



**Cleveland City Council  
Called Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, September 5, 2023 - 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, Jeremy McClure, and C.J. McDonald

Also present were City Administrator Kevin Harris, City Attorney Keith Whitaker, and City Clerk Lisa Ritchie

**2. Invocation – Student Ministries Pastor Garrett Kersey, The Bridge Church,  
and White County Ministerial Alliance**

Pastor Kersey was not in attendance.

Dean Dyer, WRWH, gave the invocation.

**3. Pledge of Allegiance**

**4. Approve Agenda**

Motion by Council Member McClure, seconded by Council Member McDonald, and voted, unanimously, to approve the agenda.

**CITY ADMINISTRATOR KEVIN HARRIS**

Mr. Harris discussed the following items:

- Status of package store applications and next steps in the process
  - All applications have been reviewed by the City Attorney and are in the process of review by the City Clerk
  - Approved applications will be processed through a lottery
  - Applicants whose application/s are denied will have 15 days to appeal the denial to the Alcohol Review Board

- Information packets (Ordinance regarding Licenses package sales of distilled spirits for consumption off premises, etc.) will be sent to the Alcohol Review Board
- Lottery proceedings will take place in or around the week of October 12
- Talon Property
  - Beginning September 11, a Request for Proposal (RFP) will be open for 30 days for brokerage firms wishing to assist with the sale, either by auction or by a sealed bid process

### **CITY ATTORNEY KEITH WHITAKER**

Mr. Whitaker did not have any items to discuss.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

5. Ratify payment to JMCM Enterprises LLC for FEMA ladder truck consulting fees

Mr. Harris stated that the expense is a result of the ladder truck grant Cleveland received. He said the application process requires the recipient to pay 5% of the total grant.

Motion by Council Member McDonald, seconded by Council Member Bowen, and voted, unanimously, to approve the ratification of the payment, from general funds, to JMCM Enterprises LLC for the FEMA ladder truck consulting fees.

6. Resignation of Ward 2 Council Member Rebecca Yardley effective August 31, 2023

Mayor Turner stated that Ms. Yardley notified the Mayor and Council of her decision to resign effective August 31, 2023 in a letter dated August 21, 2023.

Motion by Council Member McDonald, seconded by Council Member Bowen, and voted, unanimously, to accept Ms. Yardley's resignation.

7. Resolution 2023-23 – Amendment to Board Appointments – Mayor Pro Tem

Mayor Turner stated that Ms. Yardley's resignation leaves the Mayor Pro Tem position vacant.

Motion by Council Member McDonald, seconded by Council Member Bowen, and voted, unanimously, to approve the appointment of Council Member McClure to serve as the Mayor Pro Tem for the remainder of the year.

8. Resolution to amend the Resolution and Adoption Agreement with Georgia Municipal Association for Defined Contribution Plan retroactive to July 1, 2013

Finance Department Director John Solmon addressed the Mayor and Council Members. He stated that the amendment allows employees to be eligible for the defined contribution plan after a month of employment, effective back to July 1, 2013. He said it also changes the requirement for the city to pay weekly to once a monthly.

Mr. Whitaker, having reviewed the agreement, stated that he did not have any concerns with it.

Motion by Council Member McClure, seconded by Council Member McDonald, and voted, unanimously, to approve the Resolution amending the previous Resolution and Adoption Agreement with Georgia Municipal Association for Defined Contribution Plan retroactive to July 1, 2013.

9. Approve Meeting Minutes
  - August 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Council Member McDonald, seconded by Council Member Bowen, and voted, unanimously, to approve the August 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes.

10. Approve Executive Session Minutes
  - August 7, 2023 Executive Session Minutes

Motion by Council Member Bowen, seconded by Council Member McClure, and voted, unanimously, to approve the August 7, 2023 Executive Session Minutes.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

11. 2024 Employee Benefits Update

Ms. Ritchie stated the following:

- Human Resources has worked with 5 brokers to identify the best plan and provider for employee health benefits
- None of the brokers were able to identify better options
- Two brokers are currently working with insurance companies for quotes
- The City's current provider has scheduled Open Enrollment from October 23 to November 10
- A deliberate process including a health fair (October 16 and 17) is being planned to inform employees of their options and to ensure employee participation

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no comments from the public.

Mayor Turner stated that he wishes Ms. Yardley well in her future endeavors and he looks forward to working with Councilmember-Elect Sutton for the benefit of Cleveland's citizens.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Ritchie gave the announcements.

Upcoming calendar items:

- 12.** Downtown Development Authority – Thursday, September 7 14, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. at the Chamber of Commerce
- 13.** White County Water Authority Meeting – Thursday, September 14, 2023, at 7:30 a.m. at the Water Authority
- 14.** Planning & Zoning Meeting – Thursday, September 28, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at the Police Department

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion by Council Member McClure, seconded by Council Member McDonald and voted, unanimously, to enter an Executive Session at 6:52 p.m.

- 15.** Discussion regarding real estate

Motion by Council Member McClure, seconded by Council Member McDonald and voted, unanimously, to adjourn the Executive Session and return to the City Council Meeting at 7:23 p.m.

Council Member McDonald opened the door and invited those waiting to return to the regular meeting.

Motion by Council Member McDonald, seconded by Council Member McClure and voted, unanimously, to enter into a Letter of Intent for the purchase of property located at 84 East Underwood Street, commonly and formerly referred to as the Ward's Funeral Home property, from Westley G. Parks for the purchase price of \$325,000 with said Letter of Intent to include an exclusivity provision, require clear title subject only to standard title exceptions, and include other closing terms considered standard in the industry. Council Member McDonald further moved with Council Member McClure's second for the City to subsequently enter into a binding agreement for the purchase of said property in accordance with the terms in said Letter of Intent and to proceed to closing as soon as reasonably practicable and authorized Mayor Turner to sign the Letter of Intent, the Purchase Agreement, and all necessary closing documents, and the purchase shall be funded through ARPA funds.

Mr. Harris stated the following about the property:

- It adjoins Cleveland City Hall and Freedom Park
- The purchase is for future city planning and development, with no specific use identified at this time
- The property will be beneficial to the growth of the City of Cleveland with a plethora of possible uses due to its strategic location

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion by Council Member Bowen, seconded by Council Member McDonald and voted, unanimously, to enter an Executive Session at 7:30 p.m.

16. Discussion regarding personnel and pending litigation

Motion by Council Member McClure, seconded by Council Member McDonald and voted, unanimously, to adjourn the Executive Session and return to the City Council Meeting at 9:14 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.

**ADJOURN**

Motion by Council Member McClure, seconded by Council Member McDonald and voted, unanimously, to adjourn the Called Meeting at 9:15 p.m.

 _____ Josh Turner	Mayor	 _____ Jeremy McClure	Council Member Ward 3 Mayor Pro Tem
 _____ Nan Bowen	Council Member Ward 1	 _____ C.J. McDonald	Council Member Ward 4
VACANT	Council Member Ward 2	ATTEST:  _____ Lisa A. Ritchie	City Clerk