

**City of Richmond Heights  
City Council Meeting  
February 28, 2023**

President of Council, Bobby Jordan called the meeting to order at 8:24 PM.

**PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

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

Motion was made by Lentine, seconded by Jordan to excuse Nelson; passed 6-0

**Excused:** Nelson

Motion was made by Jordan, seconded by Lewis to accept the consent agenda and meeting minutes from February 14, 2023; passed 6-0.

**REPORTS:**

**Mayor Kim A. Thomas:**

- Last week Gleisser and the Mayor met with congresswoman Brown's community outreach director to discuss resources available and funding opportunities. On Friday the Mayor completed a total of 5 interviews for candidates of DEI Board. The DEI board was birthed from the passage of legislation in 2019 that declared racism a public health crisis in RH. This was a part of the action steps to give that piece of legislation meaning.
- She is finishing the interview process for the ethics board. She has 3 candidates. She interviewed one member of the Zoning Board of Appeals. One member resigned because he moved out of RH.
- Mayor said she and her team met with the county and the partnership for the greenway bikes and walking paths. They discussed the current connection for the surrounding communities.
- Lentine asked when the civil service exam is. Mayor said she leaves that up to the civil service commission, but she will be appointing a new chief soon. Hunt said the civil service rules provide for a temporary or emergency appointment as an interim for any position including chief of police. Hunt said there must be a process and tests going forward for candidates. Lentine asked if the person Mayor has in mind is temporary. Mayor said yes, until the civil service test. She asked all of council to look at the civil service rules to understand the process. Hunt will send the one page rule out.

**Fire Chief, Marc Neumann:**

- The next civil service commission meeting is Thursday at 5:00 PM
- Yesterday a focus group from the Division of fire participated in a pre-construction session at the Sutfin factory for the new ladder truck. The construction of the new ladder truck is on schedule with an estimated completion in June or July in 2024 in Hilliard OH. The wait list for fire engines is 40-48 months now.
- Heart Saver CPR training has started, and the first session since Covid was Monday Feb 24<sup>th</sup>. It was a full class and they trained 11 people. Next class is April and there are only 2 spots left and

they are already starting to fill June's. Classes are free and participants must be at least 16 to attend.

- Lentine asked what's going on at the UH hospital, he said he found out doctors' offices are still taking patients as of today. There will be a meeting with senior leadership to find out how long the docs office will continue to operate. Lewis said her doctor doesn't know either.
- Ursu asked about the Willoughby apartment fire and said that our department responded to it. Neumann said it was an apartment complex under construction and involved two buildings that are similar to the apartments slated to be put up down the street. Neumann amended his statement to say "the official report documents that the fire is under investigation and that the cause is undetermined until proven otherwise." No one was injured or hurt but there was a lot of loss of property.
- Urankar said it is a total loss. We must take this in consideration that the buildings are most at risk when they are coming out of the ground. He mentioned to Meng from Bialosky & Associates that we were given a fire exposure analysis. He wants to sequence the build it so there is a sort of a protection to the building. They will discuss this with the designers.
- Lentine said there was a house explosion in Wickliffe Saturday morning. He asked if RH responded to that fire also. Neumann said no we didn't respond to that one. They are saying there was a storage of fireworks, gas may have been involved but it's still under investigation.
- Alexander said the most dangerous time of a construction build is during construction and the insurance is 3x more during construction.
- Mayor asked if all 3 locations were the complexes that the Maurus Bros were in the process of building. Urankar said Marous were the contractors for 2 of the buildings and he isn't sure about the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Police Chief, Thomas Wetzel:** None

**Building Commissioner, Jim Urankar:**

- Planning and Zoning meeting is 3/7/23 at 7:30. They will be reviewing the Belle Oaks lot split consolidation that creates one tax bill of the owner. Also, they will be reviewing the retail sign plan and wayfinding signs and the street names for Belle Oaks. The retail sign plan will be used by future projects with the architectural review board. Once that's approved Meijer's sign already complies with the sign plan and will automatically be approved. They will review the Firestone site and the building elevations.
- FlexJet has a target move date at the end of April if all goes well. They think they can make it but they have a lot of customizing.
- Plante Fitness has a target date of March 10<sup>th</sup>.
- The Loganberry hazard is being repaired and they had to push hard and send letters to force their hand and they are going to be doing all the cables. All the cables are coming down. There are still things to take care of. They are close but have loose ends including dumpster enclosures and carpet at the exit stairwells.
- Lentine asked what Urankar can tell us about the old Barelli property. Urankar they are working and remediating the mold issue. He received a plan review with a resubmittal and will review the drawings tomorrow. He doesn't have a move in date. They are depending in the health department and have to get the ceiling grid in and they are in the process of it. There have been zoom meetings with the owners and the finance department on it. He is waiting to see the drawings to discuss further and will discuss them with the mayor.

- Jordan said the Pliodzinskas came to the last meeting about the neon sign and asked did they get a permit? Urankar said yes, they got a sign approved and it cannot be on at night, only between 6:00 AM-10:00 PM. He spoke to the pastor, and he has changed the time to 7:00 AM and it will turn off at 9:00 PM and reduced the light intensity 25%. If we get more complaints, we will have them reduce it more. It can't be over .3 lumen max lighting. He will talk to the pastor's sign person. Jordan asked to have it looked at again since there is a safety issue. Urankar will go out in the morning and if anyone else complains they can call Urankar.
- Ursu said maybe it's worthwhile to revisit the ordinance on a sign of that sort being in a residential neighborhood that maybe should distinguish between retail zoning vs residential. Alexander said it does say it must be 200 ft from residential but there's a clause that allows them to go to 100. That sign is not 100 ft from the right of way. He said what they're saying is that it's a new reader board but it's not a new sign because it went on the old foundation. He thinks it should have been pushed back into the front yard at least 100 ft from the property line and at least 100 ft from the street. Alexander will meet with Urankar to go over the AI sign recommended ordinances for jurisdictions.
- Urankar will talk to the pastor about the settings and drive by tonight to see the sign.

**Finance Director, Annette Harmon:**

- The budget is up and running and we are officially in 2023. The Finance Department is operating well, and they anticipate closing the books at the end of this month.
- Jordan asked as far as taxes how does it work since there are people still working at Richmond Hospital. Harmon said we will get income tax on the workers, and she will find out how much we are receiving. She will contact RITA to find out the dollars and numbers.
- Alexander said the problem is if the doctors are working for the University Hospitals or if they are independent. He said that if their pay comes from downtown, we won't likely get anything. He said it's tough to determine what the city will get.
- Hunt said you are supposed to be taxed at each facility.
- Mayor said the difficulty in a lot of municipalities is when workers are working from home. A lot of the employees are working from home. She would love for the employees to report it correctly.

**Recreation Director, Cameron Campbell:**

- Thanks to the parents, coaches, and players for participating in youth basketball this season. They will celebrate with a pizza party in collaboration with the Kiwanis club.
- The Women's Day Tea is sold out.
- The City Edition is being finalized and will go to print tomorrow and residents will receive their copies by the end of the week.

**Economic Development Director, Brian Gleisser:**

- Asking for support for resolution 29-2023 authorizing the city to accept the grant from NOPEC of \$4,608 that can be applied to energy related projects.
- He and the mayor met with Cuyahoga county planning commission staff person regarding the greenway bike ways. One of the items they discussed was identifying funding sources for planning and implementation and they are supposed to put together a matrix of funding sources.
- Reached out to Marous construction about the ability of our fire division to get into the mall for training. It will be for search and rescue training. Jordan would like to attend, and Neumann will get him dates.

## City Engineer, Chris Courtney

- AT&T Work is progressing with current target end date is mid-March.
- Chardon Rd- They received the Stage 1 comments back from ODOT today. He has not reviewed them yet. He will start to address them. Environmental documentation is being prepared. Stage 2 and 3 Plans will be due April 1<sup>st</sup>. The project is progressing.
- Highland Road plan development is at about 50%. Once it is further along, he will share the preliminary set with Gleisser and the mayor and council.
- 2023 Rd program work they have initiated survey work on Steven, Georgetown, Cary Jay and Edgemont which are the 4 roads that are programmed for major work this year. He anticipates the 2023 Road program ready for requested bidding at the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> week in April.
- For the school bridge replacement, he attended the School board meeting work session last night and presented the culvert extension preliminary plan and the proposed right-of-way grant and easements arrangements needed. They board approved both. This will allow Hunt to formalize the project agreement with the school so they can proceed with the final plan.
- Mayor, Tiedman and Courtney attended the Teams project kick off meeting for IJA funding they received through the Ohio EPA Water pollution control loan fund. It is a \$500k forgivable loan. Now they are coordinating with the regional sewer district on project agreements and scheduling work with the regional sewer district to apply for the grant. He expects legislation to be passed by council in the next month or 6 weeks.
- They are collecting information for the 2022 Phase 2 stormwater update that is due to the EPA. They will be receiving information from the CSWCD, CCBH, Euclid Creek Watershed, and other program partners. All updates are done electronically now and all will provide a hard copy to Tiedman or Mayor. There may be council action after the update is completed.
- For 503 and 504 Trebisky he's still working with Laura Webber at the county to isolate those two homes from the sewer trenches. No word on if the county will perform the work or if they will use their maintenance contractors.
- He was contacted by Osborne Engineering today to advise that they started working on the plans for lining the 48 in. Cleveland water department line on Trebisky. The water department has awarded a \$7 million contract to line the large water main from Georgetown Dr. to Trebisky. He is going to ask if they can do some things to help better manage the trench water on Trebisky which should help take pressure off this situation.
- Belle Oaks water service agreement. The water department and developer were in agreement about how to establish the water service agreement by way of modification of the standard Cleveland water department easement for private development. He spoke to Paul Ellis and explained the program and there is no issue with how they coordinated between the developer and water department. The developer and city are waiting on draft language for the easement. Margevicius will review the easement tomorrow and then again with the city and then share it with the developer.
- Jordan asked if he is keeping the Pliodzinkas abreast of the issue. Courtney said yes.
- Jordan asked did we ever address the mailboxes and yards damaged from the water main break on Highland. Courtney said they did some landscape clean up. They have repair work planned for the 2023 Road program as a part of the local road work. They will submit to the county a 50/50 application in April to completely redo Harris as a part of next year's road program.
- Jordan asked will they dig up the whole street for the lining. Courtney said no, it won't be a huge trench where they excavate the whole thing. He said they will line the old pipe with a new

smaller pipe. They'll dig up the valves and use a liner and drop new valves and this limits the amount of disturbance and excavation.

- Alexander asked if he could make sure they survey the old lot on the Atkins property that they are getting ready to build on. Courtney said when they get the site plan, they will make sure the sewer trenches all involve some cut off element.

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

- The team had all the roads clear for Saturday's snow event in 4 hours.
- Tiedman and his team are surveying the city to replace all the street signs. A company will do the signs but the service dept will install them to keep the pricing down.
- The team is working on building maintenance, cold patching, chipping, and tree trimming.
- One company put in a bid for the RFQ which was CT consultants for the city architect.
- Bell said thank you to the service dept. When she went to work the streets were clear on her way to work at 6:30 AM.
- Jordan asked does he know why trash cans weren't picked up on Rushmore. Tiedman said Waste management said the truck was full and they forgot to come back but they came back this morning.

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

- Still in the middle of performance season. They have transitioned from self-evals to performance evaluations. Directors are putting them into writing. They should be completed in mid-March.
- They are working diligently to boost and bolster finance department and service dept for hiring.
- She said thank you to the Mayor because they went through board and commissions interviews. The mayor interviewed 5 groups and met with 9-11 people.

#### **AUDIENCE COMMENTS:**

- Terry Butler of 474 Celestia Drive, Vice Chair of the Planning and Zoning commission said their commission has already approved the signage plan, but they may have missed the site plan that was approved and the signage for that plan. The architect indicated that there were some changes from the very generic initial names the street had, and they assigned names from surveyors in the area and one of the surveyors was named Truman. It was brought to his attention that someone asked where the names came from. There may be residents or others who have social or cultural issues and he's bringing it to council's attention to head off any issues regarding the name. He said the signage plan was well done.
- Alexander asked if they had handled any security issues such as panic boxes on the walkways. Butler said that issue has not come forward yet, and they are still in phase one and they don't include any security plan.

#### **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.

- Jordan said Councilwoman Nelson would like us to hold this ordinance.
- **Hold On**

**ORDINANCE NO.: 15-2023 INTRODUCED BY: LENTINE; SECOND READING**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 761.04 AND ADDING SECTION 761.99 OF CHAPTER 761, "LANDLORD TENANT RELATIONS", TO REQUIRE LANDLORDS TO GIVE NOTICE TO NEW AND RENEWAL RESIDENTIAL TENANTS OF OUTSTANDING CODE VIOLATIONS AND ADOPTING A PENALTY FOR VIOLATIONS OF CHAPTER 761.

- Todd recommends holding this ordinance so he may add amendments or revisions with respect to notifying tenants and prospective tenants of this regulation. He will make the revisions and send them to council.
- **Hold On**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**ORDINANCE NO.: 22-2023 INTRODUCED BY: NELSON; FIRST READING**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 1325.16 OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEIGHTS BUILDING CODE TO PROCESS CONTRACTOR PERMIT DEPOSITS IN A MORE EFFICIENT MANNER.

- Jordan said Councilwoman Nelson would like this ordinance to be held.
- **Hold On**

**RESOLUTION NO.: 28-2023 INTRODUCED BY: MAYOR THOMAS; FIRST READING**

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT WITH R. TODD HUNT AND THE LAW FIRM OF ROETZEL & ANDRESS, LPA TO PROVIDE DIRECTOR OF LAW AND OTHER LEGAL SERVICES TO THE CITY; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- Mayor said this legislation is to retain Hunt and his current firm and declaring an emergency.
- Motion was made by Alexander, seconded by Bell to suspend the rules; passed 6-0
- Motion was made by Ursu, seconded by Lentine to pass Resolution Number 28-2023; passed 6-0

**RESOLUTION NO: 29-2023 INTRODUCED BY: MAYOR THOMAS; FIRST READING**

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACCEPT NORTHEAST OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY COUNCIL ("NOPEC") 2023 ENERGIZED COMMUNITY GRANT(S) FUNDS.

- Mayor said we are asking for approval to accept the grant from NOPEC.
- Motion was made by Alexander, seconded by Bell to suspend the rules; passed 6-0
- Motion was made by Lewis, seconded by Bell to pass Resolution Number 29-2023; passed 6-0

**RESOLUTION NO: 30-2023 INTRODUCED BY: MAYOR THOMAS; FIRST READING**

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DISPOSAL OF EQUIPMENT THAT IS UNNEEDED, OBSOLETE AND UNFIT FOR CITY PURPOSES.

- Mayor said this legislation is for the disposal of unneeded equipment.
- Motion was made by Alexander, seconded by Ursu to suspend the rules; passed 6-0
- Motion was made by Ursu, seconded by Lewis to pass Resolution Number 30-2023; passed 6-0

**RESOLUTION NO: 31-2023 INTRODUCED BY: MAYOR THOMAS; FIRST READING**

A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE INTENT OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEIGHTS IN 2023 TO SELL BY INTERNET AUCTION PERSONAL PROPERTY, INCLUDING MOTOR VEHICLES AND OTHER PROPERTY REFERENCED IN REVISED CODE §721.15 WHICH ARE NO LONGER NEEDED FOR PUBLIC USE, OR ARE OBSOLETE OR UNFIT FOR THE USE FOR WHICH THEY WERE ACQUIRED; AUTHORIZING GOVDEALS.COM, INC. TO PERFORM THE SALES; AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF SPECIFIC PERSONAL PROPERTY BY INTERNET AUCTION; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

- Motion was made by Alexander, seconded by Ursu to suspend the rules; passed 6-0
- Motion was made by Alexander, seconded by Ursu to pass Resolution Number 31-2023; passed 6-0

*Council President Jordan adjourned the February 28, 2023 City Council Meeting at 9:27 PM  
Minutes taken by Donnie Hunter, Clerk of Council*