

CITY OF AURORA  
OHIO  
**Master Plan Review Commission**  
Meeting Minutes  
July 11, 2017

The Master Plan Review Commission met in a scheduled meeting on Tuesday, July 11, 2017, in Council Chambers of City Hall. Laura Stith, Chairman called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Matt Gilmore  
Shannon Keibler Arrived 4:02 p.m.  
Dale Moravec, Vice Chairman  
Jennifer Stanley  
Laura Stith, Chairman  
Joan Tomko  
Lucy Zamarly

Absent: Nick Austin  
Evan Webster

Also Present: Denise Januska, Director of Planning, Zoning, & Building Division  
Meredith Davis, Asst. Director of Planning, Zoning, & Building Division  
David Barnes, Chief, Aurora Fire Department  
Brian Byard, Chief, Aurora Police Department  
Tim Clymer, Finance Director  
Marie Lawrie, Secretary

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES:**

**Motion: To adopt the minutes of the June 13, 2017 meeting, as submitted**

Mr. Moravec moved; Ms. Stanley seconded and the motion carried, 5-0-2, on a voice vote.

Yeas: Mr. Moravec, Ms. Stanley, Ms. Stith, Ms. Tomko, Ms. Zamarly

Nays: None

Abstentions: Mr. Gilmore, Ms. Keibler

**CITY DEPARTMENT PRESENTATIONS:**

**Fire Department**

Chief David Barnes of the Aurora Fire Department gave an overview of his department. He started with the history of Fire Department. 1929 began a volunteer Fire Department, 1970 brought the first full-time employees, and 1997 opened a second station. Fire calls are less common in Aurora. Most frequently the department

responds to calls for EMS service. 2006 produced 1,373 EMS calls and 480 Fire Calls. 2016 produced 1,750 EMS calls and 443 Fire calls.

Staff includes 18 full-time employees with firefighter training as well as paramedic training. 32 part-time employees with 28 of those have both firefighter training and paramedic training. There are 2 full-time fire safety inspectors. The department operates with 7 people each day. If needed, additional personnel are called in.

Services provided include EMS, Fire Suppression, Fire Prevention, Fire Education, Joint Special Rescue Teams, and a Joint Fire Investigation Team. These special teams can handle labor intensive rescues and investigations which occur infrequently but require special skills and equipment.

The Fire Department is funded by a 1.5 Mill levy. This levy provides funding for 6 full-time employees as well as all capital improvements including trucks, heart monitors, etc. \$ 2.7 million of the general fund is also allotted to the Fire Department. The department generates \$884,000.00. The cost to the owner of a \$100,000.00 home is approximately \$.25 per day.

Future needs of the department include maintaining response times, matching manpower to run volume, keeping equipment up to date, and including time saving technology. As the population grows, the department will need to grow. Rescue quad vehicles last 8 -10 years and pumper trucks last 25 years. The 1986 ladder truck has been refurbished once in 2009. The cost was \$225,000.00 verses purchasing a new truck for approximately \$1 million dollars. The department currently has an in-house EKG monitors and CPR machines in each squad vehicle which save valuable time. They also have an 800 lb. capacity patient loading device and power cots which saves two lifts per rescue.

Questions asked included if the department teaches CPR. The department hosts classes for businesses as well as community classes. When asked if the department provides mutual aid to Bainbridge, the Chief responded that they do provide mutual aid as needed. This happens infrequently.

### **Police Department**

Chief Brian Byard of the Police Department gave an overview of his department. The department answers approximately 23,000 calls per year. Of those 5,230 were traffic related. There are 49 employees. The department operates with a budget just over \$5 million dollars.

Services provided by the Police Department include an officer dedicated to the Portage County Drug Task Force, an officer dedicated to the Aurora School District, and a part-time park ranger. Community events include Safety Town, Drug Take Back Program, RUOK program, Click it or Ticket Campaign, Truck Day, Bike Rodeo, Shop with a Cop and None 4 under 21. The department has a bike patrol and a canine unit.

Major concerns of the department include internet crime and social media outlets. Cyber-crimes are prevalent and anonymous making them difficult to investigate or arrest. The Police Department aims to educate the residents on scams. They also monitor the law enforcement database regularly to prevent the risk of hackers.

Another major concern is the current opioid epidemic. The department partners with the local schools to educate the students and deter experimenting with drugs. Last year the Police Department partnered with the DEA, the FBI, and the United States Attorney to offer support and advice to superintendents and educators in Northeast Ohio.

Many policy, infrastructure, and technological improvements have taken place in the past two years. The department received State Accreditation for policy development. The City has purchased a new 911 system which allows Aurora to remain as a Public Safety Answering Point in Portage County. The department also upgraded to a new radio format which allows clear communication between officers and dispatch.

The City consists of 25 square miles and nearly 40 developments. As the population of Aurora grows, the Police Department will need to grow with it.

Lastly, Chief Byard invited everyone to attend National Night Out, Tuesday, August 1, 2017 from 5 – 8 p.m. This event is a family friendly event to celebrate the partnership of the community and our Police Department. Activities include tours of the Police Department, food, and games.

### **Finance Department**

Tim Clymer, Finance Director for the City of Aurora gave an overview of the Finance Department. He has a staff of 5 employees. The responsibilities of this department including a variety of reporting obligations, tracking fixed assets, manage an investment portfolio and track outstanding debt, create and monitor the budget.

The City has a AAA bond rating. This rating would allow the City the lowest interest rate available in the event that a loan is needed. He did not foresee that need in the near future, barring any ambitious project the City may undertake such as a recreation center or a large scale infrastructure project.

The City operates on a budget of approximately \$16 million. The City has been operating at a surplus the last few years, transferring funds at year end to the capital funds account to prepare for coming projects. In the coming years that may not be possible as the state has passed an amendment that changes the way the income tax is administered resulting in less funds for the community. There was also a change on state level with the local government distribution of the state budget, resulting in a reduction of funds.

The City budgets conservatively and has some reserve for emergencies. There are commercial and industrial companies moving into Aurora. There is more land available for development. Mr. Clymer explained tax abatements. These abatements allow for new construction or improvement of an existing building with tax abatements with the County for 10-15 years. This is a tool to attract desirable development. Another tool is an income tax rebate. A portion of the business income tax is given back to the company. They use this tool on a case by case basis. 33 percent of the income tax over a 5 or 7 year period is rebated.

Mr. Moravec asked Mr. Clymer to explain a TIFF. This type of tax incentive is typically used when a large infrastructure project is necessary to develop the job site. The city would have the infrastructure constructed for the property. This incentive puts a freeze on the property tax of the parcel for a period of time. During that period of time the company would pay the amount the property tax would have been to the city to offset the cost of the infrastructure. Mr. Clymer had examples of cities where this took place and the company went out of business before the reimbursement was complete. He also had an example of a successful TIFF. This type of incentive has not been necessary to date.

When asked, Mr. Clymer explained the process which oversees tax incentive reporting. A Tax Incentive Review Committee which includes Mr. Clymer, Auditor Esposito, Board of Education President Gerald Kohanski, Economic & Entrepreneurial Development Director Jack Burge, and a number of residents review the reports, vote to renew the tax incentives and forward them to City Council for approval.

#### **SUMMARY OF INPUT ON PARKS & RECREATION – JUNE 13, 2017:**

Mr. Liszniansky explained the Homework Results Summary. (See attachment.) He explained that trails were the most popular result for Passive Recreation Amenities. Under the Active Recreation heading, paved multi-use trails and outdoor amphitheater were most popular. Spring Hill Farm was the natural park considered the highest priority to make an investment in. Hartman Farm was the active recreation park

considered the highest priority to make an investment in. Sheldon Park and Veteran's Memorial Park scored highest as a neighborhood park to invest in.

### **SHARING OF HOMEWORK – REVIEW OF 2013 PLAN: GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

Each of the goals from the 2013 Master Plan Update were individually read and discussed. Each goal was broken down into several objectives. The group discussed whether each objective was completed or nearly completed. They also weighed in on whether each objective was still relevant moving forward. Some objectives will remain; some will be changed or removed. New objectives may be added. Categories included Economy, Housing, Land Use/Zoning, Community Facilities & Infrastructure, Transportation, and Natural Features.

Some objectives they may move forward with changes to the verbiage included working with the Chamber of Commerce to promote eco-tourism, investigating the necessity of an Exterior Maintenance Code, and a Housing Code for Rental Property. There was conversation about Town Center, including streetscaping and cohesive districts verses developing a down town. There was discussion on transparency of cost if a recreation center is considered in the future. ~~The Commission hopes~~ Some members of the Commission suggest the Ad Hoc Recreational Committee will investigate the feasibility on constructing such a facility. A truck turning lane on State Route 43 near the industrial area was discussed, as well as encouraging complete streets. Complete streets include vehicle lanes, bike lanes, and sidewalks.

### **OVERVIEW OF NEXT MEETING:**

Approximately two weeks before the August 8, 2017 meeting members will receive a 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the Master Plan Update. He asks the member to review it in detail. The meeting will consist of two hours of detailed review of that document.

### **PUBLIC MEETING REMINDER:**

Mr. Liszniansky reminded the members that the public forum meeting will happen on Tuesday, July 25, 2017 from 6:00-8:00 pm. All members were encouraged to attend if possible. Members were informed of the public survey residents can take part in. This survey can be found on the home page of the city website [www.auroraoh.com](http://www.auroraoh.com).

### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was no one present at the meeting wishing to make comment.

**HOMEWORK:**

The homework will be to review the 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the update, which will be delivered to them approximately 2 weeks before the meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Ms. Stanley moved to adjourn; Ms. Keibler seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 5:51 p.m. on a unanimous voice vote.

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Laura Stith, Chairman

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Marie Lawrie, Secretary