

MINUTES – REGULAR SESSION

PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday August 24, 2020

6:00 p.m.

The City Council of the City of Portsmouth, Ohio met in regular session on Monday August 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m., at Shawnee State University Center. Council held the meeting at Shawnee State University in order to comply with the Governor’s order to social distance at least 6 feet apart.

Mayor Kevin E. Johnson called the meeting to order. A moment of silent prayer was observed followed by The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll Call showed the following members to be present:

Sean Dunne	1 st Ward
Charlotte Gordon	2 nd Ward
Kevin E. Johnson	3 rd Ward
Andrew McManus	4 th Ward
Edwin Martell	5 th Ward
Thomas K. Lowe	6 th Ward (Absent)

Also present was, City Manager Sam Sutherland, City Clerk Diana Ratliff, Solicitor John Haas, and Auditor M. Trent Williams.

Councilman Lowe’s absence was excused on a motion by Vice President Dunne. The motion carried viva voce: **VOTE: 5 ayes – 0 nays.**

Council dispensed with the reading of the Journal for the Regular Session of August 10, 2020 on a motion by Vice President Dunne. **The motion carried viva voce: VOTE: 5 ayes –0 nays.**

Vice President Dunne motioned to add as 7(N) A resolution that Sam Sutherland, City Manager of the City of Portsmouth, Ohio (“Lessee”) is authorized to purchase, lease, acquire, and to encumber, real and personal property, including, without limitation, rights and interests in property, leases and easements necessary to the functions or operations of the Lessee for the maximum principal amount expected to be financed of \$385,048.00. **The motion carried viva voce: VOTE: 5 ayes –0 nays.**

Item Added

STATEMENTS OR REMARKS FROM CITIZENS ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Due to the Governor’s mandate of only 10 persons in a meeting, the meeting was not open to the public – Statements and Remarks were emailed ahead of time and read by Clerk Ratliff

Harry Blount – 1329 Mound Street Portsmouth, OH – In regards to the Marijuana legislation, he stated in his email that if he had a vote, he would vote to decriminalize it.

Allen Harner – Wheelersburg, Ohio - He is a life-long resident of Scioto County and has paid Portsmouth City taxes for the last 13 years while working in Sciotoville. He was deeply troubled about the proposed marijuana legislation and would like to respond to some of Council’s opinions that have been reported. He addressed five of the reported reasons that Council has given to move forward with this legislation:

1. Councilman Dunn: *“This is similar to what other cities and municipalities have moved forward with.”* I would argue that this justification simply isn’t good enough, and is quite frankly irrelevant to what is right and good for the City of Portsmouth and the surrounding community. Certainly, we wouldn’t all jump off a bridge just because everyone else was doing it...
2. Councilman Dunn: *“One of the ways we can reduce the opioid epidemic is by improving harm reduction methods.”* Is marijuana usage really a “harm reduction” method? What about the harm that marijuana itself causes? Am I justified, for instance, in allowing my child to possess 200 grams of marijuana purely in an effort to “reduce harm” from a potential opioid overdose? This reasoning is simply flawed and very dangerous.
3. Councilman Martell and Councilwoman Gordon: *“Portsmouth is poised to change our city and the people we attract to our city.”* I couldn’t agree more with these statements. Portsmouth will certainly change—but it will not be for the better. And folks will certainly be attracted to our city—but for all the wrong reasons.
4. Councilman Martell: *“I think decriminalization is a big step in helping kids to stop getting caught up in the system at an early age.”* I certainly am not for kids getting “caught up” in the system. But I am also not for kids getting “caught up” in marijuana. And the fewer number of kids that get “caught up” in marijuana, the fewer number of kids we’ll have getting “caught up” in the system because of marijuana. Getting “caught up” in the system is only a symptom of the underlying condition. Let’s spend time thinking about ways to treat the cancer rather than simply “alleviating” the symptoms.
5. Mayor Johnson: *“No one is up here saying it’s OK to use [marijuana]. But you don’t want to see young lives ruined over a small mistake.”* If it’s true that no one on the council believes it’s OK to use marijuana, then why are we sending a message to our community that it’s OK to possess it? Do we believe that somehow this legislation will lead to a reduction in young lives being “ruined?” I wonder how many young lives have been and will continue to be ruined by marijuana?

In closing, I would simply ask each Council member to examine his or her conscience and ask if the supposed ends of this legislation justify its means? If this legislation would indeed lead to a reduction in the opioid epidemic, as Councilman Dunne has suggested, is an alternative like marijuana the solution we want? Are we justified in sending a message to this community, and especially to our children, that marijuana is somehow “better” than opioids? I believe we are only deceiving ourselves if we believe so. I implore you—let’s invest our time and energy in praying for the City of Portsmouth and seeking real solutions to our problems. Do not pass this legislation.”

LEGISLATION

The clerk gave a **third reading**, to an Ordinance authorizing the vacation of the alley located between 5544 and 5534 Wilson Avenue as requested by Matthew Reeder and Kimberly Reeder, and more fully described in the attached legal description, with the City of Portsmouth reserving all easements to this property.

Ord. #40 2020
Vacating Alley
at 5544 and
5534 Wilson
Avenue

Vice President Dunne moved that the Ordinance be passed.

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes – 0 nays, the Ordinance was passed.**

The clerk gave a **third reading**, to an Ordinance authorizing the establishment of Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA).

Vice President Dunne moved that the Ordinance be passed.

Ord. #41 2020
Outdoor
Designated
Outdoor
Refreshment
Area DORA

Councilwoman Gordon stated that at the previous meeting she had requested to know if the businesses were open to bathroom usage, if there would be signage and increased law enforcement. Councilman Dunne stated that he had reached out to the four vendors which were Brew Pub, Patties & Pints, Oscars and Port City Pub and three out of the four stated that the bathroom issues would not be a problem, but the person he spoke to at Oscars couldn’t give a confirmation because of the entry being through the hotel which might be an issue. He stated that for the signs, cups and bracelets he had received a couple of mock-ups for the bracelets which were three different colors printed with Portsmouth DORA and they created a logo “Portsmouth Dora” that would also work on the signs. Mrs. Gordon asked if there would be Police enforcement should someone venture outside of the DORA area, Mr. Dunne stated that it would be an open container at that point. He stated that there would be a breakdown given to the bartenders at the four establishments and he felt the servers at the four vendors would be first line of code enforcement. He gave an example: If someone came in that shouldn’t be served or that had had a problem, the servers would be the first line of enforcement by not serving that person. If this would get out of hand, the program would have to end. Mrs. Gordon reiterated that the city still had the standing recourse that if there were a lot of complaints or it does get out of hand, the DORA could be cancelled.

There were no further questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes – 0 nays, the Ordinance was passed.**

The clerk gave a **third reading**, to an Ordinance authorizing the appropriation of \$2,959.19 from FEMA Grant Fund No. 261 to be applied towards the purchase of a drone for the City.

Ord. #42 2020
Appropriation
from FEMA
grant to
purchase a
Drone for PD
& FD

Vice President Dunne moved that the Ordinance be passed.

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes – 0 nays, the Ordinance was passed.**

The clerk gave a **third reading**, to an Ordinance enacting a new Chapter entitled the City of Portsmouth Human Rights Commission of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Portsmouth.

Ord. #43 2020
Establishment
of Human
Rights
Commission

Vice President Dunne moved that the Ordinance be passed.

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes – 0 nays, the Ordinance was passed.**

The clerk gave a **second reading**, to an Ordinance authorizing the acceptance of \$155,712.00 from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Portsmouth Skatepark Project and the appropriation of the same to Community Development Fund No. 301.

Vice President Dunne motioned to amend the ordinance to read Capital Improvement Fund No 301.

Ord #44 2020
Accepting and
Appropriating
Grant from
ODNR for
Skatepark

The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes– 0 nays, the ordinance was amended.

Vice President motioned to suspend the three-reading rule.

The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes– 0 nays, the rule was suspended.

Vice President Dunne moved that this Ordinance be passed.

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes – 0 nays, the Ordinance was passed**

The clerk gave a **second reading**, to an Ordinance authorizing the acceptance of \$150,000.00 from the Ohio Development Services Agency Community Development Block Grant for the Portsmouth Skatepark Project and the appropriation of the same to Community Development Fund No. 243.

Vice President Dunne motioned to suspend the three-reading rule.

The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes– 0 nays, the rule was suspended.

Vice President Dunne moved that this Ordinance be passed.

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes – 0 nays, the Ordinance was passed**

The clerk gave a **second reading**, to an Ordinance authorizing the acceptance of \$27,890.00 from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources NatureWorks Program for the Bannon Park Pickleball Court project and the appropriation of the same to Capital Improvement Fund No. 301.

Vice President Dunne motioned to suspend the three-reading rule.

The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes– 0 nays, the rule was suspended.

Vice President Dunne moved that this Ordinance be passed.

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes – 0 nays, the Ordinance was passed**

The clerk gave a **first reading**, to an Ordinance amending Section 513.03(C) (2) Drug Abuse: Controlled Substance possession or use of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Portsmouth, Ohio.

Vice President Dunne motioned that this constitute a first reading.

Vice President Dunne stated that there were a couple of questions at the previous meeting in which they had discussed various aspects of this and similar legislation that had been passed elsewhere. He didn't have the specifics behind the reason, but one of the questions was about 200 grams which he had researched and the reason for this amount was that it matched the amount of medical marijuana. He stated that the reason it was 200 grams for medical marijuana was that it was used for making butter and people use a lot when making eatables and that amount was listed for people who go every couple of months so as to avoid going every two weeks. He said Columbus had some differentiation with a \$10.00 fine up to 100 grams and \$20.00 for 200 grams but they had since changed it to the same as what the city was proposing, no fine, no time under 200 grams.

Councilwoman Gordon stated that she had received a couple of calls regarding this legislation and clarified that Council was not voting to legalize marijuana, only to decriminalize it; she had also researched the 200-gram amount. She said that City Council does not have the power to be able to legalize it and this legislation was to keep kids out of the legal system and that there were people who were using it medicinally. Mr. Dunne stated that on the decriminalization there had been issues with people having financial obstacles such as a medical card and getting into the medical marijuana system and an added incentive to decriminalize were those that have had difficulties getting access to medical cards for whatever reasons and was told that this was an added argument in larger cities. He said that in an online discussion about this, it seemed that 85% of the comments were in support.

Solicitor Haas reiterated that this would only change the city ordinance and would not change the state laws, it was still illegal to possess up to 200 grams and a person could still be charged and convicted of possession

Ord. #45 2020
Accepting and
Appropriating
Grant from
ODSA for
Skatepark

Ord.#43 2020
Accepting and
Appropriating
Grant from
ODNR for
Pickleball
Courts at
Bannon Park

under the state law. Mayor Johnson asked if this legislation passed and a Portsmouth City Police Officer were to cite a person for this offense, would they be charged under the new city ordinance and would it be different under a State Highway Patrol Officer? Solicitor Haas said that Portsmouth Police Officers write tickets under the state laws and was rare that charges be filed under a city ordinance especially if there was any jail time. If a person was being arrested for a crime with jail time, they most likely will be charged under State law so that the city doesn't have to pay the jail expense. The city code was very rarely used but the Police Officer had the ability to write under city or state laws at their discretion. Mr. Johnson said that Officers could pick and choose who gets charged or not charged! He thought he knew how he felt about this legislation but after hearing this information was unsure. Mr. Johnson asked about how the person received 200 grams because they were still receiving it illegally; they had to buy it somewhere which is dealing or grow which was cultivating either way there was still an illegal event that had happened. Solicitor Haas reiterated that it is still illegal and if you are smoking a joint walking down the street and draw attention to yourself, a person could be arrested and charged under the state code.

Mr. Haas stated this would be more of a policy statement that Council would be doing and was similar to sending a resolution up to Columbus advising that we're decriminalizing it in our city but it doesn't have much of any affect at all from a legal standpoint. Mr. Johnson stated that he believed that we would be sending a message that it was alright to do something illegal. Mr. Haas stated that this legislation would be basically saying that we don't believe that this should be criminalized to the point that someone received a record for it, but the Officers would still have discretion under the state code.

Mr. Dunne said some states have had a referendum on this and some of the biggest financial backers for those that have been trying to stop this correction in law, was the Pharmaceutical industry and he doesn't believe there needed to be much of a reminder of the chaos and destruction that the Pharmaceuticals reaped on our city and others in this region; they do not want this to be decriminalized or legalized. He said California failed earlier attempts, they had alcohol companies as strong opponents against this and when you look at it in the context the racist war on drugs, he understood a lot of the forces behind this and more ways to limit peoples civil liberties and those that are against big government. There's an interesting split, but what we're doing had a message that when we talk about the lives destroyed and getting kids the stigma of being a criminal for having a joint or whatever the case may be, how many lives had that ruined and those that use medicinally and are under threat of various legal actions. The Pharmaceutical industry wants to continue that so that they can profit from their products but when you see where social movements have been able to alter State Legislation, it is a huge victory for civil liberties, common sense and a great way to fight against the war on drugs. When you have a young person that is not used to the criminal justice system and not thinking clearly when they're interacting with the law and what it might lead to afterwards, it opens up a system of problems for our youth. He said there would be a couple of cities in Ohio that would have it on the ballot as a referendum and there were 20 cities in Ohio that already have this type of legislation and it was only a matter of time before there is a change in Statewide policy and seeing what it has done for other areas of the country and he believes that it was a step in the right direction.

Mr. Johnson stated that in the past 10-15 years a young person caught with marijuana got their life messed up. He asked Solicitor Haas about recent years and what happened now with kids that were caught who weren't repeat offenders or a convicted felon, does it mess up their lives as far as a record and asked if a record could be expunged over a simple possession charge. Solicitor Haas replied that a record could be expunged for certain things, but was never truly expunged because the Government could still get ahold of the old records. He added that up until recently if you got caught with a little bit of marijuana whether you were driving or not, the State Legislature enforced the suspension of a person driver's license for 6 months. He believed that had been an issue with some of the courts and prosecutors because it didn't seem to align with the offense to suspend a driver's license; if a person had a job it would have a negative effect on them if they lost their license for 6 months. He said some drug offenses were being changed or dismissed to avoid that punishment because if you pled guilty, it was mandatory to receive a minor misdemeanor and he wasn't sure how much was really enforced because of it. He said that if you received that penalty and if that person applied for a Police or Fire job or the military, it would affect them. Solicitor Haas also stated that at one time if you lost your driver's license, you would probably lose your job too and that was the type of thing that would have a disproportionate affect for the seriousness of the crime. He had received a call from another city that wanted a copy of our drafted legislation and that City's Council was interested in doing the same. Mr. Dunne asked what the average cost of an expungement for an 18-year old, Solicitor Haas stated that he wasn't sure what Defense Attorney's costs are on expungements but he would guess it would be in the hundreds. Mrs. Gordon asked if Solicitor Haas knew the average age of people being charged with possession of marijuana and he replied that he had seen all ages from 18 and up because he doesn't have any Juvenile cases. Mr. Dunne stated that it affected housing if you're looking to rent a place to live and it could be used against a person. Mr. Haas replied that he wasn't sure if the Housing Authority could get into expunged records, but if you're charged with a drug offense, a person could be evicted from the property.

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 4 ayes – 1 nays (K.E. Johnson), a first reading was declared.**

The clerk gave a **first reading**, to an Ordinance authorizing the appropriation of funds from Police Department CIP Miscellaneous Fund No. 301.221.5529 to participate in a five-year program for the replacement of Tasers in the police department as outlined in the attached Exhibit A.

Vice President Dunne motioned that this constitute a first reading.

Vice President Dunne commented that he spoke with Chief Brewer and she stated that Officers would often draw the taser as a form of de-escalation but not use it.

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes – 0 nays, a first reading was declared.**

The clerk gave a **first reading**, to an Ordinance ratifying the contract between the Portsmouth City Auditor and Local 1039C, Ohio Council 8 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) AFL-CIO, for the period of January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2022.

Vice President Dunne motioned to suspend the three-reading rule.

The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes– 0 nays, the rule was suspended.

Vice President Dunne moved that this Ordinance be passed.

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes – 0 nays, the Ordinance was passed**

The clerk gave a **first reading**, to an Ordinance to amend the Salary Ordinance as amended by Ordinance No. 25 of 2020 to reflect a 2.75% wage increase for AFSCME Local No. 1039C retroactive to January 1, 2020, a 2.75% wage increase for IAFF Local No. 9 retroactive to January 1, 2020 and a 10% wage increase effective September 1, 2020 along with the removal of 10% pension pickup effective September 1, 2020 for IAFF Local No. 9 and repeal Ordinance No. 25 of 2020.

Vice President Dunne motioned to suspend the three-reading rule.

The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes– 0 nays, the rule was suspended.

Vice President Dunne moved that this Ordinance be passed.

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes – 0 nays, the Ordinance was passed**

The clerk gave a **first reading**, to a Resolution accepting the amounts and rates as determined by the Budget Commission of Scioto County, Ohio, authorizing the necessary tax levies, and certifying the same to the Auditor of said County.

Vice President Dunne moved that this Resolution be adopted.

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes – 0 nays, the Resolution was adopted.**

The clerk gave a **first reading**, to a Resolution to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the City of Portsmouth, Ohio and the Village of New Boston, Ohio as outlined in the attached Exhibit A.

Vice President Dunne moved that this Resolution be adopted.

There were no questions or comments. **The role was called. VOTE: 5 ayes – 0 nays, the Resolution was adopted.**

The clerk gave a **first reading**, to a Resolution that Sam Sutherland, City Manager of the City of Portsmouth, Ohio (“Lessee”) is authorized to purchase, lease, acquire, and to encumber, real and personal

Ord.#44 2020
Ratifying
AFSCME
1039C Contract

Ord.#45 2020
Salary
Amendment
For 1039C,
IAFF Local #9

Res #17 2020
Accepting
Amounts and
Rates from
Scioto County
Budget
Commission

Res #18 2020
MOA
between City
of
Portsmouth
and Village of
New Boston

property, including, without limitation, rights and interests in property, leases and easements necessary to the functions or operations of the Lessee for the maximum principal amount expected to be financed of \$385,048.00.

Res #19 2020
Lease
Agreement
for Vactor
Sewer
Cleaner

Vice President Dunne moved that this Resolution be adopted.

There were no questions or comments. **The roll was called: VOTE: 5 ayes – 0 nay, the Resolution was adopted.**

STATEMENTS OR REMARKS FROM CITIZENS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Due to the Governor’s mandate of only 10 persons in a meeting, the meeting was not open to the public - Questions were sent in ahead of time via email and read by Clerk Ratliff

Gary Jenkins - gary25891@gmail.com

Do you support a church using an open-air public park if they practice safe social distancing and masks wearing? Yes or no?

Do you support changing the meetings up to allow questions and answers at the end of every meeting for better transparency? Yes or No?

Wendi Waugh – Southern Ohio Medical Center and Connex

“Dear City Council,

Congratulations on winning the Portsmouth’s All-American City! I know there was a lot of hard work, creativity and dedication that contributed to this win. I also saw that Main Street Portsmouth recently found funding to continue the riverfront development and will be adding some equipment around York Park. Just awesome! Tracy Shearer recently shared with me that it was time for the council to sign off on the dedicated path and then there would be three subsequent readings. This too, is a huge win for our community and one that I know many citizens are very excited about. If you need anything from me, Connex Leadership, or citizens to support this endeavor, do not hesitate to reach out. We stand with you in continuing to press forward with positive change in this community. Thank you so much for all your diligence and ongoing support.”

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS AND REPORTS:

City Clerk’s Report – Clerk Ratliff reported the following:

1. Congratulation to Councilman Dunn and everyone who helped make the City of Portsmouth an All-American City, it really shows how much you care about our city.

The City Clerk’s report was received, filed and made part of the record, on a motion by Vice President Dunne. The motion carried viva voce: **VOTE: 5 ayes– 0 nays.**

City Manager’s Report – Manager Sutherland reported the following:

1. He was very proud of our city for receiving the All-American City Award, there was a lot of hard work put into it and a lot of folks came together and showed that the city was united.
2. He said there was work being done on McKinley Avenue with the installation of a new water line which had been a long time coming. The street was in bad need of paving but he didn’t want to look at trying to pave it without installing new waterlines.

The City Manager’s report was received, filed and made part of the record, on a motion by Vice President Dunne. The motion carried viva voce: **VOTE: 5 ayes– 0 nays.**

Mayor’s Report – Mayor Johnson reported the following:

1. He thanked Vice President Dunne for organizing the Lindy Infante Foundation event. He said it was a great event and they had passed out hundreds of free sports bags to our youth and had volunteers from the Portsmouth City School faculty and students.
2. He attended a meeting along with Manager Sutherland, Portsmouth City School Officials and the Service Department in regard to striping the parking lot to help with student drop off and pick-up process due to the COVID-19 virus. He thanked Service Director Jack Tackett, he had his crew working immediately, they did a super job and completed the project in no time.
3. He thanked each and every person who helped to achieve the All-American City award and he remembered the city winning it in 1980. He thanked Councilman Dunne for all of his hard work and to everyone that had something to do with winning the award because it was quite an honor and added that we do live in an All-American City.
4. He will be addressing Mr. Finn’s questions in his ward report.

The Mayor’s report was received, filed and made part of the record, on a motion by Vice President Dunne. The motion carried viva voce: **VOTE: 5 ayes– 0 nays.**

Solicitor Haas Report – Solicitor Haas had no report.

Auditor Williams Report – Mr. Williams reported the following:

1. He said there was minimal if any changes to the revenue and funds listed in the final monthly report.
2. He congratulated Councilman Dunne and everyone who worked on the All-American City award.

3. He thanked Council for ratifying the Local 1039C contract.
4. He thanked Shawnee State University for the accommodations.

The Auditor's report was received, filed and made part of the record, on a motion by Vice President Dunne. The motion carried viva voce: **VOTE: 5 ayes– 0 nays.**

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS FROM CITY COUNCIL

1st Ward – Councilman Dunne reported the following:

1. He said the Lindy Infante foundation was great and doing inspirational things. It was great to have Mayor Johnson and his family and they handed out 370 Sports-in-a-Bag to people in our area. The selections were basketballs, footballs or soccer balls which also included a jump rope and, in these times, when kids can't meet in larger groups as safely as they previously did, this group was ensuring that kids stay active regardless of the financial means of their parents. He said they have further ideas for the Portsmouth Elementary Schools and they were very impressed by the turn out and the people they met in Portsmouth. He said when he returned the key to the Service Department, that kids were out playing with a football from Sports-in-a-Bag.
2. He thanked Shawnee State University for the use of the Ballroom and advised that this was also opening day at Shawnee State with students returning to campus. It had been a while since they've had students there due to the COVID-19 and it was great to see them return.
3. He said that there were a lot of people to thank regarding the All-American City Award. He said the strategy for the presentation was purposely community based and thought other cities missed the mark by having a City Manager or Mayor due a lengthy introduction and conclusion (no offense to Sam Sutherland or Mayor Johnson) but the award was based on civic engagement by different community groups and individuals in the community and what they really wanted to display was all of the great organizations of people. He said they had approximately 28 people in their presentation which was different from other cities who only had about 12 people, so people had to quickly describe their organization. He said that it was great to have Jeremy Burnside there to give the acceptance speech. He thanked Councilman Edwin Martell who kept everyone on time and in line and was there to emphasize how people's actions were contributing towards the evaluation criteria which was key. He thanked Manager Sutherland, Police Chief Brewer and Tracy Shearer for helping and also thanked Councilwoman Gordon who didn't even know she would be speaking, but did great and he appreciated it. They had David Kilroy from the Innovation Hub, Andrew Gedeon from the Health Department, Teresa Bryant from SOMC, Dale King from Doc Spartan, Cinnamon Wellington from Happy Pot, Kristie Franklin from SOMBA, Allison Martin from Connex and many more. He was very grateful to all of the people involved in the presentation and the two-minute video that was released upon winning, which was also the two-minute introductory video to our presentation. They worked with J.D. & Carla Bentley on the video who did an incredible job and Jeremy Burnside very generously helped finance the video. He said the event was held at Shawnee's Innovation Hub and one of the things they looked at was the collaboration of different institutions within the city working together which was evident not only in the application but in the presentation. He said that it was tiring but rewarding to work on, and he thanked Manager Sutherland for working with them for this award because other City Manager's would have wanted their name all over the project or wouldn't do it unless they were in charge, so it was great to have a collaborations instead of a domination. He'd like to see the city apply again within the next ten-years.

2nd Ward – Councilwoman Charlotte Gordon reported the following:

1. She congratulated Councilman Dunne on the work to coordinate all those people and to write the grant and submit it. She said the award was not just a reflection on the work that Mr. Dunne had done, but the work the city had done in unison to build what we have now and improve our standing by rolling up our sleeves and solving problems together.
2. She recognized that 100-years ago last week on August 18th was the 100th year that women won the fight to vote. She said that it meant a lot to her and at every Council meeting she wore white in order to honor those women who were arrested, beaten and tortured to make it possible for not just her to vote, but for her to be able to serve her city in a Council seat.
3. She said that when she came to Council 13 months ago, it was impressed upon her by every City Councilmember that Council was an "A" political group, they were neither Democrats or Republicans when they gather for Council meetings and that all party standings were left at the door and they serve every citizen of the City of Portsmouth. She encouraged her fellow Councilmembers that during the next 70 days for the next contentious election that they continue working in unity for the betterment of our City, because a lot happens when they work together.

4. She congratulated the 14th Street Community Center, who served many kids over the summer, on the variety show they put together at the end of their camp. They fed them, they had many programs and she was proud to have worked with them part of the time. It was a fabulous camp and Director Maxine Malone had coordinated all of the events and deserved a lot of recognition.
5. She addressed the question about the Churches meeting in public. She said that these were unprecedented times and at a previous meeting the City Solicitor had addressed that the parks were closed to large groups and it didn't matter the affiliation of the group, it wasn't a religious statement and she felt the respect for the rules and the laws were what was needed right now.
6. She addressed the second question about adding questions to the end of the meetings. She differed to the process as it would add a lot of time to meetings and wouldn't give them any time to prepare or gather facts to answer questions.

3rd Ward – Councilman Kevin E. Johnson reported the following:

1. He met with Manager Sutherland to look at some overgrown weed and tree issues between Coles Boulevard and North Hill Road. Manager Sutherland will be following up with AEP.
2. He met again with Manager Sutherland about a local business expanding their seating and will continue to follow up on that issue.
3. He looked at some residential issues on Cedar Street and also at the project on McKinley Avenue. He added that they went to work right away and it looked like it was going well.
4. He participated in the Parking Parade at Portsmouth High School and thanked all who came out to lift up in prayer all the schools, students and teachers, it was a very nice event.
5. He addressed the two questions:
 - a. Do you support preventing the church from using an open-air public park if their practicing safe social distancing and mask wearing. His response was “no” he does not support preventing a church from doing so if permits to utilize the parks were being issued, then a church should have that right as well, but only if the city was issuing the permits. There were other contributing factors such as a pandemic and believed that churches should fall under the same guidelines as all others as far as getting a permit to use a park.
 - b. Do you support changing the meetings to allow questions and answers at every meeting for better transparency? He said “no” he does not support a Q & A time during the meeting and believed that City Council was very transparent as citizens were afforded two opportunities to speak during the meetings “Items on the Agenda” and “Items not on the Agenda”, but because of COVID, they could email their statements to be read by the Clerk. Also, he advised that every member of Council's phone numbers or emails were located on the city website and were available for any citizen to contact with questions. There were other underlying issues for his objections to the Q & A which were time restrictions and preparedness for unknown questions, but believed that this Council was very transparent and encouraged citizens to utilize emails or phone numbers.

4th Ward – Councilman McManus reported the following:

1. He congratulated Councilman Dunne and everyone involved in the All-American City Award and as others have stated, it was a group effort. He watched the introductory video and saw lots of people he knew and a lot of business owners; it brought a smile to his face to witness people that you see daily, get to show what they do in this town.
2. He thanked Manager Sutherland and the city workers on a problem in his ward that was fixed in a couple of days.
3. He said a friend of his that lives in Sciotoville contacted him about a couch being picked up and he spoke with Manager Sutherland about the way it was currently done. In his opinion it could use some work, you have until 2:30 Monday – Friday to drop something off or to have it picked up and it was at least two weeks out. He would research on how other cities handle this issue.
4. He addressed the two questions:
 - a. He reiterated what the others had said, this isn't a religious protest or anything about church, it's about not issuing permits currently. There's a global pandemic and with big groups together, you're more likely to contract the virus. There haven't been any weeks in which someone hasn't contracted the virus and people were still getting the virus, and he supported the city on not issuing permits to large groups.
 - b. He said that taking questions would turn into a debate and he felt it was up to the representative of each ward to directly address the questions and also, he would like time to research any question and be educated before he made a comment.

5th Ward – Councilman Martell reported the following:

1. He had already answered Finn's questions in a FaceBook message that he had received from him. They had a conversation about the questions and Mr. Finn knew his thoughts and position.
2. He congratulated the City of Portsmouth for winning the All-American City Award. He thanked Councilman Dunne and anyone who was a part of it, it was a huge group effort. He clarified that this award does not mean that we don't care about other things that were going on in our city and they understood that a lot of things needed to be fixed. This award was about the collaboration between City Officials and Non-Profit Organizations who all have a goal and the goal was shown with some of the workings within the All-American City application. Our City

won which was something to be proud of, but he understood that there was a lot more work to do and that's happening around our town.

6th Ward – Councilman Lowe had no report due to absence.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:11 p.m. on a motion by Vice President Dunne.

City Clerk

Mayor