

# WESTLAND AREA COMMISSION

P.O. Box 293 – Galloway, OH 43119

**Wednesday, March 17, 2021**

Virtual Meeting through Zoom and Facebook live

Chairman: Scott Taylor; Vice Chairman: Bill Steimer; Treasurer: Dave Van Order; Recording Officer: Tena Thompson

## Minutes

7:04 pm Call to Order

### Roll Call

Nancy Day-	Marian Hymer-AB	Bill Steimer-x	Shawn Thomas-x
Achauer-x	Brian Largan-	David Stewart-EX	Tena Thompson-x
Cathy Cowan	Lyman-x	Jeff Tanner-x	David Van Order-x
Becker-x	Mike McKay-AB		
Janet Cahill-x			
Ashley Hoye-EX	Denise Southworth-	Scott Taylor-x	
	x		

X- Present  
AB- Absent  
EX- Excused

Chair Taylor asked for a motion to approve the February 2021 minutes with corrections. Bill Steimer made the motion to approve the amended minutes and Brian Largan- Lyman seconded. All approved and the February 2021 minutes were approved with corrections.

### Recognition of guests-

Sergeant Frederick Brophy spoke about the current overall crime rates for the Westland area. He said statistically they are lower than normal for this time of the year, however car thefts are up. He reminded people to not leave your car running to warm up as this is how the thieves are getting them. Also, violent crimes are up city and nationwide and expected to increase as the weather improves. The city, along with other entities, are working to create programs to challenge the trend and address this problem. Sergeant Brophy stated that in his discussion with the community, there is an increased concern of random violence attacks. He said that a majority of the violent crimes are between people who know each other and have an issue and rarely does a random person get targeted. Officer Rob Bruce was also present and he commented on the same issues, and asked some questions about some of the matters on the Hilltop. Due to ongoing cases, these matters were not discussed beyond the mention.

Franklin Co. Municipal Court Environmental Judge Stephanie Mingo was present and introduced herself. She gave a brief description of what the Environmental Court is compared to what it is not. Judge Mingo presides over three types of cases: 1) Civil cases involving properties that are a public nuisance 2) Criminal cases that involve crimes to create a property to become a public nuisance and 3) all of the animal abuse, neglect and bite cases in Franklin Co. Judge Mingo went into great detail about the first category (civil cases involving properties

that are a public nuisance). She explained how these properties are identified and determined. She did state out of the 646 nuisance cases that were filed in 2020, 3 were in the 43119 zip code and 35 were in the 43228 zip code. Also, she gave multiple examples of remedies that the Court might take ranging from fines, to ordering compliance in a timely manner, to vacating the property and other means to make the property less of a public nuisance. She encouraged members to be vigilant and to report properties that could lead to a public nuisance. She recommended 311, and to call Kyle Kirker, the Chief Environmental Specialist, should 311 not respond in a timely manner. Judge Mingo did thank the commission for their involvement and continued support on these matters.

## **Committee Reports**

Zoning – Nothing to report.

Community Relations – Nothing to report.

Education –

Committee chair David Stewart was not able to be present to the meeting, however he did email Commission Chair Taylor his report. Mr Taylor read Mr. Stewart's report emphasizing the information about South-Western City Schools returning to 5 days in person learning starting April 5, 2020. He did state that rules will be in place to have a safe return and include deep cleanings, mask wearing and social distancing. SWCS has been in contact with the health department and both believe that a safe, in person return is possible and needed.

Planning & Development – Nothing to report.

Recreation & Parks – Nothing to report.

Public Health & Safety –

Committee chair Nancy Day-Achauer reported an update about the youth vaping task force in Franklin co. She said in person presentation dates are April 6, April 15, April 22, April 27 and May 4 about different aspects of the youth vaping issue. No presentation will be the same. Flyers will be available soon, and encouraged to be passed out physically as well as online. The presentations are geared towards parents and those who work with youth to educate them about the dangers of youth vaping that is an increasing concern.

The produce giveaway is scheduled for Saturday, March 20 at 9am. Volunteers are always needed and welcomed at 7:30 am. The giveaway will be at the fire station on Inah Ave. and it is a drive thru produce giveaway. Commission member Bill Steimer said that he talked with Mr. Jordan, from Westland and he will help get the word out about having students volunteer with the giveaways again. There was a decline in this, when Covid hit.

Committee chair Shawn Thomas reported that he has seen many people crossing Galloway Rd. to get to the park area, where there is not a place to cross. His concern is safety, as people run across. Mr. Thomas did talk to the county and they said their jurisdiction was on one side and the city was on the other. In order to have a sign going both ways, both jurisdictions would have to be in agreement and place their signs respectively. Mr. Thomas did call 311 and left his contact information in the hopes that it will be passed on to the correct person. Melissa Green did request the information to be forwarded to her and she will pass it on to the contacts in transportation that she has. More information to come.

## **Old Business**

Chair Taylor reminded everyone about the need to update the Commission committees. Chair Taylor thanked everyone who did email him a list of the committees that they would like to be on. He did email the list that he compiled from member preferences for review. If any changes are needed please let him know. It was questioned if committee meetings needed to be made public and if so what would need to happen. In addition, when would in person meetings begin to happen again. Melissa Green said that all meetings, committee and whole Commission meetings would need to be made public. She said that the new Ohio Sunshine Laws become effective July 1st and the Governors Order about virtual meetings and public meetings end on July 1st. So the earliest possible date for an actual in person meeting would be July 2, 2021. The in person meetings and being open to the public would be mandatory under the Ohio Sunshine Laws, however it would be optional if the WAC and committees would want the meetings broadcasted virtually as well. She did remind everyone that there would be certain rules still in place and that a lot of things can change between now and then. More information to come.

## **New Business**

Chair Taylor sent members the updated 2021 training schedule that is being offered by the city. These programs are highly encouraged. Melissa Greene emphasized the New Commissioner training that is being held on April 7, that would be extremely beneficial to new members, as well as a reminder to current members of resources and tools that are available. Also, she encouraged those who were interested in financial aspects and budgeting areas to attend the Budgeting training that is offered on April 17.

Melissa Greene had a few updates that she announced as well as questions that she answered. She did say that the end of the fiscal year was April 30, so any purchases should be made before then. In connection with the end of the fiscal year, she suggested that the 2021-2022 budget should be discussed at the April meeting, so that it would be ready for approval at the May meeting. There did not seem to be any objections to the suggestion. It was asked if more ZOOM licenses could be purchased so that committees could hold meetings and do whatever business was necessary without using the one license that Mr. Taylor has. She indicated that there might be a need to update the budget in that regard but she would find out for certain. Also, it was questioned if ZOOM would still be necessary as the state opened up, but many remarked that meeting in person would also depend on the rules of the location, which could greatly limit the Commission's ability to physically meet. More information to come.

Ms. Greene did announce that Stanley Gates will be taking over for Erin Gibbons, as the Director of Community Engagement for Columbus City Council. He should be present at the meeting in April. He did ask for his contact information to be shared ([Segates@columbus.gov](mailto:Segates@columbus.gov)) or 614-645-3566 should anyone have any questions or need assistance. He is planning to ask to speak at the April meeting about the Capital Improvements Budget process, that is common to talk about in the springtime. It was encouraged for members to think about the improvements that they would like to see in the area so that could be presented as the budget process is starting for the year. A few suggestions were discussed and encouraged to be mentioned again when Mr. Gates comes to the meeting. More information to come.

Commission member Cathy Cowan Becker volunteered to work on the Neighborhood website page and the Commissions personal webpage. She did say she was granted access and is currently updating the page.

**Conclusion**

There being no more business before the Westland Area Commission, Chairman Taylor asked for a motion to adjourn the March 2021 meeting. Bill Steimer moved to adjourn and Nancy Day-Achauer second the motion with all members voting in favor. Meeting ended at 7:56pm. The next meeting of the Westland Area Commission will be held April 21, 2021 via ZOOM and Facebook live.

**Acceptance of Minutes**

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Chair

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Date