

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

**Maple Heights Senior Center**

**July 16, 2014**

Council President Jackie Albers called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Human Services Director Linda Vopat 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, Bill Brownlee, Richard Trojanski and Edwina Agee. Absent and excused was Councilman Ron Jackson.

Also present were Mayor Jeffrey Lansky, Law Director John Montello, Finance Director Irene Crowell, Acting Chief John Popielarczyk, and Fire Chief Castelucci, and Human Services Director Linda Vopat.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

From Mayor Jeffrey A. Lansky:

The Mayor's Court report for the month of June, 2014.

**MINUTES AND COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**Fire Department** – Chief John Drsek reported responses to fires on Woodrow Avenue with Bedford Fire Department on June 22<sup>nd</sup> and a garage fire on Cato on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Chief Drsek also explained that when the Fire staffing is at 6, the Dunham station would be closed, due to lack of man power. The Chief reported that when the minimum manning is at 6, the response time can be anywhere from 20 to 7 ½ minutes. Chief Drsek also announced that Ken Schultz retired from the Fire Department on July 3<sup>rd</sup> he would be retiring as Chief on August 1<sup>st</sup>

**Law Department** - Mr. John Montello congratulated Chief Drsek on his retirement.

**Police Department** – Chief John Popielarczyk reported that the Police Department had 2,171 calls for service during the month of June, which brought the current total to 12, 975 for the year. The Chief also reported on the Watson homicide and the solving of a cold case from 1979. Chief Popielarczyk also stated that the traffic cameras would go live next week on Warrensville Center and Broadway.

**Human Service Department** – Mrs. Linda Vopat reported that the shredding day for the residents would be Saturday, September 19<sup>th</sup> at Stafford Park from 9:00 a.m. to noon and that the City was awarded a grant from Cleveland Clinic and Southpoint Hospitals for \$5000.00. Ms. Vopat also thanked everyone who came or worked at the Senior Center fund raiser on June 22<sup>nd</sup> as they raised \$24,526.00 on that day. Ms. Vopat also thanked Chief Drsek for all of his help to the Senior Center and wished him a wonderful retirement

**Finance Department** – Ms. Irene Crowell congratulated Chief Drsek on his retirement and stated that the Finance Department has been working on a plan to get the City back on track and out of the Fiscal Watch designation from the State Auditors.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS:**

Mr. Bob Halen of Maplewood Court commented about the Speed Camera petitions and the need for the passage of the levies.

Mr. Gerald Arnold of 20709 Bowling Green Drive commented about the legal notices for the Special Meetings of Council and stated that even though the amount of time is legally enough, he hoped that Council could find a way to give the residents more time so that they can come to the special meetings. Mr. Arnold also commented about the possible surplus in the Solid Waste Fund and feels that the residents have been over-charged for garbage pick-up.

Ms. Tina Peterson of 18408 Waterbury complained that a flat bed truck is blocking driveways on her street and wanted to know how to solve the problem.

Mr. Frank Artino of 1256 East 331<sup>st</sup> Street, who was a Maple Heights resident for 55 years and 16 years as a Councilman, congratulated everyone for the successful fundraiser on June 22<sup>nd</sup> and commented that he would like to see more Council members at City functions. Mr. Artino also stated that the Maple Heights News Web Site is not the City Web Site and is inaccurate.

**LEGISLATION:**

**RESOLUTION NO.: 2014-59**

**A RESOLUTION REPEALING ORDINANCE NUMBER 2014-44 REMOVING THE CHARTER AMENDMENT FROM THE NOVEMBER 4, 2014 ELECTION, WHICH WOULD DECREASE THE INCOME TAX CREDIT FOR WORKING MAPLE HEIGHTS RESIDENTS FROM 100% TO 50% AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

Mr. Adams made a motion, seconded by Mr. Trojanski to adopt the resolution. ROLL CALL. Ayes: Trojanski, Agee, Adams, Jones, and Cefaratti. Present: Brownlee. The resolution passed by the vote of 5 ayes and 1 present and will become law upon the Mayor's signature.

**ORDINANCE NO.: 2014-60**

**AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE APPROVING THE MAYOR'S 2014 FINANCIAL RECOVERY PLAN AND DIRECTING THAT THE PLAN BE SUBMITTED TO THE FINANCIAL PLANNING AND SUPERVISION COMMISSION AT THEIR FIRST MEETING OF THE FINANCIAL PLANNING AND SUPERVISION COMMISSION FOR THE CITY OF MAPLE HEIGHTS, OHIO**

This Ordinance had its first reading.

**EXPENDITURES OVER \$1,000.00:**

Mr. Adams made a motion, seconded by Mr. Trojanski to approve the expenditures over \$1,000.00 numbered 2014-62 through 2014-70. Mr. Brownlee commented that since the column denoting the available funds is blank, he cannot vote to approve the expenditures as he needs to know that the funds have been appropriated. ROLL CALL. Ayes: Trojanski, Adams and Jones. Nay: Brownlee and Agee. Present: Cefaratti. The motion passed by the majority of three ayes with two nays and one present.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Jeffrey Lansky congratulated Chief Drsek on his 33 year career in the City and stated that he is proud of him and his accomplishments. The Mayor commented about the temporary closing of the Dunham Road Fire Station and stated that this is happening in other cities too. The Mayor explained that both the Police and Fire Departments have had retirements and resignations that the City cannot replace the employees at this time because of the financial conditions. The Mayor stated that the city is close to balancing the budget, and the cuts have been many, but last May the residents have said that they will not pay any more property taxes, so we had to find other revenue. Mayor Lansky stated that the other revenue that we found was the traffic cameras, but a lot of people don't like them. Mayor Lansky stated that the city has been making cuts since 2011 because we knew that there would be shortfalls. The Mayor commented about a recent newspaper article that stated that in 2006 the average price of a home in Maple Heights was \$99,900.00 but in 2012, the average price plummeted to \$23,500.00.00, so the taxes on those home were reflected in less tax money for the City.

**COUNCIL'S REPORT:**

**Councilman Ron Jackson, District 4** was absent.

**Councilman Bill Brownlee, District 5** congratulated Chief Drsek on his retirement and thanked him for his service to the City. Mr. Brownlee commented about the traffic camera issue and stated that the organizers of the petition against the cameras are concerned about their community, and like several of the business owners, believe that the cameras will have a negative impact on the City and businesses. Mr. Brownlee also stated that he spoke with the Mayor of Newburgh Heights, who has had the cameras for over a year, and the Mayor spoke very positively about them, stating that the company was very good and that businesses were not driven away. Mr. Brownlee stated that he believes that the cameras are a great option for the Maple Heights Police force as a way to enforce the speed limits in the community. Mr. Brownlee thanked Mr. Arnold for making the comments about the Special Meeting notices and the Solid Waste Fund, and stated that he agrees that there is enough money collected for the trash fund. Mr. Brownlee stated that his videos on his web site are for the residents who cannot attend the meetings and that the residents who voted against the levy in May were the voice of the people in the City.

**Councilman Richard Trojanski District 6** congratulated Chief Drsek on his retirement and thanked him for his many years of service to the City. Mr. Trojanski announced the winners of

“The Best Yard Contest in District 6” as, First Place: 5266 Camden Road, Second Place: 5228 Camden Road, and Third Place 28112 Franklin Road. Mr. Trojanski asked everyone to pick up a copy of his monthly newsletter on the back table and announced that the next Finance Committee meeting on July 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in the Senior Center. Mr. Trojanski also announced that he is working to create a District 6 Residents’ Neighborhood Association with the first meeting on Saturday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Library at 10:00 a.m. and a Community Cook-out at Stafford Park from 3 to 5 p.m. to meet and greet the officials and neighbors of District 6.

**Councilwoman Edwina Agee, District 7** congratulated Chief Drsek on his retirement and thanked him for his many years of service to the City and announced that she is having a Block Watch Meeting on July 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Library.

**Councilman Alex Adams, District 1** reported on the usual problems in District One including pot holes on Summit, sink holes on Rowena and Longvale, broken catch basins, and other complaints, and thanked Tanya Black and Dennis Lew for their assistance with these problems. Mr. Adams stated that the high grass seems to be under control and he is proud of the residents in District One as most of the houses in the district look good. Mr. Adams also added that Dunham Park is well manicured and thanked Jim Lowe for the good job. Mr. Adams stated that for the amount of men in the Service Department, they are doing a fine job. Mr. Adams congratulated Chief Drsek on his retirement and thanked him for his many years of service, especially in District One where he helped so much with the oil wells and various fires. Regarding the notices for the Special Meetings, Mr. Adams stated that he sends out newsletters, the notices are on the web site and on Facebook, there are two signs in the City and notices in the Neighborhood News. Mr. Adams stated that the residents who want to come to the meetings have a responsibility to find out when they are and that the Council and the Mayor welcomes input from the residents. Mr. Adams stated that he would like the citizens to create a committee to support the levies because the City cannot sustain the deep cuts that we have had without additional revenue and the support of the Community.

**Councilwoman Toni Jones, District 2** stated that one of the reasons that the Council wants to get in touch with John Barnes is that the State has an eight hundred million dollar surplus from the cuts they made to the cities in Ohio, and we wanted to ask him to at least try to get some of the money back for Maple Heights that the State cut from us. Ms. Jones stated that it would be nice if all of the Mayors and Councils who are hurting could work together for some of the money, because Mr. Barnes represents us, just as this Council represents the residents. Ms. Jones stated that the Council has been meeting a lot to try to solve the financial problems in the City and we need to bring everyone together. Ms. Jones stated that, as Mr. Trojanski said, there will be a finance meeting to discuss the Financial Plan for the City on July 28<sup>th</sup> and she hopes that residents will be there and submit their ideas for new revenue. Ms. Jones also announced a Housing and Economic Development Meeting on July 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. regarding Rental Registrations. Ms. Jones stated that the Council is doing their best to keep the residents informed about the Special Meetings but without a newspaper, it is difficult. Ms. Jones stated that if anyone has any better suggestions on how to get the word out for the meetings, just let the Council know.

**Councilman Anthony Cefaratti, District 3** congratulated Chief Drsek on his retirement and thanked him for his service to the City. Mr. Cefaratti also thanked the Police Department for their work in finding and arresting the burglary suspect that has been stealing from the residents all summer long. Mr. Cefaratti also commented that the Library renovations are finally finished and everything looks great.

**Council President Jackie Albers** reported that now that the Library is finished, the Council would like to have meetings or Forums for the residents to come and listen to various topics discussed by the Council and the department heads. Ms. Albers stated that the forums will have question and answer periods regarding the levies, the traffic cameras and other topics that the residents are interested in. Ms. Albers stated that September and October will bring the opportunity to meet and greet as a Community, and to possibly form an advisory committee to keep the residents informed and to support the levies. Ms. Albers also announced that the City has a new employee working in the Mayor's Office who is working on the city's website to update it and that is another way that the residents can find out information. In addition, Ms. Albers stated that a tape recording of the Council meeting and other information is sent to a reporter at the Neighborhood News, a free paper, which is also online, and that she is very good about reporting accurately and fairly. Ms. Albers also commented about the Library renovations, especially the children's area and the new McDonald's restaurant, which will begin construction soon. In regards to the levies, Ms. Albers stated that the clerk has created a chart for the residents, based on their property valuation, to show the amount of money the levies would cost the residents, in addition to what they are already paying. Finally, Ms. Albers commended Chief Drsek on his commitment to the City over the years, and stated that he has attended every meeting in the City because he cares so much and wants to be involved. Ms. Albers stated that it has been a pleasure to work with him, and wishes him the a wonderful retirement.

There being no further business to come before this Council, Council President Jackie Albers adjourned the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

Passed: November 5, 2014

ATTEST:

Katherine M. Unger, CMC  
City of Maple Heights