



CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

Monday, November 2, 2020 Minutes

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

6:48 – 7:41 p.m.

Mayor Stein presiding

Roll Call: Present: Dunbar, Russell, Seren, Stein, Ungar
Excused: Hart

Staff Present: Boland, Butler, Clinkscale, Freeman, Hanna, Himmelein, Lambdin, McRae, Mecklenburg, Niermann O’Neil, Smith, Trupo, Wong

Topic discussed: Boards and Commissions vacancies

CITY COUNCIL

7:41 – 8:46 p.m.

Mayor Stein presiding

Roll Call: Present: Dunbar, Russell, Seren, Stein, Ungar
Excused: Hart

Staff present: Boland, Butler, Clinkscale, Freeman, Hanna, Himmelein, Lambdin, McRae, Mecklenburg, Niermann O’Neil, Smith, Trupo, Wong

Minutes from the City Council meeting held Monday, October 19, 2020, were approved with submitted edits.

Personal communications received from citizens (via electronic mail)

Amy Himmelein read a comment from Xhulio Pogace requesting an extension of overnight parking near the corner of Yorkshire and Lee.

Amy Himmelein read a comment from Phillip Bounthisavath regarding the Cleveland 19 News article titled, “Man walking around Cleveland Heights with long-gun quoted as saying ‘He’s going to kill Black people.’”

Amy Himmelein read a letter of support from Rev. Regis Bunch regarding a robust recycling program.

Amy Himmelein read a comment from Imane Boon about limited street parking near Lee and Yorkshire.

Amy Himmelein read a comment from Lauren Lee requesting additional parking accommodations for Yorkshire.

Amy Himmelein read a comment from Rosa Kovalevich regarding Resolution 120-2020 and asking for points of clarification about the Task Force and Police training.

Amy Himmelein read a comment from Randolph Givens asking about development at Severance Town Center.

Amy Himmelein read a comment from Gigi Patsch requesting information about grants available through the City and CARES Act to help local businesses. Susanna Niermann O'Neil stated that there is \$300,000 available and applications will be available online Wednesday for small businesses in Cleveland Heights.

Report of the City Manager

Susanna Niermann O'Neil stated the City is being conservative about reopening buildings including the Community Center as the County almost went to purple a few days ago. We are in communication with the Health Department, but do not intend to open any time soon.

The Chief will respond regarding the work they've been doing regarding the incident with a man carrying a gun.

Susanna Niermann O'Neil thanked Richard Wong for his service of over 20 years to the City. He's been a vital part of the City Hall team. He has staffed the Architectural Board of Review, Board of Zoning Appeals, the Planning Commission, Transportation Advisory Committee, and taken part in the Community Center and various townhomes that have been built around the city.

Report of the Chief of Police

Chief Mecklenburg stated there is still an active investigation for two of the murders that occurred in the past couple months. There are no updates, but police are following up on leads.

There were a couple of shots fired over the weekend – one on Monticello Boulevard that ended up being a dispute between a boyfriend and girlfriend where the man fired a round into the ground. Nobody was injured by the gunshots, but she did suffer some other injuries. On November 1, a male arrived in the emergency room with a gunshot to the thigh, but is not cooperating in the investigation.

Regarding the incident on Blanche Avenue, detectives are finalizing their investigation. During follow-up on the comment that he was going to shoot black people, nobody admitted to having heard that from the man on Blanche with a rifle. There are no

confirmed reports. There are some leads as to the original post. While there is no evidence to substantiate that claim, police are taking it very seriously.

There was a fatal accident that started as a pursuit out of East Cleveland. The driver took out some poles at a high speed and was injured severely in the accident. There were two passengers that suffered minor injuries.

The contract with Cleveland State University has been signed. Police training will begin next week. The Chief will be providing Dr. Dunn with data and policies for review.

Vice Mayor Seren asked if a Council Member could audit a training so they know what officers are learning. The Chief said she would discuss it with Dr. Dunn.

Council Member Dunbar asked if carrying a rifle is permitted under Ohio law. Chief Mecklenburg stated that Ohio does have an open carry law which permits one to carry a firearm in a public area with certain exceptions.

Report of the Clerk of Council

No report

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Council Member Ungar stated there are many things that people can do in our community that are facially legal, but it doesn't mean that we as a community have to sanction them or tolerate them.

Council Member Ungar asked people to drive past the Top of the Hill development to see progress.

He requested an update from staff on the Master Plan.

Council Member Ungar stated he worked closely with Richard Wong when he chaired the Planning Commission and his well-deserved retirement is a loss for the city. He thanked him for his integrity, honesty, class and candor.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION NO. 120-2020 (PSH). A Resolution establishing a Racial Justice Task Force and prescribing the composition, duration, purpose and duties of such Task Force

Introduced by Council Member Ungar, Seconded by Council Member Russell

Council Member Ungar stated Resolution 78-2020 was the precursor to this, condemning the murder of George Floyd and declaring racism to be a public health crisis. This resolution establishes a Racial Justice Task Force which will be comprised of 25 members. The application will be posted online. Each Council Member is able to

designate a task force member, then Council needs to approve the committee by consensus. He would favor video being made available. The purpose of the task force is to analyze racial justice and equity within the City of Cleveland Heights and make recommendations. He thanked everyone that worked on this legislation.

Council Member Russell thanked colleagues for supporting this task force. She stated the important of justices, not only with law enforcement, but with housing, businesses, and all aspects of the community. She stated that as a large committee, they will be able to break out into different focuses.

Bill Hanna stated there is a blank in Section 2 of the resolution to provide for the initial period of work of the task force. It can be extended by Council. He stated including that time frame now would include it in the vote.

Mayor Stein asked Council Member Ungar what month period he wanted to include. Council Member Ungar suggested nine months which can be extended. Council Member Russell agreed that was a good start and seconded it. Vice Mayor Seren asked if they needed to move to amend. Bill Hanna stated it was a matter of clarifying that the motion to adopt is for an initial period of nine months to be provided in Section 2.

Roll Call: Ayes: Russell, Seren, Stein, Ungar, Dunbar
Nays: None

Legislation Passed

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE

ORDINANCE NO. 121-2020 (AS). An Ordinance amending Ordinance No. 17-2020, “Wage and Salary Ordinance,” to authorize a 27th pay-period in the 2020 calendar year

Introduced by Vice Mayor Seren, Seconded by Council Member Dunbar

Roll Call: Ayes: Seren, Stein, Ungar, Dunbar, Russell
Nays: None

Legislation Passed

Vice Mayor Seren moved to appoint Melissa Fliegel to the Board of Zoning Appeals contingent on Denver Brookers’s resignation from the Board of Zoning Appeals. The motion was seconded by Council Member Dunbar. Mayor Stein explained this had been discussed in Committee of the Whole.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ungar, Dunbar, Russell, Seren, Stein
Nays: None

Motion Passed

Vice Mayor Seren moved to appoint Denver Brooker to the Architectural Board of Review contingent on Melissa Fliegel’s resignation from the Architectural Board of Review. The motion was seconded by Council Member Dunbar.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ungar, Dunbar, Russell, Seren, Stein
Nays: None

Motion Passed

Vice Mayor Seren thanked Richard Wong for his service to the city, particularly for his kind, patient and calm way.

Vice Mayor Seren requested Council consider having a discussion on the Council vacancy in open session. He stated his first choice is Anthony Maddox because he spent months campaigning next to him and heard what he had to say, sat in forums with him and listened to his answers, and his convictions and values match our city. His second choice is Tony Cuda as he saw his dedication to the Elected Mayor issue which was something he believed would benefit the community. Regarding Craig Cobb, Vice Mayor Seren stated he thought it was important to avoid appointing someone twice. He stated he has some concerns with Robert Koontz on an ideological basis.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION NO. 122-2020 (CRR). A Resolution declaring November 28, 2020, “Small Business Saturday”

Introduced by Council Member Russell, Seconded by Council Member Ungar

Roll Call: Ayes: Dunbar, Russell, Seren, Stein, Ungar
Nays: None

Legislation Passed

Council Member Russell stated that Council Member Hart was unable to attend due to her mother’s stroke. Budget information will be in the packet soon with a description of changes. Staff and residents have been involved in drafting committees.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

No report

MUNICIPAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION NO. 123-2020 (MS). A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the County of Cuyahoga to perform certain services to help maintain the City’s sanitary and storm sewers

Introduced by Council Member Dunbar, Seconded by Council Member Ungar

Roll Call: Ayes: Russell, Seren, Stein, Ungar, Dunbar
Nays: None

Legislation Passed

Council Member Dunbar clarified that even though she asked about the open carry law, it in no way means that she supports what was going on.

Council Member Dunbar stated that the Transportation Advisory Committee had a meeting this past week where they had a presentation from RTA about how they proposed changing the routes. They worked with a consultant who said frequency of service would help with ridership, but the trade-off is a reduction in routes. However, one improvement is proposed to go directly from Noble to Tri-C Metro on the same bus, and she suggested calling that our Opportunity Corridor.

Council Member Dunbar stated that as part of the Heights Bicycle Coalition, she extended her heartfelt thanks to Richard Wong for his support on initiatives to make Cleveland Heights more bicycle friendly and to generally improve options for getting around the city, maintaining our residential and commercial districts, and all the work he has done to make the city be the best it can be. Richard is an ardent bicycle commuter. Council Member Dunbar thanked all of the departments and staff that have helped the city become more bicycle friendly.

Council Member Russell wished Richard Wong a happy retirement.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Stein thanked Richard Wong for everything he's done for the community.

Tomorrow is election day. If you haven't already voted, go vote. Polls open 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. tomorrow.

NEXT MEETING OF COUNCIL: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

Jason S. Stein, Mayor

Amy Himmelein, Clerk of Council
/jkc