

Please note that we will start our next Committee meeting with our annual joint meeting with the Franklin Township for discussion of cemetery matters. Afterwards, we will have a short work session for Council to update the Committee items pending list and we have rescheduled the staff demonstration of the GovQA citizen information and referral service for your information.

Works Session

1. Pending List Update

Council members have been asked to review the pending list items that have been referred into their respective Committees and make recommendations for those items to remain or be removed from the Committee pending list.

Administrative Recommendation

Review the pending list items referred into Committee and authorize the modifications to the list as deemed appropriate by Council.

Council Action

Authorize and amend the pending list as appropriate.

2. GovQA Citizen Information and Referral Service Demo

Staff has requested Committee time to demonstrate the GovQA online citizen information and referral services that we have been using for the last 3 years. This database management system allows the staff to receive citizen requests on line 24 hours a day, it automatically refers the request to the appropriate staff, and allows for the tracking of the staff efforts to answer the citizen inquiry.

Administration Recommendation

Receive the information.

Council Actions

Receive the information; no action necessary.

Community Development Committee

1. Semi-Annual EDA Revolving Loan Fund Certification

Each year the City is required to submit a semi-annual report of the activities performed with the revolving loan fund that were capitalized with EDA funds. City Council is being asked to pass a resolution certifying the current report. (attachment)

Administrative Recommendation

The City has effectively used EDA revolving loan funds to retain and attract new business investment in Kent. Council certification of the City's Loan Fund Plan is a semi-annual procedure that is required by the Ohio EDA to maintain eligibility and I would urge Council's adoption.

Council Action

Approve and certify the EDA Revolving Loan Fund report.



Community Development Committee (continued)

2. Tax Incentive Review Council (TIRC) Annual Report

Each year the Tax Incentive Review Council reviews the performance of the Enterprise Zone agreements for the City of Kent and submits an annual report for Council approval. There are 2 Enterprise Zone agreements in effect in Kent: Land O'Lakes, and Don Joseph Toyota. The TIRC members are recommending terminating the Land O'Lakes agreement and continuing the Don Joseph agreement. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

I would encourage Council to support the TIRC's recommendation.

Council Action

Accept and adopt the TIRC Annual Report.

3. Extension of the City's Enterprise Zone Tax Abatement Program

Staff is requesting Council's authorization to extend the City's participation in the State's Enterprise Zone Tax Abatement program. The City had previously utilized this program back in the 1990's as a mechanism to allow negotiated abatements on both real and personal property taxes to qualifying projects that were not part of our Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) tax abatement districts. While the payment (and abatement) of personal property tax is no longer an issue, real property tax abatements can still be granted under the Enterprise Zone program. Staff believes that having this program serves as another valuable tool in the City's economic development tool box. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

The City's Enterprise Zone Program expired in 1999 and I would encourage Council to renew and extend the Program as proposed by staff.

Council Action

Authorize the extension of the City's Enterprise Zone Tax Abatement Program.

Land Use Committee

4. Downtown Entertainment District

Dan Smith has requested Committee time to seek Council's approval to establish a new downtown entertainment district in support of the new restaurants that have been announced in the Acorn Alley project and the Fairmount property project. The purpose of the proposed entertainment district is to assist the new restaurants secure liquor licenses for their establishments. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

The success of the new restaurants planned for downtown Kent will depend upon the availability of liquor permits and I would strongly recommend Council's support for the creation of the new downtown entertainment district.

Council Action

Approve the establishment of a new downtown entertainment district as proposed.



Land Use Committee (continued)

5. Vacant Property Ordinance Discussion

As requested by City Council, staff has completed an initial review of possible ordinance changes that would be intended to create a dis-incentive for property owners to allow properties to sit vacant and become blighted. The original Council referral asked staff to consider an ordinance similar to the one passed in East Cleveland that assesses annual registration fees to properties that are vacant and deteriorated. Jim Silver will discuss the findings of his research and make suggestions for possible next steps for addressing blighted, vacant properties. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

The removal of blighted properties has been one of the City's top priorities and is one of the motivations behind the City's significant property acquisition and investment in downtown Kent over the last 5 years. In order to protect that investment, and the significant investment made by private property owners in the central business district, I urge Council's support to consider mechanisms available to discourage property owners from allowing properties to decline and become blighted.

Council Action

Receive the staff report, discuss and make recommendations for next steps.

Streets, Sidewalks and Utilities Committee

6. Ohio Public Works Commission Pre-Application Request

Jim Bowling has requested Committee time for Council to consider approving submission of one City capital project pre-application request for Ohio Public Works Commission grant funding -- \$490,000 for Summit Street Traffic Signal Coordination Project. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Given the City's current financial constraints I have encouraged staff to pursue all possible grant sources and I recommend for Council's authorization to proceed with submission of the OPWC pre-application request.

Council Action

Approve the submission of the pre-application request for OPWC funding.

7. Street Closure for Grill For Good Event

The City has received a request from the Kent Jaycees for Council's consideration to close N. Water Street between Columbus and Main Street from 8 am to 8 pm on June 11, 2011, for the Grill For Good fund raising event. (attachment)

Administrative Recommendation

I recommend Council's support for the temporary street closure in order to support the Grill for Good event in downtown Kent.

Council Action

Authorize the proposed street closure for the Grill for Good event on June 11, 2011.





Land Use Committee (continued)

8. Smoker/Cooker License Review

In 2010 City Council had approved a license for the smoker/cooker used by Cajun Dave's at the Water Street Tavern to occupy the right-of-way (parking spaces) for a period of one year. It is time for the smoker/cooker license to be renewed, modified or terminated.

Administration Recommendation

There have been some concerns raised by the property and business owners adjacent to where the smoker/cooker unit is used concerning the amount of smoke generated. The smoker/cooker unit owner has worked in good faith with the City to modify the cooking techniques and improve ventilation to try to resolve those concerns. The staff and I recommend Council's support to renew/modify the license.

Council Actions

Authorize the renewal and/or modification of the license to occupy the right of way.

Information Items

1. Income Tax Report

Dave Coffee has provided a summary of income tax collections thru the end of March 2011. Overall the City income tax collections are up 3.61% (\$91,881) from March 2010. Kent State University's collections thru the end of March are up .43% (\$4,745). For the end of the first quarter of 2011, income tax collections exceed our budgetary projections for income tax revenues for this period and hopefully this trend will continue following 7 months of incremental income tax gains that began in mid-2010. (attachment)

2. Civil Service Commission Meeting

I have included a copy of the minutes for the March 14, 2011 Civil Service Commission meeting, and the agenda for the April 11th meeting for your information. (attachment)

3. Letter From The Franklin Township Trustees

For your information I have included a copy of a letter received from the Franklin Township expressing their strong opposition to the expansion plans announced for the current Sunrise Apartments on Rhodes Road. (attachment)

4. Tree City Designation – 25 Years Running

I have included a copy of a letter and press announcement from the Arbor Day Foundation noting Kent's recognition as a Tree City for the 25th consecutive year. Today we're one of 3,400 cities that receive this designation but we're proud to call ourselves the original Tree City, and we're doing a great job living up to that legacy. (attachment)