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HEALTH AND RECREATION COMMITTEE September 10, 2020

The Health and Recreation Committee of Wheeling City Council met on the above date at 4:00 a.m. in City Council Chambers. Committee members present: Chair Ketchum, Vice Chair Thalman, and Member Seidler. Others present: Mayor Elliott, Parks and Recreation Director Jesse Mestrovic, and City Clerk Brenda J. Delbert.

The following matters were discussed:

Discussion on Racism as a Public Health Crisis

Ms. Ketchum introduced Ron Scott and Lori Jones with YWCA. Mr. Scott and Ms. Jones described why they are asking for a change in approach by racism to be declared as a public health crisis. Ms. Jones presents letter to committee (attached). Ms. Ketchum, seconded by Mr. Thalman to declare racism as a public health crisis. All in Favor. Motion carried.

Discussion on Homelessness

Mr. Seidler pleads that all organizations come together to address homelessness. When organizations work fragmented there is no holistic plan or solutions. Mr. Seidler suggests the city should implement a compassionate work program for citizens with nonviolent criminal history. He is proposing the Municipal Civil Service Exam would not need apply, and not necessary for all positions. Ms. Ketchum asks for a new commission to be created. Entitled Vulnerable Communities Commission. Mayor Elliott suggests the city hire a community liaison, possibly under the Human Rights Commission. The city is not an expert in the problem but can help create collaboration amongst organizations. Mayor Elliott also stated he is meeting with legislatures to encourage the rebirth of Mental Health Court.

Discussion on Nelson Jordan Center

The Nelson Jordan Center is the only city owned recreation center, however the lack of air conditioner, poor lighting, lack of cameras for security, could all lead to unsafe space. Ms. Ketchum introduces Rod Lee facility coordinator. Mr. Lee gives brief background of the center. He testifies the center is very active in the community for at risk youth. He says money is needed or programing, beautification, and repair of access road. Jesse Mestrovic confirms the center is funded through CDBG at about \$33,000 annually. Ms. Ketchum asks for a feasibility study on keeping facility open in current location or possibility relocation. Ms. Ketchum asks for the return of the Recreation Commission to help guide the process and gather public input before any decisions would be made.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Ms. Ketchum, seconded by Mr. Thalman, moved to adjourn. Time: 4:44 p.m.