

**Village of Newburgh Heights  
3801 Harvard Avenue  
Newburgh Hts., Ohio 44105**

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD 3/30/2023**

**Mayor Traore called the meeting to order at 6:08pm.**

Roll Call: Giersz, Graora, Dunman and Moran present; Kray absent

Councilperson Graora motioned to excuse Councilperson Kray from the meeting. Councilperson Giersz seconded. Motion passed 4 yes – 0 no.

Also in attendance: Fiscal Officer Cathleen Nagorski and Law Director Luke McConville.

Before the reading of legislation, Council Pro Tempore Graora began with a question for the clerk regarding Ordinance 2023-07. She asked if this was the same one that was submitted on March 25, 2023. Mr. McConville noted that there were changes and Mrs. Graora stated she'd like to know what those changes are. Mayor Traore then interjected and reminded Council that the Clerk of Council needed to read the ordinance before discussion could occur.

**Legislation:**

**ORDINANCE 2023-07**

**Introduced by All of Council**

**AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE VILLAGE OF NEWBURGH HEIGHTS THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2023, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**

Council Pro Tempore Graora motioned to adopt Ordinance 2023-07, rules suspended, and that Ordinance 2023-07 is placed on 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and final reading for adoption.

Before a second was made, discussion continued beginning with the changes to the ordinance. Fiscal Officer Nagorski noted that expenses increased by \$66,800 when a second full-time inspector was added to the budget. It was also noted that Photo Enforcement Fees are under NHPD Expenditures and include \$56,000 in filing fees to Garfield Heights Municipal Court and \$167,112 to GATSO for September 12, 2022 through December 31, 2022. It is expected that GATSO will reimburse the Village 300 judgement fees at \$35 each. It was not included in the budget as GATSO has yet to agree to it but per the mayor it is non-negotiable. Mrs. Graora then asked why Council received these new figures as late as they did. It was explained that the information was received when Mrs. Nagorski was in Columbus attending a training conference.

Council Pro Tempore Graora then approached Council for their thoughts on the proposal of two full-time inspectors in the Housing and Building Department. She recommended laying off or suspending employment for an inspector until the budget is figured out. Councilpersons Giersz and Dunman feel it is best to stick with the plan as is. Mr. McConville explained how going over

the budget appropriations makes the party responsible for overspending personally responsible for paying that money back.

Further discussion occurred concerning the addition of \$233,000 added to the budget due to the passing of legislation; changes to the budget presented at this meeting were from Mayor Traore; it is Council's purview to pass the budget as it was on 3/25/2023 however changes must be done line by line to change the budget presented today. Mr. McConville explained that budgets are a living, breathing document that can be adjusted throughout the year.

More discussion took place with Councilwoman Giersz expressing her change of heart and not wanting there to be any layoffs since there will be no Service Director or Building Commissioner and Mrs. Graora voiced her understanding of a budget needing to be voted on today.

Discussion returned to camera tickets, fine collection and more expenses being thrown into the budget. Although there may be an increase in citations, there is not an increase in revenue. Only about 40% of issued tickets get paid. That number is down since the camera laws were changed. There was further discussion concerning the amount of money paid to GATSO showing an increase of \$34,000 and now there is talk of another \$56,000 being thrown into the mix. Council noted that department heads and the mayor were requested at previous meetings, however no one was available. The mayor noted that more than 24 hours' notice is needed for herself and other staff to rearrange their schedules and that all pertinent information was provided.

Council went on to discuss the Housing and Building Department portion of the budget. Fiscal Officer Nagorski pointed out the lines on the budget for Council to review. If anything is to be changed, all line numbers must be read aloud and noted as other items are included in portions of that budget. Unintelligible background discussion occurred.

Council was asked how they'd like to proceed. Did they want to schedule a monthly Finance Committee meeting for review of the Fund Cash Report? It would help them keep a better eye on how the budget is going. Councilman Moran stressed that they should accept the budget as is, have monthly meeting for review and revisit it in June or July and that there cannot be any new hires. The mayor inquired about the Village Administrative position and was informed it had been removed from her office's budget and a full-time one added to the Housing and Building Department. Inaudible discussion continued.

Mr. McConville reminded the room that the ordinance must be passed today or tomorrow. As a member of council is absent it has to pass unanimously, a 3 to 1 vote will not suffice.

Conversation concerning GATSO was had. Numbers were discussed once again. Mr. Moran and Ms. Giersz both stated to pass the budget with no hiring this year and monthly budget oversight meetings.

The estimated budget for 2023 would be in the positive by \$44,000 if accepted as is.

**Councilperson Dunman motioned for a recess, Council Pro Tempore Graora seconded. Motion passed 4 yes - 0 no. Recess was taken at 6:45pm.**

**Council Pro Tempore motioned to resume the meeting with a second from Councilperson Moran. Motion passed 4 yes - 0 no. Meeting resumed at 6:59pm.**

There is a motion on the floor for the adoption of Ordinance 2023-07. Councilperson Dunman asked for a moment to discuss his concerns with the Housing and Building Department budget. He has concerns about functionality and does not feel two full-time inspectors are necessary. \$66,803 can be saved annually with the elimination of one full-time position. He will support moving forward with the amended appropriations if that is what Council chooses.

Moving forward Council is reminded that the budget is fluid and can be adjusted.

**Council Pro Tempore Graora motioned to adopt Ordinance 2023-07, rules suspended, and that Ordinance 2023-07 is placed on 1st, 2nd, and final reading for adoption. Councilperson Moran seconded. Roll call on suspension of rules: Giersz, Graora, Dunman and Moran voted yes. Roll call on adoption: Giersz, Graora, Dunman and Moran voted yes. Motion passed.**

**Ordinance 2023-07 is adopted.**


Mayor Traore expressed her appreciation and understands where council is coming from with their questions and concerns. She asked Council to please call her if further discussion is needed. A meeting is not always necessary. She stated there will be a much better view of the budget in June or July and that Fiscal Officer Nagorski's hard work is greatly appreciated.

**Adjournment:**

Council Pro Tempore Graora made a motion to adjourn with a second from Councilperson Moran. Roll call: Giersz, Graora, Dunman and Moran voted yes. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:06pm.

Date Approved: 5/2/23

Mayor Gigi Traore: 

Fiscal Officer Cathleen Nagorski: 