



# City of Mentor-on-the-Lake

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## MINUTES SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL CITY OF MENTOR-ON-THE-LAKE MARCH 7, 2023

The Special Meeting of Council of March 7, 2023, for the City of Mentor-on-the-Lake, Ohio, was called to Order by Council President Rob Johnson at 7:00 P.M.

**CALL TO ORDER:** PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

**ROLL CALL:**

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

**PURPOSE:**

FOR THE INTERVIEWING, DISCUSSING, AND CONSIDERATION AND/OR VOTE ON THE HIRING OF A PERSON TO FILL THE POSITION OF CITY ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR

**INTERVIEW:**

Mr. Johnson asked Mayor Eva to introduce Terrance Ness. Terry previously worked for the Cuyahoga County Veteran Service Commission in Cleveland, Ohio, as the Operations Manager. Terry has experience with finance, with people, and a great background. Mr. Johnson asked Mr. Ness to introduce himself and give Council a little background. Mr. Ness said he is the father of three, married, lives in Chardon, coaches his 5-year old and previously coached his 7-year old in sports. He was the Financial Operations Manager for the Veteran Service Commission and did payroll, invoicing, auditing; he wore many hats.

Mr. Johnson opened up the discussion for questions from Council. Mrs. Moore said one of the things that come to mind is the Fire Department, Police Department, sometimes construction projects that are needed for road, parks, etc., we look into applying for bonds, and asked what his experience with the bond process. Mr. Ness said he has no experience with the bond process, he is used to requesting proposals, bids, that sort of thing. Mrs. Moore asked about grant writing. Mr. Ness said he learns quickly and is sure he can figure it out if he has a point of contact of someone who knows what they are doing, he can probably pick it up pretty quickly.

Mr. Morris asked what he thinks are his strong points for this job. Mr. Ness said his attention to detail, he is good with people, and he learns quickly. He likes to stay busy and takes pride in what he does. Mr. Morris asked if he feels the commute between Mentor-on-the-Lake and Chardon could be a problem, especially in winter. Mr. Ness said no, he was driving to Downtown Cleveland.

Mr. Johnson asked what interests him about this job. Mr. Ness said it is very similar to what he was doing, there are things that are not similar, so there are some budget things he has to learn as it is different from what he was used to dealing with; he thinks he would be a good fit for the job, and once he met the Mayor, who is a very laid back person, the opposite of what he is used to; he has met most of the staff, and their longevity is very refreshing.. It is the exact opposite of where he came from, so he is looking forward to that.

Mr. Lunder said it says ten year government policy and procedures on his Resume, and asked Mr. Ness to enlighten him about this. Mr. Ness said he is used to answering to the County Government. He is used to answering to the County for invoices that go through them. The Veterans Service Commission has its own Board of Commissioners for resolutions, etc., and anything beyond that they would have to try to follow County policies unless the Board approved otherwise. Mr. Lunder asked if he would be comfortable with and is familiar with State audits. Mr. Ness said yes, a little bit. They had pretty much the same thing through the County.

Mr. Chabut asked if he was currently a Financial Operations Manager. Mr. Ness said no, he is currently not there anymore. Mr. Chabut asked what he was doing. Mr. Ness replied he is applying for jobs, and hoping to get this one! Mr. Chabut asked what happened with the Veteran Service Commission. Mr. Ness said they did not like that he was looking for a job; and when they found out he put in his two week's notice, they did not honor that and asked him to leave, which he did not expect.

Mrs. Moore said in this position you have to deal with a lot of the public. What is his skill set that he brings to the table that would make him a valuable asset to be the face of the City to the public. Mr. Ness said he did a lot when he started with the Veteran Service Commission as a Service Officer, and helped the public quite a bit, and if they did not qualify for financial assistance, he had to talk to them in a straight forward manner. He talked about dealing with the public in other capacities with the Veteran Service Commission.

Mr. Johnson asked what his top three skills are and what is the one area he most needs to improve. Mr. Ness said he is very good with numbers, which he actually enjoys and spreadsheets; he learns quickly; and thinks he is a good leader. His weakness which he needs to work on is that he is a perfectionist; he focuses on making everything just right. He tries too hard to make it all perfect instead of doing the best he can and moving forward.

Mrs. Moore said one of the biggest things the Mayor brought to us is the Fall Festival, which we are trying to bring back. What kind of experience does he have with event planning and community engagement. Mr. Ness said he has some experience; they have an event they would throw twice a year and he was involved in putting them together.

Mr. Morris asked if he sees this as a stepping stone. Mr. Ness said he is looking forward to staying here and retiring.

Mrs. Moore asked, through his experiences with the Military and the Veteran Service Commission, what did he like and not like about them. Mr. Ness replied he liked the people, he got along with the staff. What he doesn't like is micromanaging and the mistreatment of people. With the Army, it was the comradery.

#### **DISCUSSION/VOTE:**

Mr. Johnson asked for discussion. Mrs. Moore said from his Resume and what was said this evening, she sees he has a lot of strong strengths; quite a bit of financial experience being brought to the table. Mr. Chabut asked about Mr. Ness's starting date of March 13, 2023, he is ready to go, and what is wrong with

tomorrow. Mayor Eva said he thought Monday would be a nice lead-in. Mrs. Moore asked if Mayor Eva had discussed Section 2 of the Resolution regarding salary. Mayor Eva said he had.

Mr. Johnson asked if there was any discussion on the Resolution. There was none.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-R-06**

A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE APPOINTMENT OF TERRANCE NESS AS ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR FOR THE CITY AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

**MOTION MADE BY MR. MORRIS**, Seconded by Mr. Lunder, for Suspension of the Rules. ROLL CALL: Ayes: Council Member Moore, Morris, Bittner, Chabut, Lunder, Johnson. Nays: None.  
**MOTION CARRIED: 6/0**

**MOTION MADE BY MR. LUNDER**, Seconded by Mr. Morris, for Passage of Resolution No. 2023-R-06. ROLL CALL: Ayes: Council Member Moore, Morris, Bittner, Chabut, Lunder, Johnson. Nays: None.

**MOTION CARRIED: 6/0**

Mr. Johnson congratulated Mr. Ness. Mayor Eva said he will do the Oath of Office at the March 14, 2023, Regular Meeting of Council. Mrs. Moore asked if Mr. Ness had any questions for Council. Mr. Ness said not at the moment. Mr. Ness thanked everyone for their time and approval.


**ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION MADE BY MR. MORRIS**, Seconded by Mr. Chabut, for Adjournment. ROLL CALL: Ayes: Council Member Moore, Morris, Bittner, Chabut, Lunder, Johnson. Nays: None.  
**MOTION CARRIED: 6/0**

The Special Meeting of Council adjourned at 7:18 P.M.

**APPROVED:**

March 28, 2023  
Date

  
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**ROB JOHNSON**  
President of Council

Attest: Joyce M. Day  
Clerk of Council