

Dublin City Council
Public Services Committee
Wednesday, April 13, 2022 – 5:00 p.m.
5555 Perimeter Drive
Council Chamber

Meeting Minutes

Ms. Kramb called the April 13, 2022 Public Services Committee meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Vice Mayor De Rosa, Ms. Kramb (Chair), Mr. Reiner.

Staff present: Mr. Ranc, Ms. LeRoy, Mr. Earman, Ms. Gischel, Ms. Witchey, Sgt. Stoll.

Also present: David Babner and Shannon Kurek, M3S.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Kramb moved to approve the minutes of the March 22, 2022 Public Services Committee meeting.

Vice Mayor De Rosa seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion: Ms. Kramb, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes.

Discussion Items:

Tier 3 Event Review – Emerald City Half Marathon

Ms. LeRoy explained Tier 3 events. She stated that in 2019 Council voted to require any Tier 3 event to come before the Public Services Committee for recommendation to City Council. A Tier 3 event is any event requiring a major road closure. The Memorial Tournament is Tier 3.

Ms. LeRoy provided a summary of the Emerald City Quarter and Half Marathon. This event was first run in 2008 in the northwest corner of Dublin. In 2020, the organizer asked to move the event to Downtown Dublin, but the event was canceled due to the pandemic. In 2021, the event was held and the route started and ended in Historic Dublin. It was a widespread route that went out to Metro Park. It was followed with an after party at Bridge Park. Ms. LeRoy stated that the event was held on a Sunday morning, which caused trouble for churchgoers. It required more police officers than Dublin could staff internally, so Union County and Franklin County deputies were used. It is difficult to fill the need for special duty police officer needs. The event has been moved to a Saturday (August 20). Staff and the organizer have worked through several routes. Utilizing both Franklin County and Dublin police officers, staff believes a maximum of 10 special duty officers can be provided. Participants will be running the

new pedestrian bridge. Staff and event organizers are considering building a ramp that would need to be approved by local standards. Volunteers will be placed onsite to alert participants to the ramp and different terrain. Staff recommends approval of the event with the proposed route.

Mr. Babner stated that he is honored to represent the first event to be considered by the Public Services Committee. He introduced himself and his company, M3S Sports. He stated that they produce events, not races. They put on 15 running/walking events in Central Ohio including the Capital City Half Marathon which is having their 19th edition this year. Other events in Dublin include partnerships with the Memorial Tournament, the Dublin Irish Festival and the Flying Feather.

Mr. Babner provided details on the Emerald City event noting that it was founded in 2010 as a major running/walking event in Dublin. It celebrates a healthy active lifestyle. The event has averaged between 4,000 and 4,500 participants. The medical team associated with it is Ohio Health. In 2018, Crawford Hoying asked him to attend a meeting and asked him to bring the Emerald City Quarter and Half Marathon to Downtown Dublin as part of their effort to increase visitor spending as well as highlight Historic Dublin and Bridge Park. In 2021, over 500 residents participated alongside participants from all over Ohio. For a race immediately following the Covid pandemic, they had 3,000 participants. A big charity component is with One Dublin. A post-race party in Bridge Park is planned and they hope that with the partnership with Crawford Hoying they will be able to expand throughout Bridge Park. Mr. Babner stated that the collective vision with their partners is to create an event where people will come for the event and stay for the weekend. M3S Sports pays for the police presence, City services, etc. They have the support of Ohio Health, Visit Dublin, Historic Dublin Business Association, Crawford Hoying, and many more. Most Emerald City Quarter and Half Marathon participants also come for the Capital City event. The planning process began in January to modify the event to address some issues with a Sunday event and police presence. They want to maximize resident participation and visitor spending while minimizing resident impact. There will be a large communication effort. They are attempting to limit the number of police officers needed to 10 but would also like to build a consistent course on a consistent date to market the event more widely. They have the framework, history and expertise for holding safe race events. This event could continue to grow to near 10,000 participants.

Ms. Krumb stated that as a past event participant, she recognizes that they have doubled the difficulty with this route; it is also a more scenic route.

Mr. Reiner stated that it is obvious that much work has been put into this route. Ms. LeRoy stated that the biggest concern of the Police Division was having sufficient officers to support the event. Everyone involved wanted to plan a race that the City and M3S could safely execute. Mr. Reiner asked about street closures. Ms. LeRoy responded

that they tried to ensure neighborhoods were avoided. Mr. Reiner expressed appreciation for the encouragement of this event to get out and exercise.

Vice Mayor De Rosa asked about the difference in the need for police officer support versus volunteer support. Sgt. Stoll responded that they place police officers at intersections with high volume as they have been trained in managing that. Ms. Kramb stated that volunteers help on paths. Vice Mayor De Rosa asked if the race organizers are experiencing police shortages in other races. Mr. Babner responded that he has never developed a race using a maximum number of police officers. The Fore Miler uses 18 officers. They use 80 police officers from multiple jurisdictions for the Capital City Half Marathon.

Mr. Reiner confirmed that this event is held rain or shine. Mr. Babner responded affirmatively. Mr. Reiner stated that these events typically involve a large number of volunteers, and he presumes that will also be the case with Emerald City Quarter and Half Marathon. Mr. Babner stated that following the pandemic, in 2021 they had fewer volunteers and course managers than usual, but the number of volunteer has returned to normal levels. They offer free race entries and swag for volunteers. The race coordinator has paid staff. Mr. Reiner stated that these events are assembled/disassembled very quickly. Mr. Babner stated that he has been doing this for 20 years. They have significant corporate support behind them and offer positive economic impact. Dan Sullivan, famed golf tournament organizer, has served as a mentor.

Ms. Kramb asked about the potential conflict with the Bridge Park farmers' market held on Saturdays. Ms. LeRoy stated that Crawford Hoying is a partner in this event and they will be working out the logistics with the farmers' market vendors. Ms. Kramb asked if the event after party would be held on North High Street or in the Plaza. Will North High Street remain closed for the event? Ms. LeRoy responded that the northbound lanes will remain open. Traffic will be facilitated within the area during the event utilizing alleys.

Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that she thinks the event is a great idea and thanked the Police Division for figuring out how to safely hold the event.

Ms. Kramb stated that she thinks the proposed route is beautiful.

Ms. Kramb moved to recommend to Council approval of the Emerald City Quarter and Half Marathon with the proposed route. Vice Mayor De Rosa seconded.

Vote on the motion: Ms. Kramb, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes.

City of Dublin Holiday Markets

Ms. LeRoy shared an update on holiday markets. This topic was presented to Council previously, who referred it to the Public Services Committee. She thanked Vice Mayor De Rosa for introducing the idea. She shared that staff is considering a feasibility study that would include the following: technical feasibility (location and hardscape); financial feasibility (budget and revenue); market feasibility (competing holiday events); and operational feasibility (staff and vendor availability).

Ms. LeRoy reviewed the pros and cons of having internal staff conduct the study versus an external firm. Some pros for the internal staff would be that they would have a full understanding of current SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis and there would be no additional cost. Cons for a study conducted by internal staff would be staff availability and their limited experience with specific holiday events. The advantage of hiring an external firm would be using a firm with specialized experience, and obtaining a third party opinion. Cons of utilizing an external firm would be cost and the limited number of firms available. Staff has been unable to find a firm who conducts this type of feasibility study.

Ms. LeRoy provided an overview of a potential fact-finding trip. The purpose would be to meet with organizers, assess potential costs and logistics needs, and to experience first-hand the events. Attendees could see different styles of events and meet possible vendors/entertainers. A full report of what was learned would be created and shared with the Committee. Ms. LeRoy shared the details of a proposed European trip. The trip would be for 6 nights, 7 days, from December 5, 2022 through December 11, 2022. There would be seven attendees (3 Council members and 4 staff). Cities to visit would include: Berlin, Dresden, and Nuremberg. They could also add on Prague, Strasbourg or Munich. The cost of such a trip would range from \$20,000 to \$25,000. That number can change significantly. Hotels book up fairly early and reservations should be booked as soon as possible.

Ms. LeRoy outlined a potential U.S. trip. She provided two options. The first option would be a one-night trip to Carmel, Indiana utilizing a City van. 12 people could attend for an estimated cost of \$2,800. The second option would be to Carmel, Indiana and Chicago, Illinois. This would add an extra night and with the same parameters would cost approximately \$6,000.

Ms. LeRoy requested the Committee's consideration of the following options. Staff could start planning a trip now and work on the feasibility study at the same time, or the trip could occur after the feasibility study.

Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that she thinks a trip is a good idea. It is important to see the markets before assessing the potential costs. Holiday markets follow a common pattern but size and scope will have a lot of impact and variability. Many holiday markets run through Advent and Christmas (40 days). Vice Mayor De Rosa shared that she has been to approximately 15 holiday markets in Berlin. The trip should occur so that attendees are there from a Thursday through Sunday because the markets are

active at the end of the week. We could identify a model and then begin to talk to vendors. Some commercial vendors will have booths at each market. She believes the holiday markets must be experienced before the decision is made whether one would be feasible in Dublin, Ohio. Vice Mayor De Rosa offered the suggestion of flying into Munich and out of Berlin; travel by train is a good option. Mr. Reiner stated he did this with the City of Columbus in downtown Columbus. The biggest problem will be getting vendors that are interesting. Europe has such excellent rail and to use that might be less expensive than renting a van. He stated that a holiday market would require a lot of twinkle lights. Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that she thinks there are some standard vendors with whom orders could be placed to obtain the products. This will be more about creating the essence of the experience. Ms. LeRoy stated that staff talked to a lady from Schmidt's because they run the Oktoberfest event. She was excited to hear about this possibility.

Ms. Kramb suggested a feasibility study be done in-house first. She stated that it may be difficult to find a specialist in this lane. The City has the benefit of internal staff's knowledge of how residents participate in events that Dublin offers. Familiarity with the people who attend events is probably as good, if not better, than a consultant's input would be. She suggested a feasibility study to see how many weekends, hours, etc. could be supported. It may not be advisable for the City invest \$30,000 considering an event that can be held for only two weekends. She would prefer not to make permanent, high investments initially. Dublin has had great success with events that have grown larger and larger and better and better. Vice Mayor De Rosa does not believe a feasibility study can be done before seeing the holiday markets. \$20,000 is not too high a cost to gain that experience. Ms. Kramb stated that she is not supportive of putting large amounts of money and research into something before we know whether or not the project is feasible. Ms. LeRoy stated that staff is still going to spend time researching the travel, which could be more of a hybrid effort. Ms. Kramb stated that going to Europe is not a wise investment. Vice Mayor De Rosa responded that without seeing the markets beforehand, we are wasting Staff's time. Mr. Reiner stated that the trip is probably a good idea. It is easier to take other people's ideas and reproduce them. Much information can be gathered from actually seeing it. The sequence of retail and kind of vendors needed are things that need to be determined. It may be possible to get some information from Frankenmuth. He does not believe a holiday market would generate a lot of revenue but would generate a lot of interest. Mr. Ranc stated that since there is not a rush for implementation, feasibility research could be done in house and staff could start to game out logistics over the next months. Having a conversation about a potential trip should probably be a full Council discussion. Staff would suggest reporting on this item at the April 25 Council meeting before continuing discussion.

Ms. Kramb asked about contacting the person from the German holiday markets to see how much they would charge for their implementation plan/details.

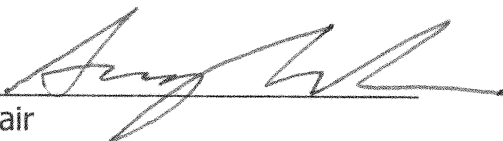
Mr. Reiner stated that he thinks this is an opportunity to acquire some great ideas and bring them back to Dublin. Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that she thinks it is City Council's responsibility to look beyond central Ohio. To go travel and see. She stated that more items could be added to the trip like a performing arts center. As Council, we may need to spend some money to go explore some things. She stated that it seems like such a prudent thing to do. We are not going to be able to do extraordinary things if we don't go see those things. She would advocate strongly to see this as an investment. It is unfair to us and staff if we don't do those types of things. Mr. Reiner stated that he doesn't disagree. It wise to get out of their environment. It is not a bad idea to put a budget on this. He believes that knowledge gained travel is better than that from a university. Vice Mayor De Rosa added architecture to the items they could experience. Mr. Reiner provided an example of inventive planning and architecture different from Dublin that he found in the southern United States.

Ms. Krumb stated that the travel needs to be a conversation with all of Council.

Mr. Ranc stated staff could take the lead on feasibility in house.

Mr. Reiner reiterated the possibility of looking at performing arts centers, parks, architecture, etc. to bring information back for more thorough consideration. Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that Council has the budget for travel and education, but we do not spend it.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 6:24 p.m.


Chair


Deputy Clerk of Council