

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING
February 7, 2017

The Regular Meeting of City Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m. with Mayor Domenick Mucci presiding. The meeting was opened with a silent prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were Councilmen Hahn, Johnson, Paul, Timmons, Villamagna, DiLoreto and Dressel.

Also present; City Manager James Mavromatis, Law Director Gary Repella, Finance Director Dave Lewis, Fire Chief Carlo Capaldi, Utility Director Chuck Murphy, Urban Projects Director Chris Petrossi, M&R Director Bob Baird, Utility Billing Manager Lisa Knight, Dave Gossett from the Herald Star and WTOV9.

APPROVAL/CORRECTION OF MINUTES

Mrs. Hahn moved that the minutes of January 31, 2017 be accepted as written. Second by Mr. Johnson. Roll call. All ayes. So moved minutes accepted declared Mayor Mucci.

PETITIONS/COMMUNICATIONS

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

NO. 2016-106 – BY THE PLANNING COMMITTEE – 3rd reading

Messrs. Johnson, Dressel, Hahn

ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 1175 OF THE ZONING CODE CREATING THE HOMEWOOD AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT.

Mayor Mucci – “Before we move on we have two pieces of correspondence from the Planning and Zoning Commission.”

The Clerk read a letter of positive recommendation from Chris Petrossi to the Planning Commission and a letter of positive recommendation from the Planning Commission to Council. Hearing no objections the correspondence is ordered into the record.

Mayor Mucci – “You have heard the third and final reading of Ordinance No. 2016-106. If there is anyone wishing to speak on Ordinance No. 2016-106 please come forward and state your name and address.”

Mr. Paul called question. Roll call. All ayes. Ordinance No. 2016-106 duly adopted declared Mayor Mucci.

NO. 2017-9 – BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE – 1st reading

Messrs. Paul, Johnson, Dressel

ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE FINANCE DIRECTOR TO TRANSFER THE AMOUNT OF \$323,429.90 FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO THE GENERAL RESERVE FUND (90).

Mayor Mucci – “You have heard the first reading of Ordinance No. 2017-9. The second reading will be on February 14; the third and final reading will be on February 21st.”

NO. 2017-10 – BY THE PLANNING COMMITTEE – 1st reading

Messrs. Johnson, Dressel, Hahn

ORDINANCE CREATING SECTION 521.12 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF STEUBENVILLE.

Mayor Mucci – “You have heard the first reading of Ordinance No. 2017-10. The second reading will be on February 14; the third and final reading will be on February 21st.”

NO. 2017-11 – BY THE PLANNING COMMITTEE – 1st reading

Messrs. Johnson, Dressel, Hahn

ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 1323.122 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF STEUBENVILLE.

Mayor Mucci – “You have heard the first reading of Ordinance No. 2017-11. The second reading will be on February 14; the third and final reading will be on February 21st.”

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Mrs. Hahn – “I have no report from the committees but I do request an executive session tonight for the purpose of personnel in the Parks and Recreation Department.” Second by Mr. Paul. Roll call. All ayes. So moved declared Mayor Mucci.

Mr. Johnson – “Yes, your honor; I have several things. As part of that executive session meeting I would like to also discuss the Fire contract; I make a motion that we discuss the Fire contract.”

Mayor Mucci – “At this time there will be an amendment to the motion that the executive session will also include discussion of the Fire Department; I would like a roll call vote on adding that amendment to the motion.” Roll call. All ayes. So moved declared Mayor Mucci.

Mr. Johnson – “I would like to sunshine three pieces of legislation; an ordinance amending Ordinance No. 1992-20, as amended, the zoning ordinance of the City of Steubenville, Ohio by rezoning property owned by River Rail Development, located at State Route 7 and Third Street, Steubenville, Ohio, from I-3, Heavy

Industrial District, to I-1, General Commercial and Industrial District; an ordinance amending chapter 1175 of the zoning code creating the Crestline Drive and Central Avenue Neighborhood Conservation District; and an ordinance amending chapter 1175 of the zoning code creating the Whitehaven-Devonshire Neighborhood Conservation District.”

Mr. Paul – “Yes, your honor; first from Council as a Whole a resolution proclaiming the month of February, 2017 as National African American History Month. I would like to call a Safety Committee meeting on February 21st at 6:00 p.m. here in Council Chambers. I would also like to remind everybody that next Tuesday the 14th at 6:00 p.m. we also have the Finance Committee meeting; Mike had already sent something to me about the agenda; if anyone has anything send it to me and I’ll put it on the agenda.”

Mayor Mucci – “The Clerk will facilitate the proper meeting notice.”

Mr. Timmons – no report

Mr. Villamagna – no report

Mr. DiLoreto – no report

Mr. Dressel – no report

REPORT OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS

Mr. Mavromatis – no report

Mr. Repella – “Yes, your honor; I have one report. I believe that I sent all of you copies of the complaint that we had just completed and so either on Wednesday or Thursday of this week the City will be suing Jefferson Health Plan; the Ohio Public Entities Consortium Healthcare Cooperative; Ohio Insurance Service Agency, Inc.; and an individual by the name of Frank Harmon. This is in regards to our healthcare; as you know we’ve had some problems with our healthcare from 2015 and 2016; we had a 25% increase in 2015; another 12.5% increase in 2016; and we want to bid out our insurance for 2018 and to do that we need our loss runs and our claims reports for 2014, 2015, and 2016; and these entities that we are suing are refusing to give us our loss reports. There are four or five causes of action; the first one which will be heard first is a mandamus action where we’ll be asking the court to order these entities to give us our loss claims and then there are various other causes of action that we have against these individuals and companies; so that should be filed either tomorrow or Thursday.”

Mr. DiLoreto – “That was the contract that we were promised pie in the sky; everything was going to come free or lower cost a couple years ago under bad leadership.”

Mr. Repella – “Initially; yes. But at any rate that will be filed and once again I ask Council not to comment on the lawsuit; the only person who will be commenting on the lawsuit is our attorney Mark Stem from Columbus, Ohio; I have his phone number so if the media wants to contact him they can contact him and he’ll respond to any questions about it; thank you.”

MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS

Mr. Paul – “Yes, your honor; last week I said something I shouldn’t have said; I spoke before thinking; I made a mistake; I would like to make a public apology to the JB Green Team; last week I made a statement that the JB Green Team needed to step up and help out with abandoned tires and litter throughout our city. The following day I was informed that the tires are being addressed and my comment was unfounded and unwarranted and again I would like to apologize to the JB Green Team and their staff and management for my unjust comments last week.”

Mr. Villamagna – “I handed out everybody a messenger community link from the City of Macedonia; my brother recently moved up there and he sent me this form that they send out to the residents. It has all the basic information on it; the first page is a message from the Mayor with all the information of Council, the City directory is on there; it also explains the budget in that pie; it just goes on through the whole thing and it tells certain things that are going on; widening of roads; resurfacing phase I; sanitary sewer assessment project; different things that are going on throughout the city; asking questions about is your house prepared for certain weather that is going to be forecast; just a nice thing printed out from the city to the residents and with communications the way they are today it’s not really a hard thing to do I think so I would like our IT people to look at this and come up with some kind of plan like this; I think it’s a good thing; we talked earlier today about how do the landlords know that we do these things; this would be the perfect venue to have that in there; it could describe Dean Martin Days or the Nutcracker Village or things like that; it’s a nice thing; I gave one to everybody so if you could look at it I would appreciate it; thank you very much.”

PUBLIC FORUM

Mayor Mucci – “If there is anyone wishing to speak to City Council on City business please come forward and state your name and address.”

Delores Wiggins/Jerry Barilla – (on behalf of the Civil Service Commission) - Honorable Mayor and members of the City Council; I would like to say that from our last meeting which was last month the Civil Service Commission decided because of some former things that have happened when it comes time to testing; we know that the Department Heads they send this to us when it’s time to test and that’s not a problem because that’s their job. But we see a problem when they send the letters to us to test; we test; we have to pay for it; we have a budget and we have to pay for advertisement in the Steubenville Herald Star; that’s a lot of money; we pay for Case

Western out of Cleveland; the most prominent agency for testing in the State of Ohio; we've been using them for a lot of years now. They have to come down and give the tests; sometimes if it's bad weather they have to spend the night. Civil Service's problem is that we have had a couple of department heads who asked us to give a test; and it's been over three years ago now and those tests are still lying in the office; there was nobody picked from those lists; that is a waste of money; that's what that is. You must know when you need someone; if someone retires or something like that; whatever the cause is; we try to accommodate you with that but there are I know two department heads that did not hire off that list; it's been like three to four years now and we still have the test. We are asking all the department heads to please not ask us for a test unless you are going to use someone off that test; and by the way after two years we have an option to renew that eligibility list after two years. That's all we're asking. Please; if you can, try to comply with that. That was over \$6000 was wasted; nobody was called off that list; so if you could do that we would certainly appreciate it; thank you."

Mayor Mucci – "Thank you, Mrs. Wiggins and Mr. Barilla; let me just state so there is not a confusion; the Civil Service Commission, although it is approved by the legislative body of appointments recommended by the Mayor's office; this Council does not directly deal with the Civil Service Commission and you can understand why; it's an entity separate from City government so there could be fair testing for police, fire, AFSCME union laborers within the city. That conversation, I'm glad you called it to our attention, really hasn't happened with our City Manager; the department heads, when they see that they're getting low on staff they may request a Civil Service test; however, that still goes through the City Manager's office for approval before it is sent for the request to the Civil Service Commission. I think, Mrs. Wiggins; you've been on there several years; you understand you receive communication from both; just so you understand that this Council is not directly involved with Civil Service activities or when they're testing; we don't interfere with that; in fact that's prohibited under the Ohio Revised Code as you're well aware; but thank you for calling that to our attention especially when we're looking at budgetary processes here but really that goes to the City Manager and then to the department heads. If there is anyone else wishing to speak to City Council on City business please come forward and state your name and address."

Deborah Demattio – "I live at 403 Colonial Drive and I don't want to be videotaped. First I would like to say I was born and raised in Steubenville. I remember the good old days when Labelle had responsible homeowners and landlords. I resided last year on Labelle and what I saw as I walked the hilltop broke my heart; the couches, the litter, homes that look like shacks; unkempt properties. I personally lived near the biggest dump in Steubenville; two cars jacked up on blocks; no wheels; smashed windshield; two couches; two recliners; mattresses; about forty bags of garbage; and my neighbors told me they had been there for about five to six years. I had to do something; I called and reported it twice with litter control; nothing happened. Then I finally one day came when I called back and I threatened in a kind way; I told them I would call channel 9 and show them the biggest dump on the hill. Also what stunned me most of all was the landlords; or should I say honestly, loud and proud; the slumlords. I have walked the hilltop; sometimes up to twenty miles a day; and the slumlords that own these properties are prominent citizens in our community. They don't care about their property; they possibly can't with cardboard in the windows; trash spilled everywhere; where dogs, cats and rats tear it up. I actually had to leave Labelle because the mattresses that were in a court, not an alley, blocked me from getting out of my driveway. When people remove their couches or whatever off their front porches they were just thrown in the backyards; it's a disgrace to Labelle. And if you really need another control officer I will walk that hilltop front and back for minimum wage; I'm looking for a job and again I walk twenty miles a week. I've had to move because of the mattresses blocking my driveway every day; and I also believe everyone in the City of Steubenville should have a garbage can so the garbage that sits outside sometimes for days again is not torn up by the rats, cats, raccoons or stray dogs that run across the hill. It's up to the property owners and these slumlords, they just care about money and not their property. I ask each one of you if you owned a property wouldn't you check on it at least once or twice a month? Go after them; go after the property owners; the slumlords; the properties that are going to be demolished; have the property owners pay for those; not the good citizens of Steubenville. We didn't make that property a mess; they did. Again, loud and proud; go after the slumlords; you'll be surprised who they are. I can tell you the ones after this meeting if you'd like to know because I made it my business to walk up around and find out who these slumlords were that own this property. And if you want to show a picture on the news of a house that has couches on their front porch and broken windows and doors; I think right next to it should be a sign who the property owner is; thank you."

Mayor Mucci – "If there is anyone else wishing to speak to City Council on City business please come forward and state your name and address."

Chambers were cleared for executive session.

Chambers were reopened for adjournment.

Mr. Paul moved to adjourn. Second by Mr. Villamagna. Roll call. All ayes. So moved; meeting adjourned declared Mayor Mucci.

Mary F. Anderson
Clerk of Council

ATTEST: _____
CLERK OF COUNCIL

APPROVED: _____
MAYOR