

**THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CIVIL CITY OF NEW ALBANY,
INDIANA, HELD A REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBERS AT NEW ALBANY CITY HALL ON MONDAY, MAY 6, 2024 AT
7:02 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Council Members: Mrs. Collier, Mr. Phipps, Mr. FitzGerald, Mrs. Gohmann, Mr. Blair, Mrs. Griffith, Ms. Murphy, Mr. Unruh and President Dickey.

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs. Manning, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Hall and Mrs. Glotzbach.

CALL TO ORDER: President Dickey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

MOMENT OF REFLECTION:

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL:

APPROVAL OR CORRECTION OF THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:

Mrs. Gohmann moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes for April 18, 2024, Mr. Phipps second, all voted in favor.

COMMUNICATIONS – COUNCIL:

Ms. Murphy gave a special thank you to Mr. David Rake and Mr. Larry Summers for working on the Kohl's intersection to have extra signage there and getting the hospital crossing extra signage. She really appreciates their help with that. She then stated that tomorrow is election day and reminded everyone to go vote.

Mrs. Griffith stated that it has been raining a lot and there is an overlap with the storm water department and the street department, so she is encouraging citizens to log their concerns with both departments and that way they can kind of tell where the water is puddling. She has had a couple of people say that they have a lot of puddling water. She then wished all of the mothers in the room a Happy Mother's Day and said she hopes they enjoy Sunday.

Mr. Blair stated that he is wearing his "I Voted" sticker so he is obviously encouraging everyone to be informed, and if they haven't voted yet, please vote tomorrow.

Mrs. Gohmann stated that May is Mental Health Awareness Month which is very important. She said that mental health is sometimes a silent disease that we are not aware of. She then stated that it is also National Foster Care Awareness Month and there are over 25,000 children in Indiana in foster care right now, so they desperately need foster homes. She said that she was a foster parent for seven years and it is a very rewarding opportunity.

Mr. FitzGerald stated that he wanted to reiterate to vote tomorrow if you haven't yet. He said that the polls will be open from 6:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. He thanked Street Commissioner Rake with helping out with a couple of debris issues in a couple of people's backyards and alleyways. He stated that Mr. Rake was able to take care of those issues. He also stated that he is working with a couple of residents and animal control to deal with some feral cats that keep reproducing in the neighborhoods around Ekin Avenue. He then said that Beautification Day is on May 18th and coinciding with that rain or shine, he will definitely be doing his community walkthrough in the neighborhoods around Beeler Street, Locust Street and Ekin Avenue.

Mrs. Collier stated that she wanted to remind everyone that the Farmer's Market is on summer hours, so they open at 8:00 a.m. Saturday and Wednesday hours will soon be announced. She then said that Mr. Dickey and she were able to meet with Mr. Gibson

today for the Public Health & Safety Committee, and after going over some things with him, she thinks it would be best for him to come and reiterate everything to the entire council. She is waiting to get dates from him and then she will be in touch with the council to see where we can match up and he can reiterate to you what they talked about today. She then reminded everyone to go vote tomorrow.

Mr. Dickey stated that it is Problem Solving Court Month also and we had a wonderful program hosted by our judges over in Jeffersonville for the region. He said that it was a very well attended event and very powerful seeing the impact that problem solving courts, such as Veteran's Court, have on the community so he just wanted to recognize them. He stated that we did have an Arbor Day Celebration and it went very well. He said that there was a nice little crowd there that helped us plant a couple of trees in the Michael Kerr Park at the end of E. Main Street. He stated that it is good to see that the residents at the Mansion on Main are utilizing that park very frequently. He said that he wanted to make note that River Run season passes are available, so if you are interested or have constituents that are interested, please let them know that there is information at the park's website. He stated that mosquito abatement is also going to be done and the fog will start to be applied on May 13th. He then said that we do have some new graduates from IU Southeast today, so he wants to congratulate those graduates. He reminded everyone of election day tomorrow.

COMMUNICATIONS – MAYOR:

Mr. Hall stated that the Sherman Minton Bridge does have a closure right now. He said that I64 East closed at 3:00 p.m. today and he believes it will be closed until May 20th, so this is one of the extended closures that they are allowed. He said that it is to finish some concrete work on the lower bridge approaches, so hopefully they will get that done and everything will go smoothly there. He said that the mosquito abatement program is back and this is actually our 13th year doing this. He stated that it is pretty effective and very successful, but if anyone has any concerns or problem areas, please get those over to the wastewater department. He said that the product is Anvil and is very heavily tested, but all of the guys applying it will have the material safety sheets on hand if anyone stops them and wants to know what they are doing. He added that they get that quite a lot.

Mr. Blair asked if he said to contact the sewer department on that?

Mr. Hall replied yes and stated that wastewater operates it with one of their trucks.

Mr. Blair stated that he has people in the past ask for additional spraying.

Mr. Hall stated to make sure that the wastewater department is aware of the area. He thinks they work in kind of like a grid but they can head back to certain areas and things like that.

Mr. Phipps asked if that is done during certain hours?

Mr. Hall stated that he believes it has to be applied during certain hours and he can double check. He thinks that later in the day like evening hours is usually when they have applied it in the past. He said that he will check to see if this product is the same and try to give an update on that next time. He then stated that Touch-A-Truck is this weekend and it is a super fun event. He said that is hosted over by the Spring Street Firehouse and there will be a small road closure right there so they can get all of the trucks in. He stated that there all sorts of goodies and hears that they may even have a helicopter this year as long as the weather holds out. He said that event is this Saturday from 9:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. He hopes to see everyone there. He stated that DORA has been kind of finalized on our end and was sent off to the state, so right now we are just kind of waiting on that final stamp of approval from the state. He said that we have begun getting necessary equipment ready for that such as decals that have to be in certain areas, and it is his understanding that we are getting a basic allotment of the designated cups to kind of

help supply the first round of those so people are prepared and ready for when that goes live.

Mr. FitzGerald asked if he knows how long that approval process is going to take?

Mr. Hall stated that they didn't really give us an estimate. He said it could be tomorrow or it could be a couple of weeks from now. He is expecting a couple of weeks. He added that we do have our first concerts coming up later in May, so hopefully we can get it done around that time but maybe the first couple we will still have to utilize the fencing and things that we have done in the past. He stated that Beautification Day is coming up and this year is a little different than in the past. He said that in the past, we have hosted volunteers and things like that for like plantings and general cleanups, but this will be more of a dumpster drop off, so there will be locations across the city where we will be putting dumpsters and staffing those. He stated that anyone can bring their spring-cleaning debris to drop off at the dumpster but there are some certain requirements on what you cannot bring. He said that he will be making a post on social media later this week with all of those details. He added that this is a residential only program and is not for commercial waste or builder's or anything like that.

Mr. Phipps asked if he has a tentative date on when the Sherman Minton Project is going to be finished? He asked if was tentatively suppose to be like in the fall this year?

Mr. Hall stated that he believes so but he hasn't seen a firm date. He said that he can contact Mr. Summers because he is a little more involved with that and may have a better idea of their exact progress and if they are on time or behind.

Mr. Phipps stated that someone was saying that the top deck is totally finished now, so that is what was giving him hope that maybe they would just do some spot stuff at the bottom and then maybe finish up.

Mr. Hall stated that he knows that this closure is to do some of that concrete work on the bottom, so we are all in the same boat and very hopeful that they can get it done quickly. He said that if he hears any updates, he will definitely pass that information along.

Mr. FitzGerald asked when I265 starts?

Mr. Hall stated that he is not sure.

Mrs. Gohmann stated that the ramp is already closed for I65 North.

Mr. Dickey stated that I64/I265 is scheduled to start this fall, so they might finish one project and then have another one.

COMMUNICATIONS – OTHER CITY DEPARTMENTS OR CITY OFFICIALS:

REPORTS – COMMITTEES, BOARDS OR OTHER OFFICIALS AS REQUESTED BY A MAJORITY VOTE OF THE COUNCIL:

TARC – On-Demand Program

Mr. Rob Stevens, TARC, gave a presentation to the council on their On-Demand Program. Said presentation is on file in the city clerk's office. He stated that for the first 30 days in April, they did have 49 new riders and 7.4 rides per rider with a total of 364 trips. He said that got them a 4.867 rating from the ridership which is very close to 5 in a 1 to 5 scale. He stated that is not bad for the first 30 days, but he plans to give the council an update in the next couple of months and hopefully they learn a little bit more. He then asked if anyone has any questions.

Mr. FitzGerald asked what the metrics of success are?

Mr. Stevens stated that success is going to come in different ways. He said they have their normal what they call key performance indicators, so they will be looking for cost efficiency and cost effectiveness, riders per hour, riders per mile and those kinds of things. He stated they will be successful too if they learn what travel patterns are, what new travel patterns are, what new customers want and how to attract new riders to the system. He said that describing why buses are empty is a challenge for him. He also said that a bigger longer-term discussion is how they communicate value to the community that they serve. He stated that he is interested in the customer experience so he would like to get direct feedback on what they could do to improve TARC. He added that all of the other metrics are the KPIs that he just mentioned and will be looked at as well.

Mr. FitzGerald asked how this has been marketed to each community? He said that one of his friend's mother is 85 years old, so they are getting her signed up to go to her doctor's appointments, etc.

Mr. Stevens stated that he would hope that they did a good job communicating this to the communities that they are serving now. He said that they did a direct mailer with a postcard that went to everyone in the areas that they serve. He stated that they also have a couple of videos and information on their website.

Mr. FitzGerald stated that he has seen more than the five vehicles out and about and it is really good seeing them out.

Ms. Johnson stated that she wanted to add to the communication piece too. She said they did have the press event that was here and was covered by WDRB, WHAS and WLKY as well as the News and Tribune she believes. She stated that they also sent out information within the utility mailers that were received in late April, so that should've gone to every household in New Albany as well. She also told Dr. Kornberg with Caesars about this and he was very excited, and as we know, he has communication with many non-profits. She said that he sent out an email to his entire contact list that reached about 400 different non-profits and he said that he received positive feedback. She stated that word of mouth goes a long way too. She has been texting friends and family encouraging them to use it as well.

Mr. FitzGerald asked if there are any electric vehicles in the fleet? He stated that one of the reasons why he loves using mass transportation is because it is more environmentally friendly. He asked if there is a mixture in the fleet?

Mr. Stevens said not on the micro transit side since they are individual contractors privately owned, so they probably don't have access to the type of funding that we do. He stated that on the flip side, with all of the fixed route vehicles or any vehicles that TARC owns directly and operates, the best option for them to replace those at the federal level is encouraging that they are low emission or no emission vehicles. He said that it is not on the micro transit side, but you will be glad to know that we are purchasing electric vehicles and outfitting our grid for electric vehicles for the future.

Mr. FitzGerald stated that he thinks there was an article on public radio about reduced services and reduced funding and asked if he had any comments about that? He said that since southern Indiana doesn't really have a say in the bus system, will that reflect on cuts on Route 71 as well?

Mr. Stevens stated that it is an ongoing conversation and an uncomfortable one for everyone. He said that he has been in the transit business for a very long time and no one wants to talk about cutting services, but they do have a challenge, so they will probably be trying to address that possibly this summer. He stated that you might see a reduction in service network wide, but he thinks the way that will look, but is not totally certain this is what it will be because they keep kind of shifting their focus on what it will look like. He said that the easiest way for them to reduce services very quickly is something that the community is familiar with. He said it will be called a Saturday Plus Service and it would be what they initiated during Covid, which was a Saturday service, but it would be plus

because there are other network connectors that they do operate on an increased frequency or standard weekday frequency. He stated that would be a way to reduce a service but not so drastic that it would be just a terrible thing. He said that what the news has reported and what you have seen in their board agenda reports is moving in a direction of how they create an environment where TARC can be sustained over the next several years, so they can get time to do this study to reboot the network and look for different ways to fund TARC going forward.

Mr. FitzGerald stated that he just wants to make sure that Route 71 will still be there.

Mr. Stevens stated that he can't comment on that but he believes it will and he hopes so too.

Mr. Blair asked if they have ways to transport bicycles on their On-Demand vehicles?

Mr. Stevens said that he doesn't think that the On-Demand do but that is a good question.

Ms. Johnson said that she knows the On-Demand vans have bike racks.

Mr. Blair stated that is a great service because a recreational rider may just want to do a one-way ride. He then asked if the City of New Albany is providing any funding for the pilot program?

Ms. Johnson stated that this project was part of an allocation through KIPDA and there was funding that became available through INDOT, so they had a vote as part of the KIPDA TPC Meeting and part of that was how to allocate those dollars. She said that they were allocated toward TARC to be able to use for a program just like this. She stated that in those discussions, they emphasized that because the vote was going for TARC, it should also include some services here in New Albany.

Mr. Blair stated that if this is popular, there is the possibility that we could continue it by subsidizing or making a contribution from the city to continue it on he would think. He asked if that is part of their plan or their funding thinking?

Mr. Stevens stated that he would say if it were him in charge, he would leave no stone unturned. He said certainly, all things are possible. He stated that it is a complex problem that took many, many years to create, and it will take some time to unravel and figure out what the path forward is for TARC. He said that he has only been with TARC a little over a year but this challenge that they are having to deal with now probably was in the making for 20+ years, so it has just eroded to the point where they can't ignore it anymore. He stated that they have to do something and they have a great leadership team and Louisville Metro and the Mayor's office is engaged in trying to figure out what our steps are. He said that they have relationship building at the state level in Kentucky and they have asked them to do a lot. He stated what the final plan looks like, he doesn't know, but they have just begun that journey but he would leave no stone unturned.

Mr. Blair stated that obviously we have a budget coming up fairly soon so that is just something on his mind.

Mr. Stevens stated that he will make a note of that. He said that he doesn't think they are quite there yet, but thanked Mr. Blair for offering that and he will make sure that they keep that onboard.

Mr. Blair stated that obviously they have worked with governments but part of the challenge with governments is that we plan so far ahead. He said that we budget mid-year for expenses 18 months out so that is just something to keep in mind.

Mrs. Griffith stated that the fee is \$5.00 and asked if that is per person or if there is a group of people, is that per stop?

Mr. Stevens stated that is a good question. He said that he thinks it is per person.

Mrs. Griffith said that it is \$2.00 if it is taking you to a stop and \$5.00 if it is taking you to an individual stop, right?

Mr. Stevens stated that it is \$5.00 for point to point anywhere inside the zone. He said that the \$2.00 is meant to get you to the fixed route network or bus stop. He stated that the \$5.00 is anywhere from one edge of the zone to the other, you don't have to be on the fixed route network. He said that they are trying to encourage people to use the fixed route network, and are hoping that they are new customers, so that way they will kind of experience what it is like if you want to get that feedback from them.

Mrs. Griffith asked if they are collecting data and doing surveys while they have the riders?

Mr. Stevens replied yes and stated that they have lots of data as far as like the trip information. He said that they do surveys also and they have gotten a good rating but he doesn't know what questions they are asking people. He added that they haven't had any negative feedback that he can report today.

Mrs. Griffith asked how many vehicles they have?

Mr. Stevens replied five. He stated that the study kind of identified what the demand was and what resources they thought you would need to meet that demand. He said that it is not the exact same zone that they identified; they tweaked it and expanded it a little bit. He stated that they wanted to make sure that they were honest with the contractor in helping deliver the services, so they could land on a unit price per trip that was reasonable and that they believed they could afford in their budget in the pilot. He said that they started out with five vehicles and it could grow, and hopefully if it does, they may need to amend their agreement with their contractor. He added that he thinks they are doing fine with five.

Mrs. Griffith thanked him for the information and thanked him for the presentation.

Mr. Dickey asked in comparison to the other pilot in Jeffersontown, how are we doing?

Mr. Stevens stated that you guys are doing great. He said that there is one reason that is not their fault and that is that they got a late start, so we don't have a full 30 days of data, but what he has now is that you are two weeks ahead of them and you're knocking it out of the ballpark. He stated that hopefully J-town catches up to you in a couple of weeks but they didn't start until April 15th.

Mr. Dickey stated that he is assuming that near the end of the trial, we will get some additional information back about how things have gone and progressed.

Mr. Stevens said absolutely. He stated that it will be a flurry of communication to try to figure out where they are and communicate what the next steps are, so he would hope that he would be in a position six months from now to give you a great report and what they would recommend to extend the pilot. He said personally, he thinks six months is too short of a pilot period to know what is happening. He stated that they had a lot of things happening at TARC such as a change in leadership in December, so some of these were put in place and what went to the board was adopted quickly. He said that if they could have done it over, he would have had a one-year pilot because you could probably learn a little better.

Mr. Dickey stated that they could have seen seasonal changes, etc.

Mr. Stevens said yes. He also said to onboard and get the thing started, you almost have to turn around and start winding it down if you think you are not going to continue, which

from a planning perspective, that's not fun. He stated that they are going to keep track of what's happening and communicate with you on a regular basis, so they can be ready to do what the next steps are and he is hopeful that it will continue for another six months.

Mr. Dickey stated that he will echo some of the comments about the importance of the service and the economics. He said that we certainly understand that. He stated that one of the things that he would be particularly interested in is seeing what the utilization is to some points like the industrial park or the social security office. He said personally, having the one route is important for our community, but if we are trying to get throughout the community, it makes it challenging for those who are off of that route and this really serves as an answer to that question. He also said that he thinks this goes a long way to trying to answer what the solution is when you only have one route running through your community. He stated that he does commend TARC for putting this in place and he was very enthusiastic about the concept and idea. He thinks it also being connected to TARC gives it a name that people know and will feel more comfortable with because they are going to assume that the standard is a quality standard. He added that they do want Mr. Stevens to come back after the trial is over and make sure we get an update of kind of where we are at.

Mr. Stevens said that he will most definitely be back.

Mr. FitzGerald stated that when you mention if the demand increases there are opportunities to amend the agreement, he asked if they have thought about changing times like for weekends? He said that he knows it ends at 9:00 p.m., correct? He asked if people want to come downtown, could there be an extension like the pilot going until 11:00 p.m. or something to that effect?

Mr. Stevens stated that is a good question. He said that they have only be in for 30 days so he doesn't know if there has been a request for that or if they are honoring requests like that now. He stated that they don't have a hard start and a hard stop, it's just early morning and late evening and he thinks they are trying to figure things out. He said that if they get a request for it, they will provide it. He added that part of what he wanted to do was be flexible enough to be able to learn from this experience and know what people want, but he doesn't know if they are getting requests for late evenings on the weekends. He said that is definitely important to know among other questions. He would hope that they would be flexible and respond to that.

Mr. Dickey said that would be nice even for special events because we have a very nice 4th of July celebration that is here at the riverfront and draws several thousand people. He stated that we also have Harvest Homecoming in October, which obviously is two weekends with the parade being first Saturday and the booth days following that Thursday through Sunday. His thought is that even if we could just amend the service and provide extra hours for some of those special events, he would see the need for the service at those times to help alleviate folks who may be enjoying themselves and need a ride home afterwards.

Mr. Stevens stated that he will get with Ms. Johnson and make sure that he gets answers to some of these questions like that. He said that he doesn't know but he doesn't think that they have a hard start and hard stop time. He would like to get back to them on that and thinks that is totally doable and not a big deal. He stated that he would have to ask if they have gotten any customer feedback that is requesting that and what they would do if they received that request and how they would respond. He said that he will do his due diligence and get back with Ms. Johnson on that one.

Mr. Dickey thanked Mr. Stevens for his presentation.

APPROVAL OF CF-1 FORMS:

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS:

BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC (NON-AGENDA ITEMS):

ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Adam T. Dickey, President

Vicki Glotzbach, City Clerk