

DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE

August 12, 2024

The August 12, 2024 Downtown Committee meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers by Tom Karcher, Chairperson. Downtown Committee members present were Tom Karcher, Marc Mays, Scott Moore, Zach Morral, Nicole Morris, and Kate Niederkohr. Graham Treadway was absent.

Others present included: Kyle McColly, Mayor; and Sarah Bennett, Clerk.

The minutes of the July 8, 2024 Downtown Committee meeting, having been mailed to each Downtown Committee member, were approved as received.

Mayor McColly indicated that he was recently contacted by Mr. Josh Messersmith, Wyandot Memorial Hospital, and Mr. Messersmith is planning to attend the September 9, 2024 Downtown Committee meeting to discuss plans for a 5K that was being considered for late summer or early fall this year but is now being planned for September 2025.

Mayor McColly shared a report showing the balance of the funds collected for food truck permits to date is \$3,070.00.

Mayor McColly indicated that Ms. Angela Polachek, Administrative Assistant, will be compiling a spreadsheet document of food truck permit holders to be shared with the Police Department and the Wyandot County Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Morral expanded on his idea presented at the July 8, 2024 Downtown Committee meeting to hang Edison lights in the downtown alleys, and he suggested the possibility of closing the east/west alley located in the 100 block of North Sandusky Avenue along the west side, from North Sandusky Avenue west to the adjoining north/south alley and provide a communal seating area with tables and chairs in this alley which could allow individuals to eat a meal in this area and help with seating during events such as 1st Thursdays and the Autumn Cruise that take place in the downtown. Edison lights could be hung in the alley by either anchors on the buildings or by posts, and donations for the Edison lights could be sought. The plug-ins for the lights would have to be figured out as there are no electric outlets in this alley. Mr. Morral noted that he has had discussions with Mr. Mike Hill, Upper Fire Systems, 120 North Sandusky Avenue, who owns the building and business that abuts the alley to the north and Mr. Kip Wentling, Richardson's Flowers, 116 North Sandusky Avenue, who owns the building and business that abuts the alley to the south and they both have no objections to closing this alley. Mr. Morral inquired with Mr. Hill and Mr. Wentling about painting the sides of their buildings and Mr. Hill indicated that he was not interested in having his building painted and Mr. Wentling recently received a quote of \$50,000.00 to paint his building and he has no objections to the side of his building being painted or having a mural painted on the side of his building. The closure or vacation of the alley was discussed and it was noted that with the closure of the alley the City would maintain control of the alley but with the vacation of the alley the adjacent property owners would each own half of the alley. Downtown Committee members agreed that the alley should be closed so the City can maintain control. Mr. Morral indicated that he will present this idea to the Safety Committee at their September 3, 2024 meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Morral, seconded by Mr. Moore, to recommend to the Safety Committee, Service Committee, and City Council to close the east/west alley in the 100 block of North Sandusky Avenue located along the west side, from North Sandusky Avenue west to the adjoining north/south alley. Upon Voice Vote, all members voted Yes. The Chairperson declared the motion carried.

Mr. Mays again addressed the need to replace the worn street signs in the downtown area. Mr. Karcher indicated that he researched the allowable color options for street signs to comply with Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) regulations and found that brown, green, and black signs are permitted but the lettering must be white.

Mayor McColly reported the Wyandot Improvement Network (WIN) will begin holding their meetings every other month going forward, and at a recent meeting of the WIN Edison lights in the downtown area were discussed. Mayor McColly indicated that a request was previously received and he would like to see Edison lights strung across North Sandusky Avenue in the 100 block. Downtown Committee members agreed that there are many factors to consider with the placement of these lights over the street including height, where to anchor the lights, electrical outlets, maintenance, etc. Mayor McColly stated that the WIN would like to continue the consideration of this project or the placement of these lights along the tree line, over the sidewalks, on both sides of the street.

Mayor McColly noted that the wayfinding sign located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Wyandot Avenue and Sandusky Avenue is full and there are seven (7) businesses on a waiting list for the next wayfinding sign and once the waiting list has ten (10) businesses the WIN will proceed with ordering the sign. Mayor McColly requested input from the Downtown Committee on the placement of the next wayfinding sign which could preferably be located at the northeast or southeast corner of the intersection of Wyandot Avenue and Sandusky Avenue. Mayor McColly also inquired as to how far the Downtown Committee is willing to extend the distance of businesses to be placed in the wayfinding sign as there has been interest from a business located outside and several miles to the east of the City that has expressed interest. Downtown Committee members agreed that parameters need to be set limiting the distance of businesses to advertise on the sign and members voiced their preference that only businesses located within the City should be allowed to advertise their location on the wayfinding sign.

The need for additional seating during the Wyandot County Chamber of Commerce's 1st Thursday events was discussed. Mr. Karcher suggested more benches in the downtown area need to be considered. It was noted that the parks are getting full with memorial benches so possibly memorial benches in the downtown area could be considered. Mayor McColly indicated that downtown businesses have inquired about placing benches on the sidewalk in front of their locations. Downtown Committee members agreed that additional benches to be placed in the downtown area should match the benches that are already located in the downtown area.

It was reported that the Wyandot County Chamber of Commerce is taking over obtaining sponsors, the purchase, and distribution of the cups for the Designed Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA). The 12 oz cups have been sold out and 7,500 of the correct size 16 oz cups were recently ordered.

Mayor McColly reported that the WIN inquired about extending the large flower pots for placement into the 200 block of South Sandusky Avenue. Mayor McColly will address this inquiry with Mr. Keith Niederkohr, Parks Manager.

There being no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting adjourned.

Sarah J. Bennett, Clerk

Tom Karcher, Chairperson