

**REGULAR CAUCUS MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BROOK PARK, OHIO
HELD ON MAY 12, 2020**

The meeting was called to order by called to order by Council President Vecchio at 7:00 p.m., the clerk called the roll and the following Members of Council answered: **SCOTT, SCHMUCK, ORCUTT, TROYER, MENCINI, POINDEXTER, SALVATORE**
Also in attendance were Mayor Gammella, Law Director Horvath and Finance Director Cingle.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS:

Note: Moved by **motion** from the March 10, 2020 Caucus agenda.

1. REGULAR CAUCUS MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 11, 2020.

Motion by Mr. Troyer, supported by Mr. Poindexter, to move to the June 12, 2020 Caucus agenda for amendments.

Mr. Vecchio stated to Mr. Troyer if you would put the amendments in email format and submit to the clerk ahead of time.

Mr. Troyer responded one is the motion regarding Executive Session using my verbiage instead of Mr. Vecchio verbiage.

The clerk asked are there any other amendments.

Mr. Troyer responded due to power outage that's why items were moved. Also, legislative committee during first term only two items were put in committee.

DISCUSSION:

Note: Discussion items of Council Rules were moved by **motion** from the March 10, 2020 Caucus meeting:

PROPOSED COUNCIL RULE AMENDMENTS – PER COUNCIL PRESIDENT VECCHIO.

COUNCILMAN TROYER PROPOSALS:

RULE NO. 7 – ORDER OF BUSINESS

RULE NO. 24 – TO AMEND RULES

RULE NO. 12 – ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS INTRODUCTION.

COUNCILMAN SCOTT'S PROPOSALS:

RULE NO. 12 – ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS INTRODUCTION.

COUNCILMAN POINDEXTER COUNCIL RULE PROPOSALS PER RECOMMENDATION FROM LAW DIRECTOR HORVATH:
RULE NO. 12 – LETTERS A THROUGH I
PROPOSED COUNCIL RULE 12 AMENDMENT – Moved by **motion** from the January 21, 2020 Council meeting.

Mr. Troyer stated due to the current circumstance with the Coronavirus any amendments to Council rules should be moved to mid-June; table all items.

Motion by Mr. Troyer, supported by Mr. Salvatore, to move Council Rules to the June 9th Caucus agenda.

ROLL CALL: AYES: Troyer, Salvatore, Poindexter, Mencini, Orcutt, Schmuck, Scott
NAYS: None. The motion carried.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE – CHAIRMAN, MENCINI:

1. AN ORDINANCE ENACTING SECTION 505.23 OF THE GENERAL OFFENSES CODE OF THE CITY OF BROOK PARK ENTITLED 'MANAGEMENT OF CAT POPULATION; PERMITTED ACTS' AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mayor Gammella stated in all communities there is a feral cat problem and the city is proposing to neuter the cats and release; so they don't reproduce; to reduce the cat population.

Mr. Poindexter asked Mayor Gammella if this will be performed in the animal shelter or another facility?

Mayor Gammella responded not sure whatever is more cost-efficient; possibly have a veterinarian come to the city.

Mr. Poindexter expressed support of this legislation and thinks most humane way to control cat population.

Mr. Scott stated after reviewing this legislation I spoke with Animal Control Officer, (ACO) Laura Takacs, in Middleburg Heights on how they proceed with the city's stray and feral cat problem. They also do the trap, neuter and/or spade and release with the process of trapping on Tuesdays and Wednesdays with a standing appointment on Fridays with the Cleveland Animal Clinic for sterilization. The City of Parma also has the Trap-Neuter and/or Spay Release Program. The City of Berea does not have this program due to having a part-time animal control officer. It is my understanding this is the normal way on how to control these feral and stray cats. A lot of phone calls are received and have one resident that continually calls. Legislative Committee – Chairman, Mencini: cont.
about stray cats. This is an issue and the breeding period for cats is from February through October. There is also an ordinance I haven't been able to obtain if the

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE - CHAIRMAN, MENCINI: CONT.

through October. There is also an ordinance I haven't been able to obtain if the house is known where the cat is coming from that resident receives three warnings and then cited.

Mr. Mencini stated to Mayor Gammella glad this came forward is a problem in the community. Both the City of Berea and Middleburg Hts. also have a park system where cats can hide. In Brook Park the homes are close together and most of calls received about cats and deer is they coagulate within the residences. Where would the cats be released so the city wouldn't have that problem. To follow that up after neutering or spaying why not put them up for adoption.

Mayor Gammella responded we would like to do that, this past Saturday the city held a cat-dog adoption event and within 20 minutes all animals were gone. The problem is all these feral cats do not coincide with domestic cats; they are wild cats and want to remain wild cats. So rather than euthanizing the most humane way is to live their lives without reproducing. Another problem is animals are very territorial and a lot of times when these cats are there keeps other cats away. When they are not there other cats will fill the void. Speaking with the animal warden and shelter volunteers everyone felt this is the best way to go.

Mr. Mencini commented I attended the adoption event that went pretty well but one other thing to be brought forward with this is where will these cats be released? Another problem is when the cats get too big or people can't afford them they put them out does and gets another kitten to do the same thing. Al, the shelter volunteers do a tremendous job.

Mayor Gammella commented a lot of calls are received for the animal warden to pick up cats and this is the most humane way to do this; step one to solve the city's problems.

Mr. Scott commented one question to ACO Takacs on how this is done and they trap neuter/spay and release the cats in the same area where trapped.

Mayor Gammella commented one thing I found interesting if someone traps a raccoon or feral cat and lets the animal go in the MetroParks that person can be fined.

Mr. Orcutt stated it states in the legislation that the feral cats are returned to the area where trapped. To Mayor Gammella what other communities in Cuyahoga County are practicing this Trap, Neuter and Return Program.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE - CHAIRMAN, MENCINI: CONT.

Mayor Gammella responded the Cities of Parma and Middleburg Heights is as far as the city went with the program. Talking with the city's animal warden, shelter volunteers and doing some research this appeared to be the best way to go to control the problem.

Mr. Orcutt continued in Ward 3 quite a few phone calls are received with cats living under porches or wherever they can find a home and are producing, growing a bigger problem. Will support this legislation and it doesn't seem to be costing the city too much moneywise.

Mayor Gammella responded not when you consider how much it costs to keep up with the cats and offspring.

Mr. Orcutt commented speaking with the shelter volunteers this program will actually reduce costs in the future.

Mayor Gammella concurred.

Mr. Mencini reiterated his question of trapping, neutering and returning to same area what if the people don't want the cats returned.

Mayor Gammella responded the animals will be released in the general facility of where caught.

Mr. Troyer asked Mayor Gammella if accepting co-sponsors and continued this issue is in my ward and understand why this exists. The only issue I have with this is Code Section 505.30 – Feeding of stray animals. No person shall provide food for dogs, cats or other animals or wildlife by setting such food out on the exterior portion of home or residence or in close proximity thereof. I would ask the law department come up with an amendment to that code section so these laws are not contradicting.

The clerk polled Council for co-sponsorship. The following Councilmembers' voted yes. Troyer, Mencini, Poindexter, Scott, Schmuck, Orcutt and Council President Vecchio.

Motion by Mr. Poindexter, supported by Mr. Troyer, to place on the May 19th Council agenda.

ROLL CALL: AYES: Poindexter, Troyer, Mencini, Salvatore, Scott, Schmuck, Orcutt
NAYS: None. The motion carried.

Mr. Mencini thanked the Technology committee for assistance with microphone.

Miscellaneous comments:

Mr. Troyer asked Mr. Vecchio on who cancelled the past Caucus Prior to Council meeting.

Mr. Vecchio responded that question was answered at the last meeting.

Mr. Troyer confirmed it was Mr. Vecchio in accordance with Resolution No. 9-2020.

Mr. Vecchio responded no, I stated Council passed Resolution No. 9-2020 which has with the moving of meetings and/or cancelling meetings.

Mr. Troyer asked where it is that gives the ability to cancel meetings that Council called.

Mr. Vecchio asked Mr. Troyer does your conversation on anything on tonight's agenda?

Mr. Troyer responded this is a Caucus meeting for general discussion.

Mr. Vecchio interjected if you want to hold to the (Council) rules as you stipulate so often is it on the agenda for discussion or not.

I move to place this on tonight's agenda.

Mr. Vecchio asked the clerk to poll Council.

The clerk polled Council Troyer voted yes, Mencini voted yes, Poindexter voted yes. Mr. Salvatore stated this topic should be included with the Council rules that were removed from tonight's agenda to discuss at the same time, it deals with rules and procedures would rather see this all at the same meeting. Mr. Scott agreed with Mr. Salvatore.

Mr. Mencini concurred with Mr. Salvatore and the reason for the yes vote is there is time tonight but will respect of colleagues.

The clerk continued with the polling of Council to place a discussion item on the agenda. Scott voted no and mentioned Council rules, Schmuck voted yes and Mr. Orcutt voted no and mentioned this is the month of May and pushed Council rules to another meeting; maybe Council should look into having a special meeting for Council rules only. The poll is 4 yes and 3 no.

Mr. Troyer stated to Mr. Vecchio what part of Resolution No. 9-2020 gives that ability.

Miscellaneous comments:

Mr. Vecchio responded since I don't have that legislation in front of me I can't give that answer.


Mr. Troyer reiterated somewhere in that legislation you believe gives you that authority, thank you that's all I needed.

There being no further business to come before this meeting a **motion** by Mr. Mencini, supported by Mrs. Schmuck, to adjourn.

ROLL CALL: AYES: Mencini, Schmuck, Orcutt, Scott, Salvatore, Poindexter, Troyer

NAYS: None. The motion carried.

Council President Vecchio declared this meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED 
Michelle Blazak
Clerk of Council

APPROVED 

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