

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

Maple Height Senior Center

February 7, 2024

MEETING CAUCUS

Council President Jackson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the following Council Members present: Jackson, Shenett, Jones, Tatum, Anderson, Madden and Agee. Councilwoman Stafford Marbury arrived at 6:35 p.m. Also present were Law Director Frank Consolo, Fire Chief Dan Syphen, Police Chief Todd Hansen, Human Services Director Linda Vopat, Finance Director Tinita Tillman, Service Director Tony Ciresi, Planning and Development Director Joe Duffy and Council Clerk Leonette Cicirella Johnson. Mayor Annette M. Blackwell and City Engineer Ed Hren were absent and excused.

Mr. Jackson said that Councilwoman Jones would have the Invocation and lead the Pledge of Allegiance for tonight's meeting. He also said there was an Addendum for tonight's meeting and one (1) Committee Report from the Finance Committee.

Moving to the legislation on tonight's meeting Agenda, Mr. Jackson said **Ordinance No. 2024-11** would authorize all actions necessary to accept the NOPEC 2024 Energized Community Grant(s) and asked if there were any questions on this legislation.

Mr. Jackson said Council had talked about all of the legislation on tonight's Agenda at Monday's Committee of the Whole Meeting.

There being no questions on this legislation, Mr. Jackson said if there were no objections he would ask Council to vote on this legislation at tonight's meeting. There were no objections from Council.

Mr. Jackson asked if there were any questions or comments on **Resolution No. 2024-12** authorizing an Aquatic Facility Management Agreement with Hastings Water Works, Inc. for management of the City's playground for the 2024 Season for a Total Price of \$24,490.00.

Councilman Tatum asked to be added as a Co-Sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. Jackson asked if there were any other questions or comments. There being no other questions or comments, Mr. Jackson said if there were no objections, he would ask Council to vote on this legislation at tonight's meeting. There were no objections from Council.

Moving to **Ordinance No. 2024-13** fixing the Salary and Wage Schedule for Non-Bargaining Unit City Employees for 2024, Mr. Jackson said this Ordinance would be on First Reading.

Mr. Jackson said **Ordinance No. 2024-14** would provide a High Deductible Health Insurance Plan with a Healthcare Savings Account (HSA) and Establish Contribution Amounts to the HSA Accounts for Non-Bargaining Unit City Employees Effective January 1, 2024 and asked if there were any questions on this legislation. There were no questions from Council. Mr. Jackson said

if there were no objections, he would ask Council to vote on this legislation at tonight's meeting. There were no objections from Council.

Mr. Jackson said **Ordinance No. 2024-15** Amending Council's Rules of Order concerning Standing Committees set forth in Section 220.01(e)(3) of the City's Codified Ordinances would be on First Reading.

Mr. Jackson said **Ordinance No. 2024-16** which had been added by Addendum would change the Street Name of Hazelwood Court to Beacon Court and asked if there were any questions from Council on this legislation.

There being no questions or comments, Mr. Jackson said if there were no objections, he would ask Council to vote on this legislation at tonight's meeting. There were no objections from Council.

Mr. Jackson said there were two (2) Expenditures over \$25,000.00 and five (5) Disclosures of Purchase Orders over \$10,000.00 for review at tonight's meeting. He asked if there were any questions on the Lists of Expenditures. There were no questions on the List of Expenditures.

Mr. Jackson asked if there were any other questions or comments from Council.

There being no other questions or comments, the Caucus Meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL

Council President Jackson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following Council Members present: Jackson, Shenett, Jones, Tatum, Anderson, Madden, Stafford Marbury and Agee. Also present were Mayor Annette M. Blackwell, Law Director Frank Consolo, Fire Chief Dan Syphen, Police Chief Todd Hansen, Human Services Director Linda Vopat, Finance Director Tinita Tillman, Service Director Tony Ciresi, Planning and Development Director Joe Duffy and Council Clerk Leonette Cicirella Johnson. City Engineer Ed Hren was absent and excused.

Councilwoman Toni Jones gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Council Clerk Leonette Cicirella Johnson called the roll.

ADDENDUM: There being no objections, the Addendum was added to the Agenda for tonight's meeting.

MINUTES: Mr. Shenett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Jones, to approve the Regular Meeting of Council Minutes of January 17, 2024.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Shenett: Yes; Ms. Jones: Yes; Mr. Tatum: Yes; Ms. Anderson: Yes; Ms. Madden: Yes; Ms. Stafford Marbury: Yes; Ms. Agee: Yes. The motion passed by the vote of seven (7) ayes to zero (0) nays.

Ms. Jones made a motion, seconded by Ms. Anderson, to approve the Special

Meeting of Council Minutes of January 24, 2024.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Shenett: Yes; Ms. Jones: Yes; Mr. Tatum: Yes; Ms. Anderson: Yes; Ms. Madden: Yes; Ms. Stafford Marbury: Yes; Ms. Agee: Yes. The motion passed by the vote of seven (7) ayes to zero (0) nays.

COMMUNICATIONS: There was one (1) Communication for tonight's meeting:

From the Ohio Division of Liquor Control:

Notice regarding an application for the transfer of a C1, C2 and D6 liquor permit from EASYTRANS SERVICES LLC dba MAPLE 1 STOP at 6120 Dunham Road, Maple Heights, Ohio to SELIM FUEL LLC dba MAPLE GAS USA at 6120 Dunham Road, Maple Heights, Ohio.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: There was one (1) Council Committee Report for tonight's meeting:

Finance Committee

Mr. Shenett, Chairman of the Finance Committee, introduced the members of the Finance Committee to include Ms. Agee, Ms. Jones and himself. He said Ms. Jones had information from the County Board of Revision regarding property valuations available on the back table.

Mr. Shenett said one (1) goal or purpose of the Finance Committee was to work with the Administration on the budget and to work with the Mayor, the Directors and the Departments on various issues. He said the Finance Committee also wanted to let residents and individuals know about information that can help them. At this time Mr. Shenett introduced resident Antonio Golston, CPA, Manager of Apple Growth Partners, to discuss important tax issues for the current tax season.

Mr. Golston thanked Mr. Shenett and the Finance Committee for inviting him to speak at tonight's meeting. He said the first thing he always asked his tax clients to do was to request their IRS transcript that listed everything reported under that person's Social Security Number to check for any errors and to make sure the client was reporting all of their income.

Mr. Golston said another issue taxpayers needed to be careful with were the receipt of 1099 statements that will be either 1099 Miscellaneous or 1099 Employee which were used for individuals performing services such as an Uber driver, etc. He said these 1099 forms were used by both the employer and the employee and that if the amount was high enough the individual may be able to get deductions as an employer. Mr. Golston said taxpayers will need to keep track of all ordinary and necessary expenses associated with 1099 work, such as mileage. He said there were two (2) methods to calculate the deduction for mileage, the actual expense method or the use of standard mileage.

Mr. Golston said for individuals who received Social Security benefits, up to 85% can be taxable if the individual had other income. He said individual may have received over \$100,000.00 in Social Security benefits, but it may not be taxable if the individual had no other income.

Mr. Golston said the new and popular Ohio Sports Betting may have tax consequences. He said individuals who won enough under the rules will receive a W-2G for these winnings. Mr. Golston said the IRS allowed taxpayers to offset winnings against losses, but only if the individual filed a Schedule A (itemized deductions). He said a lot of taxpayers do not itemize deductions since the Standard Deduction was usually higher.

Mr. Golston said taxpayers who had high deductible health insurance plans with an HSA account needed to be aware that the contributions to the HSA accounts were taken out pre-tax so these funds were only permitted to be used for qualified medical or health expenditures. He said the individual will pay ordinary income tax if used for non-medical expenses.

Mr. Golston said the last important tax issue he wanted to mention involved recent legislation that was passed in the House that was now in the Senate regarding the refundable portion of child tax credit which was \$1,600.00. He said another issue being considered in the Tax Cut and Jobs Act was to return to the 100% deduction for depreciation expenses that was now at 85%.

Mr. Jackson thanked Mr. Golston for the information he presented at tonight's meeting.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Fire Department – Fire Chief Dan Sypen reported that the total Fire Department calls for 2023 were 5,950 and that total calls for the month of January 2024 were 495.

The Fire Chief announced that next Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. at Maple Heights City Hall the Fire Department will welcome Andrew McBride and Derel Comer as new members of the Maple Heights Fire Department. He said the Fire Department was currently processing one (1) more candidate to fill out its roster.

Fire Chief Sypen concluded his report by thanking the Administration and Council for supporting the Service Department and Safety Forces with the the approved collective bargaining agreements. He said the approved agreement has had a positive effect on the morale of the Fire Department.

Law Department – Law Director Mr. Frank Consolo said the Law Department has been working on a lot of contracts lately. He said Fire Chief Sypen just mentioned the Fire Department collective bargaining agreement and said the City had seven (7) collective bargaining agreements that had been approved by Council at the last Council Meeting. Mr. Consolo reported that the Law Department was in the process of finishing the contracts into their final form so that by the beginning of next week the contracts will be circulated for all the necessary parties to sign.

Mr. Consolo said the Law Department recently completed a couple of agreements with the Service Department regarding the removal of the underground storage tanks at the Service Garage and the installation of above-ground storage tanks. He thanked Mr. Ciresi and Mr. Koudela from the Service Department for their assistance on these contracts and said he was also

working with Mr. Ciresi for a contract with the City of Bedford for dumping at the Schreiber Road Service Area.

Mr. Consolo said the Law Department was working with Police Chief Hansen and HR Director Linker on a Return to Duty Contract for an Officer who had left the Police Department but would now be returning to the MHPD.

Mr. Consolo said there was legislation on tonight's Agenda for Aquatic Facility Management Agreement with Hastings Water Works, Inc. and thanked Human Services Director Vopat for her assistance with this contract.

Mr. Consolo announced that Maple Heights Mayor's Court was looking for a Mayor's Court Assistant who would be able to help with public records and was proficient with the Baldwin software that was used in Mayor's Court.

Mr. Consolo said the Law Department and other members of the Administration would be attending a meeting with representatives from the Cuyahoga County Board of Health and various other cities to discuss the regulation of tobacco products in the City. Mr. Consolo said local governments were no longer able to regulate tobacco products within their communities. He said the Ohio Legislature had passed legislation giving the State control to regulate these products which had been vetoed by Gov. DeWine, but the State Legislature overrode the Governor's veto. Mr. Consolo said the legislation also prevented cities from restricting products such as flavored e-cigarettes and flavored vaping products.

Mr. Consolo said this State legislation has raised the issue of Home Rule under the Ohio Constitution so cities with Home Rule provisions would prefer to be able to pass legislation to regulate these products within their municipality.

Police Department – Police Chief Todd Hansen reported that the total of calls for service to date were 2,000 and announced that the Police Department will be swearing in a new Police Officer, Ryan Tench, on Tuesday, February 14, 2024 at 3:30 p.m. The Police Chief said Mr. Tench will be coming to the MHPD with ten (10) years-experience at the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District. Police Chief Hansen also announced that Officer Westfield has returned to the Maple Heights Police Department.

Police Chief Hansen said there has been a lot of training at the Police Department with new officers and the new training cycle.

The Police Chief said there had been a lot of discussions regarding speeding in the City and residents would ask why the City could not ask the Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) to help with speeding enforcement. Police Chief Hansen said the OSHP was now in Maple Heights due to a change in management at the OSHP. He said the OSHP had authority to come on County routes such as Libby Road so the Police Department will continue to work with them regarding traffic enforcement. The Police Chief said he will continue to update Council Members and residents regarding this matter.

Police Chief Hansen concluded his report by wishing everyone a Happy Valentine's Day.

Human Services Department –Mrs. Vopat reported that during the month of January, the Senior Transit Services provided 550 transportation trips for seniors and/or disabled residents. Mrs. Vopat also reported that for the month of January the Department of Human Services provided 611 congregate meals to seniors and/or disabled residents, delivered 1,555 meals to home-bound residents and registered 12 new clients for the meal program.

With regards to the Maple Heights Food Pantry, Mrs. Vopat reported that 389 households were served during the month of January which provided food for three (3) days for 1,005 residents.

Mrs. Vopat announced that the Senior Transit Services will be expanding to provide transportation services to Ahuja Medical Center in Beachwood and Zak's Supercenter in Bedford. She said these new services will start on February 20, 2024.

Mrs. Vopat reminded everyone to Save the Date for the City's Easter Fest for children ages 12 and under which will be held on Saturday, March 23, 2024 from 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Maple Heights High School Cafetorium. She said children will be able to meet the Easter Bunny and decorate cookies with students from the Remington College Culinary Art School. Mrs. Vopat said a lunch for the children will be provided by Mr. Chicken.

Mrs. Vopat said the AARP Income Tax Services will be available at the Senior Center again this year for residents aged 55 or over and low-income individuals. Mrs. Vopat said residents will need to call the Senior Center to make appointments for these in-person tax services and advised that the Senior Center was already booking appointments into the middle of March.

Mrs. Vopat announced that Cuyahoga County will be offering another Great Estates Planning Program tomorrow evening, February 8, 2024 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Garfield Heights Civic Center located at 54074 Turney Road, Garfield Heights, Ohio. She said transportation services for this event will be available through the Senior Center. Mrs. Vopat said this program was very beneficial to help residents avoid unnecessary costs and delays in settling an estate. She said individuals may register for the event, but registration was not needed to attend.

Mrs. Vopat concluded her report by respectfully requesting that Council pass Resolution No. 2024-12 authorizing the contract with Hastings Works, Inc. to manage the City's aquatic facility for the 2024 season which was scheduled to open the first weekend in June. Mrs. Vopat said under the proposed contract Hastings will open the sprayground and manage it throughout the season. She said the company will also have a supervisor onsite while the sprayground was opened. Mrs. Vopat said Hastings has been an excellent partner for the City. She encouraged the residents to come visit the sprayground which was free to residents. Mrs. Vopat said the Service Department also assisted in maintaining the facility.

Finance Department – Finance Director Ms. Tinita Tillman said she had two (2) months of financial reports to present this evening. She said the Finance Department closed both the month of December and year end for 2023 on January 24, 2024 and reported that for the month and year

ending December 31, 2023 the Unexpended Balance in the General Fund was \$8,725,110.08 and that the Unexpended Balance for All Funds was \$17,487,807.39.

Ms. Tillman said the Finance Department closed the month of January 2024 on February 6, 2024 and reported that as of January 31, 2024 the Unexpended Balance in the General Fund was \$9,063,225.58 and that the Unexpended Balance for All Funds was \$18,008,218.61.

Service Department – Service Director Mr. Tony Ciresi reported that the Schreiber Road Service facility received a perfect score during a recent EPA inspection.

Mr. Ciresi said the Service Department has been taking an aggressive approach regarding trees in the City and reported that twenty-four (24) large trees had been removed by contractors and that Service Department staff removed or trimmed about one hundred (100) small to medium-sized trees. He said all of the trees that were removed or trimmed were either diseased, dead or extremely dangerous.

Mr. Ciresi said during the recent snow storm that dropped 14” of snow in our area the Service Department personnel plowed 36 straight hours. He said with the current temperatures staff will be repairing streets with cold patch. Mr. Ciresi said that over the past five (5) years with the road repair programs that were being done in the City the call volume regarding street complaints has been significantly reduced.

Mr. Ciresi reported that all of the street lights on the Libby Road Bridge were working with the exception of one (1) light. He said that in early spring Service staff will be going street by street to check the street lights to report outages. Mr. Ciresi said if a resident saw a streetlight in need of repair it may get repaired faster if the resident called The Illuminating Company directly to report it. He said residents could also report street light outages via the First Energy website.

Mr. Ciresi concluded his report by announcing that the Service Department will be planning two (2) Community Shred Days, the first on April 20, 2024 at Stafford Park on the east side and the second on September 7, 2024 at St. Andrew Eastern Orthodox Church on the west side.

Planning and Development Director -- Planning and Development Director Mr. Joe Duffy wished everyone a belated Happy New Year and said he wanted to provide an update on a few programs that were available to residents. Mr. Duffy said Cuyahoga County was offering up to \$25,000.00 toward the purchase of a new home. He said this program was available through many local credit unions and larger banks such as Third Federal Savings and Loan and Key Bank. Mr. Duffy said these grants will help offset the higher purchase prices and interest rates that have become normal post-pandemic. He said anyone interested in this program should contact the lender for information regarding this program and to find out if they were eligible to participate.

Mr. Duffy said he recently attended a meeting with a presentation by the Cuyahoga County Treasurer regarding property taxes. He reminded everyone that property taxes were due by February 15, 2024 and encouraged taxpayers to pay online or to call the County Treasurer’s Office if the resident has any payment issues or needed to enter into a payment plan. Mr. Duffy

said the County Treasurer will work with taxpayers rather than penalize them given the large increases in property tax assessments this year in an effort to avoid foreclosures. He recommended that residents who were on fixed incomes and struggling with the tax increase call the County Fiscal Office before the payment deadline at 216-443-7400.

Mr. Duffy said the Building and Housing Departments were finalizing the Grass Cutting Request for Proposals (RFP) for the nuisance abatement of high grass and weeds on privately-owned lots. He said the City was planning to put the grass cutting program out for public bid to qualified grasscutters within the next month or so.

Mr. Duffy concluded his report by reminding property owners that this year was the sexennial or 6-year reappraisal of all properties within the County to re-evaluate the property values. He said the County will have appraisers out checking properties and advised residents that it was anticipated that most values will increase by double digits resulting in an increase in property taxes.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS: Started at 7:41 p.m.

Mr. Lawrence Means residing at 5422 Elmwood Avenue, Maple Heights, Ohio said he wanted to talk about the comment he made at the last Council Meeting and that he did not mean Councilwoman Madden needed to bow down to anyone. Mr. Means said he was a Cavs fan and that the Cavs were playing well because they were playing team ball, people working together. He said that was what needed to be done for the City.

In response, Ms. Madden said she was speaking because her name had been mentioned and that she would continue to work together and try to do what was right. Ms. Madden said just because people did not always agree did not mean they cannot get along.

Citizens Comments closed at 7:47 p.m.

LEGISLATION:

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-11

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACCEPT THE NORTHEAST OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY COUNCIL (NOPEC) 2024 ENERGIZED COMMUNITY GRANT(S), AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Ms. Anderson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tatum, to suspend the rules and pass this Ordinance on emergency. Mr. Jackson asked if there were any questions or discussion on this legislation.

Mayor Blackwell said that NOPEC was the City's energy provider and that part of the money collected from their services was given back to the community in the form of these grants. She

said this money was used for the Music in the Park program, etc. She said the grant needed to be formally accepted Council.

Mr. Jackson asked if there were any other questions or discussion. There being no other questions or discussion, Mr. Jackson asked for the vote to suspend the rules and pass this Ordinance on emergency. On the motion to suspend the rules and pass this Ordinance on emergency, all voted aye, none opposed, the motion passed.

Mr. Jackson asked if there was any other discussion on this Ordinance. There being no additional discussion, Mr. Jackson asked for the vote for passage on emergency.

ROLL CALL on the vote for passage on emergency: Jones: Yes; Tatum: Yes; Anderson: Yes; Madden: Yes; Stafford Marbury: Yes; Agee: Yes; Shenett: Yes. The motion passed by the vote of seven (7) ayes to zero (0) nays. The Ordinance passed on emergency and will become law upon the Mayor's signature.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-12

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AQUATIC FACILITY MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT WITH HASTINGS WATER WORKS, INC. FOR MANAGEMENT OF THE CITY'S SPRAYGROUND AND CONCESSION STAND FOR THE 2024 SEASON, MAY 30, 2024-AUGUST 18, 2024, FOR A TOTAL PRICE OF TWENTY-FOUR THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED NINETY DOLLARS AND ZERO CENTS (\$24,490.00), AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Ms. Jones made a motion, seconded by Mr. Shenett, to suspend the rules and pass this Resolution on emergency. Mr. Jackson asked if there were any questions or discussion on this legislation.

There being no questions or discussion, Mr. Jackson asked for the vote to suspend the rules and pass this Resolution on emergency. On the motion to suspend the rules and pass this Resolution on emergency, all voted aye, none opposed, the motion passed.

Mr. Jackson asked if there was any other discussion on this Resolution. There being no additional discussion, Mr. Jackson asked for the vote for passage on emergency.

ROLL CALL on the vote for passage on emergency: Jones: Yes; Tatum: Yes; Anderson: Yes; Madden: Yes; Stafford Marbury: Yes; Agee: Yes; Shenett: Yes. The motion passed by the vote of seven (7) ayes to zero (0) nays. The Resolution passed on emergency and will become law upon the Mayor's signature.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-13

AN ORDINANCE FIXING THE SALARY AND WAGE SCHEDULE FOR NON-BARGAINING UNIT CITY EMPLOYEES FOR 2024, AND DECLARING AN

EMERGENCY.

This Ordinance was on First Reading.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-14

AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING A HIGH DEDUCTIBLE HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN WITH A HEALTHCARE SAVINGS ACCOUNT (HSA) AND ESTABLISHING CONTRIBUTION AMOUNTS TO THE HSA ACCOUNTS FOR NON-BARGAINING UNIT CITY EMPLOYEES EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2024, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Shenett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Jones, to suspend the rules and pass this Ordinance on emergency. Mr. Jackson asked if there were any questions or discussion on this legislation.

Mr. Shenett asked to be added as a Co-Sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. Jackson asked if there were any other questions or discussion. There being no other questions or discussion, Mr. Jackson asked for the vote to suspend the rules and pass this Ordinance on emergency. On the motion to suspend the rules and pass this Ordinance on emergency, all voted aye, none opposed, the motion passed.

Mr. Jackson asked if there was any other discussion on this Ordinance. There being no additional discussion, Mr. Jackson asked for the vote for passage on emergency.

ROLL CALL on the vote for passage on emergency: Jones: Yes; Tatum: Yes; Anderson: Yes; Madden: Yes; Stafford Marbury: Yes; Agee: Yes; Shenett; Yes. The motion passed by the vote of seven (7) ayes to zero (0) nays. The Ordinance passed on emergency and will become law upon the Mayor's signature.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-15

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING COUNCIL'S RULES OF ORDER CONCERNING STANDING COMMITTEES SET FORTH IN SECTION 220.01(e)(3) OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF MAPLE HEIGHTS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

This Ordinance was on First Reading.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-16

AN ORDINANCE PURSUANT TO R.C. 723.04 CHANGING THE STREET NAME OF HAZELWOOD COURT TO BEACON COURT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Ms. Jones made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tatum, to suspend the rules and pass this Ordinance on emergency. Mr. Jackson asked if there were any questions or discussion on this legislation.

Mr. Shenett said he received the e-mail from the Mayor and thanked her for the clarification with regards to the snowplowing of the street by the City and the clearing of the parking area by the facility.

Mr. Jackson asked if there were any other questions or discussion. There being no other questions or discussion, Mr. Jackson asked for the vote to suspend the rules and pass this Ordinance on emergency. On the motion to suspend the rules and pass this Ordinance on emergency, all voted aye, none opposed, the motion passed.

Mr. Jackson asked if there was any other discussion on this Ordinance. There being no additional discussion, Mr. Jackson asked for the vote passage on emergency.

ROLL CALL on the vote for passage on emergency: Jones: Yes; Tatum: Yes; Anderson: Yes; Madden: Yes; Stafford Marbury: Yes; Agee: Yes; Shenett: Yes. The motion passed by the vote of seven (7) ayes to zero (0) nays. The Ordinance passed on emergency and will become law upon the Mayor's signature.

EXPENDITURES OVER \$25,000.00:

Mr. Jackson said there were Two (2) Expenditures over \$25,000.00 and Five (5) Disclosures of Purchase Orders over \$10,000.00 for review at tonight's meeting. He asked if there were any questions or discussion regarding the **List of Expenditures over \$25,000.00**.

There being no questions or discussion, Mr. Jackson asked for the vote to approve. Ms. Jones made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tatum, to approve the **List of Expenditures over \$25,000.00**.

ROLL CALL on the motion to approve the List of Expenditures: Shenett: Yes; Jones: Yes; Tatum: Yes; Anderson: Yes; Madden: Yes; Stafford Marbury: Yes; Agee: Yes. The motion to approve passed by the vote of seven (7) ayes to zero (0) nays.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Blackwell thanked Mr. Golston for his presentation and asked that he leave his contact information after the meeting. The Mayor said the City sponsored an annual Resource Fair that included representatives from banks, the County Treasurer's Office, the utility companies, etc. to help residents. She said Mrs. Vopat had announced about the AARP tax services. The Mayor said the City has helped residents whenever it can by bringing resources to the residents to try to help them with free services whenever possible.

Mayor Blackwell said she attended a First Suburbs Consortium (FSC) presentation with Planning and Development Director Duffy which included a 45-minute presentation from the Cuyahoga County Treasurer regarding property taxes and collection programs. The Mayor said Community Development Manager Hansberry was working on a program to help residents who were having problems paying property taxes. She said property taxes were an important source of revenue for the City. Mayor Blackwell said the County will also be moving the payment deadline for the First Half of property taxes to a permanent date in February.

Mayor Blackwell said this year was also the sexennial (six-year) reappraisal for property valuations which were judged on comparable sales in the area. The Mayor said property values will probably increase by double digits which will result in increased property taxes. She said the County will be holding meetings in various locations to discuss property values with one meeting to be held in Warrensville Heights.

Mayor Blackwell said residents should read Ordinance No. 2024-15.

The Mayor said Cuyahoga County Executive Chris Ronayne recently came to Maple Heights to tour various parts of the City. She said Mr. Duffy planned the tour. Mayor Blackwell thanked Mrs. Vopat for the use of the senior van for this tour. The Mayor said the Administration wanted the County Executive to see the assets in the City to leverage funding. Mayor Blackwell said he was shown Broadway Avenue, MapleTown, some of the vacant lots in the City, Rid All, Maple Heights Hardware and the new Beacon Grove Senior Facility. The Mayor said she received a note from the County Executive that he was pleased with the visit.

Mayor Blackwell announced that the City received a letter from the County regarding the 2024 County Road Maintenance Reimbursement Program to maintain the County routes in the City. The Mayor said the City had been awarded \$141,600.00 for this program and that City Engineer Ed Hren advised her that this award amount was more than the City received last year. She said the award meant that this amount of money would not need to come from City funds for County road repairs. The Mayor said the City was hoping to do about \$3 million dollars-worth of side street repairs this year. Mayor Blackwell said the Service Department was using cold patch which was a temporary fix and will use hot patch after the asphalt plants opened. She asked residents to be patient and said the City will try to do better communicating with the residents.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Councilwoman Toni Jones, District 2 thanked the Mayor for explaining the County property reappraisal process and said she had left some flyers on the back table regarding property tax information. Ms. Jones said property owners will have until August 1st to file an appeal with the County Board of Revision regarding the valuation of their property as listed on their bill. She said the application for this appeal to challenge the valuation of your property was available online.

Ms. Jones said information was also available for the County Treasurer's Office Easy Pay Program that allowed property owners to pay each month towards their taxes.

Ms. Jones announced that the County Treasurer will be hosting a live presentation on the County's social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) tomorrow, February 8, 2024 at 11:30 a.m. to answer questions regarding property taxes, etc.

Ms. Jones concluded her report by announcing that she had received a letter from the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections advising that the polling location for District 2 voters had been changed for the March Primary Election to the Maple Heights Library. Ms. Jones said electors could also vote by absentee ballot.

Councilman Timothy Tatum, District 3 thanked his colleagues for allowing him to serve on the Community Life and Education and Public Works and Safety Committees and also thanked Mr. Carrington in the Building Department for handling a situation in District 3.

Mr. Tatum said he will be hosting the 2nd Annual Black History Month Program for Seniors and that a Neighbors on Duty Block Watch event will be coming up.

Councilwoman Dana D. Anderson, District 4 said that February was Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month and that teenagers between the ages of 12 to 19 had the highest rates of rape and other physical violence. She said anyone experiencing this type of violence can call 1-866-331-9474 (TTY 1-866-331-8453) for help.

Ms. Anderson announced that the Community Life and Education Committee will be hosting a Black History Mini-Museum celebrating local African-American individuals. She said the event will be held at the Maple Heights Library on Saturday, February 24, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Councilwoman Tanglyn Madden, District 5 said she appreciated the additional police presence to help reduce the speeding on Dalewood and Waterbury Avenues in District 5. She said the speeding was usually more prevalent in the afternoon.

Ms. Madden extended her appreciation to Human Services Director Mrs. Vopat for contacting a resident in her District who was having some issues.

Councilwoman Tina Stafford Marbury, District 6 thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and said she wanted to remind residents of District 6 that the first District Meeting for District 6 will be held on Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. at the Maple Heights Library.

Councilwoman Edwina Agee, District 7 said she wanted to share the following District 7 Cleveland Food Bank Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Distribution statistics for 2023:

79,732 pounds of fresh produce were distributed during the year to approximately 1,857 individuals which included 854 adults, 404 children and 599 seniors. Ms. Agee extended a heartfelt "Thank You" to all of the incredible volunteers who were so dedicated to making this positive impact for these residents.

Ms. Agee announced that the next Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Distribution will be held on Friday, February 9, 2024 from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at 5395 Warrensville Center Road, Maple Heights, Ohio.

Ms. Agee also announced that the Annual District 7 Seniors Meeting for High School Students and their parents/guardian will be held on Thursday, February 15, 2024 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Maple Heights library. Ms. Agee said this meeting will be followed by the District 7 Block Watch Meeting from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Maple Heights Library. She said the District 7 Block Watch Meeting will review her performance by presenting an overview of

District 7 achievements in 2023, discuss the challenges for the District and possible solutions. Ms. Agee said residents will also be able to ask questions and offer comments.

Ms. Agee concluded her report by inviting families to attend the Family Board Game Day to be held on Saturday, February 24, 2024 from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at The Lutheran Church of the Covenant located at 19000 Libby Road, Maple Heights, Ohio. Ms. Agee said she was sponsoring this event in partnership with The Lutheran Church of the Covenant, Equipoise Corporation and the James Kick for Success Foundation to help bring families together and support them.

Councilman Stafford L. Shenett, District 1 announced that the annual Combined District 1 and District 7 Block Watch Meeting will be scheduled for April.

Mr. Shenett thanked the Police Department for their assistance with cars parked overnight in District 1 and also thanked the Law Department for working on a mediation to help resolve an ongoing issue in the District. He said mediation was very helpful for a safe community.

Mr. Shenett concluded his report by stating that families go through difficult times and that the community needed to care for them. He thanked the Mayor for joining him with an “In Memorium” proclamation that he presented to District 1 resident Tyrone Hipps whose son, Tyrone Hipps, Jr. was killed. Mr. Shenett said Mr. Hipps has been involved in the District over the years as a Block Watch Captain.

Council President Ron Jackson thanked everyone for attending tonight’s meeting said it was good to hear about the positive things in the City.

Mr. Jackson announced that the polling location for District 1 voters has been changed for the March Primary Election to the Maple Heights Board of Education located on Lawn Avenue.

There being no further business to come before this Council, Council President Jackson thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

Dated: February 21, 2024

ATTEST:

S/S Leonette Cicirella Johnson
Leonette Cicirella Johnson Clerk of Council