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City Council

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Agency: [Cleveland City Council](#)

Date: Nov. 13, 2023

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Summary

- Greater Cleveland residents continued to offer opinions about Israel's war on Gaza during the public comment section of the meeting.
- City Council passed an ordinance that will lead to mixed-use development in the Clark-Fulton neighborhood, including the construction of 60 affordable apartments.

Follow-Up Questions

- I noticed that Council Member Kerry McCormack said during the meeting that attendees couldn't display signs or placards, but then he said nothing when signs and placards were shown less than a minute or two later while a resident was talking during public comment. I understand this rule would be hard to enforce once the meeting started, but couldn't the signs/placards be stopped (or confiscated) at the door before the meeting?
- [Past coverage](#) on public comment during City Council about Israel's war on Gaza mentions restricting comment to Cleveland residents, but that restriction wasn't mentioned in the draft proposal regarding public comments. Why is that? Did something change?
- Numerous items discussed by council during this meeting weren't included in the agenda. Is this unusual, or is it par for the course in meetings where a large number of items are just read into the record without comment or debate?

Notes

The meeting was opened on time with enough council members to establish a [quorum](#). Council President Blaine Griffin and Council Member Stephanie Howse-Jones were excused. Roll call was followed by a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public comment (six people spoke)

Most of the public comments were related to Israel's war on Gaza. Some comments

appeared related to [Mayor Justin Bibb](#) and Griffin's earlier comments in support of Israel after the Oct. 7 Hamas attack, while other comments had no apparent connection to the mayor or council.

1. Rasmia Alnadi (Medina) spoke in opposition to Bibb's October statement in support of Israel. She read a poem she wrote, along with a quote from a Palestinian poet.
2. Basma Hamid (Cleveland) spoke about her personal experience as a native of Palestine and her opposition to Israel in the ongoing war.
3. Lucas Waggoner (Mentor) spoke in opposition to Bibb and Griffin's earlier support of Israel. He spoke in opposition to Israel in the current war and in support of a ceasefire.
4. Alec Popivker (Cleveland Heights) led a prayer for Israeli and American soldiers. He spoke in opposition to a public figure (couldn't get the name) "here" (unclear if "here" meant in Cleveland specifically or the United States generally) that was anti-Semitic and was spreading "propaganda." While this man was speaking, audience members raised posters of individuals with the phrase "Murdered by Israel" at the top (similar in style to FBI wanted posters). Council Member Kerry McCormack, who was leading the meeting in Griffin's absence, reminded the audience that signs and placards were not allowed in council chambers.
5. Sarah Popivker (Cleveland Heights) spoke about pro-Palestinian college student groups that used what she felt were anti-Semitic statements and slogans during a recent demonstration in Cleveland. She implored the council to "stop these groups from polluting our youth with such dangerous forms of hate." During her comments, audience members again raised the "Murdered by Israel" posters, but with no further comment by McCormack.
6. Dontez Taylor (Ward 4) asked about the diversion program and other rehabilitative programs at the county's youth detention center.

Communications

The clerk read into the record information about the following:

- a) Oath of office for city employees
- b) Economic development transfer applications for specific businesses
- c) A dedication plat for public use
- d) Appointments by the mayor to several committees
- e) Condolences offered for individuals and institutions from council members

First Reading Legislation

Twenty-one [emergency ordinances](#) for administrative and committee review were introduced. These included:

- a) Ordinances to conduct data collection for the airport and to participate in the JD Power North American Airport Satisfaction Survey.
- b) A couple of ordinances related to lead abatement.

First Reading To Be Passed

Thirteen emergency ordinances were read in full and passed. Many of these ordinances were related to the disbursement of casino revenue funds to specific wards and the approval of collective bargaining agreements with different unions.

Resolutions To Be Adopted

There were two resolutions passed regarding issuing and transfers of liquor permits, with 14 votes in favor.

Second Reading Legislation To Be Passed

Council passed 15 ordinances. These ordinances included entering into a grant promoting the Blanket Mill mixed-use project in the Clark-Fulton neighborhood, facilitating the construction of a pedestrian bridge at Cleveland Clinic Main Campus, and helping finance the renovation of a health and wellness facility at the Jordan Community Residential Center.

Emergency Resolutions Adopted

Emergency resolutions were adopted establishing sister city relationships between Cleveland and three African cities (Cape Town, South Africa; Kigali, Rwanda; and Tema, Ghana).

Introductions

The following introductions were made:

- a) Council Member Jasmin Santana introduced new Cleveland resident Daniel Matthew.
- b) Council Member Joe Jones introduced Rhoda Cantrell from the city's Department of Aging.
- c) Council Member Kevin Conwell introduced Rhonda Robinson and Fred Ward.
- d) McCormack introduced Dave Abbott and Jessica Trivisonno in relation to their work with the West Side Market.

Announcements

Santana thanked multiple individuals for their help in securing funding for the Blanket Mill mixed-use project in the Clark-Fulton neighborhood (referenced above in the "Second Reading Legislation to be Passed" section). Santana said that this project would authorize

construction of 60 affordable apartments.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned shortly after 8 p.m. The next meeting will be Nov. 20.

If you believe anything in these notes is inaccurate, please email us at cleDOCUMENTERS@gmail.com with "Correction Request" in the subject line.