

MINUTES
VILLAGE OF CUYAHOGA HEIGHTS
COUNCIL WORKSHOP
6:00 PM
FEBRUARY 24, 2016

ROLL CALL: BIRO, BLOAM, DUSZYNSKI, HARRIS, HENLEY, SHOEFLER

MAYORS REPORT

The Mayor had a question relating to some of the press releases that we had concerning the ½% tax increase. The Clerk's newsletters continue to say that we are financially stable, yet we are asking for a tax increase. He stated that we should have put something in the last newsletter showing the light switch budget, and showing that we can maintain our salaries, and pay our bills with the money we have coming in, but there is no way to generate enough revenue to do capital projects. He stated that many people appreciate the Clerk's newsletter and all the information he gives, but in the next newsletter the Clerk needs to make it perfectly clear that the money we currently have and generate for the year will not support capital projects that need to get done in the coming years.

Ms. Duszynski stated that if we don't generate a substantial amount of revenue in the future, we will still have enough to open the doors for x amount of years, but that still depends on the revenue staying the same from the industry. The Mayor said our revenue which we forecast, is hit or miss. If our revenue stays flat, with minor fluctuations, the 5 year forecast says we can open the doors, slowly drawing down the General Fund for incidentals, but ultimately you will never generate enough revenue that will ever cover a 4 million dollar road project. Ms. Duszynski said that we are basically surviving, and at a standstill for major projects.

The Mayor said that we have many road projects that are behind, and our debt service is not insane, but in contrast to many other communities we are in good shape. Some communities are carrying much more debt than us. The Mayor assured everyone that we are in good shape financially, but there is no way without a tax increase that we can keep up with the projects that we need to address without depleting our General Fund. These are not pet projects, these are project to maintain our Village at the level that it is today, and into the future.

Mayor Jackson of Cleveland is asking his Council to increase the tax in Cleveland, and Mayor Perciak of Strongsville is looking at starting to tax tickets from Cinemark. Everyone is trying to get creative in raising revenue, because nothing is cheap anymore. He believes many other communities will be taking a hard look at increasing taxes in the near future to make up for the deficit. No one in our community including the businesses had anything negative to say about the increase when we announced it. If anything, they said that they understand. The level of services that our Village offers is second to none.

Clerk Unger stated that if you have read his newsletter articles over the last year, he has mentioned a couple of times that yes, we are in good shape financially to open the doors and pay our bills, but I have also mentioned a number of times the need to raise revenue for future projects. He has done this to let people know that we are managing our money responsibly, but if there is a need to do anything in the future, we will have to look for different ways to generate revenue. I think at this time, it is appropriate for Council to put the increase on the ballot in order to get these projects covered. The only place for Cuyahoga Heights to go and get any more revenue is a tax increase, and I will address this in future newsletter articles.

Ms. Henley feels that the seniors don't understand the levy, Ms. Harris suggested that the Mayor go to them and make a presentation so they could better understand it. The Mayor said that we could do that if needed. The Mayor said that we put out the information in several different forms, they see Clerk Unger's report, and maybe a little something extra could have helped them understand it better. We will take that into consideration in the future, but the Mayor wanted to have it in the minutes today, so those that did have the question know that it was addressed.

Ms. Henley asked if the Mayor was concerned about the pickets in front of Alcoa. The Mayor said no, management wants to shift the workforce so there is not as much overtime, and become more cost effective. The picketing has been done very peacefully, and talking to our Police, they feel the picketing is being done very peacefully and they have not had any problems. We have nothing to be concerned about over there whatsoever.

We need to move forward with our focus on the Charter Review. I will have the Clerk forward to you what the responsibilities are of Council, and we will get some people picked. Last time we did this, it was not easy to get people for the Charter Review, there was very little interest, but maybe we can get a couple people together to come up with some suggestions for Council to possibly put on the ballot with the tax change.

Something Council might want to entertain is the 4 year term for Council as we have done in the past. For some reason, that measure doesn't seem to get much traction, but we can at least ask for it. The Mayor feels it would be better for Council to have 4 year terms instead of 2 year terms. Ms. Harris said they should be staggered terms.

The Mayor mentioned this in 2014, 2015, and now again in 2016, that 2018 will be our hundred year anniversary. We really need to start getting a group of people together that have a desire to make this a great event. This cannot be done in a couple of months, it takes a year of planning. Many events have to be booked a year ahead of time. The Mayor believes the 100 year anniversary needs to be spectacular and memorable. It has to be a home run for our seniors, and memorable enough for our young people that will make them want to be here for the 125th. We have to have something that is spectacular. We need to get a group of people together to research what other communities have done, and take some ideas that we like, add some things, and make it our own.

Mr. Sokolich texted the Mayor about a sign at the Gallo Building for a new business moving into the building. Mayor Bacci told him that it is for a business that will soon be in the building, but is not currently moved in. The Mayor and Council had a discussion concerning the new tenants at the Gallo Building. He stated that it is a large building, and there will be multiple tenants moving in, one being Heat Seal. They will be moving to the Gallo Building from their current location on E. 71st.

Mr. Bloam asked if we put the no trespassing sign on the recently acquired the Yarmesch property. The Mayor said that we put the sign up for liability purposes, and to keep anyone from taking anything off the property.

Ms. Henley mentioned that she heard that Vinny Vaccher was renting his house out on E. 72nd Place, and asked the Building Commissioner Mr. Casini to check and see if they have obeyed all of the rental codes. The Mayor said the Building Department is investigating an unlawful rental without an inspection. There was a break in at the residence, and the tenant told the Police that he was renting the home. The owner, Mr. Vinny Vaccher is on the lam, he has a felony warrant with a pick up radius of one. That means if he is picked up anywhere in the USA, they are to hold him until he can be brought back to Cleveland to answer for his crimes. He has not been around our Village for a while, and he is in deep deep trouble.

Ms. Harris asked about the Majors house on E.72nd Street. The Mayor said someone put up a for sale sign in front but it was quickly removed, but it still shows up on the webpage as for sale. We have continuously tried to get in contact with the realtor, and have had no luck. Ms. Duszynski inquired what they are asking for the property. Mr. Schoeffler said it is for sale at \$87,500.00. The Mayor mentioned that they have not yet had a point of sale on the home, and they can't sell it without that.

WHEREFORE, there being no further business before this Council, Ms. Henley made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Schoeffler that the Work Session be adjourned. All voting aye, none opposed; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.