

Mt. Auburn Community Council

Full Council 03/20/17 Meeting

Recorded and Prepared by Carlton Farmer (Recording Secretary)

Board Members in Attendance: Sandi Allen, Stanley Broadnax, Rod Browne, Carlton Farmer, Ken Farmer, Carol Gibbs, Steve Gibbs, Cathy Ingram, Ryan Lammi, Anne Shannon, Anthony Thompson

Excused Absence: None

Special Guests: Officer LaDon Laney, Daniel Betts (Cincinnati Recreation Commission Director)

Meeting Activities

1. **Call to Order** – Meeting called to order by called to order by Stanley Broadnax at 7:05 PM. Moment of silence.
2. **Safety Report (Officer Laney filling in for Office Brazil)** - Multiple reports of an individual or individuals checking door handles along Milton, Walker and Boal. Shooting at the Reading Road Shell station; the suspect ended up turning himself in by accident. There is a suspect in the shooting of the young girl on Burnet; they just don't have enough to charge yet but are still working on this. **Questions:** C.Gibbs: Someone posted some photos today on a neighborhood Facebook page of a man stealing packages on Liberty Hill. Laney: I don't have Facebook. I think Officer Brazil does. But you can send those pictures to us. Resident: Was the suspect on the shooting of the girl on Burnet, was that through crime stoppers or through police work? Laney: It was a combination.
3. **Closure of the Filson Park Pool (Daniel Betts, Director of Cincinnati Recreation Commission)** - Betts: I am relatively new to this position, about 11 months as director. As many of you know, the CRC has to reduce our budget by 10% to help close a \$25 million gap in the city budget. CRC operates on a \$17 million annual budget, so cutting \$1.7 million is no easy task. Much of these cuts will end up being staff or labor costs. The first priority was to not layoff employees. The second priority was to minimize the reduction of services to communities--pools, community centers, etc. However, there are some assets that we are planning to close. Pools that the CRC is looking to close: Filson, Mt. Adams, Camp Washington and Spring Grove Village. Community Centers the CRC is planning to close: OTR, Hartwell and Westwood Townhall. **Questions:** Linders: Mt. Auburn lost our rec center and we lost many nearby pools. It seems that once a pool is closed, it is difficult to reopen. I strongly urge you to reconsider. Resident: Have people approached the big organizations or businesses and asked them to invest in the children of this city? Betts: We are engaged in public-private partnerships, and we are expanding this effort. The CRC went from \$30 million to about \$17 million, but we didn't change our model. There are \$77 million in capital needs. The CRC is going to have to change, we don't want to be coming to communities every year because of budget shortfalls. Broadnax: Can you describe what these capital needs are? Betts: They are largely the result of deferred maintenance. (Passed around pictures of some of the issues at Filson pool.) The CRC budget for pools is \$4 million. I could spend that on one location. Mary McDonald: If you close down the pool, we have nothing else. We don't have a library. We don't have a rec center. We will have nothing. C.Gibbs: Since 2012 we've lost our rec center, senior center and now we are about to lose our pool. In that same time, \$12.1 million was spent on 4 other pools in the city. \$1.5 million is designated to be spent on Oakley this year and another \$2 million is being talked about for Oakley. Betts: I understand your frustration, but that money was allocated before my time, and the \$2 million you are referring to

is being proposed by City Council members. C.Gibbs: Do you know what the repairs to Filson pool would cost? Betts: Yes, it would be somewhere between \$200,000 and \$315,000. Rev. Alvin Scales: If we don't give our kids something to do, they are going to get in trouble. Betts: I agree completely. I grew up on the Southside of Chicago and if it weren't for rec centers and community centers, I would not be standing in front of you today. I understand the seriousness of these issues. Joyce Hughley: Why is the city eliminating so many of our neighborhood pools. Swimming is a great form of exercise. They filled in the pool at Inwood so they can build a restaurant and now they want to close the Filson pool. If the city can spend \$18 million on a streetcar, can't we spend the money to maintain our pools. Why was the pool not maintained for so many years? Betts: The department simply cannot keep up with its deferred maintenance, not just at pools, but also at community centers. I can't go back and undo what has been done. What I can do is ensure that where there is development, we will be in that space. S.Gibbs: We need a clear statement in writing from you with an estimate for the repairs to Filson pool. That way we can take that and try to support you and help get this done. We aren't just here to beat up on you. We want to work with you on this. Betts: I hope it doesn't come to that. S.Gibbs: Aren't we already at that point. Rev. Scales: If we raise money for Filson pool, is there a guarantee that those funds won't get used elsewhere? Betts: Yes. We would not mix those funds. Legally and ethically we wouldn't do that. Derek Williams: In your estimates, are you mainly looking at concrete? There are new, substitute materials that may be cheaper. I would like to suggest that you look at alternate materials. Betts: Thank you. I will bring that up with my staff. Ingram: Why was Filson pool your first visit upon coming to Cincinnati. Betts: Filson was not my first visit in Cincinnati. It was one of several visits in my first couple of months on the job. Ingram: OK, I thought that was what you said. Why was the plan for maintaining these pools and assets not followed? Is it simply a budget issue or something else? The reality is if Filson pool is closed, Mt. Auburn is left with nothing. And at the same time, other communities are experiencing investments in their community and recreation centers. The CRC will essentially have no presence in Mt. Auburn if the Filson pool is closed. Betts: What I was trying to say was that the last time we did a strategic plan was 2010. That should be updated every 3 to 5 years. S.Gibbs: Again, we need to know what the price tag is to get us out of this box. The reason that Oakley got what it did was that money came in from outside sources. Alice Williams: You said that the last time there was a plan was 10 years ago. So, over that time, some communities got services and some didn't get any? Betts: No, I don't think that is a fair deduction. Services were provided throughout communities during that time, but some maintenance was deferred. The purpose of these plans is to help develop public-private partnerships and to work with community members. Alice Williams: What time table are we looking at here? Betts: Good question. So what are the next steps? I have my budget conversation on April 10. The key deadline is May 17, when the city manager presents his budget. C.Gibbs: Do we even have time to make these repairs in order to open the Filson pool in time for the summer? Vogt: I think we are looking for clarification on what is the minimum of capital maintenance that needs to be done in order to open the pool? Betts: We would need to spend \$200,000 to \$315,000 in order to open the pool. Broadnax: Is there a way to phase in some repairs in order to have the pool open? Betts: I'm not sure. I think that is an interesting idea that it worth exploring. I will take this back to my staff and work on it. K.Farmer: In the past, we couldn't even open the pool without outside money for operating costs. Couldn't we run the risk of raising money to repair the pool, and then the city decide that they don't have the funds to operate Filson pool. Betts: I am including operating/labor costs in my proposal. And that will be included in the figures I will send to you tomorrow. Walter Hawkins: If we looked at the reduction of pools and the increase of crime during that time, I imagine we would see a correlation. Looking at the bigger picture, why weren't the strategic plans executed?

Betts: I agree with what you are saying. Currently the CRC is a data poor organization. Most of our processes are done by hand. The CRC faces a lot of challenges. Walter Hawkins: I would be happy to offer data analytics services to you if that would be helpful. Broadnax: What are you planning for the special meeting that we talked about holding in a couple of weeks. Betts: I will work with you on developing an agenda. **After some brief discussion, the agreed special meeting info was:** Tuesday April 4 , 6:30 PM tour the pool. 7:00 PM meeting at Taft Elementary.

4. **February MACC Minutes** - *Anna Linders made a motion to approve the minutes. Rod Browne seconded. Motion carried.*
5. **Treasurer's Report** - *Steve Gibbs made a motion to approve. Tom Rotte seconded. Motion carried.*
6. **Board Report (Broadnax)** - We have two vacancies on the MACC board. **Tom Rotte** sent a letter to the MACC Board stating his interest in and qualifications for the open trustee position. Ken Farmer made a motion to approve Tom Rotte's appointment to the open position. *Anthony Thompson seconded. Motion carried.* **Deborah Ooten** sent a letter to the MACC Board stating her interest in and qualifications for the open Vice President position on the MACC Board. *Steve Gibbs made a motion to approve Deborah Ooten's appointment. Anna Linders seconded. Motion carried.*
7. **New Business**
 1. **Designating Parks in Mt. Auburn Gun Free and Drug Free Zones (Rev. Alvin Scales)** - Scales stated that he and other ministers are looking to designate a number of parks (Jackson, Hopkins, the park next to New Unity) in Mt. Auburn as gun free and drug free zones. **Questions:** Mary McDonald: So what can we do to help? Scales: To be honest, I am at the beginning of this process and wanted to bring this idea to the community. Broadnax: I talked with Officer Brazil about what we need to do in order to do this. Anyone who is interested in this effort should speak with Rev. Scales after the meeting. Ingram: If we are trying to increase fines or sentencing in these parks, that has to involve CPD and possibly the city. Mary McDonald: I am glad that someone is doing this.
 2. **Special City Budget Meeting (Alice Williams)** - The city is holding a special Budget and Finance Committee meeting on Wednesday, March 22nd at the Bond Hill Community Center.
 3. **Summer Youth Employment Program (Daniel Betts)** - If anyone is interested in finding out more information about the Summer Youth Program, call (513) 352-4005.
 4. **Independent City Council Candidate Cristina Burcica** - Cristina briefly introduced herself and handed out a piece of campaign literature.
8. **Adjournment** - *Anthony Thompson made a motion to adjourn. Ken Farmer seconded. Motion carried.*