

**XENIA CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 8, 2018
7:00 P.M.**

1. CALL TO ORDER: President Michael Engle called the March 8, 2018, Regular Session to order at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, City Administration Building.

2. INVOCATION: Pastor Andy Spencer, First Church of Christ.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Mays led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. ROLL CALL: Vice President Edgar Wallace, Councilman Thomas Scrivens, Councilman Dale Louderback, Councilman Wesley Smith, Councilman Levi Dean, Mayor Sarah Mays, and President Michael Engle were present.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Councilman Louderback, seconded by Councilman Smith, to approve the February 22, 2018, Special Session meeting minutes as written. No discussion followed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: Wallace, Scrivens, Louderback, Smith, Dean, Mays, and Engle

Nays: None motion carried.

Motion by Vice President Wallace, seconded by Councilman Dean, to approve the February 22, 2018, Regular Session meeting minutes as written. No discussion followed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: Wallace, Scrivens, Louderback, Smith, Dean, Mays, and Engle

Nays: None motion carried.

6. SPECIAL PRESENTATION(S): None.

7. AUDIENCE COMMENTS: President Engle explained the procedures for audience comments and invited anyone who wished to speak to come forward.

John Saraga, 279 N. King Street, Xenia, said he was speaking on behalf of a concerned group of citizens. He then read the following statement:

Xenia Streets and Curbs:

REASON: To speak to repairing streets and curbs in Xenia for the purpose of helping all property values and to be an attractive city. We are here to give some background, outline the problem, recommend a solution, and request the city's help. We are not here to point fingers and we will be civil with our goal to work to repair a very serious problem.

BACKGROUND: Included is a copy of the 2005 City Budget, it also has comparisons to 2004 budget items. Not counting street sweeping we, the City, allocated \$1.5 Million in 2004 and \$1.4 Million for expenditure to repair and maintain our streets and curbs in 2005. When passing an increase in income taxes it was promised that an additional \$500K - \$750K would be added to the repair of our roads. My understanding is that this year you approved \$500K to be spent on street repair. Our point is that our city should be spending at minimum \$1.5+ Million each year

specifically for the repair, replacement, maintenance of our streets and curbs. The city receives income tax and from the State and Federal government revenue from gas taxes and other fees, which is more than you allocated for this year's street repair. Every citizen who wants to sell their home in the future will benefit from the first impression for a potential buyer.

DISCUSSION: We have about 160 miles of streets and curbs that are in very deplorable condition. This is not something that can be fixed in the short term but it must be addressed and acted on starting next spring. Because funds have been provided for the purpose to maintain and repair roads, and because our taxes are high, we can do this project as a community **without NO TAX or FEE INCREASES.**

RECOMMENDATIONS: How to fix this large problem that is impacting the city, citizens, neighbors, business, and visitors negatively.

Borrow \$30 Million for the specific purpose to repair, replace and maintain ALL our streets and curbs. Pay the loan with the \$1.5 Million annually that is revenue generated from city income taxes, federal and state gas vehicle taxes and fees. Also if HB 415 passes that too will help. DO NOT FUND THIS project with asking for any new Taxes or increasing any Fees.

Create a plan to work in at least 20 miles of roads (including curbs and other relevant infrastructure with respects to the streets being worked on) each year until completed. Begin with the worst in need, take into consideration traffic rerouting and challenges to residents and business in our City. Very important do the work when the temperature is 75 degrees or higher so the material sets properly. Once a street is up to standards, create a maintenance plan to keep the fixed streets and curbs in good repair. Do not add any grant programs and /or increased road programs until the above project is completed or that the new is fully funded by some agency/person other than the City of Xenia.

Finally, because this project is multi-year, requires our city to go into debt and needs citizens buy in and is the right thing to do ... I urge you to place this on the November 2018 ballot, again not asking for more taxes but to seek citizen's approval. If approved start in the spring of 2019 and finish no later than 2029. We offer our help to campaign this and thank you for your time and consideration.

President Engle said Council intends to meet on March 15th at 5 p.m. for a Special Session to discuss streets. He thanked Mr. Saraga for coming to the meeting and speaking tonight. On behalf of his colleagues, they hear their plea—they all drive on the same streets. He noted nothing can be done immediately because they cannot pave during the winter months. Council always appreciates the public's participation, comments, and constructive suggestions. He discussed the possibility of establishing a "blue ribbon" panel of concerned citizens to discuss potential solutions in regard to this subject.

Robert Haller said he moved to 532 Marshall Drive in Xenia 33 years ago. During that time, he has seen the streets and curbs deteriorate. He wondered if the money could come from the labor part. It seems the city has grown over the years to include more directors and assistant directors. He asked the bureaucracy be reviewed to determine if the City could be operated with fewer employees. When the income tax rate was increased, they were told the revenue would be used to maintain the streets. Further, it seems they are always being forced to choose between safety (police and fire), and he wondered if the bureaucracy has grown so large that the revenue is not being used efficiently.

DeeDee Larson, 75 Omalee Drive, said she works, lives, and volunteers in this community and she knows a lot of people—many of whom are agitated with the condition of the streets and the

projects in the community. They are happy projects are being done to make Xenia grow and prosper, but they felt that priorities need to be adjusted so streets are being done instead of taking care of bike paths and islands in the middle of the road. She agreed 100 percent with Mr. Saraga—taxpayer dollars need to be spent on the streets first.

Kenneth Harbison, 1532 Kylemore Drive, said he was born in Xenia in 1942 and has lived here off and on throughout his life. He has lived in Laynewood for the last 40+ years, and his street has never been repaved. City workers have only applied the cold patch to the street. He pays his taxes, and the City needs to come up with the money to repair the roads. The money is found to purchase fire trucks, medic units, police cars, etc., and he realizes they need those things for protection, but he thinks the City is overspending. He did not think the City should ask citizens for \$30 million to repair the roads—the City should already have the money needed to fix the streets.

8. OLD BUSINESS:

A. President Engle presented RESOLUTION 2018-G ESTABLISHING STREET LIGHTING DISTRICT #2 WITHIN THE STERLING GREEN CROSSING SUBDIVISION AND DECLARING THE NECESSITY OF IMPROVING CITY STREETS AND PUBLIC WAYS WITHIN STREET LIGHTING DISTRICT #2 BY THE LIGHTING THEREOF FOR THE YEARS 2019-2022, which he originally introduced on February 22, 2018, and it was read for a second time.

Motion by President Engle, seconded by Councilman Smith, to adopt Resolution 2018-G as read. No discussion followed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: Wallace, Scrivens, Louderback, Smith, Dean, Mays, and Engle

Nays: None motion carried.

9. PUBLIC HEARING(S): None.

10. NEW BUSINESS:

A. **Introduction of Ordinance 2018-09 Establishing a 15-Minute Loading/Unloading Zone and Authorizing the Erection of Loading/Unloading Signs in front of the Xenia Pre-School at 425 Edison Boulevard.** City Manager Brent Merriman presented Ordinance 2018-09 for Council's consideration based on a recommendation from the Xenia Traffic Commission, which met and considered this matter on February 5th. A concern was raised within the Traffic Commission that options should be reviewed to look at providing a safe drop-off zone for parents walking their pre-school aged children to and from the parking lot that surrounds the Xenia Pre-School at 425 Edison Boulevard. Despite a prohibition of parking in front of the school, cars are currently being left unattended for an extended period of time during drop-off and pickup hours daily. Given the conditions associated with the intersection at Edison and Park Drive, this creates a concerning line-of-sight problem. The Commission wanted to provide a convenience for drop-off and pickup but did not want to exacerbate safety conditions by allowing extended parking. Therefore, Traffic Commission recommends the establishment of a 15-minute loading/unloading zone to prevent parents from parking in front of the school entrance for an extended period of time. The City Engineer and Police Division will determine the most

appropriate locations for the erection of the necessary signage that identifies the loading/unloading zone. He further noted that staff is concerned with the inefficiency of the current legislative requirement to bring these types of parking issues back through the extensive legislative process of an ordinance approval by City Council. He feels that these types of ordinance requirements are not a valuable use of Council's time in dealing with fairly minor administrative matters like designating parking and signs. It is likely that staff will recommend in the future that the Public Safety be given the authority to designate parking zones like this, with input from Traffic Commission. However, this type of change currently requires adoption of an ordinance and staff is recommending introduction of Ordinance 2018-09 to effectuate the drop-off zone designation.

President Engle entertained an introduction of Ordinance 2018-09.

Councilman Dean introduced ORDINANCE 2018-09 ESTABLISHING A 15-MINUTE LOADING/UNLOADING ZONE AND AUTHORIZING THE ERECTION OF LOADING/UNLOADING SIGNS IN FRONT OF THE XENIA PRE-SCHOOL AT 425 EDISON BOULEVARD, and it was read for the first time.

B. Introduction of Resolution 2018-H Amending Appendix 2 of the Employee Benefits Manual (Non-Union Wage Ranges) of the City of Xenia, Ohio. Mr. Merriman said on behalf of the Administrative Steering Committee, which includes the three appointed officials and the Clerk of Courts, it is recommended that Resolution 2018-H be introduced to amend the City's Non-Union Pay Grade Wage Schedule. The City annually evaluates and considers adjustments to the compensation plan; the last adjustment to pay ranges was in March 2017. Recently, the Administrative Steering Committee met to discuss wage adjustment options for non-union staff for 2018. As a core metric, they looked at the Consumer Price Index (CPI) from December 2016 to December 2017, which rose 2.1%. With this metric in mind, the Committee then specifically considered the City's financial position and comparison data from the comparable communities as listed in the agenda report as key factors before coming to a consensus to recommend an adjustment to pay ranges of 2%. Approving this resolution only adjusts the wage ranges; individual non-union pay adjustments will be made on a case-by-case merit basis. Administrative leadership recommends introduction of Resolution 2018-H.

Vice President Wallace introduced RESOLUTION 2018-H AMENDING APPENDIX 2 OF THE EMPLOYEE BENEFITS MANUAL (NON-UNION WAGE RANGES) OF THE CITY OF XENIA, OHIO, and it was read for the first time.

Vice President Wallace noted that recent union negotiations resulted in more than a 2% increase, and he asked the rationale for that. Mr. Duke said the union contracts for Fire, Dispatch, Police Sergeants, and Police Captains all have been 2.25% for each of the three years. They are still negotiating with Police Officers. Mr. Merriman added that during the first five to ten years of employment, union employees are eligible for annual step increases of designated percentages. Those union employees will typically get step increases as well as cost of living increases. With respect to non-union, there is no step increase and no guarantee of a merit increase. Non-union increases come down to whether or not their supervisors feel they deserve it, and if so, it has to be within the budgeted amount in that pay range as approved by City Council.

C. Administrative Motion Authorizing the City Manager to purchase a Combination Sewer Cleaner through the State of Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Cooperative Purchasing Program. Mr. Merriman said staff is recommending authorization to purchase a Combination Sewer Cleaner through the Ohio Department of Administrative Services Cooperative Purchasing Program, at a cost not-to-exceed \$373,404.41. The combination sewer cleaner, or vac truck, is a mission-critical multi-use piece of equipment that is used on a daily basis for preventative maintenance efforts to keep sewer lines clear of debris and flowing properly. Failure to maintain the proper functioning of sanitary sewers would present a substantial liability for the City as sanitary sewer overflows could place the City in violation of OEPA regulations and subject the City to penalty. Having a reliable vac truck is a critical need for City maintenance crews. Currently, the City has a model year 2010 vac truck that is showing its age with increased maintenance costs, and more concerning, decreasing reliability. If approved, staff intends to keep the current unit in service to serve as a back-up unit for the sanitary sewer system and also use it more regularly to step up maintenance activities in the storm sewer system. Staff recommends authorization to move forward with the purchase from the state bid list as indicated.

Vice President Wallace asked if the City had the ability to do in-house maintenance on this equipment. Mr. Merriman said staff can perform preventative maintenance, but the more advanced maintenance needs cannot be done in-house due to the complexities of the vac system. He further noted that staff looked into renting a vac truck in an overflow situation, and while a rental is possible, there is never a guarantee that one would actually be available.

Motion by Councilman Louderback, seconded by Councilman Scrivens, to authorize the City Manager to purchase a combination Sewer Cleaner through the State of Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Cooperative Purchasing Program from Jack Doheny Companies, Inc., at a cost not to exceed \$373,404.41. Brief discussion followed. President Engle noted that this is a costly piece of equipment, but sanitary sewer backups would result in significant expenses. Mr. Merriman agreed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: Wallace, Scrivens, Louderback, Smith, Dean, Mays, and Engle
Nays: None motion carried.

D. Administrative Motion Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Contract for Governmental Electric Aggregation. Mr. Merriman said staff is recommending that Council authorize him to execute a contract with either AEP Energy, First Energy, or Dynegy for electric aggregation services as part of the City's approved community electric aggregation program. As Council is aware, they have been pursuing options regarding a new service contract for electric generation services, and based on initial RFP results, there seems to be an opportunity to achieve a better aggregate rate based on the current price to compare. To position the City for the best possible rate and in conjunction with our consultant, Palmer Energy, it is necessary to request a price refresh on generation bids from the aforementioned three providers. Upon requesting the refresh and receiving quotes, the City will essentially have less than one day to commit to the refreshed price quote. Therefore, the exact contract rate cannot be presented to City Council this evening. Staff is requesting authority to commit to a contract on the basis that a rate savings must be present with terms and conditions approved by the Law Director. The City is not obligated to accept any of the refresh bids. If the refresh bids do not present a clear savings, staff would

reissue an RFP. The City's current generation service contract does not expire until May, so there is sufficient time to accommodate these contingency steps.

Motion by Vice President Wallace, seconded by Mayor Mays, to authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with AEP Energy, First Energy, or Dynegy for Governmental Electric Aggregation if there is a cost savings in the rates given on the refresh date, with the terms and conditions of the contract to be as approved by the Law Director. No discussion followed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: Wallace, Scrivens, Louderback, Smith, Dean, Mays, and Engle
Nays: None motion carried.

E. Administrative Motion Approving the Schedule of Bills in the amount of \$188,286.69. Finance Director Ryan Duke requested the payment of bills as presented.

Motion by Councilman Louderback, seconded by Councilman Smith, to approve payment of bills totaling \$188,286.69. No discussion followed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: Wallace, Scrivens, Louderback, Smith, Dean, Mays, and Engle
Nays: None motion carried.

F. Administration Motion to Reject Bids for the 2018 Sewer Pipelines Rehabilitation Project: Mr. Merriman said staff is recommending that City Council reject bids for the 2018 Sewer Pipelines Rehabilitation Project. Subsequent to opening bids for this project, it was brought to the attention of the City Engineering Division that there were discrepancies in the bidding documents that may have resulted in inequities in determining the "Lowest and Best" bid. In the bid documents, the City specifically reserves the right to reject any and all bids; consequently and in order to insure a fair bidding process, Engineering Staff believes that all bids received should be rejected. If Council rejects the bids this evening, staff will make necessary adjustments and rebid this project and return to City Council at a later date with a bid award recommendation. He distributed copies of email correspondence from the apparent low bidder who raised questions as to why the City was recommending the rejection of bids.

Motion by Councilman Louderback, seconded by Vice President Wallace, to reject all bids received on March 1, 2018, for the 2018 Sewer Pipelines Rehabilitation Project and authorize staff to re-bid the project. No discussion followed. The Roll on this was the following:

Ayes: Wallace, Scrivens, Louderback, Smith, Dean, Mays, and Engle
Nays: None motion carried.

Councilman Scrivens asked what happens now that the bids have been rejected. President Engle said the plan is for staff to correct the discrepancies and re-bid the project.

11. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:

A. Board of Zoning Appeals: Mayor Mays said BZA met on February 26th; she provided the following report:

- Variance to allow an existing sign installed without a permit to remain without complying with the minimum required 5' setback from the street right-of-way, filed by Conrad Klank on

behalf of Community Action Partnership for the property located at 469 Dayton Avenue, which was denied.

B. Board for Recreation, Arts, and Cultural Activities: President Engle said BRACA met on March 6th and discussed upcoming events including the Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 31st, at 11 a.m. (registration for free Easter basket prizes starts at 10 a.m.) at Shawnee Park as well as the conclusion of the Youth Basketball League regular season with tournament action starting shortly thereafter. He said the Tree Committee is planning an Arbor Day event at Shawnee School on Friday, April 27th, about the proper planting and the importance of trees. A tree planting will take place at the school at 10:45 a.m.

C. Traffic Commission: Councilman Dean said the XTC met on March 5th to discuss flashing traffic lights at the intersections of N. Detroit Street and Wilson Drive and Lower Bellbrook Road and Allison Avenue. Staff recommended only putting the lights on flashing during inclement weather, and the Commission concurred. They also discussed changing the speed limit from 35 to 25 mph on W. Main Street from Church Street westward due to the crossing of the Creekside Trail near McDonald's; however, a traffic study would be required and the funds have not been budgeted.

D. Planning and Zoning Commission: The March 1st meeting was cancelled.

12. APPOINTED OFFICIALS REPORTS AND COUNCIL COMMENTS:

A. City Manager, Finance Director, and Law Director:

Mr. Merriman shared the following updates:

- Greene CATS Stop in Xenia Towne Square: He has received several complaints regarding changes to the Greene CATS stop located in Xenia Towne Square. The City is not responsible for this. He provided the background on this situation: The City received a notice from Blue Rock, Inc., the building owner/lease holder of the former Fulmers building, that they wanted the Greene CATS bus stop removed from in front of their building and the bus stop activities to cease and desist. Upon review by the Law Director, it was confirmed that Blue Rock had the right to have the bus shelter removed from the property but not the right to determine how the drive in front of the building was to be used. Subsequently, Greene CATS determined that the pick-up location would remain in Towne Square but would be relocated to the edge of the parking lot. City Planning staff has been working with Greene CATS to determine an alternate location and assist with a grant application to pay for the relocation. The alternate location would be on the north side of the Towne Square along Church Street where a drop lane would be added with a new shelter within existing City right-of-way to ensure that no future disruption of the service would occur.
- President's Award for REACH Project: He was very pleased to be joined by several City staff members and former Mayor Marsha Bayless as invited guests at the YMCA Annual Awards Banquet and Benefit last week in Dayton at Sinclair's Ponitz Center. On behalf of the City, they were invited to attend to accept the YMCA President's Award for Leadership for the City's role in advancing the REACH Center Project. He noted Kettering Health Network was also recognized for their role in this important project.
- Construction on Progress Drive: Rehabilitation of Progress Drive will be commencing in the coming weeks, which will unfortunately be timed with commencement of the REACH Project's construction. The public should plan for daily lane closures on Progress Drive as

they work to improve this roadway. The City will issue advanced notices across all media platforms as work commences.

- Work Session on 03/22/18: A work session will be scheduled prior to the next regular session to discuss issues regarding downtown parking, use of public space for special events, and use of alcohol at public events.
- Pat Felton: This past week, several staff members were invited to attend a funeral service for former Mayor and Councilwoman Pat Felton. He shared that he has tremendous respect for Pat, who was a beloved member of this community. When he was hired for the City and was introduced to Pat, he didn't think she liked him very much because he wasn't from here and she may have felt that he didn't care about Xenia. As he got to know Pat and learned from her wisdom and compassion for this community, she learned that this was more than just a job for him and they developed a great relationship of mutual respect. When he became City Manager, he called on her often to learn the history of various subjects and seek her opinion on numerous ideas. Pat was full of spark, he had tremendous respect for her love of this community, he appreciated all her contributions, and she will be greatly missed.

Councilman Louderback said he was very disappointed in Blue Rock. Many senior citizens and disabled citizens use that bus stop to travel to grocery stores, etc. He noted that he is the City Council's representative to MVRPC, and those dollars are not easy to get. With the REACH project, there will be a lot of heavy equipment traversing that roadway, and he asked if the Progress Drive improvements could be delayed. Mr. Merriman said that concern has been discussed. The REACH center is scheduled to be complete by January 2019. Most of the construction traffic will occur during the summer months and a lot of that traffic will be redirected down Hospitality Drive to the construction entrance.

Councilman Louderback asked when the hotel is scheduled to open. Mr. Merriman said the completion date has been pushed back to June because they are having trouble finding skilled laborers, specifically construction workers to do the sheet rock.

Councilman Louderback said many people are upset with him for supporting the roundabout project at Church and Columbus. He asked for clarification/confirmation about the city's monies used for that project and if they could be used for other City paving projects. Mr. Merriman said the short answer is yes. He recognized the timing of this project is not desirable because it is being done when there are many other street needs in the community. It is important to note that this project began about five or six years ago with the initial request for funding because it is one of the City's most dangerous intersections. He understood residents' frustration, but this project will address a safety issue and providing a new enhancement to the community. Further, the opportunity to leverage the City's dollars 3 to 1 is a great return on our investment. Councilman Louderback noted that if the City turns down grant dollars, they will go to another community. Mr. Merriman agreed. Councilman Louderback reiterated this is the second most dangerous intersection in the City, and this project will greatly improve the safety and esthetics of that intersection.

Mr. Duke said at the last meeting, he discussed HB 49 and its impact with regard to income tax collections. To date, they received about 50 requests from businesses to file through the Business Gateway. He reminded Council that the City will be charged a fee for the state to process, and City staff has no way to audit those returns. He reminded residents to come into the City Administration Building to file their City Income Tax returns and added that staff is always

present to help citizens file their taxes. To avoid long lines closer to the due date, residents should stop in within the next few weeks.

Ms. Fisher did not have anything further to share.

B. Mayor and City Council:

Mayor Mays said she had a very busy few weeks. She then shared the following activities she attended:

- On Friday, February 23rd, she had the honor of serving alongside former Mayor John Saraga as judges for the science fair for Xenia High School's freshman class.
- Also on Friday, February 23rd, she hosted several area Mayors for lunch at Nick's, which was packed but delicious.
- On Saturday, February 24th, she attended the Xenia Area Chamber of Commerce's Annual Awards Dinner and was blessed to provide the opening prayer.
- On Sunday, February 25th, she attended Xenia Adult Recreation and Services Center Senior Day of Caring where she and her children had a good time eating pancakes.
- That afternoon, she attended the Eagle Scout luncheon where the following Xenia Eagle Scouts were recognized: Jacob Stickle, Mason Nash, and Christopher and Jonathan Karhoff.
- On Thursday, March 1st, she participated in "Read Across America" at Cox Elementary School, which was Dr. Seuss' birthday.
- On Sunday, March 3rd, she participated in the "Rolling of the Scrolls" at Vice President Wallace's church.
- On Wednesday, March 7th, she and other City staff volunteers participated in One Bistro's free community meal. She noted that One Bistro provides a free community meal every Wednesday evening and thanks to a fundraiser that City staff did in December, enough funds were raised to pay for three community meals.
- Today, she spoke at the Women in Business luncheon. They talked a lot about what it means to serve your community, which includes some sacrifice.
- Prior to this evening's meeting, she stopped by Key Bank for Business After Hours.

Mayor Mays also acknowledged the audience members who spoke at this evening's meeting. She always appreciates those who are solution oriented.

Councilman Louderback said it was great to see a full audience this evening. It's great for people to get involved. City Council has 25,000 bosses. He is not a tax and spender and would not support a tax levy for new streets; however, he would vote to put it on the ballot so taxpayers can decide. He is looking forward to Council's meeting next week. He realizes streets are the citizens' top priority.

Councilman Smith also extended his condolences to the family and friends of former Mayor/Councilwoman Pat Felton. He noted former Councilwoman Jeanne Mills and Pat were very close. He thanked Mr. Saraga for coming forward in a solution-oriented approach. It is easy to sit behind a monitor and vent frustration on social media, but that is not the solution. Meeting with people face to face is where to start. He noted the Mayor and Council do not make "big bucks"—they ran for office to serve the public because they love this community. He noted they all drive on the same streets as other Xenia citizens, and they recognize that they need some work. Winter has not been kind to the streets, and he assured everyone that Council will do

whatever they can to fix the streets without seeking a tax increase. He did not like to pay taxes either, but he wants a community that everyone can be proud of. He is looking forward to the REACH project, which will be a great boost for this community. As construction commences, he asked citizens to please be patient. The project will be well worth it in the long run.

Councilman Scrivens thanked all those who attended this evening's meeting, especially former Mayor John Saraga. He appreciates those who are concerned and take an active role in local government—they have to make it happen together. He noted their contact information is publicly listed on the website, and residents should not hesitate to contact them. Regarding the roundabout project, the state is paying 80% of that project—if the state is paying 80% of anything, he is going to take them up on their offer. He said Governor John Kasich funded his “Rainy Day Fund” by taking away monies from local municipalities like Xenia, and grants are a great way to get a little bit of that money back. He spent some time with the City's Water Treatment staff. He reported that Xenia's water quality is excellent and one of the water towers was built in 1887, which is the second oldest in service in the United States and is something to be proud of. There's a lot good things going on in this City, and the City's Public Relations Coordinator has a lot to share. He also learned a lot when he went on a tour of Xenia with the City's Development Director recently, specifically the Industrial Park. The City has a great mix of businesses from low tech to high tech industries. He challenged every citizen to do what he has done ... listen and learn. All of their quality of life is important. He asked Council's permission to participate in the Xenia Professional Firefighters' event on September 28th at WPAFB to showcase what they do when responding to emergencies and disasters. Finally, he looks forward to representing City Council on the Wellhead Protection Committee and the Greene County Career Center's Academic Advisory Board.

Councilman Dean also extended his appreciation to Mr. Saraga for attending the meeting this evening. As others have stated, Council is well aware of the condition of the streets. He is looking forward to Council's work session next week. He stated he ran against tax increases in the November election, and his position has not changed.

Vice President Wallace thanked Mayor Mays for participating in the “Rolling of the Scroll” and for sharing her beautiful voice in song. He noted former Mayor Marsha Bayless was also present at the event. He appreciated the audience participation this evening. He asked Mr. Merriman to remind him when the groundbreaking for the REACH project will be held. Mr. Merriman said it will be held on Wednesday, March 14th, and he will forward those details to all of Council. Vice President Wallace said he received a copy of a letter from a resident stating she has been driving through the Columbus Avenue and Church Street intersection for 42 years without incident. He has also been driving through that intersection for many, many years, multiple times per day, and it is still confusing. He cannot imagine how a driver who is unfamiliar with that area would know what to do there. He knows City staff is filling the potholes with a temporary filling, but it doesn't last long. They put it down in the morning, and it may be gone by the afternoon. He is looking forward to more permanent fixes.

President Engle asked his colleagues about the idea of creating a “Blue Ribbon Panel.” Several members of Council indicated their support of the idea.

