

**CITY OF MASON  
COUNCIL WORKSESSION  
November 17, 2009**

Mayor Grossmann called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**ATTENDANCE**

The following members of Council were present: Michael Gilb, Christine Shimrock, Don Prince, Tony Bradburn and Tom Grossmann. David Nichols was absent.

**ADMISSIONS TAX**

Mayor Grossmann noted the attendance of Greg Shied from Kings Island. He stated he was invited to attend the worksession because there was a possibility he would be out of town for the next regular council meeting. Vice Mayor Prince stated he and Councilmember Gilb met with Greg Shied this week and discussed the proposed admissions tax and parking tax. Greg Shied stated he was surprised the topic of an admissions tax surfaced as he was told in August that it was not moving. He noted the only reason he was aware the topic was being discussed earlier in the year was because UC contacted him. Mayor Grossmann clarified that he would be abstaining from this discussion and voting on this topic as it is a conflict of interest with the firm in which he is employed.

Greg Shied stated the parking tax was a complete surprise, as it has never been mentioned before. He reported on the ways in which Kings Island (KI) has been a good business partner with the City and community. He mentioned the contributions given to the Festivals of Mason, assistance with ice being donated to residents in a time of need, allowing police dog training and fire training to occur on KI property and support of the Chamber of Commerce. He reported KI paid \$110,000 in wages to Mason police when they were off duty. He stated in his 3.5 years at this location, there have been very few times when KI has needed extra help from Mason. He said since 1997 KI has paid approximately 7 million dollars in property taxes. He added in 2006 KI paid 3.7 million dollars to local businesses. Mayor Grossmann asked him what the revenues for KI were for 2009. Greg Sheid replied it was a good year. He stated Cedar Fair has struggled as a company with a drop in revenues. He said they have experienced some layoffs in full time personnel. Greg explained his business breaks into three categories: Group sales, season pass sales and daily ticket sales. He said in 2007 they raised the ticket price by \$5 and saw a large decrease in attendance. He said they became aware this area of the state responds to those price increases differently than the populace in Sandusky. He stated this tax will influence his group sales and his season pass sales. He said it probably won't affect the daily ticket sales. He shared an email from a customer that shares his view of this being a unfavorable tax. Greg stated not only will KI be affected but the hotels and restaurants will also feel the impact. Mayor Grossmann asked Greg if the revenues from the park have increased since he arrived in 2007. Greg replied, "yes".

Mayor Grossmann asked if attendance has increased for 2008 and 2009. Greg replied, "yes". He also stated to his knowledge, only three parks in the country were up in attendance in 2009, KI being one of them. Mayor Grossmann reported the City would like to see a full interchange at Western Row Road, the reconfiguration on the intersection at Columbia Road and KI Drive become a boulevard. He asked Greg if these would help his business. Greg replied he didn't think the interchange or the reconfiguration would increase his business. He said he doesn't think the boulevard would increase it either but he would like to see it. He said he has safety concerns about the current traffic flow on KI Drive. Councilmember Shimrock said she has also met with Greg Shied to discuss this matter. Councilmember Gilb asked him if he has an example of how an admissions tax has adversely affected attendance. He asked him to provide attendance records for Cedar Fair in 1971 and 1972 when their admissions tax was implemented. Greg did not have those numbers but agreed to supply them.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Councilmember Bradburn moved to adjourn into executive session for the purpose of discussing land acquisition. Councilmember Gilb seconded the motion. VOTE: ALL YEAS

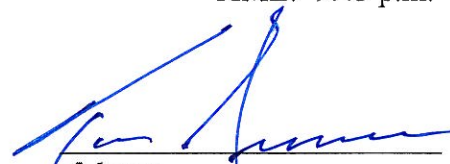
A motion to reconvene into regular session was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Councilmember Gilb. VOTE: ALL YEAS

**ADJOURN**

Councilmember Bradburn moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilmember Gilb. VOTE: ALL YEAS

TIME: 9:43 p.m.

  
Clerk of Council

  
Mayor