

**SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS, OHIO
JULY 18, 2016**

Mayor Infeld called the regular meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Mrs. Susan Pardee
Mrs. Pamela Cameron
Mr. Philip Ertel
Mr. John Rach
Mr. Mark Wiseman

Absent: Mr. Steven Sims, Mrs. Michele Weiss

Also Present: Law Director Luke F. McConville
Finance Director Larry Heiser
Police Chief Steven Hammett
Fire Chief Douglas Zook
Building Commissioner Eric Tuck-Macalla

MOTION BY MRS. PARDEE, SECONDED BY MR. RACH to excuse the absence of Mr. Sims and Mrs. Weiss. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

Agenda Item:

A. Ordinance 2016-26 Adopting and Implementing the Procedures under Chapter 5722 of the Ohio Revised Code to Facilitate Reutilization of Nonproductive Land situated in the City of University Heights and Declaring an Emergency.

Mr. Tuck-Macalla stepped forward to explain Ordinance 2016-26 was similar to the Cleveland Heights ordinance and will be used to assist the City to force vacant and abandoned properties into foreclosure, to then have the City take possession and then move the properties toward being productive.

Mr. McConville stated that under Chapter 5722 of the Ohio Revised Code we [as a city] are creating our own landbank. The city will get notices from the county regarding these properties on a more timely basis. Another advantage is that we can sue to force foreclosure of blighted properties.

Ms. Pardee in a question directed at Mr. Tuck-Macalla asked, “You referenced Cleveland Heights [in your previous statement] why are you doing this now? Any particular reason?”

Mr. Tuck-Macalla stated that he had been researching the issues regarding blighted properties and this is another tool to move these properties along.

Mayor Infeld stated, “This gives us another mechanism to take care of the blighted properties. This should speed up the process.

Mr. Tuck-Macalla stated that 2602 Edgerton sat for years until it was foreclosed on and now that it has the Building Department; it is getting lots of calls because it has a clean title.

Mr. McConville stated that this process is to help get these properties back on the tax roles.

Mr. Wiseman asking about the properties being vacant: “Why was this on the agenda as an emergency? Will the council be informed regarding procedures with this program?”

Mayor Infeld stated that we have had issues with my spending limit being at \$5000 and the repairs to the Fire Department Heating and Cooling system was above her authority and this Ordinance was ready to go. We can wait until the next meeting when the rest of Council is here.

Mr. Wiseman stated that he had been talking about the process since he had gotten on council. He was concerned that Council is not informed to the procedures put in place. "Is this city going to pay for this ourselves and not use the land bank?"

Mr. McConville stated that having our own landbank is overdue. We will start getting information from the landbank more timely. He was not sure what the benefits are as far as waiting. Houses are sitting vacant and the county land bank will determine if the house is salvageable.

Mr. Rach stated it is a "Wonderful program" – how is the program going to work, how will property be used moving forward. What are the current maintenance plans for these homes? Do we own the house? Will we have better access to funding?

Mayor Infeld states we have been working with Land Bank for a long period of time. We can establish or own rules. Another option: tool but not sure about funding.

Mr. Rach asked, "What happens after the house is taken?" He indicated he would want to see more future development, if there actually was a plan.

Mayor Infeld stated that the landbank evaluates rehab or demolition. Recently, Council approved applying for a loan for a pocket park, which was a property where the house was demolished. Future: possibly parks, sell to neighbors, sell to developer to rehab. Goal would always be to make the property as valuable as possible.

Mr. Ertel stated the intention is to improve the neighborhoods. We owe it to the community to help the process.

Mrs. Pardee repeated Mr. Wiseman's point "Why the rush?" with "So we can push a property into foreclosure."

Mrs. Cameron asked, "Do we have criteria or rules which are in place? How do we explain this to residents? What outline do we have in place? How do we adopt and implement procedures, a coherent explanation of procedures?"

Mr. McConville stated, "These properties are typically in distress, to speed up the process a defendant can pay the liens – which the city would like. When discussing criteria, the Building Commissioner has already identified properties, chronic problem properties.

MOTION BY MR. ERTEL, SECONDED BY MR. RACH to suspend the rules Adopting and Implementing 2016-26 of Procedures under Chapter 5722 of the Ohio Revised Code to Facilitate Reutilization of Nonproductive Land situated in the City of University Heights and Declaring an Emergency. On roll call, Mr. Rach., Mr. Ertel, Mrs. Pardee, and Mrs. Cameron voted "aye." Mr. Wiseman voted "nay." The motion fails.

B. Motion to Approve the Purchas of a Replacement of Central Air Conditioning Unit for Fire department from Central Heating in an amount of \$7,473.00

Mayor Infeld makes a motion to approve the air conditioning and rooftop furnace units.

Mr. Tuck-Macalla obtained three price quotes and states it will take two weeks to order in the units, which will be replacements. He is recommending Central Heating and Cooling as they are the current maintenance providers for the City's Heating and A/C units. He explained that in 1998 the current unit was fixed and now it is past repair.

Mrs. Cameron asks about the air-conditioning/heat combination and how many years the unit will endure.

Mr. Tuck-Macalla explained that the new unit should last at least 10 years.

MOTION BY MR. WISEMAN, SECONDED BY MRS. CAMERSON to approve the Purchase of a replacement of Central Air Conditioning Unit for Fire Department from Central Heating in an amount of \$7,473.00. On roll call, all voted "aye."

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

MOTION BY MRS. PARDEE, SECONDED BY MR. ERTEL to adjourn the meeting. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

Susan K. Infeld, Mayor

Larry Heiser, Acting Secretary