

University Heights CIC (City Beautiful Corporation)

May 13, 2024

Meeting started at 5:30pm.

Present:

CIC Vice President Michele Weiss

Shawn Belt, CIC UH Resident Member

Susan Drucker, UH Director Economic Development, CIC Member

John Rach, UH City Councilman, CIC Member

Sheri Sax

Absent:

Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan, CIC President

Deanna Bremer Fisher, CIC Secretary

Geoff Englebrecht, UH Director Housing and Community Development, CIC Member

Dennis Kennedy, UH Finance Director

Vice President Weiss made the motion to start the CIC meeting.

Motion seconded by John Rach.

Motion passed unanimously.

Since the secretary is not present, Vice President Weiss notified the committee that she is recording this meeting on her iPhone to be posted on the UH CIC website.

Sheri Sax was asked and accepted to write the minutes as a substitute secretary at today's meeting.

Susan Drucker motioned to substitute Sheri Sax as the secretary at today's CIC meeting.

Motion seconded by Shawn Belt.

Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda item 1:

Vice President Weiss wants to reinstate the CIC with the State of Ohio, including signing the check for \$25 to accompany the reinstatement. The reason is because the CIC lapsed on March 29, 2024, when the annual reinstatement was not submitted by the deadline.

CIC Vice President Weiss asked CIC President Brennan to attend this meeting, but he declined to be in attendance, choosing instead to provide a written statement that he emailed and asked to be read into the minutes. The following statement was read in its entirety by CIC Vice President Weiss to put into these minutes:

**“The City created the Community Improvement Corporation known as University Heights City Beautiful Corporation (the “CIC”) to negotiate and enter into contracts without the legal constraints that the City has,**

such as requiring competitive bidding among developers. The CIC was created for the townhome project which is now known as the South Taylor Road Condominiums and is underway, together with some infill housing which is completed.

All other possible purposes are secondary or ancillary and may be done by the City government without a CIC.

As of now, all developable vacant parcels have been developed. In the case of the townhomes, the first four units have been constructed, and the next four are underway. the City has no plans and no intention to transfer any further land to this CIC for development.

The purpose of the CIC has been fulfilled, and the time has come to wind it up.

For a time, the administration entertained the idea of keeping the CIC for underdetermined future projects. This was conditioned on restructuring the governance of the organization in order to work better together, requiring collaboration and support among board members from both branches of government in order to undertake a project. The most modest change needed and proposed by the Mayor and President of the CIC was to require an affirmative vote of 5 out of 7 on any substantive vote. This proposal was rejected by the Council and Council-appointed board members at the last regular meeting.

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This rejection is clear and convincing evidence of the City Council's continued desire to run the CIC at its whims with its controlling majority of 4 out of 7. This was evidenced further by proposed ordinance 2024-32 introduced at the May 6, 2024 City Council meeting, which removes the Mayor as president of the CIC. And evidenced further by a bare majority of the board insisting on holding a special meeting tonight, May 13, 2024, even as the Mayor/President is unavailable to attend, asked for another date, and was told by the Vice Mayor/Vice President to submit a written statement for the record instead – that she said she would read into the record.

The corporation was cancelled by the state of Ohio on March 29, 2024. Rather than seek reinstatement, the administration seeks windup of the CIC. The funds on account, sourced solely from the City's general fund, should be returned to the general fund, with any outstanding bills first paid by the CIC (presumably these are legal and auditing bills only). The contract with Knez Construction may be assigned to the City of University Heights for continued administration of the townhomes project. These actions and all other actions related to a windup are the only business the CIC board should be conducting, either voluntarily or subject to order of the court of common pleas if necessary.

After consulting with the city law director, I am announcing that, except for the purposes of effectuating a windup, the administration is withdrawing its support of the University Heights City Beautiful CIC. The City will no longer provide the services of a treasurer or secretary from administrative staff. They are absent from tonight's special meeting, as no one consulted their schedules before scheduling this special meeting. the City

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will no longer require them or require the administration directors to attend CIC board meetings. I value their time, and these meetings are no longer a necessary use of their time.

As the Council holds the majority on the CIC board, you have the votes you need to facilitate the wind up.

Going forward, I recommend our City Council members focus their efforts on developing the programs they say they would support through the CIC as actual City programs. We already have a home improvement grant that could be bolstered, for example, through more funding and relaxed eligibility requirements. The City already works with the CDC FutureHeights on select programs and projects, and we could be working more with them as well, without devoting further public resources to this CIC.

Regardless of your vote tonight, I will have prepared for the next City Council meeting an ordinance dissolving this CIC and repealing Chapter 280 of the City's codified ordinances. With the original purposes of this CIC fulfilled, I ask you this evening to move to dissolve the CIC.

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After reading this statement, Vice President Weiss asked for a motion to reinstate the CIC.

Susan Drucker asked for clarification if Vice President Weiss has the authority to sign the paperwork and also to sign the check to reinstate the CIC. Vice President Weiss said that she checked before the meeting and was told that she does have this authority to sign the check in addition to signing the form and to submit both to the State of Ohio.

Drucker clarified that the Vice President is also submitting the form to the State of Ohio which was confirmed.

Vice President Weiss presented the motion to give her (the Vice President) the authorization to reinstate the CIC as a non-profit through the State of Ohio and requested authorization to give permission to sign the accompanying check. Vice President Weiss clarified that the CIC reinstatement lapsed and was not terminated.

This motion was seconded by John Rach.  
The motion passed unanimously.

No further comments were made.

Susan Drucker made the motion to adjourn.  
Shawn Belt seconded the motion.  
The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 5:38pm

*Respectfully submitted by Sheri Sax, substitute secretary*