Mayor Rothschild called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Roll Call: Present: Mrs. Adele H. Zucker
Ms. Frankie B. Goldberg (not at roll call)
Mr. Steven D. Bullock
Mr. Peter R. Bernardo
Mr. Kevin Patrick Murphy
Mr. Frank Consolo
Mr. Steven Sims

Also Present: Clerk of Council Nancy E. English
Law Director Kenneth Fisher
Finance Director Anthony Ianiro
Chief of Police Gary Stehlik
Fire Chief John Pitchler
Service Director Christopher Vild
Building Commissioner David Menn
Community Coordinator Walter Stinson

MOTION BY MR. BULLOCK, SECONDED BY MR. SIMS to excuse the absence of Ms. Goldberg. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

A moment of silence was held in memory of the late Father Thomas J. O’Malley, former President of John Carroll University, who passed away recently, and for the people hurt and killed at Fort Hood, Texas, and for the soldiers overseas.

Minutes of the regular meeting held on November 2, 2009

There were no corrections or additions to the minutes of November 2, 2009.

MOTION BY MRS. ZUCKER, SECONDED BY MR. CONSOLO to approve the minutes of the November 2, 2009 meeting. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

Mayor Rothschild announced that three (3) newly elected officials were present in the audience: Mayor-Elect Susan K. Infeld, Councilman-Elect Phillip Ertel and Councilwoman-Elect Susan D. Pardee.

Comments from the Audience:

Steven D. Bennett, immediate past President of the Northeast Ohio City Council Association (NOCCA), invited officials to NOCCA’s November 19, 2009 forum entitled “Regional Prosperity Initiative: Planning, Sharing and Growing...Together” which will be held at the New Orleans Showboat Restaurant in Brooklyn. Mr. Bullock requested that such meetings be listed on the upcoming meetings notices.

Sheila Hubman, 2528 Ashurst Rd., requested that two items be placed on the current Council’s agenda before it disbands: 1) the final status of the vacant lot at 2603 Ashurst Road (if it will be sold or land banked) and 2) the Exceptions Analysis prepared by NEO|SO. Mayor Rothschild noted that Council has not met to decide the future of the Ashurst property. She added that the Exceptions Report was tabled until after the election, but now she understands Mr. Bullock and Mr. Murphy tabled the presentation until the first of the year. Mr. Murphy stated that there was a scheduling conflict with Mr. David Akers of NEO|SO not being able to make the presentation until after the first of the year. Vice Mayor Zucker inquired if the Council will be able to review the report. She added that since the current Council authorized the expenditure, the members are entitled to see the report. Mr. Murphy stated that a request can be made to see the report. Mayor Rothschild agreed that the report should be submitted during her tenure. Mrs. Hubman asked if NEO|SO has been paid for the report. Mr. Ianiro will check to determine what has been paid to date. Mr. Sims mentioned that he is anxious to see the Exceptions Analysis report and hoped that the current Council as a whole would have an opportunity to see the report and speak to it.

Reports and Communications from the Mayor and the taking of action:

Mayor Rothschild announced that the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District awarded Service Director
Christopher Vild the 2009 Trash Oscar Award for the Best Service Director in a Leading Role.

Mayor Rothschild reported that the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORSD) will be increasing sewer rates due to a new charge for storm water containment. She noted that objections may be made to NEORSD until December 7, 2009. Law Director Kenneth J. Fisher reported that the additional charge of approximately $4.75 per month is pursuant to the Clean Water Act. He added that the City will receive 7.5% of the funds to be used for storm water related activities such as catch basin repairs. He also noted that the City will have an opportunity to make comments, but cannot object to the charge. Mayor Rothschild stated that she feels the residents are being over charged; therefore, during the comment period the City will request reimbursement on a regular basis.

Agenda Items:

A. Report on the NOPEC General Assembly Meeting held November 10, 2009

Councilman Sims reported on the Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) General Assembly meeting held November 10, 2009 at the Independence Civic Center. He noted that NOPEC, which was formed in 2000, is a watchdog for the electric and natural gas utility customers of Northeast Ohio. It is the largest government energy utility aggregation in the country serving 126 cities and 9 counties.

Issues discussed at the meeting included approving the 2010 budget, voting on new member communities, and the election of directors from Lorain, Medina, Portage, Summit and Trumbull Counties. Cheryl Roberto, a member of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO), was the guest speaker. She spoke generally on her role and the PUCO working with the public utilities. Leigh Herrington, Executive Director of NOPEC, provided an update on electric and gas programs and demonstrated the success NOPEC has achieved in bringing competitively priced power to its customers.

Mr. Sims explained that due to NOPEC’s successful efforts in establishing an electric program, its residential customers have experienced electric bills of 12% lower than the prevailing market rate in 2009 and it will be 8% lower in 2010. Small business customers received a 9% reduction in 2009 and it will be approximately 5% lower in 2010. Overall, on average, NOPEC can provide lower rates for electric and natural gas than other utility vendors.

A financial report was also presented. As of September 20, 2009, NOPEC held $14.4 million in assets which is held in cash and investments with the other side of the balance sheet being held in reserves. The 2010 budget was approved which included $2.5 million in revenue primarily from electric and gas management fees and $987,000 of budgeted expenses.

The City of Parma was added to the natural gas program and Trumbull County’s participation in the electric program was rescinded because the county failed to complete all the necessary steps for membership.

B. Ordinance No. 2009-64 Establishing temporary appropriations for the period commencing January 1, 2010 and ending March 31, 2010 (1st Reading)

Ordinance No. 2009-64 appropriates funds for current expenses and other expenditures of the City for the period commencing January 1, 2010 and ending March 31, 2010. Finance Director Anthony L. Ianiro reported that there will be a Finance Committee meeting on Tuesday, November 17, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. to discuss the temporary appropriation ordinance.

Councilman Sims stated that some of the line items reflect $0 appropriations. He explained that does not mean these areas will not be funded, but rather that appropriations are not needed before the permanent appropriation ordinance is approved. Mr. Sims stated that the budget will be difficult to achieve because of the uncertain outlook for the revenues of the City, which are likely to decrease. Therefore, there will be a need to control expenses and make hard choices. Mr. Sims stated that the City needs a sufficient General Fund Budget of at least 5% of the annual appropriation because it will affect the City’s ability to borrow funds.

Councilman Sims distributed an analysis of revenues, spending and fund balances for the General Fund, which will be used for discussion during preparation of the permanent appropriation.

Ms. Goldberg entered the meeting a 8:00 p.m.

Ordinance No. 2009-64 was placed on first reading. There were no objections.
C. Resolution No. 2009-65 Authorizing tax advances during the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010 (1st Reading)

Resolution No. 2009-65 authorizes the County Auditor to advance taxes from the proceeds of tax levies for the period of January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2010.

Resolution No. 2009-65 was placed on first reading. There were no objections.

D. Motion to hold an executive session immediately following this regular meeting for the purpose of discussing personnel, litigation and real estate matters

MOTION BY MR. BULLOCK, SECONDED BY MR. MURPHY to hold an executive session immediately following this regular meeting for the purpose of discussing personnel matters. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

Directors’ Reports:

Fire Chief John Pitchler reported that the Fire Department has installed over 350 smoke detectors in residents’ homes since July 31, 2009. Also, the Fire Prevention Program has been completed in all the schools and for senior citizens.

Chief Pitchler stated that a flu inoculation clinic was held on Sunday, November 15, 2009, which served approximately 80 people. He thanked the police officers, firefighters, CERT Team members and the auxiliary police who assisted with the clinic. Mayor Rothschild mentioned that the clinic went very well and thanked those who participated.

Building Commissioner David Menn reported that he will be attending a Land Bank Conference on Thursday, November 19, 2010.

Service Director Christopher Vild reported that leaf pick up crews are currently working on the west side of the city and will continue picking up through the end of the month. Mr. Sims inquired if there is a schedule for leaf pick up. Mr. Vild noted that the crews work through the city from east to west and then pass through again until completed. He noted that each pass takes approximately one week, but as leaf piles diminish, the time spent on each pass decreases.

Committee Reports:

Civic Information Committee Chairman Frank Consolo reported that he was attempting to schedule a committee meeting for November 18, 2009 for a presentation on the proposals received for IT services. However, Daniel Cavolo of the Loyola Group could not meet on that day. He mentioned that Itek has been handling the City’s ongoing technical problems as they arise, which is been the least expensive method. Councilman Consolo suggested that the item be discussed at the Finance Committee meeting if the proposal information is submitted prior to the meeting. He suggested that Mr. Cavolo be scheduled to present at the next council meeting.

Mr. Consolo stated that the committee still has the proposals submitted by three (3) website vendors which were tabled last year due to lack of funds. He recommended that this documentation be considered during the budget discussions as well.

Finance Committee Chairman Steven Sims announced that the Finance Committee will meet on Tuesday, November 17, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers and possibly jointly with the Civic Information Committee.

Safety Committee Chairman Steven D. Bullock did not have a report, but Mayor Rothschild asked the committee to meet to consider the fee schedule for emergency medical services.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Mayor Beryl E. Rothschild

Nancy E. English, Clerk of Council