



CITY OF CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, OHIO

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF MONDAY, MAY 18, 2009

Council Committee of the Whole of the City of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, met on the above date at 6:05 p.m.

Phyllis Evans, presiding

Council Members present: Caplan, Dietrich, Evans, Montlack, Tumeo, Wilcox

Council Members absent: Kelley

Vice President Evans excused the absence of Mayor Kelley.

Staff present: Carter, Czaga, Downey, Gibbon, Knittel, Lentz, Malone, Mannarino, Niermann O'Neil, Wagner, Wong

Topic of discussion included general information pertaining to the City Manager's weekly memo.

Committee of the Whole adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

The Council of the City of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, met on the above date at 7:35 p.m.

Phyllis Evans, presiding

Council Members present: Caplan, Dietrich, Evans, Montlack, Tumeo, Wilcox

Council Members absent: Kelley

Vice Mayor Evans excused the absence of Mayor Kelley.

Staff present: Carter, Czaga, Downey, Gibbon, Malone, Mannarino, Niermann O'Neil, Wagner, Wong

"Good evening. I'm Irene or Rini Smith, 2228 Chatfield. I'm grateful to be here, Vice Mayor and Members of Council and I'm here to report to you about the exciting status of the Heights Youth Club. You helped us come into existence. You helped us put together a brilliant program and a brilliant building and we are now in the third year of our operation. Our success is so great it exceeds our imagination. We have made a huge difference in the lives of the kids who come to be with us. Our academic status is what is so astonishing. We find that the large majority of the kids who come on a daily basis end up on the honor roll and in distinguished positions in the high school or whatever branch of the schools where they attend. We are serving seventy kids on an average basis a day. Right now we are helping the high school kids prepare for finals. One of the most exciting events in the last

few months is we now have permission to include all the kids in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights School District and tomorrow the head, the executive director of the Heights Youth Club, Roscoe Morgan will be meeting with the school district to partner with programs for next school year. I think enhancing the ability of each of us to serve the kids. To give you an example of what we do outside of the academics, we just finished a program in ballroom dancing. We are very diverse, serving all of the needs in the programs that the boys and girls club do throughout the country. The summer program will begin on June 8th and for \$10.00 for the whole summer the kids will have a program from twelve to five o'clock and typically that program starts with journaling, which means that the kids sit and get to write creatively and get to learn how to write.

The real reason that I'm here tonight is to include you in the great new adventure of the Heights Youth Club. For three years we were so proud of our garden tour. We featured eight to ten gardens just in Cleveland Heights. We didn't just have big ones, just little ones, we had every size garden from what I think the most magnificent property on Oakridge in all of Cuyahoga County to beautiful modest homes. We made sure they were all through [the] Cleveland Heights community. But, this year we branched out because we think it's time for all of you to get to come to the Heights Youth Club to see the kids in action, to see their performing and also to get to celebrate the restaurants that are in this area. So we are now - on June 3rd, Wednesday, going to have a taste of the Heights. We have twenty-two (22) restaurants coming to be with us that evening. So for \$50.00 you get to have tastes from 22 restaurants, meet the kids, see the facility and Roscoe Morgan will be at the door. He had hoped to be here tonight, but an electrical problem that developed at his home at 7:00 p.m. kept him at home. So, I am here on his behalf and I want to include you, all of you, each of you has received an orange invitation. If any of you need another one, I would be happy to give you one. We have these fliers that I'd be happy to put in any place that is appropriate and in the community you may start seeing these posters, '*A Taste of the Heights*', Wednesday, June 3rd 6:00 tp 9:00 and if you have questions or anyone has questions, please use our website, heightsyouthclub.org. Thank you."

"Carol Gibson, 1836 Wilton Road. I'm here as a representative of the League of Women Voters in Cuyahoga County. In 1998 we published a brochure on county government. I've bet you've all seen this [displaying brochure] but things have changed since 1998. We did include the history, the sorry history I might add of attempts to reform and break into and through some of the old structures that aren't serving us well. During the decade since publication a lot has happened. Serious efforts to achieve reform were launched by the Cleveland Bar Association, the Ohio Legislature, the leagues in Cuyahoga County and a number of municipal and county officers. So, an update of the brochure was needed. In response to this need the Cuyahoga Area League's education fund has produced a *Citizen's Guide to Cuyahoga Government Past, Present and Future* using much of the material in the former brochure but a lot of updated information. It includes information that the leagues learned during the recent study of authorities, boards, commissions and special districts or as we call them the ABCD's and also the results from the 2008 Cuyahoga County Commission on Government Reform. That was appointed by Governor Strickland and the Ohio Legislature. In a nutshell the persistent problems that the commission and the league identified as barriers to effective and transparent county government are summed up on the last page of the brochure, if you're the type to go to the last page you'll get the skinny back. I always say things that aren't in my notes, don't I? Anyone interested in obtaining a printer-friendly downloadable guide can visit the league's publication section of their website which is lwvcuyahogaarea.org and I have a copy for each one of you and the staff. Thank you."

Vice Mayor Evans added, "Thank you very much, Carol. The hard work of the league is always appreciated."

"Hello. My name is Mary Dunbar and I live at 2880 Fairfax Road. My purpose in speaking this

evening is to announce my candidacy for a seat on Cleveland Heights City Council in the upcoming November election. I am running because I love living in this community. I believe that despite current challenges Cleveland Heights has major opportunities to build on its many strengths to insure an outstanding future. I am running because I bring experience and expertise in business, finance, communications and marketing to enable me to make a significant contribution as a council person. I am running because I now have all the time there is to devote to public service and to achieving the goal we all share of living in an excellent community. I will be walking around soon, going door to door, passing out brochures that highlight the reasons why voters should select me for city council in the upcoming November election. As I walk around the city, I look forward to gaining citizens' input and to hearing your thoughts and concerns. Thank you very much for this opportunity to announce my candidacy for Cleveland Heights City Council. Again, my name is Mary Dunbar."

Vice Mayor Evans stated, "Thank you, Mary. Thanks for adding your name to the long list of people who love Cleveland Heights."

"Hi. I'm Fran Mentch. I live at 1413 Lynn Park Drive and I am the president of Severance Neighborhood Organization. In March, Severance Neighborhood Organization had a meeting with the help of the Community Relations Department, a meeting about crime. Subsequent to that, there were two meetings in the Oxford Neighborhood. Those neighbors were also concerned about issues of crime. Among the issues that did come up that were of concern to people, some of it had to do with problems with some of our young people. At that meeting the Severance Neighborhood Organization held, we had a faculty person, Jim Chriss from Cleveland State University, Department of Sociology and we also had present in the audience the Chief of Police of the CMHA (Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority). Chief Gonzalez was there. We talked about the issue with the youth. In fact, one of my neighbors has a son who goes to Monticello and she, at this meeting said she was concerned about what was going on there, because he was coming home and talking about gangs and gang-like activity. So when she brought this up at the meeting about Severance Neighborhood Organization had with the city, Chief Gonzalez and Dr. Chriss mentioned this program named *GREAT*. And *GREAT* is a program that's sponsored by the federal government. It started about seventeen years ago. It has had a series of evaluations, one of them very rigorous, it was a longitudinal evaluation. I have copies for some of you for you to review, that document from the federal government. But, *GREAT* describes itself on their website. It says, '*The GREAT Program is a school-based, law-enforcement officer-instructed classroom curriculum with prevention as its primary objective - prevention.*' The program is intended as an immunization against delinquency, youth violence and gang membership. Now, as I continue to talk about my concern, I'd like you to think of what would be a more appropriate activity for a police officer than to be involved with prevention against delinquency, youth violence and gang membership? We talked about this program, the *GREAT Program*. Chief Gonzalez offered to partner that night with Cleveland Heights' police. Councilman Tumeo was there. He said there would be no cost to the city other than the release time for the training. I think he is authorized as a trainer. So he offered to partner with the city on that. Again, there is no cost. And then, I subsequently spoke to members of the school board in [the] administration office and they said that, "They, in fact, had attempted to partner with the Cleveland Heights Police Department. That they in their grant received monies that would pay for the Cleveland Heights police officer to go for the training and whatever expenses involved in the transportation." So it's going to cost nothing again, but the release time and apparently our police department has dropped the ball. They have not gotten back. We have not partnered, I shouldn't say the police department because that's really not fair, I've worked in [unclear] - the Chief of Police apparently is not showing the leadership that we would hope that he would at this point in time. Because there may be officers who are very willing to do this. So it is the chief who didn't follow through. I'm really encouraging, as a member of this community and as president of this organization that we take advantage of this program. As I said, it is old, it is established, it has been researched. I

also have to express that I am uneasy at the idea that the Chief of Police is not willing to partner with the public school district. I'm very uneasy about that. I can't think of a better definition of a neighborhood than a place where you feel that you are welcomed and cared about by your organizations and by your community. I feel in some ways that this disinterest actually places our community at risk, because it's certainly not serving the youth that are at risk and their families and their neighborhood which is all of us in the community. If you can prevent at all problems, those of you in human services know that an ounce of prevention is worth about what two-three-four times of cure. I am very concerned that we have not followed up on this and I thank you in advance for your taking this concern forward. As I said there are two organizations that have attempted to work with the chief and as I say it seems there is an appearance of disinterest."

Vice Mayor Evans added, "Thank you very much. Mr. Downey who also serves as our Safety Director would like to update us."

Mr. Downey stated, "Thank you very much, your Honor. Yes, I would like to take a minute and respond if you will. As you know, this evening's meeting will be on television shortly, as we turn around our cable show very quickly, it will be on tonight and I wouldn't want to let for a moment our friends and our residents in the Oxford area around Oxford School, around Monticello Junior High think that the police do not take their job seriously. We have been in contact with the school superintendent, with their chief of security, and their principal, the principal of Monticello Junior High and the school superintendent tells me that the principal, for example at Monticello Junior High knows of no gang activity at all - knows of nothing going on in or around the school. In addition, their Chief of Security Bryan Loretz, is in constant contact with our police department and reports the same thing. They have no credible evidence from anyone saying that there is any kind of gang activity going on. Our police department, the Cleveland Heights Police Department has looked into this as well and we don't find any gang activity going on in and around that neighborhood. We've gone so far as to contact our police contacts who live in the neighborhood. Folks who live in and around Oxford/Noble and those schools and they don't report any gang-like activity. However, if there is anyone who knows anything about this, please, please by all means give us a call - any activity of this type, but if someone would, we would please ask you to call Captain Mike Cannon and his number is 291-3845. He is aware of this issue. He knows I've talked with the school superintendent. He has talked with the principal, etc. If there is anyone who knows anything, we'd love to hear from them.

I talked to the superintendent as I do on a regular basis and specifically asked about the question, what was the school board providing or not in terms of this training? And she was very, very clear with me. She was very clear with me. They do not have money for the training of Cleveland Heights' police officers. They're working their hardest to make sure that they can afford Officer Loretz's training, but they do not have money for us as well and she actually shared with me a memorandum that she wrote to the school board talking about how pleased she is with the continued cooperation between Security Chief Loretz and our police department. Couldn't say enough nice things about the sharing of information between the two entities. So I'm a little surprised that the notion that we would consider not showing leadership in this area and we're not participating with the other local public agencies here. Our Chief of Police, Captain Cannon as well, talk regularly with the schools and with the school security people in order to keep that kind of understanding alive and communication open. So, if you have any questions, your Honor, I would be more than happy to answer them."

Vice Mayor Evans replied, "I do not. Mr. Tumeo, please."

Council Member Tumeo stated, "I don't have a question, I do want to follow up with a couple things though. I think it's important that the citizens recognize that the people listening to this recognize

that the concerns expressed about Monticello, I think are as you've heard from the safety director, not something that we can verify and speaking with the principal myself, it doesn't seem to be extant in the way expressed. As for the *GREAT* training and I think this is very important, one of the things that we often, as individuals do, think that if our idea isn't enacted it's because someone isn't doing their job because we all think our ideas are always the best. Sometimes our ideas are not necessarily as right on point as we may believe they are. I did look into the *GREAT* training. I was at the meeting where this came up and we talked to Officer Gonzalez. A couple things about that. First, it does cost the city. We have had layoffs, police officers and we don't have excess police officers to be putting into schools, especially when it is the schools that need to run the program. The school doesn't have the money to run the program right now and the school is running other programs in cooperation, for example, with the Heights Youth Club, that you've already heard about and I would direct individuals if they are interested in the *GREAT* program to go to their website and they say they actually partner with nationally recognized organizations such as the boys and girls club. So, I think we already have a lot of those programs in place, where the *GREAT* training might be one that the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Police Force chooses to engage in. They are a much different organization than in a police force that is responsible for the health and safety of the populace. They are responsible for the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing activities, not for the safety of Cleveland. So they are not the Cleveland police force. The Cleveland police do different things to take care of the safety and health of their citizens as do our police and I think the one thing I want to directly respond to is that Chief Lentz in any way is not interested or involved - he is very interested - very involved - talks regularly with the head of security at the school, which is appropriate. Our Safety Director, Bob Downey, talks regularly with the superintendent at the school, which is also appropriate. So, I want to directly dispel any concern that there is no cooperation or no interest - that's the exact opposite of the truth. Actually, the *GREAT* program, it's not something at this time that seems to be appropriate for us or definitely within the resources of the school or the city. Thank you."

Council Member Montlack stated, "Yes, I was surprised to hear a comment that sounded like Chief Lentz was not somehow cooperating with the Cleveland Heights-University Heights schools, because that is so contrary to what I have observed not just in the 22 years on this council, but the 12 years before that sitting as an acting judge. But, especially during the last several years we have often met with both the school personnel and the chief to hear of a close working cooperation. Some of which, is probably not appropriate to go into detail about, but certainly he has given invaluable advice. This has happened, as I said, in the last couple of years especially when there were one or two problems that became public problems. He has worked on installation of security devices, he has allocated personnel from the police department who continue to work closely with the schools. The chief was working co-operatively with the University Heights Chief of Police, the President of the school board, Mr. Tumeo as chair of Public Health and Safety and me, when we met for some important sessions on looking at how to deal with youth problems generally. His leadership, speaking of Chief Lentz was very evident when many of the police chiefs through the First Suburbs organization met with juvenile court and it was obvious for very good reason Chief Lentz's colleagues looked up to him and his experience and knowledge. Those of us whose connection with Cleveland Heights is basically living here and expecting a secure environment know that the allocation of resources and keep in mind that like every department the police department has under gone reductions. That those allocation of resources are still cutting edge and that the police response time is one that every community would like to see. I think that while I can't say why any kinds of public comments are made at any time, I do tend to notice that as we near November of odd number years there seems to be more speechifying on both sides of the council furniture. Maybe we need to think, all of us, very carefully about what it is we say. Are we really making a contribution or are we somehow playing to the kind of fears that are all too common in today's world. Although that last comment is strictly my own, but I think that we've got to look carefully at some of these things. Thank you."

Council Member Caplan added, "Yes. Some things are not always out in public, the work that's done behind the scenes and for many years, I mean really many years as a member of this council I had been the chair of something that was called The Heights Task Force on Youth. It's only not been functional the past year or so and I'll tell you why in a moment, but for all those years what that task force consisted of was an officer from Cleveland Heights, a police officer from University Heights, a police officer from South Euclid, school people from administration and from the junior highs and the high school, from the libraries, because lots of our youth go to the libraries and both University Heights and Cleveland Heights City Councils and staff. And we would meet and talk about specific issues that were happening, sharing information, giving good ideas to each other and primarily I saw my task as just bringing the people together and it was amazing to see the kind of cooperation that went on. The task force ceased a little more than a year ago and part of that had to do with our police chief becoming even more involved on a personal level with the chief of security at the school system and so that there was a way for them to communicate even more directly. But, all those years we had a police officer come, all kinds of information was flowing back and forth and although it wasn't public, the public wasn't - under the sunshine laws, I think, because it was a sharing of information - I'm having difficulty over here, most of it was in public areas - about commercial areas, the libraries - the libraries were in the beginning just beginning to deal with children coming after school and being left there for long periods of time. The parents used the libraries as baby sitters and so there was a way of trying to figure out how do we work around this, what do we do with those children, how do we keep them involved and if that was the reality then what do we do about it and how do we identify children that seemed to get in more trouble than others? I'll never forget the biggest lesson I ever learned was the lesson of anonymity. Once you know the name of a child, then it's easier to deal with who this child is. So when the police would ask the school people and were shown pictures, we have this child that was difficult and then they learned who it was and then there was a whole discussion about how can we deal with this child, deal with this family, what are some of the issues? So, not all of that was in public. It wasn't through a course, it was through people talking to each other and trying to solve common issues and let me tell you it would not have happened if the chief had not been willing to allow his police officer and all of those police chiefs from these three cities to allow their officers to come to a meeting on a regular basis and discuss issues that were of common concern. It distresses me a little to think that one would think our police chief was not involved. It could hardly be true. I wanted to tell you about it, it was quite an experience for me. I learned more than I could ever imagined about police work, about sharing that information. It made me proud to live in this community, where talking is really a thing that we all take very seriously. Thank you."

Vice Mayor Evans added, "I would just like to add that at Monticello Middle School, there is a youth group called the Youth Summit, it meets on a regular basis and they discuss some of their concerns and their hopes and desires and they are doing a very good job of encouraging each other to be good students."

REPORT OF THE CITY MANAGER

Mr. Downey stated, "Thank you very much, your Honor. I just have just one brief item this evening. In your packets you received a copy of Bid Document No. 2009-03, also known as the path resurfacing in Cain and Denison Parks. The lowest and best bidder is the Chagrin Valley Paving Company in the amount of \$197,785.00. Your Honor, I would request that the bid tabulation and the award of contract be made a matter of record."

Vice Mayor Evans made it a matter of record.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE/CLERK OF COUNCIL

Mr. Malone stated, "I have no report, your Honor."

REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Council Member Dietrich stated, "There is no report."

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Council Member Montlack stated, "There are three pieces of legislation from this committee. These are almost housekeeping pieces in the sense that each October/November this council passes the special budget for Community Development Block Grant funds and then as the time approaches to enter into agreements to spend the monies that are in that special budget, legislation is prepared and these are three of those pieces of legislation. There will be more in the next meeting, etc.

The first is Resolution No. 45-2009(F), authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the Heights Community Congress, a non-profit corporation, for the use of Community Development Block Grant funds for assistance with its programs to promote integration and fair housing; providing compensation therefor; and declaring an emergency. As with each of these pieces of legislation, Exhibit A is part of the legislation and it describes in this case the HCC's efforts to promote integration. The amount pursuant to the budget as I described it is a grant in the sum of Eighteen Thousand Dollars (\$18,000.00) from 35th year CDBG budget and that agreement would be for a one-year period starting July 1 of this year and terminating one year later. Resolution No. 45-2009(F) is presented on first reading for passage tonight."

Vice Mayor Evans accepted Resolution No. 45-2009(F).

Roll Call: Ayes: Caplan, Dietrich, Evans, Montlack, Tumeo, Wilcox

Nays: None

Resolution passed

Council Member Montlack continued, "Thank you. Resolution No. 46-2009(F), authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the Heights Emergency Food Center, a non-profit corporation, for the use of Community Development Block Grant funds for the payment of operating expenses; providing compensation therefor; and declaring an emergency. The amount provided is Five Thousand Two Hundred Twenty Dollars (\$5,220.00) to this very worthy organization, which now more than ever is providing much needed food assistance and by virtue of the federal rules these funds can only go for operating expenses as opposed to helping them purchase food. Within those confines that's how we arrive at the amount provided and then again it is a one-year agreement for the same period as the previous legislation. Resolution No. 46-2009(F) is presented on first reading for passage tonight."

Vice Mayor Evans accepted Resolution No. 46-2009(F).

Roll Call: Ayes: Dietrich, Evans, Montlack, Tumeo, Wilcox, Caplan

Nays: None

Resolution passed

Council Member Montlack continued, "Thank you and finally Resolution No. 47-2009(F), authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the Heights Youth Club, Inc., a non-profit corporation, for the use of Community Development Block Grant funds to provide funding for assistance with its Project Learn: The Educational Enhancement Program; providing compensation

therefor; and declaring an emergency. Here the agreement was in the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) for the same period of time and we heard a little bit about the Heights Youth Club activities previously during this session. Resolution No. 47-200(F) is presented on first reading for passage tonight.”

Vice Mayor Evans accepted Resolution No. 47-2009(F).

Roll Call: Ayes: Evans, Montlack, Tumeo, Wilcox, Caplan, Dietrich

Nays: None

Resolution passed

Council Member Montlack continued, “Thank you. Just a few comments on some funds that are about to be received. We heard from our staff prior to this meeting that we’ve been notified already, of course, about the Neighborhood Stabilization Program funding of 2.3 million dollars which is in the pipeline to Cleveland Heights now and speaking of block grant funding another part of the entire stimulus package which is additional block grant funds, extra amount in addition to the regular budget. This one in the sum of about 468,000 dollars is also on its way. The city has received official notification and for the first time has received the rules about how it may be expended. In each case as I’ve discussed them, the staff is hard at work complying with the rules and setting up its programs so that the funds can be expended timely, so that before that happens the application conforming to the rules to the federal government and we can stimulate the local economy as well as doing good things for Cleveland Heights. And as we discussed somewhat here the Neighborhood Stabilization Program funds will predominantly be used for housing, for some of the fairly sad dwellings that are coming to us by way of HUD’s Dollar Home program and the extra block grant funds we anticipate, after review by the Citizens Advisory Committee tomorrow night, should be available for some very badly needed work on Cleveland Heights’ streets and water lines and other such project. That completes this report and thank you.”

REPORT OF THE MUNICIPAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Council Member Caplan stated, “Thank you. I have one piece of legislation. At our last meeting I had talked about that we have a new magnet for your refrigerator that has to do about recycling. What can be recycled, what can’t be recycled, our website is on it, our phone number is on it and so I’m loving reading this new piece of legislation and by the way you can get this if you come to City Hall [displaying the magnet]. By the way, we have 5,000 of them and you can get it for free.

I have Resolution No. 48-2009(MS), authorizing the City Manager to accept a *Community Recycling Awareness Grant* from the Board of Commissioners of Cuyahoga County on behalf of the City of Cleveland Heights; and declaring an emergency. The Board of Commissioners of Cuyahoga County has awarded a grant of Three Thousand Four Hundred Ninety and 20/100 Dollars (\$3,490.20) to the City of Cleveland Heights to support recycling efforts. Acceptance of this grant will aid us in promoting recycling and be of a benefit to us.

That’s how we pay for these [displaying magnet]. So I’m really thrilled that we got money to pay for the magnets and we can all have them.

The City Manager is now authorized to accept on behalf of the City of Cleveland Heights from the Board of Commissioners of Cuyahoga County a *Community Recycling Awareness Grant* in the amount of Three Thousand Four Hundred Ninety and 20/100 Dollars (\$3,490.20) to promote recycling efforts in the City. The City Manager is authorized to execute any and all documents necessary for acceptance

of the grant. Notice of passage shall be given and this Resolution shall be passed as an emergency tonight. I offer Resolution No. 48-2009(MS) for passage.”

Vice Mayor Evans accepted Resolution No. 48-2009(MS).

Roll Call: Ayes: Montlack, Tumeo, Wilcox, Caplan, Dietrich, Evans

Nays: None

Resolution passed

Council Member Caplan continued, “Thank you. I have a very important message. Anybody whose rubbish is collected on Friday needs to really pay attention. This weekend is Memorial Day weekend and if you remember in our trying to become very fiscally responsible we have cut out collecting garbage on Saturdays. So on Friday it will be a double pickup day - next Friday, the 29th. So, Monday there is no garbage collection. It is Memorial Day and you are all going to come to a Memorial Day service at our memorial on Superior and Mayfield. It is at 10:00, but there is no garbage pickup that day. So, Monday is going to be picked up on Tuesday, Tuesday’s households will be picked up on Wednesday. Wednesday’s households will be picked up on Thursday. Thursday’s households will be picked up on Friday and Friday’s households will be picked up on Friday. There will be no garbage pickup on Saturday. The Friday households really need to pay attention. It is mostly in the northern part of the city. I am reminding you. You did get all kinds of notices before. I don’t think you are going to get notices this time. You are going to have to rely on your neighbors to remind you. So do remember, it’s really important. So you will put out your garbage next Friday.

There has been a whole discussion about are we, as a city, cutting grass of vacant houses or houses that are not cutting their own grass for whatever reason. And we’ve done that in the past. Last year, I think, we cut - I don’t know - somewhere between 400 and 900 lawns and for the most part we do ultimately get paid for that through various ways, being paid by the banks who own the houses or on liens on the households or whatever. So, yes, we are cutting grass again. However, we have a much limited personnel to do the grass cutting and so if a house next door to you or on your block looks in need of being cut and you can, would you cut it? I know we did it for a long time for a neighbor that we had. It was somebody who couldn’t do it themselves and actually the truth of it is we cut the lawn because it made our lawn and our house look better. So, if you are in the position to be able to do that it would really be helpful and it would mean that it would be done in a timely way. We all want our city to look great. We’re doing the best we can with the resources that we have, but it would really be a neighborly thing to help make your own neighborhood look really great and that’s all I have. Thank you.”

REPORT OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Council Member Wilcox stated, “Thank you, your Honor. There is no legislation tonight, but I did want to make an announcement of a community meeting. This has to do with the planned new University Circle Cedar-Rapid Station. If you go down Cedar Hill and you notice that rapid station that is at the bottom of the hill. It is in great need of updating and a better design for one thing. On Tuesday, June 9th at our community center, the architect that has been hired to present a new 10 million dollar design for this rapid station will present the design. That’s at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 9th at our community center and from the initial drawings that council has seen this will be quite a dramatic and needed change for the bottom of Cedar Hill. So, that will be an opportunity to hear first hand about what that project entails and perhaps to get some public input on that as well.

I just have one other comment and essentially following up on Councilwoman Caplan’s

comment. Memorial Day does mark the beginning of our summer season and that means there is going to be a lot more activity in our city, a lot more demand for city services from our public works' people, from our parks and recreation programs, Cain Park, and that brings complaints from residents including things like tall grass, noise complaints, vacant homes that may need to be fixed up. As we've all said up here, we've cut staff by dozens of workers over the last year and although we are attentive to complaints and inquiries from our citizens we want you to keep in mind that it may take a little bit longer to respond than it has been in the past. Certainly things like EMS, fire, police - when you call and you need immediate help, help will be there and that's what you expect in Cleveland Heights and that's what you'll receive. However, when you're talking about a pothole on your street or a house that may be vacant and may need grass cutting or some repairs try to be somewhat patient about that. We will get to your complaint. We're not ignoring you if we don't respond immediately, but it is just a matter of resources. And then I would echo what Councilwoman Caplan said, if you can help others on your street, if there is a vacant house and maybe take turns with neighbors in cutting that lawn or whatever. But, look out for your neighborhood and again the city is listening - we will respond, it just may take a little longer than in the past. That completes my report."

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

Council Member Tumeo stated, "Thank you, your Honor. I have one resolution tonight and this is Resolution No. 49-2009(PSH), declaring the property at 2611 Idlewood Road to be a nuisance; authorizing abatement of the nuisance; and declaring an emergency. The City Manager and the Certified Building Official have reported to this Council that the residential property known as 2611 Idlewood Road owned by Joan H. Hornik has not been maintained for a number of years and is in a state of severe disrepair. There have been numerous housing violations. There have been proceedings on this house since early 2000. It's been in court, out of court, in court, out of court. It has been closed several times by the court for lack of response. It is a very serious situation on a very beautiful street and we're working to try and get this repaired. By this Resolution it is hereby found and determined by this Council, pursuant to Chapter 553 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Cleveland Heights, that the premises owned by Joan H. Hornik known as 2611 Idlewood Road is in a state of disrepair to the extent that it constitutes a health and safety hazard and a blighting influence and is hereby declared to be a public nuisance. The City Manager and Certified Building Official and Director of Law are authorized and directed to cause the nuisance to be abated. I introduce Resolution No. 49-2009(PSH) for passage tonight."

Vice Mayor Evans accepted Resolution No. 49-2009(PSH).

Roll Call: Ayes: Tumeo, Wilcox, Caplan, Dietrich, Evans, Montlack

Nays: None

Resolution passed

Council Member Tumeo continued, "Thank you, your Honor. It is estimated that the total cost to bring this up so that it is looking good and it's not looking as blighted will be about \$4,900. That should be taken care of in the very near future hopefully.

A couple of other things just to update some issues that are going on. I do want to report that based on the Oxford neighborhood meeting that I attended. We've now identified an Oxford neighborhood liaison who is working with the police department. It is a pilot program where a neighborhood organization can have a liaison that comes in weekly, goes through the police reports and can report back everything that is going on in the neighborhood, mostly notably in these instances people find there is not a lot going on. So the perception of all the anti-social behavior and concerns

from the police is actually kind of abated by the fact that there really isn't a lot of activity in most of our neighborhoods and the few things that do happen are addressed quickly and thoroughly. So that program is a pilot. We're seeing how it works, seeing how it works for the neighborhood, whether the kind of information we can provide is good and if that works out we'll be expanding that to other neighborhood groups as interested. So stay tuned for more developments on that - just part of the effort to insure that the city and the police department are communicating with the neighborhoods and making sure that we are all working in this together.

The other thing I would like to just give you an update on is the always fun concept of discussing merger and I had the opportunity to listen to and read some of the comments that are going on and there is just one thing that I do want to respond to that's been said in a couple editorials that somehow my suggestion to discuss this was an attempt to tax-grab from our neighbor, University Heights, because we are suffering such dismal financial statements, I think it was, *swamped by debt*, was the comment that was made by one individual. I want to assure you that (a) we are not swamped by debt, we have a balanced budget, we have a reserve, the city is not bankrupt or in any way struggling financially other than the same as everyone is. There is less money to go around and there are more things that people want. So we're being very judicious and as you all know we are playing it very tight and we are doing a lot more with less, but we are not sliding into the depths as might be suggested by some of our fair neighbors. I think that the discussions for merger are based, for me and for the people that I've talked to, that are very excited about the idea of the discussion on how do we make this community, this region better for the future? Not our personal concerns today. So, I encourage people to continue sending me the emails. They buoy me up. I appreciate it and stay tuned there are some more things to come. Thank you."

REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Council Member Dietrich stated, "Thank you, your Honor. There is no legislation, but I have a few things to report on. Councilwoman Caplan and I attended the Heights Democratic Club meeting last week. The topic was Governor Strickland's school reform plan. The speakers were Julian Rogers from the Education Voter, Julian is actually a young man who graduated from Heights High. The other speaker was Bill Zelei who is the superintendent of South Euclid Lyndhurst Schools. You probably read about the plan in the paper. You know there are some very good elements to the plan. I have to sort of give him that, but I have to say that I am really, really disappointed by the school funding aspect of the plan. It does increase state funding somewhat, but to me the real problem with school funding is the fact that the revenue that the schools get does not grow to keep up with inflation as the revenue to say a city does. It might not always grow exactly enough to keep up with inflation, but we do have some automatic growth in our revenue which the schools do not. And I was just really, really hoping that Governor Strickland, who I like and support, was truly going to do as he promised and address the real issues of school funding. I have to say that what was presented in this plan seemed more like tinkering around the edges and I just have to say take a good look at it. I think that we are - not that we get to be the people that decide on it, I mean obviously this is something that the legislature at the state level will decide, but unfortunately I think we're going to be faced with the burden of having to pass school levies for the next million years. I just wanted to give my opinion on that.

On a more positive note, I have two announcements. One is that our safety town is alive and well for another summer, in spite of all the things that we've had to cut back on. Safety Town is still going to be offered to you as a free service. If you have a child who will be entering kindergarten this coming fall, that child is eligible to attend Safety Town and that child is encouraged to attend Safety Town. It's a wonderful program, several of the towns around us also offer it. It's provided largely by the police department and a little bit by the fire department. It teaches children how to be safe pedestrians so

that in the fall they can walk safely to and from their neighborhood school. They learn and practice in a little town that is set up in the community center parking lot. [They learn] how to cross streets, what to do if a stranger approaches them, things like that, that help them to develop their independence. Sign-up for Safety Town is a first come, first served basis. Sign-up is this Wednesday, May 20th. That is from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. here at City Hall. There are four different weeks that the program is offered. It is a Monday through Thursday program. You can sign your child up for a morning or an afternoon. The weeks that it's offered are June 15th through the 18th from 1:00 to 3:00, June 22nd through the 25th from 10:00 to noon, July 13th through the 16th from 1:00 to 3:00 and July 20th through the 23rd from 10:00 to noon. Please make the effort to sign your child up for Safety Town. It still is a free program and it really is one of those things that makes Cleveland Heights, Cleveland Heights, so I urge you to pay attention and take advantage.

Finally, I would like to urge you to attend a fun event that will benefit the Heights Community Congress. This is an evening of live jazz and blues at Nighttown featuring a musician named Gaetano Letizia and his group. The twenty dollar cover charge for this evening will go towards Heights Community Congress and as always at Nighttown shows, you can buy food and drink. This benefit show for HCC at Nighttown will be on Friday, May 29th at 7:00 p.m. So you can make reservations at Nighttown if you want to or you can just show up. There will be door prizes and items to bid on. It should be a really fun evening and for a good cause as well. So, I hope to see you at Nighttown on May 29th and that concludes my report."

REPORT OF THE VICE MAYOR

Vice Mayor Evans stated, "I would just like to thank Kermit Lind who served as the Heights Fund Treasurer for many, many years and he did a very fine job. Our Heights Fund is actually a mortgage incentive program for people interested in purchasing homes in certain neighborhoods in Cleveland Heights. I'd also like to thank Bob Rink for coming on as our treasurer and he'll probably serve for many years. We'll keep our fingers crossed.

Community Improvement Award nominations are now open. This is really a *feel good program* that is hosted annually and the nominating forms can be obtained online or at the libraries and also here at City Hall. The deadline for the nominations is August 3rd and the program is scheduled for October 1st in the atrium. So if there are any properties, homes, yards that you think the residents need to have a hug, a pat on the back - this is the way to do it. Nominate that property and it will be judged and the awards will take place on October 1st.

This is actually our last reminder about our annual Memorial Day ceremony which as Councilwoman Caplan mentioned is going to take place at Cumberland Park at the Veteran's Memorial at 10:00 a.m. That is Monday, May 25th and hopefully we hope to see a good number of you there. Other than that I'd like to wish you a happy and safe holiday and in fact a happy and safe many, many months to come, forever, I guess. That concludes our meeting this evening. We are adjourning at 8:35 p.m. and the next meeting is scheduled for June 1st, same time, same place. As always we will stay if any of you want to speak with us, we're happy to talk to you. Thank you very much. Good night."

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis L. Evans, Vice Mayor
Vice President of Council

Thomas K. Malone
Clerk of Council