

**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS, OHIO
MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM | 892 8024 6569
MONDAY, MAY 19, 2021**

Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Mrs. Michele Weiss
Mrs. Sandra Berry
Mrs. Barbara Blankfeld
Mr. Phillip Ertel
Mr. Justin Gould
Mrs. Susan Pardee
Mr. John Rach

Also Present: Law Director Luke McConville
Finance Director Dennis Kennedy
Clerk of Council Kelly Thomas
Executive Fire Captain Andrew Boylan
Police Lt. Todd Kinley
City Engineer Joseph Ciuni
Communications / Civic Engagement Michael Cook

Council Meeting May 3, 2021

Mayor Brennan asked that the approval of the May 3, 2021 Council minutes be table because there was a discrepancy with Resolution 2021-14 that needs to be corrected.

MOTION BY MR. ERTEL, SECONDED BY MRS. WEISS to approval of the April 19, 2021 Council Minutes. On roll call, all voted “aye,” except Mrs. Pardee, who “passed.”

Comments from Audience

There were no audience comments.

Mayor’s Report

Mayor’s Report May 19, 2021

I have excellent news to report tonight, news that all of council and all residents of University Heights should be happy to hear. But first, a quick look back:

When this Administration took office at the beginning of 2018, we discovered the Finance Department was in shambles. Proper books had not been kept. No bank reconciliations had been done in over a year, not since 2016. I provided the Finance staff that I inherited from the previous administration the direction and opportunity to rectify the situation. When they did not deliver, or even make meaningful progress, I replaced them all in Spring of 2018.

With new Finance staff, the first order of business was to recreate, or indeed, create books so that the City could be audited. It was evident from our first meeting with the auditors in early 2018 that we had nothing to give them for 2017, and that the City was at risk of being declared unauditible. That was a black eye we sought to avoid. We took two extensions and constructed books that passed an audit and avoided that embarrassment.

All the while we made changes throughout city government in 2018. Among them, we planned and then transitioned to a new accounting system. We began implementing best practices in Finance. And that brings us up to 2019.

The year 2019 represents the first full year where this administration had our personnel in from Day One, and where some of the best practices we had implemented thus far were in place. Accordingly, the 2019 audit represents the first audit of the City of University Heights that is a complete statement of the current administration’s work in reforming the Finance Department.

I turn now to the State Auditor’s Audit of the City of University Heights for the year ended December 31, 2019. It is now on our City’s website, having been released by the State Auditor since the last council meeting.

While the City has used James G. Zupka CPA Inc. for audits in the past and will again in the future, the City was due to have an audit done in house by the State. That was this audit. Due to COVID-19, the State Auditors took additional time. And now it can be told. The 2019 University Heights audit is a clean audit.

Overall, the State Auditor found that the financial position of the City is fairly represented in its financial statements. The Auditors found no issues that would cloud the judgment or veracity of the information contained in the City's financial statements. Items noted in prior years were corrected in 2019. That process of improvement continued in 2020. It continues now in 2021.

Let me tell you about the exit conference we had with the state auditor on this audit. We did not have one. The state auditor offered to waive the exit conference. And we agreed, and waived the exit conference. There were no material issues to discuss.

It is important for the community to know that I take the stewardship of the public finances very seriously. This is the people's money. By taking care of it, and using it prudently, we can deliver the high quality services our residents expect and deserve. With this audit, the auditors have confirmed that the City and this Administration continue to make progress and continue to improve controls through formal policies, practices, and procedures.

A few examples. Instead of calling a carryover balance a surplus, we implemented the City's first reserve policy – and we follow it. We revised a long outdated investment policy, opening up new and secure methods for investing public money. We implemented an updated fixed asset policy. We created a facilities improvement fund, with some initial funding – and with that, obtained approval of the administration's facilities needs assessment study, now underway. We have completely rewritten the Personnel and Policy Manual (which had a first reading at the last council meeting, and will be back in a future meeting). We implemented a payroll stabilization fund, so years from now, when there are 27 instead of 26 paydays in one year – like there was in 2020 – it won't be the same budgetary hit to the City as it was last year. (Most of us won't even be working here the next time that happens, but we nevertheless are looking out for the future.) We are submitting tonight a revised petty cash/change fund policies for the pool, police department, building department. This is not an exhaustive list. Over the next few weeks, there will be even more.

Finance is the lifeblood of any organization. It enables us to do all the good things people expect. Without good finance, all the good work we otherwise would seek to do would be impeded. Good finance is not merely an end to itself, but is a means to the greater end of delivering high quality services to our residents, and building the community we envision.

It is mid-May, and last week our Finance Director Dennis Kennedy provided every member of council financial statements through the end of April. Yesterday, he followed that up with a written summary of those statements. We have come so far from the days when the prior administration did not provide financial statements to council for a year. We all thought they were being evasive, and secretive and non-transparent. When really, they couldn't report on where the city was financially because they didn't know either.

It seems that they were scared to spend money because they didn't have a handle on what the City actually had. They would feign poverty, and then magically discover and declare a surplus at the end of the year – when in fact, they hadn't paid the bills, and hadn't made necessary investments; they deferred necessary expenditures (even authorized ones), and abandoned maintenance. When you cannot handle the present, you cannot even plan for the future. This administration, our administration, has a handle on the money. We understand where we are, and where we can go, and where we need to go. That is why we are leading the way, and why the administration is planning for the future.

It all starts with finance. Now it can be told: We did it in 2019 – clean audit, confirmed. We continued this work in 2020. We are doing this work now this year. And we will do this work next year, and in years to come.

With the security and stability, guidance and professionalism this administration provides in Finance, maybe together we will have the courage to make the best decisions this City and its residents deserve. I look forward to that day.

Thank you to Finance Director Dennis Kennedy, and all the dedicated professionals in the Finance Department that helped make this successful and clean audit possible. Thank you for a job well done and for excellent service to the residents of University Heights.

Speaking of professionalism and excellent service, it is my pleasure to introduce to the community tonight our new Housing and Community Development Director, Geoff Englebrecht.

Mr. Englebrecht is most recently of the Cleveland Housing Court where he was a Housing Specialist. He worked on hundreds of criminal cases regarding both minor and first-degree misdemeanors for housing, building, and zoning code violations. Much of his work involved properties in derelict condition and efforts to encourage property owners to bring their properties into compliance. Mr. Englebrecht was also Lead Community Organizer for ESOP – Empowering and Strengthening Ohio’s People, where he led a grassroots coalition that persuaded the City of Cleveland to demolish over 50 derelict properties in the Mt. Pleasant neighborhood, and where he led efforts against slumlords, resulting in property cleanups, repairs, and payments owed on capias warrants. His community development work includes his time with the Northeast Shores Development Corporation, which focused on projects in North Collinwood including a public art project and the early work towards reconstruction of the Euclid Beach Fishing Pier (if you haven’t seen it, it’s amazing).

In the 2 weeks he has been here, Mr. Englebrecht has hit the ground running, some of which council members already know from their email, much of which will be set forth in his report later this evening, as well as agenda item D tonight.

Housing and community development was central to this administration’s priorities and initiatives in 2018 and 2019. We even created a new department to emphasize and prioritize addressing the issues of our aging housing stock. This all took a back seat to public safety during the pandemic, and today this priority is back up front where it belongs. Safe, secure housing is essential. We have programs that meet people where there are, at all levels, from the city-wide Community Reinvestment Area we established, to our longstanding partnership with the Cleveland Restoration Society and its Heritage Home program, to the Property Maintenance Grant Program we started in 2019.

Please join me in welcoming Geoff Englebrecht to the City of University Heights.

On Memorial Day, we will hold a commemoration ceremony at 10:00am at Walter Stinson Community Park. Since we have postponed the parade until July 4, we have moved the location and time of the Memorial Day commemoration. The good news is we are nevertheless having an event to honor those lost in service to our country.

All members of City Council are invited to participate in the commemoration and in the traditional flag ceremony. No excuse is necessary if you do not yet feel comfortable participating in an in person public event. Just let us know either way please. If all members would RSVP by emailing info@universityheights.com. There are six flags in the flag ceremony. If all seven council members attend, then the vice mayor will lead with the pledge while the other six place the flags.

Our featured speaker this Memorial Day will be retired Commander and Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame inductee Rick DeChant. Rick currently serves as the Executive Director for the Northeast Ohio Foundation for Patriotism, and has over 40 years of experience in military, public, and government affairs, as well as strategic planning, crisis management, and donor development.

DeChant attended college at John Carroll University and served our country for a total of 21 years in the Coast Guard Reserve, with combat tours in the Middle East for the first Gulf War, in Haiti in 1994, and again in Iraq and Kuwait for Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 and 2004. In addition to his service in the Coast Guard, Rick has also served with the Department of Homeland Security as its Assistant Federal Security Director for Operations in Northeastern Ohio.

This year’s Memorial Day Commemoration Ceremony will be especially bittersweet, as it will be our first since the passing of Pete Bernardo. Tonight, we will be honoring Pete Bernardo by resolution, Item C on the agenda. For over thirty years, Pete has helped plan and coordinate the parade and commemoration ceremony. This year’s Memorial Day Commemoration is dedicated to the memory of Pete Bernardo. We will honor him, and hold him especially in our hearts for his service and dedication to our city and to our country. Thank you, Pete, for everything.

Thank you, this concludes my report.

Agenda Items:

- A) Motion Authorizing Entering into Financing Proposal with FNB Commercial Leasing for the Payment of Expenses Related to the Approved Procurement of a new Refuse Truck and new Dump Truck**

Mr. Kennedy stated that the City received a quote proposal from First National Bank dba FNB to support the financing for \$407,909. The original quote was as at a rate of 2.45%. Subsequently the City was able to have a discussion with the FNB representatives and that rate came down to under 2% to 1.96%. The financing calls for six (6) semi-annual payments in arrears of \$70,335.69 to allow the capital costs to be spread over a couple of years. Mr. Kennedy added that he wanted to bring this option to Council's attention for a motion authorize the city to enter into this commercial leasing agreement.

MOTION BY MR. ERTEL, SECONDED BY MR. RACH Authorizing Entering into Financing Proposal with FNB Commercial Leasing for the Payment of Expenses Related to the Approved Procurement of a new Refuse Truck and new Dump Truck. On roll call, all voted "aye."

B) Ordinance 2021-17 Amending Ordinance 2005-27 and Ordinance 2018-70; Section 243.67 and Creating a Petty Cash/Change Fund Policy for City Departments and Declaring an Emergency

Mr. Kennedy stated that in getting ready for the summer swimming pool season there is a need to provide a start up money register for the purchase of memberships and concession stand items and that he was not able to any previous legislation allowing for such.

Mr. Kennedy reported that there is a petty cash fund currently authorized both in the building and housing divisions but he was proposing consolidating that into one change fund for \$200. This will also establish a change fund and a petty cash fund for the police department for \$150 in each fund. Mr. Kennedy review the proposed policy that will govern how those monies are managed. The difference between a petty cash fund and a change fund is that the change funds will be strictly used to make change for consumers that are coming in to make cash payments on various services. The petty cash fund will cover small items that the Finance Department such as reimbursement for parking expenses for somebody to go downtown to go to court. Some other nominal purchases needed under emergency for anything related to care of any prisoners or people that are detained. Currently the department finds itself continually writing vouchers these types of things. The proposed policy will formalize these processes.

Mrs. Weiss commented that the Service and Fire Departments do not have any type of petty cash and asked if that was something that Council should also consider.

Mr. Kennedy replied that he would probably consider that at a later time, at this time he wanted to address what is currently happening. Later they can certainly review to see if Finance, Service and/or Fire Departments would also need these types of funds but a lot of payments for services are being moved to online payments.

Mr. Gould noted and asked if in the amendment portion of the legislation where a section allows the Finance Director to make amendments to the policy was intended? And if that were the case would those amendments would need to be presented to Council on an annual basis? Would that authority allow the Finance Director to simply create a petty cash fund for say, the Administration and to raise the amounts or would any amendments have to be brought back before Council for approval.

Mr. Kennedy replied that this was basically the same language that he and others have used, particularly in the other cities he has been connected with. Mr. Kennedy added that he did not plan on doing anything that the Council would not be aware of in terms of adding other departments or increasing the amount of monies that are designated for petty cash or change. Mr. Kennedy said he believed that that particular sentence was there in the event that something happens on an unforeseen basis where he would need to sign off on something as opposed to having to go backwards and redo something. Mr. Kennedy made note that again, these are all again, very small amounts and that that verbiage was there for efficiency purposes.

Mr. Gould asked Mr. McConville if that would allow a future Finance Director or future Administration to make changes to the petty cash fund such that amounts could be raised and that Departments could be added and that policies could be changed as to how those monies are spent.

Mr. McConville replied that it was his interpretation that in order for any amounts to be raised, the Administration would need to come back to Council for authorization.

MOTION BY MRS. WEISS, SECONDED BY MRS. BLANKFELD for the Passage of Ordinance 2021-17 Amending Ordinance 2005-27 and Ordinance 2018-70; Section 243.67 and Creating a Petty Cash/Change Fund Policy for City Departments and Declaring an Emergency. Roll call on Suspension of the Rules, all voted "aye." Roll call on Passage, all voted "aye."

C) Resolution 2021-18 In Honor of the Life of Peter “Pete” Bernardo

Mayor Brennan read Resolution 2021-18 into the record. Whereas Peter Pete Bernardo was a 1967, 1972 and 2017 John Carroll University graduate, a lifelong servant, an ambassador for his country and community, the beloved husband of Joanne and father, three sons, Peter, Michael and Matthew. And whereas Pete Bernardo was a respected much-loved resident of University Heights. Whereas Pete Bernardo passed away on May 14 2021, at the age of 75. Whereas Pete Bernardo was a decorated Vietnam War Veteran, the recipient of the Distinguished Service Cross, and three Purple Hearts for his heroic efforts in the line of duty for the US Army. And whereas after a distinguished 20-year military career, Pete Bernardo served in a variety of roles at JCU, including Director of Alumni Relations from 1988 to 1997, Director of Advancement Services from 1998 to 2000, and Director of Planned Giving 2001 to 2007 and Senior Director of Philanthropic Relations. And whereas Pete Bernardo was the University Heights Citizen of the Year in 2002 and served as the University Heights Memorial Day Parade Marshal in 2003. And whereas Pete Bernardo served on the University Heights City Council from December 17 2007, through December 31 2009, and for over 30 years helped coordinate and organize the University Heights Memorial Day Parade and Memorial Day Ceremony. And now therefore, be it resolved by the Mayor and Council of the City of University Heights, Ohio, that Section one, the City of University Heights hereby acknowledges the tremendous life accomplishments and contributions of Peter Pete Bernardo, as well as his valor in military service to the United States of America, and the legacy he leaves behind. Section two, it is hereby found to determine that all formal actions of the Council concerning and relating to the passage of this Resolution were adopted in an open meeting of this Council, and that all deliberations of this council and any of its committees that resulted in such formal action were in meetings open to the public in compliance with all legal requirements. Section three, this Resolution shall take effect upon passage by a majority of members of Council and the signature of the Mayor, otherwise at the earliest time allowed by law.

Mrs. Blankfeld noted that Mr. Bernardo was a genuinely kind and gracious and remarkable man. It is a great loss; a bright light has gone out.

MOTION BY MRS. BLANKFELD, SECONDED BY MR. GOULD for the Passage of Resolution 2021-18 In Honor of the Life of Peter “Pete” Bernardo. Roll call on Passage, all voted “aye.”

D) Motion to Requesting Permission to Seek Funding for the Demolition of 3621 E. Scarborough through the Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation. The property was Deemed a Nuisance by City Council on December 16, 2019

Mr. Englebrecht stated that the property located at 3621 East Scarborough is a large vacant single-family dwelling and is located three parcels from the corner of East Scarborough and Canterbury Road. The house is directly to the north of Canterbury Elementary School and the grass park on which the school sits. Mr. Englebrecht said that the property has been vacant for over seven years and is currently titled to Jeanne and Valerie Hawke, who took title in June of 2007. The property was cited by the City several times since they took title includes seven different times when they were cited for exterior violations and for Point of Sale inspections. There have been no attempts made in the past to repair the conditions of the property. The City has been paying for grass cutting year-round at this property for the past seven years including this year. The property is in derelict condition and has a negative impact on the surrounding community. Upon Mr. Englebrecht visit to the property on May 12 he found the property to be open to entry, with the rear door the property being kicked in, the window to the rear door was broken out, the storage area in the back of the property was also open to entry. Photos were taken and provided to Council members. The property is severely tax delinquent with a total balance of \$49,621.43 owed in back taxes. There is currently an active tax foreclosure case against the property, case number CV-2938613. A telephone hearing set for the case coming up the week of May 20, 2021. Community members are upset at the condition of the property in its current state and have stated as such in conversations with Mr. Englebrecht. One neighbor who lives directly next door to the property stated that she watches the property but has grown tired of having to live next to the property in its derelict condition. City Council previously found this property to be a nuisance with the declaration made in Ordinance 2019-76. The Cuyahoga County Landbank Realization Corporation (County Land Bank) recently made the city aware that funds are available for the demolition of nuisance properties, specifically for suburban communities in the amount of \$290,000. The deadline for applying for these funds is August 31 of this year. Title work in the tax foreclosure case was completed in April 2020 but because it was completed back in 2020 a call was made to the title company requesting that the title work be updated in preparation for the seeking of funds from the Cuyahoga County Land Bank for the property's demolition. Mr. Englebrecht stated that because of the stated issues and because the property is across the street from a school, he respectfully requested that the City Council grant a motion to allow him to begin seeking the funding for the demolition of the structure.

Mrs. Blankfeld commented that Council had received a flurry of emails designating a number of properties that have been languishing, dangerous and hazardous. Since Mr. Englebrecht came on board with the City these properties were brought to Council attention and although very concerning the City is moving in the right direction and those properties will now be remedied. Mrs. Blankfeld added that she hates to see any house come down, especially the homes that have been here for 80 years or so because the character of them is so different from new houses being built. But, safety is paramount and regrettably this is probably the route Council will have to take.

Mrs. Weiss stated that she also appreciated the pictures and the emails from Mr. Englebrecht. And like Mrs. Blankfeld comment, Council does not ever want to have to tear a house down if it can be saved. Noting that the pictures that Mr. Englebrecht provided were mostly of the outside and only one inside showing what looked like the electrical or water gauges, Mrs. Weiss asked Mr. Englebrecht if he had the chance to get a warrant to go into the house?

Mr. Englebrecht replied that he has a meeting with the City's Prosecutor Stephanie Scalise on Friday at one o'clock to go over properties that will need search warrants.

Mrs. Weiss noted that she was hesitant to pass this authorization to seek funding for the demolition of 3621 E. Scarborough through the Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation without actually going inside it because there have been great successes with some houses where individuals have bought the houses and rehab them. Mrs. Weiss added that she was not sure if this would be a premature decision before having a warrant to go inspect the inside of the house.

Mrs. Blankfeld added that it was her understanding that if it was going to be suggested that it be demolished that Council would already know that the inside was completely beyond any remedy. Mrs. Blankfeld asked if there was a sunset date in which the funding would no longer be available to do this?

Mr. Englebrecht replied that the deadline was August 31, 2021. And, that he brought this particular property to Council's attention because Council had already passed Ordinance 2019-76 naming this property a public nuisance. That was the only reason why he brought the property forward to Council now, plus there is access for funding to have it demolished. The other properties he had not seen where an interior inspection had been done or completed when he looked inside the files.

Mrs. Blankfeld asked Mr. Englebrecht when did he anticipate gaining entry with a warrant because she would really like to know what the interior looks like.

Mr. Englebrecht replied he that once he had the warrant he would only need to schedule a date for the Police to go out to the property with him. So, he could possibly gain entrance the following week.

Mayor Brennan asked Mr. McConville for clarification if the requested motion was the request for permission to seek funding and that the Administration would have to come back before the Council for permission to demolish the property.

Mr. McConville replied that Mayor Brennan's comment was correct if Council reserved that right. The Building Demolition Ordinance has four separate categories in which a building demo permit can be issued. One is that the property has been declared a public nuisance. But if Council wants to reserve that right they can do that by motion at this meeting. The fact of the matter is that there is still have a notice process that has to be follow through. The next steps would include having the judicial title report updated and issued in the City's name so that it can make sure that proper notice is given to all interested parties. And then walking through a notice process with an opportunity to cure. When a property gets to the state that it is in now, including its tax foreclosure status that becomes extremely unlikely. But nevertheless, the City is obligated to go through that notice process. It would only be after the City is satisfied that notice has been given and that there are no efforts made to cure that the City would administratively authorize the demolition. If Council wants to reserve the granting of the power to demolish it can make their approval for seeking funding contingent on that. Mr. McConville added that he thought that there would be enough time to get the ball rolling, and to have that administrative search warrant executed and conducted so that Council can see if the home still has good bones or not.

Mr. Gould stated that it sounded like there were a lot of steps that need to take place and that he appreciated the background information on what still needs to happen between now, the time that the City receives the funding and the time of that the property could be demolished. With all of those steps in mind, Mr. Gould thought that he would like to allow Mr. Englehart to continue his work. If the City needs to do all of these other judicial and administrative steps between now and getting the actual funding Mr. Gould said he would like to continue that process but would reserve the right to approve the demolition.

MOTION BY MRS. WEISS, SECONDED BY MR. GOULD to provide authority to the Administration to seek funding for the demolition of 3621 E. Scarborough through the Cuyahoga County Land

Reutilization Corporation. With the provision that the Council reserves the final approval of the demolition. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

E) Motion to Accept the Bid as the lowest and best from ABC Equipment Rental & Sales of Brunswick Hills, Ohio and Authorize the Purchase for Two (2) Kubota Utility Refuse Collection Vehicles in an Amount not to exceed \$16,987 each for a total amount not to exceed \$32,974.00

Mr. Pokorny stated that Ciuni reported that bids were opened Friday, April 30 for the purchase of two (2) Kubota of refuse collection vehicles. The low bidder was ABC Equipment Rental and the City has purchased equipment from them in the past. The City has also purchased equipment from Mentor MFG, which was the second low bidder. The city operates six of these vehicles, currently one of them is out of service due to a transmission problem. Thus, the need for the purchase of these vehicles is getting more critical. Mr. Pokorny respectfully requested that Council authorize the purchase of the two vehicles so that they can be received as soon as possible because the wait on these vehicles could be up to 120 days.

MOTION BY MR. RACH, SECONDED BY MRS. BERRY to Accept the Bid as the lowest and best from ABC Equipment Rental & Sales of Brunswick Hills, Ohio and Authorize the Purchase for Two (2) Kubota Utility Refuse Collection Vehicles in an Amount not to exceed \$16,987 each for a total amount not to exceed \$32,974.00. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

F) Motion Advertising for Bids for Service Department Temporary Labor Staffing 2021 - 2023

Mr. Pokorny reported that this was the temporary staffing that the Service Department uses during leaf collection and brush collection in the fall heavy periods. The temporary staffing during periods of emergency should there be a storm and the department needs additional staffing to help clean up from something like that. In the previous years, there has been a three-year contract with Minutemen staffing for this service and that has worked out well.

Mr. Gould asked how did using temporary staffing interact with the union and what opportunities are given to the workers that the City currently has before using temporary staffing.

Mr. Pokorny replied that it was spelled out in the collective bargaining agreement to allow for temporary staffing and made note that the Administration negotiated several things to allow that to happen.

Mr. Gould clarified that this was simply within the current constructs that have been negotiated between the Union and the City.

Mr. Pokorny replied yes and that for the last two negotiating sessions, that was discussed at length.

Mayor Brennan elaborated that historically the CBA (collective bargaining agreement) has allowed 10 weeks or so during leaf season to have four temporary workers assist the Service Department. That number can be extended during leaf season by agreement and consensus of the union. If there is a severe storm with micro bursts of storm damage similar to what recently hit Shaker Heights, Pepper Pike and Cleveland Heights the CBA would allow the City to call in the temps in those types of emergent storm situations.

Mr. Rach asked Mr. Pokorny to confirm that any members from minute men will not enter the backyards as part of our rubbish pickup?

Mr. Pokorny stated that he did not know if that had been a requirement of the collective bargaining agreement. Background checks are done on the temporary staff and the city is allowed by the collective bargaining agreement to use them for rubbish collection if necessary. Therefore, Mr. Pokorny could not say that the temporary staffing would never be allowed to enter a backyard.

Mr. Rach clarified that the temporary staff receives background checks. Mr. Pokorny replied yes.

MOTION BY MR. GOULD, SECONDED BY MR. ERTEL to Advertise for Bids for Service Department Temporary Labor Staffing 2021 – 2023 as outlined. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

G) Motion to Authorizing the Police Department to Accept grant monies from Bureau of Justice Assistance in the amount of \$4,536.00 to offset the cost of purchasing nine (9) Bulletproof Vest with the cost of \$5,256.00

Chief Rogers stated that this item was related to a reoccurring grant that the Police Department applies for and specifically that on October 19 2020 the department was awarded \$4,536 by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. Through the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program, the grant provides a 50% reimbursement of the costs related to an agency purchasing vest for their officers. Chief Rogers said that currently the department is due for nine officers to have vest replace in 2021 and that the \$4,500 can be utilized by the department until August 31 2022. For related purchasing a little background on the grant. The bolt proof vest partnership is awarded more than 13,000 jurisdictions, a total of 522 million in federal funds for the purchase of over 1.4 million vests as of November 2020 for law enforcement. Estimates have acknowledged that over 3000 police officer's lives have been saved since 1990 as a result of officers wearing bulletproof vests in the field while being shot. Chief Rogers recommended that the agency continues to accept this type of grant award to ensure that the department has bulletproof vests that recognized industry standards on a replacement schedule to keep our officers safe and effective in the field.

Mrs. Blankfeld asked Chief Rogers to clarify the cost to the City for the purchase of the vests.

Chief Rogers replied that the grant is utilized to reimburse 50% of the total cost for each vest that is purchased. The total cost for 2021 vest replacements of the nine vests will be approximately \$5100 and any portion of the grant that is not used in 2021 can be carried over to 2022.

Mrs. Blankfeld asked what the timeframe was for industry standard for recommended vest replacement.

Chief Rogers stated that the standard has been that every five years or within five years it is best standards for an officer to be replaced.

MOTION BY MRS. BLANKFELD, SECONDED BY MRS. BERRY Authorizing the Police Department to Accept grant monies from Bureau of Justice Assistance in the amount of \$4,536.00 to offset the cost of purchasing nine (9) Bulletproof Vest with the cost of \$5,256.00. On roll call, all voted "aye."

H) Motion to Hold an Executive Session immediately following this Regular Meeting for the Purpose of Discussing Personnel, Legal and/or Real Estate Matters

Mayor Brennan stated that the Law Director had two matters of potential and or imminent litigation that he wanted to update the Council on.

MOTION BY MRS. BLANKFELD, SECONDED BY MR. GOULD to Hold an Executive Session immediately following the Regular Meeting for the Purpose of Discussing Legal Matters. On roll call, all voted "aye."

Director's Reports

Finance Department – Dennis Kennedy provided an update on the City's income, property tax collections and other financials thus far. Mr. Kennedy stated that he had a general concern about the street lighting fund because he did not think that the assessment was sufficient enough to pay the streetlight costs. So, it may be necessary to consider increasing the charge either this year or next year to ensure that the annual collection that are received are sufficient to pay the lighting bills. This year there is enough money this year because the fund started out with a small beginning balance and there were a couple of real small transfers budgeted to that fund.

Law Department – Luke McConville took the opportunity to address a procedural and parliamentary matter that relates specifically to the removal of Ordinance 2021-16 from this evening's agenda, which occurred pursuant to the direction of the mayor. In connection with the memorandum provided to council members Ordinance 2021-16 related to the adoption of the Employee Policies and Procedures Manual. Mr. McConville stated that a few members of council raised questions about the authority of both the Mayor and Council and specific questions relating to who could remove items from the agenda, and when was it appropriate to do so? Mr. McConville said he thought that it made sense to clarify that neither the Mayor nor any other party has the authority to remove any legislative item from the agenda unilaterally. And that no other party including Council has the authority to remove a legislative item from the agenda outside of a public meeting. During the course of the meeting, Council has the authority to add items to the agenda. Furthermore, as it relates

specifically to any item of legislation Council can during the course of a meeting, remove an item referred to committee, adopt, table or fail or deny the approval of any particular item of legislation.

Mr. Gould asked if he understand correctly that the ordinance will be properly on the agenda for second reading at the next year session?

Mr. McConville replied yes. The request has been made and Council should anticipate that Ordinance 2021-16 will be on the agenda for the first meeting in June for its second reading.

Department of Fire – Chief Perko reported that couple of weeks ago the department started pushing out on social media their partnership with the Cuyahoga County Board of Health and the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging. Together the agencies will facilitate a new program to vaccinate those persons who are homebound in the community. The Cuyahoga County Fire Chiefs have been taking the lead with the Board of Health all throughout this pandemic, including with the vaccinations in the county, and this program is meant to reach people who cannot leave their homes and go out and get the vaccine. This will be a partnership where there is a contact number on a flyer that is being pushing out for people to call so that they are placed on the list to be scheduled by the Western Reserve agency in collaboration with the Cuyahoga County Board of Health. Then the Board of Health will be working with the area fire departments to work on grouping individuals for scheduling for firefighter paramedics in the region to go into the homes and vaccinate them at their homes. Follow up with watching them after make sure there's no side effects and documenting all the paperwork. Chief Perko said that the heights area was the pilot program for this that started a few weeks back. and that Shaker Heights was the first department to try to get it going. University Heights has partnered up with Shaker Heights and with the other heights area departments. The University Heights Fire Station will be hosting the first rollout of this in our community. Firefighter paramedics from Shaker Heights, Cleveland Heights, South Euclid, East Cleveland, will join the University Heights station and will receive the vaccines from the Cuyahoga County Board of Health Nurses. Teams will go out to the individuals who are on the list in those regions to receive the vaccination. The phone number to call for the Western Reserve agency is 216-621-0303.

Service Department – Jeffrey Pokorny reported that the Spring cleanup of brush and loose leaves has been completed. Brush now has to be cut in 4ft. lengths and tied in order to be collected. Yard waste must be bagged. Secondly the Service Department staff has been working on preparing the pool for the summer season. The pool will open on Memorial Day, May 31, information is available online at University Heights.com or in the mosaic magazine which was distributed to residents.

Housing and Community Development – Geoff Englebrecht reported that within the last two weeks from May 3 through May 14 the department has received and returned 222 voicemails and phone calls, sent 217 emails, processed 20 point of sale inspections and 3 rental permanent applications, in the amount of three contractor registrations, processed 18 Certificate of transfers, 10 Certificate of Compliance were issued. were 6 special garbage pickups were processed, 20 properties that were added to the city's year-long grass cut list. Beginning next week, the housing inspectors will begin work at 7am to give people the chance to have their inspections done starting at 7:30am so that they can have their inspections done before they need to go to work. First inspections again starting next week we'll begin at 730. Mondays during the next month and a half will be dedicated completely to serving grass cutting tickets by the inspectors that are out and about in the community, by Thursday the inspectors will circle back to tagged properties to check and make sure that the grass has been cut. If the grass hasn't been cut by Thursday on that Friday, that list will be sent over to the Service Department for cutting by the grass abatement contractor.

City Engineer – Joseph Ciuni reported that the 2021 Street Resurfacing program has started and the Dominion project in the northwest corner of the town is progressing on schedule.

Communications/Civic Engagement – Michael Cook stated that he would be working with Fire Chief Perko to get the information regarding administrating the COVID vaccine to homebound residents. Also, on Monday the Heights library is sponsoring Cooper's second birthday party. Cooper will be there and young kids will have story time.

Economic Development – Susan Drucker stated that RFP's for the City's Comprehensive Zoning Code Update were opened May 14, 2021 at 11:30am and four proposals were received.

There were no other director reports.

Standing Council Committees:

Economic Development Committee – Mr. Rach stated that there may be a committee meeting to review the RFP and to decide the interviewing process.

Finance Committee – Mrs. Weiss reported that the finance and finance advisory committee will meet on Tuesday, the 25th at 7:30pm.

Safety Committee – Mrs. Berry stated that the Citizen Advisory Committee has its next meeting on May 25.

Service and Utilities Committee – Mr. Gould reported that Dr. Tom Sutton has completed the synthesis of the survey questions that were posed by the different parties after the last Service Committee meeting. The draft survey as it stands now runs three pages. The next Service Committee meeting maybe on Wednesday next week to go over the questions to see if there is anything can be decided as a group what could be cut out to still bring about the same effect. The goal is to get the survey out into citizen hands as soon as possible.

There were no other committee reports.

MOTION BY MRS. BLANKFELD, SECONDED BY MR. RACH to resume the regular Council Meeting session. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

MOTION BY MR. GOULD, SECONDED BY MR. RACH to adjourn the meeting. On roll call, all voted “aye.”

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:36p.m.

Michael Dylan Brennan, Mayor

Kelly M. Thomas, Clerk of Council