



City of Mentor-on-the-Lake

5860 Andrews Road, Mentor-on-the-Lake, OH 44060-2827

Phone: (440) 257-7216 Fax: (440) 257-2766

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MINUTES REGULAR/VIRTUAL MEETING OF COUNCIL CITY OF MENTOR-ON-THE-LAKE JANUARY 25, 2022

The Regular/Virtual Meeting of Council of January 25, 2022, for the City of Mentor-on-the-Lake, Ohio, was called to Order at 7:00 P.M. by Council President Robert M. Johnson.

CALL TO ORDER: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL:

Aye: At Large: KEVIN BITTNER, Vice-President
Aye: At Large: JIM LUNDER
Aye: Ward 4: DESIREA THOMPSON
Aye: At Large: MICHELLE MOORE
Aye: Ward 1: DAVID CHABUT
Aye: Ward 2: PAUL MORRIS
Aye: Ward 3: ROB JOHNSON, President

READING OF MINUTES: Regular/Virtual Meeting of Council – January 11, 2022

MOTION MADE BY MR. MORRIS, Seconded by Mr. Chabut, to approve the Minutes of the January 11, 2022, Regular/Virtual Meeting of Council. **ROLL CALL:** Ayes: Council Member Bittner, Lunder, Moore, Chabut, Morris, Johnson. Nays: None. Abstain: Council Member Thompson

MOTION CARRIED: 6/0/1

CORRESPONDENCE:

Mr. Johnson read an email dated January 14, 2022, from Skip Gray, 7574 Dahlia Drive, regarding Mr. Towns' appointment to the Board of Zoning Appeals and the Board of Local Tax Review. He also read his response to Mr. Gray as well as a correction he made to his response. Copies of the emails are attached.

Mr. Morris said he also received an email from Skip Gray, 7574 Dahlia Drive, and read the email, a copy of which is attached. Mr. Morris said he called Mr. Gray after that and expressed to Mr. Gray that first of all he personally doesn't think a person who is a renter should serve on a tax board; can they serve on many other commissions, definitely, but taxes, he questions that. As far as renters vs. non-renters, it occurs to him that there were non-property owners who attempted to get a Council appointment and there was conversation among Council at that time that they would prefer not to have a renter on Council. He thinks Mr. Gray raised some very interesting questions. Is it required by law to be a property owner, probably not, and he rephrased that and said no, he doesn't think it is, but is it a better idea, he thinks it is. Keeping in mind we are having difficulty filling all these positions makes things a little bit different; it is a shame that our residents do not care enough to stand up and volunteer for some of these, with a few exceptions.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

Mayor & Safety Director – Mr. Eva

Mayor Eva advised he met with Greg Sommers on January 14, 2022. Greg is part of the project at Lake Shore and Andrews. The scope of the project now will be townhouses, approximately thirty-seven units. The City received correspondence from Mr. Sommers yesterday as far as setting up a new, unique district for that property, and this information was turned over to Jim Sayles yesterday. Mr. Sayles will create and draft a residential/Lake Shore district for review.

Mayor Eva received a Memo from Chief Gielink that Matthew Woisnet has joined the Police Department as a Part-Time Officer. He began his field training with Sgt. Daubemire on January 19, 2022.

Administrative Director – Mrs. Bartone

Mrs. Bartone said some Members of Council and Administration have not been receiving notices from the Toshiba that the Clerk has been sending out. She asked them to check their Spam as something triggered it and a lot of random Toshiba messages have been going straight to Spam.

Mrs. Bartone said since the last Council Meeting, they have been trying to stream and upload the recordings. There are size limitations and the only thing she can find around that is a U-Tube channel for the City which is now in effect and active. Almost everything that has been recorded is on that channel. It can be accessed through the Council Meeting page or the Board and Commission Page on the City Website.

Law Director – Mr. Lyons (No Report)

QUESTIONS TO ADMINISTRATION AND DEPARTMENT HEADS:

Mr. Morris went back to the appointees for the different Boards and Commissions, he understands how valuable these volunteers are, but asked Mrs. Bartone when she sent out the list of Board and Committee Members he noticed that the terms of the Members on the CRA Housing Board had expired by over a year, and why were these people not renewed. Mrs. Bartone stated they have not had any meetings. There is a meeting next month so they will all be reappointed and there will be legislation at the next Council Meeting to reappoint them. Everyone has opted to stay on the Board.

Mr. Bittner asked Mayor Eva if Mr. Sommers had said why they went from apartments to townhouses. Mayor Eva said he thinks the cost of the materials, but also, as Mr. Johnson knows, the density of the property, and they think this will be a better fit.

BOARD/COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS:

Board of Zoning Appeals / January 17, 2022 / Mr. Lunder

Mr. Lunder advised the Board of Zoning Appeals met on January 17, 2022. The builder and owner of the property came back for a second time to go over their plans with the Board because the first time it did not fit within the legal limits of the house they wanted to build. They came back with revised building plans, everything fit, and it was approved.

Finance Committee/Council of the Whole / January 24, 2022 / Mrs. Moore

Mrs. Moore advised the Finance Committee met on January 24, 2022 at 6:00 P.M. Present were Chair Mrs. Moore, all Members of Council, Mayor Eva, Mrs. Bartone, Police Chief Gielink, and Fire Chief Pechatsko. Also attending were residents Renee Shaeffer and Phyllis Chabut. The meeting was held to review the 2022 Budget. Mrs. Bartone explained that one of the SR283 project bonds will be paid off this year. The OPWC bonds are interest free. Fire Chief Pechatsko advised he had applied for an AFG Grant to replace the heavy rescue and the SAFER Grant to increase staffing by two full-time firefighters if approved. Police Chief Gielink clarified, for Mr. Morris' question, the total equipment increase covers new car and radio equipment for the 2022 car. Mrs. Thompson confirmed with Chief Gielink his budget does include two full-time officers. Chief Gielink explained some of the part-time staff was changed to assist with budgeting for the two full-time positions. Mrs. Moore asked about the Mentor Reciprocal Billing Program for resident/non-resident rates. Mrs. Bartone gathered information and advised that Mentor no longer has this program. Road program amounts have been received. Mrs. Bartone answered Mr. Chabut's question that the savings for not replacing one Service Department employee have been spread out. Mrs. Bartone also clarified for Mr. Morris the professional services in the budget increased due to proper coding of engineering fees from Funds 231/232. Mrs. Bartone asked Council to consider applying for the SID program for Overlook Beach Park erosion control. Prior estimates were about \$500,000.00. Council was also asked to consider a retention lump sum payment option as an incentive to keep employees. Both matters will be discussed further. Mayor Eva asked Mrs. Bartone to confirm property tax information. Mrs. Bartone explained property tax valuation is about \$25 Million. Revenue increased 14.8%. She confirmed the carry-over for 2022 is projected to be over \$1 Million. COVID funds are decreasing but we will still have this carry-over. Mrs. Bartone feels everyone in the Departments is doing well budgeting their funds. Mr. Johnson commented Mrs. Bartone is doing well, thinking outside the box, and making changes where needed. There were no other questions or comments. No changes to the 2022 budget were suggested. The Meeting adjourned at 6:30 P.M.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK: 7:17 P.M.

CLOSED OPEN TO THE PUBLIC SECTION: 7:17 P.M.

LEGISLATION BEFORE COUNCIL: (None)

OLD BUSINESS:

Review of Council Rules. Mr. Johnson said Mr. Morris sent a proposed form to everyone for applicants to the boards and commissions to fill out. Mr. Morris said Mr. Lyons suggested he make up a form, and he thought the form was very non-intrusive and would give Council an insight as to the type of person being appointed. He also thought that if a candidate or a nominee has a specific skill that could be best served in another Committee that is more warranted of that skill, Council may want to ask them if they would be interested in serving on that Committee as well or instead of. Mr. Johnson asked for comments.

Mr. Lunder thought that since all of the Board and Committee Meetings have been changed to 6:00 P.M., he would like to see if Council Meetings could be changed to 6:00 P.M. instead of 7:00 P.M. Mr. Morris did not see a problem. Mr. Johnson asked for comments. The meeting starting at 6:00 P.M. could be a problem for the Clerk. Mayor Eva said he could see where 6:00 could be a problem.

To go back to the appointment, Mayor Eva said he does not know what form Council is looking at. Mr. Johnson sent him a copy of the form as it was not forwarded to Mayor Eva. Mr. Bittner asked if this was something he was looking at to go into Council Rules. Mr. Lyons said Council could set the protocol or procedure for their own appointments in terms of filling out a form. Since Council has to confirm most

Mayoral appointments, not all, but most, they can set a procedure for getting information. Mr. Lyons thinks Council could make this a Council Rule. In terms of the 6:00 P.M. change, this has to be done by legislation.

Mr. Johnson asked for any additional comments about the form. Mrs. Moore said she is not opposed to offering residents a form. Right now the protocol to express to be on a Committee is to submit a letter and/or email an interest to the Mayor or the Administration. Some people are comfortable writing those type of letters, some are not, and some people would be more comfortable filling out a form and some would not. She is open to offering either. There was discussion regarding using the proposed form or asking for a letter of intent. Mr. Lyons said this could be optional, he does think that more information could be helpful, especially if there is more than one applicant for a particular Board or Committee. Mr. Johnson said except for Council's appointees, these are the Mayor's appointees. He is going to choose among the applicants applying. Mr. Lyons said the information may help the Mayor make a selection. Mr. Johnson said they would let the Administration review the form, since they have not seen it, let them provide any feedback, and discuss this again at the next Council Meeting.

Mr. Johnson said changing the time of the Council Meeting to 6:00 as proposed by Mr. Lunder, and which would need legislation, would now be discussed. So far, the Clerk would not be able to be present. Mr. Chabut said if 6:00 would not be good for the Clerk, would 6:30 be better. The Clerk explained why it would be hard for her, and said she would try for 6:30. It was suggested by Mrs. Thompson to have a trial run for a 6:30 Meeting. Mr. Bittner asked if everyone had to be here for that. Mr. Johnson said yes, and this would be scheduled at the end of the meeting.

Mr. Johnson asked Mr. Lyons if he was able to get any information about posting places and using the website as one. Mr. Lyons said he has not found a State law that allows this but he will look further into it.

Mr. Morris asked Mrs. Bartone if there had been any word on the audit that was being done. Mrs. Bartone said nothing has been heard.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Eva said he sent Mr. Johnson and Mr. Bittner an email about the Zoning Committee. Mr. Johnson said he has forwarded that on to Mr. Chabut.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK: 7:31 P.M.

CLOSED OPEN TO THE PUBLIC SECTION: 7:31 P.M.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SETTING OF MEETINGS:

Parks and Recreation Board	Wednesday, January 26, 2022, at 7:00 P.M.
Zoning Committee	Thursday, February 3, 2022, at 6:00 P.M.
Community Development	Thursday, February 3, 2022, at 7:00 P.M.
Planning and Zoning Commission	Monday, February 7, 2022, at 6:00 P.M.
Ordinance Committee	Monday, February 28, 2022, at 6:00 P.M.
Regular Agenda Meeting	Thursday, February 3, 2022, at 6:00 P.M.
Regular Meeting of Council	Tuesday, February 8, 2022, at 7:00 P.M.

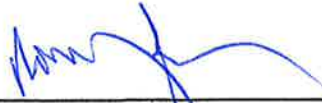
ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION MADE BY MR. MORRIS, Seconded by Mrs. Thompson, for Adjournment. ROLL CALL:
Ayes: Council Member Bittner, Lunder, Thompson, Moore, Chabut, Morris, Johnson. Nays: None.
MOTION CARRIED: 7/0

The Regular/Virtual Meeting of Council adjourned at 7:42 P.M.

APPROVED:

February 8, 2022
Date



Robert M. Johnson
President of Council

Attest: Joyce M. Saye
Clerk of Council

On Fri, Jan 14, 2022, 1:15 PM gray.skip <gray.skip@roadrunner.com> wrote:

Good afternoon Council President,

Congrats on the one year appointment Mr. Johnson to President of Council for the City of Mentor on the Lake, Ohio.

So it appears your first Council Meeting was a little unnerved.

And unfortunately I have come up with more uncertainty and clarification of progress.

How was the process of vetting from an Mayor appointed position certified?

Who certified the Mayor's recommended position?

How was this individual vetted?

And were you, President, notified of an vetted certified process of authentic identity?

I ask specific to these line of questions due to the time line of Mr. Towns introduction and presentation to Council. Which by Ohio Law could have waited till February to be appointed.

Upon my review process. It is undeterminable if Mr. Towns actually owns property at said address. Which has been expressed in official City of Mentor on the Lake, Ohio letterhead on an resolution to be 5615 Marine Parkway.

My review concluded that said property was purchased by another female on September of 2019. It also indicates Mr. Towns children do not attend an Mentor on the Lake address school faucility. And verified by Mr. Towns own admission to political activities and or associations in The News Hearld article. Mr. Towns participates in Orchard Elementary PTA, which the city boundaries are in the City of Mentor.

Couple questions need addressed in this situation.

The legality of an non taxpaying property owner having say on other residents?

Was an lease presented to Council for verification of 2 consecutive years at same residency?

Due to the nature of published reports the idea of seven years residency for a piece of property not owned by Mr. Towns. Source The News Hearld during BOE candidate election process.

How does a man vote from a place of seven years when he does not own it?

At Tuesday Council Meeting, Mr. Towns admits residency, four years Headland, one year, and then two years.

While barely two years and a conversationn at New Year Eves party. Sound suspicious at best from an timeline standpoint.

If these issues can be addressed by Council President and the City Council body as a whole I would appreciate it.

I all ready called our City Administrator to express these concerns. I currently have not heard back from the city in an official compactly while emailing you sir at this time.

I have more line of questioning to follow.

Sincerely,
Mr. Gray
7574 Dahlia Drive

Sent from my Sprint Samsung Galaxy S9.



Joyce Saxe <councilclerk@citymol.org>

Fwd: Vetted Verification

1 message

Robert Johnson <rjohnson@citymol.org>
To: Joyce Saxe <councilclerk@citymol.org>

Tue, Jan 25, 2022 at 7:41 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Robert Johnson** <rjohnson@citymol.org>
Date: Sat, Jan 15, 2022 at 11:03 AM
Subject: Re: Vetted Verification
To: gray.skip <gray.skip@roadrunner.com>

Mr. Gray,

Rereading my email I noticed a mistake-- they are required to be a registered voter and Mr. Towns obviously is just as all previous appointees.

Regards,

Rob Johnson

On Fri, Jan 14, 2022, 2:21 PM Robert Johnson <rjohnson@citymol.org> wrote:

Mr. Gray, I am not sure why you thought the first meeting was unnerved. I thought it went quite well. The requirement to serve on BZA is a resident for 2 years--not a homeowner, not even a registered voter. BZA hears appeals not only from homeowners but also business property owners. Our boards are made up of a diverse group of people with varying backgrounds. He is not the first non-homeowner to serve and hopefully won't be the last.

By Ohio law the appointment could also be made at that meeting which we did. Mr. Towns has no requirement to own property and renters are not prohibited from serving on boards or even Council.

Apparently you are unaware that residents of Mentor-on-the-Lake have 2 elementary schools. All residents of Marine Parkway north of the apartments attend Orchard Hollow, so I am glad to know Mr. Towns participates in that PTA. This information is readily available on the Mentor Public Schools website and I encourage you to familiarize yourself with it

Since you are concerned with who owns the property, the property owner lives in Willoughby.

As far as checking a lease to ensure he lived at the same location for two years, that is also not a requirement. He could rent two different locations in the city and still fulfill the 2 year residency requirement. But since you have concern over this you may check his legal residence through any court documents--specifically his Marriage license issued at that address more than 2 years ago.

How does a man vote from a residence for 7 years without owning it? It is called rental or living in a home owned by a parent, etc.

I find it disturbing that you would suggest those who rent should not have an opportunity to serve on our Boards and Commissions. It is even more disturbing that you suggest only property owners should be able to vote. We have some outstanding residents who do not own their own homes but contribute to our City in very positive ways. We also have some homeowners who contribute in very negative ways.

Regards,

Rob Johnson



Joyce Saxe <councilclerk@citymol.org>

Fwd: Hold of appointment

1 message

Paul Morris <pmorris@citymol.org>
To: Joyce Saxe <councilclerk@citymol.org>

Tue, Feb 1, 2022 at 8:45 PM

Sorry!

----- Forwarded message -----
From: **gray.skip** <gray.skip@roadrunner.com>
Date: Fri, Jan 14, 2022 at 2:10 PM
Subject: Hold of appointment
To: <Pmorris@citymol.org>

Good afternoon Ward 2 Council Representative,

Councilman Morris were you made aware of the duration of Mr. Towns residence prior to the council meeting on Tuesday?

Does this body hold accountability to the taxpayers of this city by means of property ownership to an higher degree?

Should home ownership be added to the vetted process in matters of taxation whether levied or withheld?

A person of rental status should not dictate policy, language, or taxes on people of ownership?

I say this due to the nature he can leave at any given point. Plus the renter is not paying these taxes levied to the property within the boundaries of this City of Mentor on the Lake.

Do you councilman feel that any rental appointment person should have the power over an deeded homeowner?

Do you councilman think an renter should have a non expiring term limits?

All after the fact of appointment to which council was not given ample time to vett or peer review said appointments.

What happens when the audience of constituents now have a question after the fact of legitimacy?

Sincerely,
Mr. Gray
7574 Dahlia

Sent from my Sprint Samsung Galaxy S9.