

**CITY OF HIGHLAND HEIGHTS  
MINUTES OF A COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD: MAY 9, 2023  
Highland Heights City Hall Council Chamber  
7:30 PM**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Brunello; Council Representatives D'Amico, DeLisio, DiLalla, Ganser, Goff, Hargate, Milroy; Clerk of Council Donatelli; Law Director Lograsso; Police Chief Matejcic; Fire Chief Turner; Finance Director Filippo; Building Commissioner Grabfelder; Police Chief Matejcic; Service Director Belfiore; City Engineer Mader.

**ACTION ON MINUTES:** The reading of the Minutes of the Council Meeting held April 25, 2023, was dispensed with. Mr. Milroy moved to accept the minutes as written; seconded by Mr. Goff. Ayes all; motion carried.

**NOPEC Representative Tony Ramos:** Mr. Ramos approached Council to answer any questions about NOPEC and the re-enrollment of residents. Mr. Ramos stated there was a price spike in summer 2022, but the company is re-certified to distribute electricity. Mr. Ramos informed Council that residents only need to call NOPEC if they would like to opt-out of the program, they will be automatically enrolled otherwise. Mr. Ramos stated there were two separate letters sent out to residents; however, one pertained to electricity and the other to gas. Mr. Ramos thanked Mayor Brunello and Ms. D'Amico for attending the multi-city public forum in Lyndhurst and opened the floor to anyone else with questions.

Mrs. Ganser asked how NOPEC's rates will compare to other companies. Mr. Ramos responded that electricity will be 6.45 cents per kilowatt-hour and natural gas will be \$4.25 per MCF. The electric price is fixed for June through December. The standard program rate is variable and will fluctuate that customers can choose to move to. NOPEC stays in the bottom third of cost compared to other companies. Mr. Ramos added that residents may opt-out at any time.

Mr. DiLalla asked how the NOPEC rate compares to standard service. Mr. Ramos responded that the standard service rate is currently 5.8 cents per kilowatt-hour. He added that the cost will raise for standard service in June to almost double. Mr. DiLalla asked if that almost double rate would be from June through December. Mr. Ramos responded yes and it will be a variable rate. Even First Energy does not recommend staying on the standard service.

Mr. Milroy asked if NOPEC determines different pricing based on time of day electricity is used. Mr. Ramos responded that this is Peak Demand Charges and NOPEC has no involvement in that. The Peak Demand Charges pertain to the utility company and the delivery fee.

Ms. D'Amico asked for the maximum term length for residential and small commercial. Mr. Ramos responded every 2 years for Natural Gas and every 3 years for electric. Mr. Ramos added that if a resident opts out of the natural gas program, they are unable to re opt into it until the next two year period. Mr. Ramos stated that Council can pass supplemental legislation with NOPEC to become an opt in natural gas community so a resident can opt back in without waiting until the next period. Electric, on the other hand, is different and residents can opt in and out of the program as they please. Ms. D'Amico asked what the rate would be if a resident does opt back in. Mr.

Ramos responded that it would be the same rate as everyone else already on the plan. Ms. D'Amico asked if other communities pass this type of legislation. Mr. Ramos responded no and there are only a few. Mayor Brunello added that going that route can be confusing.

Mayor Brunello stated that NOPEC is not a large company and residents need to be patient when calling in. Mr. Ramos added that the office in Solon has less than 20 full-time workers. Mr. Ramos added that the call center is hired as a third-party company. The call center was backed up because gas and electric fell in the same year, but now is a good time to call. Mr. Ramos added that residents are still able to opt out if they would like to. Mr. Ramos stated that his recommendation is that the residents know what company they will use because the utility company will be expensive. Mr. Ramos added that there are only 4 relation managers.

Fire Chief's Report: Chief Turner reported that the department safely moved into their trailers for the renovation period.

Chief Turner stated that Hydro flushing will occur in May and June. Any hydrant out of service is reported to Cleveland Water and they will repair/replace then oversee the restoration.

Chief Turner stated ISOL insurance will be visiting the department May 23 for a full review. This will last one or two days to review all operations, training, communication, fire prevention and codes. The total process of review lasts five to six months for results that residential and commercial rates are based upon. Chief Turner reported that the city is currently a 2 and hopes to remain at that rating.

Chief Turner stated that he met with the Legislative and Finance Committee to discuss a resolution and motion to be added to the agenda regarding electricity for the trailers and payment to Envelope Consulting Services for their fee of overseeing the construction process.

Police Chief's Report: Chief Matejcic stated that the department is fully operating from the trailers. Chief Matejcic reported for the month of April the Police Department received a total of 1,404 calls. 12 calls included property damage with 1 injury, 58 were alarm calls and 4 mutual aid police calls. The department entered 59 warrants. Officers conducted 434 prisoner safety checks and the jail housed 15 prisoners who served 223 hours of time.

Chief Matejcic presented the new electric bike owned by the police department. Chief Matejcic stated that the bike has a 50 mile range and is capable of up to 30 MPH.

Mrs. Ganser asked how long it takes to recharge the battery. Chief Matejcic responded that he is unsure because there are two battery packs, so once one runs out, they replace it with the other and always keep one on the charger.

Chief Turner asked how much the bike cost. Chief Matejcic responded about \$5,000.

Mr. DeLisio asked how many electric bikes the city bought. Chief Matejcic responded just one.

Mr. Goff asked if there are lights to pull people over with the electric bike. Chief Matejcic responded there are lights and a siren.

Service Director's Report: Mr. Belfiore stated that the community park pool is being disinfected. The pool is pumped down and in the process of being acid wash. Filling and circulating will begin next week. Mr. Belfiore stated that the pool opens June 10.

Mr. Belfiore stated that the staff will finish fertilizing the entire community park by the weekend. Herbicide will be applied to the turf at a later date.

Mr. Belfiore reported that 280 cubic yards of brush have been collected from residents' tree lawns. Mr. Belfiore stated that the department helped celebrate Arbor Day by planting a Swamp White Oak Tree in the community park.

Mr. Belfiore stated that there are 21 new Hometown Hero Banners in addition to the 26 from last year. Staff will install the flags on Highland Rd.

Mr. Belfiore stated that staff completed the rebuilding and repair of the planting beds in the community garden with new wood and hardware.

Mr. Belfiore reported that the next shred day is May 13 from 9am-1pm at the Service Department.

Mr. Belfiore stated that Community Clean Up Day was rescheduled to May 13 from 9am-1pm.

Mr. DiLalla complimented the Baseball Fields in the Community Park and how well they held up through the rain.

Building Commissioner's Report: Mr. Grabfelder stated that for the month of April there were 78 residential permits and 7 commercial permits granted; there 9 violation notices for zoning.

Mr. Grabfelder stated that Tuesday Morning is going out of business. Also, there will be new businesses in place of Hibachi and Pizza Roma. Mr. Grabfelder reported that Tijuana Tacos is finally open to the public.

City Engineer's Report: Mr. Mader stated that the 2022-2023 Concrete Program work is complete except for the pedestrian signal at the corner of Alpha and Highland. Work is scheduled to be completed on Monday.

Mr. Mader reported that the county is completing work on the North side of the Wilson Mills Overlay Project. The county did pave but the rain put the project back a little bit. The county will be adjusting castings and completing all ADA ramps on the North side for the next week and a half. The county plans to flip the zone the week of May 22.

Mr. Mader stated that the Street Striping bid opening was last week and Pat Flowers, Inc. was the lowest and best bidder of two companies by a large margin. Mr. Mader recommended Pat Flowers, Inc. be awarded the project though the estimate is over the engineer's estimate by just under 10% because the project does have a \$200,000 contingency included.

Mr. Mader stated that they are surveying roads for the 2023 Road Program and hopes to have plans prepared and out to bid later in the month. Construction will most likely occur in the fall. Over the next couple of months, there will be a road ranking of all roads within the city to create a report and have a three-year forward-looking goal of upcoming projects.

Mr. Mader stated that retention basins will be reviewed to ensure they are all working as intended.

Mr. Milroy asked if the road ratings will be based on ODOT's PCR. Mr. Mader responded no and will be based on the engineer's discrepancy. Mr. Milroy asked if the tennis court bids are being advertised. Mr. Mader responded that they are being advertised and the opening is May 16.

Finance Director's Report: No Report

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Parks and Recreation:** No Report

**Legislative and Finance:** Mr. DiLalla stated that the committee met to discuss two invoices for the Police and Fire trailers. The committee decided to remove the invoices from Legislative and Finance and add a motion to approve the invoices as one at the Council meeting. Mr. DiLalla stated that the committee also discussed the Resolution to pay Envelope Consulting Services on the Council meeting agenda.

**Safety and Service:** No Report

**Drainage:** No Report

**Planning and Zoning:** Mr. Milroy stated that Planning and Zoning is going begin compiling language to present to Council for a Planned Residential District using other cities as a guide.

Mr. Milroy reported that there is an appeals meeting May 10 for the company that wanted to put storage warehouses on Alpha.

Mr. Milroy stated that the carnation sale is on May 13.

Mr. Milroy stated there were 60 plus people at the opening of pickleball.

**Law Director's Report:** No Report

**MAYOR'S REPORT:** Mayor Brunello stated that the CPA Council of Governments quarterly meeting was held at City Hall last week. May 11 will be a pasta dinner in recognition of older Americans month at Lyndhurst Community Center. The chili cookoff will be October 27 at City Hall for all local Fire Departments.

Mayor Brunello stated that there are some phone calls being received pertaining to the park trail. Mayor Brunello stated that the project started in September 2021 with a town hall meeting. There was then a survey well received by the residents. Mayor Brunello stated he published the project in 5 newsletters from 2021 to present. The project has also been in the newspaper 4 times. Mayor Brunello confirmed that the project will continue forward. He received one proposal for engineering from Bishop to the community park from OHM who has been working with Mayor Brunello for a while. This would be a quarter of a mile long, 8-foot-wide paved path. Mayor Brunello would like to complete the project in the fall. Mayor Brunello stated that he would like to add a crosswalk at Cambridge over to Bishop if there is any additional money left.

Mayor Brunello stated that the Blair Project is not cost effective.

Mayor Brunello stated that he attended the planting of the tree to celebrate Arbor Day. He thanked the Highland Heights Green Taskforce for their contributions and donation of the tree.

Mayor Brunello stated that he, Mr. Hargate, and Ms. D'Amico attended the Friends of Mayfield Library luncheon with keynote speaker Susan Cannavino. Mayor Brunello commended Mr. Hargate as he is the president of the committee.

Mayor Brunello stated the community clean up day was rescheduled to May 13 and will meet at city hall before working from 9am-noon.

Mayor Brunello stated that the carnation sale is May 13.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** Ms. D'Amico stated that Senior Planting Day is May 26. There are currently 74 people signed up and the committee anticipates close to 100 people in attendance. Ms. D'Amico stated that the Girl Scouts are unavailable to help at the event and asked that anyone on Council help at the event if able.

Mr. Goff asked what time and where the event is. Ms. D'Amico responded it is 1pm-3pm at the pool barn at the community park.

**ITEMS TO BE ADDED AS NEW BUSINESS:** Motion authorizing payment to A&M Electric for temporary power hook up for the police and fire departments' trailers in the amount of \$19,850. A motion was made by Mrs. Ganser to add the motion to the agenda; seconded by Mr. DeLisio. Ayes all; motion carried.

Resolution issuing a six-month extension of the Moratorium on the granting of building permits or certificates of occupancy for any group home for a period not to exceed six months from the effective end date of the resolution previously passed, in order to allow City Council and the Planning Commission to review the Highland Heights Zoning Code and other Codified Ordinances relative to such use; and declaring an emergency.

A motion was made by Mr. Milroy to add the motion to the agenda; seconded by Mr. Goff. Ayes all; motion carried.

Resolution authorizing the payment of Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$75,000.00) to Envelope Consulting Services, LLC for Construction Administration and Procurement Services for the Police and Fire Renovation Project.

A motion was made by Mrs. Ganser to add the motion to the agenda; seconded by Mr. DeLisio. Ayes all; motion carried.

**MEETING OPENED TO THE PUBLIC:** No Public

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**MOTION FOR PAYMENT:** A motion was made by Mr. Milroy authorizing payment to A&M Electric for temporary power hook up for the police and fire departments' trailers in the amount of \$19,850; seconded by Mr. DeLisio. Ayes all; motion carried.

**FIRST READING OF RESOLUTION 22-2023:** Council listened to the First Reading in title only of Proposed Resolution 22-2023 which description is: "A Resolution declaring Pat Flowers, Inc. to be the lowest and best bidder for the striping of certain streets within the municipality, authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with said bidder not to exceed the sum of Twenty-Two Thousand, Four Hundred Forty-Five Dollars and Thirteen Cents (\$22,445.13), rejecting all other bids received and declaring an emergency." (Mayor Chuck Brunello, Jr. & Council as a Whole)

**FIRST READING OF RESOLUTION 23-2023:** Council listened to the First Reading in title only of Proposed Resolution 22-2023 which description is: "A Resolution issuing a six-month extension of the Moratorium on the granting of building permits or certificates of occupancy for any group home for a period not to exceed six months from the effective end date of the resolution previously passed, in order to allow City Council and the Planning Commission to review the Highland Heights Zoning Code and other Codified Ordinances relative to such use; and declaring an emergency." (Mayor Chuck Brunello, Jr. & Council as a Whole)

**ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION 24-2023:** Council listened to the Second Reading in title only of Proposed Resolution 21-2023 which description is: "A Resolution authorizing the payment of Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$75,000.00) to Envelope Consulting Services, LLC for Construction Administration and Procurement Services for the Police and Fire Renovation Project." (Mayor Chuck Brunello, Jr. & Council as a Whole)

Council was asked to suspend the Second and Third readings to allow the project to continue.

A motion was made by Mr. Goff to suspend the Third reading; seconded by Mrs. Ganser. Ayes All, motion carried.

Mr. Milroy moved to adopt; seconded by Mr. Goff. Ayes All, motion carried.

**ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION 21-2023:** Council listened to the Second Reading in title only of Proposed Resolution 21-2023 which description is: "A Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with MVGMM, Inc. to provide food and beverage concession services at the Municipal Pool and Park for the Summer of 2023 and declaring an emergency." (Mayor Chuck Brunello, Jr. & Council as a Whole)

Council was asked to suspend the Third reading to ensure the contract is accepted before the company begins selling.

A motion was made by Mr. Goff to suspend the Third reading; seconded by Mr. DiLalla. Ayes All, motion carried.

Mr. Milroy moved to adopt; seconded by Mrs. Ganser. Ayes All, motion carried.

**SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE 9-2023:** Council listened to the Second Reading in title only of Proposed Ordinance 9-2023 which description is: “An Ordinance fixing the salaries of the Members of Council and fixing the salary and bond of the Council Member selected under the provisions of the city charter to serve as President of Council and declaring an emergency.” (Mayor Chuck Brunello, Jr. & Council as a Whole)

**ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION 18-2023:** Council listened to the Third Reading in title only of Proposed Resolution 18-2023 which description is: “A Resolution authorizing the Finance Director to make a payment to Swagelok Company from nontax revenues in the amount of Two Hundred Fifty Thousand dollars (\$250,000) pursuant to the Economic Development Grant agreement dated July 28, 2015 and declaring an emergency.” (Mayor Chuck Brunello, Jr. & Council as a Whole)

Mr. DeLisio moved to adopt; seconded by Mr. DiLalla. Ayes All, motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Mr. Goff and seconded by Mrs. Ganser to adjourn the meeting. Ayes all; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

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Clerk of Council

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President of Council