

CITY OF WEST LAFAYETTE
COMMON COUNCIL
PRE-COUNCIL MINUTES
JULY 2, 2020

The Common Council of the City of West Lafayette, Indiana, met electronically on July 2, 2020, at the hour of 4:30 p.m.

President Bunder called the meeting to order and presided.

Present: James Blanco, Peter Bunder, Nick DeBoer, Shannon Kang, Larry Leverenz, Kathy Parker, Gerald Thomas, and Norris Wang.

Absent: David Sanders

Also present: Mayor John Dennis, City Attorney Zach Williams, Clerk Sana Booker, Director of Development Erin Easter, and City Controller Peter Gray. Other unnamed department heads who did not speak were available on the conference line.

ELECTRONIC MEETINGS:

City Attorney Zach Williams reported that Governor Eric Holcomb extended the public health emergency for 30 more days [Executive Order 20-34]. This is the fourth extension and goes through August 3, 2020. During the public health emergency, Governor Holcomb has said that we can skip some of the normal prohibitions for electronic meetings. For now, we can continue to conduct meetings, take action, and vote electronically. We hope that we will be notified more in advance for future potential extensions. Attorney Williams confirmed for Councilor DeBoer that since the next Council meeting is scheduled for August 3, 2020, we can presume that the meeting will be held electronically.

PRE-COUNCIL ACTION ITEMS:

Amend Resolution No. 13-20

Councilor DeBoer moved to amend Resolution No. 13-20 by substitution. Councilor Thomas seconded the motion.

Director of Development Easter confirmed for President Bunder that the amount on the Resolution got smaller. She explained that the way that the Small Business Stabilization Fund works is that we reprogram dollars from previous years, in this case 2019, to make that fund. The rest of the dollars listed in the original document were from the 2020 Action Plan that was approved by the Council in May [Resolution No. 08-20]. The purpose of this Resolution is to appropriate dollars for our coronavirus funds that came through as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, and it should only reflect the dollars that are part of the 2019 amendment. She noted that it was published correctly and all other steps regarding this were done correctly, so we just need to clarify the Resolution.

There was no further discussion.

Clerk Booker called the roll call vote:

<u>Councilperson</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Blanco	Aye
Bunder	Aye

PRE-COUNCIL MINUTES, JULY 2, 2020, CONTINUED

Councilperson	Vote
DeBoer	Aye
Kang	Aye
Leverenz	Aye
Parker	Aye
Sanders	Absent
Thomas	Aye
Wang	Aye

Clerk Booker stated that the vote was 8 AYES and 0 NAYS.

Resolution No. 13-20 is amended.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Controller Gray noted that we are currently under budget, and he will provide more details at Monday's meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Ordinance No. 07-20 An Ordinance Providing For Temporary Loans (Pension Funds) (Submitted by Controller) [No. of Readings 2 of 2]

President Bunder read Ordinance No. 07-20 by title only.

There was no discussion.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ordinance No. 08-20 An Ordinance To Amend Ordinance No. 04-20, To Fix The 2020 Salary Schedule For Appointed Officers, Employees, And Members Of The Police And Fire Departments Of The City Of West Lafayette, Indiana (Presented by Controller) [No. of Readings 1 of 1]

President Bunder read Ordinance No. 08-20 by title only.

Controller Gray stated that we are rearranging a few positions in the Building Department.

There was no further discussion.

Ordinance No. 09-20 An Ordinance Restricting Over Growth Of Weeds, Grass, Noxious Plants, And/Or Vermin Harborage In The City Of West Lafayette, County Of Tippecanoe, Indiana (Sponsored by Mayor Dennis) [No. of Readings 1 of 2]

President Bunder read Ordinance No. 09-20 by title only.

Attorney Williams explained that this is a necessity due to the removal of references in the City Code to the Building Officials Code Administrators International (BOCA) during recodification.

There was no further discussion.

Resolution No. 12-20 Resolution Repealing West Lafayette City Code Chapter 24, Article IV Governing Taxicabs And Taxicab Companies (Sponsored by Mayor Dennis) [No. of Readings 1 of 1]

President Bunder read Resolution No. 12-20 by title only.

Attorney Williams stated that this has been brought forward because this provision is no longer needed, and it is a clean-up item since it is not being used in our Code.

There was no further discussion.

Resolution No. 13-20 A Resolution Amending The West Lafayette Community Development Block Grant 2019 One-Year Annual Action Plan (CARES Act) (Submitted by Department of Development) [No. of Readings 1 of 1]

There was no discussion after the aforementioned amendment.

COMMUNICATIONS

► President Bunder welcomed Councilor Wang back and wished him well.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

► President Bunder noted that we have received some citizen comments, which the Councilors have in email. Two emails received to the Clerk email address are appended to these minutes.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business at this time, Councilor DeBoer moved for adjournment. President Bunder adjourned the meeting, the time being 4:42 p.m.

From: [Elias Trout](#)
To: [clerk](#)
Subject: Public Relations/New Business (a)
Date: Thursday, July 2, 2020 1:49:07 PM

External

Hello,

I hope this finds you well. My name is Elias Trout and I am a resident of West Lafayette (District 4). I am writing to submit a public comment for the West Lafayette City Council meeting on Monday July 6th (although if the Council could consider this comment during its pre-council meeting tonight, I would very much appreciate it).

"In light of the last month of Black Lives Matter protests, myself and many others in our community are reconsidering the role of police in our lives. Instead of spending more money on trainings for the WLPD, I urge the city council to establish a position for a social worker or a mental health worker (this funding could be set out for the 2021 budget). There is a vast difference between 1) an armed police officer with training vs 2) a paid social worker whose *job* it is to treat patients and who has had extensive education and experience.

This/these worker(s) could respond to non-violent calls alongside an EMT in order to reduce the possibility of escalation from police officers, as well as to make the caller or patient more comfortable (many people feel distressed when an armed police officer comes to the scene, despite intentions). If the city needs time to transition into this, it could send an unarmed police officer alongside the social worker to these calls. I understand that this sometimes happens already in West Lafayette (although I am not sure that the officer is unarmed in these situations), but the police officer must *choose* to call in the social worker--we should mandate this practice and disarm the officers in these scenarios. The CAHOOTS program in Eugene, Oregon uses this kind of model, and receives about 20% of 9-1-1 calls; the city of Eugene saves about \$15 million dollars from this program. I'd like to see reallocation away from our police department in order to make headway in a transition towards more non-violent first-responders.

Additionally, I would like to see an independent entity given jurisdiction over the handling of police misconduct. Two members of the Police Merit Commission are appointed by WLPD itself. During a call with Councillors Parker and Thomas this week, we agreed that the Human Relations Commission might serve as an adequate body to handle police misconduct in the future (especially since many Black and other marginalized people feel uncomfortable reporting crime or misconduct to police-affiliated groups). A body with jurisdiction over the police should not have any ties with WLPD--this includes the members of the Commission, as well as each member's family. This body's members should be

appointed by community organizations and individuals without said ties. So if the Human Relations Commission is to be this body, I would be remiss if I did not express discomfort that the mayor of West Lafayette appoints certain members. While my discomfort is especially understandable if the mayor happens to be a former police chief, I think that the city government should have no role in determining such a Commission's members in any case. We are desperately in need of an independent, civilian oversight structure which has jurisdiction over police misconduct. This is an urgent matter of public safety. We continue to claim that West Lafayette is somehow different from the rest of the country, but the absence of a police union in town is just not enough."

Please let me know if there is any other information I can provide for you. Thank you for your time and effort.

Sincerely,
Elias Trout

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Elias Trout
Brandeis University, Class of '21
History and Art History

From: [Beth Campbell](#)
To: [clerk](#)
Subject: Pre-Council Meeting Public Comment -- WLPD
Date: Thursday, July 2, 2020 2:58:12 PM

External

I would like to address the role of the police department in our community.

It is inevitable that the WLPD will abuse their power. They will harm someone in this community. Because they already have because that is the nature of police in this country. This is evident in police forces across the country as recent events have exposed. And if you think the WLPD is any different, you are fooling yourself. The problem isn't just a few bad apples, it is a diseased tree. You must recognize that policing is a broken system. Privilege is blinding you to this fact that is blatantly obvious to Black and Brown people in our community.

Police departments were built to maintain white supremacy and nothing has been done to change this fact. Black people are targeted from a young age by Safety Resource Officers in schools. They are then incarcerated at a 5.8 times higher rate than their white peers. Police are over-militarized and dangerous, treating every situation as life-threatening leading them to kill approximately 1,000 people a year, 24% of these people being Black.

Police are not the answer. Because the U.S. spends more on law enforcement and gives its police more resources than any of its peer nations. If policing stopped violence the U.S. would be the most peaceful country in the world.

I am asking a lot of you right now. I am asking you to reconsider your worldview. To consider the fact that the police force which you have worked closely with over the years might be part of the problem. That you might be part of the problem.

To build a safer community for ALL members, we must undergo much discomfort. It will be much easier for you to ignore and brush off these problems. To tell yourselves that West Lafayette is different. But I promise you that if you look deeper, you will see that it is not. If you are truly committed to building a safer and more inclusive community, I urge you to rethink the West Lafayette Police Department.

Why should we continue to pour more money into a broken, useless system? Instead of investing more money into training that doesn't work and body cams that don't work we should free up resources that can be used to fund things that actually create public safety: affordable housing and health care, education, youth centers, employment programs, and mental health and drug abuse treatment. Imagine a

community where you don't have to worry about someone breaking into your house because there's no reason for them to do that because they have no economic desperation.

Beth Campbell
Lifelong West Lafayette resident
West Lafayette High School '17