

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

Maple Height Senior Center

February 21, 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, Stafford Marbury and Agee. Also present were Law Director Frank Consolo via Zoom, Fire Chief Dan Sypen, Police Chief Todd Hansen, City Engineer Ed Hren and Council Clerk Leonette Cicirella Johnson. Mayor Annette M. Blackwell, Human Services Director Linda Vopat, Finance Director Tinita Tillman, Service Director Tony Ciresi and Planning and Development Director Joe Duffy were absent and excused.

Mr. Jackson said Councilman Tatum would have the Invocation and lead the Pledge of Allegiance for tonight's meeting and that there were meeting minutes to be approved.

Moving to the legislation on tonight's meeting Agenda, Mr. Jackson said **Ordinance No. 2024-13, As Amended** fixing the Salary and Wage Schedule for Non-Bargaining Unit City Employees for 2024, would be on Second Reading.

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 also be on Second Reading at tonight's meeting.

Mr. Jackson said **Ordinance No. 2024-17** would authorize the application for and acceptance of a Fiscal Year 2023 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for Operations and Safety Equipment and asked Fire Chief Sypen to discuss this legislation.

In response, Fire Chief Sypen said this grant was a FEMA AFG grant for the Fiscal Year 2023 grant cycle. He said this grant money was to be used for operations and safety equipment so with this grant application the Fire Department would be requesting funds to replace three (3) thermal imaging cameras. The Fire Chief said these cameras were used to be able to see through smoke-filled areas and detect heat sources. He said thermal imaging cameras were expensive, costing approximately \$12,000.00 to \$16,000.00 each.

Fire Chief Sypen said the total amount of the grant to be requested was \$50,000.00 with FEMA's portion being \$45,000.00 and the City's matching amount would be approximately \$5,000.00. He said this was a reimbursement grant so the City will need to expend the funds and then receive the grant award funding.

The Fire Chief said under **Ordinance No. 2024-17** the Fire Department was requesting permission for two (2) actions, the first being for permission to apply for the 2023 AFG Grant and the second was permission to accept the grant if awarded. Fire Chief Sypen said the grant

application deadline was March 8, 2024 so he respectfully requested passage on emergency so the Fire Department would be able to meet the grant deadline.

Mr. Jackson asked if there were any questions on **Ordinance No. 2024-17**. Mr. Jackson asked if the cameras were able to see through the fire/smoke environment to which Fire Chief Sypen responded in the affirmative. He said the thermal imaging cameras saw through smoke and darkness to assess the fire spread or locate victims.

Councilman Shenett asked if he could see the camera Fire Chief Sypen had brought to the meeting and asked if the thermal imaging cameras worked by detecting heat sources, to which the Fire Chief responded in the affirmative. Fire Chief Sypen said these cameras helped firefighters detect fire victims and other firefighters.

Mr. Shenett thanked Fire Chief Sypen for his presentation and asked to be added as a Co-Sponsor of this legislation.

Councilwoman Jones asked if the thermal imaging cameras could also be used to check between walls for hidden fires, to which Fire Chief Sypen responded in the affirmative. The Fire Chief said these cameras were used to check for hot spots and structural weaknesses.

Ms. Jones also asked to be added as a Co-Sponsor of this legislation. Mr. Jackson asked to be added as a Co-Sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. Jackson asked if there were any other questions or comments regarding **Ordinance No. 2024-17**. 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.

Mr. Jackson said **Resolution No. 2024-18** would authorize the Community Life and Education Committee to expend public funds and accept private donations to host various community events and asked if there were any questions from Council on this legislation.

Mr. Jackson asked Ms. Anderson if the Community Life and Education Committee was sponsoring a Black History Month Event to which Ms. Anderson responded in the affirmative.

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 **Resolution No. 2024-19** would authorize the City to expend public funds and accept private donations to host various community events and asked if there were any questions on **Resolution No. 2024-19**.

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

Moving to **Resolution No. 2024-20** authorizing application to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) for funds from the Recreational Trails Program and/or Clean Ohio Trails Fund Program, Mr. Jackson asked City Engineer Ed Hren to discuss this legislation.

In response, Mr. Hren said the City has applied to this grant program every year and that May 1st was usually the grant deadline, but this year the grant deadline had been moved up to March 15, 2024.

Mr. Hren said the earlier TLCI (Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative) study that had been done for the City under NOACA had suggested that a bike path be added to Southgate Park Boulevard. He said now that this project would be underway, it would be a good time to apply for funding to add a trail linking Southgate Park Boulevard and Stafford Park.

Mr. Hren said the proposed multi-purpose trail would extend beyond the stadium and would utilize the existing sidewalk between Liberty Ford and the Fire Department and join with Southgate Park Boulevard. He said the trail would actually replace this sidewalk. Mr. Hren said the trail would be strictly for pedestrian use, but there would be removable bollards for emergency vehicles to get into the park if necessary.

Mr. Hren said he did not have a final cost for the proposed project but estimated it to be approximately \$500,000.00 to \$750,000.00. He said typically the matching funds for this grant would be about 20% of the grant amount awarded so maybe \$100,000.00 would not be covered. Mr. Hren said the City could use CDBG grant funds or other sources to make up this difference.

Mr. Hren said **Resolution No. 2024-20** would only authorize the City to apply for the grant, but the City would not need to accept the grant until it was awarded.

Mr. Jackson asked if there were any questions on **Resolution No. 2024-20**.

Mr. Shenett asked if the difference that other grants could cover was the 20% Mr. Hren described, to which Mr. Hren responded in the affirmative. Mr. Hren said the "local match" meant another grant was being used and did not necessarily need to be City funds.

Mr. Jackson asked if there were any other questions or comments on this legislation. 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.

Mr. Jackson said **Resolution No. 2024-21** authorized the contract with Lake County Nursery to purchase trees for installation at Stafford Park to expand the tree canopy in the City of Maple Heights and asked Mr. Hren to discuss this legislation also.

In response, Mr. Hren said this legislation was the result of a grant between the Cuyahoga County Board of Health (CCBOH) and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) for the purpose of planting trees within the County. Mr. Hren said Council had passed earlier legislation authorizing the City to sign a sub-recipient agreement for this project, after the Board of Health had asked the City to administer this grant since Maple Heights had experience

with tree programs such as the Healthy Tree Canopy Grant Program (HTCP). He said the same process will be used as was used for the other tree planting projects such as the Dunham Road and Northeast Quadrant of Hansen, Watson and Raymond Streets projects.

Mr. Hren said for this project the City solicited RFPs for the purchase of trees and will be coming back to Council at a later time with the RFPs for the contract to install the trees. Mr. Hren said the trees will be planted where the ball fields had been demolished near the Fitness Trail.

Mr. Hren said under this legislation fifty (50) trees will be purchased for this project, with each tree being approximately 2 ½ “ caliper or diameter.

Mr. Jackson asked if there were any questions 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. Hren thanked Council and said representatives from the CCBOH would like to come before Council with a presentation regarding the tree program.

Mr. Jackson said **Ordinance No. 2024-22** was the final item of legislation on the agenda for tonight’s meeting and had been added by addendum. He said this legislation would amend various Sections of Title Four – Taxation, Chapter 891 – Earned Income Tax Regulations of the MH Codified Ordinances and asked if there were any questions from Council. Mr. Jackson said although Law Director Consolo was not present at tonight’s meeting, he was available by telephone to answer any questions. There were no questions from Council regarding **Ordinance No. 2024-22**. There being no questions or comments, Mr. Jackson asked Council to vote on this legislation tonight.

Mr. Jackson said there were no Expenditures over \$25,000.00, only two (2) 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 6:46 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 via Zoom, Police Chief Todd Hansen and Council Clerk Leonette Cicirella Johnson. Fire Chief Dan Syphen, Human Services Director Linda Vopat, Finance Director Tinita Tillman, Service Director Tony Ciresi, Planning and Development Director Joe Duffy and City Engineer Ed Hren were absent and excused.

Councilman Tim Tatum 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: Ms. Anderson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Jones, to approve the Regular Meeting of Council Minutes of February 7, 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. Anderson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tatum, to approve the revised 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.

COMMUNICATIONS: There were no Communication for tonight's meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: There were two (2) Council Committee Announcements for tonight's meeting:

Finance Committee

Mr. Shenett, Chairman of the Finance Committee, announced that there will be a Finance Committee Meeting to be held on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the 2nd Floor Council Chambers, Maple Heights City Hall.

Housing and Economic Development Committee

Ms. Stafford Marbury, Chairwoman of the Housing and Economic Development Committee announced that there will be a Housing and Economic Development Committee Meeting to be held on Thursday, February 29, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in Room 7, Maple Heights City Hall.

At this time Mr. Jackson announced that District 6 Councilwoman Ms. Stafford Marbury had been appointed to the open position on the Community Life and Education Committee.

Ms. Stafford Marbury said she respectfully declined this appointment to the Community Life and Education Committee.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS: There were no Department Reports for tonight’s meeting due to a change in the meeting format to present Department Reports only the first Council Meeting of the month.

COMMENTS FROM CITY RESIDENTS: Started at 7:06 p.m.

Ms. Linda Sekura of 20508 Libby Road, Maple Heights, Ohio, said she had some questions regarding **Ordinance No. 2024-15** and said the legislation was vague and ambiguous. She asked what the word “review” meant and said she was concerned about the possibility of Council controlling departments and that some departments required special certifications for their employees.

Mr. Jackson asked Ms. Agee if she wanted to respond this comment.

In response, Ms. Agee said the legislation said “review” and that the resident was reading into it and not what it said.

In response, Ms. Jones said Council should be able to discuss things with departments and that since she had been on Council it had not seen any action plans.

In response, Mr. Shenett said in regards to communications with departments, for example with Mr. Consolo in the Law Department, he said Council did not try to direct departments but rather would ask for information from the departments. Mr. Shenett said Council recognized that departments have different skill sets than Council so Council worked with them in a legislative way.

In response to Ms. Jones Mayor Blackwell said she was sorry that Council did not see any action plans and that Council received the legislation and additional information in their council packets the Friday before the Council Meeting.

Ms. Jones said she did not want her comment misconstrued and said that individual Council members did not get involved in the day-to-day department operations. Ms. Jones said she was just trying to clarify that if departments had action plans, Council was not part of that and did not know about that.

Mr. Lawrence Lane residing at 14908 Rockside Road, Maple Heights, Ohio, said he was concerned about the malicious and personal agenda of some City officials that had nothing to do with helping Maple Heights. He said maybe they needed to grow up and realize we were all stakeholders.

Ms. Diane Giersz of 19244 Stafford Avenue, Maple Heights, Ohio, said she had a problem with a loose dog so she called the non-emergency Police Department phone number since the City did not have an Animal Warden. Ms. Giersz said she was able to secure the dog and a Police Officer came and took the dog to the County Shelter. She thanked the Police Department for the Officer’s attention and help in this matter. She said the City needed to help residents know about

license requirements for animals and perhaps to help residents to be able to get their pets spayed and neutered.

Ms. Giersz said she attended the District 7 Block Watch Meeting and there was discussion about litter in the neighborhoods. Ms. Giersz said she was wondering if the schools could get involved and perhaps organize volunteer youth groups to help with this problem or if there would be some risk for this type of program.

Ms. Giersz concluded her comments by asking residents to keep their porch lights on for safety, especially for children walking to school.

In response, Mayor Blackwell asked Chief Hansen to respond regarding the Animal Warden.

Police Chief Hansen said the City was looking to hire someone for the position of Animal Control Officer. He said the City did have cages, but cannot care for the animals. The Police Chief said the City has asked the County Animal Protective League, vets, other animal non-profit agencies for assistance but they have limited staff and resources also. Police Chief Hansen the cities of Bedford and Bedford Heights share Animal Control Officers and the City of Solon contracted with an animal control business. He said the City looked into this option, but this has become a problem for other cities also.

Police Chief Hansen said last year the Police Department seized ten (10) dogs/puppies but needed to follow procedures and secure warrants to do this. He said after they took the dogs the City contacted a number of agencies, other cities and non-profits for assistance, but all communities have limited capacities.

Police Chief Hansen said the Police Department was the back-up for the Animal Control Officer so residents can call the non-emergency Police number at 216-662-1234 for help with an animal. He advised residents to call 911 however if the dog was attacking someone or another animal.

Ms. Kimberly Fuller residing at 19616 Beverly Avenue, Maple Heights, Ohio, said her mother lived near Milkovich Middle School and said the children were out of control. She said a shooting occurred on February 9th and said that juveniles have been fighting in her mother's yard. Ms. Fuller said as one student from the Middle School was being arrested he threatened to kill another child. She said there has also been a problem with large groups of about 25 juveniles gathering in her mother's yard since someone drove through her fence. Ms. Fuller said juveniles have continued to disrespect her mother and her mother's property. Ms. Fuller said she called the police and the juvenile did not budge until a second police officer pulled out a gun and asked him to leave.

Ms. Fuller said children needed to listen to their parents and school staff and asked if there was any type of mentoring program. She said with the weather getting warmer, it will get worse.

In response, Mayor Blackwell said the school had a School Resource Officer and that the City worked with the City Schools. She said the problem of juvenile crime and delinquency was a societal problem, but the City will continue to work with the schools. The Mayor said the City

also had a Juvenile Diversion Program and had hired students as employees during the summer. Regarding the issue of the fence that had been damaged, Mayor Blackwell said Ms. Fuller's mother could apply to the City for an Exterior Home Repair Grant to repair/replace the fence.

In response, Police Chief Hansen said Police Officers patrol by the schools and have worked with the School District to stagger the dismissal times for the Middle School and the High School so Officers would be present.

The Police Chief said juvenile delinquency was a societal problem and that this behavior was a breakdown in respect for themselves, their teachers, elders, etc. He said the Police Department will continue to work with the schools and will attend all community events to try to interact with children and be a positive influence on the children.

Police Chief Hansen said the Juvenile Diversion Program was a more teaching-based program and that at the County level the Judges and the juvenile justice system were overwhelmed. He said at the JV level Police Departments were required to follow different holding times for juveniles who were arrested as compared to adults. As an example, the Police Chief said a juvenile arrested on a misdemeanor charge can only be held for two (2) hours and a juvenile arrested on a felony charge can only be held for six (6) hours. The Chief said the kids know this.

Police Chief Hansen said the Police needed help from the juvenile's family members and peers. He said it needed to start at home, at church, with people that the young person knows.

Mayor Blackwell asked Police Chief Hansen to address the comment about the officer pulling out a weapon.

In response, Police Chief Hansen said Police Officers have pepper ball guns that were like a paint ball gun. He said these guns were a less lethal tool. The Police Chief said the police officer will pull out this weapon at times to use it as a deterrent or as a threat of force. Police Chief Hansen also advised residents that if they call police, let the Police Officers handle the situation after they arrive.

Ms. Janet Coker of 5425 E. 141st Street, Maple Heights, Ohio, said she was a 48-year resident of E. 141st Street and complained about drivers speeding down her street. Ms. Coker said she was almost hit recently when she was shoveling the apron of her driveway.

Ms. Coker said there were also problems with littering, parking on front lawns and residents keeping trash containers out after trash collection. She asked why the City Ordinances were not being enforced.

Ms. Coker said the Police Department did get things done and also thanked Mr. Carrington from the Building Department for following-up on issues.

In response, Mayor Blackwell said the City was working on the use of speed tables and that the City had a Traffic Calming Study last year. She said the City must follow ODOT rules and will be starting a pilot program to reduce speeding.

The Mayor also said that residents should contact their Councilperson with any concerns and the Councilperson will contact the correct department such Building, Service, etc.

Mr. Daniel Scoglietti residing at 5343 Elmwood Avenue, Maple Heights, Ohio, said in response to the previous comment regarding the problems with the Middle School students that 78% of black families were single-parent families.

Mr. Scoglietti said that what happened last week was an embarrassment to the City and will chase residents and businesses away. He asked the Mayor to have a meeting with the Council members to work it out.

In response, Mr. Shenett said the comment regarding black families was not fair and that this was a societal problem. He said there have been struggles and many families were challenged and that it took diversity to make things better, to understand history and determine where we are going. Mr. Shenett said Church was important and that juveniles do not see love. He said young people needed to see love. Mr. Shenett said everyone was trying to do the best for the youth and to help parents. He said the problem was more complicated than just a percentage and that some single Moms were doing a great job.

At this time, the Comments from City Residents had extended to 45 minutes. Per Council Rule 220.01(c)(9), Mr. Jackson asked for a Motion to Extend the Time for Comments from City Residents. So moved, by Ms. Jones and seconded by Mr. Shenett. On the motion to extend the time all voted aye, none opposed, the motion passed.

Ms. Moneka Lewis of 6261 Dunham Road, Maple Heights, Ohio, said she had heard the news reports and said there may be disagreements but this was not good for the City. She asked what was Council doing to address the safety issues.

In response, Mr. Jackson said with regards to the safety issues he was not sure what could be done. He said it all started with mutual respect.

Ms. Shirley Merritt residing at 17000 Libby Road, Maple Heights, Ohio, said she was embarrassed by what happened and asked why was there prayer before the Council Meeting since people were disrespecting each other, children were disrespecting other people and property. Ms. Merrick said love was free and that we all needed to do the work of the City.

Citizens Comments closed at 8:06 p.m.

LEGISLATION:

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-13, As Amended

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

This Ordinance was on Second Reading.

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 Second Reading.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-17

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND FIRE CHIEF TO APPLY FOR, AND IF AWARDED, ACCEPT, WITH MATCHING FUNDS OF 10% OF THE AWARD, A FISCAL YEAR 2023 ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT (AFG) FROM THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA) FOR OPERATIONS AND SAFETY EQUIPMENT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Ms. Jones made a motion, seconded by Mr. Shenett, to suspend the rules and pass this Ordinance 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 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: Tatum: Yes; Anderson: Yes; Madden: Yes; Stafford Marbury: Yes; Agee: Yes; Shenett: Yes; Jones: 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. 2024-18

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COMMUNITY LIFE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE TO EXPEND PUBLIC FUNDS AND ACCEPT PRIVATE DONATIONS TO HOST THE FOLLOWING 2024 COMMUNITY EVENTS: BLACK HISTORY EVENT; HEALTH & WELLNESS & MENTAL HEALTH FAIR; SUMMER FESTIVAL/EVENT; FALL EVENT; AND HOLIDAY EVENT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Ms. Jones made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tatum, 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: Tatum: Yes; Anderson: Yes; Madden: Yes; Stafford Marbury: Yes; Agee: Yes; Shenett; Yes; Jones: 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.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-19

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO EXPEND PUBLIC FUNDS AND ACCEPT PRIVATE DONATIONS TO HOST THE FOLLOWING 2024 COMMUNITY EVENTS: EASTER FEST; MUSIC IN THE PARK; FALL FEST AND HOLIDAY LIGHTING EVENT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Ms. Jones made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tatum, 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: Tatum: Yes; Anderson: Yes; Madden: Yes; Stafford Marbury: Yes; Agee: Yes; Shenett; Yes; Jones: 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.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-20

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO APPLY TO THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (ODNR) FOR FUNDS FROM THE RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM AND/OR CLEAN OHIO TRAILS FUND PROGRAM IN THE CITY OF MAPLE HEIGHTS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

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

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

Mr. Shenett said he appreciated this legislation as discussed by City Engineer Ed Hren regarding the project to plant trees at Stafford Pak to beautify the park.

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 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 passage on emergency.

ROLL CALL on the vote for passage on emergency: Tatum: Yes; Anderson: Yes; Madden: Yes; Stafford Marbury: Yes; Agee: Yes; Shenett: Yes; Jones: 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.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-21

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH LAKE COUNTY NURSERY TO PURCHASE TREES FOR INSTALLATION AT STAFFORD PARK, AS PART OF THE CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH (CCBH) - OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (ODNR), DIVISION OF FORESTRY, URBAN TREE CANOPY RESTORATION PROJECT TO EXPAND THE TREE CANOPY IN THE CITY OF MAPLE HEIGHTS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

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

Mr. Shenett said he had made a mistake and that his previous comment was intended for this Resolution and not **Resolution No. 2024-20**.

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 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 passage on emergency.

ROLL CALL on the vote for passage on emergency: Tatum: Yes; Anderson: Yes; Madden: Yes; Stafford Marbury: Yes; Agee: Yes; Shenett: Yes; Jones: 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. 2024-22

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING VARIOUS SECTIONS OF TITLE FOUR - TAXATION, CHAPTER 891 - EARNED INCOME TAX REGULATIONS, OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF MAPLE HEIGHTS TO ADOPT UPDATES TO CONFORM TO HOUSE BILL 33, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Ms. Jones made a motion, seconded by Mr. Shenett, 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 that as information for the public this legislation from the State included language that will reduce late fees with regards to municipal income taxes and also provided a waiver if this was the taxpayer's first time being late.

Mayor Blackwell said this legislation will require annual income tax returns from all residents and stated that the largest stream of revenue for the City was from income taxes, the second largest was from property taxes followed by funding from the Local Government Fund and then grants. She said RITA was following the State requirement reducing fees and that part of the legislation was to help residents to file their income taxes. The Mayor said the legislation also addressed remote workers and granted a thirty (30) day due date extension for non-individual filers.

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: Tatum: Yes; Anderson: Yes; Madden: Yes; Stafford Marbury: Yes; Agee: Yes; Shenett: Yes; Jones: 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 No Expenditures over \$25,000.00 for review at tonight's meeting, only Two (2) Disclosures of Purchase Orders over \$10,000.00.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Blackwell spoke out against **Ordinance No. 2022-15** to amend the Council Rules to add a Government Affairs Committee. The Mayor said Ms. Agee was on Council in 2014 when the City was in fiscal watch and in 2015 when the City went into fiscal emergency.

Mayor Blackwell said she inherited the City being in fiscal emergency but worked to get the City out of fiscal emergency and asked what part did Council play in this or in generating the amount of money in the General Fund, the increase in the City's bond rating or the City's clean audit award two-years in a row. The Mayor said the City had the ribbon cutting for the senior housing facility at Beacon Court. She asked why did the City need a Government Affairs Committee. Mayor Blackwell said the City needed a Government Affairs Committee in 2014. The Mayor said the administration got the City out of fiscal emergency and that Ms. Agee did not propose the Government Affairs Committee in 2014.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Councilman Timothy Tatum, District 3 said he will be attending a NOCCA Forum tomorrow at 6:00 p.m. to network with other communities' Council people.

Mr. Tatum congratulated Rid-All for receiving a Citizen Diplomat Award regarding urban farming. Mr. Tatum said he also participated with other elected officials in the opening of the Beacon Grove Senior facility. He thanked the Mayor for bringing these facilities to the City.

Mr. Tatum said he supported the Mayor and that we need to do what is right to move the City forward. He said no other City had a Government Affairs Committee.

Councilwoman Dana D. Anderson, District 4 said the Mayor has done a lot of great things for our City and that she got us out of fiscal emergency. Ms. Anderson said the Mayor and the Departments did not need an overseer.

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, 2nd Floor, on Saturday, February 24, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Councilwoman Tanglyn Madden, District 5 said Beacon Grove was located in District 5 and that it was a wonderful facility. She said there was a great turnout for the grand opening.

Ms. Madden said over 90% of the legislation presented to Council was passed by Council, so Council did work together with the Administration to move the City forward.

Councilwoman Tina Stafford Marbury, District 6 thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and announced that Shekinah Wellness Center located in District 6 at 5131 Warrensville Center Road will be hosting a Women's History Business Mixer to celebrate Women's History Month on March 8, 2024 from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Ms. Stafford Marbury said RSVPs were required for this event and that more information was available online at www.skekinahwellnesscenter.com.

Ms. Stafford Marbury also announced that the MetroParks Zoo Crew was offering activities for children ages 13 to 17. She said registration for this program would be through March 1, 2024.

Councilwoman Edwina Agee, District 7 said in response to Mr. Tatum's comment that the no other City had a Government Affairs Council Committee that the legislation presented in **Ordinance No. 2024-15** came from the City of Shaker Heights.

In response to the Mayor's Report, Ms. Agee said in 2014 and 2015 she raised concerns but was only one person. Regarding **Ordinance No. 2024-15**, Ms. Agee said this legislation was not about wanting the Mayor's power or anybody's power. She said that if the Mayor had concerns about the legislation she could have discussed it with Ms. Agee who would have been willing to talk with her.

At this point, Mr. Jackson asked for order as residents had started talking and shouting, interrupting Ms. Agee's report.

Mr. Jackson asked Ms. Agee to continue her report. In response, Ms. Agee said she was finished with her report since the residents wanted to hear only one side of the story and that no matter what she said, they would not believe her.

Councilman Stafford L. Shenett, District 1 said before he began his report he wanted to remind everyone that they needed to be fair and needed to be respectful. He said even if we did not agree with someone, at the end of the day we needed to let everyone speak. He said all the people on Council had good hearts.

Mr. Shenett thanked the Police Department for assisting him with an abandoned/vacant property in District 1. He said the Police Department was able to contact the prior occupant. He also thanked the Police Department for their assistance with an issue of cars parked overnight on the street because of too many vehicles for the driveway.

Mr. Shenett also thanked Mr. Carrington from the Building Department for his prompt and professional response to violations in his District and also thanked the Building Department for assisting with a wire that was down near a District 1 business.

Mr. Shenett concluded his report by stating that he was encouraged by the Police Department's efforts with regards to hiring an Animal Control Office. Mr. Shenett said he has been receiving a number of calls about dogs.

Councilwoman Toni Jones, District 2 said the City was fortunate to have Mayor Blackwell.

Ms. Jones announced that property owners in Cuyahoga County who have not already paid the first half property taxes will have until February 25, 2024 to pay these taxes without interest and penalties.

Council President Ron Jackson said everyone was passionate about their positions, but there were rules and regulations for public meetings. Mr. Jackson said he tried to give everyone a chance to speak and that Council had changed their Rules to expand the Citizens' Comments section. He said everyone needed to be respectful of the person speaking and that people should not talk over the person speaking. It said that was disrespectful.

Mr. Jackson said the City has made great strides over the last few years and we should be appreciative of that.

Mr. Jackson concluded his report by thanking everyone for coming tonight.

There being no further business to come before this Council, Council President Jackson thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

Dated: March 20, 2024

ATTEST:

S/S Leonette Cicirella Johnson

Leonette Cicirella Johnson, Clerk of Council