CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

December 18, 2023
Regular Meeting
7:30 PM

Cleveland Heights City Hall
Council Chambers
40 Severance Cir
Cleveland Heights, Ohio

MEETING MINUTES

1) Meeting called to order by Council President

Start: 7:30pm
Clerk of Council is out sick, Vice President Cobb will act as Clerk

2) Roll Call of Council Members

Present: Janine Boyd, Craig Cobb, Tony Cuda, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., Davida Russell
Excused: None
Absent: None

3) Excuse absent members

4) Amendments to the Agenda (if necessary)

None

5) Approval of minutes from previous meeting(s)

a. November 20, 2023

APPROVED

6) Communications from the Mayor

Mayor Seren wanted to express his appreciation for President Hart at the last regular Council meeting over which she will preside and read a proclamation of appreciation in recognition of her work.

7) City Administrator's Report

None

8) City Departmental Report(s)

None

9) Report of the Clerk of Council

None

10) Public Comment - Legislative Agenda Items only

(Note: Persons wishing to speak must register in advance. A 3-minute time limit applies. If there are more than 15 speakers, the time will be automatically reduced to 2-minutes. Council President reserves the right to reduce the time limit based on the volume of business on the agenda. Comments unrelated to the agenda may be made after Committee Reports)

Speakers

CJ Nash	Citizen	Supports ORD 179-2023 and RES 201-2023
Drew Herzig	Citizen	Supports RES 169-2023 and ORD 123-2023
Jeff Lox	Citizen	Supports RES 169-2023
Melissa Wood	Citizen	Symbolic Resolutions (RES 204-2023 and RES 205-2023); believes these to be performative in nature
Alexandria Ruden	Citizen	Supports RES 168-2023
Eric Logan	Citizen	Supports RES 168-2023
Karin Lash	Citizen	Questions about emergency language, and why a lot is passed on emergency; also has concerns about the shipping containers within the ARPA legislation and believes it is a waste of money (RES 179-2023)
Kara O'Donnell	Citizen	Supports ORD 123-2023 and ORD 179-2023
Amy Rosenbluth	Citizen	Supports ORD 123-2023
Rachel Bernstein	Citizen	Supports ORD 123-2023
Paul Volpe	Citizen	Supports ORD 123-2023 and hopes that the CIC pieces of legislation will

		also pass when they come back on the agenda.
Juanita Brent	State Representative	Supports RES 168-2023

11) LEGISLATION

Note: The title for each piece of legislation contains a parenthetical reference to the Council Committee within which the subject matter of the legislation falls. Council Committees are abbreviated as follows: (AS)-Administrative Services; (COTW)-Committee of the Whole; (CRR)-Community Relations and Recreation; (F)-Finance; (HB)-Housing and Building; (MSES)-Municipal Services and Environmental Sustainability; (PD)-Planning and Development; (PSH)-Public Safety and Health. See Resolution 97-2022 for a list of Council Committee subject matter areas.

a. First Readings – Consideration of Adoption Requested

ORDINANCE NO. 199-2023(F): *First Reading.* An Ordinance to amend certain subparagraphs of Ordinance No. 168-2022(F) and subsequent amending ordinances, relating to appropriations and other expenditures of the City of Cleveland Heights, Ohio for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2022; and declaring the necessity that this legislation become immediately effective as an emergency measure.

Introduced by Mayor Seren

Motion to adopt: Anthony Mattox Jr.
Seconded: Gail Larson

Yes: Janine Boyd, Craig Cobb, Tony Cuda, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., Davida Russell
No: None

LEGISLATION PASSED

RESOLUTION NO. 200-2023(F): *First Reading.* A Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute an agreement with Zupka & Associates for the provision of assistance to the City's Finance Department in the preparation of the annual audit statements for the period from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2027; providing compensation therefor; and declaring the necessity that this legislation become immediately effective as an emergency measure.

Introduced by Mayor Seren

Motion to adopt: Gail Larson
Seconded: Janine Boyd

Yes: Janine Boyd, Craig Cobb, Tony Cuda, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., Davida Russell
No: None

LEGISLATION PASSED

RESOLUTION NO. 201-2023(PD): ***First Reading.*** A Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute a contract with Kimley-Horn for professional services for the preparation of a Comprehensive & Equitable Safety Action Plan (CESAP); and declaring the necessity that this legislation become immediately effective as an emergency measure.

Introduced by Mayor Seren

Motion to adopt: Anthony Mattox Jr.
Seconded: Tony Cuda

Yes: Janine Boyd, Craig Cobb, Tony Cuda, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., Davida Russell
No: None

LEGISLATION PASSED

RESOLUTION NO. 202-2023(AS): ***First Reading.*** A Resolution authorizing the renewal of the City's property, vehicle, law enforcement, general, employment practices and public official liability coverage for the City and its employees with the Public Entities Pool of Ohio for the calendar year 2024; and declaring the necessity that this legislation become immediately effective as an emergency measure.

Introduced by Mayor Seren

Motion to adopt: Gail Larson
Seconded: Anthony Mattox Jr.

Yes: Janine Boyd, Craig Cobb, Tony Cuda, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., Davida Russell
No: None

LEGISLATION PASSED

RESOLUTION NO. 203-2023(AS): ***First Reading.*** A Resolution extending the deadline for the Charter Review Commission to provide a report and recommendations to Council, until May 31, 2024; and declaring the necessity that this legislation become immediately effective as an emergency measure.

Introduced by Vice President Cobb

Motion to adopt: Anthony Mattox Jr.
Seconded: Janine Boyd

Yes: Janine Boyd, Craig Cobb, Tony Cuda, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson,

Anthony Mattox Jr., Davida Russell
No: None

LEGISLATION PASSED

b. Second Readings

ORDINANCE NO. 194-2023(COTW): *Second Reading.* An Ordinance authorizing the allocation, appropriation and expenditure of ARPA funds; and declaring the necessity that this legislation become immediately effective as an emergency measure.

Introduced by Councilmembers Hart, Mattox, Larson, Russell, and Boyd

Motion to adopt: Anthony Mattox Jr.
Seconded: Gail Larson

**Vice President Cobb and Councilmember Cuda recused themselves because they are both on the board of the Coventry SID.

Yes: Janine Boyd, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., Davida Russell
No: None

LEGISLATION PASSED

ORDINANCE NO. 195-2023(PD), *Second Reading.* An Ordinance amending Ordinance No. 13-2019, as amended by Ordinance No. 11-2022, to expand the Board of Directors of the Cleveland Heights Community Improvement Corporation to achieve greater community representation and expertise, modifying the ex-officio membership of the Board by replacing the Director of Housing with the Director of the Department of Planning and Development, and authorizing the Mayor to file appropriate amended Articles of Incorporation.

Introduced by Vice President Cobb and Councilmember Mattox

Motion to adopt: Gail Larson
Seconded: Anthony Mattox Jr.

Discussion: Councilmember Cuda is all for expanding the CIC to nine members, but will be voting no because Council will not be making any of the appointments to the CIC. Councilmember Larson commented that there will be an application process that the Mayor has agreed to follow.

Yes: Janine Boyd, Craig Cobb, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr.
No: Tony Cuda, Davida Russell

LEGISLATION PASSED

ORDINANCE NO. 198-2023(F): *Second Reading as Amended.* An Ordinance to make appropriations for the current expenses and other expenditures of the City of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, for the period of January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024; and declaring the necessity that this legislation become immediately effective as an emergency measure.

Introduced by Mayor Seren

Motion to adopt: Anthony Mattox Jr.
Seconded: Janine Boyd

Discussion: Councilmember Larson says this budget addresses many of the concerns that have been brought up by citizens. She supports this budget wholeheartedly.
President Hart says this budget was a collaborative effort between City Council and the Administration and some significant improvements were made.

Councilmember Cuda says that this budget is clearly a better budget than last year, especially because of the number of capital improvements included. Thanked the Mayor for requested Council's priorities, and having the administration consider these priorities. Specifically thanked Director Clinkscale (Public Works Director) for the detail she went into in the budget book, and he also thanked Director Unetic (Finance Director) for putting together the first ever budget book which he found extremely helpful. Also thanked Director Ledbetter (Parks and Recs Director) for a lengthy discussion he had with him regarding upgrades/modernization of Cain Park. He did not get everything he wanted, but he understands that everybody can't get everything they ask for.

Councilmember Russell thanked the Mayor for this budget, and thinks this is a very good budget, especially for our seniors with regard to transportation for our seniors and more staff for the senior center. She definitely supports this budget and will be voting yes.

Yes: Janine Boyd, Craig Cobb, Tony Cuda, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., Davida Russell
No: None

LEGISLATION PASSED

RESOLUTION NO. 168-2023(PSH): *Second Reading.* A Resolution authorizing an agreement with the Journey Center for Healing and Safety for a Victim Advocate in the Cleveland Heights Municipal Court; and declaring the necessity that this legislation become immediately effective as an emergency measure.

Introduced by Councilmember Boyd

Motion to adopt: Davida Russell
Seconded: Gail Larson

Discussion: Councilmember Boyd recounted the story of Aisha Fraser who was stabbed by her ex-husband in front of their children. She discussed how a legislative approach to domestic violence might have saved Aisha and many others. Spoke about her history with a piece of legislation, Aisha's Law, that she worked on when she was in the State Legislature. She left the State Legislature before being able to pass Aisha's Law, but see's this piece of legislation as a way to finish the work she started and as a way to lead the state where the state failed to lead. Thanked everybody for their support.

Councilmember Cuda thanked Councilmember Boyd for her leadership on this issue; Aisha Fraser was a former colleague of his. Hopefully the work Councilmember Boyd is leading on will help prevent these types of things from happening in the future.

Yes: Janine Boyd, Craig Cobb, Tony Cuda, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., Davida Russell
No: None

LEGISLATION PASSED

RESOLUTION NO. 169-2023(PSH): ***Second Reading.*** A Resolution authorizing an agreement with Bellefaire JCB for law enforcement training and an update of the Cleveland Heights Youth Diversion and Mentoring Program to better serve transgender and other LGBTQIA+ youth; and declaring the necessity that this Resolution become immediately effective as an emergency measure.

Introduced by Councilmember Boyd

Motion to adopt: Davida Russell
Seconded: Anthony Mattox Jr.

Discussion: Councilmember Mattox is excited about this legislation and wanted to mention that Bellefaire does amazing work, and appreciates the work they do and is excited to vote yes on this legislation. Thanked Councilmember Boyd for this piece of legislation as well.

Councilmember Russell reiterates Councilmember Mattox, as she herself has had an opportunity to work with Bellefaire in the past and they do amazing work.

Yes: Janine Boyd, Craig Cobb, Tony Cuda, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., Davida Russell
No: None

LEGISLATION PASSED

c. Fourth Readings

ORDINANCE NO. 179-2023(COTW): ***Fourth Reading as Amended.*** An

Ordinance authorizing the allocation, appropriation and expenditure of ARPA funds; and declaring the necessity that this legislation become immediately effective as an emergency measure.

Introduced by All Council Members

Motion to adopt: Anthony Mattox Jr.
Seconded: Gail Larson

Discussion: Councilmember Larson says it has been an honor to work on this project. There is still more work to do, but she believes council will be good stewards for these funds and that the residents of this city will see the benefits. She wants her colleagues to keep in mind her suggestion of parklets if money is reallocated.

President Hart thinks this piece of legislation is very good and council has allocated funds to many infrastructure changes that have been overlooked in the past, she expects to see these changes in coming years. It was a very collaborative effort.

Councilmember Russell wants to remind the non-profits who have been allocated money, that our ARPA advisor, Guidehouse has indicated that there will be required reporting because if the money is not being used well, the city can reallocate those funds.

Councilmember Mattox wanted to thank the community for the community engagement around ARPA funding that happened over the last few years. Thanked the community for driving the decision making through this process.

Councilmember Cuda says it was a good exchanged between all of Council; he would like to have seen more money go to infrastructure, specifically more street repairs and more money into commercial districts. But he thinks these allocations reflect this Council as a whole. On balance he supports this piece of legislation.

Yes: Janine Boyd, Craig Cobb, Tony Cuda, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., Davida Russell
No: None

LEGISLATION PASSED

ORDINANCE NO. 123-2023(AS): *Fourth Reading as Amended.* An Ordinance amending Part One, Title Five of the Administrative Code of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Cleveland Heights to enact a new Chapter 142 “Arts Commission” to establish an Arts Commission for the City of Cleveland Heights and provide for appointment, powers, and duties of the commission; and declaring the necessity that this legislation become immediately effective as an emergency measure.

Introduced by Mayor Seren

Motion to adopt: Craig Cobb
Seconded: Anthony Mattox Jr.

> **Motion to amend Section 3 to strike emergency clause:** Melody Joy Hart
> **Seconded:** Gail Larson
>
> **Yes:** Janine Boyd, Craig Cobb, Tony Cuda, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., Davida Russell
> **No:** None
>
> **MOTION PASSED**

Discussion: Councilmember Cuda recognized the Mayor for bringing this piece of legislation forward, and giving the arts community a voice is a very important thing. He does have a problem with the fact that Council does not make appointments to the Arts Commission; he believes it is an important roll of council to make these appointments. He says the vast majority of arts commissions across the country are staffed by council appointments. He thinks you'll get a better result if Council is involved in the choosing, so he will be voting no on this piece.

Mayor Seren understands Councilmember Cuda's perspective, however, he doesn't know what communities the Councilmember is referring to when it comes to arts commissions around the country. He wants to correct the record, that he as Mayor did not specifically request appointments on the transportation advisory or environmental sustainability committee and did not take part in designing the legislation of these two committees.

Councilmember Larson mentioned that during the COTW that Mayor Seren did commit to choosing his nominations from a pool of applicants.

President Hart says as long as Council has a chance to vet the Mayor's nomination, and deny or accept the nomination as we wish, that constitutes sufficient control.

Councilmember Russell believes no matter what happens here, we will all have our view point of appointments to committees/commissions and she believes it should be a shared process. Because the arts community came today to support this legislation, she will vote for this piece today, but she does believe committees/commission appointments in the future should involve council.

Yes: Janine Boyd, Craig Cobb, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr.
No: Tony Cuda, Davida Russell

LEGISLATION PASSED

d. Consent Agenda

RESOLUTION NO. 204-2023(CRR): *First Reading.* A Resolution proclaiming January 11, 2024 as *National Human Trafficking Awareness Day*; and declaring the necessity that this legislation become immediately effective as an emergency measure.

Introduced by Councilwoman Russell

RESOLUTION NO. 205-2023(CRR): *First Reading.* A Resolution proclaiming January 2024 as *National Poverty in America Awareness Month*; and declaring the necessity that this legislation become immediately effective as an emergency measure.

Introduced by Councilmember Russell

Motion to Suspend rules: Gail Larson
Seconded: Anthony Mattox Jr.

Yes: Janine Boyd, Craig Cobb, Tony Cuda, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., Davida Russell
No: None

MOTION PASSED

Motion to adopt: Anthony Mattox Jr.
Seconded: Craig Cobb

Yes: Janine Boyd, Craig Cobb, Tony Cuda, Melody Joy Hart, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., Davida Russell
No: None

LEGISLATION PASSED

12) Public Comment - General

(Note: Persons wishing to speak must register in advance. A 3-minute time limit applies. Council President reserves the right to reduce time limit based on the volume of business on the agenda.)

Speakers

Emily Teague	Citizen	Spoke in support of Palestinians and is against Council passing RES 167-2023; asks for Council to call for a ceasefire.
Canyon Teague	Citizen	Spoke in support of Palestinians and is against Council passing RES 167-2023; asks for Council to call for a

		ceasefire.
Christin Li	Citizen	Spoke in support of Palestinians and is against Council passing RES 167-2023; asks for Council to call for a ceasefire.
Graham Ball	Citizen	Spoke in support of Palestinians and is against Council passing RES 167-2023; asks for Council to call for a ceasefire.
Jack Slater	Citizen	Spoke in support of Palestinians and is against Council passing RES 167-2023; asks for Council to call for a ceasefire.
Natalie Senturk	Citizen	Spoke in support of Palestinians and is against Council passing RES 167-2023; asks for Council to call for a ceasefire.
Akshai Singh	Citizen	Spoke in support of Palestinians and is against Council passing RES 167-2023; asks for Council to call for a ceasefire.
CJ Nash	Citizen	Remembers after 9-11 this country made a lot of mistakes, that we can't take back. Israel has started making the same mistakes we did. This City can support both communities.

13) Committee Reports

Councilmember Mattox wanted to take this opportunity to thank President Hart

for all her hard work throughout a tumultuous couple of years. He appreciates that she has led this Council into this new form of government and is truly grateful for his time on Council with her.

CRR: Several pieces of legislation will be coming from the CRR Committee in the new year.

MSES: A couple of pieces of legislation will be on second reading in the new year, so watch out for those**.** He also thanked President Hart for stepping up to the challenge and wished her luck in the future.

HB: Hoping that his short-term rental legislation will be able to be passed in the new year. Added, that while he and President Hart haven't always seen eye to eye, he appreciates how much time she put into the job, and she has stepped up to the plate, especially with regard to housing issues.

AS: There is a vacancy arising on the ABR and encouraged people to apply. Must be an architect. Gave his remarks to Council President Hart and her term as President. The job of President is a difficult one, and she worked tirelessly with no personal agenda. He wants everybody to look at the accomplishments of this Council over the past two years, how collaborative this Council has been, and that is in no small part thanks to her.

Councilmember Boyd reiterated fellow councilmembers' remarks and said it has been a joy to work with her this past year.

14) President's Remarks

This is her last meeting and last meeting presiding as Council President. It has been her privilege to serve this city. She is proud of the many accomplishments over the years, especially the housing diversion program she worked with staff and the courts on to establish. She is also proud of the job of forming a collaborative government, between the Council and the Administration. Though there were some rough patches, she believes this Council has really come together and collaborated particularly well during the budget process and ARPA allocations. She believes they have become a great Team Cleveland Heights. She would like to recommend that this Council consider electing Vice President Cobb in the new year as the new Council President.

15) Adjournment

End: 9:42pm

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF COUNCIL: JANUARY 2, 2024

NEXT MEETING OF COUNCIL: JANUARY 16, 2024

APPROVED: February 05, 2024

Tony Cuda
President of Council

Addie Balester
Clerk of Council