

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

BROOKLYN CITY COUNCIL

March 10, 2014

7:00 p.m.

Present: Mary Balbier
Kevin Tanski
Andy Celcherts
Katie Gallagher
Tony DeMarco
Ron Van Kirk
Kathy Pucci

Absent: None

Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION by Tanski, second by Celcherts to approve the minutes from the meeting of February 10, 2014.
VOTE RESULTED: *Approve:* Yes: Balbier, Tanski, Celcherts, Gallagher, DeMarco, Van Kirk, Pucci. No: None. (**APPROVED**)

President Gallagher updated that Council met February 25th in a budget work session with Finance Dir. Enovitch and the Mayor to discuss the proposed 2014 permanent budget. They'll meet again to discuss capital items and forms of payments, but it's close to finalizing, which needs to be passed at the end of the month. Dir. Enovitch is already starting to look to 2015 so that budget could be wrapped up by the end of this year. He has a very broad view of finances related to the city, and has introduced a new way of procuring large capital items. Directors will meet with individual Council committees to share capital items. Dir. Enovitch said the city needs to look at more than just the cost of an item, and review how expenditures play a role in the city's vision for the future, and how they impact residents. It requires more planning by directors, but also promotes each major capital item twice before it comes to the Council floor. She commended him for pushing this new procedure that is a positive change for Brooklyn. She congratulated Mary Balbier and her family, for her family's business, the Sokolowski's University Inn, being named the James Beard Foundation American Classic Winner, one of only five restaurants in the United States to be honored with this award in 2014. They will be honored on May 5th at the Lincoln Center in New York City. Council received all the departments' 2013 annual reports, and thanked everyone for them. After reading them there are so many different programs and services we offer our residents, and ways to volunteer. Example: the Fire Dept. will install a car seat; the Police Dept. has reduced rate helmets for children; seniors can get blood pressure reading or help with taxes; the Service Garage repairs many of our sidewalks – things not offered in other cities. Most of the reports are already posted on the city's website. There are three repeated and one amended ordinance on the agenda, as well as two new ordinances. New: Ord. 2014-15 adds the option of obtaining monthly membership passes at the Recreation Center. There are many new renovations at the Rec Center and Council would like to allocate more money for much needed improvements and cleaning. New: Ord. 2014-17 introduced by Kevin Tanski concerns the deposit of snow. This ordinance modifies an existing ordinance that prohibits depositing snow that hinders or blocks sidewalks and drives and all snow that is removed must be deposited on to the same premise from which it came. Ron Van Kirk announces that Public Safety Meeting will take place on Thursday March 20, 2014 at 7pm. to discuss the traffic and speeding on Idlewood.

PUBLIC SESSION:

Carol Bodkin of 4731 Bentwood Drive said she is in support of Ord. 2014-15. She has a neighbor that blows the snow on to her house and yard constantly. She went into lengthy discussion how she cannot shovel the snow that her neighbor leaves behind. She wants Ord. 2014-15 to pass because she cannot deal with it any longer.

William A. Brown of 9497 Idlewood Drive said he had a conversation with an environmental engineer with ODOT who was out to survey the area for the sound barrier walls that will be going up along I-480. Went into a lengthy discussion how he is against the sound barrier walls with Mr. Carpenter and expressed his concerns with the bridge on Idlewood Drive. Concerns stem from traffic coming over the Idlewood bridge to a curve in the road that has caused issues for residents along the curve when pulling out of their driveway. Thinks that sound barriers will not be beneficial for this particular area.

Todd Hopkins of 642 Redstone Circle Brunswick, Ohio- Brooklyn School Treasurer: Offered tours of the vocational wing of the high school on March 11, 2014 before it is torn down and also asked for support for Issue 2 which is a renewal levy on the May ballot.

Mary Necker-Hahn of 8608 Ansonia Ave. said she is in support of Issue 2 and commented the play that was put on by the High School was fantastic and how she would hate to lose such a wonderful program if the levy were to fail. Spoke of the music program at Brooklyn High School and asked all residents to please support it by attending the future concerts and events.

Bonnie Bartczak of 4831 Ridge Rd. congratulated the students involved with the play Annie for a fantastic production. Thanked Supt. Walker for her continued support of the students in and out of the classroom. Thanked the teachers, administrators, and parents involved with the play. Discussed how the marching band is the largest student organization and how it is one of the programs that will be cut if the renewal levy does not pass in May. She asked for all residents to please vote yes on May 6th. Second annual spaghetti dinner fundraiser for the levy will be on April 5, 2014.

Patrick Schmitz 6508 Archmere Ave. commented on how great the production of Annie was and he is in support of Issue 2. However his main concern is the issue of back yard chickens. He has started "Hens in Brooklyn" as an informative page on Facebook. He gave some myths about urban chickens. Asked everyone to please be informed before you make an opinion on or about chickens in Brooklyn.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS & BOARDS:

Finance Committee (Councilwoman Pucci): Discussed Ord. 2014-15, monthly membership to Rec. Center, and Ord. 2014-16, which the finance committee recommends pass by emergency measure, which would amend the previous agreement to purchase the vacant lot on Memphis and Brookway. The title Co. discovered that there were 2 parcels there, and the amended agreement stipulates both permanent parcels numbers and there is no change in price, it remains \$10,500.

Recreation Board (Councilman Tanski): Discussed Youth Baseball along with the sign up dates and fees. Volunteer coaches are also needed. Applications are at Recreation Center. The next Rec Board Mtg. will be March 17th at 7pm in the Mayor's Court.

School Board (Councilman Celcherts): Congratulated all those involved with the play Annie and complimented everyone for a job well done. Discussed that the high school Spring concert will held on March 13, 2014 at 7pm for those who had missed the play Annie. A pre-demolition tour is being offered at the vocational wing of the High School at 5:30pm on March 11th. The next regular the School Board will be on Tuesday, March 18th at 6pm in room 173 of the High School. Also mentioned the 2nd Annual Spaghetti dinner in support of the renewal levy which will take place on Saturday April 5th. There was a work session held by the Board on March 3rd which he did not attend due to he did not know about it being held. All meetings are open to the public, which take place the first Monday of the month at 6pm. Suggests that the Board use its Leader Alert system to notify parents and residents of future meetings because the next 2 years are very important for the school system.

Planning Commission (Comm. Fitzgerald): The Commission met March 6th for 3 items on the agenda; denied a request from Evette Thompson for a child day care center to be located at 7405 Memphis Ave.; approved a request from Archer Corp to install an illuminated wall mounted sign at 7020 Biddulph Rd. for business identification of Cricket; approved a request from Global Signs and Graphics to install illuminated wall mounted sign at 5020 Tiedeman Rd for business identification of Buffalo Wild Wings.

Domestic Violence (Katie Gallagher): The Domestic Violence Abuse Commission will hold a meeting on Wednesday March 12, 2014 at 7pm in the Senior Community Center.

REPORTS OF COUNCIL:

Mary Albier: Congratulated the Brooklyn High School Drama Club on the performance of Annie, which was fantastic. Appreciates all the hard work and dedication the students put into making the musical a huge success, everyone should be proud. Visited the Brecksville Service Department with Dir. Verba, Councilman Celcherts, Tom Bruzek, Ray Mass, and Marty Rini, and was able to see how other cities operate and possibly implement some of their ideas into our city. Said Polaris Career Center is having a career fair March 26th from 9am until noon, free for employers and job seekers. They'll also hold a resume writing workshop on March 20th 2-4pm. Contact Polaris for more information. Many great programs are coming to the Brooklyn Library, pick up a newsletter at the library. March 13th the Senior Center is having their annual St. Patty's Day lunch and dance. AARP will also be at the Senior Center on Mondays and Wednesdays for those who need help doing their income tax. AARP also will be sponsoring a drive safety course May 16th from 10am until 2pm at the Senior Center. Please call the Senior Center to schedule an appointment.

Kevin Tanski: Discussed how he received numerous calls and complaints about removal of snow and that is why he has introduced Ord. 2014-17, Deposit of Snow. Summer Youth Employment Program has begun registration, which helps teenagers 14-18 yrs of age find summer jobs. The City of Brooklyn requires youths to be 16 yrs of age, but surrounding communities have different minimum age requirement. All are encouraged to register at www.youthopportunities.org. Registration closes April 4th at 5pm.

Andy Celcherts: Visited the Brecksville Service Dept. to view their operations and facilities. Thank their Service Director for his time, and explaining things. Also thanked Dir. Verba and staff for their time. Was interested in the automated leaf collection which only requires one man for the job, and that the truck that carries the vacuum can be converted to a snow plow with a salt spreader. He and Councilwoman Albier visited our own Service Garage and noted it needs paint, lights, fire alarm system, and exhaust system. Thanked Service Department for staying on top of water main leak by St. Elias until Cleveland Water could repair it. Attended a couple of focus group meetings and the general theme seems to be to clean up Brooklyn and get it back to what it used to be. Reiterated what Mr. Hopkins said about the renewal levy on May ballot.

Tony DeMarco: Commented he's been clear about his support of the levy since being on Council. As a Brooklyn graduate he appreciates the value of extracurricular activities. He asks the residents to consider their situation, the value the schools offer Brooklyn, and find a way to support it. He agreed it was sad the Resolution was tabled. As mentioned, there were a couple of budget meetings, working to finalizing it before the end of the month. Reiterated his broad thoughts on the budget, which he has mentioned before. Said we can afford his proposal to reduce income tax rate by ¼%, which is a 10% reduction, and will cost \$1.7M in revenue. The increase passed in 2008 was to be temporary, not permanent, and he hopes we can make that happen in the near future. One of his concerns with the budget is we continue to focus on building fund balances, which is the typical objective of municipalities. But with a departing large taxpayer, and no real plan to replace that, we must have a strategy. He likens our situation to the schools', that if you agree with it or not, the prior School Bd. and Superintendent had a vision for the schools, did their homework, came up with a plan, talked to residents about it, and the wheels are in motion to build this new facility. He looks forward to that. He hopes we can build a budget that addresses our current needs, as well as address the future concerns of the city. As he e-mailed his Council colleagues, he wants to see a significant transfer to the Economic Development Fund of \$500,000 this year, as there isn't a balance to attract a significant business to come here. The funding needs to be there, but without a plan in place it doesn't matter.

Ron Van Kirk: Said the Public Safety mtg. that will be held on Thursday March 20th and encourages residents to attend the meeting. He's meeting with a company that will be at the meeting and wants to get everything situated before it. Residents will be able to voice their thoughts and ask questions. He met with the Mayor and Dir. Enovitch about the budget, and the meetings went very well, he appreciates both of them for their hard work. Looking forward to a good budget set for this year.

Kathy Pucci: Thanked Mrs. Enovitch for the annual report from the Senior Center, adding we're grateful to all the volunteers who dedicated the time they have to the Center. We wouldn't be able to provide the

programs and special events without their commitment. Also congratulations to Councilwoman Balbier on her restaurant's award. Received information that on April 30th at 7pm. there will be a town hall forum called Heroin in the Suburbs that will be at the Brooklyn Library. We did have a local community awareness night last May. She encouraged anyone who has children to attend. Thanked the Brooklyn Schools for their effort to get this information out. Thanked the residents who spoke. Told Mr. Brown hopefully ODOT will take his points into consideration. Asked Chief Mielke and Comm. Fitzgerald if there's anything different with the deposit of snow this year. Chief Mielke said he hasn't gotten many complaints, but if they do, they respond. Would like either or both of them to speak with Ms. Bodkins to get some resolution until the new legislation passes. Attended the production of Annie and it was fabulous. Congratulated the cast, crew, musicians, and anyone involved. Thanked the community who came out and supported the students. Let residents know that if they are unable to attend some of the music performances they do play them on Brooklyn TV. Supports the renewal levy, and more information will be coming out before the election. Encouraged people to get information they need or any questions answered.

Katie Gallagher: As she stated, they're working on passing a budget, and each Councilmember has different ideas on the goal of a better Brooklyn. She shared her views on the budget discussions. Said she's very fiscally conservative, in personal life and more so as Councilperson. Council's primary role is to pass an annual budget, and the only items coming to Council through the year are items over \$15,000. Councilman DeMarco brought up reducing the income taxes in February, and Councilman Van Kirk brought it up at the beginning of the year. She's in favor of it, but not this year. The tax increase was onset by careless spending in the city; but the city, like other cities, was impacted by the recession and state funding reductions, and on top of that was the impending loss of American Greetings handing over us. As a result of the loss, we neglected our buildings, our streets, our housing stock, and our residents. The last three years focused on saving to fill the imminent loss in tax collections and catching up on our neglected infrastructure. Her position is that our goal for this year should not be to reduce the tax immediately, but create a plan for the future so as to comfortably and permanently restore the tax back to 2%. Our housing stock needs to be improved, by giving our Building Dept. the resources to make sure every street can attract home buyers; increase the resources we're allocating to the Service Dept. for street repairs each year; increase the percentage of money going into the capital account to pay for the necessary items, like a new police station, without going to the residents or raising taxes, which she is not in favor of. So far, every financial decision she's taken part of has been reactionary. With the city climbing up from the financial hull, we need to start being more proactive with finances; not only advocating for good, solid businesses to fill the American Greetings' void, but start financially planning for our aged infrastructure, and setting money aside to incentivize homeownership and beautification projects for existing businesses. As the Mayor said, she attended with him an economic development seminar in Independence, which included mayors, economic development directors from the region. Each had the same concerns: how to maintain/increase tax base and services, and how to promote their city in this economy. She took away many things from this, that Cleveland has not bounced back like many other regions, and with our failure to promote and retain educated work force it's keeping our region from economically moving forward. There were many suggestions by leaders that would be immediate, such as to ensure our schools system have current partnerships with local businesses to allow apprenticeship and internship programs. She will be meeting with Council Board Liaison, Councilman Celcherts to look at this idea more, and sit down with our Economic Development Director who has already talked to many companies in this area, who have expressed shortages of qualified applicants in certain trade fields; and with these suggestions, Councilman Celcherts and she will meet with school officials to see if we can create and promote some type of partnership.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Balbier: Received the annual report from the Service Dept. and gave statistics of complaints, tree maintenance, street striping, solid waste, recyclables, compost, and cost of road repairs. Also mentioned how the skilled craftsman turned the police range into a property room. The Building Dept. has taken in over \$70,000 in building permits already this year. Gave statistics of the Fire Department fire/rescue squad runs for the month of February 2014. Last week the First Suburbs Consortium met with the County Council, and spoke on the infrastructure, age, and how our streets, bridges, and systems are the connective tissue to getting people to downtown Cleveland every day. There are over 1200 bridges in Cuyahoga County and if the county replaced 10 bridges a year it would take 100 years to get back to the first bridge. Brooklyn has 39 miles of water pipes and out of those 39 miles, 21 were put in before 1930; which means in the next 10-15

years they are going to be over 100 yrs old. The whole point was to get across to the county that the suburbs around Cleveland are aging just like Cleveland and we need a lot more help than the outer suburbs. They will continue to have meetings like this to get their point across that we need help and are going to keep trying for this. Gave statistics from Senior Center annual report which included the sign-ins, Meals on Wheels, driveway plowing, and van transportation. Mentioned the meeting for Heroin in our Suburbs that is April 30th, and that it would be a good thing to attend.

DIRECTORS REPORTS:

Finance Dir. Enovitch: As of today, General Fund revenues year to date were \$2,576,264.82; expenses \$2,987,599.27. Included in the expenses (not adding all the de-icer, but that's over \$100,000 so far), the gas bill alone for city buildings was \$55,000. Property and casualty insurance bill was \$87,000. Overtime attributed to snow removal was over \$67,000. We paid Worker's Comp for the whole year, \$127,000. This all accounts for the variance between the General Fund revenues and the expenses. Unencumbered Gen. Fund balance as of today is \$8,524,377. With the two sub-funds (Budget Stabilization and Economic Development) the total unencumbered Gen. Fund balance is \$10,709,677. Total balance of all funds is \$20,783,584; cash balance is \$22,999,206.32.

Service Dir. Verba: Gave construction updates as follows: I-480/Tiedeman Road exit ramps will begin on Monday March 17th, the completion date set for September 15th. March 13th a traffic zone will switch to a permanent zone on Ridge which will consist of reducing traffic to one lane in each direction on the east side of Ridge from Ira to Outlook Ave. in order to accomplish work on the west side of the road in section 2. March 22nd access to the school drive from Ridge Road will be completely closed until March 30th, which is spring break, to allow for the reconstruction of school drive at Ridge. Northbound traffic on Ridge will detour west on Biddulph, north on Rodoan, and then east on School Drive; southbound traffic on Ridge will detour west on Memphis, south on Rodoan, and then east on School Drive.

Bldg. Comm. Fitzgerald: Discussed that the Building Dept. will be implementing two new inspection programs for the city: the first a safety and maintenance inspection program for the absentee landlord. We have 200 properties and will break them into thirds, which means inspection once every 3 years. Last year's rental housing license fee increase will cover the expense of our part-time inspector. The second will be an exterior inspection of all properties from the public sidewalk, and will be done as time allows. It's the intent of the Building Dept. to work with owners to correct any problems before they become an expensive issue.

LEGISLATION:

ORDINANCE 2014-10, Annual appropriations. **(SECOND READING)**

ORDINANCE 2014-12, Determining the percentage of gross receipts from the Brooklyn Municipal Tax to be deposited into the General, Capital Improvement, Termination Leave Payments and Retrospective Medical Claims Funds. **(SECOND READING)**

ORDINANCE 2014-13, Enacting Section 1371, "Entering Adjoining Properties; Damage" to Chapter 13, Title 3, Building Code of the Brooklyn Codified Ordinances. (Amended to include subsection C: The person entering or causing another to enter another property to make repairs, to give, or attempt to give the property owner, property manager, lessee, or tenant whose property they are entering upon notice of when the repairs will be made. Repairs shall be made at a reasonable time so as to not affect the use or enjoyment of said property.) **MOTION** by Pucci, second by Tanski to amend as stated, and to re-letter C to D. **VOTE RESULTED: To Amend: Yes: Balbier, Tanski, Celcherts, Gallagher, DeMarco, Van Kirk, Pucci. No: None (AMENDED ON SECOND READING)**

ORDINANCE 2014-15, Amending Section 4 of Ordinance 2010-26 Entitled, "Establishing the general admission rates at the John M. Coyne Recreation Center and Natatorium." **(FIRST READING)**

ORDINANCE 2014-16, Authorizing the Mayor to enter into an amended agreement with Hieu Chi Lieu for the purchase of certain real property known as 8208 Memphis Ave., PP 431-21-028 and 431-21-029.

Councilwoman Pucci explained this in her Finance report. **MOTION** by Pucci second by Tanski to suspend the rules. **VOTE RESULTED:** *Suspend the Rules:* Yes: Balbier, Tanski, Celcherts, Gallagher, DeMarco, Van Kirk, Pucci. No: None. *To Adopt:* Yes: Balbier, Tanski, Celcherts, Gallagher, DeMarco, Van Kirk, Pucci. No: None **(ADOPTED)**

ORDINANCE 2014-17, Amending Section 541.15, Deposit of Snow of Chapter 541 Property Offenses of the Brooklyn Codified Ordinances. **(FIRST READING)**

Councilwoman Pucci asked to speak with Councilman Tanski after the meeting about concerns regarding this. She thinks it needs to be amended in order to be completely covered.

Councilman DeMarco wanted to clarify his position on the budget and future vision for the city in plainer terms. Over four years ago we were given a clear signal they were departing Brooklyn; and over four years later we haven't really made any impact on our revenues to replace what we know we're going to lose. We're now going down the path of Key Bank is our largest employer, and his concern is we're putting all our eggs in one basket, like we did many years ago with American Greetings. What if Key Bank gets sold in 6-12 months? What do we do as a city? He doesn't know if we have a plan for that; but we should have this thought process, and conversations we should be having, to provide the services our residents deserve. He's telling the residents, to be as honest as he can, if we continue on this path, two or so years from now the services we enjoy today won't be able to be provided by the city. It's why he's so adamant since being on Council that we need to put a serious push on economic development, and start attracting serious business that will be here for extended period of time, allowing us to provide the services our residents have come to, and should, expect.

Kathy Pucci: **MOTION** by Pucci, second by Gallagher to adjourn into executive session for the purpose for discussing labor negotiations relating to the Firefighters contract with the Mayor and the Law Director. **VOTE RESULTED:** *Adjourn to Executive Session:* Yes: Balbier, Tanski, Celcherts, Gallagher, DeMarco, Van Kirk, Pucci. No: None. **(AJOURNED TO EXECUTIVE SESSION)**

MOTION by Van Kirk, second by Gallagher to reconvene. **VOTE RESULTED:** *To Reconvene* Yes: Balbier, Tanski, Celcherts, Gallagher, DeMarco, Van Kirk, Pucci. No: None. **(RECONVENED)**

There being no further business, **MOTION** by Pucci, second by Van Kirk to adjourn. **VOTE RESULTED:** *Adjourn:* Yes: Balbier, Tanski, Celcherts, Gallagher, DeMarco, Van Kirk, Pucci. No: None. **(ADJOURNED)**

Asst. Clerk of Council

President of Council