

**City Council Meeting  
City of Richmond Heights  
January 10, 2023**

President of Council, Bobby Jordan called the meeting to order at 8:15 p.m.

**PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

**Roll Call: Alexander, Bell, Jordan, Lentine, Lewis, Nelson, Ursu**

**CONSENT AGENDA**

All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted after reading of the titles of each by two motions -- one motion requires five affirmative votes to suspend the Council's rules requiring three separate readings of legislation and the second motion requires four votes for passage of all items listed on the Consent Agenda.

There will be no separate discussion of these items prior to their adoption. If any Councilperson desires discussion, the particular item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately by Council with full discussion and individual action thereon.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

1. Minutes of the City Council Meeting from December 20, 2022.

Motion made by Jordan and seconded by Lewis to pass the Consent Agenda items; passed 7-0.

**REPORTS:**

**Mayor Kim Thomas:**

- Happy New Year! Been a busy week. Had a meeting with community partners and the Tri-C East Campus President. Identified programs to explore.
- Met with Dr. Willis at RH School. Looking at ways to strengthen partnership with school. Ways to partner, good way to meet residents. Rhonda will invite new residents. Putting in e-newsletter as well.
- Will kick off apprenticeship program with Ryan Tiedman in the Service Dept.
- NOPEC—stick with them for electric and gas aggregation. Opportunity to receive \$100K in grant funding. Looking at ways to switch to NOPEC in June.
- MLK Event filling up fast for Monday Jan 16<sup>th</sup> from 11am-2pm
- Next Tuesday will not be here—will be in DC at the Mayor & Mgrs. Conference there.
- Had a meeting with BIGGBY Coffee to bring it to RH. Looked to get Starbucks here too. We can have a BIGGBY and a Starbucks as well. Looking at available locations such as Richmond/Chardon location on the corner (0.49 acre).
- Lentine asked if the entertainment facility across from RH Hospital up and running yet? No, not yet. Mayor said it looks pretty good though. Hopefully before the spring. Urankar received construction docs recently and roofer is granted a permit. Mayor thanked Ryan and Service Dept.

**Fire Chief, Marc Neumann:**

- Thanked Clerk of Council Betsy Traben for her many years of service.
- Firefighters were very busy this past year with 2,558 calls in 2022, avg 7 calls/shift, EMS calls 25%
- Fire service had 648 calls last year, with 10 structure fires in the city.
- Winter storm on Dec 24-25<sup>th</sup> kept the firefighters busy with 15 EMS calls, 7 alarms, 7 public assists, one downed power line and 2 house fires.
- Warming center at Lodge/Community Center was opened on Dec 24<sup>th</sup>
- First responders kept residents safe and public safety exemplary
- Next 3 weeks we are having regional fire safety and training hosted by Univ Hts with 2 large scale exercises held at Wiley Middle School. We have 5 new firefighters in less than one year.
- In 2023, will be having the Heart saver CPR training for residents. Courses held at RH Fire Dept and are

free to residents.

- Lentine discussed a car fire at 444 Park apts in the parking lot. Malfunction in the car itself. Amazed that a car can just ignite once parked. How long can the cars stay there in parking lot, and all burnt up? Very unsightly. Chief said it was a mechanical malfunction—electrical issues. Wrecking company can move that vehicle to a location. Chief Wetzel said will work with mgmt. to take care of vehicle there.

#### **Police Chief, Tom Wetzel:**

- Thanked Betsy Trabren, Clerk of Council for her years of service.
- Thanked Ryan Tiedman for plowing in the snowstorms.
- Sunday, Feb 26<sup>th</sup> 11:30- 1:30pm---United Skates Rental with Police dept
- Special Needs skating with first responder—Feb 15<sup>th</sup> 6pm- 8:30pm at United Skates
- Hosted Officer Wellness Think Tank—48 attendees in northeast Ohio and 6 police chiefs there. Shout out to Univ Hospitals and supported with speakers and snacks.
- Picked the 2 winners for surveillance cameras—Culmans and the Hustons, and thanked Dunn Hardware for the donation of the cameras.

#### **Building Commissioner, Jim Urankar:**

- Review the type A daycare on Feb 8<sup>th</sup>
- Belle Oaks and Meier's to review on Jan 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am
- City Force working with it; slow process but coming along fine.
- Sent out additional adjudication order to 444 park apts. —went out last Thursday.
- Switzer coming in and working on high tech boiler. Big relief to get this extra help.
- Lentine—concerns at 444 Park and Loganberry. Mayor offered to have a ward meeting. Holding off until we talk to City Prosecutor, Mike Cicero. Want to have something to tell my ward residents. Want to know the process and how this is all working. Hunt said not appropriate subject for executive session unless there is litigation as the apartment concerns are public record. Mayor said Lentine can also just call Cicero and does not have to wait for an executive session or meeting. Privy to info—give him a call. Do not let this prevent you from having a ward meeting. Mayor said she can attend meeting with Lentine as well.
- Bell suggested that she and Lentine have their ward meetings together, as they talked about that. Mayor said the sooner the better.
- Urankar asked if city can do a session on “How to put their money in an escrow” Hunt said they can talk about that.

#### **Finance Director, Annette Harmon:**

- City Force—Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> went live, great experience and reporting process going well. Able to reconcile City Force with SSI. Good financial reporting and will reconcile on a weekly basis. Kudos to Building Staff on working hard on this and has saved us money. 2023 will be a good year.
- Urankar said that Carnell Switzer (Building Dept) is working on this and studying up on the City Force. All in Building Dept working on learning this.
- Closing the year of December books. Taking a little longer than a normal close and will have info on that at next Finance meeting. Book and bank balances \$16,521,780.11.
- Going live with new software from Collins Equipment on the fuel pumps and new software using to produce reports on analysis. Computer was deleting the fuel stats due to storage, so this new program will be able to store and keep track of the fuel usage in real time.

#### **Economic Development Director, Brian Gleisser:**

- Identified 35 poles for commercial district banner program on Wilson mills, Richmond, highland, Chardon ---start designing banners and reach out to businesses for sponsorships. Banner design phase to start soon.
- 2023- demolition of city owned house on Richmond. Land bank to set demolition schedule.

### **City Engineers, Lee & Chris Courtney:**

- Notified by county public works—sewer repairs on Wilson Mills near Highland Hts line. Being done by outside dept,
- Fiber optics—Richmond Run has another month to go. Foxwynde has no timetable yet
- Road projects----(Chris Courtney)— Pliodzinkas property and heard back from water dept. Terrace Construction to use in that area. Copied Ryan Tiedman on the emails for that. Yet to be determined on whose water it is.
- Met with Tiedman on Harris regarding flooding issues. Backyards draining in the roads and flooding properties across the street. Feasibility study working on by Harms Road.
- Programing road work on Harris due to complaints on road conditions.
- Recommending 50/50 app to county for Harris Road, for 2023 road program work
- 2023 road program to discuss at future meeting
- Chardon Road, submitted to ODOT and 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 submittals, due in Feb
- There will be 2 projects to be taken up at the next Council meeting: Highland Road and Wilson Mills Road projects.
- Scope doc submitted to state---- in Feb, have 30 days to review and then we prepare the next 2 steps, layer in info before final submittal. Mayor—spoke with State about site plan. Scope first and then site plan? Chris said there is nothing called a site plan that is submitted. Chris said they are working on the final set of plans, which takes months to develop. Detailed schedule is on the scope document. Nelson asked Chris if the architect drawings are considered site plans? Chris said they are called improvement plans.
- Chardon will be completed in 2024 and have 12-week period starting June 1, 2023, awarded in October 2023 and will start in early 2024.
- Alexander commented on the flooding on Catlin and still having problems after that. Lee Courtney said he is aware of that. Alexander said it is all South Euclid water and asked if there is anything we can do in future to alleviate that? Lee said it is an ongoing process.
- 2023 Road program process started much earlier this year, at request of admin.
- 2022 road program still not completed yet. Jordan said hope to do 2022 and 2023 in 2023. Chris said yes. Wrap up 2022 before 2023 starts.
- School bridge---extension plans submitted for review, temp construction, need city to provide approval and finalize the right of way, finalize agreement with schools and get all in agreement. Will discuss potential bidding of projects then. School needs to donate right of way and easements.
- 100 ft of natural stream restoration—curriculum in science classes on this for the schools. Chris Courtney is working on this with the schools.

### **Service Director, Ryan Tiedman:**

- Shoutout to all the guys plowing nonstop and round the clock. Big thank you to the mechanic as well. Many worked on Christmas morning.
- 3 updated quotes for flooring and lighting at the Lodge, in the small hall.
- Getting 3 quotes on insulation and generator at City Hall.
- Clean up of leaves and brush bi-weekly.
- Trimming of overgrown trees in the city.
- Thank you to Rhonda Lowe and will be interviewing for new mechanic tomorrow.
- 5 signs to put up in the city soon.
- Meeting with designer this Friday.
- Jordan asked about the pick-up of live Xmas trees. Can we announce this? Mayor said it was put it in the e-newsletter.

### **Human Resources Director, Rhonda Lowe:**

- HR is very busy right now and partnering with depts right now to make sure fully staffed. Interviews with Service, Finance/Purchasing Agent, Police to fill spots and Rec Dept to make sure fully staffed.

- Successful benefits open enrollment and spent a lot of time working on that.
- Accepting inquiries and applications for boards and commissions and put in the e-newsletter.

**Recreation Director, Cameron Campbell:**

- Youth basketball games started on Saturday, January 7<sup>th</sup> with 14 teams and will run until Feb 11<sup>th</sup>, Saturdays 9am-12noon at high school

**AUDIENCE:**

Bill Crest, 4920 Lindsay Lane: frustration with electrical power. Had no power for 12 hours on Christmas and have had chronic problems over the years. Working with CEI- 6 power outages on the street, many hours, and it is very frustrating. CEI said the problems are compromised power lines on the street. Looking at getting a generator now. It was a very cold Christmas. CEI said you need to have 3 failures in a year to get on their list of improvements, and we have had 2. Service is not reliable. First Energy is not going to do anything, asking if city can get involved on this. Not just Lindsay Lane as other streets nearby are involved with these problems. Mayor said she will follow up with Kevin Smalley at CEI on this and look into this.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**ORDINANCE NO.: 143-2022, INTRODUCED BY NELSON; THIRD READING**

AN ORDINANCE ENACTING NEW CHAPTER 1170 OF THE ZONING CODE TITLED "CHILD DAY CARE HOMES" AND AMENDING SECTION 1135.02, "PERMITTED USES" AND SECTION 1169.08, "STANDARDS FOR SPECIFIC CONDITIONAL USES" TO REFERENCE NEW CHAPTER 1170.

**HOLD (meeting Feb 8<sup>th</sup> PC on this)**

**ORDINANCE NO.: 154-2022, INTRODUCED BY NELSON & MAYOR THOMAS; THIRD READING**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 137, "DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE", OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES TO ADOPT NEW SECTION 137.19, "COMPETITIVE BIDDING; EXCEPTIONS".

**HOLD**

**RESOLUTION NO.: 157-2022, INTRODUCED BY JORDAN; SECOND READING**

A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS WITH RESPECT TO ITS GRANT OF A USE VARIANCE APPLICATION AT 25618 HIGHLAND ROAD.

- MOTION MADE BY BELL AND SECONDED BY NELSON TO SUSPEND THE RULES OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCE AS PROVIDED IN SEC. 121.22 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCE. MOTION PASSED 5-2. (NAY- ALEXANDER, LENTINE)
- MOTION WAS MADE BY BELL AND SECONDED BY LEWIS TO PASS RESOLUTION NO. 157-2022. MOTION PASSED 5-2. (NAY- ALEXANDER, LENTINE)

**RESOLUTION NO.: 158-2022—WAS REMOVED IN THE COW**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**RESOLUTION NO.: 1-2023, INTRODUCED BY MAYOR THOMAS; FIRST READING**

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DONATION AND TRANSFER OF FEE TITLE OWNERSHIP TO TWO CITY-OWNED PARCELS TO THE CLEVELAND METROPARKS.

**HOLD ON FOR DISCUSSION**

- **Donated by Land Reutilization Fund, parcels are not taxable according to Todd Hunt.**

**RESOLUTION NO.: 2-2023, INTRODUCED BY MAYOR THOMAS; FIRST READING**

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A CONTRACT BETWEEN THE CITY AND ANTHONY MICELI AS AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR TO PERFORM THE SERVICES OF INCOME TAX “ADMINISTRATOR” FOR THE CITY AS DEFINED, AND WHOSE DUTIES ARE SET FORTH, IN CODIFIED ORDINANCE CHAPTER 184, INCOME TAX.

- Mayor—Tony Miceli is the Tax Administrator and asked to be independent contractor
- Amend the resolution to backdate to Jan 1, 2023- Motion by Alexander, seconded by Lentine; passed 7-0.
- MOTION MADE BY ALEXANDER AND SECONDED BY LENTINE TO SUSPEND THE RULES OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCE AS PROVIDED IN SEC. 121.22 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCE. MOTION PASSED 7-0.
- MOTION WAS MADE BY URSU AND SECONDED BY LEWIS TO PASS RESOLUTION NO. 2-2023. MOTION PASSED 7-0.

**RESOLUTION NO.: 3-2023, INTRODUCED BY COUNCIL PRESIDENT JORDAN; FIRST READING**

A RESOLUTION APPOINTING DONNIE L. HUNTER TO BE THE CLERK OF COUNCIL.

- Jordan said both he and Council Clerk Betsy Traben looked at the resumes and interviewed Donnie Hunter. They both recommend her. Jordan also called 2 other candidates, who did not call back. Another person was interviewed by Council a couple weeks ago, but Hunter had more experience in this field.
- Nelson would like to state on record her concerns. She said it is not the person but the process. She added that the description was also not changed on website—put on there that clerk is accountable to council president and said it should state all the council members. Said Hunt recommended to change as well. Feels there should be a process followed by Council for the interview process.
- Nelson had sent an email—want it as part of the record--- dated 1/7/23 (see attached to minutes).
- Jordan asked if Rhonda Gibson would be able to train for Clerk job and asked Clerk Traben who said no. Mayor also added that Rhonda is very busy with her fulltime day job in the city and would not have the time to fill in as Clerk for an unknown period of time.
- Bell said if we run into this again, we should have procedures and processes in place and should know what the procedures are. Need to be transparent and make sure hiring process is transparent, so people can't come back on us being not appropriate. Bell asked if the references were called. Jordan said he tried calling Bell about that and left her messages regarding the references as he hoped she would call them, but he never heard back from her.
- Jordan discussed calling and interviewing the people Nelson recommended, advertising in Municipal Clerks Association, and then had HR advertise.
- Mayor said she and Admin agreed to stay out of the process. This is not something her assistant should have to do as she is quite busy on city admin processes.
- Jordan explained the procedures taken and time constraints. Going forward need a process of having someone take this spot when a sick day comes up. There is a lot more than just sitting here typing. Added that the area in front of Rhonda Gibson's office will be used for space to use for new Clerk of Council.
- Discussion ensued on the Indeed job for Clerk- being accountable to President of Council and Nelson suggested it should be for all of Council as well. Nelson asked for it to be changed to all of Council. Mayor said that Rhonda Lowe posted on Indeed due to time constraint.
- Todd Hunt suggested putting together a motion to put together a job description of duties and Clerk of Council is accountable to all of Council.
- Mayor said she and the city will stay out of this and Council will work on this.

- MOTION MADE BY ALEXANDER AND SECONDED BY LEWIS TO SUSPEND THE RULES OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCE AS PROVIDED IN SEC. 121.22 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCE. MOTION PASSED 5-2. (NAY- Bell, Nelson)
- MOTION WAS MADE BY URSU AND SECONDED BY LEWIS TO PASS RESOLUTION NO. 3-2023. MOTION PASSED 5-2. (NAY- Bell, Nelson)

**ADDITIONS:**

*MOTION for an Executive Session to discuss the appointment, employment and compensation of certain public employees and officials by Jordan, seconded by Lewis; passed 7-0.*

**ADJOURNMENT:** Motion was made by Jordan and seconded by Lewis to adjourn this January 10, 2023, City Council Meeting at 10:47p.m.

*Minutes taken by Clerk of Council, Betsy Traben*

## **Attachment to City Council Minutes from January 10, 2023**

### **January 7, 2023- Email from Cassandra Nelson to all of Council**

Good afternoon,

Respectfully, I am of the opinion that your requested legislation reflects a complete disregard of Council's discussion and concerns from several colleagues regarding this very subject matter. It further solidifies my concern that processes put in place by this very body are being purposefully circumvented. As I communicated previously, rules and processes are put in place for a reason regardless of who agrees with them or otherwise. It would be prudent for us to proceed with caution as the rushed legislation and vote could be perceived as an attempt to undermine other members of council's ability to provide input on the interviewing and hiring of a Council Clerk. I would hate for us to set a precedent that may later come back to bite us.

As a point of clarification, if you have not hired Donnie and the Mayor has agreed to provide council with temporary assistance, why can't Council follow the normal process and at least reach out and attempt to speak with the other candidates?

Sincerely,

Councilwoman Cassandra Nelson

Sent from my iPad

Cassandra Nelson

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