



Monday, March 7, 2022 Minutes

CITY COUNCIL

7:38 – 8:25 p.m.

President Hart presiding

Roll Call:	Present:	Cobb, Cuda, Hart, Larson, Mattox, Moore, Russell
	Absent:	None

Also Present: Mayor Seren, Hanna, Himmeltein, Niermann-O'Neil, Thomas

Personal communications from citizens on Agenda Items only

Marlene Goldheimer wanted to witness, support, thank and celebrate Council for unanimously endorsing the resolution to support the Medicare for All Act of 2021. She recognized that while passage of the resolution isn't considered law, the copy sent to State and Federal representatives will let them know the City believes access to quality healthcare is a human right. She also thanked Thomas Jewell for the detailed account of the resolution in the Feb 4th edition of the Sun Press. She stated Mayor Seren listened to the needs of the community and responded by standing up for all residents. She believed he was influenced by the effects of the COVID pandemic on the residents; not only the tragic loss of life, but also the loss of jobs, which included loss of healthcare benefits. This left many without access to medical care in the midst of a pandemic, making it evident that tying healthcare coverage to employment doesn't work. Quality healthcare should be provided to everyone in the country, from birth to death, regardless of whether they are employed or not. In the current system, corporations are making medical decisions that should be made by doctors and their patients. This is why she supports Move to Amend, which seeks to end corporations taking the rights of individuals. The corporations she referred to are the for-profit health insurance moguls and prescription drug entities. She thanked Amber Akhter, a student at Case, who gave testimony and introduced to Council the Medicare for All. She stated Amber represents the next generation of advocates that believe healthcare is a human right. Amber's current mission is to have all districts throughout Cleveland adopt a Medicare for All resolution. Ms. Goldheimer thought Cleveland Heights provided an apt model for other cities to adopt. For over 40 years, she has been a member of the staunch advocates of a single payer system and she will continue to advocate until this country has a health care system that proclaims 'everybody in, nobody out.'

Communications from the Mayor

Mayor Seren congratulated the developers for getting final conditional approval on the design of the CLM project. He stated he is looking forward to the next steps and actually getting the project

done. Next, Mayor Seren welcomed the new communications director, Mike Thomas, to the community.

Report of the Clerk of Council

Nothing to report at this time.

Committee Reports

MUNICIPAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Nothing formal to report at this time.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

ORDINANCE NO. 23-2022 (PD), First Reading. An Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with Made Cleveland, LLC, for the lease of City-owned property located at 1807 Coventry Road for the operation of a retail store; and declaring an emergency.

Motion to Adopt by Councilman Mattox, Seconded by Vice President Cobb

Roll Call: Ayes: Cuda, Hart, Larson, Mattox, Moore, Russell, Cobb
 Nays: None

Legislation Passed

Mayor Seren noted the emergency was requested by the economic development staff to get the lease actuated.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

***MOTION** to appoint Sheila Keller and Melody Yates to the Racial Justice Taskforce.

Moved by Councilor Larson, Seconded by Councilwoman Russell

Roll Call: Ayes: Hart, Larson, Mattox, Moore, Russell, Cobb, Cuda
 Nays: None

Motion Passed

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION 24-2022 (AS), First Reading. A Resolution confirming the Mayor's appointment of Joseph E. Sinnott as City Administrator for the City of Cleveland Heights; and declaring the necessity that this Resolution become immediately effective as an emergency measure.

Legislation Introduced

ORDINANCE NO. 25-2022 (AS), *First Reading*. An Ordinance establishing salary schedules, position classifications and other compensation, and benefits for officers and employees of the City; and declaring an emergency.

Legislation Introduced

***MOTION** to reappoint Adam Howe to the Planning Commission.

Moved by Vice President Cobb, Seconded by Councilman Mattox

Roll Call: Ayes: Hart, Larson, Mattox, Moore, Russell, Cobb, Cuda
 Nays: None

Motion Passed

Vice President Cobb pointed out that there are two vacancies on the Planning Commission they are working to fill within the next few weeks.

***MOTION** to reappoint Mazie Adams, Margaret Lann and J. Mark Souther to the Landmark Commission.

Moved by Vice President Cobb, Seconded by Councilor Moore

Roll Call: Ayes: Hart, Larson, Mattox, Moore, Russell, Cobb, Cuda
 Nays: None

Motion Passed

***MOTION** to reappoint Thomas Zych and Dennis Porcelli to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Moved by Vice President Cobb, Seconded by Councilor Moore

Roll Call: Ayes: Hart, Larson, Mattox, Moore, Russell, Cobb, Cuda
 Nays: None

Motion Passed

***MOTION** to appoint Gayle Lewin to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Moved by Vice President Cobb, Seconded by Councilwoman Russell

Roll Call: Ayes: Hart, Larson, Mattox, Moore, Russell, Cobb, Cuda
 Nays: None

Motion Passed

***MOTION** to reappoint Jody Taslitz and Shirley Le Compte to the Commission on Aging.

Moved by Vice President Cobb, Seconded by Councilor Larson

Roll Call: Ayes: Hart, Larson, Mattox, Moore, Russell, Cobb, Cuda
 Nays: None

Motion Passed

***MOTION** to appoint Ida Etta Black and Peter De Golia to the Commission on Aging.

Moved by Vice President Cobb, Seconded by Councilor Moore

Roll Call: Ayes: Hart, Larson, Mattox, Moore, Russell, Cobb, Cuda
 Nays: None

Motion Passed

***MOTION** to reappoint Sam Bell, Charles Mosbrook, Howard Maier, Kathy Petrey, Mark Letkowitz, Chris Cummings and Jeff Bendix to the Transportation and Environmental Sustainability Committee.

Moved by Vice President Cobb, Seconded by Councilor Moore

Roll Call: Ayes: Hart, Larson, Mattox, Moore, Russell, Cobb, Cuda
 Nays: None

Motion Passed

***MOTION** to appoint Catalina Wagers to the Transportation and Environmental Sustainability Committee.

Moved by Vice President Cobb, Seconded by Councilor Moore

Roll Call: Ayes: Hart, Larson, Mattox, Moore, Russell, Cobb, Cuda
 Nays: None

Motion Passed

Vice President Cobb noted there are two vacancies on the Architectural Board of Review and the position requires the person be a licensed architect. If anyone is a licensed architect in the city, he encouraged them to apply. He stated there are only three members so if one member is unable to attend a meeting, they won't be able to handle business properly, so they need to fill the position.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION NO. 19-2022 (CRR), Second Reading. A Resolution in support of the Medicare for All Act of 2021 (HR 1976); and declaring that universal access to quality healthcare is a human right.

Motion to Adopt by Councilwoman Russell, Seconded by Councilor Moore

Roll Call: Ayes: Larson, Mattox, Moore, Russell, Cobb, Cuda, Hart
 Nays: None

Legislation Passed

ORDINANCE NO. 26-2022 (CRR), First Reading. An Ordinance authorizing and approving the presentation of entertainment programs in Cain Park for the year 2022.

Legislation Introduced

FINANCE COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION NO. 21-2022 (F), Second Reading. A Resolution establishing the Flexible Spending Account Fund and affirming that funds received by the City as a payroll deduction from employees shall be used only to cover costs incurred by the City of Cleveland Heights consistent with Internal Revenue Code §125 and applicable law and regulations; and declaring an emergency.

Motion to Adopt by Council President Hart, Seconded by Councilor Larson

Roll Call: Ayes: Cobb, Cuda, Hart, Larson, Mattox, Moore, Russell
 Nays: None

Legislation Passed

Council President Hart stated the resolution is regarding a company benefit and the legislation is intended to provide a better way to account for the benefit.

ORDINANCE NO. 27-2022 (F), First Reading. An Ordinance providing for the issuance and sale of not to exceed \$1,500,000 of economic development nontax revenue bonds for the purpose of paying a portion of the costs of the acquisition of a portion of, and redevelopment of the site generally known as “Top of the Hill” located on approximately four acres of land situated between Euclid Heights Boulevard and Cedar Road at the top of Cedar Hill in the City, and declaring an emergency.

Council President Hart stated the ordinance is regarding the refinancing of existing debt for a cheaper rate and lengthening the term.

***MOTION** to reconsider Ordinance 27-2022.

Law Director Hanna raised a point of order that bond legislation is typically voted on with a roll call vote. Council can have a Motion to Reconsider Ordinance 78-2022, adopt the Motion to Reconsider and then conduct a roll call vote.

Moved by Vice President Cobb, Seconded by Councilman Cuda

Roll Call: Ayes: Mattox, Moore, Russell, Cobb, Cuda, Hart, Larson
 Nays: None

Motion Passed

Motion to Adopt by Council President Hart, Seconded by Councilman Mattox

Roll Call on Motion to Adopt: Ayes: Moore, Russell, Cobb, Cuda, Hart, Larson, Mattox,
 Nays: None

Legislation Passed

Second Motion to Adopt by Councilman Mattox, Seconded by Councilor Moore

Roll Call on Second Motion to Adopt:

 Ayes: Moore, Russell, Cobb, Cuda, Hart, Larson, Mattox,
 Nays: None

Legislation Passed

ORDINANCE NO. 28-2022 (F), *First Reading*. An ordinance to amend certain subparagraphs of Ordinance No. 139-2021 (F), relating to appropriations and other expenditures of the City of Cleveland Heights, Ohio for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2022 and declaring an emergency.

Motion to Adopt by Council President Hart, Seconded by Vice President Cobb

Roll Call: Ayes: Cobb, Cuda, Hart, Mattox, Moore, Russell
 Nays: None

Legislation Passed

Council President Hart stated that these are normal administrative budget adjustments that will not affect the bottom line.

HOUSING AND BUILDING COMMITTEE

Councilman Cuda stated they had their first meeting earlier that evening. He said it really showed that the community and Council are making housing a priority. There was a wide-ranging discussion, including discussing the Novak Report, vacant and abandoned properties, civil options, the Racial Justice Taskforce's rental agreement (which will be brought up at a meeting on Wednesday), and the fact that they need to overhaul the housing ordinances. The Committee is meeting again on April 4th.

Personal communications from citizens

Fran Mentch announced that her group has launched their fundraising campaign for Issue 9, the public square initiative. She asked people visit their website, get yard signs and make a donation since the public square initiative is a grassroots group. She stated the opposition will get a very large donation from the developer and they will use it to try and crush her group. She read about the announcement from the City regarding the continuing approval of the development. In the announcement, they used the phrase 'following extensive community input,' which she called inaccurate, and stated there was no extensive community input. She and her friends have submitted multiple proposals over the past decade suggesting a park be put in the space. She stated citizens were never asked what kind of development they wanted and Council refused for over a decade to discuss the issue. In 2021, her group asked eight times to have the public square be put on the agenda, but she stated the request was refused. The input also did not include a general forum or a forum on the finances. She said the project will be heavily subsidized by the public with tax dollars, is quite offensive, and has generated a lot of conflict in the community. Shouldn't the citizens get a guarantee of the potential annual income from the developer? Or a promise if Cedar Lee theater leaves, that the developer will bring in another cinema? She referenced the closure of Nighttown in comparison. Finally, retaining the small space of the 1.07 acres of green space is not trivial.

Old business

***MOTION** to reappoint Terry Saylor to the Architectural Board of Review.

Moved by Vice President Cobb, Seconded by Councilor Larson

Roll Call: Ayes: Hart, Larson, Mattox, Moore, Russell, Cobb, Cuda
 Nays: None

Motion Passed

New business

Nothing to report at this time.

Council Member Comments

Councilor Moore expressed her condemnation of Russia's aggressive military invasion of Ukraine and proclaimed her full-throated support for Ukraine's government and people. She's felt horrified and distraught and powerless to help. She stated she talks a lot about community and for her, community must mean all of humanity, not just those that live close. All of us bear a responsibility to stand against what is wrong and stand with those that are vulnerable and threatened. She's also been heartened by the world's response. She encouraged people that would like to help to google organizations such as Razom for Ukraine, etc. to send aid today. She asked her fellow Council Members to join her in creating and passing a resolution to denounce Russia's unprovoked invasion, to voice their unequivocal support for the Ukrainian people and their government and to urge our national leaders to do more. She is honored that her fellow Council Members unanimously agreed to move forward with the resolution, so she is hoping to have a first reading soon.

Councilwoman Russell joined with Councilor Moore for a resolution supporting the lawsuit regarding school vouchers. She stated it's very important we support our school district where it has been hurt the most by vouchers. Second, she stated she has been very straightforward and

honest with the residents of Cleveland Heights and said she needed to say something tonight. Since 2019, when she was elected, she has been engaging with the community. She referenced her “You Talk, I Listen” series, that she intended to move around Cleveland Heights. It has never moved past the Noble/Taylor area because of the overwhelming disparities found in that area. Since she’s been on Council, she’s done 5-6 sessions, noting everyone has been invited but stated that only two Council people have ever participated, and they were not even Council Members at the time. She stated it’s always been open. She referenced the many other roundtables she’s put on, all at her own cost. Two sessions have been private, based on the request of the residents themselves. She stated some residents have decided to donate to keep the series going because the costs are starting to add up. She said it costs \$500 to rent the stage to host and \$300 to print fliers. Now that they are having a third meeting and the Mayor has been invited, she’s getting pushback from her fellow Council Members saying that they would be crashing if it’s a public meeting and they are not invited. Diane Hallum attempted to have fliers printed at City Hall but the request was rejected because it’s not a city event. Councilwoman Russell has paid out of pocket and she has no problem opening up the event to fellow Council Members and the public. But if she makes it public, she needs the City to advertise for it and create fliers and she’d like to be reimbursed the \$800. She stated that if anyone wanted to engage that community, anyone could have had a public meeting. If anyone wants the meeting to be made public, instead of private, as the residents have requested, she is then requesting the City advertise it and reimburse her the \$800.

Councilman Cuda referenced the Medicare for All resolution and said how most people are really happy with it, while some have wondered why the Council is talking about national issues. His response is that the City is a part of the national community as well as so that it is good to speak up. He also said how he loves working for the City and he is grateful for the money and for the engagement with the community.

Councilor Larson stated she is in total support of Councilor Moore’s resolution in support of Ukraine. Referencing higher gas prices, she said maybe now is the time to stand up and say we will make a sacrifice. She also stands in support of Councilwoman Russell’s position on school vouchers, saying the lawsuit really deserves citizen support. She stated Cleveland Heights is one of the primary plaintiffs and the voucher system has really hurt the students in Cleveland Heights – University Heights. She also stated as chair of Public Safety and Health Committee, there are two vacancies on the Racial Justice Taskforce. She’s working with the Chair to get two more people on the committee in order to be fully staffed.

Councilor Moore discussed the Medicare for All resolution and stated her personal experiences with high medical costs, even when she had what is considered good insurance. The for-profit healthcare system is failing America. She stated the figures representing the costs of staying with our current system versus the lower costs of switching to a single payer system. Cost savings will be huge and will save dollars, lives, stress and anxiety.

Report of the Council President

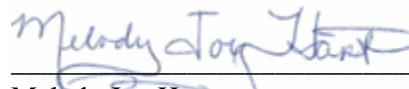
Council President Hart stated her support for the Medicare for All resolution and Council Members Moore and Russell’s resolution regarding supporting the school voucher lawsuit. She stated at the

next Finance Meeting/Committee of the Whole Meeting on March 21st, they will be getting the 2021 financial results and the meeting will be open to the public. Please check the city calendars, because the Committees have begun meeting and things are happening. She stated the Mayor has been hiring staff and the transition is continuing. She also stated that a group of nursing students have conducted a study on the 44112 area of Cleveland Heights and they are proposing that Council work towards a community garden for the area. She asked them to present their findings in April. Councilman Mattox will be working with Council President Hart as he's been involved in establishing community gardens in the area code before. Also, she stated this is Woman's History Month and there will be a presentation on March 28th. She said there is a place on the website to nominate a woman of distinction under a number of categories and encouraged people to do so.

Councilwoman Russell recommended that when Council President Hart has her meeting regarding creating a community garden in the 44112 area, that she engages with the citizens of that area. Council President Hart stated she would.

NEXT MEETING OF COUNCIL: TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2022

Respectfully submitted,



Melody Joy Hart
President of Council



Amy Himmeltein
Clerk of Council