



CITY OF WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS

Office of the Council

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AUGUST 15, 2023

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

Attendance: Councilwoman Dorise Thompson-Hagwood, Councilman Johnny L. Williams Jr., Councilwoman Walter Stewart, Councilwoman Andrea Mitchell, Councilman Matthew Howard and Council President Stanley Anderson
Roll Call: 6 Present

Motion to Excuse Councilwoman Elona C. White by Councilman Howard, Seconded by Councilwoman Thompson-Hagwood
Roll Call: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – Motion Carried

Prayer: Councilwoman Dorise Thompson-Hagwood

Minutes: July 18, 2023 Regular Meeting
Motion to Approve by Councilman Howard, Seconded by Council President Anderson
Roll Call: 4 Ayes; 0 Nays; 2 Abs – Motion Carried

August 7, 2023 Special Meeting
Motion to Approve by Councilman Howard, Seconded by Councilwoman Mitchell
Roll Call: 4 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:

Lisa Wolmack, Ward 3 Resident thanked Building Commissioner Ben Brown for his help with addressing the fence in her back neighbor's yard. She stated Commissioner Brown always followed up with her or her husband's call and never made them feel like their issue was any smaller or less than anyone else's concern. She commented that she knows just from attending the meetings that his plate is full. Mrs. Wolmack shared that the concern is being worked on so she is thankful.

Mayor Sellers stated they do appreciate the work of Building Commissioner Brown and all that he does.

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Robert Tift, Ward 3 Resident greeted everyone and thanked Council, the Mayor and Directors for all the hard work that they're doing. He commented that Building Commissioner Brown keeps up with communication but he is still having problems with the same house on Marvin Rd. He reported that the family has relatives living with them, still speed down the street and their lawn is not cut. Mr. Tift stated he observed that the house that caught fire is starting to be cleared up. He stated there are still concerns because he has requested to Police Chief Haynes that his officers patrol a little bit more. He stated the whole area just needs more attention to it. He jokes that they were lucky his wife had to work and didn't appear.

Eugene Taylor, Ward 3 Resident greeted everyone and thanked the police because when he calls, they help him out. He stated the problem is that he works but cannot sleep at night because it feels like he lives in a shipyard. He shared the Heinen's parking lot is behind his home and there are semis that park there. He stated since the bridge is being worked on South Miles there has been a decrease in the semis and the abuse of the parking lot. Mr. Taylor reported that he sleeps with ear plugs in every night because the sound makes your whole house rattle. He stated sometimes they come at 4a.m. and he's okay with that. He'd like to be able to at least go to bed before he's then woken up in the middle of the night. He reported there are signs that state there is no parking overnight in the lot. He stated he's a black man that has been done wrong by the police but he is not worried about all that stuff. He knows he deserves as much help from the police as anyone else.

Mayor Sellers replied that he has gotten the full skinny of what has been going on over there. He stated that the semis are not supposed to be over there running at all.

Councilman Mitchell reported that the agreement when it came before Planning Commission a couple of years ago was that they would not idle.

Mayor Sellers stated that currently there is disconnect between what is happening and what they agreed to. He stated they will get it rectified.

Mr. Taylor added that it happens 2-3 times a week and it's not a noise but the whole house feels like it rattles, it's unbelievable.

Police Chief Haynes reported that he has special attention on South Miles so he's going to have his officers survey the area. They are supposed to close those gates at night and open back up in the morning. He stated *No Parking* signs were put up along South Miles.

Mayor Sellers responded that even if you close the gates then there will be pulling over on the side of the road and idling. He stated there needs to be enforcement action with Heinen's because there isn't anyone from their side policing the area.

Councilman Howard inquired if it is an issue of signage to prevent semis from parking in the lot and alongside the street.

Chief Haynes and Mr. Taylor confirmed that there are signs along the street.

Ray Freeman, School Board Member greeted everyone and announced that tomorrow from 1-4p.m. there will be a senior walk-through for the new middle school and high school at 4270 Northfield Rd. He stated people will enter the north parking lot right next to Alameda Pkwy. He stated as of Saturday,

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they will have their new stadium ribbon cutting at 11a.m., right behind the new school at 4270 Northfield Rd. with Superintendent Jolly and most of the Board Members. He announced that September 2, 2023, there will be a ribbon cutting for both schools. He announced the first day of class for scholars will be September 5, 2023.

Robert Pearson, Ward 2 Resident stated he has been coming to the Council Meetings for the past few months so he can get an idea of what's going on in my city. He commented that time and time again, he observed people come up and address their council people and 95% of the time the response from Council is they're going to handle it. Regardless, there's always a solution for the Council to work on and he commended them all for that. He stated it's a funny thing that every time someone comes up from Ward 2 it is a complaint about what's not getting done. He stated there are things he has said and his neighbors have said that are still not getting done. He reported they speak to their councilperson and she responds "Oh well, I'll get to this." or "This is hard." or whatever. He stated to add insult to injury, Councilwoman Mitchell asked him if his tree lawn was done knowing good and well it was not done. He commented that he lives on the corner and Councilwoman Mitchell drives past his house 15 or 16 times a day. He stated he does not know if it is a joke to her or if she's trying to be insulting to him but this is ridiculous. He stated he does not even know why she is sitting in her chair at the dais. Mr. Pearson remarked he wasn't trying to insult her but understand why she is a councilperson because she doesn't do her job. He stated a couple a months ago Councilman Williams made a comment about apathy and Mr. Pearson stated this is where it comes from. He asked why he should take the time to vote when he cannot get things done. It is really ridiculous and he is trying to stifle his anger. He reiterated that he doesn't know why she is sitting in the chair at the dais. Mr. Pearson reiterated that Councilwoman Mitchell asked him of the tree lawn got done and he asked if she was going to take care of it for him. He stated her response was the Mayor said he would take care of it so hold him accountable. He accused Councilwoman Mitchell of pushing it off on Mayor Sellers when he has been asking her to address the matter of the tree lawn for years. He stated all he's gotten from Councilwoman Mitchell is the runaround. He asked Mayor Sellers about a matter one time and he took care of it. He reiterated that it is ridiculous and it's getting to a point where it's sad.

Mayor Sellers responded that they listen to everyone's comments whether good or bad. He stated if there are questions he can always answer. He shared that Mr. Pearson's job is scheduled for September and was discussed internally between he, Building Commissioner Brown and Service Director Ted Sims. He stated it has to be done in September for the grass to grow so it will get done.

Mr. Pearson asked Councilwoman Mitchell if she saw how simple that was and it's not just the tree lawn. He reported there's a curb across in need of repair and a little section of grass near his fence that was not getting cut. He told Councilwoman Mitchell that she knows good and well that she sees it every single day. He reported the only reason it got cut because one of the representatives from the school had said something to Mayor Sellers. A guy came out two hours later and had it cut. He commented that prior to that he had to get out there with his weed wacker looking like he lives in the projects.

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Mayor Sellers replied that as long as the left hand knows what the right hand is doing and there is communication between them and the community, the city should at least be able to tell residents what's going to happen. He stated Council and the Administration try to do the best they can. He stated he does not have a problem with anyone coming up and saying their part because it is what they signed up for.

Council President Anderson stated that he does not know the Councilwoman Mitchell he described.

Council Clerk Joyner stated nor does she.

Mr. Pearson replied... *<inaudible.>*

Council President Anderson stated there is a process for everything and it's not like Council can just wave a magic wand. They have to go to the department the issue is in first and often that issue takes time to resolve.

Mr. Pearson replied that he understood what he was saying but if an issues goes on for months, if not years and the Councilwoman never shows up at the Homeowner's Association Meeting to see what her constituents want and is unresponsive to when people try to reach her. He commented that Councilwoman Mitchell wants to send out an email but there are older residents and not everyone is computer savvy. He asked Councilwoman Mitchell if she was really trying to do her job or just pick up a check.

Councilwoman Mitchell responded that she is in the seat because she was elected and she ran to serve because she grew up in the neighborhood. She stated he can ask Service Director Sims, the Police Chief, the Fire Chief and Building Commissioner Brown. She stated there were no less than 20 different concerns she had based on neighbor conversations. She commented that Service Director Sims stated she speaks to him more than his significant other. Councilwoman Mitchell stated she is always trying to advocate for her residents and the residents who are her neighbors. She stated Eastwood is still the School District's property so she hasn't gotten an update. She stated when she asked Mr. Pearson about his tree lawn she wasn't being funny; she did not have any information. She got an update when he did just now.

Mr. Pearson asked Councilwoman Mitchell if she drives by his house every day and see the tree lawn.

Councilwoman Mitchell replied she does not know what is going on. She just found out now that it will be addressed in September.

Mr. Pearson retorted that she knew it wasn't done and he has been telling her about this for years.

Councilwoman Mitchell told him that he just heard a resolution. She stated she does not have the equipment, she reaches out to the people that do the work. She stated that Mayor Sellers has the power to take care of things that she cannot but she did make the communication. She stated she documents the things she does. She stated the Eastwood School property was discussed at the last community meeting held at the school. She

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stated Mr. Pearson asked Mayor Sellers previously about the tree lawn and he replied that he'll work on it with Service Director Sims.

Mr. Pearson argued that he came to her years before with the issue and all he got was the runaround. That is why he started coming to the Council meetings.

Councilwoman Mitchell asked what the resolution is when all she does is respond and advocate on behalf of the residents. She stated she has shared his requests but as he can see when he shares it himself he gets better results.

Mr. Pearson replied this is why he has to come to Council meetings so everyone else knows what is going on in Ward 2. He stated when he speaks to her one-on-one like the rest of the residents in Ward 2, nothing gets done.

Councilwoman Mitchell concurred.

Mr. Pearson stated he does not understand how she can come down Eastwood Ln. several times a day and she does not see the condition of the field in Eastwood. Which is something that he has been complaining about numerous times. She doesn't see the condition of the curb?

Councilwoman Mitchell questioned when Mr. Pearson has called her about this.

Mr. Pearson claimed that she does not return phone calls.

Councilwoman Mitchell replied that is not true and she does return all phone calls within 48 hours.

Mayor Sellers stated he appreciated all the comments and no one should take any offense to anything. He stated this is a part of what they signed up for. He commented that the councilmembers are not here every day and they may not know the schedule. They just know that matters will get done. He reiterated the tree lawn will be addressed early September and it will not take long. We're going to move on but he wanted to make sure Mr. Pearson was heard. He stated as elected officials, they need to be held accountable. He stated there is no ill will towards anyone's comments.

Councilman Howard stated in all of his years in serving with Councilwoman Mitchell, she has always done the right thing. He stated he's not there and does not know what is going on but he can only speak from his experience. If he calls her, she returns his call and has shown him how to be a better councilperson over the years. He stated as a Council, they have to operate more functionally because there is too much dysfunction and they would be surprised who doesn't speak to who or what type of foolishness and mess goes on sometimes. He stated he is not calling anyone out but the lines of communication should be open a little bit better. They all can be doing a better job at communicating. He commented that Councilwoman Mitchell just found out today about the tree lawn so she should get a pass on that one and he doesn't know about everything else. Council does not control the Service Department and the Mayor does what needs to happen based on his budget and gets pulled in different directions. Council does not make the call. They all have to do better. If they all were a little more united, this would not happen. He stated

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Mr. Pearson can always reach out to other councilmembers as well and appreciated him coming out.

Mr. Pearson replied he should not have had to notify other councilmembers. It is the simple things if there is a little wear and tear, just fix it. It is not a big deal. He explained that where he lives he has an entire influx of Section 8 people that have moved in. He stated it is like they aren't going to take care of anything they aren't paying for. If you are supposed to be the representative of this particular part of Warrensville and you see something falling apart, you cannot even take care of that? Somebody has to tell you about that? You have to sit up here and be on front street in front of a Council Meeting, which is ridiculous.

Councilman Howard suggested that Mr. Pearson come to one of the Service Committee meetings and address some of his concerns. He wanted to make sure they're handling the business the way that they're supposed to.

Council President Anderson repeated that he does not know the councilperson that Mr. Pearson addressed and he has attended quite a few of Councilwoman Mitchell's meetings. She is always advocating for Ward 2 and that's the Andrea Mitchell that he knows. He stated she is well-organized and vigilant for the people. He stated there's a process for everything and things don't get done as soon as people might like. Council President Anderson stated they can only do so much and it's not the councilperson's job to check property and look for things. If they don't see it, bring it to their attention and give the person a chance to address the issue.

Councilwoman Mitchell reported that her number is 216-339-1279 and it is used frequently and she responds to calls. She can't make people do anything but they will know what needs to be done. She stated she is an advocate.

Robert Tift, Ward 3 Resident (2ND Comment) agreed with Mr. Pearson regarding the "Section 8 stuff" stating that it is getting bad. He doesn't want to see it and it's getting where it is bringing down the city and he lives next door to it every day. He stated back in 90 or 2000-something he paid almost as much in rent as he does on his mortgage to live in Shaker Gardens and Granada and had a garage. He stated the city does stuff to help but then the renters will do something else and be in and out if you look around the whole neighborhood. He stated they have to get Warrensville like it used to be and crack down. He remarked that he grew up down the way and know what it's going to do.

Order of the Day

1. Ord. 2023-074

CITY COUNCIL

TO APPROVE CURRENT REPLACEMENT PAGES TO THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motioned by Councilman Stewart, Passage by Council President Anderson, Seconded by Councilman Howard

Roll Call: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – Motion Carried

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- 2. Ord. 2023-075 COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**
 AMENDING CHAPTER 2 RULES OF COUNCIL AND CHAPTER 4 PLAN YOUR WORK AND WORK YOUR PLAN OF THE WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS CITY COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL GUIDE FOR CITY COUNCIL – CLERK OF COUNCIL IN ORDER TO ADD SECTIONS FOR CENSURE, CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS OF CITY COUNCIL.
Motioned by Councilwoman Mitchell, Passage by Councilman Williams, Seconded by Councilman Howard
Roll Call: 5 Ayes; 1 Nays; 0 Abs – Motion Carried
- 3. Ord. 2023-076 MAYOR BRADLEY D. SELLERS**
 AMENDING ORDINANCE NUMBER 1992-43 IN ORDER TO UPDATE THE NAME OF THE LABOR UNION FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE SERVICE DEPARTMENT OF THE CITY OF WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
Motioned by Council President Anderson, Passage by Councilwoman Thompson-Hagwood, Seconded by Councilman Howard
Roll Call: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – Motion Carried
- 4. Ord. 2023-077 MAYOR BRADLEY D. SELLERS**
 AUTHORIZING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE CITY OF WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS TO PURCHASE THREE (3) 2023 CHEVROLET TAHOES FROM TIM LALLY CHEVROLET, INC. FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$132,000.00, FOR USE IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT OF THE CITY OF WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS, PURSUANT TO ARTICLE VI, SECTION 5 OF THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
Motioned by Councilman Stewart, Passage by Council President Anderson, Seconded Councilwoman Thompson-Hagwood
Roll Call: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – Motion Carried
- 5. Ord. 2023-078 MAYOR BRADLEY D. SELLERS**
 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ACCEPT THE 2023 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TAX INCENTIVE REVIEW COUNCIL (T.I.R.C.) TO CONTINUE ALL OF THE COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA AND TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF) AGREEMENTS EXCEPT FOR THE AGREEMENT WITH MARCUS THOMAS, LLC.
Motioned by Council President Anderson, Passage by Councilwoman Thompson-Hagwood Anderson, Seconded by Councilwoman Mitchell
Roll Call: 6 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abs – Motion Carried

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OLD BUSINESS:**6. Ord. 2023-062**

COUNCILWOMAN ANDREA MITCHELL (ACTING PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIR)
ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION OF GOPAL PATEL OF OHM SAI SHIV INC., REPRESENTING OVERLOOK SQUARE LLC, FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A WALL SIGN AND TENANT SIGN PANELS FOR CV LIQUOR LOCATED AT 4620 RICHMOND ROAD, WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS, OHIO, 44128, PPN 763-27-013.

FIRST READ: 06/20/2023

SECOND READ: 07/18/2023

THIRD READ: 08/15/2023

Motioned by Council President Anderson, Passage Councilwoman Thompson-Hagwood

Roll Call: 2 Ayes; 2 Nays; 2 Abs – THIRD READ

Assistant Law Director Hughes explained that in the City's Charter, Article IV, Section 10 it explains the procedure for voting. It specifically addresses the abstention votes and that they are deemed neither as a vote for or against the legislation.

Mayor Sellers reported that they will refer to Law Director Teresa Metcalf Beasley for a final decision and provide a resolution.

****After conferring with Law Director Beasley following the meeting, it was determined that the motion was DENIED.**

Announcements from Directors:

Communications Department – Director Jeffrey Gates wished everyone a good evening. He reminded everyone that the Summer Festival is this coming weekend. He commented that so far the weather looks good! He shared that they are going to have musical acts such as Russell Thompson and Free Agent, Romeo Maxwell and Hard Copy on Saturday and Forecast and Hubb's Groove on Sunday. He stated there will be some great things in between like the tire flipping competition, basketball shoot-out and the Children's Village with a petting zoo and face painting. He stated there are flyers in the lobby.

Senior & Civic Center – Director Jennifer Lastery announced that the Senior Club Meeting will be held here next Tuesday in Council Chambers and she would love all members to come at 1:00p.m.

Announcements from Council:

Councilwoman Andrea Mitchell wished everyone a good evening and thanked attendees for coming out. She stated she really appreciated comments from the residents about things they need to have eyes, ears and attention to. She acknowledged Ms. Wolmack, Mr. Tift, Mr. Freeman and Mr. Pearson for sharing their thoughts and opinions. She shared a Warrensville Heights tidbit that in 1954-1975

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Music Carnival was one of the first ten theaters in the country. She explained it is where the veterinary hospital is located now. Roughly in its 20th year, they built The Front Row but Music Carnival was the predecessor to that. In 1987, they graduated from the front row and a few years later they tore it down. She shared that bands from around the world came and performed in Warrensville Heights.

Councilman Walter Stewart wished everyone a good evening. He thanked attendees for coming out and asked that they please stay safe.

Councilwoman Dorise Thompson-Hagwood thanked everyone for coming out and supporting them. She sadly shared that Councilwoman Elona White's father transitioned that evening. She remarked that Councilwoman White came to the City Council meeting because that's who she is and that's how she supports her people. She asked that everyone keep Councilwoman White in their prayers and thoughts. She stated she will share more information as it becomes available with Council Clerk Joyner and Council President Anderson.

Councilman Johnny L. Williams thanked Councilwoman Thompson-Hagwood for sharing and sent prayers to Councilwoman White and her family. He gave kudos to the school and City Administration for holding a phenomenal Thursday Food Truck event. He commented it is more than the food truck but about the fellowship, interaction and the comradery of the Administrators. It is a wonderful, wonderful, wonderful thing! He specifically recognized Economic Development Director Nicole Harris and especially Community Development Manager Raymon Turner for all their heavy lifting. He acknowledged Finance Director Karen Howse and her team and does not know who could be better at doing the job. He has confidence, respect and admiration for her team. He sent prayers to those people in Hawaii sharing he has visited that specific area and it breaks his heart to see such a beautiful place with welcoming people go through what they're going through.

Councilman Matthew Howard wished everyone a good evening. He thanked his Council colleagues for the passage of Item No. 2. regarding conduct and expectations of City Council. He stated it's the groundwork for the next generation on what to expect. He commented that Item No. 6 is regarding a beverage store that opened up a few years ago and the specialty was wine. He shared the business has changed hands and their specialty is liquor and that is not what the city signed up for which is why he abstained from the vote. Councilman Howard explained he did not want to hinder the vote and create too much of a legal issue but his conscious is telling him this is not right. He stated that legally they are going to get the sign that says *CV Liquor* but he wants to keep this thing moving in the right direction. He shared the Northeastern Ohio City Council Association will be meeting for a quarterly forum at Jack's Thistledown and Frederick's will be doing the catering on Thursday, September 14, 2023 from 6-9p.m.

Law Department

Assistant Law Director Keisha Hughes had nothing to report.

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Council President's Comments

Council President Stanley Anderson thanked everyone for taking the time to come out tonight. He stated when he attends Senior Club meetings he is always advocating and encouraging people to come out and see what the city is doing and hold us accountable. The city has a lot to offer but they cannot bring the services to your door. You have to come out of your home. He stated they welcome comments from members of the audience. Sometimes what they do and how they do things is limited so there is a process and procedure for everything and sometimes it takes longer than one would like. Council President Anderson stated Councilwoman Mitchell has been encouraging him to go forward with having Council meetings on YouTube and he has not gotten it done. It will give residents another change to see how they get things done. He commented that Building Commissioner Brown gets things done and so does Service Director Sims. He asked Council Clerk Joyner where the posting location are for meetings.

Council Clerk Joyner responded the city website, social media, library, YMCA, Senior & Civic Center, Aldergate Church and the Municipal Center.

Council President Anderson stated these meeting and the committee meetings are open to the public and many are held on Zoom. He stated they would like to try and have more of the meetings at the Municipal Center but if they check at any of the posting places, the meetings are posted and open to the public.

Mayor's Comments

Mayor Bradley D. Sellers thanked everyone for attending. He sent prayers to Councilwoman White and her family. He recognized Civil Service Commission members Mr. White, Mr. Hicks and Ms. Tullos for all the work they do. He thanked School Board Member Freeman for the work the Board is doing in the opening of the three schools in the midst of fixing the front. He reported he and Police Chief Haynes had a conversation with the School District to put together a final plan. He announced there will be some changed routing on Northfield Road during this period heading south going down to one lane during school time. He reported that the work on the parking lot will likely go on until the end of November. He encouraged residents to attend the Summer Festival stating it looks like there will be good weather on Saturday and Sunday. He thanked all the speakers during Public Comment and stated nothing was taken with any ill-intent. If they have an issue they want to know so they can get it addressed. He stated there are steps and procedures here to get to where they are trying to go. There are going to be steps to get to Heinen's, get the tree lawn done and repair the curbs around the city. They always try and police the neighborhoods and make sure they stay straight. He stated they enforce the rules and regulations of this town. Mayor Sellers added that ultimately you have to believe that people what the same thing you want. He hopes that everyone wants a place they can call home and not live in a war zone.

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Adjournment

**Motion to Adjourn by Councilman Matthew Howard
Adjournment at 8:12p.m.**

09-05-2023

APPROVED



Amber Joyner, Clerk of Council

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