

**CITY OF CLEVELAND
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 3, 2019
MINUTES**

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The City Council meeting of the Mayor and Council of the City of Cleveland was called to order by Mayor Shan Ash at 6:30 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Nan Bowen, Annie Sutton, Kevin Stanley, and Bradley Greene.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Ash asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Bradley Greene made a motion to remove item #4 – Letter to rescind letter to GA. Dept. of Pardons and Paroles, Nan Bowen seconded the motion. Kevin Stanley and Annie Sutton were in opposition of removing the agenda item. Mayor Ash settled the split vote by stating to keep the line item on the agenda but it would be discussed on the terms that Mayor Ash discussed with City Attorney Grant Keene. The terms were not discussed in the meeting. Grant Keene stated he does not remember the steps Mayor Ash wanted to take in the discussion. Mayor Ash asked if Mr. Greene's motion was to remove or table. Mr. Greene answered to table. Mayor Ash stated no, it was on the agenda and will be taken care of at this meeting. The agenda was approved by the tie-breaking vote of Mayor Ash.

CITY COUNCIL – LETTER TO RESCIND LETTER TO GA. DEPT. OF PARDONS AND PAROLE

Mayor Ash informed he will not discuss the letter to the pardons and parole board or the letter to rescind the letter to the pardons and parole board. Mayor Ash does not want the individual named. Mayor Ash stated he signed the letter, but did not compose it. Mayor Ash had asked Chief Foster to compose the letter on behalf of an individual. The individual had approached Mayor Ash and asked for a letter of support to the parole board as he had an opportunity for employment. Mayor Ash stated the letter, as presented, cannot be voted on without the individual's consent. Mayor Ash informed he, along with Chief Foster, wrote the letter on city letterhead, Mayor Ash signed it without City Council approval.

Grant Keene, City Attorney and author of the letter to rescind, now recommends the City Council not move further with the current version of the document, but consider another form. Bradley Greene stated the Council needs to protect personal rights and name, but some type of correspondence needs to be sent to the board of pardons and paroles.

Mr. Keene stated Mayor Ash has openly made a statement concerning the letter, but action would be inappropriate to the language, written by Mr. Keene, on the letter to rescind. If action is taken, it should be in a different form.

Annie Sutton asked Mr. Keene to prepare another letter and thanked Mayor Ash for taking responsibility for writing the letter on city letterhead without City Council approval. Mr. Keene informed he can write the letter to preserve confidential information. The City Council informed to have it prepared for the next City Council Meeting.

CITY COUNCIL – LETTER TO RESCIND LETTER TO GA. DEPT. OF PARDONS AND PAROLE - continued

Nan Bowen expressed the City Council cannot be viewed as giving an unfair advantage to one that cannot be given to others. Ms. Bowen advised to make this right and correct the issue as soon as possible.

Mayor Ash has an explanation for the letter as the individual came to him for assistance. Ms. Bowen stated Mayor Ash should contact the individual and let him know of the need to send a letter to rescind the original letter. Mayor Ash stated no he should not since he did not have the item put on the agenda. Ms. Bowen answered it wasn't the council that wrote the original letter.

Dean Dyer, WRWH Radio, asked the Mayor and Council to be clearer of the contents of both letters. Mr. Dyer stated since the letter is being discussed in open meeting, the public should know the details or the issue should have been discussed in executive session. Mr. Dyer stated there is no way to explain the issue to the public without further information.

Mayor Ash responded by issuing a written statement to Mr. Dyer and to Stephanie Hill, White County News. Mr. O'Bryant informed Mayor Ash the statement should be made part of the City's records and Mayor Ash did not offer to the city clerk and answered it was a statement to the media. Mayor Ash stated he did not want to open up privacy issues that is on the letter he wrote on city letterhead. Annie Sutton informed the issue is already out in the public and she does not know how it got out there.

On motion by Annie Sutton, seconded by Bradley Greene, in favor – Nan Bowen and Kevin Stanley, and carried unanimously, the Cleveland City Council voted to direct Grant Keene, City Attorney, to draft a new letter to rescind the letter to the GA. Dept. of Pardons and Paroles and submit to the Cleveland City Council at the next City Council Meeting.

CHIEF RICKY PRUITT – FIRE DEPARTMENT

Chief Ricky Pruitt, Fire Department, was not present.

CHIEF JOHN FOSTER – POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief John Foster, Police Department, presented a class request for Officer Thomas Robertson to attend field training. There is no fee or overnight stay for this class.

On motion by Bradley Greene, seconded by Annie Sutton, in favor – Nan Bowen and Kevin Stanley, and carried unanimously, the Cleveland City Council approved the class request for Officer Thomas Robertson.

GRANT KEENE – CITY ATTORNEY

Grant Keene, City Attorney, did not have new business to discuss.

TOM O'BRYANT – CITY ADMINISTRATOR

Tom O'Bryant, City Administrator, presented the revised contract for the engineering services of Rindt-McDuff for the upgrade of the wastewater treatment plant. The revised agreement should meet all the requirements of funding and grant agencies.

On motion by Nan Bowen, seconded by Annie Sutton, in favor – Kevin Stanley and Bradley Greene, the Cleveland City Council approved the agreement for the engineering services of Rindt-McDuff for the upgrade of the wastewater treatment plant.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Beth Truelove, White County Chamber, came before the Mayor and Council to request additional city services for the Annual Agri-Fest and Pottery Comes to Town event. The City typically provides police, fire, and sanitation services during the event. Bradley Greene stated he has reviewed the layout of the vendors and expressed his approval. Chief Foster stated he has not seen the layout, but was reminded it was emailed to him. Chief Foster responded his department is familiar with the layout.

On motion by Bradley Greene, seconded by Annie Sutton, in favor Nan Bowen and Kevin Stanley, and carried unanimously, the Cleveland City Council approved the requests for additional city services of police, fire, and sanitation services for the Annual Agri-Fest and Pottery Comes to Town event.

2. Nadine Wardenga – Downtown Cleveland Merchants Alliance, came before the Mayor and Council to discuss the downtown organization and events. The DCMA will participate in Agri-Fest by selling raffle tickets. The merchants have contributed approximately \$3500 worth of items or services for the various raffles.

The group has been organized to promote downtown and areas off the square. The group wants visitors to embrace the past and walk the square and enjoy the hospitable nature of the square. DCMA has been working with the Chamber but needs the city's help to become a part of the Main Street Program.

Ms. Wardenga mentioned the cigarette butts on the square, and encouraged the city to purchase cigarette disposal bins. Ms. Wardenga remarked on how nasty the streets are on the square and has asked the city to pressure wash the area.

Ms. Wardenga informed DCMA's slogan is Create Charm, Culture, and Community. DCMA would like to emphasize culture and a sense of community to come together. DCMA would like to embrace the historic past of Cleveland from Indians, gold, Babyland, to chicken salad. The Mayor and Council received a schedule of events.

Ms. Wardenga informed the Jingle Mingle will change a little to include the Chamber, as well as DCMA, to solicit new memberships. The Black Friday event is her best sale day for her store on the square and encouraged everyone to take advantage of the sales on Black Friday.

Ms. Wardenga spoke of the Spring Fling and the group wants to include an outdoor dinner. Ms. Wardenga stated she will meet with Chief Foster to discuss blocking off an area on the square for the outdoor dinner. The group also wants to include a July event.

NEW BUSINESS – continued

3. On motion by Bradley Greene, seconded by Nan Bowen, in favor Annie Sutton and Kevin Stanley, and carried unanimously, the Cleveland City Council approved the class requests for Andrea Smith and David Lauderdale for continuing education training for wastewater certification. Mayor Ash did not sign the class requests.
4. On motion by Bradley Greene, seconded by Nan Bowen, in favor – Annie Sutton and Kevin Stanley, and carried unanimously, the Cleveland City Council approved the minutes of August 5 and August 12, 2019.
5. Public comments – Mayor Ash stated he hopes everyone in Hurricane Dorian's path stays safe. Ward Gann commented on the progress of the Oak Springs project and how good the building looks. Dean Dyer asked if there was a timeframe for completion and Mr. O'Bryant answered shooting for late fall.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Nan Bowen, seconded by Bradley Greene, in favor Annie Sutton and Kevin Stanley, and carried unanimously, the Cleveland City Council voted to adjourn the City Council Meeting of September 3, 2019 at 7:12 p.m.



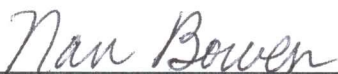
Shan Ash,

Mayor



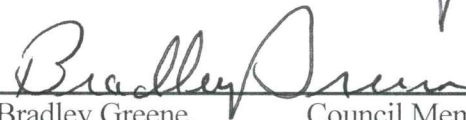
Kevin Stanley,

Council Member



Nan Bowen,

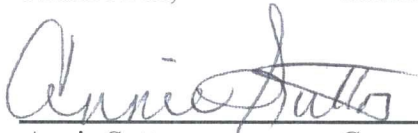
Council Member



Bradley Greene,

Council Member

Mayor Pro Tem



Annie Sutton,

Council Member

Attest:



Connie Tracas,

City Clerk

Minutes approved at October 7, 2019 City Council Meeting.

