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Vice President of Council

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COUNCIL:

JULIE BELICH

NANCY E. FELLOWS

JOE JARMUSZKIEWICZ

DANIEL KNECHT

TANYA TAYLOR DRAPER

# City of Willoughby Hills

## Council Business Subcommittee Meeting

### Minutes of July 20, 2021

*Policy No. 2: All Council meetings shall be recorded by audio recording device and will be held in perpetuity and shall be part of the official records and minutes. Written minutes of Council shall be shortened whenever possible.*

The Council Business Subcommittee Meeting was called to order on Tuesday, July 20, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. **Council Vice President Kline** presided.

**Call to Order 6:00 p.m.**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

#### ROLL CALL

**Members Present:** Council Vice President Mike Kline, Councilwoman Tanya Taylor Draper, Councilwoman Belich, and Councilwoman Fellows.

**Absent:** Councilman Joe Jarmuszkiewicz

**Other Invited Guests:** Council President Christopher Hallum, Councilman Dan Knecht, and Mayor Andy Gardner.

#### Business Fair - Purpose/Plan

**Council Vice President Kline** stated that the purpose of this meeting is to start planning on a Willoughby Hills Business Fair which we hope to have sometime this Fall.

- Continuation of the City's efforts to help Willoughby Hills businesses.
- Further help in addition to last year's help through CARES program business grants.
- Large variety and types of businesses operating in the City.
- Business Fair would help give exposure to businesses operating in Willoughby Hills.
- Business Fair:
  - Give exposure to Willoughby Hills businesses;
  - Only open to Willoughby Hills businesses;
  - Surrounding communities welcome to attend;
  - Advertise via signs in front of Community Center, e-newsletter, ad in News-Herald, possible article in News-Herald;

- Each business would get a table to display items related to their business (pamphlets, business cards, promotional items);
- Table space would be free of charge;
- Would run possibly mid-late afternoon (3:00-6:00/7:00 pm).

**Council Vice President Kline opened up discussion to Council**

**Councilwoman Taylor Draper** stated that she thinks this is an excellent idea and a wonderful idea to get everyone under one roof to promote the businesses of Willoughby Hills.

Concentration should be on promotion and how to draw the people out (i.e. food, music). Booth-to-booth may not be as exciting as something that would draw folks in (food and/or music) to take the time to explore what we have to offer.

**Council Vice President Kline** commented that sometimes with Business Fairs there are exhibitors that might be in the food industry (caterers, restaurants) that display samples for attendees walking through that could certainly draw people in, especially later in the afternoon. In terms of entertainment, **Council Vice President Kline** stated that he's seen at past Business Fairs, an emcee of sorts who walks around and does a small business interview with exhibitors so that others in the room will hear what's going on. Lake County Business Expo has done an amazing job with Business Fairs in the past (about 20 years). Willoughby Hills resident, Ray Somich, was the emcee at those Business Fairs when he was with the radio station. They'd play music and conduct interviews. Interviews would pull out information from the businesses so it wouldn't be a cold setting of grabbing pamphlets from each exhibitor. There would be more of an atmosphere.

**Councilwoman Taylor Draper** mentioned that Willoughby Hills has a few bands who are residents of the City. They could promote their bands and entertainment business by playing as well as supporting their City. From what **Councilwoman Taylor Draper** has been told, there are three or four bands whose members are Willoughby Hills residents. This would be an excellent way of promotion and entertainment combined.

**Council Vice President Kline** stated that he wasn't aware of local bands but agrees that it's an excellent way to gain exposure and promotion.

**Councilwoman Taylor Draper** said that she could get the names of the bands and residents and report back.

**Councilwoman Belich** stated that in addition to bands, there are local DJs as well that can be located. In reference to signage and marketing what we're doing, Councilwoman Belich asked if anyone has discussed this with the News-Herald or the person doing the newsletter so that we can be sure to get information out to the public? Also, are there dates in mind? Time periods?

**Council Vice President Kline** said that no time has been identified but from a planning standpoint it probably wouldn't be until October. In terms of marketing, we could get a notice in every e-newsletter because the City is looking and asking for input on a regular basis. The City does have an Excel file of businesses that was updated a year ago when we were doing the CARES relief. It's updated in the sense that we have all the businesses, addresses, phone numbers, and probably 2/3 of email addresses. "I have a copy received from Gloria and am going through online sources and will be then knocking on doors to get email addresses." Once the list is updated and complete, we can hit businesses repeatedly instead of once and waiting for a response. The plan is to get that complete. There hasn't been contact with the News-Herald at this point. Once we start moving forward, **Council Vice President Kline** will be in contact with the Willoughby Hills reporter to get coverage as a Human Interest piece of sorts.

**Councilwoman Belich** asked about signage at various local areas other than the Community Center.

**Council Vice President Kline** said he wasn't aware of doing that in the past and deferred to **Councilwoman Fellows**.

**Councilwoman Fellows** didn't believe additional signage had been posted elsewhere about events but mentioned that the City for years has discussed the need for a digital sign. Location for a digital sign has been an issue but also "a whole other can of worms."

**Councilwoman Belich** stated that she believes there's a need for yard signage with simplicity promoting events at the "Welcome to Willoughby Hills" signs on River Road, SOM Center Road, and several others.

**Councilwoman Taylor Draper** asked about budget for this event.

**Council Vice President Kline** responded that it hasn't gotten that far but something will have to be put together. This may be considered for funds coming in from The American Recovery Plan (ARP) for helping businesses. He states that he doesn't foresee this as having a huge budget but he hasn't talked to the administration yet about giving that some consideration.

**Councilwoman Taylor Draper** feels that promotion will be key to whether this will be a success or failure. Bulk of budget will be on signs and promotion to get the word out. It should also be necessary to have the businesses register so we know who is willing to come and participate – some kind of formal registration once everything gets rolling.

**Councilwoman Fellows** asked how many businesses were previously identified by **Council Vice President Kline** and former **Councilman Zegaric**.

**Council Vice President Kline** stated that the businesses under the CARES grant qualifications came to around 150 to 170. There were a number of businesses that were excluded because we followed the same qualifications that some other Cities did and they did not allow businesses with multiple locations, tobacco, alcohol, and gaming businesses. Some multiple location businesses that were excluded – Gale’s Garden Shop, Eddy’s Bike Shop, Marc’s, Dunkin Donuts, etc. In total, there are probably close to 200 businesses that we can hopefully contact and gauge interest in the Business Fair.

**Councilwoman Taylor Draper** asked if it would be going against any rules or laws if we were to ask the multiple location businesses (McDonald’s, Dunkin Donuts, etc.) if they would be willing to maybe sponsor or donate to the Business Fair?

**Councilwoman Fellows** stated that it would have to probably be brought to corporate. She was told once when collecting donations for another event that a form would need to be filled out and sent into corporate. She ended up purchasing gift cards herself then donating to the event. She found that it takes time to go to the corporate entity and get a response. She noted that Willoughby Hills belongs to the Willoughby Western Lake County Chamber of Commerce that promotes businesses. Maybe they’d be able to help us promote this through the media that they use. There are only three Chambers of Commerce in Lake County – this one, Mentor, and Eastern Lake County.

**Council Vice President Kline** stated that in terms of The O’Ryan Room across the street, looking at the 2021 Craft Show layout as an example, there may be room for 40 tables instead of the 30 shown. If it started to gain interest, more tables can be put into the alcove outside the door which wouldn’t isolate them too much. Getting 40 businesses out of the 150-200 would be able to fill the room up.

**Councilwoman Belich** asked about sizing of the tables and if the businesses would have choices with regards to the table size and location.

**Councilwoman Fellows** reported that the tables are standard rectangular size she believes to be 6’x 2’ and all the same size. All will be provided for the businesses.

**Council Vice President Kline** stated that some businesses might have a logo throw for the table or signage set up behind the table with information about themselves. Some business may not want a table and will have a free standing display that gives information about the business so that would be set up where the table would be. Another consideration would be electrical supply should any businesses need it for displays and such. Have limited locations with electrical access on a first come, first serve basis. Extension cords could be a liability.

**Councilwoman Taylor Draper** suggested that being part of the registration – “What would you need the day of the event?” to get a better idea of the needs in order for them to make their best presentation.

**Council Vice President Kline** asked about thoughts on restricting any types of businesses? He thought gaming but **Councilwomen Fellows and Taylor Draper** stated that gaming is legal and legitimate and should only limit if there’s a limit on 40 table limit on registration (first come, first serve). **Council Vice President Kline** also brought up that it’ll be important to note that even though this is free, people won’t be knocking down your door to take advantage of it. Some businesses might need convincing as to why they should participate – especially businesses of a unique nature (ex: medical and dental offices dealing with a unique service to highlight).

**Councilwoman Taylor Draper** mentioned that even if a business isn’t physically there as an exhibitor, there could still be an area to promote. It could be uninviting to turn people away.

**Councilwoman Fellows** stated that it would be really nice to have a business directory for Willoughby Hills. Logistics would be collecting the information, updating frequency for maintaining, and would residents get it. It could be electronic or a hybrid but it would be nice to have it done by category. **Councilwoman Taylor Draper** added that it could even be a link to the directory through the e-newsletter. **Council Vice President Kline** stated that we aren’t far away with having all of the information we need but it’s a matter now of getting a complete, updated email list of the businesses, reconfiguring that information, and formatting it. It would make the most sense to keep it electronic for updating convenience but there could be a printed version for those who prefer it.

**Councilwoman Fellows** mentioned that at some point there could be some type of coupon book in the future as a form of incentive to help the business.

**Councilwoman Taylor Draper** reiterated that a business directory definitely needs to be done.

**Councilwoman Fellows** added that as a St. Noel’s parishioner, she’s noticed that their bulletin has almost two pages of business ads listed.

**Councilwoman Belich** stated that years down the road we may have to limit too many of one type of business but because this is the inaugural year, we should welcome all businesses.

**Councilwoman Taylor Draper** questioned home businesses being included and Council Vice President Kline said that there are only a couple of home businesses listed in the directory but that doesn't mean that there aren't others. His concern is that there is a Craft Fair for selling wares and exhibitors from the Craft Fair might see the Business Fair as an additional opportunity to promote their products for free. He thinks we could be inundated with situations like that.

**Councilwoman Belich** wondered if home-based businesses would include things like Mary Kay, Avon and put into the same category. If there are multiple sellers of such, are we allowing that?

**Council Vice President Kline** said that those types of businesses were not included in the business directory, only a plumbing contractor. All else was brick and mortar business.

**Councilwoman Taylor Draper** suggested that we should pinpoint brick and mortar businesses with the first Business Fair until they're more popular than we can include the home-based businesses. **Council Vice President Kline** said that he'd check with Gloria or someone regarding information on these types of home-based businesses. Councilwoman Belich stated maybe there should be two rounds of going about registration with the first round to include brick and mortar businesses and second round adding on home-based businesses. This will be why marketing and promoting will be very important when getting businesses involved.

**Councilwoman Fellows** stated that we may want to look into past event budgets as Ray Somich as emcee charges per event so don't be surprised if that's the case. He may or may not charge, but the possibility is there.

**Council Vice President Kline** mentioned another option for exhibitors that he's seen at previous Business Fairs, is each business having a raffle related to their business (ex: car dealership with free carwash). That business could utilize the remaining names for future marketing once the winner is announced. Another option would be for exhibitors to be listed in squares. Each attendee would get a paper with the squares numbered according to the table to bring to each exhibitor to be signed off. Once completed, the sheet would be put into a container and one would be drawn for a prize (ex. gift card). Once someone is at their table, it's the business's responsibility to keep them at the table. We can help move traffic but businesses need to keep the person interested in the business. **Councilwoman Belich** asked about what kind of prizes would be offered. Council Vice President Kline stated gift card (one or several) given by the City. **Councilwoman Fellows** added the possibility of a ride along opportunity with the police or fire department or something as a prize. **Council Vice President Kline** said that even multiple prizes could be offered as more incentive.

**Councilwoman Taylor Draper** asked about children without supervision at the Business Fair. **Council Vice President Kline** stated that he's been at Business Fairs where kids will run around grabbing whatever is on the table (candy, samples, etc). No unsupervised children should be permitted. **Councilwoman Belich** asked about signage for this and it was agreed this should be done and not inappropriate at all. This would be good for safety and liability. **Councilwoman**

**Belich** also mentioned possibly adding wording on the back of the business application to sign off for releasing liability from the City should anything happen as far as safety. There should also be COVID safety signage as well posted. Would this be closer done toward holiday season? **Council Vice President Kline** stated that this wouldn't be done until mid to late October.

Various Community Center events and dates were discussed for possibilities and avoidance of other Community Center activities.

**Councilwoman Taylor Draper** asked if this would take place on a weekend and **Council Vice President Kline** stated that he's seen them done on weeknights. **Councilwoman Belich** stated she didn't like that idea because it seems that participants and attendees would be more willing to go on a weekend afternoon to be more accommodating to hair stylists, restaurants, etc. **Council Vice President Kline** said that as we move along gathering information we can ask businesses what would work best for them (day/time). **Councilwoman Taylor Draper** said to also take into consideration the attendees. Parents will be driving kids around to activities because school will be back in session. She feels that people have a little more time on the weekend versus during the week. **Councilwoman Belich** suggested sending out a survey to the businesses to find out the best time/day, needs, samples, food, etc. **Council Vice President Kline** agreed that that would be a good idea to gauge interest instead of just scheduling it and not having the businesses attend because the time and day won't work. Councilwoman Fellows suggested even having a totally separate Business Food Fair solely for food businesses. **Councilwoman Belich and Taylor Draper** agreed it would be a fun idea. **Councilwoman Taylor Draper** asked if it would be easier to start with that type of Fair before the Business Fair. **Council Vice President Kline** said it could be a possibility, but not necessarily easier.

**Council Vice President Kline** stated that the first step is to get the updated Business Listing with email addresses. Next, get some sense which would require more lead time – Business Fair or Food Fest – and whichever is quicker, we should do that one first.

#### **Public Portion open at 7:20 p.m.**

Frank Cihula, 35060 Dixon Road, stated he and his wife have helped with previous Craft Fairs and it gets hectic. Signage – who would maintain, not in right-of-way. What responsibility would the property owner have with the sign? Business Fair has been tried before and the business couldn't attend because they couldn't afford to lose the employee for a few hours. Just want to caution about the reality involved.

Mark Belich, 2476 Parsons Drive, stated that businesses need employees and would be more inclined to come to find employees. Not many businesses are struggling for business, but more employees. Maybe focus on recruitment for businesses.

#### **Public Portion closed at 7:27 p.m.**

**Comments/Suggestions: Councilwoman Taylor Draper** stated that these were all good points and appreciated Frank sharing his stories. She is not coming into this with any ideas of this being a perfect venture, but it's still worthwhile to try and learn from mistakes. Maybe we can intertwine the business/employee need.

**Council Vice President Kline** said that this has been informative. He came in thinking there'd be planning for a Business Fair and we're ending up considering a Business Fair, Food Fair, and an Employment Fair. Very educational and lots to give thought to.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Council Vice President Kline adjourned the Subcommittee Meeting at 7:29 p.m.**