



CITY OF WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS

Office of the Council

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 3, 2023

Call to Order: Mayor Bradley D. Sellers at 7:00p.m.

Attendance: Councilwoman Dorise Hagwood, Councilman Johnny L. Williams Jr., Councilwoman Elona C. White, Councilman Walter Stewart, Councilwoman Andrea Mitchell, Councilman Matthew Howard and Council President Stanley Anderson
Roll Call: 7 Present

Council President

Nominations: Councilwoman White nominated **Councilman Stanley Anderson**, Seconded by Councilman Howard and Councilwoman Thompson-Hagwood
Roll Call: 7 Votes for Councilman Stanley Anderson
Stanley Anderson is the 2023 Council President

Prayer: Councilwoman Andrea Mitchell

Minutes: December 20, 2022 Regular Meeting
Motion to Approve by Councilwoman White, Seconded by Council President Anderson
Roll Call: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – Motion Carried

Departmental Reports: Mayor Sellers stated that if Council has any questions to please reach out to the individual Director. He stated that if they have additional questions, they can contact the Office of the Mayor as well for further discussion.

Residents' Requests and Comments:

Alma Jones, Ward 4 Resident wished Council and Mayor Sellers a good evening. She stated that she lives in the Granada Garden apartment complex in the 4361 Clarkwood Pkwy. building. She reported on December 25th there was flooding in the 4421 Clarkwood Pkwy. building and she thinks the problem was resolved. The next day on December 26, there were major problems in the building she resides in. She reported pipes were bursting and the boiler was in disrepair. They had to replace boilers and eventually the problem did get resolved. She reported water was only running in the kitchen in her unit, not in the bathrooms. Councilman Stewart and Operations Manager Sterlie Jones helped her work with the Property Manager to see resolve the problem. They discovered that the second floor pipes had burst and management didn't know anything about it. She thanked them for their assistance.

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Cynthia Weatherspoon, Ward 4 Resident stated she also resides in 4361 Clarkwood Pkwy. building of the Granada Gardens apartment complex. She reported that something is going on over there because their garbage has not been picked up and the whole building flooded. She said they sent out bully letters wanting to see whose apartment flooded. Ms. Weatherspoon stated management speaks to tenants like they are slaves; those people are crooked and she can see it. She stated when she calls management they get nasty with you. She reported that cars and car parts are being stolen from working people. She reported that a man knocked on her door yesterday with a bottle of liquor, saw her then stated he had the wrong apartment and he was correct! She does not bother anyone and wants no one bothering her. Ms. Weatherspoon stated it is a money issue; somebody is getting paid.

Operations Manager Sterlie Jones confirmed there were pipes that burst after the cold weather and he did visit Ms. Weatherspoon's unit. He stated he and Building Commissioner Ben Brown walked the entire building and did identify all the violations with the Maintenance Supervisor. He reported there have been some repairs on the pipes and they had to find all the ones that were busted as some were in the walls. He reported there were elevators that were down and flooded. Eventually, one elevator was back up and running. He stated he has advised the tenants to contact Legal Aid Society and put their rent in escrow until the repairs are made. He stated the city does not own the property so they can only do so much when it comes to enforcement of the codes. The city can speak to management about their lack of communication with tenants but there's only so much the city can do on civil matters. He stated that Integra is cited every day.

Mayor Sellers stated it is not a quick process.

Alma Jones stated they have gone to Bedford Court and is aware that they have to give management a 30 notice to complete repairs before tenants can put their rent in escrow. She stated it is like being caught between a rock and a hard place. She stated she will give management some credit because they are trying to do the best they can. Ms. Jones said the tenants need more representation of their needs. She commented they should not have to pay the amount in rent that they pay to constantly have all these issues happening. She shared that someone has broken into the laundry card machine three times and they cannot find the culprit despite the cameras. She asked what she is supposed to do in the meantime when she needs to do laundry.

Mayor Sellers stated there's very bad ownership up there. He said the city manages it the best they can with code violations but Granada's operational standards are their standards. He stated that the city encourages them to do things a different way from the trash bags to the elevators. He remarked that it seems to be an underfunded operation. They don't have enough money to keep up the place so they start robbing from Peter to pay Paul; it's basic economics.

Alma Jones shared that there was a \$50 fine for tenants due to the buildup of trash in the trash room even though only certain people are doing it.

Mayor Sellers stated the powers and strength is in the people that live there. Tenants have to band together and determine what is acceptable and what it not. He stated if rents are in

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escrow, they cannot access the capital they need but if you continue to pay, they'll just continue doing what they're doing.

Councilman Stewart thanked Ms. Jones and Ms. Weatherspoon for coming out. He stated Integra is a major disaster. He reported that Legal Aid Society has attended about 12 of the Tenants Association meetings. The Tenants Association is also working closely with the Fair Housing Center. He reported he has stacks and stack of violations, many that are considered red flags. Apartments have been covered with sewage-like water and some of the tenants are cancer patients. He stated it took Integra three or four days to go to their apartments. He stated all of the buildings have problems; Integra is a nuclear bomb waiting to explode. He stated they are unprofessional, have no respect for the residents and are slow taking care of repairs. Councilman Stewart stated he appreciated Building Commissioner Brown and Operations Manager Jones for keeping him updated. He reported that Integra has a very bad reputation not only locally but nationally. He stated that he does not know where the property owner Yomo Kaplan came from but Integra has got to go! He stated that he thinks the company is corrupt and a lot of what they are do is criminal. He stated they will continue to fight Integra because he has seen too much. He commented that Mr. Kaplan had the nerve to laugh at seniors being stuck in elevators and asked him if he heard something "off the grapevine." Councilman Stewart questioned if that some type of racial, ghetto talk he's trying to throw at him. Councilman Stewart stressed that the power is in the residents and unity is important. **Alma Jones** requested to put the letter residents received on December 30, 2022 on record:

Beginning January 1, 2023, the restoration company will come and inspect every unit for any possible water damage. This letter serves as a 24 hour notice of entry to your unit. Failure to comply is considered a lease violation which may result in being served a three day notice to vacate the premises. We thank you all for your cooperation during this time.

She stated the reason for reading it is because there has been a lot of water damage but the letter is threatening. She asked how they can tell her if she doesn't open her unit, that she will be given a three day notice. She stated whether she is her unit or not, they have keys to enter. **Mayor Sellers** asked what the lease says about entry and she responded that if they don't give permission, they still have the right to enter the apartments because they have keys. He stated it is a private enterprise and tenants want good ownership, somebody that cares. He does not know if Integra has the capital to really operate the property at the level that is efficient for everyone. He stated he and Building Commissioner Brown will need to figure out what they can do over there. He stated what's going on isn't getting by the city.

Order of the Day

1. Ord. 2023-001

MAYOR BRADLEY D. SELLERS

ACCEPTING A CERTAIN BID FROM JAN PRO, INC. TO PROVIDE CLEANING SERVICES FOR THE WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS MUNICIPAL CENTER AND SERVICE DEPARTMENT BUILDINGS, AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A

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CONTRACT NOT TO EXCEED \$117,000.00 PLUS COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH SPECIAL SERVICES FOR THE PERIOD BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2023 AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2024, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motioned by Councilwoman White, Passage by Councilwoman Dorise Thompson-Hagwood, Seconded by Councilman Howard

Roll Call: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – MOTION CARRIED

2. Res. 2023-001

MAYOR BRADLEY D. SELLERS

SUBMITTING THE QUESTION OF THE RENEWAL OF THE 2.9 MILL TAX LEVY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING FOR CURRENT EXPENSES OF THE CITY PURSUANT TO OHIO REVISED CODE SECTIONS 5705.03 AND 5705.19, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motioned by Councilwoman White, Passage by Councilman Williams, Seconded by Councilwoman Mitchell

Roll Call: 7 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – MOTION CARRIED

Announcements from Directors:

There were none.

Announcements from Council:

Councilwoman Andrea Mitchell wished everyone a Happy New Year! She thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She stated that 2022 is in the rearview but it did not go without a few bangs. She shared there was a kitchen fire in Ward 2 on New Year's Eve and they have an amazing group of first responders in the city. She commented that 2023 cannot be about "me," it has to be about "we." She shared two examples that have already presented themselves is a football game last night and people that wanted to continue to play when someone had a heart attack. It has to be about "we" because a life is worth so much more. She stated for the first time in 100 years, they have a lack of votes for Speaker of the House. She questioned what kind of people are supposed to be representing others when their own party doesn't have enough confidence to vote on them. This is at the big scale in DC but it is also right here amongst us. She commended Ms. Jones and Ms. Weatherspoon for speaking up and trusting in their councilman who she knows works 24/7. She reiterated that in 2023 we all need to work together.

Councilman Walter Stewart thanked everyone for attending the meeting, especially the residents from Ward 4 to address the need for some kind of action to be taken. He said this fight is ongoing. They fall down but they get up! He asked that everyone have a safe evening.

Councilwoman Dorise Thompson-Hagwood wished everyone a Happy New Year!

Councilwoman Elona C. White thanked everyone for coming out and wished attendees a Happy New Year!

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Councilman Johnny L. Williams Jr. wished everyone a Happy New Year! He thanked everyone for their engagement, commitment and concern for their community. He stressed the importance of influencing others like bringing a grandchild to a council meeting because they may be in school learning about local government. He commented that women are the spokes of the wheel in their families (men just think they are) and can impact and influence others for the betterment of the community. He asked that they try and be “force multipliers” and diversify the people that attend the council meetings because most are 55 and older. He stated when younger people get exposed to situations like this AT MINIMUM they are going to vote. He reported for those in the age range of 18-29, only 18% voted in the last election and that’s completely unacceptable. He stated it starts with them as the spokes of the wheel to get younger people involved in ANY degree. It is a pathetic, diabolical, chaotic disgrace that our Congress today AS WE SPEAK can’t even come to grips to swear in our new Congress because they cannot get a Speaker of the Vote. They are going on to their fourth vote which is A 100 YEAR RECORD so there’s history made. A 100 YEAR RECORD! HISTORY WAS MADE TODAY! DO YOU WANT TO SEE SOME HISTORY? TURN ON CNN OR MSNBC! Imagine what the next two years is going to look like? He stated a positive was Donovan Mitchell scoring 71 points and 10 assists during last night’s Cavaliers game. He stated at the end of the day you have to “ride your best horses.”

Councilman Matthew Howard wished everyone a good evening. He shared that he and other councilmembers have had discussions regarding Integra Management that has properties in four wards of the city. He suggested coming together and having a meeting about how to tackle the issue. He stated what is happening in Granada is going to happen with Walford and Country Ln. They don’t want to contain it to one spot, they want it to stop. He stated with his education in construction and training as an electrician, he knows that the water has created structural damage in the apartment buildings. He commented that the Building Department has done an excellent job of trying to bring Integra Management to the table and have discussions. He shared that he told the property owner, Yomo Kaplan that a hefty investment will have to be made to the building. He stated he has to go into these buildings and totally redo them because they cannot go up on the rent for what they are getting there. He stated that this is not the projects and as long as this Council is around it’s never going to be! He stated he supports the residents 100% and need people like Ms. Jones and Ms. Weatherspoon to let them know what’s going on. He wished everyone a Happy New Year! and asked that they leave their demons behind in 2022. Work with people as best as they can and try to be a better person.

Law Department

Law Director Teresa Metcalf Beasley had nothing to report.

Council President’s Comments

Council President Stanley Anderson wished everyone a good evening. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He thanked the other councilmembers for having faith in him to continue the Council President role for another year. He stated if they decide to work together as a team, they can make the Council better. He said he’ll be leaning on all six of them, seeking their support and input.

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Mayor's Comments

Mayor Bradley D. Sellers congratulated Council President Anderson on his reelection to the council presidency. He recognized Phyllis Tullos, Kenneth White and Edward Hicks from Civil Service Commission and Renee Strong and Janice Rox from Planning Commission in attendance. He recognized School Board President Traci Mitchell, Member Ray Freeman and Member Darren Roberts in attendance. He thanked Ms. Jones and Ms. Weatherspoon for coming to the meeting. He stated what they have is a property management group that does not have the capacity to do what's necessary to make it run right. He stated the constituency has to be recognized because there's a rent number that people can afford to live there. Mayor Sellers reported that the market rate for a 1200 sq. ft. apartment is about \$2000. So if they, for example, start charging \$1200 at Granada, there will be a pay difference if you multiply all of the units. It is about the upkeep and what's necessary to keep things going. They cannot evacuate everyone out of there and tell them go find someplace else to live. The amount of capital they need to refurbish the building is an astronomical number because he thinks they bought the entire thing for 33 million dollars. He stated they would need some real help and the only group that has that money is the federal government. He stated the good thing is the Secretary of HUD used to be the Mayor of Warrensville; they have that money. Yomo Kaplan does not and the group before them AIY, did not. Goldberg sold the property because they knew how much was needed to go into it. The next group is going to be worse than Integra. The city has to start talking about what to do and work on some things. They have to make sure they are fishing in the right pond because HUD has a lot of money and the constituency needs that.

Adjournment**Motion to Adjourn by Councilwoman White****Adjournment at 8:00p.m.***01-17-2023*

APPROVED



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