

**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**WADSWORTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**September 21, 2021**

*The regular meeting of Wadsworth City Council, Tuesday, September 21, 2021, at 5:30 p.m., was held in-person at City Council Chambers.*

**PRESIDING:** Bruce Darlington, *President Pro Tem of Council*

**MEMBERS OF COUNCIL PRESENT:** Ralph Copley, Patty Haskins, Jeanne Hines, Tom Stugmyer, David Williams, Jon Yurchiak

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Acting Mayor Bob Thurber, Assistant Public Service Director Michael Testa, Director of Law Tom Morris, and Clerk of Council Tammy Guenther

**PRESS REPRESENTATIVES:** *None*

**VISITORS SPEAKING:** *George Najjar, 760 Doty Drive*  
*Emma Kingland, 178 Parkview Avenue*  
*Ben Kingland, 178 Parkview Avenue*  
*Lindsay Mangan, 405 Carol Way*  
*Lawrence Mangan, 405 Carol Way*

**Mr. Darlington** called the meeting to order at approximately 5:30 p.m. He asked everyone to remain standing as he led the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the Invocation. The Clerk of Council called the roll.

**MINUTES:** **Mr. Williams** made a motion, which was seconded by **Mr. Copley**, to adopt the minutes of the Council meeting **September 7, 2021**. An all-in-favor vote was taken and all Council members present voted in favor of the motion. **THE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES of September 7, 2021 WERE APPROVED.**

**VISITORS SPEAKING:**

Mr. Darlington stated that he had a list of visitors who indicated they wanted to speak. He asked if there was anyone else who wanted to speak and had not signed the list. No other individuals added their names to the sign-in sheet. He noted that each person would have two minutes to speak. Mr. Darlington also observed that he had read the written presentation of the first speaker, Mr. Najjar, and saw that it would take more than two minutes. He asked if someone else would follow up and finishing reading his statement. Mr. Najjar asked a question from his seat that could not be heard. Mr. Darlington said that the time limit met the Council's Rules for visitors to speak. Mr. Najjar asked Mr. Darlington how he had gotten the copy of his comments and Mr. Darlington said it had been forwarded to him by Mr. Thurber. He said that he was happy to have the chance to see it. Mr. Darlington also explained to the speakers that Council members would not engage in a discussion with speakers during the visitor's portion. He said if they wanted to talk with Council members, to please stay after the meeting and they would be happy to talk with them as long as they wanted.

Mr. Darlington called the first speaker on the list. He asked everyone to state their name and address when they came to the podium.

**Mr. George Najjar** came forward and thanked Council for the prayer before the meeting started. He asked if everyone had read his statement. The Council members indicated that they had, and Mr. Najjar said, “Wow, that’s outstanding.” He thanked them and said he would then add a statement that had been sent to Sheriff Grice. They went and met with him. Mr. Najjar said they were obviously very concerned about federal government overreach. Specifically, since they’d read everything, he would address “project shielding.” He asked if they’d looked up what it was. Mr. Najjar said it was a threat from the communist side of their government, who was willing to go into people’s homes and determine if they were a threat and what degree of a threat they were to society based on the federal government’s idea of what that might be. The federal government had no business intruding in their homes, taking them out of their homes, Mr. Najjar said, according to “this” document on the CDC website. Anyone could read it. But, he asserted, they were going to come into their houses and remove them for their purposes and Mr. Najjar said they did not comply.

He sent this message to Sheriff Grice and said, “Sheriff Grice, you are kind and we appreciate the time you spent with Emma and myself.” Mr. Najjar said (to him) that he was sending, in a separate email, the rough draft to the City Council meeting. Mr. Najjar said that he (the Sheriff) would send a statement for them to read tonight, but he did not. He was sure that he (the Sheriff) was a very busy man. Mr. Najjar sent him a link, which he would send to the Council too. They were concerned about the federal government taking the Covid-19 federal vaccination mandate to its logical conclusion, and that was they would continue to force everyone to be vaccinated. They saw it as a weapon against them. The reason they saw it as a weapon against them was because they followed some of the most renowned doctors in the entire world, not just their local doctors, not just the news people. They followed doctors, not just what people called science.

At that point, Mr. Darlington informed Mr. Najjar that two minutes were up and thanked him very much.

**Mrs. Emma Kingland** came forward and handed out folders of information to Council and the Administration. She made only 10 folders, so asked that people share it with each other. She also did not realize there was a time limit and so would revamp her comments to squeeze it all in.

Mrs. Kingland thanked them for the opportunity to speak. She would try to be as brief and to the point as she could. She was mainly there to discuss three concerns that night. Her first concern was Biden’s address to the nation on September 9, where one of the things he said was, “my plan also takes on elective officials in states that are undermining you (meaning the vaccinated, Mrs. Kingland said) and these life-saving actions. If they will not help, if those governors won’t help us beat the pandemic, I will use my power as president to get them out of the way.”

Mrs. Kingland said her question was, “what are you all planning to do about Biden threatening to remove and / or circumvent elective state officials?” She was sure they had all seen Governor DeWine’s response to Biden’s address. Mrs. Kingland said his response was great, but those were just words. She was curious as to what was his plan of action. So her second question was, “how are you going to assist the Governor in creating a plan that protects people’s rights to say ‘no’ and make their own medical decisions?”

Her final concern that night was that of the Wadsworth City School Board not working for the parents. Before she went into further detail of what she meant, Mrs. Kingland said they would see documentation in the folders from the CDC, the Medina County Health Department, the Governor's office, and Ohio Law. Mrs. Kingland said, according to the CDC from January 4, 2020 until September 11, 2021, 516 children, ages 0-8 had died from Covid. "For argument's sake," she said, "let's just say there are 75 million children currently in the United States." They could see the documentation also in their folders. She said, "That meant only .007 percent of the total child population has died from Covid in the last 18 months. There was another chart from the Medina County Health Department that showed zero children in their county had died from Covid." Mrs. Kingland stated that "in 2019, the CDC showed that there are 40,352 children have died from accidental deaths."

Mr. Darlington indicated that two minutes had passed. He thanked her.

**Mr. Benjamin Kingland** came forward. He was main instructor for Sacred Heart School and Parish in Wadsworth. He said he and his wife felt passionately about talking to them quickly about the numbers and the overreach they felt the School Board had. They felt like they did not have necessarily all of their best interest. They had some people's interest obviously. They had obviously a large following in their own. It seemed to be that there was a large group of them who did wish for their children to remain unmasked.

He knew that at Sacred Heart, since the mask advisory went into place, they also followed suit for the three weeks to follow. One of the things that they had noticed – and they would be compiling numbers – were that the numbers of total Covid cases had not gone down in those three weeks. Also they only had one case of spread at the school out of all the cases that they'd had and there had not been a lot. He thought maybe a total of 12-13. One of the things that they had noticed as a school, as well, was that when they took a look at the total number of students being quarantined, it was a huge number. It could be three to five students for every one student who came in contact or did test positive or did have Covid. So the 15 or 20 percent that the School Board suggested, Mr. Kingland thought was an astronomically ridiculous number, because they, at one point, lost half a class because of two children who tested positive. That entire class, other than those two children, all tested negative after and during their quarantines, obviously in the days following when they were able to take their tests.

Mr. Kingland thought it was really important for them and for the Council, hopefully, if they could pressure the School Board or talk to them and say, "listen, you need to get the numbers. You need to see if this is actually working. You guys actually need to take into consideration that what you are doing is having very little effect on the actual numbers." He did not know if that was necessarily true at the City School District, but Mr. Kingland would like to see those numbers and he didn't think anyone was doing that yet. He thanked the Council members.

**Mrs. Lindsay Mangan** came forward. She was also employed at Sacred Heart School and wanted to follow up a bit on what Mr. Kingland said. Mrs. Mangan's concern, as an educator at Sacred Heart, was the amount of time that they were losing with their students, their healthy students. They did have a huge amount of students on quarantine, like Mr. Kingland said. They had half a class out for two kids and all of those children tested negative. But they still lost those 10 days in the classroom. They could do a lot online. Thankfully, they had that technology, but there was nothing like being in the classroom with an educator.

The students needed to see the educators and the educators need to see the students. That went into the mask too. Mrs. Mangan had the ability in the classroom – she only had 12 students – to be six feet apart

so they didn't have to wear their masks unless they were moving around the classroom. The amount of learning that went on in her classroom was dramatically different than the classroom across the hall. She could tell by looking at a student in a matter of seconds that they got this or they had no idea what was going on. With the mask, it was deadpan. Educators got it pretty well by looking and trying to figure out what was going on with their students. But there was nothing like the crease of the cheeks, the smile or the frustration. That could not be seen from the mask up.

Mrs. Mangan just asked that they take a look as a community about how they could change the quarantine laws because it was not working for their students. They were falling behind in education and it was not fair to their kids. They wanted to be there and they wanted to learn. As teachers, they wanted to teach them. They wanted them there. They wanted the students to have those spontaneous moments that if they were not in the classroom, they've lost out on something that was just a precious tidbit of information that they did not think to put on the packet that was sent home. But, because a child questioned them, they followed that lead to explore it.

Mrs. Mangan said they needed to keep the kids in the classroom and they needed to be able to see them and they needed to see the teachers.

**Mr. Lawrence Mangan** came forward. He did not have anything prepared, but would echo what everyone else said. They did have a lot of concerns in the classroom and in the community. They felt like they should have some say over their own bodies and whether or not they chose to get the vaccine.

It was really kind of scary just seeing what President Biden and the federal government were threatening to do to them. They were just looking for some support in their local communities, and also just looking at the kids in the classroom and the mask mandates they were seeing there. Mr. Mangan understood Covid was scary, but at the same time, they were not seeing it spread in the schools. They were forcing the masks on the kids, but were not looking at the other effects of being masked would be. Like his wife brought up, the kids were missing something, the facial cues and that kind of stuff. He'd seen articles talking about masks holding in the CO2, the fibers in the mask, other germs, and whether there were long term consequences that they were really not taking into consideration now.

How much good did the masks really do versus how much harm they might be doing long term? Was anyone really looking into that, asked Mr. Mangan? Again, what was really best for their children and for their communities?

Those were his concerns and he would just echo what everyone else had said. They had those concerns and felt like they were not really heard. They were worried about long term effects for their children and the community. He thanked them.

Mr. Darlington thanked all of the speakers again and said to feel free to stay after the Council meeting to discuss anything with them, if they wished.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** *None*

**LEGISLATION:**

**ORDINANCE NO. 21-053 (2<sup>nd</sup> RDG.): AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY TO NEGOTIATE AND ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN AND ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE NEW FIRE STATION HEADQUARTERS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

- Sponsored by Council Member Ralph Copley

- Forwarded by Public Safety Committee August 17, 2021, with recommendation for three readings

Mr. Copley made a motion, which was seconded by Ms. Haskins, to place Ordinance No. 21-053 on third reading. An all in favor vote was taken and all Council members present voted in favor of the motion. **Ordinance No. 21-053 advanced to third reading for the meeting of October 5, 2021.**

**ORDINANCE NO. 21-054 (2<sup>nd</sup> RDG.): AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY TO SELL PERSONAL PROPERTY ACQUIRED AS CONTENTS FROM THE PURCHASE OF REAL PROPERTY WHICH IS NOT NEEDED FOR MUNICIPAL PURPOSES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

- Sponsored by Council Member Ralph Copley
- Forwarded by Public Safety Committee August 17, 2021

Mr. Copley made a motion, which was seconded by Ms. Haskins, to place Ordinance No. 21-054 on third reading. An all in favor vote was taken and all Council members present voted in favor of the motion. **Ordinance No. 21-054 advanced to third reading for the meeting of October 5, 2021.**

*The following legislation was read for the third time, having been previously read at different meetings on different days, and acted upon as follows:*

**ORDINANCE NO. 21-045 (3<sup>rd</sup> RDG.): AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO PURCHASE PARCEL 040-20C-07-003 AT A TOTAL PRICE NOT TO EXCEED FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$5,000.00) PLUS AN ADDITIONAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$1,000.00) FOR CLOSING COST AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

- Sponsored by Council Member David Williams
- Discussed in Executive Session by Public Ways Committee July 12, 2021

Mr. Williams called the question on Ordinance No. 21-045. Mr. Darlington called for a vote. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Haskins, Yurchiak, Copley, Williams, Stugmyer, Darlington, Hines. Nays: none. **Ordinance No. 21-045 declared to have been adopted September 21, 2021.**

**RESOLUTION NO. 21-09 (3<sup>rd</sup> RDG.): A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE NECESSITY OF IMPROVING THE PHASE 2 – SOUTHWEST PARKING LOT WITH CONCRETE PAVEMENT; INTERLOCKING PAVERS; LANDSCAPING; STORM SEWER; PRIVATE SIDEWALKS, DECKING, STEPS, PARKING AREAS, DRIVEWAYS, PATIOS, ADA ACCESSIBLE RAMPS, DOWNSPOUTS, AND LANDSCAPING; GRADING; SIDEWALK; CURBING; REPAIRS TO THE PHASE 1 – SOUTHWEST PARKING LOT; AND OTHER SURFACE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE CITY OF WADSWORTH AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

- Sponsored by Council Member David Williams
- Forwarded by Public Ways Committee July 12, 2021, with recommendation to suspend the three reading rule

Mr. Williams called the question on Resolution No. 21-09 on third reading. Mr. Darlington called for a vote. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Yurchiak, Copley, Williams, Stugmyer, Darlington, Hines, Haskins. Nays: none. **Resolution No. 21-09 declared to have been adopted September 21, 2021.**

#### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

Mr. Darlington understood that Mr. Testa had a report.

**Mr. Testa** wished everyone a good evening and said he wanted to talk a little bit about the airport incident they had on the past weekend. As many knew, they did have a plane crash at the Wadsworth Airport on Saturday. When something like this happened, typically the National Transportation Safety Board and the FAA lead the investigation, along with the Ohio State Patrol. Currently, they were investigating and would eventually issue a report. The City did not have a set date on when that report would be issued. But there was one person on the plane and that was the pilot. The pilot was killed in the accident. Any time someone died in accident, plane or otherwise, it was a very sad occasion. Certainly, as a City, their thoughts and prayers were with both of the families. There was an accident last Saturday and another accident that had occurred a couple of weeks ago.

Mr. Testa wanted to do was to publicly thank the City Safety Forces. Their first responders were on scene in less than three minutes. There were also several bystanders and other folks at the Airport who did whatever they could to try to assist the pilot. It was a sad event that happened. At that point, they were waiting for the report to come back from the FAA. They cooperated one hundred percent with their investigation. Mr. Testa just wanted to let them know where they were at right now.

Mr. Williams asked Mr. Testa if the Airport had been reopened. Mr. Testa affirmed that it was open. He added that the Airport was closed for a couple of days, which was normal during the investigation when the FAA and others were out there. It was a normal course of action.

Mr. Darlington asked for any comments from the Law Director. Mr. Morris said he had nothing to add. The Mayor Pro Tem Mr. Thurber was asked for any comment and he had none.

Council members were asked for their comments.

Mrs. Hines mentioned the September 11<sup>th</sup>, 20-year tribute and said how wonderful and moving was that remembrance. It was absolutely wonderful. She was glad to be a part of it and to be there. Mr. Darlington agreed that it was wonderful for everybody involved.

Mr. Stugmyer noted that Feeding Medina County, in conjunction with the schools and the City, was still doing the food give-a-ways in town, every Thursday, at Wright Stadium, from 10:30 a.m. until noon.

There were no further comments.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Mr. Williams made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Copley. All were in favor. **The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:54 p.m.**

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Clerk of Council

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President of Council