

## COUNCIL MINUTES

DECEMBER 7, 2020

Via Zoom

7:00 P.M.

**President Ellington called the meeting to order**

**He asked anyone who was not a council member to mute themselves and their video then reminded everyone there are 2 sections for citizens comments and when it come to that section if you would like to speak to turn on your video and he will call on you at that time**

**ROLL CALL** – Mr. Barker, Mr. Blake, Mr. Bubb, Mr. Fennell,  
Ms. Hall, Mr. Harris, Mr. Labutis, Mr. Lang, Mr. Marmie, Mr. Rath

**INVOCATION** – Mr. Labutis

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE- President Ellington**

**CAUCUS**

**Mr. Blake** – I think everyone is aware that we are going to use Rule 11 for Resolution No. 20-95, but I did confirm with the Clerk of Courts the item that was in Finance Committee this evening does need to use Rule 11 tonight as well. It was one section of Resolution No. 20-97.

**President Ellington** – Mr. Marmie, how about if we just go ahead and do both of these and get them out of the way is that okay?

**Mr. Marmie** – That will be fine.

**By: Mr. Rath**

**RULE 11 Resolution No. 20-95** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF LEGAL REPRESENTATION OF INDIGENT PERSONS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2021 WITH THE LICKING COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE CITY OF NEWARK, LICKING COUNTY, OHIO AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

**Motion to waive 2 day reading rule, second by Mr. Bubb**

**Mr. Rath** – This is a standard piece of legislation we need to move forward every year that allows us to be reimbursed for representation of indigent persons. This comes to us from the state through the county. It's an annual piece that needs to be done quickly.

**President Ellington - Two day reading rule has been waived**

**Motion by Mr. Rath to adopt, second by Mr. Bubb, motion passed 10-0**

**By: Mr. Marmie**

**RULE 11 Resolution No.20-97 Expedite**

A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING MONIES FOR CURRENT EXPENSES OF THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

**Motion by Mr. Marmie to waive the 2 day reading rule, second by Mr. Blake. Passed 10-0**

**President Ellington - Two day reading rule has been waived**

**Motion by Mr. Marmie to adopt, second by Mr. Blake**

**Motion to separate Resolution 20-97, Section 1 to be Resolution No. 20-97-A and Section 2 to be Resolution 20-97-B, Second by Mr. Blake, passed 10-0**

**President Ellington – Resolution 20-97 has been separated into 20-97-A and 20-97-B**

**Mr. Blake** – Previously we had seen that this request was related to COVID dollars for the Clerk of Courts Office. The Clerk is on now and can answer any questions related to this, if the President allows.

**Resolution 20-97-A passed 10-0**

**Motion by Mr. Marmie to table Resolution No. 20-97-B until 1-4-2020, second by Mr. Blake, passed 10-0**

**MINUTES of December 7, 2020** - Motion by to approve the December 7, 2020 Newark City Council Minutes as presented and the reading be dispensed with in view of the fact each member of Council has received written summary of same, second by **Motion to approve by Mr. Labutis , second by Mr. Barker , carried by acclamation**

#### **APPOINTMENTS**

**Mayor Hall** – Reappointing Steve Layman & Bryan McAnally to the City of Newark Board of Zoning Adjustment. Their new four year term begins January 1, 2021 and will expire December 31, 2024. **Passed by acclamation**

#### **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

Finance – **no objections, received and filed**

Service – **no objections, received and filed**

#### **REPORTS FROM CITY OFFICIALS**

**City Auditor, Stephen E. Johnson** – Operating report for period November 30, 2020

**No objections, received and filed**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS**

**Ohio Public Utilities Commission** – A letter noting an amendment to correct a clerical error on the report by the staff of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, Ohio Power Company.

**no objections, received and files**

**Ohio Division of Liquor Control** – Transfer application from Hepner Enterprises Inc. DBA Market Basket to Khawar LLC DBA Market Basket

**no objections, received and filed**

#### **COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

**Betsey Hampton** – 242 Trail Ct., Newark – I want to comment regarding the re-zoning on River Rd. I want to ask City Council that when the re-zoning is considered that you take into account making sure the properties are set back enough so that it looks nice from River Rd. I also think that they should

allow space so that sidewalks or a bike path could be added along River Rd. Right now River Rd is hard for anyone to walk along and I think that as they're re-zoning properties they should make the neighborhoods more walkable and I think the time to do that is when new neighborhoods are being developed rather than waiting until later and trying to add them afterwards. Especially now I know in my neighborhood bussing is being cut for the high schoolers so it would be nice to have more walkable space for them. As it is right now there are no walking areas along River Rd. With it being a neighborhood full of houses I think we need sidewalks and street lights and everything that goes along with that. I think with any new development that City Council should work with the developers to make sure they are neighborhoods that look good for our community.

**President Ellington** – There are 3 pieces of legislation that refer to that this evening. They will be referred to Planning Commission tonight, They will have a public hearing in January or February, everyone will have a chance to give their input. The Planning Commission the following month will come back with their recommendation, it will come back to Council, we'll have another public hearing and then vote on that. I would say around March that will happen. Thank you for your input.

**Marcia Phelps – Licking County Clerk of Municipal Court** – work address 40 W. Main St. Newark, home address 205 Gladys Ave, Newark – **see attachment for Ms. Phelps comments.**

Additionally I wanted to ask about Resolution No. 20-97. Has that been tabled or is my section for \$6,500 being voted on tonight?

**President Ellington** – The section for your \$6,500 has been voted on and passed already tonight. If you stay on the meeting, when we get to Resolution 20-88, if anyone has any questions for you I will allow them at that time.

**Marcia Phelps** – I appreciate that and let me reiterate that the two investigators involved in that report are also online tonight.

**Caroline Cook** – 898 Lateglow Ct, Newark, You may get tired of me but I do intend to keep speaking out at this meetings. I think that's my job as a caring and informed citizen. Recently I've seen various projects discussed in these meetings and in the Advocate. All of them involve development of one kind or another. They involve using tax money and some private contributions. They're to find projects to aid business development. These projects include making the highway systems better to help developers bring in resources, transport products, develop real estate, to make our downtown more interesting and exciting. I'm not opposed to business development, but I am concerned that we are not giving the same energy and monetary support to human development in our county. I think most of us can agree we have problems in providing a nurturing environment for many people in our community. There is a lack of affordable housing. Problems with addiction, lack of transportation, lack of decent child care and preschool for many low income families. If you feel these problems don't exist here, then you must not live in the same Newark that I live in. I'll give you an example. I was driving down Church St. and there was an old guy with a beard riding a little bike, he fell down in the street in front of me. I stopped my car and he was laying in the street because I was afraid of COVID I didn't know what to do, but fortunately some young men around 18 years old were in a truck behind me and when I stopped my car, they stopped their truck. They got out and got the guy back up on his feet again. I have seen people riding bicycles in really cold weather, we had a

kid hit on 21<sup>st</sup> Street and killed. So, we need transportation in Licking County. I don't think you disagree with me that the problems are there. What we do not agree on is the cause or solutions to these problems. I believe that nurturing the people in our community is just as important as developing commerce. I also believe it takes a community to help people develop their potential and provide support when they need it using tax payer money for human development is just as important maybe even more than using taxpayer dollars to support business development. During the recent election progressives who wanted to use taxpayer dollars to support and nurture humans were accused of being socialist, communist, promoting a welfare state. Those who want to use taxpayer dollars to promote and support corporations are considered good free market capitalists. I have a big problem with that characterization, I also see our national and state priorities as totally out of balance. I am going to keep coming back here to talk with you. You can count on seeing me at other public meetings. I totally support the poor peoples' campaign movement for a moral revival where the needs of this countries people, especially the poor and low wealth people are taken seriously and we work to address those problems. I'm not a socialist, I just want my taxes spent in ways that are consistent with my values. I will keep coming here to advocate for decent and affordable housing, reliable and affordable transportation systems, a low barrier shelter for the unsheltered, mental health and recovery resources for those who struggle with addiction and mental illness. And as far as the new development of housing that kids would go to Granville schools but live in Newark tax district and so forth, I really believe that we don't need more high end real estate housing, we need housing that is affordable for working class families. I also think it's unfair to the Granville system. My daughter teaches for Granville and I have grandchildren that go to Granville and to put the burden on them to pass a tax levy to fund a new school which they are going to have to do if they have more kids is unfair. I also think that these high end developments tend to increase segregation, not only racial segregation but income segregation.

#### **ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING**

No Ordinances on 2nd Reading

#### **ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING**

**By: Mr. Marmie**

**20-39** General Fund AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO DURING THE YEAR ENDING, DECEMBER 31, 2021.

**Motion by Mr. Marmie to waive the 2 day reading rule, second by Mr. Bubb, passed 10-0**

**Motion by Mr. Marmie to adopt, second by Mr. Bubb, passed 10-0**

**By: Mr. Marmie**

**20-40** All Others Funds AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO DURING THE YEAR ENDING, DECEMBER 31, 2021

**Motion by Mr. Marmie to waive the 2 day reading rule, second by Mr. Bubb, passed 10-0**

**Motion by Mr. Marmie to adopt, second by Mr. Bubb, passed 10-0**

**By: Mr. Marmie**

**20-41** Grant Fund AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO DURING THE YEAR ENDING, DECEMBER 31, 2021

**Motion by Mr. Marmie to waive the 2 day reading rule, second by Mr. Bubb, passed 10-0**

**Motion by Mr. Marmie to adopt, second by Mr. Bubb, passed 10-0**

**By:Mr.Rath**

**20-42** AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY, GENERALLY DESCRIBED AS 2811 RIVER ROAD, CITY OF NEWARK, LICKING COUNTY, OHIO, FROM THAT OF SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE RL – LOW DENSITY DISTRICT TO PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO. **Referred to Planning Commission**

**By:Mr.Rath**

**20-43** AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY, GENERALLY DESCRIBED AS 2738 RIVER ROAD, CITY OF NEWARK, LICKING COUNTY, OHIO, DROM THAT OF SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE RL – LOW DENSITY DISTRICT TO PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO. **Referred to Planning Commission**

**By:Mr.Rath**

**20-44** AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY, GENERALLY DESCRIBED AS 2550 RIVER ROAD, CITY OF NEWARK, LICKING COUNTY, OHIO, FROM THAT OF SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE RL – LOW DENSITY DISTRICT TO PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO. **Referred to Planning Commission**

## **RESOLUTIONS ON SECOND READING**

**By: Mr. Bubb**

**20-88** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH SPECIALIZED LEGAL COUNCIL FOR THE PURPOSE OF INVESTIGATING ALLEGATIONS OF WORKPLACE HARASSMENT AND OTHER ALLEGATIONS OF POSSIBLE WRONG-DOING IN THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF MUNICIPAL COURT

**Motion by Mr. Bubb to adopt, second by Mr. Marmie**

**Mr. Blake** – Earlier when Clerk Phelps was giving her comments you said that you would allow a question?

**President Ellington** – I would.

**Mr. Blake** – I understand that her and her investigators are on the call and I don't want to assume that everyone had a chance to read that completion of their investigation. My question

to the investigator is, there were 3 names of former employees given to them and I just wanted to hear what their experience was when interviewing those three former employees.

**Zach West – lead investigator,** We contacted all three of the former employees, two of them declined our request to be interviewed and the third we spoke to late last week. She was very forthcoming with us, was a bit surprised to be contacted. She had not spoken with Councilman Marmie or anyone else and was not sure how her name had become associated except that she thought it might have been through a mutual acquaintance. She did answer our questions, she was cooperative and again, as we say in our report, she denied that there was any hostile work environment because she was not a member of a protected class.

**Mr. Blake –** Thank you Mr. West, I just wanted to get an understanding that this all originated from 3 former employees and you weren't able to talk to 2 others. I feel like we have to have an understanding that this scenario is very irregular. Typically is there's a situation with an employee they would go to their supervisor and then to the department head, there's a chain of action that typically happens when there are allegations of harassment or work place situations. In this regard, you had former city employees go to a member of council and then the Personnel Committee has sent forward to us a Resolution to take tax payer dollars to continue an investigation. This Resolution currently before us doesn't have a maximum limit amount that we would spend. It has a minimum amount of \$10,000. But there is no maximum limit and there is no deadline as to when this investigation will be completed per this resolution. Is this to happen in the next 30 days or 60 days, how long is this investigation within Resolution 20-88 going to occur. This is a very irregular situation, it's a situation I don't believe is appropriate for council to be taking and I would urge members to vote no on this resolution.

**Mr. Marmie –** I have a couple points of clarification. Mr. West indicated that he contacted three employees. I believe it was three employees that were listed on notes that I had taken. The names of those three employees were not the employees that I spoke to, those were the names of three employees provided by someone else that indicated I should speak to those three. The individuals that spoke to me, their names were on there, their full names weren't. Mr. West never contacted me other than asking for my notes. He did not ask which employees I spoke to. Another thing that I'm hearing is spending of taxpayer dollars. That's what the Clerk is doing now with her investigation, she is spending taxpayer dollars. In addition, she indicated that she made swift moves as soon as there were allegations to take action. She did not. That was not done until this legislation was prepared and going forward to city council. The city council is doing what was recommended by the HR Department. He gave three recommendations on what council should do. One was to do nothing due to the allegations, two was to let him investigate in which he indicated that he didn't have the capacity and then three he said to hire outside council. That is the three things the HR Director said we should do. The council decided to move forward with an independent investigation. I support that action. That way we're investigating something that will protect employees. So that is why I am in

support of this legislation

**Motion passed 8-2, with Mr. Blake and Mr. Fennell voting against.**

**By: Mr. Marmie**

**20-90** A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING MONIES FOR CURRENT EXPENSES OF THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

**Motion by Mr. Marmie to adopt, second by Mr. Bubb, motion passed 10-0**

#### **RESOLUTIONS ON FIRST READING**

**By: Mr. Marmie**

**20-91 Expedite** A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING MONIES FOR CURRENT EXPENSES OF THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

**Motion by Mr. Marmie to waive 2 day reading rule, second by Mr. Bubb, motion passed 10-0**

**Motion to adopt by Mr. Marmie, second by Mr. Bubb, motion passed 10-0**

**By:Mr.Rath**

**20-93** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT AND ENTER INTO A WATER POLLUTION CONTROL LOAN FUND AGREEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF NEWARK FOR PLANNING, DESIGN AND\OR CONSTRUCTION OF WASTEWATER FACILITIES (UV DISINFECTION UPGRADE PROJECT) AND DESIGNATING A DEDICATED REPAYMENT SOURCE FOR THE LOAN.

**Held for 2 weeks for 2<sup>nd</sup> reading**

#### **COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

**Marcia Phelps – Licking County Clerk of Municipal Court,** All I can say at this time is that I'm disappointed. I'm disappointed that Newark City Council wants to continue to spend city taxpayer dollars for something that has already been investigated. I'm equally disappointed that Councilman Marmie wasn't forthcoming with the investigators for the attorneys that were contracted to do a thorough investigation. Full disclosure obviously wasn't given as I listened to his comments stating that nobody called him and he knew the names were not part of the people he had talked to. That leaves holes in the investigation, obviously. Yes, I did spend taxpayer dollars. I have the right to do that. I didn't get an additional appropriation for those funds, I was frugal with my budget and was able to find money within and transfer in order to pay for that. I will continue to use those attorneys to apply the recommendations they have given me, since this has come up and I only feel compelled to proceed with that. I would like to have some answers to the questions, although this is not a time for debate, but as to how long this is going to last. When do they expect expedite, if you will, this investigation. How long will it take? Maybe the HR Director will be able to answer those questions for me or maybe Councilman Marmie might want to share with me the information if he's in that charge. I also want to thank Councilmen Blake and Fennell for seeing the report for what it was, true and honest, thorough,

as thorough as it could be given there was not complete disclosure of information, or so it seems. I also want to wish everybody a very Merry Christmas. It's been a difficult year for everyone, our office particularly in the courts, but we have persevered through all of those adversities and have remained open and been able to service the people through access to justice. With that said, I do wish everyone a very Merry Christmas, I hope your families stay healthy and I hope the new year is better than what we ended it with.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

**Mayor Hall** – As we close out 2020 I want to thank all of our great employees, thank council and thank everyone. It's been quite a different year, especially the last half of it here. Everyone has done a yeoman's job and been a real class act. Government can't close down, not that we really want to, especially our first responders and surely the courts as Marcia said, they've stayed open through this and we've all worked together very well, even among a bit of tensions. I appreciate all of the employees and council. Thanks to council for passing what I feel are good budgets as we move into 2021 we have done some real fiscal savvy over the last couple of years and I think this is when it really comes to the top where we can move into 2021. There are many other cities not quite that fortunate across this state and nation. Thank goodness we were able to balance budgets without any layoffs. So again, thank you for passing the budgets this evening it's a great way to end the year and start into the new one. Finally, December is usually a month of festivities and celebrations, we just finished 8 days of Hanukkah, Christmas is on Friday and Kwanza starts on Saturday and then of course New Years is around the corner. I wish everyone Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, happy New Year, Happy Kwanza Celebration, but please do it safely and we look forward to working with everyone for 2021.

**Mr. Barker** – I would be remiss if I didn't start out the Director Rhodes thank you as normal. David you are doing a fantastic job for us and all the citizens. You're doing a great job keeping us informed of snow treatment on the roadways, I had some issues on Londondale that I made Councilman Lang aware of as well and within the hour you had a crew there to get that roadway cleared. We've had some water main issues on Country Club and each time you've been right on top of those as well as the guys from the water department, I saw them this morning in the 20 degree weather outside digging up the roadway to fix the water main. I just want to thank all of our city employees who do a fantastic job every day. Mr. Mayor, I'd like to thank you and all of your team for bringing a balanced budget to council and to Councilman Marmie who always does a fantastic job working on the budget and who represents not only council well as our Finance Chairman, but also represents his constituents extremely well. I want to thank all of our first responders, it's hard with the cold fighting fires, going on EMS runs and taking care of our citizens. Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanza, Happy Hanukkah, stay safe and stay healthy.

**Mr. Blake** – I also want to wish everyone however you celebrate this time of year to have laughs and hugs with the family members who you can with. It's been a trying year for all of us, but this time of year we just want to reflect on the year we've had and to enjoy time with loved ones and connect with them however you may be able to. In the south end this year has brought us not only a health pandemic with COVID, but we've had major floods in the springtime, we've had major issues dealing with racial justice and social justice and even the



issues with our homeless population continue. I hope as this year comes to a close and we remember all the struggles and tribulations that we went through this year that we take time ourselves to look into the issues that affect our constituents and our residents of Newark. I hope that this council takes the charge of wanting to have more discussions, we paid for and received a report from a consultant this year, and I hope we take that back up because there are serious recommendations in there I feel we did not give ample time to and hopefully we can do that in 2021. I also believe that our safety forces which we all are grateful for and appreciate the job that they're doing, but there are crime statistics that we as a council should be reviewing, I hope we can look at those numbers and see where the issues are happening in our city and ways in which we can improve upon them. Even though we may disagree on some things it's been a blessing to work with each and every one of you. I know two times a month we come together in these meetings and we have to bring forward the issues of the day that our constituents want us to do. That's our job. I just want to thank our city employees, all of them from the road crews to the cemetery, the parks people, to the water department, the storm water department, our safety forces and everyone within city government thank you for the job that you do. Thank you to all of the people who have stepped up and gone above and beyond to help people during this health pandemic. I wish everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanza, Happy Hanukkah and wish you all a Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year.

**Mr. Bubb** – I just want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**Mr. Fennell** – I think everybody can agree and some have attested to this that it was an extraordinarily difficult year and I just appreciate everybody here and throughout the city that came together and made everything continue to run. Like the Mayor said, you can't shut down the city because it still has to work. I would like to wish everybody Happy Holidays and hopefully a much better 2021.

**Ms. Hall** – I would like to repeat that, I wish everybody a Happy Holiday, however you approach that. I think there will be a lot of people cancel on their relatives, but try to be safe. A friend of mine is a retired nurse, did everything right, got COVID. So just follow the rules. It's actually really nice to see you guys without a mask. We forget what everybody looks like. I want to thank Spencer for helping me with Zoom and getting set up. Thanks to the Mayor and our administration, they didn't miss a beat. It's been difficult but hopefully 2021 will be better. Thursday I spoke to a class of third graders who wanted to know about council and my job responsibilities and last but not least, what is my favorite show. These kids at Blessed Sacrament on East Main were well prepared, questions everywhere. I showed them a map of the first ward and explained that, so when we get back to chambers at some point I want them to come and witness in person. They are great kids.

**Mr. Harris** – I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I want to thank all of the city workers as everyone said. I also want to thank Janine, no one thanks Janine, she came in half way through the year and has done a great job and I want thank you for all you've done for us Janine.

**Mr. Labutis** – I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, like everyone has said it's been a crazy year and I'm looking forward to a better year in 2021. However you decide to celebrate over the next few days whether it be in person or virtually make sure you take time to cherish those that are around you. Friends are great and they only last for so long so make sure you spend the time with those around you.

**Mr. Lang** – I wasn't going to mention this, but following the way the facts were somewhat twisted and the accusations that were leveled at Mr. Marmie I think I would be remiss if I didn't note that the lead counsel

for the firm hired by Ms. Phelps is Danny O'Connor who is the Franklin County Recorder and a member of the Executive Committee for the Franklin County Democratic Party. I'm sure Ms. Wilhelm and Mr. West, the investigators from the firm are fine attorneys, but at a minimum there does seem to be some significant ties between Ms. Phelps, her party and this firm, so I felt like that needed to be said. I wanted to thank the Auditor's department, Steve and Lori, the Mayor and Doug for another balanced budget, great work to all of you for putting the time into that. Also for your work on the COVID expenditures, I know that's ongoing, but appreciate the list being circulated now and all the work you've done there. Spencer spoke before me so of course you got to take the thank you for David, but really do appreciate the constant communication we're getting from the service department regarding plowing and the quick help you were able to provide for the folks in the 5<sup>th</sup> ward. Last, I want to thank Spencer, Don, Janine and Dave again with all the work you've done for the meetings this year. We quickly pivoted to this virtual format for a while over the summer, then we moved into our phone booths in the chambers for a bit, which was a new and different experience, hopefully we won't have too much more time in those, but if it's necessary we can go back there again, but then pivoting back to virtual you guys have done some great work to move us back and forth on the fly and work through the ongoing technical difficulties involved trying to meet this way, so much appreciated. I'd rather see everybody in person but we have to keep everybody safe, so appreciate it. Last I want to wish everybody Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, looking forward to 2021.

**Mr. Marmie** – I need to call a Finance Committee Meeting for January 4<sup>th</sup>, don't know if there will be anything on the agenda but want to call that in case. First, I want to comment on letter that Mr. Froelich posted in the Advocate indicating that I did not respond to his email. He did a records request in which he was requesting a presentation from the YMCA. That was provided to me so therefore I did not have any information to provide to him. Just to kind of set the record straight on that, I was not ignoring his request for information I just did not have any. The YMCA and the city administration was in possession of all the information. The next thing I want to discuss, I gave full disclosure, when asked to present my notes I presented all my notes to the firm doing the investigation. I provided answers, full detailed answers to the HR Department. I was informed the notes he took during my conversation were provided to the firm. I disclosed everybody that was spoken to. I don't know where this lack of full disclosure comes from, but I gave full disclosure. I did not deny any information, when asked to provide my notes I provided them right away, the same day and all the information that was on there. Just to set that straight and make sure that's out there. I too, Dee, had the great fortune of talking to the third grade class at Blessed Sacrament. They had some great questions and I was able to provide them a lot of information. They asked some though ones. They asked what I like best about my job on City Council, they asked details about what exactly we vote on. It was a great half hour. We had to limit it due to COVID. They're well educated which I am very optimistic about our future because the third grade teacher, Mrs. Chapman, she provided all the levels of the different branches, Judicial, Executive and Legislative. They knew some of the information when I started presenting they were asking questions, they were spot on so, I'm

very happy and optimistic about our future and what Mrs. Chapman is doing for them. Lastly, I just want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I think I can sum up 2020 by saying we made the best of what we had. Hopefully there are still some positives everyone can be optimistic about during these trying times. Moving forward into 2021 I hope we take what we learned in 2020, make improvements for 2021 and do the best to do that in a safe manner in which everybody can get through this pandemic, hopefully we can get back to some normalcy, however, normal is a new normal. I think 2021 can be a fantastic year, we can show exactly what we're made of as citizens of the United States and making sure we're doing the right things.

**Mr. Rath** – One good thing about going last is everybody's already said everything, so I'll say ditto to what everyone has already said. I'll start out by calling a Service Committee meeting for January 4<sup>th</sup>. No idea if something will be going on then, but none the less we'll call a meeting. I did want to say thank you to Dave Rhodes for the additional stop light on West main and Terrace. To be quite honest with you it's pretty unobtrusive, I hardly notice it myself and it's fairly close to my house, but the residents on North and South Terrace appreciate that very much. Pulling out of Terrace onto West Main Street, especially if you're making a left turn, without a traffic light was very difficult. I also wanted to say thank you very much to Licking Memorial Health Systems, they sponsored that light. It was deemed justified by the increased traffic on West Main which was in part a result of Licking Memorial's expansion at the hospital and on Tamarack, so I appreciate them stepping up to the plate and taking care of that. I am getting a lot of emails about the zoning change on River Road. There's a lot of disinformation out there as well. I will let you know that the property there currently is already zoned residential so there is going to be housing there and there is nothing that can be done to change that. There is some zoning changes going on that make changes to that zoning to allow for about 180 apartment units. I would encourage everybody to get as much information as you can about those apartment units. When you hear apartments you automatically have a vision in your mind about what you think they are. What you think they will look like and what you think they will do to your neighborhood. I can assure you that is not what these are and it is not going to do what it is you think it is going to do. None the less there's a Planning Commission Meeting coming up. There are Facebook pages and Next Door pages dedicated to this and I'll make sure that we post access to that meeting and that is a Public Hearing Meeting and I am almost absolutely positive that it will be done by Zoom and after that there will be another Public Hearing at Council which will probably be in the same format as what you're seeing tonight. You have an opportunity to speak at both of those, so I would encourage you to do that as well. When citizens are emailing me, please be sure to include your address so I do know where you live. I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and happy New Year. It's ironic that on the shortest day of the year, the longest night of the year, it's also the night that the Christmas Star appears and our skies have cleared so if you get an opportunity to take a look outside it's pretty spectacular.

**President Ellington** – I would just like to take a second to thank Law Director Sassen, our Mayor, Spencer and actually all of council for hanging in there during these meetings. I know it's been a tough year, everybody has stepped up and done a great job and I certainly appreciate all of council hanging in there and being able to put these meetings one because it certainly has been a challenge, but thank all of you for showing up and doing your part. Our

next meeting will be January 4<sup>th</sup>, 5:45pm for Committees and 7:00pm for council. I'd like to thank all of our city employees for everything they've done this year, again it's been a trying time and they've just done a great job. So, thanks to all of our employees who go out there every day and to do their job. Let me add Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone. I guess I would be remiss if I didn't say "Go Bucks" and we'll see you all next year.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion to adjourn by Mr. Labutis , seconded by Mr. Harris , passed by acclamation**

**Don Ellington, President of Council**