

COUNCIL MINUTES

January 3, 2023
Council Chambers
7:00 P.M.

President Ellington called the meeting to order

ROLL CALL - Mr. Harris, Ms. Hottinger, Mr. Houser, Mr. Labutis, Mr. Lang, Mr. Marmie, Mr. Rath, Mr. Rine, Mr. Barker, Ms. Bline

INVOCATION – Ms. Bline

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CAUCUS

MINUTES of December 19, 2022, Motion to approve by Mr. Labutis , second by Mr. Barker, passed by acclamation

APPOINTMENTS There were none this meeting

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance - **Received and Filed without objection**
Service - **Received and Filed without objection**
Personnel - **Received and Filed without objection**

REPORTS FROM CITY OFFICIALS

There are none this meeting

COMMUNICATIONS

Laura Williams - Reaching out to create awareness of the Division on Addictions at <https://www.addictiontreatmentdivision.org/drug-alcohol/ohio>

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

Jeri Good, 12 N. Park Place - You should be used to seeing me here, as of February it will be 3 years I've been coming trying to get parking resolved for residents downtown. What I ask is that we're allowed to park, just be allowed to park on the street, get a resident pass and park in any open space. We're not asking for preferred parking, we're not asking for reserved parking, just let us park. So, I did request to forward some research I did and I had some trouble forwarding it, but I think it did go through, but I did make a hard copy because it's much easier to read. I did research around the state and a few places outside of Ohio. Every place that I researched was in a mixed use, business and residential and every one of the, once you prove you are a resident, you get a permit, you

either get it free or pay for it and you can park and you're not restricted as far as time. So, that's what I'm asking. I know the parking was changed to two hour or limited parking because what I've been told was employees were parking all day, which none of the places I checked are saying they are waiving the restriction on employees, it's just that they are allowing residents that live there to park. That's what I'm asking. The Sandusky one I printed out and it's a really nice purpose statement so I am going to read that. The purpose of the downtown resident parking program is to support the development of downtown Sandusky into a vibrant mixed use district by which residents in the designated downtown parking district may conveniently park their vehicle in the downtown district and exceed the assigned time limitations. The city wishes to encourage the development of residential uses in this area. I think that's a really good purpose statement and that's all I'm asking. I think that's it. I hope to get more people here from downtown, it's a hard one. People don't want to speak up and then there are so many that tell me, what's the use, nothing's going to change. I hope never to feel that hopeless about situations, but that's what I've got.

Desiree Blake, 125 S. 2nd Street - I was just wondering, I walked down to the end of Fleek where the playground used to be and there is no playground stuff. I didn't know if you guys were putting new stuff in down there or just not going to have anything down there, because when I get my little nephews, that's where I take them to go play and everything, but now there's nothing there. So, I just wanted to know what's going on, if they're putting new because Mound City bought the park and are re-doing it, but there's no playground down there anymore.

Chris Gargus, Director Champions Network - I just wanted to bring you some updates on the addiction issue. We now have an office at 261 East Main which is right across the street from the Salvation Army which is a perfect location for us. So, we've been ministering to those folks down there, there are tons of them and we're trying to help them get off the streets as much as possible. We now have an active street team that goes between save-a lot and downtown daily in our van and they provide transportation if they want to go to celebrate recovery or a champions meeting, anything they want to go to we provide transportation for them as well as we take them to a treatment facility as well. So, this is in your city and we want you guys to know that we're bringing awareness, we know what's going on, we're trying to help get to the root of this. We bring people in for treatment and to get them help and to get them off the street. That's our genuine thing is to get them off the streets. If we don't have addicted people that are on the streets that are homeless then we're getting somewhere. Our residential will be opening this year, we'll be housing 15 men out there, it's Vesper Hills Daybreak out in the country by Longaberger Golf Course, so that's another way we can help the community. Some people need more than just 30 days, some need 6 months, some need a year. It just depends, everybody's recovery is different. Currently there are 70 people we are working with, around 50 men and 20 women on a weekly basis and I do stay in contact with these people every day at least once or twice a week if nothing else. Out of those 60% are reporting socially stable and sober, so we're doing really well with just a once a week meeting so just imagine after we open the residential the success rate we'll have out there. We're a Christ centered ministry and we move by faith and faith alone and there's other ways of doing it, but this way really works for us and we've been successful. I just wanted to give you some hope and let you know it's coming.

Rochelle Volen-Smith, 237 Violet Ct. - Last meeting was kind of interesting and rather amusing actually. Anyway, I want to quote Nelson Mandella. The difference between what counts in life is not the mere fact that you lived, but the difference that you make in the lives of others that determined the life that we lead. Steve and I were lucky enough to spend the 24th, 25th and 26th, actually not all of that, but parts, with the homeless shelter that was open on Main Street and it was a wonderful experience. Everybody was there for everybody and that was a beautiful, beautiful thing. In light of the conversation at the last meeting, I'm tempted to quote from the Bible, but I think I'm going to skip that part. I thought it was really crazy that Council couldn't understand that other people deserve to be represented too, whether they be homeless people or people of different religions or whatever, but I think there was a personal choice not to understand that. I think I'm going to end it at that.

Mary Mendecino, 391 Hudson Avenue - I'm up here like so many people I was on a list with to talk about the problems with our roads and this holiday season was a little crazy with the weather dropping and just everything all combined, but my husband and I moved to Newark to the historical area 4 ½ years ago and I knew living here, especially when I saw what our taxes would be that this would be a little bit of a challenge. We were lucky enough, we lived in the township of Granville and you pay basically for what you get and they were wonderful, the roads, but after this last situation I really felt compelled to come here and speak. I don't have all the details, I haven't been here long enough in Newark to really speak very intelligently,, but I at least thank you for the opportunity for me to be heard. I understand the growth that's about to hit us it's the best of times and the worst of times that we're about to face and when I see how we're struggling now in regards to our streets and taking care of them in crisis and our Police Department and the monies and the lack of police that we have and what we need for the City and knowing that there's a lot of buildings going to start up here and if we're struggling now I just want to know what's going to happen when we start getting this infrastructure building up and all these things happening, if it's this bad now, are we preparing and please help me, what does that look like because I really don't know. I just wanted to be heard, thank you very much.

ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING

By: Mr. Lang, Mr. Barker, Ms. Bline

22-51 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZATION TABLES OF THE LICKING COUNTY MUNICIPAL COURT ADULT PROBATION DEPARTMENT AND ABOLISHING THE POSITION OF SENIOR PROBATION OFFICER FROM HOURLY NON-BARGAINING PERSONNEL UNIT CLASSIFICATIONS AND CREATING A SENIOR PROBATION OFFICER IN THE MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISORY EXEMPT UNIT CLASSIFICATIONS AND SETTING THE COMPENSATION THEREFORE

Motion to adopt by Mr. Lang, second by Barker, motion passed 10-0

ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING

By: Mr. Rath, Mr. Barker, Mr. Marmie, MS. Bline, Mr. Harris

22-55 AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY, GENERALLY DESCRIBED AS 293 MERCHANT STREET (PARCEL #054-250128-00.000), CITY OF NEWARK, LICKING COUNTY, OHIO, FROM THAT OF SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE - RM - MEDIUM

DENSITY DISTRICT, TO TFR-TWO FAMILY RESIDENCE DISTRICT, ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO

Referred to Planning Commission for public hearing

By: Mr. Lang, Mr. Barker, Ms. Bline, Mr. Marmie, Mr. Harris

22-56 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE POSITION CLASSIFICATION, PAY RANGE AND DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZATION TABLES OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, DEPARTMENT OF Safety, DIVISION OF Police BY CREATING THE POSITION OF Criminalist, ABOLISHING THE POSITIONS OF 2 Communications Operator(s), 3 Communications Operator 1(s), 7 Communications Operator 2(s), 1 Crime Prevention Coordinator, 1 Forensic Scientist, 1 Parking Meter Repair Worker and 1 Police Communication Supervisor AND SETTING THE COMPENSATION THEREFORE--

Held until 1-17-23 for second reading

By: Mr. Rath, Mr. Barker, Ms. Bline, Mr. Marmie, Mr. Harris

22-57 AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY, GENERALLY DESCRIBED AS 1401 MT. VERNON RD., (PARCEL TAX ID #054-269934-00.003), CITY OF NEWARK, LICKING COUNTY, OHIO, FROM THAT OF GC GENERAL COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICT TO LI LIMITED INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT, ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO.

Referred to Planning Commission for public hearing

By: Mr. Rath, Mr. Barker, Ms. Bline, Mr. Marmie, Mr. Harris

22-58 AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY, GENERALLY DESCRIBED AS 1425 MT. VERNON ROAD, (PARCEL TAX ID #054-269934-00.002), CITY OF NEWARK, LICKING COUNTY, OHIO, FROM THAT OF GC GENERAL COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICT TO LI LIMITED INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT, ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, OHIO.

Referred to Planning Commission for public hearing

RESOLUTIONS ON SECOND READING

There are none this meeting

RESOLUTIONS ON FIRST READING

By: Mr. Marmie, Mr. Barker, Ms. Bline

22-112 APPROPRIATING MONIES FOR THE CURRENT EXPENSES OF THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Held until 1-17-23 for second reading

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

Daniel Crawford, 163 S. 2nd Street - First before I begin, I was checking the website to look at the minutes but there are links on there that are broken and I can't get to the minutes or

agendas or packets, probably just a quick fix it was just something in the editing process. So last meeting on December 19th as Ms. Smith had mentioned was very much interesting. One thing I don't talk about myself much except for people who know me on social media or obviously family is that I'm agnostic. I haven't been a Christian in a very long time. While of course I've remained silent over the years about the invocation and I know that City Council is far from the only body of government in this country that does an invocation pretty sure every level of government does and even conventions do it, but having said that, I think it's a legitimate concern expressed by a citizen that this could be arguably unconstitutional. However the way there was a response to what she said is what I have an issue with. Because after she said that there were some Council Members who, I think this is perfectly fine, expressed their own pride in their own faith, which I think everyone has a right to do. What's not okay in my opinion, is to create this impression that she should be ashamed for saying that. Now it wasn't said directly, but she was certainly berated in certain respects for expressing that. Things along the line of saying that you'll pray for everyone who doesn't believe Jesus should be in your life, I don't believe there ever was a Jesus Christ. I think he was a falsehood, that's obviously my opinion. Of course people. Muslims even believe that Jesus Christ existed so there's a little bit of agreement here and there a little bit of disagreement, but to be told by government that we should recognize there was Jesus Christ that we should be thankful for God being who we are or never forgetting that it's because of God that we're here that is I think wrong because I would never represent government by looking at a citizen and telling them remember there is no God. That would be inappropriate, that is not the position of government. So, I think at the least, certain members of Council or the body as a whole owes Mrs. Smith an apology. Not just her, but all of us citizens who do not believe in God or at least aren't Christian. Thank you.

President Ellington - Thank you Daniel, I appreciate your opinion although I don't agree with it.

MISCELLANEOUS

Law Director Tricia Moore - I do have a public safety announcement I would like to get out there. When you see an emergency vehicle on the side of the road and it doesn't have to be a police officer, it can be squad, a fire truck, a highway worker, a tow truck a utility truck, the law if you're on a road like SR 16 is to move over unless it is absolutely impossible. We just recently had another trooper almost hit on the side of the road. In the beginning of 2022 we had a trooper that was struck and trapped between two vehicles because people were not getting over for service vehicles. So. especially during this time when sometimes the roads are icy, you're going to see tow truck and officers along the side of the road trying to assist drivers going off the road. Please remember those lights are visible for a mile if not more. Those blue lights you know when you're driving down SR 16 you can see those blue lights forever. Get over as soon as you can, if you can't you need to slow down significantly. Please watch out for our officers along the roadway.

Mr. Harris - I could say a lot. I'm going to say this. People can come and speak their opinion, I'm going to speak mine, okay. There's a book that's called the Bible, okay, it's not negotiable. The

Bible is the Bible and that's the book that we all have to live by. One of these days we're about to face the judgement and it's going to be your responsibility whether you want to live by that Bible or not. That's just a dangerous place to be at. Anyway, I want to wish everybody a Happy New Year and remind everybody that the Martin Luther King breakfast is the 16th of January, if you want a ticket or to be a sponsor let me know or call the school and let's continue to pray for the Buffalo Bill player last night that was injured. Hopefully he recovers. You know, I wonder how many people didn't believe in prayer until last night, you know.

Ms. Hottinger - I just wanted to say thank you to Chris Gargus from the Champions Network. I just want to say I really appreciate that addiction is not the person, it's the addiction taking over and you have to consider that when you're dealing with people like that so, kudos to you and thank you for what you're doing.

Mr. Houser - Thank you Chris for bringing that up and I appreciate you updating us and am excited for what's next. Comments were made about being told by government that you have to believe in God. Councilman Harris mentioned tis already, but every opinion is exactly that, it's an opinion expressed by anybody up here so, citizens can come and express their opinions, we have the same ability to express our opinions. Obviously we disagree, I may disagree with people's opinions but that doesn't change their right to make those. My Faith is a critical part of my life and that's just for me.

Mr. Labutis - I'd like to thank Mr. Gargus for coming in this evening, 60% socially stable and sober is a fantastic number, congratulations on that. I'd like to wish everyone a Happy New Year.

Mr. Lang - I will just wish everyone a Happy New Year and thank all of our safety forces for all they did over the stormy holidays and thank our Service Department, I know there were a lot of people out in the cold taking care of things and I appreciate everybody's hard work.

Mr. Marmie - I'll call a Finance Committee Meeting. I also want to thank you Chris I really did appreciate the information and it was definitely a good shot in the arm going towards this year. I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year. Hopefully 2023 will be a great year for everyone. I just want to comment, first of all, I know that the comment was directed towards me, I did not say Jesus, I said God okay, so just to clarify that. Not that I need to explain myself, but I pray for others, not for myself, so I do pray for others. My comment was directed and legitimate that I do pray for those who may need prayer and so that's where I was directed, it was not an attack on anyone or anybody's beliefs, it's just a belief that I have and something that I do is I pray for others and not necessarily myself.

Mr. Rath - I will call a Service Committee meeting for January 17th. Chris Gargus, I love your numbers. It's nice to hear somebody come in here and talk about an actual difference that they are making. Congratulations, kudos to you, you keep up the good work. That's awesome. So I'll accept your challenge Daniel, Mrs. Smith if you were offended because you felt attacked I apologize for that it certainly was not my intention. But, I will tell you that people are often confuse about what the separation of church and state is and what it actually means. Put simply, the separation of church and state says that no state will tell people what religion to practice. So whether I say God up here when I pray, or I say Jesus or I say Buda or I say Satan or I say whatever I want to say, it doesn't matter. If I pray to God or Jesus the Wiccans are going to be upset. If I pray to the Wiccans the atheist are going to be upset. Nobody here is going to dictate who you pray to or pray at all, we're not trying to do that and because we are not trying

to do that there is an absolute separation of church and state. It should not come up again in conversation.

Mr. Rine - Chris I want to thank you for what you do, and thank you for your service, my Uncle served in Desert Storm. I was told when I was a young boy, my parents didn't pressure me to go to church, but I was told believe in something or you'll fall for anything, so I don't see why people have a problem with what other people believe in, if you have a problem for what I believe in I think you have some self digging to do.

Mr. Barker - Just want to wish everybody Happy New Year and thank all of our city workers for everything they do. I know there is a large accident on 21st Street right now, so I'm sure the Fire Department is right on top of that so, prayer for all of those involved there and we're going to have a great year here.

Ms. Bline - Chris thank you, I really appreciate it and things are getting better and it's the efforts of people reaching out and getting out of their safe places and reaching out to their neighbors and I was at the warming center and the Hospital did a great job bringing food. AS far as, you know, just represent yourself, you know I follow Christ, but someone else may not, but it's great to live in a place that we can represent ourselves. I know there are some folks here that were concerned about snow removal, please, we can talk. Thank you to everyone for coming.

President Ellington - Just a couple things. Daniel, we're working on something with the website, it's past me, but the Mayor is working on that. Thank you for bringing that up so we'll make sure those get corrected. Snow removal, I got a lot of texts and emails about snow removal, fortunately or unfortunately I happened to be out of town, which was okay because I was somewhere warm. It was a challenge this time and I think we could've dropped the ball, I don't think there is any doubt about that or any excuse for that, I know they're working on it, I don't have an excuse, I just know we didn't do well, we'll certainly need to do better than that. Our next meeting is Tuesday, January 17th, the day after Martin Luther King Day, again committees are at 5:45 and Council at 7:00pm I'd like to add my Happy New Year to everybody and thank you for your attention this evening.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Labutis , second by Mr. Harris , with that we are adjourned

Don Ellington, President of Council