



**Cleveland City Council**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, July 11, 2022 - 6:30 P.M.**  
**Cleveland Community Center/Police Department**  
**342 Campbell Street, Cleveland, GA**

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**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Turner called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:**

Mayor Josh Turner, Council Members Nan Bowen, Rebecca Yardley, Jeremy McClure, and C.J. McDonald (Mayor Pro Tem)

Also present were City Administrator Kevin Harris, City Attorney Grant Keene, and City Clerk Lisa Ritchie

**2. Invocation – Newlin Vargas of Basan Ministries**

**3. Pledge of Allegiance**

Pastor Vargas stated that Basan Ministries has been in the City of Cleveland for approximately five years.

**4. Approve Agenda**

Motion by Council Member Yardley, seconded by Council Member McDonald and voted, unanimously, to approve the agenda with an amendment to remove item number 14 from the agenda.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**5. November Referendum for the package sale of distilled spirits**

Mayor Turner stated the following:

- Mayor and Council Members will hold two (2) Public Hearings on the question of whether the issuance of licenses for the package sale of distilled spirits in the City of Cleveland shall be permitted.

- Monday, July 11, 2022 Meeting at 6:30 at the Cleveland Police Department
- Monday, July 25, 2022 Called Meeting at 6:30 at the Cleveland Police Department
- A copy of the proposed ballot question to be considered by the City Council is currently available for public inspection online as well as at Cleveland City Hall, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Under Senate Bill 145, the Georgia General Assembly and Governor Kemp revised the law allowing cities and counties to call for a ballot question on liquor package sales by resolution or ordinance. Under the previous law, the petition threshold of 35% of registered voter signatures was required to initiate the process. Under the law passed in 2021, 20% of registered voter signatures or a majority vote of the Council would allow a referendum to be placed on a ballot.
- The City Council wants to hear from its citizens prior to any potential vote taking place. For that purpose, the Cleveland City Council will hold two (2) Public Hearings on the question of whether the issuance of licenses for the package sale of distilled spirits in the City of Cleveland shall be permitted.
- The hearings have been publicized and printed as required by all city and state requirements.
- At the end of the hearing on Monday, July 25, 2022, there will be a time at the end to entertain motions on the topic from any member(s) of the city council.
- If a motion were made in order, and received a majority vote, a distilled spirits referendum could be placed on the November ballot for city residents.
- If the referendum is approved in November, the city would begin the process of developing ordinances to create the regulations and application process. The city would then set a date to complete the ordinances and determine when distilled spirits sales could begin.
- Public Comments may be provided at the meetings scheduled for July 11 or July 25 or by e-mail at [PublicComments@cityofclevelandga.org](mailto:PublicComments@cityofclevelandga.org).
- After the 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Hearing portion of the meeting on July 25, action may be taken by the Council regarding the call for a special election.

Mayor Turner asked that everyone abide by the Rules of Decorum that are in effect for this hearing and all Council meetings.

The following people addressed the Mayor and Council Members with their comments on the item:

In favor:

Charlie Pope, 160 Pine Hill Drive, Cleveland  
Ed Ward, 507 New Bridge Road, Cleveland

In opposition:

Terry Goodger, 138 Park View Drive, Cleveland

The Public Hearing was closed as there were no others wishing to speak on the matter.

## **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

## **6. Finance Department - Finance Director Connie Tracas**

- June 2022 statistics

Mrs. Tracas addressed the Mayor and Council Members. She reported the following June items:

- Revenues are at 101% compared to 103% in June of 2021
- Slight increase in alcohol tax compared to June 2021
- Slight decrease in LOST compared to June 2021
- Expenditures are at 99% compared to 92% in June 2021 due to needed upgrades in computer equipment and software
- Water/Sewer Revenues are at 80% compared to 95% in June 2021 – New, increased water rates will go into effect July 15, 2022 – Mrs. Tracas recommended extending the rate increases
- Getting ready for audit

## **7. Fire Department – Chief Ricky Pruitt**

- June 2022 statistics

Chief Pruitt addressed the Mayor and Council Members. He reported the following June items:

- Total of 80 Calls: 43 inside the city and 37 in the County
- White County Fire Department responded 4 times into the city
- 2 people were saved with Narcan

## **8. Police Department - Chief Jeff Shoemaker**

- June 2022 statistics

Chief Shoemaker addressed the Mayor and Council Members. He reported the following June items:

- Total occurrences - 2,074
  - Public assists - 317
  - Premise checks – 1,106
  - Field interviews - 8
  - Incident reports - 55
  - Accident reports - 15
  - Investigative/supplemental - 95
  - Administrative duties - 309
  - Citations Issued - 78
  - Warnings - 75
  - Warrants - 15
  - Juvenile - 1
- Citations

- Misdemeanor, non-traffic - 4
- DUI, Alcohol, & serious offenses - 5
- Driver's license, Registration, & Insurance - 11
- Moving violations, traffic control, etc. - 60
- Equipment, seatbelt, etc. - 8
- Drug arrests - 3

**9. Public Works Department – Assistant Public Works Director Ricky Hunt**

- June 2022 statistics

Mr. Hunt addressed the Mayor and Council Members. He reported the following June items:

- Service orders - 154
- Meters read – 2,206
- Meters re-read - 36
- Locates - 145

**10. Economic Development and Planning – Tom O'Bryant**

- June 2022 Report

Mr. O'Bryant addressed the Mayor and Council Members. He reported the following June items:

- Occupational Licenses - 8
- Building Permits - 13
- Sign Permits - 3
- Building Inspections - 17
- Plan Reviews - 2
- Current Commercial Activity – 6 projects (3 new construction and 3 expansions)
- Development Inquiries – 10 (3 have closed)
- Grant Applications – ARC Pre-application submittal for sewer line expansion for Woodland's Camp

Mr. O'Bryant stated that he received an e-mail from Senator Warnock's Office Chief of Staff earlier in the day. They are sending their Chief of Staff on Friday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> to meet with Cleveland staff.

- Infrastructure – Phase 3 of the by-pass, GDOT redesigning infrastructure for the proposed bridge that will replace the collapsed culvert. Mr. O'Bryant stated that he is in discussions with the City Engineer on this item.

## **POLICE CHIEF JEFF SHOEMAKER**

### **11. Request for the purchase of a 2022 Ford Explorer**

Chief Shoemaker stated that the purchase would be funded by SPLOST.

Motion by Council Member McDonald, seconded by Council Member Yardley and voted, unanimously, to approve the purchase of a 2022 Ford Explorer from SPLOST funds.

## **CITY ADMINISTRATOR KEVIN HARRIS**

Mr. Harris reported the following items:

- Staff is working on metrics to make sure that the Mayor and Council have all the information they need to make decisions
- Staff is waiting for information from the Tax Commissioner for the scheduling of millage hearings
- Commendations to Public Works for working in the heat
- The personnel code was last updated in 1994. Staff will work on a comprehensive update, working on sections at a time. It should be complete by this time next year.

## **CITY ATTORNEY GRANT KEENE**

Mr. Keene addressed the Mayor and Council Members. He announced his withdrawal as City Attorney at the end of the year. He expressed his appreciation for being allowed to serve for 33.5 years. He stated that the resignation is effective at the end of the year. He also offered to serve in an amended capacity through the end of the year.

On behalf of the City Council and City Councils' past, Mayor Turner expressed appreciation for Mr. Keene's service and counsel to the City of Cleveland. Mayor Turner stated that they recognize his professional abilities and his courteous and professional behavior.

Mr. Keene received a standing ovation.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **12. Engagement of Professional Services**

Mayor Turner stated that Mr. Keene has been communicating his plans to resign at the end of the year. He said the Mayor and Council have been interviewing candidates to fill Mr. Keene's position. He said it was a difficult task with Mr. Keene serving for 33.5 years.

Motion by Council Member Yardley, seconded by Council Member McClure and voted, unanimously, to approve the engagement of professional services with Keith J. Whitaker and Smith Gilliam Williams and Miles.

Mr. Whitaker addressed the Mayor and Council members. He said he is a lifelong resident of Cleveland and looks forward to working with the Mayor and Council and with Mr. Keene.

**13. Approve July 5, 2022 Called Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Council Member Bowen, seconded by Council Member McDonald and voted, unanimously, to approve the July 5, 2022 Called Meeting Minutes.

**14. Approve July 5, 2022 Executive Session Minutes (removed from the agenda during the adoption of the agenda)**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Judy Lovell, 341 W. Kytle Street, addressed the Mayor and Council Members and shared a piece of Cleveland's history. She said in the late 40s and early 50s Cleveland had one police officer, James Newton Byron "Big Jim", who was 7'2" tall and weighed 320 pounds. He had 11 brothers and sisters who were all over 6' tall. He was well respected in Cleveland. He served for 9 years.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**15. Millage Hearing/s**

Mr. Harris stated that the Millage Hearing/s will be announced as soon as the information is available.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion by Council Member McClure, seconded by Council Member Bowen and voted, unanimously, to enter an Executive Session at 7:07 p.m.

**16. Discussion regarding real estate and personnel matters**

Motion by Council Member Yardley, seconded by Council Member McClure and voted, unanimously, to adjourn the Executive Session and return to the City Council Meeting at 8:39 p.m.





Council Member McDonald opened the door to allow citizens to return to the regular meeting. There were no citizens waiting to return to the meeting.

The Mayor and Council Member signed the Lamar "Pinky" Black Old Water Tank agreement for the purpose of Ms. Ritchie being able to witness/attest the document.


**ADJOURN**


Motion by Council Member Yardley, seconded by Council Member Bowen and voted, unanimously, to adjourn the City Council Meeting of July 11, 2022 at 8:46 p.m.

  
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Josh Turner                      Mayor

  
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Jeremy McClure              Council Member  
   Ward 3

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Nan Bowen                      Council Member  
   Ward 1

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
C.J. McDonald              Council Member  
   Ward 4  
   Mayor Pro Tem

  
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Rebecca Yardley              Council Member  
   Ward 2

ATTEST:  
  
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Lisa A. Ritchie              City Clerk