

**REGULAR CAUCUS MEETING  
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BROOK PARK, OHIO  
TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2015**

The meeting was called to order by Council President Patten at 7:30 p.m., the clerk called the roll and the following Members of Council answered:

**D'AMICO, TROYER, SALVATORE, MENCINI, BURGIO, POWERS, HIGGINS**

Also in attendance were Mayor Coyne, Finance Director Cingle, Service Director Cayet, Safety Director Byrnes, Building Commissioner Hurst, Economic Development Commissioner Dolan, Law Director Jamison, Engineer Piatak, Assistant Finance Director Healy, Firefighter/Paramedic Wright.

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS:**

1. Regular Caucus meeting held on January 27, 2015.

**Motion** by Mr. Higgins, supported by Mr. Mencini, to approve as printed. Members of Council voted AYE. The motion carried.

**DISCUSSION:**

1. AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE ENACTED BY THE CITY OF BROOK PARK, CUYAHOGA COUNTY, OHIO, AND REQUESTING COOPERATION WITH THE COUNTY OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY, OHIO, FOR THE RESURFACING OF WEST 130<sup>TH</sup> STREET (CR-48) FROM BROOKPARK ROAD TO LORAIN AVENUE. Introduced by Mayor Coyne

Mr. Patten asked Engineer Piatak if this is a time-sensitive matter?

Mr. Piatak responded that the legislation needs to be adopted by June, 2015 so that construction can begin in July, 2015 and there is no cost to the city; this would be a short portion of West 130<sup>th</sup> Street up to I-480.

**Motion** by Mr. Higgins, supported by Mr. Troyer, to place on the next Council agenda. Members of Council voted AYE. The motion carried.

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**FINANCE COMMITTEE – CHAIRMAN, D'AMICO:**

1. AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT FOR THE SALE OF PERMANENT PARCEL NO. 344-28-029 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Introduced by Mayor Coyne **P/C 1/27/15**

Mayor Coyne stated this was approved by the Planning Commission and is city-owned property located at American Legion park that is no longer necessary. This is not only a fair price but the proposed improvement the interested party will be making will enhance the neighborhood.

Mrs. Powers stated in Section 2 it reads the City of Brook Park shall receive \$9,999 for said parcel and it is my understanding that if \$10,000 is charged that amount would have to be reported to the government but as long as it's \$1.00 under it does not have to be reported.

Mr. Jamison responded I do a lot of real estate transactions and have never heard of anything of that nature. The city is selling this property and this will go through the normal procedure as far as an escrow agent and everything being done properly; I have never heard of that threshold of \$10,000.

Mayor Coyne commented when the city wanted to give property away the residents were reluctant to accept because it added to their tax duplicate; so the interested party will be paying property taxes.

**Motion** by Mr. Troyer, supported by Mr. Higgins, to place on the Council agenda immediately following. Members of Council voted AYE. The motion carried.

The clerk stated that will appear as Ordinance No. 9958-2015.

2. AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE APPROPRIATIONS OF THE CITY OF BROOK PARK, STATE OF OHIO, FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2015 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Introduced by Mayor Coyne & Councilman D'Amico

Mr. Troyer distributed a handout to Council Members regarding the summary of Council Members Troyer and Powers positions on the 2015 budget. (attached to these minutes)

Mr. Higgins stated his disappointment with being handed this document at the last minute because he is critical of receiving information at the last minute but will take a look at this for probable discussion in the future.

**Finance Committee – Chairman, D'Amico: cont.**

Mr. Salvatore stated receiving this at the last minute and skimming through quickly there are a lot of items that motions could have been made and adjusted the budget at anytime. I concur with Mr. Higgins and would have liked this sooner so that questions could be asked on how some of these things would be done.

Mayor Coyne agrees with Council Members Troyer and Powers he doesn't want any deficit spending in 2015. Is the proposal to recover the \$4 million dollars that was posted by a resident?

Mr. Troyer responded no it's not.

Mayor Coyne continued I've always wanted to comply with the fund reserve balance policy and will show what the impact of that is. I don't know what you mean by reinstating the senior programs in 2015 and would like to see how that will be paid because the city does not have the personnel to do those programs. The appropriations do reflect the actual wages but I will look at your numbers. Number five replacing the expense reductions from layoffs and the employee buyout with new expenses \$2 million dollars; is that explained in this handout?

Mr. Troyer responded what is explained is the PERS and salary savings of \$1.9 million dollars to \$2 million dollars. What we did was go through and show ways of cutting them.

Mayor Coyne continued you're saying here that there is \$2 million dollars of new expenses.

Mr. Troyer responded yes, based on the fact that we saved \$1.6 million dollars on salaries as stated by the Finance Director and there is no P.E.R.S. (Public Employees Retirement Service) buyout for this year so that is a savings of \$432,000 not being spent; so obviously those monies are being spent somewhere else.

Mayor Coyne responded maybe and the other issue is you outlined the \$2 million dollars in new expenses you claim this budget reflects, is that correct?

Mr. Troyer responded yes, that is in there.

Mayor Coyne stated you do not support the transfer of the Sound Insulation Fund to Economic Development and the neighborhood rehabilitation program.

Mr. Troyer responded I do not support taking the \$1 million dollars out without an actual plan. Taking the \$1 million dollars is spending another million of revenue that city is not taking in; this is not everything this is just a proposal.

**Finance Committee – Chairman, D'Amico: cont.**

Mayor Coyne asked Mr. Troyer how you propose to have money to create jobs and rehabilitate the neighborhoods. Where do you propose to get that money from or you're objecting to this until you see a plan, is that correct?

Mr. Troyer responded I have a problem with spending more monies than being taken in. If monies are going to spent on something there needs to be an exact plan as to how it's going to be spent.

Mayor Coyne stated I'm with you Councilman, so we will figure out how we're going to do that. You don't support the privatization of sanitation in this budget.

Mr. Troyer interjected not without a plan.

Mayor Coyne continued there will be an upcoming meeting to include the economic development and sanitation to explain how these things will be done. Mayor Coyne asked you are in favor of leaving the parking license fee in the General Fund to operate even though those monies was tented to do these things; you're still for that is that correct?

Mr. Troyer responded yes, that is how this city has functioned for the last five or six years.

Mayor Coyne asked where do you see that new employees are being hired in this budget?

Mr. Troyer responded there is the Assistant Service Director.

Mayor Coyne stated can you tell me who it is because they don't exist.

Mr. Troyer stated there are monies to fund that position.

Mrs. Powers stated under the Mayor's office and Service Department there were appropriations for two new unnamed employees.

Mayor Coyne responded the Executive Assistant to the Mayor's position is not filled and may not be filled this year, I don't know.

Mrs. Powers commented then we don't want it in the budget until it's filled.

Mayor Coyne continued that's fine but that is not a new employee. You're trying to take tools away that are needed to do my job possibly. What is the other position that you're talking about?

**Finance Committee – Chairman, D'Amico: cont.**

Mrs. Powers responded under the Service Department it says new employee.

Mayor Coyne commented there is not a new employee there but if you want to adjust those cost-centers you can present your argument but these two new employees do not exist.

Mr. Troyer commented not yet but the monies are there.

Mayor Coyne stated there are monies appropriated in a lot of cost-centers and for a lot of different things but the fact of the matter is you're telling people there are new employees and there are not. Just like you had funding for the Assistant Clerk of Council but there was no one in the position for a while but it was in the appropriations and you had the right to fill or not fill that position. Mayor Coyne continued there were all kinds of positions in the Service Department that were funded and I will tell you that I happen to believe that if there's a position on the books and it's on the salary schedule I feel that Council is obligated to appropriate that money unless they change the ordinance to eliminate it. Some of these positions like in the fire department a lieutenant's position cannot be eliminated just because you don't want to appropriate the monies, it's in there.

Mr. Troyer interjected I think that's a little different as far as fire.

Mayor Coyne stated it's not a little different because you said the Assistant Service Director is a position that is under the contract of Local 436 which was not filled all of last year but yet by the contract there is a position there. So the fact is this there are no new employees and you're making an assumption that doesn't exist. Would I have the ability if I saw fit to do that under the budget yes I would; can I ask who helped you prepare this?

Mr. Troyer responded quite a few people.

Mayor Coyne asked can I have a name?

Mr. Troyer responded absolutely not because I know how you treat people.

Mr. D'Amico stated there is no need for that kind of remark.

Mayor Coyne stated explain that to me the statement you just made. I would like you to explain that to me Councilman you made an accusation against me and it's obvious that you didn't prepare this.

Mr. Troyer responded I can base that on the way you've treated me.

**Finance Committee – Chairman, D'Amico: cont.**

Mayor Coyne asked how have I treated you sir.

Mr. Troyer stated you've said some not flattering and not so nice things in the media about me.

Mayor Coyne interjected every one of those things that I said was true and an issue because you didn't prepare this thing.

Mr. Troyer reiterated that it doesn't matter what the positions are. The point is that there are monies for positions in a few spots; and generally we're saying that we do not support replacing expense reductions from layoffs and the employee buyouts with new expenses. We do not support the hiring of new employees with the savings the city has already in general. There are some in there and this conversation didn't have to happen because we do not support new employees after laying off 17 employees, it's not right to be hiring.

Mayor Coyne stated to Mr. D'Amico to allow the ability of the Finance Department staff to take a look at this and comment.

Mr. D'Amico concurred.

Mr. Salvatore stated on page 3 in Section 4 beginning with 111 down to 610 can you explain why there is such a wide range of reductions; you're cutting the Council Clerk by over \$10,000; Mayor's Court \$5,000; Finance Department \$10,000 is there any substantiating documentation to those types of reductions.

Mr. Troyer responded most of these are just the inflated amounts in the budget shown as maximums and we would not like to see the maximums. We would like to see the amount that they are currently expected to earn in 2015 or just slightly higher.

Mr. Salvatore asked that applies to all these positions?

Mr. Troyer concurred.

Mrs. Powers stated to Mr. Salvatore those positions on page 3 we took from the three years disbursements and appropriations for 2015 for regular salaries and rounded those numbers up. So the Clerk of Council was at \$53,000 that was disbursed in 2014 so we rounded it up and then \$65,933 was appropriated in 2015. So if we hold the appropriations for all these positions to the 2014 level then we can be saving that \$2 million dollars because everything increases in 2015 and we do not need to be spending more in 2015 than was spent in 2014. We should be spending less because we have fewer employees and are saving almost \$50,000 that does not have to be paid out in P.E.R.S. payments this year. As far as Mr. Higgins comment about

**Finance Committee – Chairman, D'Amico: cont.**

receiving this at the last minute we received information from the finance director dated February 24<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Higgins commented if Mrs. Powers would listen to what I said that's exactly what I said. We are critical of the administration handing Council something at the last minute and I was disappointed that my colleague would hand-out something at the last minute; I agree with you and don't like getting stuff at the last minute and don't care who it comes from. The comment just made was for the Clerk of Council and how they came up with that may I remind our colleagues that we didn't have a Council office staffed for an entire year in 2014. That's why you can't compare last year's numbers from this year's numbers because they are going to be different because the Council office was not staffed for the entire year.

Mrs. Powers stated looking at the 2015 Appropriations under Fund 111 – Clerk of Council line item 511 – Regular Salaries the amount of \$65,933.00 is listed and directly under the line item 513 – Part time salaries the amount of \$19,155.00 is listed. There was a disbursement in 2014 of \$8,880.91 an appropriated for 2015 is \$20,088.00.

Mayor Coyne commented about the timeliness of presentations we submitted the proposed budget on February 13, 2015 to start the budget process. For some reason you seem to think that we give you things and immediately you have to do something. You don't this is the beginning of a process to make proposals; discuss this back and forth and request information; to the best of my knowledge you have been provided all information asked for. I'm glad you made these proposals because we will review them and have the ability as to how you arrived at these.

Mr. Troyer stated we do have over a month left on this, there are two more readings, and can add more meetings so there is time on the budget. As far as the Council Clerk goes, this is Council Clerk full time, and what you're referring to is part-time Council Clerk that basically doubled. There is a change in this budget but it's very little and based on doubling what the Council Clerk earned last year. As far as Fund 111 that is the Regular Salaries and the other is part-time that has doubled from last year.

Mr. Mencini stated the reduced salaries being proposed besides the Mayor's Office and Service Director it's roughly around 10%. On that part time salary for the Clerk of Council with the disbursement in 2014 at that \$8,800 and in the 2015 Appropriations that amount increased to \$20,000. To Finance Director Cingle is there a start date when the part-time Clerk of Council started working in 2014?

Mr. Cingle responded May 8, 2014, so the \$8,800 would be from the start date to the end of the year.

**Finance Committee – Chairman, D'Amico: cont.**

Mr. Salvatore stated to Finance Director Cingle when preparing a budget the salaries are based on the high-end of the range?

Mr. Cingle concurred.

Mr. Salvatore stated if a salary is budgeted at \$60,000 and the employee's salary remains the same at \$50,000 the city saved \$10,000 because that money was not expended, is that correct?

Mr. Cingle concurred the \$10,000 would not be spent.

Mr. Salvatore stated so all the numbers can be played with it still isn't going to change a thing and if the salaries are not taken to the maximum the department must prepare for it. In the real world the budget is created in the worst case scenario, is that correct.

Mr. Cingle responded yes.

Mr. Salvatore stated that's how my budgets are prepared based on what it could possibly be not what we would like it to be. All these numbers shown sound great but we're going to save those monies if the city stays in the salary ranges currently, is that correct?

Mr. Cingle responded if the pays are not increased those monies will not be spent which will leave excess dollars in those line items.

Mr. Cingle stated just to reiterate a comment made earlier regarding timeliness of reports. The reports received today were from a request that Councilwoman Powers sent by email yesterday; so it took a little time to gather the information. Councilman Troyer sent me an email last night that is currently being worked on and as I asked in writing previously if information is needed to give me a little time to work on that information because sometimes a document must be prepared to respond to that request or to research the answers to the request.

Mr. Troyer stated what we're looking to do as far as funding to the high end of the scale; to Mr. Cingle is there a law that requires that?

Mr. Cingle responded no.

Mr. Troyer continued the Mayor stated there would be no raises and all we're saying to fund the salaries at the level they are currently at. This is what the residents want because residents know that if you give the government money they are going to spend it. So let's cut the salaries to what they are expected to be and we can always

**Finance Committee – Chairman, D'Amico: cont.**

come back and amend if a change is needed; to show that we're not leaving monies sitting out there. It's not to cut employees pays it is just to show the true numbers on what is going to be spent on those positions.

Mayor Coyne responded then Council will have to adjust the salary schedule that provides the ranges. The salary schedule that Council passed that money has to be appropriated or those people cannot get paid, which makes no sense.

Mr. Troyer stated we were just told that there is nothing. Is that a law or is it written somewhere?

Mayor Coyne responded yes, Council passed a salary range ordinance that provides for compensation, therefore, in order not to provide that in the budget then, in my view, Council has to amend the salary schedule as well.

Mr. Troyer continued I don't want to cut anybody's pay but if that is what Council needs to do to get a true number then that's what Council needs to do.

Mayor Coyne stated you have a true number in the appropriations in this budget that reflects that salary schedule passed by Council.

**Motion** by Mr. Higgins, supported by Mr. Troyer, to place on the next Caucus agenda for continued discussion. Members of Council voted AYE. The motion carried.

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**Motion** by Mr. D'Amico, supported by Mr. Higgins, to remove O-1 from the Council agenda and place back in the Safety Committee.

**ROLL CALL: AYES:** D'Amico, Higgins, Powers, Burgio, Mencini, Salvatore Troyer  
**NAYS:** None. The motion carried.

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There being no further business to come before this meeting Council President Patten declared this meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED Michelle Blazak  
Michelle Blazak  
Clerk of Council

APPROVED March 18, 2015

THESE MEETING MINUTES APPROVED BY BROOK PARK CITY COUNCIL ARE A SYNOPSIS, NOT TRANSCRIBED IN THEIR ENTIRETY, ALTHOUGH ACCURATE.