

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

Maple Heights Senior Center

June 11, 2014

Council President Jackie Albers called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. 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, Richard Trojanski, and Edwina Agee.

Also present were Mayor Jeffrey A. Lansky, Assistant Law Director Blair Melling, Fire Chief John Drsek, Police Chief John Popielarczyk, Finance Director Irene Crowell, and Human Services Director Linda Vopat.

All regular items and reports were suspended from the meeting except the legislation.

ORDINANCE NO.: 2014-44

AN ORDINANCE DIRECTING THE CLERK OF COUNCIL TO CERTIFY TO THE CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE VII OF THE MAPLE HEIGHTS CHARTER TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE ELECTORS AT THE NOVEMBER 4, 2014 GENERAL ELECTION, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

This Ordinance had its first reading.

Finance Director Irene Crowell explained the need for this Charter Amendment which would decrease the tax credit to 25% and stated that the projected revenue from it would be approximately \$3 million. She stated that it would affect residents who lived in the City but worked in another City and that the tax money would be collected beginning January 1, 2015, with the City receiving the proceeds in 2016.

Councilwoman Toni Jones stated that she hoped that all of Council would be on board with this amendment. Alex Adams agreed and stated that he hopes that there will be no anti-charter amendment materials put out. Mr. Alex added that he would like to see the issue on the ballot and let the residents decide.

Mr. Brownlee stated that he believes that the passage of this amendment would equate to a 4% increase in taxes to the residents.

Mr. Jackson stated that he would like to see the percentages on this issue because Mr. Brownlee and Ms. Crowell's numbers seem to conflict. Mr. Jackson also stated that the City is almost \$2 million in debt and if Mr. Brownlee doesn't support this issue, then he would like to hear his ideas for solving the financial problems in the City. Mr. Jackson also stated that he believes that the solution to the financial problems should be a multi facet approach so that one group of residents are not shouldering the burden for the rest of the City.

Mayor Lansky stated that there are three ways to generate income: property tax increases, income tax increases, or tax credit reductions. Mayor Lansky stated that if any Council person puts out negative literature, he doesn't think the issue would pass.

Mr. Jackson stated that he would like the tax spread out for everyone to pay equitably. Mr. Brownlee stated that the property tax increase would be more equitable.

Ms. Albers commented that she has been paying taxes since she was 14 and that the Senior Citizens have already paid their fair share throughout their lives. Ms. Albers stated that she believes that the working public should now pay their share. Ms. Albers stated that the Seniors just don't have the money and Mr. Adams agreed.

ORDINANCE NO.: 2014-43

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 414.19 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES REGARDING TRAFFIC LAW PHOTO-MONTORING DEVICES AND TO ESTABLISH AN AUTOMATED SPEED ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM AND CIVIL PENALTIES FOR AUTOMATED SPEED VIOLATIONS IN THE CITY OF MAPLE HEIGHTS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

This Ordinance was on its third Reading. Mr. Jackson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Trojanski to adopt the legislation.

Mr. Brownlee asked Mr. Dorian Grubaugh if the cameras were going to be outlawed by the Supreme Court. Mr. Dorian stated, "No", and that there may be some regulations instituted but not at the present time. Mr. Adams stated that he thought that there is another Senate Bill that would require an officer to be present at the camera. Mr. Dorian Grubaugh stated that there is not much support for the Senate Bill that requires the officer being present as the whole purpose of the cameras is that it frees up the officers so they can take care of the rest of the Police business in the City. Mr. Grubaugh stated that the Supreme Court ruled in 2008 that the cameras were legal, now they are just looking at regulations.

Mr. Brownlee asked Chief Popielarczyk if he feels confident about the installation of the speed cameras. Chief Popielarczyk stated that he is confident that they will be good for the City.

Mr. Brownlee made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jackson to amend Ordinance number 2014-43 to read as follows:

(L) ALLOCATION OF REVENUES

The City shall deposit all revenues from the collection of civil penalties, including any penalties and interest, imposed under the provisions of the Ordinance into a specified fund created only for expense related to the operation of the Maple heights Police Department.

Ms. Albers asked if there was any discussion. Mr. Cefaratti asked if this fund would be in addition to the money already allocated for the Police Department or would it completely fund the department. Mr. Brownlee stated that it simply states that the revenues would go into a fund that is specified for expenses, and be just like the police services levy, all of the money would be for the police expenses that we know of, with additional money coming out of the general fund if necessary to operate the

Police Department. Ms. Crowell stated that the money from the cameras should go into the General Fund as Special Revenue Funds should only be for items set by law or contracts.

Mr. Jackson stated that he feels that this fund is like the Ohio Lottery in that to pass the lottery, the state said that all the money from the lottery would go to the schools, but then the state reduced the school budget, so it was a mute point.

Mr. Grubaugh stated that there are no cities in the law enforcement camera program that has ever put the money in a special fund and that the money is best placed in the General Fund. Mr. Melling agreed with Mr. Grubaugh and Ms. Crowell and stated that Council should go with the recommendation of the Finance Director.

Mr. Brownlee stated that he is happy that the Traffic Camera Program will be headed by the Chief of Police, not only because he thinks that Chief Popielarczyk is capable of running it well, but to specify an individual with his accountability if there are issues in the future. Mr. Brownlee cautioned that everyone must be aware of the public perception of this issue, as everyone knows it will generate revenue for the City. Mr. Brownlee stated that his amendment will clarify the money issue to the public.

Ms. Vopat stated that she has received many calls from the Senior Citizens asking for a camera on their street as they are concerned for the safety of themselves and the children walking to school. Mr. Cefaratti stated that he would like the money to go into the Ambulance Billing Fund, because it would show support for both safety forces: the Police and the Fire Departments.

Clerk Unger called the roll to amend Ordinance Number 2014-43 as stated above. ROLL CALL: Ayes – Cefaratti and Brownlee. Nays – Adams, Jones, Jackson, Trojanski, and Agee. The motion to add the amendment to the Ordinance failed.

Clerk Unger called the roll to adopt Ordinance Number 2014-43 as presented. ROLL CALL. Ayes – Adams, Jones, Cefaratti, Jackson, Brownlee, Trojanski, and Agee. Nays – None. The Ordinance passed by the vote of 7 ayes and 0 nays.

There being no further business to come before this Council, Council President adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Passed: October 1, 2014

ATTEST:

Katherine M. Unger, CMC
Clerk of Council