



CITY OF WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS Office of the Council

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES APRIL 2, 2019

Call to Order: Mayor Bradley D. Sellers at 7:00p.m.

Attendance: Councilwoman Hagwood, Councilwoman Edwards, Councilwoman White, Councilman Stewart, Councilman Howard, Councilman Anderson and Council President Mitchell
Roll Call: 7 Present

Prayer: Councilwoman Dorise Hagwood

Minutes: March 19, 2019 Regular Meeting
Motion to Approve by Councilwoman White, Seconded by Councilwoman Edwards
Roll Call: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs

Departmental Reports: Mayor Sellers stated that Council should have a copy of the Departmental Reports in their possession. He stated that if they have any questions to please reach out to the respective Directors. He stated that if the answers they receive are not satisfactory, they can contact the Office of the Mayor as well.

Residents' Requests and Comments:

Tori Coates stated that he lives on a cul-de-sac on Vera Street and at night it gets very dark. He reported that the street lights stop at 22806 and the only thing that illuminates that portion of the street are garage lights. He stated that his wife's car was broken into last year and this morning he saw footprints in his yard and his neighbor's yard. Mr. Coates inquired if anyone has ever expressed this concern.

Mayor Sellers stated he was glad that Mr. Coates brought this matter to the City's attention and provided a little history on the area. He explained that you can actually see where the original section of Vera Street stops and in the late 90s or early 2000s, they put the cul-de-sac in there and probably did not have us go back to CEI and talk about additional street lights. He suggested to the Service Director Ted Sims that they reach out to their contact at CEI.

Service Director Ted Sims agreed.

Mayor Sellers commented that Mr. Coates home is positioned where a person can walk through and Mr. Coates responded that there are woods back there so he is sure you

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can cut through that area. Mayor Sellers stated that they will see what they can do about the situation.

Mr. Coates thanked the Mayor and Council for their service.

Mayor Sellers announced that they are going to read Items 1-3 of the Agenda first as we are trying to bring on three new Police Officers. He reported that the Ordinances will be read first and if they pass, they will go to the swearing in and pinning of the Officers so they all can be done in a row.

He added that at the end of the meeting, he will be addressing a couple of issues. He explained that there was a meeting in Chambers with Cinema Park residents last week and he will provide an update. He stated there was also a matter that came up with the Police Department and some assertions were made that he would like to discuss.

Order of the Day:

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Ord. 2019-039** **Mayor Bradley D. Sellers**
Appointing Ryan Sumner to the position of Police Officer in the Police Department of the City of Warrensville Heights, and declaring an emergency.
Motioned by Councilwoman White, Passage by Councilwoman Edwards, Seconded by Council President Mitchell
Roll Call: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – Motion Carried
- 2. Ord. 2019-040** **Mayor Bradley D. Sellers**
Appointing Christopher G. Jordan to the position of Police Officer in the Police Department of the City of Warrensville Heights, and declaring an emergency.
Motioned by Councilwoman White, Passage by Councilman Howard, Seconded by Council President Mitchell
Roll Call: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – Motion Carried
- 3. Ord. 2019-041** **Mayor Bradley D. Sellers**
Appointing Lawrence C. McKissic, III to the position of Police Officer in the Police Department of the City of Warrensville Heights, and declaring an emergency.
Motioned by Councilman Anderson, Passage by Councilwoman Edwards, Seconded by Councilwoman White
Roll Call: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – Motion Carried

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Police Chief Wes Haynes thanked the Mayor and City Council for approving three fine gentleman to become Patrol Officers with the City of Warrensville Heights.

Chief Haynes stated Mr. Ryan Sumner was an Officer at Oberlin College and came highly recommended by his former Chief. Chief Haynes remarked that needless to say, he had some disagreements with the Chief because the Chief wanted to keep Mr. Sumner and he wanted him here and he won!

<<Laughter>>

Mr. Sumner introduced his fiancée Jackle, his mother, father and grandparents. Chief Haynes asked him who will be pinning him and he responded his fiancée. Chief Haynes joked that he did not want any bloodshed with the pinning.

<<Laughter>>

Swearing In of Officer Ryan Sumner

Mr. Sumner thanked the Mayor, Council and Chief Haynes for choosing him for this job. He stated he knows that it comes with no small amount of trust and responsibility and he knows he will do his part to uphold that trust and responsibility the City is putting in him. He thanked everyone again.

<<Applause>>

Chief Haynes stated the next officer is Mr. Christopher Jordan and he was formerly employed with Northcoast Behavioral Center and as a part-time Officer with Newburgh Heights. Chief Haynes shared that when he started his own career in 1996, he was sworn into two agencies, Glenwillow and Woodmere. He stated that his Training Officer at that time was Mr. Jordan's Uncle. He stated that Mr. Jordan's Uncle trained him and started his career and now he is passing the torch to his nephew and it is a pleasure to bring him on.

<<Applause>>

Mr. Jordan introduced himself and stated he is very fortunate today because he is with ALL of his family! Chief Haynes asked Mr. Jordan who was going to pin him and he replied his father.

Mayor Sellers acknowledged that Mr. Jordan's badge number is 23.

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<<Laughter>>

Swearing in of Officer Christopher G. Jordan

Mr. Jordan thanked the Mayor, Council and Chief Haynes for this opportunity. He stated he is going to do his best to represent the City of Warrensville the best way he can and treat the citizens and residents professionally and respectfully.

<<Applause>>

Chief Haynes stated Mr. Lawrence McKissic was employed with Northcoast Behavioral for 6 years. He reported that he just started his career in Law Enforcement graduating from the Academy in March of 2018 so we are going to have him for a long time! He stated Mr. McKissic came highly recommended from his former Chief in Newburgh Heights, even as a new Officer. He remarked that the Chief in Newburgh Heights did not want to lose Mr. McKissic but he is coming over here so Chief Haynes commented that he is doing well!

<<Laughter>>

Mr. McKissic stated that his mother, cousins, girlfriend and best friend are here. Chief Haynes asked him who was going to pin him and he replied his mother.

Mayor Sellers joked that Jordan was 23 and showing everyone Mr. McKissic's badge number stated that Charles Oakley was 34!

<<Laughter>>

Swearing in of Officer Lawrence C. McKissic, III

Mr. McKissic thanked the City of Warrensville Heights, Council members and Mayor Sellers for the opportunity to start his illustrious career. He commented that Warrensville is a great City and he grew up around the corner so there is no other place he would rather be right now. He thanked everyone again.

<<Applause>>

Chief Haynes announced that the families of the sworn in Officers did not have to remain for the Council meeting so many departed before the meeting resumed.

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4. Ord. 2019-042 The City Council
Authorizing the Mayor to enter into a Codification Supplement Agreement with the Walter H. Drane Company to update the City of Warrensville Heights Codified Ordinances, including the online updates, with all revisions occurring between April 6, 2018 and December 31, 2019, and declaring an emergency.
Motioned by Council President Mitchell, Passage by Councilwoman Edwards, Seconded by Councilwoman White
Roll Call: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – Motion Carried

5. Ord. 2019-043 Mayor Bradley D. Sellers
Authorizing the Mayor to enter into a Data Use and Security Agreement with the County of Cuyahoga, Ohio and the Chagrin Valley Dispatch Council in order to participate in the Criminal Justice Information Sharing Data Warehouse, and declaring an emergency.
Motioned by Councilwoman White, Passage by Councilwoman Hagwood, Seconded Councilman Howard
Roll Call: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – Motion Carried

ADD-ONS:

6. Res. 2019-014 Mayor Bradley D. Sellers
Authorizing the Mayor to enter into a participation agreement with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) for the purchase of Sodium Chloride (Rock Salt) through the ODOT Winter Road Salt Contract for the period of September 1, 2019 through April 30, 2020, and declaring an emergency.
Motioned by Council President Mitchell, Passage by Councilwoman Edwards, Seconded by Councilwoman White
Roll Call: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – Motion Carried

7. Res. 2019-015 Mayor Bradley D. Sellers
Authorizing the Mayor to approve the Community Reinvestment Area Residential Tax Abatement Application of Jamal Holcomb and Saconda T. Deloach-Holcomb for 13143 Berry Boulevard, located in Cinema Park, Permanent Parcel Number 762-08-091, pursuant to Chapter 3735 of the Ohio Revised Code.
Motioned by Councilwoman White, Passage by Councilwoman Hagwood, Seconded by Councilwoman Edwards
Roll Call: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – Motion Carried

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OLD BUSINESS

8. Ord. 2019-030

1st Read: 3/5/2019

2nd Read: 4/2/2019

Mayor Bradley D. Sellers

Amending Ordinance Number 2016-058 in order to revise the room rental rates for the Civic and Senior Center of the City of Warrensville Heights and the Chateaux of Emery Woods Clubhouse, and declaring an emergency.

Motioned by Councilwoman White, Passage by Councilman Howard, Seconded by Councilwoman Edwards

Roll Call: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – Motion Carried

Announcements from the Directors:

Fire Department – Chief Herb Waugh greeted everyone and congratulated the new Officers.

Economic Development – Manager Raymon Turner congratulated the Officers and reported that the Department has begun accepting applications for the Exterior Maintenance Program as of April 1, 2019.

Personnel Department – Director Nicole Johnson greeted everyone and reported that we are still accepting Summer Program applications for our high school students until May 3, 2019 and they can be found on our website.

Chief of Staff – Kelli Wilson congratulated the new Officers.

Police Department – Chief Wes Haynes thanked the Mayor, City Council, Civil Service Commission and Chief of Staff for all their assistance and approval of the new three Officers. He stated we really need them so thank you! He referred to Item Five on the Agenda, The Data Use Security Agreement, stating the system is going to be very helpful to this agency for investigative purposes and it is a way for all the data throughout different agencies to be in one place so we can get that information quicker than prior means. So, he thanked Council again for approving Item Five.

Communications/Activities Department – Director June Scharf stated that everyone should have received their Spring magazines in the mail by now or within a few days. She commented that if you do not receive your magazine by the end of the week to please let us know. She reported that the State of the City Event is on April 17, 2019 at Corporate College at 6:00pm. and the Department will be putting out additional publicity.

Building Department – Commissioner Ben Brown stated that he put handouts of the Property Maintenance Schedule and Special Schedule for the season on the ledge. He stated it includes

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the streets the Department will be inspecting this year. He referred everyone to the back side of the handout that provides some ideas of what the Department looks for when an inspection is done.

Service Department – Director Ted Sims congratulated the new Officers.

Strategic Initiatives – Director Carletta Fellows congratulated the new Police Officers. She announced that we are embarking on developing a Safe Routes to School Travel Plan. She stated it is in the planning process and she is very excited about it and highlighted that there is school funding to pursue Infrastructure in the amount of \$400,000 that does not require any matching funds from the City and \$15,000 for non-infrastructure so this is a great opportunity and we will be talking more about it as we continue the process.

Finance Department – Director Karen Howse congratulated the three new Officers.

Announcements from Council:

Councilwoman Edwards congratulated the three new Officers.

Councilman Stewart thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He thanked the Warrensville Alumni Foundation and stated they did an excellent job on their presentation and that they have his support. He congratulated the new Officers.

Councilwoman Hagwood had nothing to report.

Councilman Howard thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He congratulated Chief Haynes on his three new hires as he knows they are much needed.

Councilman Anderson congratulated Officer Sumner, Officer Jordan and Officer McKissic and welcomed them to the Warrensville family.

Councilwoman White thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She thanked the Civil Service Commission for delivering our three Officers and thanked Chief Haynes.

Law Department

Director Teresa Beasley had nothing to report.

Council President's Comments

Council President Mitchell greeted everyone and thanked attendees for spending the evening with us. She congratulated Chief Haynes and thanked the Civil Service Commission as the selection process could not have been easy and it is wonderful to have three new Officers in our City. She stated if anyone is available Saturday, come out to the Ward 2 Community Meeting for residents, friends and anyone walking by! She reported that this year the meeting

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will be at Eastwood Elementary School at 11:00a.m.-12:30p.m.; it is a 90 minute meeting and if you are there for 91 minutes you are doing something else on the last minute. She thanked everyone again.

Mayor's Comments

Mayor Sellers thanked all of his colleagues for attending the meeting and expressing their concerns. He stated he always tries to address things that need to be done in this City. He thanked the members of the Civil Service Commission who went through an extensive process to find us Officers as we had to fill a number of slots due to former Officers retiring or moving on. He thanked Mr. White, Ms. Rudolph and Ms. Tullos for all their hard work and labor-intensive time they put in to vet the Officers and make sure that we are bringing on people that will represent this community to the fullest extent. He also acknowledged Ms. Rox for her hard work on Planning Commission.

He recognized the School Board Vice President Ray Freeman in attendance. He acknowledged the Cinema Park residents in attendance and that many of them were at the last Council meeting expressing concerns about how their property deals were structured. He stated he and the Economic Development Department met with residents last Monday for an over two hour meeting in Chambers and there was not an empty seat in the room! He reported that they heard the residents' concerns and got a good handle on where the angst was coming from and informed them of the City's position. Mayor Sellers announced there will be a follow-up meeting on Friday, April 5, 2019 in Council Chambers with a representative from a financial industry, Cross-Country Mortgage and he will speak about the opportunities and avenues that could work for some people at Cinema Park. He thanked Economic Development Director Jerome DuVal and Manager Raymon Turner for putting in hours of time making calls and meeting with people. He stated we are making no assertions nor promises but are trying to make some things happen. He reported that he sat in on a meeting today with Cross-Country Mortgage and that they understand the concerns. He remarked that the concerns here are different than the concerns in Beachwood and the concerns in Strongsville. He shared that he sat down with other companies and they could not understand where we are but today he at least has the understanding of one group. He reported that he told Cross-Country Mortgage that residents are feeling pressure and they told him to not let that pressure linger. He explained that instead of waiting to schedule the meeting for the third week in April, they decided to have the meeting as soon as possible. He stated that the HOA was contacted to send some emails out and Ted's staff hand-delivered the flyers to Cinema Park residents today. He stated he is expecting a good turnout and we are going to focus on this one issue at the meeting. He added that if there is a need for a secondary meeting, it will be scheduled at a later date.

Mayor Sellers reported that he was not at the last meeting but acknowledged there was a complaint made about an issue with one of his Police Officers. He stated it was alleged that the

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Officer had used excessive force and pushed a resident. He reported they were already aware of this assertion and had already vetted it before it came to this floor. Mayor Sellers indicated that any case that we do here will be vetted to determine whether it is legitimate or not and you can check his record. He remarked if the allegation is legit we will move in another direction and if it is not he will tell you. He reported a while ago this Council authorized to put body cams on Officers because otherwise you are going to be in a he said, she said situation. He reported unbeknownst to everyone here, we have a camera on all the Officers; all we have to do is go pull the tape. He remarked this particular incident is about a 37 minute long tape that is going to clear the record of the Officer that was charged and maligned in the entire thing. He stated you do not have to believe him but your own eyes when viewing the tape. He stated he does not know everyone that was at the last meeting but he is going to make the tape available at the end of this meeting to be watched tonight. He stated with this being a public forum, all you have to do is say something crazy and everyone will believe you. He stated there used to be a time when you vetted something to see if it is legit but now we cannot even wait real time to see if it is. He reported that this issue has come up a couple times in his tenure here. He stated he has come in front of everyone to publicly refute assertions that have been made because if they are not publicly refuted, people will walk away believing this stuff and it is unfair to everyone involved. He stated that no one here is going to be Judge, Jury and Executioner under his watch.

Councilman Stewart asked if he could speak and Mayor Sellers responded that he absolutely could. He stated that he really does not know what the Mayor means by someone being "maligned." He remarked that he never stated that the Officer was innocent or guilty; his primary issue was that this lady reached out to the Police Department, Officers got her information and she told me they kept telling her she needed to speak to the Police Chief. He stated that he found out later that one of the Officers that told her that was the one conducting the investigation! He commented that when the Clerk of Council sent an email to the Police Chief, she never got a response and nobody said anything to her; that was my concern! He stated that arrangements were made for him to look at the body cam with Ms. Carol Gregory-that is her name. He stated that he has had a respectful conversation with Chief Haynes and it was very civil.

Mayor Sellers responded that it should be.

Councilman Stewart stated that they set up a date and time to view the tape then Chief Haynes informed him that Ms. Gregory stated she was going to get an attorney. He stated that what was or was not on the body cam would have resolved it all but she said that her pastor told her to not call back and just get an attorney. He stated at that point he was done because there was nothing more for him to say. He remarked that he never maligned anyone and that someone had a problem with me saying "justice will prevail." He explained that he was stating that the truth will come out whether the truth is in Ms. Gregory's favor or the Officer's favor.

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He stated that residents do not always tell the truth; none of us always tell the truth. He commented that he is not about to throw out any allegation that can have a negative effect on somebody's reputation and his/her job. He remarked that he told Chief Haynes that if Ms. Gregory is not telling the truth, she has a serious legal problem on her hands. He reported there really was not anything he could do; he was called as the Councilperson because the incident happened in his Ward. He repeated that the only problem he really had was that nobody really called Ms. Gregory. He stated directly to Mayor Sellers that he does not know who he spoke with but he is telling him what the real deal is. He remarked that he has over 1300 residents in his Ward and when he was dealing with this matter, it did not stop the building complaints and other issues he has to address; that is a lot to handle! He stated that he is out of the loop on the matter now; she has an attorney and he is not an attorney, he is just a Councilman. He stated that is all he has to say.

Mayor Sellers stated that he appreciated Councilman Stewart's comments. He remarked he was never going to say anyone's name and he is still not but we have a fiduciary responsibility to make sure we vet a concern first before we do anything. He stated that he is one of the easiest people around here to reach and is in this building everyday so he could have been reached. He shared that Chief Haynes's mother was sick so he was unable to be reached; no calls were being returned.

He reported that on the day of the meeting he was in the building until 6:00p.m. He stated he did not stay for the Council Meeting because his daughter was getting an award that evening. He stated that he firmly believes that people knew Ms. Gregory was coming to the meeting. He commented that some of this stuff is theatrical because it is easy to come to the floor and perform whether you have been wronged or not and the people that are blind to it do not know the truth. He remarked that everyone asks him to let them know information so he expects the same because we are all working as a team. He stated that he is not asking anyone to take a stand one way or the other but to at least give us the heads up that something may occur.

Councilman Stewart asked if he could speak again. He stated that he did ask Ms. Gregory if anyone else knew about this and she mentioned that a couple of people were coming, including some kind of media personality but none of them showed up. He stated the only person that showed up was her cousin or nephew. He commented that Council President Mitchell asked her if anyone else came with her and Ms. Gregory replied no.

Council President Mitchell confirmed that she did ask Ms. Gregory.

Councilman Stewart stated that if anyone else showed up he cannot confirm that because he does not know her like that.

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Mayor Sellers commented that we are all working together and he listened to the Minutes of the last Council meeting. He stated that if he has a Police Officer that is out of line, it is going to be dealt with and he will be removed if need be. He added that it may take him awhile but it will get done. He remarked that our job is to protect and serve so if someone is out of line it will be addressed; but we cannot be subject to innuendo and non-facts. He stated that when we all know the facts we can then act accordingly. He stated his thinking is that our position is always one of check it first, as best as you can before you weigh in on anything.

Councilwoman White commented that one should know all the facts before standing up for anybody. She added until you have all the facts there is nothing to consider.

Mayor Sellers remarked that he has to make a stand tonight for his own people. He stated that he has the recording of the entire incident and at the end Ms. Gregory's daughter is thanking us! He reported that there was not just one Officer at the residence but two so there are two cameras!

Mayor Sellers repeated that our job here is to protect and serve the people of this community as best as we can and sometimes we are going to be on different sides of the ledger here but our job is to make sure we are doing the best for the people. He asked if it is fair to say nothing now that we have an Officer whose good reputation has been sullied. He answered his own question that it is not. He added that the job requires you to be impartial whether you like or do not like someone. He stressed keeping the lines of communication open so we are not jumping to conclusions because if we do it can end up wrong; in this case it did. He stated that the only fair thing to do is let everyone see the tape because you may not believe his word alone. He announced that he is going to adjourn the meeting and Chief Haynes will show the video.

Councilman Howard commented that in good faith it is a good idea that Mayor Sellers is putting the tape out there to be seen so we are clear and showing that we are open and honest. He stated it is very transparent with the community and he commends the Mayor for that as he was going to request the tape at a later date so he is glad it came out.

Adjournment at 7:58p.m.

9-16-2019

APPROVED


Amber Joyner, Clerk of Council

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