

**City of Richmond Heights
City Council Meeting
August 22, 2023**

President of Council, Bobby Jordan called the meeting to order at 8:40 PM.

PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

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

Motion was made by Lentine, seconded by Lewis to accept the consent agenda and the meeting minutes from August 8, 2023; passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Ursu, seconded by Lewis to pass the Consent Agenda items; passed unanimously.

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.

REPORTS:

Mayor Kim A. Thomas:

- On October 5th, the city will host its second Community Resource to share the available resource that the County has to offer our residents. County Executive Chris Ronayne will be here with his entire department heads on Friday along with County Prosecutor, Michael O'Malley and Sunny Simon.
- Three weeks ago, her team met with YOU to discuss bringing in a pilot program for Work Force Development. They engage the youth and pay them for employment. We have over 20,000 disengaged youth not in school, libraries, or recreation centers. This is to put forth a pilot program for our community. OMJ Work Force Development is a public entity that changes its structure and will eventually become a nonprofit. This will be a mini station within our schools. She made the same proposal to the mayor's managers of Cuyahoga County, and they will support it. Chris Renee and Justin Bibb support it. It went through both levels of buy-in. We will partner with RH and if done right we will be able to say we kicked this off before the non-profit was in place.

Fire Chief, Marc Neumann:

- Neumann said we've completed a lot of projects including the Fire Station roof which will have final inspection in a couple of days. The new ambulance came in and is now equipped. As of July 31st, they have responded to 1473 calls for service which is an 8.2% increase compared to 2022. Of the 1473 calls 1090 or 74% were EMS calls for service. They have 3 long-term health facilities which account for 24% of the call volume. They ran 383 fire service calls which is 26% of calls and including 5 structure fires in RH. They've received 283 simultaneous calls which is 19.2% of the time. They receive and give mutual aid to surrounding communities. They have received mutual aid 35 x and given 43 times. The average response time is 5 minutes and 9 seconds. Supplemental staffing expenses, they received a Saver Grant which reduces the cost of supplemental staffing. The total supplemental staffing cost is \$87,711. Last year we at this time we were at \$138,653 so we are down 36.7%. which is a \$50,942 decrease. They have 2 vacancies in RH Fire Division.

Entrance exam comes up in October and they should be filled quickly. There is a promotional process in the Division of Fire for and Lieutenant vacancy.

- There's an upcoming CPR class on Monday October 23, 2023 at 1:00 PM. Information is on the city's website. There are 12 openings for that class. Call the chief at 216-383-6304.

Police Chief, Calvin Williams:

- In the last 12 days RH Police Department responded to 93 incidents, issued 17 moving citations, conducted five misdemeanor arrests and issued nine parking citations.
- They are in the process of onboarding a lateral candidate. Hopefully they can onboard a new officer in the next few weeks. They are down three officers since they are backfilling the sergeant to lieutenant. They are in the process of vetting an entry level candidate. Hopefully they can get that person in the state academy in January. They swore in 3 auxiliary police officers yesterday and today: one female and two male officers. They are volunteer officers and help the city on a volunteer basis. They are also in the process of finalizing the hiring of the Chief secretary. The process for the Lieutenant promotional exam ended yesterday. Also, the Chief of police went through candidate testing process last week and hopefully the city will have a list of the top candidates for police chief and that person selected would be a full-time police chief.
- Jordan asked if the auxiliary officers volunteer to be in dangerous situations. Williams said they try to keep the auxiliary officers out of dangerous situations. They are not equipped to handle that, and it is not their function. They carry one defensive weapon and not a firearm. They do get defense training and they are looking for additional auxiliary officers.
- Ursu said that a person with bad intent doesn't distinguish between a full-time officer or an auxiliary officer.

Finance Director, Michael Frederick:

- No Report tonight. He thanked Council and the mayor for the opportunity to represent the city in his function.

Building Commissioner, William Gallagher:

- Property maintenance program continues. They have had up to 10 violations cited from the residents in the apartment buildings. They are meeting with property managers and citing them and following a process to address and correct them with the property managers.
- There looking into houses for violations. They will follow up on one that is going up for sheriff sale.
- They are working with the school district to verify that housing rental agreements are being followed through. They will need to do inspections and will allow tenants to stay and make sure it is a safe program and there are no safety issues in those houses.
- They are going to add a new street called Flex Jet and will get it through the USPS before or on September 13th at the ribbon cutting ceremony.
- Jordan asked for an update on Belle Oaks. Gallagher said that Belle Oaks is a large project and they met with David Frank and the application for the deposit for demolition was dropped off on Monday. Marous Brothers and B&B renting took up the building demolition permit. The abatement process will start September 5th and will start in Regal Cinemas and head west into the mall structure. Abatement will begin at JC Penny's which is the future site of Meijer's. As they finish the demo in the cinema they will head north. There will be crushing concrete and materials on site, recycling and re-utilizing as much of the materials as possible.

Human Resources Director, Rhonda Lowe:

- Conversations are starting around open enrollment health care benefits. The process needs to start now.

- They swore in some auxiliary officers, the police chief secretary starts Tuesday. They have a lateral that will continue through the onboarding process. The school crossing guard will be coming soon. We are still looking for a volunteers for the board of ethics. If interested email or call and she will be happy to discuss the opportunity.
- Jordan said he has a question later about the school guard and will talk to her later.

Service Director, Ryan Tiedman:

- Finally, the city received the last 2 EPA trucks that were on order for the winter.
- On August 24th the service department will receive first aid and CPR training.
- Contractors have grinded up 124 tree stumps, added topsoil and seeded.
- Grass cutting, tree trimming, and flower bed maintenance has continued.
- Beginning to work on the leaf vac machine for the season.
- Lentine said thank you to Tiedman for keeping him informed about the sign for Scottish Village, he asked when the sign will be installed. Tiedman said a call is out for the signage to be installed.
- Nelson asked for a copy of the email. Tiedman will send the email to council.
- Jordan asked if the salt bin is stable this year. Tiedman said they will have CT consultants come out and inspect it. The are going to extend the permit for another year.

Recreation Director, Cameron Campbell:

- Registration for Flag football is open until September 8. Practices will be every Wednesday beginning September 13th with games being on Sundays starting September 17th.
- Soccer fall registration is still open. Soccer begins September 2nd and is every Saturday until October 14th.
- The service department got to demo the new drag machine called AVI, which is used to grade and maintain the ball fields and the infield.
- Chief Williams said they are at the start of the “Drive Sober Don’t Get Pulled Over campaign. Please don’t drink and drive. Please ask one of the officers for the campaign dog treat if you have a pet.

City Engineer, Chris Courtney:

- Final Plans for Chardon Rd have been submitted to ODOT. The project will start late Spring 2024.
- 2 Projects are out for bids for the 2023 Road Program and the Highland Rd. Resurfacing Project. 119k reimbursement from Cuyahoga County. Highland Rd estimate is \$505k. The first ad will be on August 17th, the second ad will be on the 24th. The Pre-bid meetings will be on the 28th at 1:00 and 1:15 with bid openings set for September 1st.
- The 2022 Road Program is wrapping up. They are completing some asphalt and area repairs.
- The school bridge Culvert Extension project started. The bridge is gone. It will be replaced in the next couple of months. He attached photos and would like them distributed to council.
- He will ask for authorization to Seek Bids at the next meeting on 9-12-23 for the Edgemont Slope project.
- Highland Rd East OH gas project contractor is working on restoration. The project is mostly complete.
- They are still waiting for the water department to give schedule information and notice for pre-con meeting for Highland Rd and Trebisky. A large valve replacement has been submitted.
- They will find out about approval of the Suburban Water Main renewal project on September 1st. Applications are due 9-14 and will be submitted for the streets were awarded SWMRP Funds.
- He was advised last week that Flex Jet had a storm water backup issue at the old building at the right of way. The county came out. The main is now clear and he’s waiting for the date they will start work.

- Ohio EPA will be auditing our Phase 2 stormwater program. They asked for information and documents by September 1st. The first day is a Q&A and the second day is field visits. It is likely there will be action needed by council and end of the year.
- Tiedman notices trees and debris down in the storm channel behind city hall. The NEORSWIM team will assess the situation and schedule cleaning under the regional stormwater program.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS:

- Alex Harper of 476 Celestia asked Gallagher for an update on the status of the sanctions that were issued to 444 and any update on when they plan to fix the issues. Gallagher said they went out and looked at the complaints from the residents. There are outstanding violations. There are issues with the trash compactors. The fire compression system has been approved, but he isn't sure if it's been mobilized. Some improvements have been made. Exit lights are being replaced. He asked what is particular are the particular concerns. Harper said Doors, locking mechanisms, and elevators. Gallagher said that within his two-week tenure, they have a backlog they are on it on a regular basis and hopefully with more manpower they can address those issues.
- Mayor said that the city prosecutor, Mike Cicero, is handling things through the courts. There are \$8.2M in violations and are at a standstill. They have to wait until the courts go through their process. She will share Cicero's contact with Harper so he can ask him about the updates.
- Lentine said the August 11th hearing was postponed. That individual is taking suit against the apartment and the hearing is moved to October. The prosecutor is pursuing the issues with the court. There are issues with contacting the owners which postpones the case. We are working as hard as we can to resolve the long list of problems.
- Anita Blackwell of 485 Jeanette Drive would like an update on the process of the streetlights. Williams said they've been in conversation with CPP Director, Keen about their process and contacting one of the members of the County Executive Ronane's staff who has gone through the process themselves. They will go back to our energy company that owns the infrastructure to come up with a process to do an evaluation and raw numbers. They are still working on this.
- Kyle Cassidy of 2463 Chardon Rd., they bought the property a few years back and asked is recycling going to be proposed going forward. Mayor said the goal is to push it forward to include recycling in the 2024 budget, they have received numerous calls from residents who want recycling. In order to move it forward it will have to be brought back to council in September. Cassidy also said that there is a reservation on his road and there's wildlife and deer and he is noticing that by the curve of 238th & Effington Rd. of an increase of incidents with animals and traffic. He wants to know if a deer zing could be installed. Mayor said she is going to have a conversation with the service director. They had to put additional signs and they are committed to doing what needs to be done, even if it requires signage. She asked him to contact the service director.
- Councilwoman Russell from Cleveland Heights wants to say the structure of our council meeting is outstanding. Having directors present to answer questions for residents is phenomenal. She is impressed.

OLD BUSINESS:

RESOLUTION NO.: 106-2023 (AS REVISED 8-8-23) INTRODUCED BY MAYOR THOMAS; FIRST READING

A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE APPOINTMENT BY THE MAYOR OF SHAYLA L. DAVIS AS DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

- **HOLD ON**

NEW BUSINESS:

RESOLUTION NO: 112-2023 INTRODUCED BY MAYOR THOMAS; FIRST READING

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT BY THE MAYOR OF TRACY JUSTICE AS THE COUNCILMEMBER FOR WARD 1 FOR AN UNEXPIRED TERM; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- Motion was made by Lewis, seconded by Jordan to suspend the rules; passed 5-1, Alexander- No
- Motion was made by Lewis, seconded by Jordan to pass Resolution 112-2023; passed 5-1, Alexander- No

RESOLUTION NO: 113-2023 INTRODUCED BY MAYOR THOMAS; FIRST READING

A RESOLUTION CORRECTING RESOLUTION NO. 105-2023 TO SPECIFY THE APPROPRIATE FUND FROM WHICH PAYMENT FOR THE CONTRACT WITH WEST ROOFING SYSTEMS, INC. FOR THE POLICE STATION ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT SHALL BE MADE.

- Motion was made by Ursu, seconded by Lentine to suspend the rules; passed unanimously.
- Motion was made by Ursu, seconded by Lentine to pass Resolution 113-2023; passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO: 114-2023 INTRODUCED BY MAYOR THOMAS; FIRST READING

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION (“OPWC”) STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND/OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM(S) AND TO EXECUTE CONTRACTS AS REQUIRED; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- Motion was made by Lewis, seconded by Alexander to suspend the rules; passed unanimously.
- Motion was made by Nelson, seconded by Lentine to pass Resolution 114-2023; passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO: 115-2023 INTRODUCED BY MAYOR & ALL OF COUNCIL; FIRST READING

A RESOLUTION CERTIFYING CERTAIN COSTS AND FEES OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEIGHTS FOR THE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL OF SOLID WASTE SERVICES AT CERTAIN RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS WITHIN THE CITY TO THE COUNTY FISCAL OFFICER FOR PLACEMENT ON THE TAX DUPLICATE AND FOR COLLECTION; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- Motion was made by Lewis, seconded by Nelson to suspend the rules; passed unanimously.
- Motion was made by Ursu, seconded by Lewis to pass Resolution 115-2023; passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO: 116-2023 INTRODUCED BY MAYOR & ALL OF COUNCIL; FIRST READING

A RESOLUTION CERTIFYING EXPENSES FOR THE REMOVAL OF TRASH, NOXIOUS WEEDS, TALL GRASSES AND/OR OVERGROWN BUSHES AND HEDGES UPON LANDS WITHIN THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEIGHTS TO THE COUNTY FISCAL OFFICER FOR PLACEMENT ON THE TAX DUPLICATE AND FOR COLLECTION; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- Motion was made by Nelson, seconded by Lewis to suspend the rules; passed unanimously.
- Motion was made by Lentine, seconded by Nelson to pass Resolution 1162023; passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO: 117-2023 INTRODUCED BY ALEXANDER; FIRST READING

A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE ACTION OF THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS WITH RESPECT TO THE REQUEST FOR A VARIANCE TO ZONING CODE SECTION 1165.03(a)(11) FOR THE GASOLINE SELF-SERVE FILLING STATION AT 798 RICHMOND ROAD.

- Motion was made by Alexander, seconded by Nelson to suspend the rules; passed unanimously.
- Motion was made by Nelson, seconded by Ursu to pass Resolution 117-2023; passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Jordan, seconded by Alexander to authorize public competitive bidding for a contract for solid waste collection and disposal and recycling for the City for at least a three (3)-year period commencing January 1, 2024.

- Motion was passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

ADJOURNMENT:

Council President, Bobby Jordan adjourned the City Council Meeting at 9:34 PM

Minutes taken by Donnie Hunter, Clerk of Council