

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL
CITY OF GARFIELD HEIGHTS, OHIO**

Monday, March 28, 2011

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:00 p.m. by President Frank Geraci, Jr.

INVOCATION BY: Councilman Joseph Suster

ROLL CALL: **PRESENT:** Council Members Dudley, Marincic, Nenadovich,
Sarnowski, Suster, Vaughn

EXCUSED: Mahoney

PRESIDENT GERACI: Thank you, Clmn Suster. Before we start the meeting, anybody has their phones, please put them on mute? We'd appreciate it. This way we don't get interrupted. Roll call please.

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

CLMN SUSTER: I'd like to make a motion that we excuse Clwn Mahoney this evening.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Roll call.

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

PRESIDENT GERACI: The Reading and Disposal of the Minutes.

READING AND DISPOSAL OF MINUTES:

Moved by Clmn SUSTER to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of City Council of March 14, 2011 as submitted. The minutes were adopted with six YES and one Absent votes.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS TO COUNCIL: None.

LEGISLATION OUT OF COMMITTEE: None.

REPORTS OF THE MAYOR AND DIRECTORS:

PRESIDENT GERACI: We will now move on to the reports by the Mayor and the Directors. Mayor Collova.

MAYOR VIC COLLOVA: Thank you, Mr. Geraci, Council. A few things today. I want to start off a little bit about Governor Kasich's budget; what effect it will have on the city. As far as we could tell at this point, by him taking back 25% of the Local Government Funds it will cost the city a minimum of \$350,000.00. The inheritance tax that he's taking away will cost us approximately \$112,000.00.

So we're looking at about a \$462,000.00 additional loss to the city. It seems like every time we take a step forward we take two steps back. I just want everybody to know that I had met with all the Unions and all the staffs and I am asking once again for our employees to give concessions to get us through these rough times and with the hopes that down the road we'll be able to return the favor to the employees and pay them what they certainly deserve.

The next thing I want to talk about a little bit is the sewer calls and this is a letter.

"Starting on Monday April 4, 2011, the home sanitary sewer calls will be handled by the Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works.

The City of Garfield Heights will no longer be directly providing this service. There is no charge to the resident for this service.

Hours of operation for sewer issues are Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. There will be no evening and no weekend calls. Catch basin problems will still be handled by the Garfield Heights Service Dept."

These hours are the exact same hours that we use now so there's no change in the hours. The service stays completely the same. We actually think the service will be enhanced somewhat because the Sewer District who handles this on a daily basis will be handling these problems with the top shelf equipment that they use. So we're looking forward to this. We think it's a plus for the residents.

The next thing I wanted to talk about was the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District Household Hazardous Waste Roundup will be held on April 18, 2011 through April 22, 2011 from 7:30 to 3:00 p.m. Again on April 24th through April 29th 7:30 to 3:00 and April 30th, a Saturday, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Items that will be taken include oil based paint, pesticides, antifreeze, all household products, motor oil. They will be taken at the Service Garage on McCracken. No latex paint will be taken at the Service Garage. Paint can be disposed of in the regular rubbish collection. If the can has paint in it you open the can, add shredded newspapers, kitty litter or dirt to thicken it, leave lid off, put into an open cardboard box and put out for pickup. If can is already empty leave lid off, put into an open cardboard box and put it out for pickup. So this is coming up again starting on April 18th.

I want to read a notice that I received from WOW.

"Dear Mayor Collova:

This is to inform you that effective April 28, 2011 WOW will no longer be carrying the Sundance channel as we were unable to reach terms that we believed to be reasonable and in the best interests of our customers. WOW customers will be notified through a number of communications including bill messaging, notification in the WOW and portal page and weather channel crawl."

I'm going to pass out to Council. We received some notices from State Farm Insurance. They are actually looking for prospects to join their team. If your residents get a hold of you State Farm is looking for insurance agents and if you contact your Council people they will have the information for you to give out to you. It probably doesn't pertain to everybody, but it sounds like a pretty good opportunity. So I wanted Council to be aware of that for the residents.

With that said I want to talk a little bit about a past due tax bill that the city had. Let me explain this to you. Back in 1998 when we built the Service Garage on McCracken we had to acquire a piece of property from the State of Ohio and this piece of property was tax exempt and once the city received it it would also be tax exempt. We acquired this piece of property and we assumed that of course it would be tax exempt. We never received a bill from the County so we had no way of knowing that they didn't put it to tax exempt and the reason we didn't receive this bill from the County is because they were sending the bill to Maple Heights. And as nice as Maple Heights is they don't have to pay our bill. Unfortunately nobody wanted to tell Garfield Heights about this and of course we went on for years and years thinking that we were tax exempt. Some time in 2006 we became aware. Maybe Maple Heights finally told the County why they weren't paying it. We became aware that this tax bill was due and this tax bill was for \$650,000.00 to the city of Garfield Heights. After our tax department (and Ron can get into this further if you'd like), but after our Finance Department explained to the County the problem and that this was supposed to be tax exempt, they agreed 100% that they made an error and that in fact we should not have to pay this tax money. Well once it went to the tax people in the County they said oh wait a second. The law says you don't have to pay from this point forward but because if you were untimely in this notification you had to pay the back tax. Well we certainly didn't pay \$650,000.00 and as we were trying to get this taken care of through legislation the numbers kept going up. After a while it was up to \$1 million and it continued to go higher. Earlier this year we spoke with Senator Nina Turner, told her what our problem was and told her we needed legislation (as we had told other legislators in the past) to correct this problem. She said that she would handle it for us and I received this letter and I want to share it with you. It says

"Dear Mayor Collova:

I am elated to let you know that former Senate Bill 227 that Senator Turner had introduced on behalf of the city of Garfield Heights to permit the abatement of unpaid property tax penalties and interest on property owned by a municipal corporation that would have been tax exempt except for a failure to comply with certain tax exemption procedures was redrafted as an amendment to the Transportation Budget Bill, House Bill 114 and it was adopted and passed on the Senate floor. A formal letter will come to you as soon as we know the effective date so that you can pursue the removal of the bogus tax bill of \$1,355,485.85."

Thanks to Nina Turner this will no longer be a part of our books as a delinquent tax so I really want to thank her. We will send her a letter from Council and the Mayor and all of our Administration thanking her for her efforts. This is really a big thing that she did and we appreciate it and I wanted to share that with you.

I want to talk a little bit about some of the legislation that we have tonight. Ordinance 14-2011. Mr. Riley is going to get into that in his report. Ordinance 15-2011. Actually what we're doing is we're just shoring up the language on the administration fees for towing. It's not a big deal, but it will clear up some of the language and add to the fee somewhat.

An emergency resolution providing for only one Council Meeting to be held on the second Monday during the months of May, June, July and August. Resolution 18. This is something we do every year. The summer months we drop down to one Council Meeting. There are a lot of things going on and there may be a need for additional Council Meetings. We will call additional Council Meetings as needed. We're just following the procedure we have in the past. Resolution 19. I want to talk a little bit about Mr. Paul Birk from our Service Department. Mr. Paul Birk is here today. We talked a little bit about him at the last Council Meeting. During that flood Paul Birk, like so many others, did whatever they could do to rescue quite a few people in the Broadway area that were

trapped by the floods. The fire department asked us to recognize him for an outstanding job and he's here today and this resolution is to reward him for that particular day that he did that work. But I want to tell you that we're honoring Paul Birk today but there are many, many others that were involved in the same rescue procedures that he did. Everybody did what they had to do to help the residents. People were wading through water. We had one of our policewomen standing in water waist deep trying to get people out. We had another police officer tying sheets that he got from the hotel room around his waist trying to drag people in. There were many people—police, fire and Service that went above and beyond and I want to thank all of them, but Paul Birk's job was an outstanding job and we're certainly going to single him out. So that's Resolution 19. Resolution 20. The Garfield Heights High School boys' varsity basketball. What a great season. What a great year. It could have been a little better maybe but they did a great job. They represented Garfield Heights as good as anybody has in a long, long time. First time in 61 years somebody's been down to the final four of the State. We couldn't be any more proud of every one of them young men and everybody else that's involved with the team, including Sonny, the coach. They did a great job and we certainly want to honor them for that. Maybe next year we can get that final piece of gold that we really want. Resolution 21. It's an emergency resolution directing the Economic Development Director of the city of Garfield Heights to apply for grant funds for the development of community gardens. I believe we got this last year. It was about \$5,000.00, if I'm right and we had that garden program that worked very well. We want to enhance on that this year. Resolution 22. An emergency resolution directing the Economic Development Director of the city of Garfield Heights to apply for a parks and playgrounds initiative grant for the revitalization of playgrounds. This grant is for \$35,000.00. We would certainly want to be awarded this. A way of making the neighborhoods look better again, fixing up the playgrounds for the young kids and at no cost to the city so we're looking forward to getting that grant. Resolution 23. A resolution authorizing the Mayor to encourage Congress to continue to fund the Community Development Block Grant Program. This grant has been very advantageous to most cities, especially Garfield Heights. There's some talk about it leaving or going away and we certainly want to put our best foot forward to try to keep this in place. With that, Mr. Chairman, you have my report.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Thank you, Mayor. Any questions for the Mayor? If not, we'll move on. Mr. Riley.

LAW DIRECTOR TIM RILEY: Thank you, Mr. President. I would just want to address Ordinance 14-2011. This has to deal with the notice that has to be given when the Animal Warden picks up a dog. The current Animal Warden, Ed Jamison, has been working really hard since he took over to sort of modernize the whole process when stray dogs are picked up. So we want to change this so he could put it on the Internet and put it on our Website and also post it at City Hall. So whenever a dog's picked up we don't know who the owner is they could look on the Website to see if the city has it or they could come up to City Hall to look. So that would make it a lot easier and make his job easier and make it easier for the residents. They can check and see where the dog is. I think it's important that we do that so we can make it easier for everybody involved. And with that, you have my report.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Thank you, Mr. Riley. Any questions for Mr. Riley? If not we'll move on. Our Recreation Department. Mr. Dobies.

SERVICE DIRECTOR TIM McLAUGHLIN: Absent.

PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR BOB DOBIES: Mr. President, Council Members, good evening. Registration continues this week and will end this week for t-ball. Girls' softball signups also continue. Final signups will be on April 1st from 6 – 9 p.m. and Saturday April 2nd. That was extended because of the light turnout so far. We had a lot of calls asking if there would be an

additional signup. Don't forget aerobics spring session starts tomorrow and goes until June 6th. Classes do start tomorrow. Little League signups will continue these next two weekends finishing up on April 9th and 10th. They are at the high school gymnasium on Saturdays and Sundays. Saturday from noon to 5:00 and Sundays will be from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00. I would like to remind all again that the Annual Ice Show will be Saturday April 9th and Sunday April 10th. As I mentioned at last month's meeting this year's theme is Hollywood, which features all of our figure skaters who display their talent and gracefulness for all the hard work they put into the season. I ask you all to mark your calendars and come out and enjoy the children. Advance tickets are available and if you wish to purchase a table for your party they are also available. If you have any questions, call the Recreation Department for more information. Thank you. That concludes my report.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Thank you, Mr. Dobies. Any questions for Mr. Dobies? If not, we'll move on. Finance Director Mr. Tomola.

ACTING FINANCE DIRECTOR RON TOMOLA: Thank you, Mr. President and Council. The Mayor did a good job going over what Governor Kasich's budget is going to do to us so I'm not going to rehash that. What I do want to inform you is late this afternoon I did e-mail out to all of you the update to the income tax for the month of March. If you remember when I sent out the e-mail at the beginning of the month we were about \$220,000.00 ahead of last year? March was a bad month. We've lost \$116,000.00 in collections versus last year. We're still about \$100,000.00 ahead of last year at this point. April is historically a low collection month. May is the biggest month of the year so after May I'll be able to give you a better idea of where we're going to be. Hopefully it will stabilize.

The other thing hopefully you've all been getting the e-mails that my staff has been sending out informing you of payments as the city makes them. They've been trying to do a good job of keeping everybody up to date on what's going on. If there's ever a problem and you don't get the e-mails please get a hold of me and we'll rectify the problem as soon as we can.

As far as payables go I'd like to inform you that currently we're doing pretty good. Hovering right around 45 days on our general payables. The biggest of the health care and pensions, etc. are monthly and we are doing monthly payments on all that. With all the cuts I don't know if we'll be able to sustain that pace so I'm forewarning you that as these cuts hit us it could have a drastic impact on us. I just wanted to put that out there let everybody know. The cuts that the Kasich budget could have, loss of income tax revenues could have drastic effects. That's my report.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Thank you, Mr. Tomola. Any questions for Mr. Tomola?

CLWN MARINCIC: First of all I want to thank you again for the way we get the when you cut the checks we get the report. It's fantastic. I have any questions I just shoot Barb an e-mail and she sends me an answer. I know where every cent is going and it's really wonderful. You were saying the payables. Was that about 45 days?

ACTING FINANCE DIRECTOR RON TOMOLA: Yes.

CLWN MARINCIC: What was that last year at this time?

ACTING FINANCE DIRECTOR RON TOMOLA: Between 90 and 120.

CLWN MARINCIC: That's what Ron Tomola's done for this city. Been absolutely fantastic and I want to thank you for that. That's all I have.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Any other questions for Mr. Tomola? City Engineer, Mr. David Krock.

CITY ENGINEER DAVID KROCK: Thank you, Council President. Just a few updates on some construction projects. The North Granger Sewer Project on East 88th is underway and moving along. That project is still a couple months from being done but they have gotten started there. The Bangor Street gas main project is also going to be starting here, but we were able to move that out from behind the back yards where it was originally proposed out to the street so I think that's better for all the residents there so that will be started here shortly. That's my report.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Any questions for Mr. Krock? We'll move on to Ms. Kuban.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR NOREEN KUBAN: Thank you, Mr. President. Briefly Resolution 23-2011 refers to potential cuts in CDBG funding. Over the years the city of Garfield Heights has received millions of dollars in CDBG funding so I'd urge Council to support this so that we don't lose funding. Resolutions 22 and 21 is to apply for a playground grant and a community garden grant. We received both last year but we would like to continue in that endeavor and make improvements and expand both of those grants. Becky Repasky over there will be having a Community Garden Meeting on April 16th which is a Saturday at 11 o'clock and I urge anyone who would like to become a gardener or reserve a plot at one of our gardens to attend the meeting.

Along that line the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District is having a compost seminar and that is on April 20th, which is an evening at their offices on 131st Street at seven o'clock. They will teach you how to compost and you can also purchase bins. I've tried to compost unsuccessfully so I will be attending this seminar.

Another thing is the library is having monthly financial literacy programs. Every month there will be a different topic and if you go on their Website they will tell you what the topic is for the month. We're also posting that on our cable channel.

Finally, the Mayor and I recently met with Employment Connection. This is the agency that has the task of working with people who are recently unemployed but it doesn't just apply to people who are receiving unemployment benefits. If you're looking for a job or if you know someone who is looking for a job go to their Website and I did this to see how easy it is. You just have to input all your information, your e-mail and the type of job you're looking for and you can search their listings or you can call them at 898-1366 and the Website is employmentconnection.us. I'm going to pass these down to Council Members. That concludes my report.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Thank you, Ms. Kuban. Any questions for Ms. Kuban?

CLWN MARINCIC: I just actually have a comment. One of the Community Gardens that Noreen spoke of is in Ward 2 over in Hy Court Park. I'm going to put it in my next newsletter on how to contact people and Becky, you made the Grapevine because I'm putting your name in as a contact for that. That's all I have today.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Any other questions for Ms. Kuban?

CLWN SARNOWSKI: Do you have another meeting or get together this Wednesday for the?

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR NOREEN KUBAN: Oh, I'm glad you mentioned that. There is a public hearing this Wednesday evening in Council Chambers at six o'clock and that's for the public hearings that are related to these two grant programs.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Any other questions for Ms. Kuban? If not we'll move on.

BUILDING COMMISSIONER BILL WERVEY: Absent.

COMMENTS BY CITIZENS:

PRESIDENT GERACI: Comments from the Citizens on the agenda items only. The rules are this portion of the meeting is for residents' comments on tonight's legislation only. Comments are limited to five minutes. No one can speak more than once. Please raise your hand to be recognized.

David Mays, 8250 Green Drive. I am just amazed that Council wants to take off for four months, cut their meetings in half, with all the things that are going on in Garfield. I really feel that maybe a month, maybe two months, but for four months I think it's ridiculous. I realize that the Finance Director is extremely busy but I think if he could find time he should sit down and figure out how much the Council people are making for these meetings, the Caucus Meetings and everything else and deduct that from their salary when they don't show up. If you worked for me and you didn't show up I wouldn't pay you for it. And I don't think the city of Garfield should pay you for it if you don't show up. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Thank you, Mr. Mays.

CLMN DUDLEY: What people got to understand too. When we say we are scheduled for one meeting if you check you'll find out that we come here for special meetings still. We come here for special meetings so whether we schedule for one if something is going on which always come up in the month of May, we do show up and we do take care of legislation so nothing is lost and a lot of stuff isn't thrown behind into the next month. We are here. Even when we are scheduled for two meetings a month sometimes we'll be here four times a month or maybe more. When we need to be here we are here. So we don't do nothing less by taking a little time. It's not really time off. That's all I got to say.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Thank you. Anybody else? Very good. Any other comments? We'll move on.

PRESIDENT GERACI: We'll move on to tonight's legislation.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

ORDINANCE NO. 14-2011

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 505.02 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF GARFIELD HEIGHTS TO REVISE THE LOCATIONS FOR THE POSTING OF ANIMALS IMPOUNDED IN THE CITY OF GARFIELD HEIGHTS.

Moved by SUSTER to CONSIDER BY TITLE:

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

Motion to SUSPEND THREE READING RULE:

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

VOTE ON ADOPTION:

CLWN MARINCIC: I think this is a great idea and it's been too long in coming and I really appreciate our Animal Warden initiating this and it will really help residents find their lost animals in a quicker fashion and I vote Yes.

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

PRESIDENT GERACI: That passes 6-0.

ORDINANCE NO. 15-2011

AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 307.04 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF GARFIELD HEIGHTS ALLOWING THE CITY TO ASSESS A SCRAP VEHICLE FEE TO TOWING COMPANIES.

Moved by NENADOVICH to CONSIDER BY TITLE:

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

Motion to SUSPEND THREE READING RULE:

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

VOTE ON ADOPTION:

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

PRESIDENT GERACI: That passes 6-0.

RESOLUTION NO. 18-2011

AN EMERGENCY RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR ONLY ONE COUNCIL MEETING, TO BE HELD ON THE SECOND MONDAY, DURING THE MONTHS OF MAY, JUNE, JULY, AND AUGUST, 2011.

Moved by SUSTER to CONSIDER BY TITLE:

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

Motion to SUSPEND THREE READING RULE:

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

VOTE ON ADOPTION:

CLWN MARINCIC: Before I vote, it's no surprise to my fellow Council Members that I have never been in favor of taking the summer session as we do and I wish that we wouldn't take it so I'm going to vote No.

AYES: 5

NAYS: 1

ABSENT: 1

PRESIDENT GERACI: That passes 5 Yes, 1 No.

RESOLUTION NO. 19-2011

A RESOLUTION HONORING CITY OF GARFIELD HEIGHTS SERVICE LABORER PAUL BIRK FOR AIDING THE GARFIELD HEIGHTS FIRE DEPARTMENT IN RESCUING NUMEROUS PEOPLE AND ANIMALS FROM FLOOD WATERS WHILE USING A FRONT END LOADER MACHINE ON FEBRUARY 28, 2011.

Moved by SUSTER to CONSIDER BY TITLE:

AYES: 6
ABSENT: 1

CLMN SUSTER: I make a motion we read it in its entirety.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Will the Clerk read it in its entirety.

(The Clerk read Resolution 19-2011 in its entirety.)

Motion to SUSPEND THREE READING RULE:

AYES: 6
ABSENT: 1

VOTE ON ADOPTION:

CLMN SUSTER: Before I vote, Paul, you want to stand up please? Everybody like to give Paul a hand? Before I vote I would just like to say you know it's always good that we recognize people that go just that little bit and Paul is one of those individuals and I personally would like to thank you for all the help that you had that evening and I vote Yes.

CLMN DUDLEY: Before I vote, I'd like to thank you, Mr. Birk, because that's part of my Ward down there, you know, and I can tell you one thing though. When you do good things to people good things will come back to you. Not always just as quick as you done it before, but it's going to find its way to make them back to you. I thank you for that. I vote Yes.

CLWN MARINCIC: Yet another explementary performance by one of our wonderful employees. Way to go, Paul. Thank you so much and I vote Yes.

CLMN NENADOVICH: Mr. Birk, I congratulate you. You and your family should be very proud. I vote Yes.

CLWN SARNOWSKI: Thank you for going beyond the definition of your job in helping residents and I vote Yes.

AYES: 6
ABSENT: 1

PRESIDENT GERACI: That passes 6-0 and I would like to also congratulate you, Paul, in regards to what you did. Excellent job.

CLWN MARINCIC: Before you read the next resolution. I think Mr. Suster has it. I just wanted to point out the wrong date is on it and he might want to amend that. It says 2-2010 and it should say 2-2011. That's all I have. Sorry for the interruption.

PRESIDENT GERACI: It's all right. Correction will be made.

RESOLUTION NO. 20-2011

A RESOLUTION HONORING AND CONGRATULATING THE GARFIELD HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL TEAM FOR ADVANCING TO THE DIVISION I STATE SEMIFINALS.

Moved by SUSTER to CONSIDER BY TITLE:

AYES: 6
ABSENT: 1

CLMN SUSTER: I'd like to make a amendment to this resolution. Where it says Resolution 20-2010 let it read Resolution 20-2011.

Motion to AMEND:

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

CLMN SUSTER: At this time I'd like to make a motion that we place Resolution 20-2011 in the Legislative Committee seeing as that the gentlemen from Garfield Heights High School that played in this basketball game are not here this evening and it would only be fitting that they be here on the night that this is passed and I would hope that we would hold this until the next Meeting or when they are notified to be here because I was at the last three games and I think they did a fantastic job so I would like to make that motion that we just put it in the Legislative Committee.

MOTION to PLACE IN LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE:

CLWN MARINCIC: I agree and I vote Yes.

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

PRESIDENT GERACI: That will be put in the Legislative Committee. That passes 6-0.

RESOLUTION NO. 21-2011

AN EMERGENCY RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR OF THE CITY OF GARFIELD HEIGHTS TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY GARDENS.

Moved by MARINCIC to CONSIDER BY TITLE:

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

Motion to WAIVE RULE 24:

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

Motion to SUSPEND THREE READING RULE:

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

VOTE ON ADOPTION:

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

PRESIDENT GERACI: That passes 6-0.

RESOLUTION NO. 22-2011

AN EMERGENCY RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR OF THE CITY OF GARFIELD HEIGHTS TO APPLY FOR A PARKS & PLAYGROUND INITIATIVE GRANT FOR THE REVITALIZATION OF PLAYGROUNDS.

Moved by MARINCIC to CONSIDER BY TITLE:

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

Motion to WAIVE RULE 24:

AYES: 6
ABSENT: 1

Motion to SUSPEND THREE READING RULE:
AYES: 6
ABSENT: 1

VOTE ON ADOPTION:
AYES: 6
ABSENT: 1

PRESIDENT GERACI: That passes 6-0.

RESOLUTION NO: 23-2011

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENCOURAGE CONGRESS TO CONTINUE TO FUND THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM.

Moved by MARINCIC to CONSIDER BY TITLE:

AYES: 6
ABSENT: 1

Motion to SUSPEND THREE READING RULE:
AYES: 6
ABSENT: 1

VOTE ON ADOPTION:

CLWN MARINCIC: I think this is very, very necessary. The city has benefited by hundreds of thousands if not a million dollars over the years from CDBG grant money and I would hate to see it disappear and I vote Yes.

AYES: 6
ABSENT: 1

PRESIDENT GERACI: That passes 6-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

COMMENTS BY CITIZENS:

PRESIDENT GERACI: We will now move on to Comments By Citizens. The rules are you cannot bring up anything of a first nature. You must have previously brought the problem to a Councilperson or a City Hall department. You are limited to speak only once for a period of five minutes. Please raise your hand to be recognized.

Bob Halen, 12416 Oak Park Blvd. Before I mention what I came up to say I do want to request some of the people here that are elderly that used to enjoy Bingo to come to the Garfield Heights Boosters Club Bingo on Tuesday.

Now nobody came up with this common sense solution about collecting for the trash bills that are past due. The way I understood it about 80% of the people have not paid their bills. Between 60% and 80%. Now the solution that I think has happened in the past like notifying in the Neighborhood News the list of people that have not cut their grass. A list of those people that haven't paid their trash bill. Since there is no penalty let's penalize them in a certain way. If the garbage is to be collected in your district Wednesday and they haven't paid their bill a list is given out to the J&J to not pick up the rubbish that day and when the people at that location calls in, hey, I didn't get my garbage picked up. Well you haven't paid your bill. It won't get picked up until you pay your bill. They'll be at the city coffers with money in hand, believe me. It's happened in other cities.

Withholding picking up the trash and within 24 hours that bill is paid. You won't have to wait six to eight months for it. Thank you.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Thank you. Anybody else?

James Fritz, 13600 York Blvd. I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to come up and address you tonight. I'm here because I'm the Chairperson for the Citizens for Garfield Heights, which is the committee that sponsors the levy efforts and I just wanted to introduce myself to you so you could put a face with the name as you've been receiving my e-mails. But I'm not here by myself. I'm here with a team of people and as you may have seen on the front page of the Neighborhood News last week there is indeed a team of people, parents involved coming together to canvass the city over the next five weeks because we need to pass Issues 3 and 4 for our schools. I had a chance to meet with the Mayor. Thank you, Mr. Mayor, for your time, and he is endorsing our levy. Also met with State Representative John Barnes and he is endorsing the levy. Clmn Mike Dudley has already given us his endorsement, use of his name and spoken publicly about the levy and I respectfully hope that the rest of you will do so as well over the coming days.

I'm not here to talk about the numbers of the levy. You can see the Treasurer, Al Sluka, for these numbers. I'm here because I used to live in St. Louis and made the conscious decision to move here to Garfield Heights. I haven't been here as long as some of you sitting up there, but to me it doesn't matter because I want to be here just as long as you guys have been here. In order to do that we need to have great schools. I have twin third graders and a five year old and I need for them to have good schools and our community needs to have good schools because at the rate we're going right now there is a time coming when students who graduate from Garfield Heights High School will not have the opportunity to attend The Ohio State University because of State minimums and The Ohio State University's requirements will be higher than our State minimums. I hate to see that happen. I firmly believe that as our campaign slogan goes, strong schools strong community. For our community to grow. For our community to rebuild we must maintain a great school system. The reason that I got involved with this campaign is the same reason I imagine many of you became Council Members. That's to make a difference and to make a difference in our community I need your help to pass Issues 3 and 4 and I wanted to let you know I plan on attending the April 11th Meeting and I sincerely hope and respectfully hope to see Issues 3 and 4 on the agenda for that meeting. So thank you for your time and you have my e-mail address and my phone number in the e-mail that you received from me. I'd be happy to answer any questions and to speak with you about it and I hope to hear from you in the coming days and we brought campaign t-shirts that we'll be leaving at the door for you. Thank you.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Anybody else?

MAYOR VIC COLLOVA: If I may, let me respond just for a second? Just for the residents so you understand, we, especially as Mayor, I understand how tough things are right now and how hard it is to dig because everything that's going on is making you dig deeper and I understand that problem. It hurts us. It hurts the schools to have to ask for this money, but the reality is we're doing everything we can to make this community a better place. We want to bring young families back in here. When we bring young families back in here the community is able to prosper. They take care of their house. Things change. One of the first things when you talk to a realtor that people ask is about the school district and if it's not a good school district they're moving on to the next community. It's very important that we do everything we can to keep that school district up. If you can find it in your hearts--if you can find it in your wallets--to spare a few more dollars this is a great cause. Thank you.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Anybody else?

Keisha Matthews. Good evening. My name is Keisha Matthews and I am a Housing Specialist with Neighborhood Housing Services of Greater Cleveland. Our office address is 5700 Broadway Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44127. Good evening, Mr. President and the Members of City Council. Thank you for having me here today. I also want to give a special thank you to Noreen Kuban for inviting me to speak with you this evening. Noreen has been essential in our effort to get the word out about the service that we offer to the residents of Garfield Heights.

Neighborhood Housing Services of Greater Cleveland is a non-profit housing counseling agency. We have a mission of providing ongoing programs and services for achieving, preserving and sustaining the American dream of home ownership. We have several programs that fall under that initiative or that mission. We do home buyer education, reverse mortgage counseling, home maintenance loan and repair counseling and we do foreclosure prevention counseling. I think we all are very much aware of the impact that the current economic state that our nation is facing and especially here in Northeast Ohio. So a majority of our resources have been geared towards foreclosure prevention counseling. That is what I specialize in. Garfield Heights has been devastated by the foreclosure crisis. Families are dealing with reduction of income, unemployment, having to live off of one income and all of these things can drastically impact a family's ability to meet that mortgage obligation. The good news is there are options and there are resources available. Through our partnering with Noreen and the Economic Development Department here with the Garfield Heights City Hall we have been able to set up arrangements where every Wednesday I'm here. I'm here in the Civic Center all day providing my services to the citizens of Garfield Heights and the surrounding areas where I will help them explore the options that may be available to them. Many of the lenders today are willing to work with people and fortunately we are able to help you at whatever stage you are in the process. You can be current, you can be behind, you can be in foreclosure--there are options. I brought with me some handouts that I can give to the Council Members to take back to their Wards and also to the citizens that are here today. Please feel free to visit our Website nhsleveland.org where you can get your registration process started there and you can also call us at (216) 458-4663. Thank you so much.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Anybody else?

David Mays, 8250 Green Drive. First of all I'd like to apologize to Mr. Dudley and Council for my outburst before, but again, you are right, Mr. Dudley, you were elected to do any and all meetings, making all meetings required by you and by a Council, OK? To run the city. You weren't elected to cancel meetings because you wanted time off and that's exactly what you're doing up there. You're cancelling meetings because you want time off. I'm sorry. When I wanted time off I took a vacation and I didn't get paid for it. Thank you.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Thank you, Mr. Mays. Anybody else?

Barry Fashimpaur, 13701 Thraves. I just have two questions and I'll sit down. If you want to answer them that's up to you. What is the action plan for collecting the garbage fees? Why did it take five years to address the past due tax bill? The \$650,000.00 tax bill? Thank you.

MAYOR VIC COLLOVA: Barry, let me say this. That past due tax bill. Once the city became aware of it they contacted legislators and contacted the County and the State. They couldn't get legislators to act on it. Everybody sat on their hands so to speak. It wasn't the city's fault by any stretch of the imagination. That was long before I got here, but I have to say it was not the city's fault. It was by far the red tape, so to speak, that you have to go through and we finally got a legislator that actually took the bull by the horns and sort of rammed it to Columbus legislators and she got the job done. So that's what it was.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Anybody else?

ACTING FINANCE DIRECTOR RON TOMOLA: There's been a couple of comments here about the rubbish fees. The action plan as it is, first, let me correct one thing. It's not 80% uncollected. Right now we're running somewhere around 60% collection rate. There's about 40% uncollected. The Finance Department has teamed up with the Building Department over the last month and a half, two months so that anytime anybody comes in on a property to get a permit, to get a point of sale, no matter what it is, the Building Department staff is checking with Finance to make sure that everything is paid up to date on that property before any permit is issued and we are catching a lot of the unpaid that way and as I've said in the past, the ones that remain uncollected I will be presenting to Council for a special assessment ordinance to be put on to the property tax bills. Thank you.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Anybody else?

Timothy Lorenzo Miller, 4815 Orchard Road. Good evening. I am the owner of Lorenzo's Dog Training Team here in Garfield Heights. I've been here for 20 years now and in 1996 Mayor Tom Longo and his staff approved a 3,200 square foot building that I built here to operate my business. I'm here tonight to introduce myself and also to ask what can I do to help? Because I have seen some changes over the last 20 years and obviously I think that everyone has to kind of look at themselves instead of complaining and I wanted to see exactly what I could do to help.

A couple of months ago I had a meeting with Mayor Vic Collova and he called Mr. Tim Riley in and they were able to help me out with a major challenge I had with the city and I wanted to thank the guys for that help. I really appreciated it. I've had some other challenges in the city since then over in the Court and just in different areas, you know, trying to do business and I thought I'd stop in and introduce myself and meet my Councilperson. I've never met him or her. Once again, just to see what I can do to help so after this meeting I'd like to speak to a few people and start there. OK?

PRESIDENT GERACI: Thank you.

MR. MILLER: Thank you.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Anybody else?

CLWN MARINCIC: That's refreshing. Take his name and number.

PRESIDENT GERACI: We thank you. Anybody else? We'll move on. Miscellaneous. Clmn Dudley.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

CLMN DUDLEY: Like I said that was refreshing to see that somebody wanting to possibly. He's not the first. We've had other individuals come up and see what they could do. Now I will reiterate once again to say that to take off in the summer is not truly taking off because once again, when stuff comes up we still have to handle it. It's just so easy. I kind of like it because when they come up to the podium for some reason they love my name. I like that. Like I say I'm always going to be willing to give you an answer. Like I told Mr. Mays, you speak your mind. Whatever you got to say, you got to come up and say it. But like I say with us here you have other things you have to get done, but when the city calls we're always here. You say two meetings a month? If it's four, five, ten meetings a month I will be here if we required two meetings a month for me to get the job done. But like I say it's just so easy to complain and bring negativity. If sometimes people would take half that negativity they have and put it in a positive way this city would be a much better place than it is

now. That's the way I look at it. Like I tell people, when I got tired of seeing things the way it was, instead of me coming to this meeting and pointing a finger and complaining I said well, maybe I need to run for office if I can make a difference? I always tell people you do one of two things and not putting anybody down. You know what I'm saying? I say put up or _____. And that's what you have to do sometimes. I'm not going to change it. Like I say I have no problem with four months or three months. Like I said if you need me the other four weeks, if you need me five days in a week, Clmn Dudley will be there.

On top of that I thank the gentleman there and I come by there and I been tapping on the door, but I never could catch nobody at the place. I know where it's located. So I'm glad to get an opportunity to meet you there.

I'd just like to say springtime is coming. The weather is breaking so we know in the community we got to start doing some cleanups around the yard when the trash is done after the snow is melted down and everything and I wish everybody the best and like I say let's go and get together and push the city forward and have us a nice spring cleanup. That's all I got to say.

CLWN MARINCIC: I actually have two questions. One's for Tim. Mr. Riley, I had a resident call me about their cable bill asking to get a Senior discount because they knew their neighbor was getting it and the resident told me that the cable company told them only if Council approves that. Is that true that we have to approve Senior rates on cable?

LAW DIRECTOR TIM RILEY: I don't believe we could do anything with the rates.

CLWN MARINCIC: That's what I told them. I think they are being buffaloed because we have nothing to do with cable rates. We can't say you have to have a Senior rate.

LAW DIRECTOR TIM RILEY: No.

CLWN MARINCIC: OK. I just wanted that on the record here. Secondly, I wanted to ask Mr. McLaughlin a question, but since he's not here I'm going to hit you up with it, Mayor. Now that the County is going to take care of cleaning our sewers, I thought that they were going to clean our catch basins too. Is that going to happen as well?

MAYOR VIC COLLOVA: Actually we don't want them to do the catch basins.

CLWN MARINCIC: I thought that was part of the contract?

MAYOR VIC COLLOVA: There's a part of it that when we do the catch basins we make money on that.

CLWN MARINCIC: How do we make money? I thought we didn't have the equipment and that's why we're.

MAYOR VIC COLLOVA: We charge them for the catch basins.

CLWN MARINCIC: OK. So we're going to clean the catch basins, but we're going to charge the County?

MAYOR VIC COLLOVA: Right.

CLWN MARINCIC: OK. Good job. All right. That's all I have.

MAYOR VIC COLLOVA: Let me just say this, Nancy, and I should have said this earlier in my report. Mr. McLaughlin is not here tonight because he had a medical procedure performed today. Nothing earth shattering, but he had to have it done and it's sidelined him for the night and also Mr. Wervey is in the hospital. He's been in the hospital for about a week. He has pneumonia. That's why he's not here tonight and it's been a struggle for him, but he's doing a lot better and he will be back next Council Meeting.

CLWN MARINCIC: OK. I got to buy some cards. Thank you.

CLMN NENADOVICH: I'll try to get this out without choking. It's a medication that makes my throat dry. That's why I'm gagging like this. I want to apologize to Mr. Birk. I started to cough while we were still giving you comments. What I said was you should be very proud of your father for what he's done. He's a good man. With that I have nothing else.

CLWN SARNOWSKI: Tim's not here, but I'd like to thank him for picking up the leaves. They hit Ward 4 and they swung through and picked up some of the leaves on our tree lawns so the residents thank you. Also Ward 4 is having their Block Watch. We moved from the fire station. We're moving to the Civic Center because of the parking. This Tuesday at seven o'clock here and our speaker for that evening would be Cuyahoga County Councilperson Pernell Jones. It's at seven o'clock so please join us.

CLMN SUSTER: I, myself, I'd like to thank Mr. Lorenzo for offering to help the city. You know, as Councilperson Dudley had said, it's good to see somebody come up and talk positive for a change. I know I attended a luncheon that the Mayor was the guest speaker with the Chamber of Commerce a while back and his whole speech at that time was talking about being positive. There are a lot of positive things going on within our city, but a lot of people just have not heard about them. They will come to full volition probably within the next year or year and a half and that's the way things will go.

Also Ward 5 is having a Block Watch meeting next Monday, a week from today. It will be at seven o'clock here at the Civic Center Room 118 and our guest speaker will be Mayor Vic Collova. You always have to remember for every negative there is a positive. That's all I have this evening.

CLMN VAUGHN: Why thank you, Mr. President. Mr. Lorenzo, I want to thank you for your offer. I wish more citizens could do what you are offering to do. You know, simple things that we can do in our city is just clean out the street gutter in front of our own homes. These are just simple things that we can do and not depend upon the city to do it for us. We're all going to have to do this together if we're going to turn this city around. I think the school and the city we're going to do it. It's going to take some time, but we'll work together.

Ward 7 will have a Block Watch. All are invited. Thursday evening at seven o'clock down at St. Monica's St. Augustine Room. We might have one of the Judges from Juvenile Court. He hasn't called me back, but if not, we'll improvise. So all are welcome. With that, Mr. Chairman, motion to adjourn this meeting.

PRESIDENT GERACI: Roll call.

CLMN DUDLEY: I don't really want to go. Yes.

CLWN MARINCIC: You're going. Yes.

AYES: 6

ABSENT: 1

PRESIDENT GERACI: Council is adjourned.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:00 p.m.

APPROVED:

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Frank Geraci, Jr.
President of Council

Barbara Molin
Clerk of Council