. The task force is refining options for this athletic facility at Old River, but project planning is still in the very preliminary stages. A committee member asked how a potential project would be funded. The Oakwood Athletic Project team believes that private funding can be raised to cover the project cost. Findings from the task force are expected to be publicized in late summer. If a turf project at Mack Hummon Stadium is pursued, it will be primarily a school project. If a facility at Old River is pursued, it will be a joint venture between Oakwood Schools and the city of Oakwood.
- PUBLIC SERVICE RADIO SYSTEMS: COUNTY 800 MHZ SYSTEM AND OAKWOOD VHF SYSTEM:** Mr. Klopsch and Chief Bebris reported on the status of upgrading the public safety and public works/admin/leisure services department radio systems. The project involved a review of the existing radio inventory and reduction of six radios within public safety and two within public works. Additionally, the public works/admin/leisure system was removed from the countywide communication system and now operates on a standalone VHF system. The cost to build this VHF system was approximately \$14,000. The cost to have moved all of the public works/admin/leisure radios onto the countywide system would have been approximately \$110,000. Additionally, there will be annual savings by operating the standalone VHF system. Discussion ensued amongst the committee on contingency plans for those times when the new VHF system might experience technical problems. Chief Bebris and Law Director Jacques responded that most of the system can operate even if the antenna system is damaged and that such damage can be very quickly repaired. Also, defective radios can be quickly replaced. Replacing the radio repeater is also a quick fix. Staff does not envision there being any negative impact on public service even if there was a temporary loss of radio communication.
- POLICE CAR PURCHASES: GASOLINE VS. ALTERNATIVE FUELS:** The public safety department recently took delivery of two new police cars. These are the first two new cars purchased since 2011. They are manufactured by Ford and will be put into service within the next week or two. After additional study, staff determined that purchasing standard gasoline vehicles was a better option than bi-fuel vehicles. This decision was based on several factors, including 1) the drop in gasoline prices; 2) the volatile propane market; and 3) the movement towards compressed natural gas (CNG) fueled engine systems. A CNG station is currently being constructed at the Montgomery County Solid Waste Facility in Moraine. When completed, this station will be close enough to Oakwood to be a viable fueling station... this in the event that Oakwood begins purchasing CNG fueled engines.

- 2015 ASPHALT PAVING PROGRAM: The city has \$450,000 budgeted for asphalt pavement resurfacing and \$120,000 for sidewalk, curb and apron repairs. Both capital projects were recently bid with a total bid price of \$503,000. This leaves approximately \$67,000 available for additional repairs to concrete streets and other paved surfaces around Oakwood.
- SMITH GARDENS PAVER PROJECT: The Leisure Services Department, under direction of Carol Collins and Horticulturist Brian Caldwell, recently rebuilt all of the brick paver walkways into and around Smith Gardens. This was a multi-month project that also serves as a fundraiser for the gardens. Commemorative/Legacy bricks may be purchased for insertion into the walkway. The project has already raised nearly \$6,000.
- PERSONNEL CHANGES: Over the past year or so, the city has lost six key employees to retirements or resignations. These include Public Safety Major Randy Baldrige, Engineering Technician Bart Bornhorst, Engineer and Public Works Director Kevin Weaver, Public Works Foreman Jeff Rittenhouse, Zoning Inspector Dave Bunting, and Leisure Services Program Supervisor Dan Ruble. Four of the six have been or will be replaced with two of the six positions being eliminated... this consistent with cost cutting measures previously discussed.
- DP&L AMBASSADOR GRANT PROGRAM: DP&L recently announced a new grant program whereby \$5,000-\$10,000 will be available each year to local communities. Oakwood is considering using the grant money to help pay costs associated with the Far Hills Avenue Business District wintertime lighting.
- FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY: There is a movement across Ohio to include public sector spending information online. The Ohio Treasurer is working on establishing a web based program free of charge to local governments. Also, the Ohio Treasurer has partnered with a company by the name of OpenGov that provides enhanced web applications, but at a cost. The typical annual cost for smaller communities like Oakwood is in the \$5,000-\$10,000 range. At the moment, council and staff do not see value for that additional investment. As it is, all Oakwood financial information is subject to the Ohio public records laws and is readily available to any citizen interested in seeing financial details.

A question was asked regarding the status of discussion amongst Council on a proposal to limit the credit given to municipal income taxes paid to other communities. Mayor Duncan and Mr. Klopsch explained that the need to address this issue remains, but is not currently urgent.

At approximately 6:35 p.m., Mayor Duncan closed the Budget Review Committee meeting and thanked all participants for attending.

Chairman

