

**City of Maple Heights
Regular Council Meeting Minutes**

Maple Heights Senior Center

May 7, 2014

Council President Jackie Albers called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. Councilman Alex Adams of District 1 gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Clerk of Council Katherine Unger called the roll.

ROLL CALL: Those present were Council President Jackie Albers, Council Members Alex Adams, Toni Jones, Anthony Cefaratti, Ron Jackson, Bill Brownlee, and Edwina Agee. Richard Trojanski was absent and excused.

Also present were Mayor Jeffrey Lansky, Law Director John Montello, Finance Director Irene Crowell, Acting Chief John Popielarczyk, and Fire Chief John Drsek. Human Services Director Linda Vopat, Finance Director Irene Crowell, and Engineer Ed Hren were absent and excused.

MINUTES:

Mr. Jackson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Adams to approve the minutes from the Special Council meetings on March 26, 27, & 28, 2014, and the Regular Council meetings on April 2, and 16, 2014. Mr. Brownlee made a motion to amend various parts of the meetings on March 25, 2014, April 2, 2014, and April 16, 2014. Mr. Montello asked that all those in favor of the changes state aye. There were several members who voted aye, but without a specific count. Clerk Unger called the roll to approve the minutes as amended. ROLL CALL. Adams, Cefaratti, Jackson, Brownlee, and Agee. Present: Jones.

COMMUNICATIONS: None

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS: Edwina Agee had a Community Life Committee Meeting on April 21, 2014, but was not able to give the report at this meeting. Mr. Richard Trojanski had a Finance Committee Meeting on April 23, 2014, but was not present to give his report.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Fire Department – Chief John Drsek had no report.

Law Department - Mr. John Montello had not report.

Police Department – Acting Chief John Popielarczyk reported that during the month of April, the Police Department responded to 1,125 calls for service. Chief Popielarczyk also reported that the Maple Heights City Schools will hold their annual Fun Fest on the coming Saturday, where the Police Department will have a table, and the DARE graduation will be held on May 15th.

Human Service Department – Mrs. Linda Vopat was not present.

CITIZENS COMMENTS:

Mr. Bob Halen, 16226 Maplewood Court congratulated Chief Popielarczyk on his new position and asked the Law Director if Mr. Brownlee could be censured.

Mrs. Toma from 12404 Granger Road complained about the City's possible decision to delete the recycling program from the Waste Management Contract, which is now in arrears.

Ms. Joanne Majoris of 14408 Tokay Drive asked why the minutes are not on the web site and why the City is discontinuing the recycling program. Ms. Majoris also asked if there would be a public place available for residents to drop off their recycling products.

Ms. Gloria Jackson of 18100 Libby Road commented that she would like more interaction between the Police Department and the children in the City. Ms. Jackson also asked if the City could build a Community Center for the children on the old Raymond School property.

Mr. Al Glontz of 5758 Glenwood Avenue announced the route change for the Memorial Day Parade on May 26th. Mr. Glontz explained that due to the aging veterans who march in the parade, the parade would line up at the Maple Heights High School staff parking lot at 9:30 a.m. and would step off at 10:15 a.m. and march down Clement Avenue to Libby Road, and onto the Veterans' Memorial on Lee Road. Mr. Glontz thanked Councilwoman Edwina Agee for meeting with him and deciding not to serve hot dogs and snacks behind the Veterans' Memorial after the services out of respect for the names of the residents on the Honor Roll. Mr. Glontz asked Councilman Brownlee to also change his mind about serving hot dogs and to keep Memorial Day a somber remembrance of those who lost their lives for our country.

Mr. Tim Leili of 5541 Garden Street, a Vietnam Veteran, commented on the significance of Memorial Day and hoped that next year the veterans could find another place to form in order to have a longer parade than this year but not as long as it was in previous years.

Mr. Gerald Arnold of 20709 Bowling Green Avenue commented about the need of a recycling program, but not necessarily a curbside program, and asked that the Council consider keeping some kind of recycling program for the residents. Mr. Arnold also commented on the failure of the tax levy and the Fiscal Watch status of the City and asked that the City's Web Site be updated to keep the residents informed.

Mr. Joe Szumski of 5530 Oakwood Drive thanked Councilwoman Edwina Agee for coming to the American Legion, talking to the veterans, and deciding to not have a picnic behind the memorial to keep the day a somber remembrance for the men and women who died serving our country.

Mrs. Alfreda Albadini of 15800 Evening Star Avenue commented that she is saddened and frustrated to witness the defeat of the levy on May 6th and the voter apathy that has surfaced in the City. Mrs. Albadini stated that Mr. Brownlee has only lived in the city a few years and doesn't know the City. She added that his thoughts and ideas are destructive, that he is out of control, and if she was younger, she would have him recalled.

Ms. Tanya Black of 21414 Hillgrove reminded everyone that the Lion's Club is having a job fair on May 8, 2014 at the Lutheran Church at 19000 Libby Road from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

LEGISLATION:

RESOLUTION NO.: 2014-30

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE FINANCE DIRECTOR TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS WITH SPECIFICATIONS RECOMMENDED BY THE POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR A TOWING SERVICE CONTRACT TO BE USED BY THE CITY OF MAPLE HEIGHTS FOR ALL NEEDED TOWING SERVICES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

As this Resolution was on its third reading, Mr. Adams made a motion, seconded by Ms. Jones to adopt the resolution. Ms. Albers asked for discussion. Mr. Brownlee said that he doesn't agree with the specifications and that they are outdated. Mr. Jackson stated that as previously discussed, the existing specifications were going to be modified before they are bid out and that many of the issues that Mr. Brownlee has will be handled in that modification. ROLL CALL. Ayes: Adams, Jones, Jackson and Agee. Nay: Cefaratti and Brownlee. The Resolution passed by four members, not as an emergency, therefore it will not become law for 30 days.

RESOLUTION NO.: 2014-31

AN EMERGENCY RESOLUTION STRONGLY SUPPORTING THE PASSAGE OF HOUSE BILL 267 AND SENATE BILL 180 BY THE OHIO GENERAL ASSEMBLY WHICH PROPOSES TO EXTEND THE ELIGIBILITY OF THE HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION TO ELDERLY OR DISABLED HOMEOWNERS IN THE CITY OF MAPLE HEIGHTS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

This Resolution had its second reading.

RESOLUTION NO.: 2014-35

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF MAPLE HEIGHTS TO ACCEPT THE TITLE TO TWO VACANT PARCELS OF LAND ON GREENWAY ROAD FOR THE LAND BANK IN THE CITY OF MAPLE HEIGHTS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

This Resolution had its second reading.

ORDINANCE NO.: 2014-36

AN ORDINANCE REPEALING CHAPTER 1487 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES REGARDING CERTIFICATES OF RENTAL COMPLIANCE AND AMENDING CHAPTER 1486 REGARDING THE REGISTRATION OF RENTAL PROPERTIES IN THE CITY OF MAPLE HEIGHTS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

This Ordinance had its second reading. Council President Jackie Albers moved the Ordinance to the Economic Development and Housing Committee Chaired by Councilwoman Toni Jones.

RESOLUTION NO.: 2014-37

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO RENEW THE CONTRACT WITH WASTE MANAGEMENT OF OHIO, INC. FOR TWO YEARS AND TO ELIMINATE THE RECYCLING PROGRAM IN ITS ENTIRETY, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, TO PROVIDE GARBAGE AND WASTE REMOVAL SERVICES IN THE CITY OF MAPLE HEIGHTS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Mr. Jackson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Adams to suspend the rules and place this Resolution on its third and final reading. Ms. Albers asked for any discussion.

Mr. Cefaratti stated that several of his residents have called him against deleting the recycling program from the garbage pick-up. Mr. Cefaratti made a motion to eliminate the two-year extension, keep the recycling program and go out for bids for a new garbage pick-up contract. There was no second to the motion, therefore, the motion was not considered. Ms. Agee made a comment that she agrees with Mr. Cefaratti about the recycling, but by eliminating the recycling, the City will be able to keep a couple of police officers on the road and revisit the recycling at another time. Mr. Adams stated he looked down his street and out of 30 houses, only 9 had recycling bags out for pick-up, which is the same figures that Waste Management gave the City; that is only 11% of the people participates in the recycling program. Mr. Adams also stated that the residents turned down the Income Tax levy, so the money has to come from somewhere. Mr. Adams stated that the people elected the Council to make these hard decisions and to balance the budget. Mr. Brownlee stated that his family recycles and he is voting against this legislation because no one has indicated the amount of money that it actually costs the residents for garbage pick-up and recycling versus the amount of money that the residents are paying. Mr. Jackson commented that this legislation is not a renewal; it's an option on our existing contract. Mr. Jackson also reminded everyone that the State Budget came in and stated that the City is 1.8 million dollars in debt. Mr. Jackson stated that he is for recycling but there are very few things that the Council can do at this time that will save the City \$100,000.00.

ROLL CALL to suspend the rules. Ayes: Adams, Jones, Jackson and Agee. Nays: Cefaratti and Brownlee. As six affirmative votes are needed to suspend the rules, the Resolution had its first reading.

EXPENDITURES OVER \$1,000.00:

Mr. Adams made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jackson to approve the expenditure over \$1,000.00 numbered 2014-53 through 2014-57. Roll Call. Ayes: Adams, Jones, Jackson and Agee. Nay: Brownlee. Present: Cefaratti. The expenditure motion was passed by a simple majority of 4 ayes, 1 nay, and 1 present.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Lansky stated that he has explained numerous times about how the City got into the financial position that it is in. In addition, the Mayor stated that he has heard

many people complain that they didn't know what was going on in the City and there was nothing on the web site or in the one small newspaper that we have. Mayor Lansky stated that when the County devalued everyone's home by 33%, the City has lost a million and a half dollars every year since then. Mayor Lansky stated that the residential garbage collections are tied to the property tax, so when the valuation went down, so did the money going into the garbage fund. The Mayor also explained that the police and fire levies are also tied to the property tax and those funds went into the red about \$600,000.00, and that those levies pay for about 8 police officers and 8 firemen. The Mayor said that also showing a deficit balance is the street lighting levy, which is also tied to the property tax, and is down about \$200,000.00. The Mayor continued and stated that all of that money was in addition to the one million dollars that Governor Kasich cut Maple Heights. The Mayor summarized and stated that Maple Heights was cut one million dollars by the state for each of 4 years and one and a half million dollars by the County for each of 3 years. He stated that it is 9 million dollars that the City has lost and that the City cannot operate the way it has in the past taking a loss like they have. Mayor Lansky continued to explain the misconceptions of the public regarding the finances of the City.

COUNCIL'S REPORT:

Councilman Alex Adams, District 1 stated that he worked the polls on Election Day and that he ran his campaign in favor of the levy and Mr. Brownlee ran his campaign against the levy, which is his right. The Mayor and Council has to live by the decision of the voters, but the residents need to understand that like the Mayor explained, the City needs only to provide basic services, Police, Fire, Service and garbage pick-up until the financial status of the City changes. Mr. Adams continued his report by announcing a Block Watch on Lisa Drive on Saturday, May 10th and commented on several complaints and repairs in his district.

Councilwoman Toni Jones, District 2 commented about the recycling program being discontinued and stated that the residents may be able to place their recyclables in various dumpsters in the area. Ms. Jones also stated that she was at the polls and several residents stated that they are not voting for the levy because of the number of pot holes on their streets and the amount of crime in the City, especially the robberies. Ms. Jones asked everyone to work together and take better care of their properties to keep the values up for the next appraisals by the County. Ms. Jones stated that she is trying to send letters to people who do keep up their property and also those who don't, and hopes that everyone cooperates.

Councilman Anthony Cefaratti, District 3 congratulated Chief Popielarczyk and thanked the residents who voiced their opinions on the important issue of recycling. Mr. Cefaratti asked everyone to respect other people's opinion whether you agree with them or not.

Councilman Ron Jackson, District 4 expressed his disappointment at the levy defeat and hoped that when the residents see the cuts in City Services, they will reconsider another tax issue in the future to bring the City out of debt. Mr. Jackson emphasized that the levy was for the benefit of the people because without it, the cuts that will be made will affect all of the residents in the City. Mr. Jackson stated that when the residents come up to the microphone to complain about services and slow response times, he wants them to remember how they voted in yesterday's election.

Councilman Bill Brownlee, District 5 announced that the Maple Heights Schools will be hosting a 5K run and Fun Fest for everyone this Saturday, May 10th beginning at 9:00 a.m. at the new sports complex. Mr. Brownlee asked the residents to come out for Memorial Day to honor our veterans. Mr. Brownlee stated that there is a great amount of distrust by the residents towards the administration and that it is not the amount of money being spent; it is rather if the money is being spent well. Mr. Brownlee stated that the financial hole wasn't dug overnight and the financial recovery wouldn't happen overnight either. Regarding the garbage fees, Mr. Brownlee stated that the residents pay \$180.00 a year for the service, but we yet to find out if that is enough to cover the bill. Mr. Brownlee stated that he does not trust the administration and that the residents did the right thing by voting down the tax levy.

Councilman Richard Trojanski District 6 was not present at the meeting.

Councilwoman Edwina Agee, District 7 stated to Ms. Majors that she didn't answer her email when she wrote it because she was at work, and later talked with her at the meeting that evening. Ms. Agee reported that she is having a Block Watch meeting on May 8th at 6:30 p.m. at the Maple Heights Library. Ms. Agee congratulated Chief Popielarczyk and wished all of the mothers and grand-mothers a "Happy Mother's Day."

Council President Jackie Albers reported that she spent most of the day yesterday at the polls and spoke to several residents who really care about the City, were not angry at the administration and understand the problems that the City is facing. Ms. Albers stated that many of the residents and especially the seniors helped out at the polls and talked to the people. Ms. Albers stated that the City is trying very hard to get the web site more current and with information that will help the residents understand the financial situation in the City.

There being no further business to come before this Council, Council President Jackie Albers adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Passed: August 20, 2014

ATTEST:

s/s Katherine M. Unger, CMC