

VILLAGE OF BRATENAHL
10300 BRIGHTON ROAD
BRATENAHL, OHIO 44108
(216) 383-0468

VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2026
6:31 p.m.

MAYOR KEITH BENJAMIN

JOYCE BURKE-JONES

DAVID DEWS

TRACY HOEFLING

GINA HUFFMAN

DAVID KOZINSKI

JIM PUFFENBERGER

DAVID J. MATTY, ESQ.

NANCY L. MOLNAR, RPR, CLR

3

- 1 Roll call, please.
- 2 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
- 3 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
- 4 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dewes?
- 5 MR. DEWS: Aye.
- 6 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
- 7 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.
- 8 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
- 9 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
- 10 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
- 11 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.
- 12 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?
- 13 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.
- 14 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Next we
- 18:32:29 15 have the honor of swearing in a new police
- 16 officer, Mr. Mykol Gardiner. And I will first
- 17 turn it over to the Chief or Lieutenant to make
- 18 some comments.
- 19 LIEUTENANT SORIC: Chief. (Laughter.)
- 18:32:45 20 CHIEF LOBELLO: Thank you, Mayor. Mykol
- 21 comes to us from the Ohio State Police Patrol.
- 22 He had eight to nine years there, where he's
- 23 become an expert in traffic crash investigation.
- 24 He served the State Patrol's Mobile Field Force
- 18:33:02 25 Team as well. So when the opening came up, he

2

- 1 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Okay. Good evening,
- 2 everyone. It is 6:31 p.m. on Wednesday, February
- 3 18th. Please stand, if you're able, for the
- 4 Pledge of Allegiance.
- 18:31:50 5 (Pledge of Allegiance.)
- 6 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Madam Clerk, roll call.
- 7 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
- 8 MS. BURKE-JONES: Here.
- 9 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dewes?
- 10 MR. DEWS: Here.
- 11 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
- 12 MS. HOEFLING: Here.
- 13 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
- 14 MS. HUFFMAN: Here.
- 15 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
- 16 MR. KOZINSKI: Here.
- 17 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?
- 18 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Here.
- 19 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Is there a
- 18:32:06 20 motion to approve the minutes of the January
- 21 Village Council?
- 22 MR. PUFFENBERGER: So move without
- 23 change.
- 24 MR. DEWS: Second.
- 18:32:14 25 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Moved and seconded.

4

- 1 expressed interest. He's dealt with the
- 2 Bratenahl Police Department many, many times
- 3 because he's been stationed up here in the
- 4 Cleveland office post. So he's known a lot of us
- 18:33:15 5 for a long time and we've known him. He
- 6 expressed interest and we came together and we
- 7 couldn't be more thrilled to have Mykol.
- 8 (Applause.)
- 9 MAYOR BENJAMIN: And just for those who
- 18:33:32 10 don't usually attend Council meetings, I don't
- 11 usually dress up, but I actually wore a
- 12 button-down shirt. I felt it was at least
- 13 appropriate swearing in Officer Gardiner here.
- 14 Again, we are lucky to have you join us. I know
- 18:33:48 15 you're familiar with us. Please feel free to
- 16 take photos, family. And raise your right hand
- 17 and repeat after me.
- 18 (Whereupon, Officer Mykol Gardiner was
- 19 sworn in by Mayor Benjamin.)
- 18:35:03 20 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Welcome. (Applause.)
- 21 Please sign there and our notary, our Clerk of
- 22 Court, Angela Takacs.
- 23 LIEUTENANT SORIC: Officers, front and
- 24 center, we're going to do group photos with
- 18:36:32 25 family, then police.

1 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Okay. Thank you. Next
2 on the agenda is communication from Village
3 Council. Any additional communications?

18:39:26

4 MS. BURKE-JONES: Again, I wanted to
5 reiterate based on the Finance Committee meeting,
6 would like to send out an email to set up a
7 Public Improvements meeting in the next week and
8 a half. Obviously would like to have all Council
9 members that can be available, please attend so
10 we can discuss this facility. Thank you.

18:39:47

11 MR. MATTY: Madam Chair, can we actually
12 do it quicker than that, because these applicants
13 both represented that they would be in tomorrow
14 if you select one of them. We really need to
15 move on this. And while you're here, instead of
16 picking a date in the future, pick a date tonight
17 that everybody can be here if that's what you
18 wish, because otherwise this is going to linger
19 and we can't linger. We have to have this done
20 within a month.

18:40:01

18:40:16

21 MS. BURKE-JONES: Very good suggestion.
22 MAYOR BENJAMIN: We agree. And the
23 purpose of the meeting was to move forward. It
24 wasn't to delay any decision-making.

18:40:26

25 MR. MATTY: I understand.
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1 MS. BURKE-JONES: But still, our
2 recommendations and everything else will be
3 occurring at that time.

18:40:34

4 MR. MATTY: Because we can't start to
5 deal with negotiating a contract until we know
6 what restriction Council is going to put on us.

7 MS. BURKE-JONES: Okay.

8 MAYOR BENJAMIN: With the goal of
9 approving a contract at the next meeting.

18:40:45

10 MS. BURKE-JONES: Yes, but still we're
11 discussing, I mean.

12 MR. MATTY: I understand. But it's got
13 to move.

18:40:53

14 MS. BURKE-JONES: It would be nice if we
15 could actually meet next Monday. How is
16 everybody's calendar for next Monday?

17 MS. HOEFLING: The 23rd?

18 MS. BURKE-JONES: Yes.

19 MS. HOEFLING: I'm available.

18:41:05

20 MR. DEWS: I'm available.

21 MAYOR BENJAMIN: I will not be
22 available, but please move forward without me.

23 MS. BURKE-JONES: Of course, I don't
24 know if I'm available.

18:41:14

25 MR. PUFFENBERGER: I'm available.
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1 MS. BURKE-JONES: You are available,
2 you're available, but you're not available. How
3 about Tuesday?

18:41:22

4 MAYOR BENJAMIN: I'm fine on Tuesday.

5 MR. DEWS: Tuesday is fine.

6 MR. PUFFENBERGER: I am not available
7 Tuesday.

8 MR. KOZINSKI: I'm good.

9 MS. BURKE-JONES: You're available.

18:41:27

10 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Wednesday is fine.
11 Wednesday is Planning.

12 MS. BURKE-JONES: Thursday.

13 MR. DEWS: I'm available Thursday.

14 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Yes.

18:41:44

15 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thursday is okay.

16 MS. BURKE-JONES: Okay. We'll do it
17 next Thursday.

18 MAYOR BENJAMIN: So Public Improvements
19 Committee meeting at 5:30 next Thursday.

18:41:55

20 MR. MATTY: Don, are you available?

21 MR. BIERUT: Possibly. If you're
22 talking about the finances, I don't need to be
23 available for that. If you're trying to figure
24 out the scope of the work, I would encourage

18:42:06

25 everybody to get together and I will see if I can
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1 move what I have.

2 MR. MATTY: Thank you, Don.

3 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you.

18:42:17

4 MS. BURKE-JONES: Okay. I'll issue
5 that. Same with Diana.

6 MS. COOKS: I'll just move forward.

7 MS. BURKE-JONES: Okay. Great.

8 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you so much.

18:42:27

9 Let's move forward with reports of the
10 administration. We'll start with Village
11 Engineer, Don Bierut.

12 MR. BIERUT: Nothing to report this
13 evening.

14 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. That was
15 very short.

18:42:33

16 MR. BIERUT: You're welcome.

17 MAYOR BENJAMIN: We did receive some
18 funds from Cuyahoga County.

19 MR. BIERUT: Right. I can report that

18:42:41

20 we received some maintenance fund money that will
21 reimburse us for the cost of materials that were
22 used on county routes in the upcoming year. We
23 also have -- we're getting paperwork together to
24 file for materials who's done the Bratenahl Road
25 resurfacing project, which we'll get to the

18:43:00

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1 county and be refunded that money, the money we
2 spent on materials for that project. It's the
3 same program.

4 MS. COOKS: Thank you.

18:43:14 5 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you very much.
6 We'll move forward with Clerk of Courts, Ms.
7 Takacs, do you have a report this evening?

8 MS. TAKACS: Yes, I do. Treasurer of
9 the State received \$940.50; the City of Cleveland
18:43:30 10 received \$37.50; the County Treasurer received
11 \$125.00; and the Village of Bratenahl received
12 \$4,831.99. That concludes my report.

13 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Any
14 questions regarding court? Service Director
18:43:53 15 Maund.

16 MR. MAUND: Nothing to report, sir.

17 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. You have a
18 question for Mr. Maund?

19 MR. OREL: I do.

18:44:00 20 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Please go ahead.

21 MR. OREL: The combination padlock on
22 the boiler room fire door, has that been
23 inspected by fire or Bratenahl Building?

24 MR. MAUND: No.

18:44:11 25 MR. OREL: Because there's no -- on the
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1 exit door, there's no crash part and there is a
2 dead bolt on it. I know the Mayor is risk
3 averse. That could be a big liability for the
4 Village should someone get trapped in there.

18:44:26 5 MR. MAUND: Nobody should be inside
6 there.

7 MR. OREL: But Fire Marshal, it's very
8 frowned upon to lock a fire door.

9 MR. MAUND: I'll discuss it with the
18:44:37 10 Mayor.

11 MR. OREL: One other thing, too. I
12 noticed that that door going to the outside with
13 all the snow and ice wasn't cleared off and it
14 was being used. That reminded me that all of the
18:44:52 15 emergency exits should be free of snow and ice as
16 a liability issue as well.

17 MR. MAUND: I will discuss it with my
18 guys. I know we've been doing all the main
19 entrances. They don't go around and do all the
18:45:06 20 doors that's typically not used. Again, I'll
21 discuss that with the Mayor.

22 MR. OREL: Thank you.

23 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Dr. Leslie.

18:45:17 24 DR. LESLIE: I have nothing to report
25 from Shade Tree Commission. Thanks.

1 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Brief
2 reports tonight. Community Center Director
3 Armstrong.

4 MR. ARMSTRONG: Oh, I have a report. So
18:45:30 5 we had 495 people in January, seven meetings,
6 five rentals, two events, \$700 in revenue.

7 Started soccer shots, line dancing. We have a
8 speaker coming on 2/28 to talk about the hidden
9 history of Lake Erie. It's supposed to be very
18:45:50 10 interesting, shipwrecks and things. She's
11 written a couple books, should be good. So busy
12 month.

13 Also, just want to say that we currently
14 have seven rooms that are actively leaking where
18:46:07 15 the roofs are, you know, the ceiling are
16 beginning to fail. You know, I know the money is
17 a problem, but this building is taking on water.

18 And the more it freezes, then the more it rains
19 and the more it freezes, it's just going to get
18:46:26 20 worse and worse. So I just want everybody to be

21 aware that that's happening. You can walk around
22 and look in these rooms and see even in the
23 hallway here where the plaster is crumbling. We
24 had plaster come down in the playroom when I was
18:46:40 25 on vacation. Fortunately, nobody was hurt. And

1 Director Maund asked that we close that room. So
2 I just want everybody to be aware of the
3 situation on the grounds here.

4 MAYOR BENJAMIN: There's no doubt that
18:46:59 5 we've got some very difficult decisions to make
6 about the future of this building and what's
7 going to become of it. I appreciate that, your
8 comment.

9 MR. MATTY: Director, I need to speak
18:47:12 10 with you. I was notified just this Monday about
11 this fundraiser that you're having and there are
12 some issues with it. So after this meeting, if
13 you would speak to me and the Fiscal Officer, I
14 think we should discuss a few issues before you
18:47:28 15 go forward with that fundraiser.

16 MR. ARMSTRONG: That's not our
17 fundraiser, it's somebody else's.

18 MR. MATTY: That's the problem.

19 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Let's talk about this
18:47:37 20 offline. It's not an agenda item on the Council
21 meeting.

22 MR. MATTY: I wanted to address it as
23 soon as I was notified of the report, so we'll
24 talk about it after the meeting.

18:47:49 25 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Okay. Thank you. Any
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1 other questions? We will turn to the police
 2 department.
 3 LIEUTENANT SORIC: Good evening,
 4 everybody. Bratenahl Police Department Activity
 5 Report January 2026. We had four 911 hang ups;
 6 10 alarm drops; four animal complaints; one
 7 breaking and entering; 28 disabled vehicles; one
 8 disorderly conduct; two debris on street calls;
 9 four erratic drivers; one harassment; one
 10 identity theft; 23 traffic crashes; 18 assist
 11 EMS/fire calls; three road hazards; eight
 12 suspicion calls; two thefts; 30 traffic stops; 18
 13 citations; and four welfare checks.

18:48:00

18:48:17

18:48:35

18:48:57

18:49:12

14 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Any questions for our
 15 police department?
 16 MS. HUFFMAN: Lieutenant, how do you
 17 have an identity theft? How did that go?
 18 LIEUTENANT SORIC: Let me see if I can
 19 find that one. I think it was a fraud case where
 20 somebody was able to obtain somebody's payroll
 21 information and redirected their payroll to their
 22 account and that was corrected immediately.
 23 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you.
 24 MR. OREL: I guess more for you, but
 25 regarding police, is the welfare check system,
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1 it's been quite a while since it's been -- when
 2 is the mailing going to go out?
 3 MAYOR BENJAMIN: We're waiting on the
 4 first call where there's a meeting, actually a
 5 meeting with CVD about first call next week, so
 6 as soon as I get more information about that, we
 7 will move forward.
 8 MR. OREL: And one other question, I
 9 guess this is for you. I just heard recently
 10 that Flock has been having issues giving, sharing
 11 data that they've recovered without letting the
 12 community know that they're sharing that data.
 13 Do we know anything about that?
 14 CHIEF LOBELLO: No, we don't.
 15 MR. OREL: It was reported just a couple
 16 of days ago.
 17 CHIEF LOBELLO: I've not heard that.
 18 MR. OREL: They've actually given out
 19 new -- apparently from the report, they've given
 20 out new guidelines as to what they're allowed to
 21 share and what they're not.
 22 CHIEF LOBELLO: Actually, I think, if I
 23 know what you're speaking of, it all came out
 24 after the Super Bowl when Ring Camera announced
 25 their new technology. It was supposed to find
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18:49:27

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18:50:23

1 lost pets, where they're always recording and
 2 always communicating. Flock had a partnership
 3 with Ring. And after the fallout of Ring being
 4 dragged through the mud for invasion of policy,
 5 Flock severed their relationship with Ring.
 6 MR. OREL: That's part of it. The other
 7 part was it also came out they were sharing
 8 information with ICE enforcement, you know. And
 9 some communities have actually left Flock because
 10 they don't want that information being shared.
 11 CHIEF LOBELLO: I'm not aware of it.
 12 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Appreciate
 13 your comments. Please.
 14 CHIEF LOBELLO: Two points, two
 15 acknowledgements. First, Patrolman Mike Jenovic,
 16 who can't be us tonight because he's in balmy
 17 Florida, but today marks the 30th anniversary of
 18 Mike being sworn in with the Bratenahl Police
 19 Department. I'd like to acknowledge that.
 20 (Applause.)
 21 And second of all, Sergeant Timothy
 22 O'Haire, we were just notified last week that Tim
 23 has been accepted to and will be attending the
 24 FBI National Academy in April. (Applause.)
 25 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Congratulations.
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18:50:42

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18:51:07

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18:51:43

1 CHIEF LOBELLO: He'll become only the
 2 fourth officer in Bratenahl's history to ever do
 3 it. Louis Garpatka 1953, John Balmet in 1972, me
 4 in 2013, and Sergeant O'Haire in 2026, so
 5 couldn't be more proud of him. (Applause.)
 6 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. I know that
 7 we had an accident on Lake Shore Boulevard in our
 8 usual place last week. And our former -- if you
 9 would like to speak, former Councilman Rod Taylor
 10 is here.
 11 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you. My name is Rod
 12 Taylor, President of Breezy Bluff HOA. And just
 13 10 days ago we had, I think, the fourth bad
 14 accident on Cushing Lane and Lake Shore Boulevard
 15 that we've had. They all seem to be OVIs that
 16 are happening. We do have flashing lights there.
 17 I think like police cars, I think OVIs are
 18 attracted to flashing lights. I really do.
 19 (Laughter.)
 20 Last year we had a person that ran in
 21 there and did \$25,000 of damage to our fence. I
 22 went to court and the judge gave him three years
 23 to pay us back. We've never seen a nickel. The
 24 bottom line is something has to be done. Nothing
 25 is working at that corner and we need more
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18:52:01

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18:52:36

18:52:51

18:53:11

1 protection. We'd like the guardrail. I think
 2 it's pretty well wiped out, if you saw that.
 3 We've got some pylons there, speed bumps. We
 4 need something in that area more than what we
 5 have now. The lights are not doing it. They
 6 could care less. So I think speed bumps would be
 7 an idea.
 8 I know my neighbor, Dr. Blackstone, was
 9 coming home from work near the Navy Finance
 10 Center. That little thing that tells you the
 11 speed, a guy was doing 47 miles an hour coming
 12 down by the Finance Center.
 13 The bottom line, we'd like to have the
 14 guardrail refurbished as soon as possible, even
 15 before the guy pays for it if we do that. And
 16 get together the Safety Committee, the Police
 17 Department and find out what else we can do, but
 18 we need to slow people down on that corner.
 19 MAYOR BENJAMIN: So I have been in
 20 conversations with NOACA, which is the Northeast
 21 Ohio Area Coordinating Agency. And in order to
 22 do a speed table, a speed hump in that area, we
 23 have to do a study first. We know what the
 24 studies are going to say, I think, but there are
 25 temporary speed tables that can be installed that
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1 they have. And I'm currently negotiating with
 2 them to have one installed there.
 3 MR. TAYLOR: What are speed tables,
 4 those wide things?
 5 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Yeah. So we can be
 6 able to collect data throughout the summer months
 7 and then move forward with a long-term solution.
 8 The Chief has looked into this, too. There are
 9 some other options. Chief, I don't know if you
 10 want to say a few words.
 11 CHIEF LOBELLO: I don't want to get into
 12 the weeds and start splitting hairs, but I did
 13 research it. And the National Department of
 14 Transportation says there are two different
 15 definitions, there's speed bumps and speed humps.
 16 Speed bumps are not allowed to be put on public
 17 streets, because they're 12 inches in height and
 18 they're the ones you see in the parking lot.
 19 MR. TAYLOR: That would be good.
 20 (Laughter.)
 21 CHIEF LOBELLO: Speed humps are no
 22 taller than three inches and spread out more.
 23 That's something that -- and there are
 24 restrictions about how close to an intersection,
 25 many, many restrictions, but I haven't looked
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1 into all of them yet.
 2 Another option would be, and it would be
 3 unpopular by people who live right there, but
 4 rumble strips.
 5 MR. TAYLOR: I heard the noise, yeah.
 6 Talk to the Lieutenant he said.
 7 CHIEF LOBELLO: I'm trying to think
 8 outside the box.
 9 MR. TAYLOR: They're going to complain
 10 to me. Thank you very much.
 11 MAYOR BENJAMIN: So we are actively
 12 working on a proposed solution. And obviously
 13 after years and years of accidents, something
 14 still needs to happen.
 15 MR. TAYLOR: Every two years, there's a
 16 bad accident there.
 17 MAYOR BENJAMIN: A major accident there.
 18 Again, they're just like deer, I don't
 19 understand, people go right into the light.
 20 MR. TAYLOR: We talked about police
 21 cars, parked in the berm, lights on and they run
 22 into three or more police cars on I-90 with
 23 lights on flashing.
 24 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you very much.
 25 Mr. Maund.
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1 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you.
 2 MR. MAUND: The guy went out to the
 3 Oberlin today to pick up the guardrail to replace
 4 it. Weather permitting, next week it will get
 5 replaced.
 6 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you very much.
 7 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Appreciate
 8 it. Mr. Matty.
 9 MR. MATTY: Chief, I did not know until
 10 it happened this evening, but you should know
 11 that Officer Gardiner, who was sworn in, he is
 12 one heck of a fisherman. (Laughter.) So I know
 13 he has his credentials with the State Patrol, but
 14 I have seen the fish that he catches and he is
 15 one heck of a fisherman. Congratulations.
 16 CHIEF LOBELLO: Maybe he'll share some
 17 with me, since you never have. (Laughter.)
 18 MR. MATTY: He's got more to share, I
 19 can tell you that much.
 20 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Any
 21 questions before we move.
 22 MS. BURKE-JONES: I just wanted to
 23 remind, again, we had a discussion to renew the
 24 Village architects contract.
 25 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Absolutely.
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1 MS. BURKE-JONES: In March.
 2 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Before we
 3 move forward, during the Finance Committee, we
 4 have discussed the options. And the Finance
 5 Committee made a recommendation to move forward
 6 with option number two regarding how we should
 7 adjudicate the issue with the Regional Income Tax
 8 Authority.
 9 And so is there a motion from the full
 10 Council to move forward with that motion?
 11 MR. PUFFENBERGER: So move.
 12 MR. DEWS: So move.
 13 MS. HOEFLING: Second.
 14 MAYOR BENJAMIN: It's been moved and
 15 seconded. Is there a roll call on that motion?
 16 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 17 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 18 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dews?
 19 MR. DEWS: Aye.
 20 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
 21 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.
 22 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 23 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 24 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
 25 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.

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1 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?
 2 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.
 3 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. We now move
 4 to public comment on our items related to agenda.
 5 Items on the agenda, are there any public
 6 comments?
 7 Seeing none, we'll move forward with
 8 disbursement of legislation. We'll start with
 9 Resolution 1446, Councilwoman Burke-Jones.
 10 MS. BURKE-JONES: Did we approve the
 11 minutes?
 12 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Yes.
 13 MS. HOEFLING: We did.
 14 MS. BURKE-JONES: I missed it totally
 15 and I even voted for it.
 16 MAYOR BENJAMIN: I think you voted for
 17 it. (Laughter.)
 18 MS. BURKE-JONES: Okay. Next on the
 19 agenda.
 20 MR. DEWS: Mayor, before we go into the
 21 Resolutions, basically can we have our committee
 22 report first?
 23 MAYOR BENJAMIN: That is an excellent
 24 recommendation. So as most of you now know, I
 25 was out of town and not able to attend those

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1 meetings. They were presided over by Council
 2 President Pro Tem and I will hand it off to you.
 3 MR. DEWS: Thanks, Mayor. As you all
 4 may know, we had interviews last week. It was on
 5 Tuesday, February 10th, interviewing
 6 architectural firms for our municipal buildings.
 7 I just want to recognize the architectural firms
 8 that we interviewed.
 9 Could you just stand and introduce
 10 yourself and thank you for your submittal.
 11 MR. DEUTSCH: Thank you. I'm Paul
 12 Deutsch with Bialosky Architects. I'm the CEO.
 13 MS. FISHER: I'm Cheryl Fisher,
 14 Educational Planner with ThenDesign Architecture.
 15 MR. GELLERT: Brad Gellert, Project
 16 Manager with TDA, and Architect.
 17 MR. DEWS: Thank you and welcome. Part
 18 of our RFQ process that we went over last week
 19 was, this is the part of architectural selection.
 20 And we had our Proposal Review Committee. And I
 21 would like to thank them for working very
 22 diligent and hard to get us to this point.
 23 And what I'm going to do is turn the
 24 floor over to Don to give a short report. And if
 25 you can just let the public and Council and the

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1 Mayor know who were on the Architectural Review
 2 Committee.
 3 MR. BIERUT: The committee is comprised
 4 of four individuals, myself, Diana Cooks, Dave
 5 Matty and Dave Maund. We give a little bit
 6 background prior to the interviews. We went
 7 through the submissions. We shortlisted the
 8 three architects that appeared before, I think it
 9 was full Council last week. As part of the RFQ
 10 package, there was a matrix in the back, Exhibit
 11 1 or Exhibit A that had a matrix on scoring,
 12 which the committee did not fill out until we
 13 went through the interview process.
 14 After that, committee then left and then
 15 was charged with getting their ballots to Diana
 16 the next morning. Diana forwarded those to me, I
 17 tabulated them, came up with an average and
 18 forwarded that to Mayor Benjamin with a
 19 recommendation based on the highest firm, which I
 20 think is part of legislation tonight. That's a
 21 quick synopsis of what it was.
 22 MR. DEWS: Okay. All of Council have
 23 reviewed basically the recommendation from the
 24 committee from the standpoint -- do you happen to
 25 have any questions of the committee, any further

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1 questions or anything of that nature that you
2 would like to voice at this time?

19:01:54

3 MS. BURKE-JONES: Well, I'd really like
4 to -- I think, again, thank you very much,
5 Committee, for all the hard work that you've done
6 over the last several weeks. I'd really be
7 interested in finding out what fellow Council
8 people, what their assessment was of the
9 different -- especially since two of the teams
10 were so close in analysis. I would like to know
11 who you would like, who you think is appropriate,
12 who would be the best and why.

19:02:15

13 MR. DEWS: I would open the floor up to
14 Council. And I'd like to hear from everyone on
15 Council your thoughts. This falls under Council.
16 This is our selection.

19:02:35

17 MR. PUFFENBERGER: This was the top, as
18 Ms. Burke-Jones alluded to, this was essentially
19 a dead heat. There was a fraction of a point
20 between the two top contenders. And I didn't do
21 a Chi-squared test or any kind of statistical
22 analysis, but I guarantee that the difference is
23 not statistically significant, so it's a dead
24 heat.

19:02:53

25 So this is tough, because I did an
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19:03:10

1 MR. DEWS: Councilman Kozinski.

2 MR. KOZINSKI: I would agree with the
3 first two presenters that are here this evening.
4 I tended to go with the first by -- I'm sorry
5 about the pronunciation, Bialosky. I'd like to
6 take a little bit more time to study some of the
7 previous projects that they've done before
8 settling in on an exact answer for this, but I
9 believe that the performance, the way that they
10 presented themselves is very, very close to call
11 without a little bit more homework.

19:04:54

19:05:19

12 MR. DEWS: Councilwoman Huffman.

13 MS. HUFFMAN: It was tough, very tough.
14 The firms that are in the room are the firms that
15 rose to the top of my list. I, too, thought key
16 staff was an important deal, especially looking
17 in the materials and figuring out the percentage
18 of time that will be spent by each of those key
19 staff on the project, which was really important
20 to me.

19:05:37

19:05:57

21 Again, I, like, Councilman Kozinski,
22 really have to look at digging even deeper to
23 figure out who would be the fit, because both
24 firms are great fits. I am very interested in
25 public private partnerships and creative type of
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19:06:24

1 average of each of the individual categories,
2 because there are, what, five different
3 categories that everyone voted on. And even
4 within those, they were close. Even within
5 those, they were close. The project
6 understanding was exactly a dead heat. The
7 average is exactly the same.

19:03:23

8 The only outlier was in a category that
9 I think is -- and we can talk about this, right?

19:03:44

10 We can talk about individual categories. The
11 only outlier was, in my view, one that probably,
12 if I were doing this, would weight higher than
13 the 15 percent value that it was given. And
14 that's key staff. I think that's incredibly
15 important.

19:04:02

16 And in that category, and I'm sorry
17 you're all hearing this, but in that category,
18 TDA came out ahead. And that was the only one
19 that really was an outlier as an average as I did
20 all these things. I frankly --- not just for
21 that reason, but I frankly am kind of tilting
22 toward TDA for a couple of reasons. That's one
23 of them. And I'll discuss some other ones before
24 we're finished here. I'd like to hear from other
25 folks as well.

19:04:16

19:04:36

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1 things that can be explored for the budget that
2 we have. And that's one aspect of one of the
3 firms.

19:06:43

4 The other thing is I really like some of
5 the contemporary structures that the other firm
6 had moving forward in 2026, so that's what I can
7 offer right now. It's very, very close.

8 MS. HOEFLING: Thank you. So for me, I
9 think all three firms were great. The top two
10 were the first and second for me. My main reason
11 for firm one over the other is the public
12 experience. I think having that intimate public
13 knowledge, understanding how municipalities work,
14 financing works, bond issues, working with
15 residents, trying to really present a full
16 transparent story weighed a lot on my decision
17 for one over the other.

19:07:28

18 MR. DEWS: Is there one that you said
19 that was weighted more over the others?

19:07:45

20 MS. HOEFLING: TDA.

21 MS. BURKE-JONES: I agree, the same with
22 me. I thought they both had excellent
23 experience. I like the idea that TDA had so much
24 education and experience, because that then
25 infers all the bond issues that they have

19:08:09

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1 experience that they have to go through and were
2 able to have success in that endeavor, so I am
3 more interested in TDA.

19:08:31 4 MR. DEWS: Okay. And just to close it
5 out, reviewing everything in proposals and so
6 forth, when things are that close, you know, I
7 always look at, as you mentioned, Councilwoman
8 Huffman, is what would be a good fit for the
9 Village. And the thing is that after looking and
19:08:51 10 going over, you know, I agree that TDA, since it
11 is so close, it's a toss up that basically they
12 are from the standpoint of a firm that would be a
13 good working partner with us.

19:09:12 14 MR. PUFFENBERGER: To address my two
15 colleagues to the right, discussion about
16 previous experience and previous projects, I
17 mean, I did an average for those, too. They were
18 nearly dead even in that area, too. The
19 committee judged them to be nearly dead even on
19:09:27 20 previous project experience.

21 MS. BURKE-JONES: Leave it up to you to
22 come up with a statistic of the issue.
23 (Laughter.)

19:09:37 24 MR. BIERUT: After claiming not to come
25 up with a statistics.
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1 MS. BURKE-JONES: I wasn't going to look
2 into it because I knew you were.

3 MR. PUFFENBERGER: I love a good
4 spreadsheet, you know that.

19:09:45 5 MR. DEWS: The thing is that from the
6 standpoint of our discussion, if we had to move
7 forward today on this and from the standpoint of
8 would the majority of Council choose TDA as the
9 firm you'd like to go with.

19:10:05 10 MS. BURKE-JONES: That's what I would
11 say.

12 MR. PUFFENBERGER: I would as well.

13 MS. HOEFLING: Yes.

14 MS. HUFFMAN: I would concur.

19:10:12 15 MR. DEWS: Dave Matty, I know that the
16 legislation we're going to have to go back redo
17 it.

18 MR. MATTY: Redo it tonight.

19 MR. DEWS: Redo it tonight.

19:10:20 20 MR. MATTY: You'll have to amend the
21 legislation. You won't have to -- yeah, you'll
22 have to amend the legislation on Bialosky's.
23 You'll have to amend the legislation on TDA,
24 because the second section on the Sixmo, you
19:10:45 25 won't have to amend anything.

1 You can actually take that out of order
2 and do it first because you'll reject that, but
3 the Proposal Review Committee's rating has to be
4 rejected for this legislation to pass this
19:11:03 5 evening, because the Proposal Review Committee
6 went the other way with Bialosky first and then
7 TDA second, so that rating needs to be rejected
8 on record.

9 So what I would say to the Council is I
19:11:22 10 would say address out of order the first Sixmo,
11 1447, address that first and reject it. And then
12 I'll give you language when you go into
13 Bialosky's and then I'll give you language on
14 TDA.

19:11:40 15 MR. DEWS: Do we need to reject Exhibit
16 B, the rating first?

17 MR. MATTY: No. No, we'll just do it
18 that way so that we can get one of the ordinances
19 rejected first and then we'll go to Bialosky.

19:11:57 20 MR. DEWS: Okay. So what I would do,
21 I'm going to turn the floor back over to the
22 Mayor and we'll start with the legislation 1447.

23 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you, Council
24 President Pro Tem. Okay. Resolution 1447, I
19:12:21 25 will turn that over to Councilwoman Burke-Jones

1 to read for suspension.

2 MS. BURKE-JONES: Yes. Introducing
3 Resolution 1447 for suspension, a Resolution
4 accepting Sixmo Architecture's statement of
19:12:40 5 qualifications for architectural services to plan
6 and schematically design new municipal buildings
7 and accepting the Proposal Review Committee's
8 rating of all qualified architectural firms and
9 declaring an emergency.

19:12:55 10 MS. HOEFLING: Second.

11 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Okay. It's been moved
12 and seconded. Real call on suspension.

13 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?

14 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.

15 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dews?

16 MR. DEWS: Aye.

17 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?

18 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.

19 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?

20 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.

21 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?

22 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.

23 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?

24 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.

19:13:09 25 MS. BURKE-JONES: Introducing 1447 for

1 passage.

2 MS. HOEFLING: Second.

3 MR. MATTY: Okay. Now, before roll is

4 taken, remember this is for passage. So if

19:13:21 5 you're not in favor of passage, that's what you

6 indicate.

7 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. If there is

8 no more discussion, roll call, please.

9 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?

19:13:30 10 MS. BURKE-JONES: Nay.

11 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dews?

12 MR. DEWS: Nay.

13 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?

14 MS. HOEFLING: Nay.

19:13:29 15 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?

16 MS. HUFFMAN: Nay.

17 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?

18 MR. KOZINSKI: Nay.

19 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?

19:13:41 20 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Nay.

21 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Councilman

22 Dews, would you please handle Resolution 1446.

23 MR. DEWS: Introducing Resolution number

24 1446 for suspension, a Resolution accepting

19:14:02 25 Bialosky's statement of qualifications for
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1 architectural services to plan and schematically

2 design new municipal buildings and accepting the

3 Proposal Review Committee's rating of all

4 qualified architectural firms and declaring an

19:14:17 5 emergency.

6 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Second.

7 MS. HOEFLING: Second.

8 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Roll call on

9 suspension.

19:14:23 10 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?

11 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.

12 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dews?

13 MR. DEWS: Aye.

14 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?

15 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.

16 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?

17 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.

18 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?

19 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.

20 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?

21 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.

22 MR. MATTY: Okay. Now, Councilman Dews,

23 before you go forward, we'll need an amendment.

24 And the amendment should read -- give me a

19:14:59 25 minute.
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1 And the reason that this needs to be

2 changed is because of your rejection of the

3 Proposal Review Committee's rating. So I have

4 put this language in and ask Nancy to make sure

19:15:39 5 that her record indicates that Section 2 there

6 should be a motion to amend. And that motion

7 should read: The Council hereby rejects the

8 Proposal Review Committee's rating of all

9 qualified architectural firms, a copy of which is

19:16:01 10 attached hereto as Exhibit B and incorporated

11 herein as if by reference. And replaces such

12 rating to be TDA as first and Bialosky as second.

13 And the reason that is to be done is

14 because if we are unsuccessful in negotiating

19:16:24 15 with TDA, then we must go to Bialosky by law. So

16 that would be the amendment that I would ask you

17 to make a motion for first.

18 MR. DEWS: Introducing Resolution number

19 1446, as amended, for passage.

19:16:46 20 MS. HOEFLING: Second.

21 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Moved and seconded.

22 MS. COOKS: Don't you need a motion?

23 MR. DEWS: You need a motion on the

24 amendment?

19:16:55 25 MR. MATTY: Motion on the amendment.
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1 MAYOR BENJAMIN: This is what you made.

2 MR. DEWS: Yes.

3 MAYOR BENJAMIN: A motion to amend.

4 Would you like to read it for the record as part

19:17:04 5 of the hearing?

6 MR. MATTY: The Resolution title would

7 be An Amended Resolution, that would be first.

8 And then for the record, the language of Section

9 2 would be, The Council hereby rejects the

19:17:19 10 Proposal Review Committee's rating of all

11 qualified architectural firms, a copy of which is

12 attached hereto as Exhibit B and incorporated

13 herein as if by reference. And replaces such

14 rating to be TDA as first and Bialosky as second.

19:17:37 15 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. So did you

16 make the official motion and seconded? You

17 seconded?

18 MS. HOEFLING: Yes.

19 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Okay. So the motion to

19:17:49 20 amend Resolution 1446.

21 Roll call, please.

22 MR. DEWS: And this is basically

23 affirmative, because it was made an amendment; is

24 that correct?

19:17:58 25 MR. MATTY: Correct.
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1 MS. BURKE-JONES: Even though reading it
 2 says accepting Bialosky's statement, the first
 3 paragraph.
 4 MR. MATTY: You're accepting their
 5 qualifications because you're ranking them
 6 second, so that doesn't change.
 7 MS. BURKE-JONES: Just checking.
 8 MR. MATTY: There's no reason to change
 9 that.
 10 MAYOR BENJAMIN: That's a good question.
 11 MS. BURKE-JONES: Thank you.
 12 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Okay.
 13 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 14 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Roll call.
 15 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 16 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 17 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dews?
 18 MR. DEWS: Aye.
 19 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
 20 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.
 21 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 22 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 23 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
 24 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.
 25 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?
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1 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.
 2 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Okay. Then, Mr. Dews,
 3 one more time on the final reading of the
 4 Resolution.
 5 MR. DEWS: Okay. Introducing Resolution
 6 number 1446 --
 7 MAYOR BENJAMIN: As amended.
 8 MR. DEWS: -- as amended for passage.
 9 MS. HOEFLING: Second.
 10 MAYOR BENJAMIN: It's been moved and
 11 seconded. And roll call.
 12 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 13 MS. BURKE-JONES: So this is passage
 14 again.
 15 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Ayes are affirmative or
 16 are now ayes --
 17 MR. MATTY: Refresh me, where are we at?
 18 MR. DEWS: We're still on 1446.
 19 MAYOR BENJAMIN: We made the amendment.
 20 MR. MATTY: The amendment has been made.
 21 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Now we have to vote
 22 on --
 23 MR. MATTY: The passage as amended, yes.
 24 MR. DEWS: So it's affirmative.
 25 MR. MATTY: Yes.
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1 MS. BURKE-JONES: Okay. Now that I've
 2 been told how to vote. Aye. (Laughter.)
 3 MS. COOKS: Okay. Mr. Dews?
 4 MR. DEWS: Aye.
 5 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
 6 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.
 7 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 8 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 9 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
 10 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.
 11 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?
 12 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.
 13 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Okay. Thank you.
 14 Councilman Hoefling, would you handle Resolution
 15 1448.
 16 MS. HOEFLING: Does 1448 need to be
 17 amended?
 18 MR. MATTY: Yes.
 19 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Yes. So why don't we
 20 read it for suspension and then we'll make the
 21 official amendment.
 22 MS. HOEFLING: Just read it as normal?
 23 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Read it as normal for
 24 suspension.
 25 MS. HOEFLING: Introducing Resolution
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1 1448 for suspension, which is a Resolution
 2 accepting ThenDesign's statement of
 3 qualifications for architectural services to plan
 4 and schematically design new municipal buildings
 5 and accepting the Proposal Review Committee's
 6 rating of all qualified architectural firms and
 7 declaring an emergency.
 8 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Second.
 9 MAYOR BENJAMIN: It's been moved and
 10 seconded. Roll call for suspension.
 11 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 12 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 13 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dews?
 14 MR. DEWS: Aye.
 15 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
 16 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.
 17 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 18 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 19 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
 20 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.
 21 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?
 22 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.
 23 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. And then,
 24 Mr. Matty.
 25 MR. MATTY: We need an amendment, a
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1 motion for amendment for 1448. The title will
 2 read: An amended Resolution. And Section 2 will
 3 read: That the Council hereby rejects the
 4 Proposal Review Committee's rating of all
 5 qualified architectural firms, a copy of which is
 6 attached hereto as Exhibit B and incorporated
 7 herein as if by reference. And replaces such
 8 rating to be TDA as first and Bialosky as second.
 9 We need a motion to amend first and then
 10 go from there.
 11 MS. HOEFLING: I make the motion to
 12 amend 1448.
 13 MR. DEWS: Second.
 14 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Okay. Roll call on the
 15 motion as amended or to amend.
 16 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 17 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 18 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dews?
 19 MR. DEWS: Aye.
 20 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
 21 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.
 22 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 23 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 24 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
 25 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.

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1 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?
 2 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.
 3 MS. HOEFLING: Introducing amended 1448
 4 for passage.
 5 MR. DEWS: Second.
 6 MAYOR BENJAMIN: It's been moved and
 7 seconded. Any other comments or questions?
 8 Hearing none, roll call.
 9 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 10 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 11 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dews?
 12 MR. DEWS: Aye.
 13 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
 14 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.
 15 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 16 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 17 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
 18 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.
 19 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?
 20 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.
 21 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Okay. I
 22 know that that was confusing. I want to thank
 23 all of the firms that decided to make an
 24 application for and submit an RFQ. Having worked
 25 for many cities over the years, I've had the

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1 opportunity to see all of your work and it's
 2 exceptional. And look forward to working with
 3 ThenDesign in the very near future, but always
 4 look forward to working with Bialosky, they're
 5 wonderful as well, so thank you.
 6 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Thank you very much.
 7 MS. HOEFLING: Thank you.
 8 MAYOR BENJAMIN: So thank you. We will
 9 now move on to more familiar legislation. And I
 10 will turn it over to Councilwoman Huffman for
 11 Resolution 1449.
 12 MS. HUFFMAN: Introducing Resolution
 13 number 1449 for suspension, an Ordinance
 14 authorizing the sale of a police vehicle no
 15 longer needed for a municipal purpose and unfit
 16 for use on GovDeals.com and declaring an
 17 emergency.
 18 MS. HOEFLING: Second.
 19 MAYOR BENJAMIN: It's been moved and
 20 seconded.
 21 Roll call for suspension.
 22 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 23 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 24 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dews?
 25 MR. DEWS: Aye.

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1 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
 2 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.
 3 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 4 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 5 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
 6 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.
 7 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?
 8 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.
 9 MS. HUFFMAN: And introducing Resolution
 10 number 1449 for passage.
 11 MS. HOEFLING: Second.
 12 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Moved and seconded.
 13 Roll call for passage.
 14 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 15 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 16 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dews?
 17 MR. DEWS: Aye.
 18 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
 19 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.
 20 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 21 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 22 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
 23 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.
 24 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?
 25 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.

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1 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Councilman
2 Kozinski, would you handle Resolution 1450,
3 please.

4 MR. KOZINSKI: Introducing Resolution
5 1450 for suspension, a Resolution authorizing the
6 Mayor to extend the Professional Services
7 Agreement/Contract with the Cleveland Restoration
8 Society to participate in the Heritage Home
9 Program for the 2026 calendar year and declaring
10 an emergency.

11 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Second.
12 MR. DEWS: Second.
13 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Moved and seconded.
14 Roll call for suspension.

15 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
16 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
17 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dews?
18 MR. DEWS: Aye.
19 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
20 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.
21 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
22 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
23 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
24 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.
25 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?

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1 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.
2 MR. KOZINSKI: And Resolution number
3 1450 for passage.

4 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Second.
5 MAYOR BENJAMIN: It's been moved and
6 seconded. Any questions? We discussed this
7 during the Finance Committee.

8 Hearing none, roll call, please.
9 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
10 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
11 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dews?
12 MR. DEWS: Aye.
13 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
14 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.
15 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
16 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
17 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
18 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.
19 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?

20 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.
21 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Councilman
22 Puffenberger, Resolution 1451.

23 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Yes. Introducing
24 Resolution number 1451 for suspension. This is a
25 Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into an

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1 Employee Assistance Program Agreement with
2 Employee Services LLC to provide the Village's
3 employees certain benefits and declaring an
4 emergency.

5 MS. HOEFLING: Second.
6 MAYOR BENJAMIN: It's been moved and
7 seconded.

8 Roll call for suspension.
9 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
10 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
11 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dews?
12 MR. DEWS: Aye.
13 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
14 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.

15 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
16 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
17 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
18 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.
19 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?

20 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye. And Resolution
21 number 1451 for passage.

22 MS. HOEFLING: Second.
23 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Moved and seconded.
24 Any questions?

25 MS. BURKE-JONES: Could you just remind
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1 me again exactly the thought behind this, the
2 service? I know we've talked about this in the
3 past and I just wanted to be able to reiterate it
4 again.

5 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Yeah. I'm not aware of
6 a community that does not have an Employee
7 Assistance Program. It is there for an employee
8 when they experience a trauma or a trauma
9 response or just need to go and speak to somebody
10 regarding their mental health.

11 They can go on their own or during the
12 course of conversation with a department head
13 they can be directed to. And it costs us a sum
14 of \$2,500 annually and it's well worth it. I
15 know lots of people who have utilized it over the
16 years.

17 MS. BURKE-JONES: Very reasonable. Very
18 reasonable. I looked at the amount and I
19 couldn't believe it, frankly. Thank you.

20 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Any other
21 questions?

22 Roll call, please.
23 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
24 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
25 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dews?

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1 MR. DEWS: Aye.
 2 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
 3 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.
 4 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 5 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 6 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
 7 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.
 8 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?
 9 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.
 10 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. And
 11 finally, Councilwoman Burke-Jones, would you
 12 handle pay claims?
 13 MS. BURKE-JONES: Yes, I will.
 14 MAYOR BENJAMIN: It's Ordinance 4294.
 15 MS. BURKE-JONES: Yes. Introducing
 16 Ordinance number 4294 for suspension.
 17 Introducing the following amended claims against
 18 the Village of Bratenahl are hereby directed from
 19 the funds and the Fiscal Officer is hereby
 20 authorized and directed to draw her warrants for
 21 payment, to wit: \$191,783.92.
 22 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Second.
 23 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Roll call for
 24 suspension, please.
 25 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
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1 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 2 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dewes?
 3 MR. DEWS: Aye.
 4 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
 5 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.
 6 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 7 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 8 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
 9 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.
 10 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?
 11 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.
 12 MS. BURKE-JONES: Introducing Ordinance
 13 number 4249 for passage.
 14 MS. HOEFLING: Second.
 15 MAYOR BENJAMIN: It's been moved and
 16 seconded. Any other questions regarding pay
 17 claims?
 18 Hearing none, roll call.
 19 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?
 20 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.
 21 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dewes?
 22 MR. DEWS: Aye.
 23 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?
 24 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.
 25 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
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1 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 2 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
 3 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.
 4 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?
 5 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.
 6 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thanks. We move to
 7 public comment this evening. Ms. Meade, please.
 8 MS. MEADE: A couple of things. One
 9 more point on the levy. It seemed at the
 10 presentation, and I had asked for clarification
 11 on the scope of the project, and it seemed like
 12 the scope does not include the future of the
 13 existing Village Hall building or the existing of
 14 the Community Center. It's my opinion, as a
 15 resident, if those two questions aren't answered
 16 and integrated into this levy process in some
 17 way, it will be very difficult to pass the levy.
 18 And then secondly, based on the vote
 19 tonight of TDA, I attended last month's meeting.
 20 And without me having the knowledge or the
 21 background of any of the printed information that
 22 you guys all had or the scoring or whatever was
 23 discussed, based on just what I heard, and based
 24 on the decision made tonight, the one thing about
 25 if you say it Bialosky, the one thing I heard
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1 from them that I did not hear from the other two
 2 that I think is an important thing that I hope
 3 will be integrated into TDA going forward, is Mr.
 4 Matty stressed every time we have wealthy
 5 residents but a poor government.
 6 Bialosky was the only one that stressed
 7 at looking at not only building new, but looking
 8 at existing buildings and seeing if they could be
 9 renovated and might need an addition or something
 10 else, but they had experience in saving
 11 communities where they gave examples of -- I
 12 forget the communities, the projects they named,
 13 but they came back and renovated a building and
 14 it might have needed an expansion, it cost like
 15 1.8 million as opposed to a brand-new building.
 16 I did not hear any discussion from the
 17 other two. And given our situation, I'm hopeful
 18 that TDA, if going forward that works out, that
 19 they will do the same kind of due diligence.
 20 And, again, I think that will be important to
 21 residents just see that that step was taken.
 22 MAYOR BENJAMIN: I'm glad that you
 23 brought this up tonight. The last thing that we
 24 were going to do before we adjourn tonight was
 25 that I was going to make a motion to see if
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1 Council would approve a motion to have our
 2 Village Engineer prepare requests for
 3 qualifications to look at some cost estimates,
 4 utilizing the Doty and Miller report, like we
 19:31:21 5 used this one for new, to ascertain the cost for
 6 the restoration of the Community Center and
 7 Village Hall, because I do think that it is very
 8 important that when we go to the voters, that
 9 they know what the cost would be to renovate
 19:31:40 10 these buildings and what the cost would be to
 11 build new.
 12 And so we have talked earlier, I had
 13 asked Mr. Matty if it was possible to amend the
 14 current RFQ and we cannot do that unfortunately,
 19:31:57 15 so we'll have to issue a new RFQ to do that.
 16 The other option that we still have is
 17 that if they're willing, Council can entertain
 18 the legislation regarding Leopardo who can come
 19 in and certainly do that study and give us those
 19:32:14 20 estimates as well.
 21 MS. BURKE-JONES: Yeah. Again, I know,
 22 I was under the impression that we could hire
 23 Doty Miller to update their assessments and give
 24 us a number for what the renovated buildings were
 19:32:42 25 going to be.
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1 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Yeah. Unfortunately,
 2 Mr. Doty, the engineering firm that he had worked
 3 with for decades, is no longer in business. He
 4 would have to hire a new engineering firm and he
 19:32:55 5 basically said he would have to start from
 6 scratch. And with that starting from scratch, I
 7 felt that it might be best at that point to
 8 either, A, move forward with Leopardo to
 9 determine those costs or, B, just issue a new
 19:33:09 10 RFQ. And if Mr. Doty would like to submit to do
 11 that as part of an RFQ process, that's fine, but
 12 open it up to others as well.
 13 MS. BURKE-JONES: So what would Leopardo
 14 be doing? Would they be doing the energy
 19:33:26 15 efficiency thing or are they just analyzing the
 16 facility to improve them to safe and dry?
 17 MAYOR BENJAMIN: That's what they would
 18 be doing.
 19 MS. BURKE-JONES: Period.
 19:33:37 20 MAYOR BENJAMIN: And I know that there's
 21 something we want more than that.
 22 MS. BURKE-JONES: Right.
 23 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Potentially if the
 24 Village, including our residents, ended up voting
 19:33:45 25 on moving forward with -- we don't want just
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1 clean, safe and dry. We need to make these
 2 facilities compatible for the next 30, 40, 50
 3 years.
 4 MS. HUFFMAN: Will we be able to discuss
 19:34:02 5 this as a Public Improvements meeting?
 6 MAYOR BENJAMIN: We can if you'd like.
 7 MS. BURKE-JONES: We won't be able to
 8 vote at that meeting, but --
 9 MR. MATTY: May I speak? And with all
 19:34:14 10 due respect to Council and especially with all
 11 due respect to the Mayor, I understand those two
 12 options. The third option Council has is to not
 13 do either and just to proceed with the RFQ that
 14 you have now.
 19:34:31 15 I don't know if there's any majority
 16 support for any of this, but I think out of
 17 respect for those Council members who have only
 18 chosen to go the route of new, that should be a
 19 third option that you're discussing. And you
 19:34:48 20 should take a vote and see if a majority has the
 21 ambition for any of those options before you
 22 incur the cost of doing an RFQ and having that
 23 done at the same time where you're trying to do
 24 what you're trying to do for new buildings.
 19:35:05 25 And I say this very respectfully, but
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1 rather than waste time with committee meetings,
 2 et cetera, if there's not a majority that has the
 3 ambition to do any of these, we should know that.
 4 MAYOR BENJAMIN: I agree with that. So
 19:35:22 5 let's try to ascertain tonight. You know, I
 6 hear, too, what Ms. Meade said. I've heard that
 7 from residents, as well, as one of the issues we
 8 had in 2022, so I want to make sure that we have
 9 some answers that we can give them regarding
 19:35:40 10 costs, but if that's not what Council desires,
 11 that's up to you.
 12 MR. MATTY: And I include in that no
 13 disrespect to anybody, including Ms. Meade, who's
 14 raised the issue, because this needs -- this is
 19:35:55 15 an important function going forward. And if it
 16 bogs down what you want to do with new buildings,
 17 we need to understand that upfront or if there's
 18 not a majority, I don't hear other Council
 19 members speaking on that issue. If there's not a
 19:36:11 20 majority to do this, we need to know.
 21 MS. BURKE-JONES: Well, and there have
 22 been some discussions, but not probably
 23 altogether. But I know we have discussed that --
 24 well, the discussion that we want to do new and
 19:36:31 25 everybody concurred with new, but we knew that if
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1 we were going to talk with the residents, they
 2 would want to know what it would cost to renovate
 3 the old. They would want to compare and
 4 understand that, yes, it just makes more sense to
 19:36:49 5 do new and prove it to me. Show me how much it
 6 costs to do the old facility. That's what we're
 7 struggling with right now, wanting to deal with
 8 that situation.
 9 MR. MATTY: Councilwoman, I understand.
 19:37:03 10 I understand what your position is. I understand
 11 what Mr. Dews's position is. I don't understand
 12 what the other members are. So let's hear from
 13 the other members, as far as which one of these
 14 options they want to go forward, to see if we
 19:37:19 15 have a four majority for one, two or three, if we
 16 could.
 17 MR. DEWS: Because we've done studies, a
 18 lot of studies. And the Doty study, so forth,
 19 that was a wash and so forth and didn't address
 19:37:38 20 all basically what was needed in this building
 21 versus basically consolidating down to -- the
 22 Doty study says 10,000 some square feet is really
 23 what's needed. We spent a lot of money on that
 24 so forth and came up with a conclusion.
 19:37:55 25 We hired in late -- in December 2025, we
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1 had an appraisal done on this facility. The
 2 appraisal came back and said, hey, the best use
 3 of this facility is to basically put it in
 4 residential and demolish. And that was the best
 19:38:17 5 thing that we can do and have income tax and take
 6 these things off the book, that we don't have to
 7 have the operating expense and consolidating it
 8 down to from the standpoint ongoing operating
 9 costs and so forth and get revenue and property
 19:38:34 10 taxes and convert these assets, these unused
 11 assets into productive use and getting those
 12 things offline.
 13 And we can basically spend the money to
 14 figure out, okay, a Rough Order of Magnitude or
 19:38:53 15 whatever that basically how much it's going to
 16 cost, but at the end of the day, it makes sense
 17 if you're going down to -- we have 31,000 square
 18 feet here. If we're going to reduce it down to
 19 10,000, if you take the maintenance cost, the
 19:39:08 20 utility cost and do it by square footage and also
 21 from the standpoint of looking at that, it's
 22 going to be cheaper. I'm just throwing that out,
 23 that's my thoughts on this.
 24 MR. PUFFENBERGER: I frankly thought I'd
 19:39:27 25 been pretty clear in the past that I think new is
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1 the way to go. I don't know that I need to -- I
 2 mean, that's where I've been. And I think we've
 3 heard some things tonight even about this
 4 building tonight and the things that are
 19:39:43 5 happening in this building as we sit here that
 6 support that opinion.
 7 MS. HUFFMAN: I just want to make
 8 comment that we did all concur that we thought
 9 new was the way. I think where we distinguish
 19:39:57 10 this whole discussion was around if we should be
 11 locking this building into consideration of a new
 12 facility, which I think all of us have different
 13 views on that.
 14 Me, myself, I think that there should be
 19:40:17 15 a new facility. This facility, I've already said
 16 what I've said. I think that parts of this
 17 building should be taken down and I think there
 18 are very valuable parts of this building, but you
 19 cannot -- at this point where we are tonight,
 19:40:32 20 what we're trying to do, we're trying to look
 21 forward. We have to come back to this. We're
 22 paying for it. We already know how much it
 23 costs.
 24 The real decision is what to do with it
 19:40:46 25 moving forward. We know how much it costs. We
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1 know the monthly operating costs. We've had the
 2 appraisals, as Mr. Dews stated, about what would
 3 need to happen for this building. We already
 4 have numbers. We don't need any more numbers.
 19:41:03 5 We have to make a decision about what we're going
 6 to do with the building, but for tonight's
 7 purposes, I thought that we were deciding to just
 8 go with this option right now.
 9 MAYOR BENJAMIN: I agree with you. Go
 19:41:17 10 ahead.
 11 MR. PUFFENBERGER: I'm sorry, I do agree
 12 with the fact that we need to be prepared to
 13 address what it would cost with these two
 14 buildings. I don't know that major studies are
 19:41:26 15 necessary to determine that, but we need to be
 16 prepared to address that.
 17 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Basically updating the
 18 numbers that we have. And I do want to turn it
 19 over to Mr. Kozinski, but maybe what we can do is
 19:41:43 20 at the Public Improvements meeting next week, one
 21 of our financial gurus, Councilman Dews, has done
 22 some math and has some experience in this.
 23 And if you're willing, maybe we can go
 24 over some of those numbers that you have come up
 19:42:03 25 with and some of those projections on estimated
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1 costs for restoration.
 2 MR. DEWS: The reason why I'm not
 3 sharing, I don't want to basically -- I want to
 4 be objective and so forth, whatever, but the
 5 thing is is that, you know, based off of the data
 6 that we already have, the square footage and
 7 stuff like that, the BS study and all of that and
 8 going by square footage about what we have, it
 9 comes out cheaper from the standpoint of building
 10 new with reduced square footage.

11 I don't mind sharing that, but that is
 12 just my own edification of whatever, but I'm
 13 perfectly willing to share that with Council and
 14 so forth and also looked at operating costs. I
 15 brought it down to net present value from the
 16 standpoint of looking at it, what is the -- from
 17 the standpoint of differential, and it comes out
 18 about a million dollars even demolishing the
 19 building.

20 MS. HOEFLING: So for me, I see how much
 21 it costs the Village to operate this building and
 22 the utilization that we have. It just doesn't
 23 make fiscal sense. We spend \$100,000 a year to
 24 operate this building and with very little
 25 benefit to the overall population of the Village.

1 MS. MEADE: So my point was --
 2 MR. MATTY: Can we hear from Mr.
 3 Kozinski first, please.

4 MS. MEADE: My apologies.
 5 MAYOR BENJAMIN: That was my fault
 6 because I went to you.

7 MR. KOZINSKI: Most of you know my
 8 opinion. I'm of the opinion that this building
 9 is not that far gone that it can't be

10 resurrected. I wanted to bring up a conversation
 11 I had or at least an interest that I brought to
 12 Council last year. Unfortunately, we've not
 13 discussed it or I've not heard anything more
 14 about it, is the thought of our Service

15 Department cutting the tree lawns in the Village.
 16 I'd like personally to stop that and redirect
 17 some of those attention and time. And if that
 18 had taken place, we might not have rooms that are
 19 leaking the way they are if we're taking care of
 20 our facilities.

21 The conversations I've had with a lot of
 22 people in this Village is you can't take care of
 23 the buildings you got now. Why should I vote for
 24 you to have a new buildings? And unfortunately,
 25 you know, I don't talk to everybody in this

1 Village, but, you know, some people are making
 2 their comments. I understand the numbers as far
 3 as the square footage and the operating costs of
 4 10,000 versus this building, but what I want
 5 everyone to consider is that we have this
 6 building now. Is it bigger than we need every
 7 single day? Probably. But what we are not
 8 discussing is that utilization that the community
 9 is using this building.

10 You have a gym right there. There's no
 11 gym going down there. So all the basketball
 12 players, you two, that's gone. That's gone. The
 13 size of parties we have down there, 150 people,
 14 100 people, that's gone. Palates, I don't know
 15 why, that door should not be locked for other
 16 residents to be out of here. They're not even
 17 paying rent. You're going to have a room set up
 18 for palates in the new building that's locked for
 19 one situation?

20 I'm just trying to stress the situation
 21 that if we utilize the manpower that we have, we
 22 might not be in the situation that we are. And
 23 I'm convinced that had the previous
 24 administration taken care of these facilities and
 25 buildings, these conversations wouldn't be taking

1 place.

2 I've said it before with some other
 3 people, there's not a person on the Vatican side
 4 that's having any kind of discussion to knock
 5 that building down. And something tells me the
 6 Vatican is older than this building, right? So
 7 that's where I stand with this. I'd like to see
 8 this building in the future, you know, because we
 9 have the gym. We have -- look at the beautiful
 10 work that they did, Joe, in this building, in
 11 this room. We can do it again. We can do it
 12 cheaper than a 10,000 square foot building. And
 13 on top of what Ms. Meade brought up, knocking
 14 that building down and knocking this building
 15 down.

16 MR. DEWS: Just from the standpoint of
 17 even from looking at other municipalities who are
 18 going through this, the Plain Dealer had an
 19 article that Diana shared with us, Brecksville,
 20 seeks grant for possible demolition of former
 21 Central Elementary School.

22 And this is the December, so forth. It
 23 says that they're going through the exact same
 24 thing and they're coming up that, hey, these
 25 buildings, they're not -- from the standpoint,

1 the maintenance and all that and try to keep them
 2 up and restore them, they're looking at new.
 3 And then there was another one, Lakewood
 4 Police Department growing gender diversity
 5 highlights need for modern facilities, so forth,
 6 to meet those particular needs.
 7 MS. MEADE: My point is just being
 8 objective here. If the scope of the project is
 9 to build a new building, to new police station,
 10 to take into effect community life for all the
 11 recreation where you can have a huge rec flex
 12 room that can be broken down so you can have big
 13 events, blah, blah, blah, the scope did not
 14 include or say what the future of Village Hall
 15 and Community Center would be. That's my point.
 16 So the point is if the new building is
 17 going to encompass all of that, then you need to
 18 educate residents saying we are going to tear
 19 down Village Hall, we are going to tear down the
 20 Community Center, and here's why. In the scope,
 21 the two buildings were not being addressed at
 22 all. And I think ignoring it completely may not
 23 be a satisfactory approach to residents. That
 24 was my point. Not what the endgame was, but you
 25 need to give the whole picture so people can look

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1 at pros and cons.
 2 MAYOR BENJAMIN: That's my goal is to be
 3 able to give the full picture at the end of the
 4 day. And to do that, the best way to do it is to
 5 quantify it through numbers. Go ahead.
 6 MS. BURKE-JONES: Yeah. Basically, if
 7 you're going to build a whole new building, it
 8 makes absolutely no sense to keep the other
 9 buildings, keep them up. You have to demolish
 10 the other two. That's what it is. You don't
 11 build new buildings including all the parochial
 12 elements and then have the other two buildings
 13 just sitting there. So a demolition, anything
 14 that we would have for a bond issue would have to
 15 include the cost of demolishing the two
 16 buildings.
 17 MS. MEADE: But remember the last levy,
 18 the issue of Village Hall was not addressed. And
 19 I asked the question of what is the future
 20 because it wasn't put in the levy language, so
 21 could Village Hall be torn down, and the honest
 22 answer was yes, it would. It was never
 23 discussed. So a lot of people were upset
 24 because, again, the future of the existing
 25 buildings were ignored. And that raised a big

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1 question for residents to think about not knowing
 2 what was going to happen. Are we taking on a new
 3 plus two existing? You know, it didn't make
 4 sense. So it's more than a strategic and
 5 educational component however Council deems
 6 moving forward and what happens to the building.
 7 I don't -- me personally, when you say
 8 let's just update numbers and throw it out, that
 9 doesn't fly with me, because, again, if you're
 10 doing a new building and you're incorporating
 11 recreation and, again, the footprint of what can
 12 be, updating this doesn't make sense to me just
 13 factually, because you're not changing any of the
 14 function, you're just fixing what's broken.
 15 You're not really -- you don't have a
 16 new vision saying here's what the Community
 17 Center could be going forward. You're just
 18 saying, you know, to upgrade electrical, to
 19 upgrade plumbing, to fix, you know, the exterior,
 20 so that is not a compelling argument for me as a
 21 taxpayer. I want to know if you are really
 22 thinking about the future of the Community
 23 Center. What could it be? And that discussion
 24 has never taken place.
 25 And I'm not saying you don't need to

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1 necessarily. I'm just saying as a resident just
 2 throwing numbers saying, well, this is what it
 3 cost now and to upgrade it this is what it cost,
 4 so it doesn't make sense. It's part of the
 5 picture, but not the whole picture for me.
 6 MR. DEWS: You're right, Pat, but are we
 7 talking about community life or are we talking
 8 about a building? Community life can happen
 9 wherever we put it at and making sure that it's
 10 value added to our community.
 11 MS. MEADE: And you think about the
 12 applications. Again, you even have to have an
 13 application for the new building. You have to
 14 have a vision saying if we've got community life,
 15 what are all the potential uses and do we have
 16 space. Maybe we can't build a gym because it's
 17 going to cost a million, but can we have X amount
 18 of square feet where if we need to hold a party
 19 or an event for 200 people, we have a big open
 20 space and they can have dividers doors and break
 21 into smaller meeting rooms, but that kind of
 22 stuff comes down the road with the architects and
 23 all of that, but, again, that involved a vision.
 24 When you're talking about existing
 25 buildings now, no one cares about a vision,

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1 because a decision has already made without the
2 vision. So I'm just saying be open and honest
3 with the residents.

19:51:58 4 MR. BIERUT: A few things. It's very
5 easy to say let's issue an RFQ. Well, an RFQ is
6 very basic. And I'm an engineer, you guys have
7 to answer these things if you're going to respond
8 to an RFQ, which is costly for everybody, but if
9 you issue an RFQ, what does the Community Center
19:52:18 10 -- if you're going to do more than just fix the
11 wiring, then you've got to program it, then you
12 have to find out when uses are going to be. It's
13 a thing. And this is the easy part.

19:52:34 14 The Village Hall, I'm, again, no
15 architect, but the police department, as soon as
16 you touch that thing, that police department
17 isn't going to fly over there. So I think we
18 actually would be muddying the water with some of
19 these things.

19:52:47 20 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Yeah. My concern is
21 mostly this building. You know, obviously any
22 scenario we've been talking about has always
23 included at the very least an adjacent building
24 or an annex with the police department.

19:53:03 25 MR. BIERUT: But as soon as we say,
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1 what they're doing in their communications so
2 that the resident ballot committee, you all are
3 residents, and if Mr. Kozinski and Mrs. Jones
4 wants to be part of that, that's up to you guys,
19:54:42 5 but you can present to the voters the position
6 that you may have or the four of you can join a
7 ballot committee that want to go forward for just
8 new and have your own ballot committee that's
9 outside the scope of being Council members or you
19:55:00 10 can do it in Council of the Whole if there's a
11 majority.

12 I'm just trying to have Council make
13 that decision. The Mayor has an opinion on
14 issues. He can voice where he wants to be, but
19:55:13 15 you have to implement this. Council has to
16 implement this whole thing. And Don is right,
17 another RFQ is expensive for everybody, but
18 you've got base information. The Fiscal Officer
19 has given you information on the cost of this
19:55:29 20 building. The Chief has given you information
21 about the inadequacies of that building,
22 considering also turning on a microwave and the
23 computers go off. I mean, Mr. Maund has told you
24 about the faults with this building and that
19:55:46 25 building.

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1 well, we want this building to be safe and dry
2 and we want these other things, well, what are
3 those other things? We may end up with a bigger
4 building here or a smaller billing. It's not
19:53:14 5 that easy of a question. It makes things very
6 difficult.

7 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Please go
8 ahead.

19:53:23 9 MS. MEADE: I have one other point, but
10 it's a different subject altogether. Are we okay
11 to move to a different question?

12 MR. MATTY: Before you do that, Ms.
13 Meade, and I'm only taking a read of the room,
14 can we have a motion that we're only going to go
19:53:42 15 forward with what I've heard from four Council
16 members with the concept of what the RFQ is now
17 for new? I know we have two dissenters, I
18 understand that.

19 And to be honest with you, if Council
19:54:03 20 wants, Council can do the calculations and the
21 situation that Mr. Dews is talking about as far
22 as the use of this building, but you know,
23 residents and Council can also form a ballot
24 committee. And outside the scope of these public
19:54:23 25 meetings, a ballot committee can assist TDA in

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1 So make a decision and go forward, but
2 as Don said, don't muddy up the process that
3 you're trying to get done with your main
4 objective here. That's all. And maybe I'm
19:55:58 5 talking too much, but you have to make these
6 decisions. And there's ways to present these
7 other issues if people have other issues that
8 they want to present. It has to be a majority of
9 Council going forward with support of the Mayor
19:56:12 10 to get any chance for TDA to pass a bond issue.
11 You have to have support or you're not going to
12 go. I don't know what else to tell you, but you
13 can't just keep going around this.

14 MR. DEWS: The majority of our ships
19:56:27 15 have to move in the same direction if we want
16 this to work. If not, we're just basically --
17 it's the definition of insanity. We're going to
18 go down the same route of a failure.

19 And the thing is that when we put the
19:56:42 20 last bond in, and the thing is that we need to be
21 talking the same talk and whatever or something
22 has to be done. Where we're at right now is not
23 sustainable. I've walked through these
24 buildings, I've walked through Village Hall, I've
19:57:00 25 walked through this building, so forth. This is

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1 not Bratenahl.
 2 And if you think that's Bratenahl and so
 3 forth, we have a level set. We have to start
 4 over again. This is a clean slate. And
 19:57:17 5 basically from the standpoint and start doing
 6 things right and start accruing for our capital
 7 improvements and things of that nature. We're
 8 trying to fit a square peg in a round hole here.
 9 And I'm trying to hold my tongue, but we got to
 19:57:34 10 move forward. We need traction.
 11 MAYOR BENJAMIN: I agree with you. We
 12 have to make decisions moving forward. My only
 13 -- and, again, I've said it before, I will say it
 14 very briefly again, that my only concern is based
 19:57:49 15 on the outcome of 2022, and maybe the next one
 16 will be different, is that in that round, we did
 17 not -- we were not able to provide answers to the
 18 questions that the residents asked.
 19 They wanted to know you're going ahead
 19:58:06 20 and building a new Village Hall. How much does
 21 it cost to renovate the old one? You're talking
 22 about the Community Center. How much does it
 23 cost to renovate that? And we were not able to
 24 give the residents answers to those questions.
 19:58:22 25 That's my only concern, because at the
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1 end of the day, we have to go to the voters and
 2 the voters have to make a decision. The
 3 residents, the taxpayers in this community, have
 4 to make a decision about what they are willing to
 19:58:37 5 fund or not fund. And when the time comes, we
 6 are going to need -- they are going to ask
 7 questions and we are going to need to provide
 8 answers. So I want to be able to do that as
 9 openly and transparently and as honestly as
 19:58:51 10 possible. And that's the only reason why I'm
 11 bringing this up.
 12 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Lessons were learned
 13 in that last go round, no doubt about it. We
 14 know what needs to be addressed. We also know
 19:59:04 15 that in all those town meetings, certainly I
 16 noted, I wasn't even on Council at that time, it
 17 was that interim when I wasn't around, but what I
 18 noticed when I walked into the room is at the
 19 town meetings, there wasn't a single member of
 19:59:20 20 Council sitting at the front table. Not one.
 21 Not one. That sent a real clear message to the
 22 Village. And I think that was at least one of
 23 many reasons why it didn't go.
 24 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Yeah. Chief.
 19:59:31 25 CHIEF LOBELLO: I don't live in the
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1 world of finance or engineering or architecture.
 2 I live in the world of common sense I like to
 3 think. I think Ms. Meade hit the nail on the
 4 head that her question wasn't why aren't we
 19:59:49 5 considering renovating this building of Village
 6 Hall. Her question was more geared towards if
 7 we're going for new construction, are we going to
 8 demolish this building; yes or no? Are we going
 9 to demolish Village Hall; yes or no?
 20:00:03 10 And I think my common sense approach is
 11 the only answer to that is yes. You have to take
 12 it on the chin now for the six people in this
 13 Village who want to keep this building. You have
 14 to take it on the chin and then go with that
 20:00:19 15 message.
 16 MS. BURKE-JONES: I think that some of
 17 the Council people sitting at this table when we
 18 voted for new construction thought that we were
 19 demolishing the other two buildings.
 20:00:33 20 CHIEF LOBELLO: That's got to be in the
 21 message then.
 22 MS. BURKE-JONES: Exactly. I mean, now,
 23 going, oh, of course, new. We just didn't think
 24 we're going to build this big building and also
 20:00:45 25 keep the other ones going, but now I'm finding
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1 out that some of our Council thought that we were
 2 going to keep the other buildings going even
 3 though we said we were going to vote we were
 4 going to build new. And I think we've got to
 20:01:00 5 just come to some concurrence with this group
 6 here of what we're talking about. When we're
 7 building new, that is about also demolishing the
 8 old.
 9 MR. PUFFENBERGER: I don't think when I
 20:01:14 10 said new I even gave it a second thought that we
 11 would keep the other two buildings.
 12 MS. BURKE-JONES: Exactly.
 13 MR. PUFFENBERGER: You can say about
 14 assumptions, but that was my assumption. I never
 20:01:25 15 even gave it a second thought that's the way we
 16 would have to go. And it does have to be part,
 17 and I'm a marketing guy, that has to be part of
 18 the marketing that we explain that.
 19 MS. BURKE-JONES: Right.
 20:01:36 20 MR. DEWS: What we're doing is taking
 21 our assets, our underutilized assets, and putting
 22 them into a productive use as housing that we can
 23 get income and property taxes, especially on this
 24 site. And we've been talking about from the
 20:01:54 25 standpoint of the shortfalls and so forth. We
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1 have to start thinking about underutilized assets
2 and how can we put them in productive use.
3 That's my thoughts.

20:02:07

4 MS. HUFFMAN: Perhaps I haven't been
5 clear. I thought I was. But I did, in fact,
6 agree with new. And I was very explicit about
7 wanting to keep part of it, which meant that some
8 of it would be demolished. Now other Council
9 members who are voicing their opinions in their
10 minds would admit that they just felt like this
11 would be demolished.

20:02:27

12 All we are doing is just sharing what we
13 feel like it should be. And at the end of the
14 day, it's going to be about whatever the majority
15 wants and whatever the voters will pay for. I
16 could say what I feel should happen. It may not,
17 but I do think that it should be put out there
18 that I think that's a very valuable piece of this
19 property. Surely some of this will be
20 demolished.

20:02:40

20:02:57

21 Again, we can keep talking about we
22 don't know how much the numbers. We don't know
23 how much this is going to cost. We already know
24 how much it costs to run it. We already know
25 that. That should give us a really good

20:03:09

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1 indication on whether we do keep the gym or if it
2 is demolished. So I just want to be clear that I
3 split the baby on that, but I'm all for new.

20:03:32

4 MS. BURKE-JONES: There's no way that
5 our AE team can progress without identifying what
6 in the world they're including in the new
7 construction. And if we say but we don't know
8 yet if we're going to have the gym or blah, blah,
9 blah, they're just going to sit and say okay,
10 when you make up your mind, let us know, because
11 we have to tell them what we want.

20:03:49

12 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Yes.

13 MS. BURKE-JONES: And we can't -- and we
14 can't wait and say, oh, let the community decide,
15 you know, and then you have a bunch of -- without
16 information, some people like the gym, some not,
17 that gym is a very, very poor asset. It doesn't
18 have mechanical systems. It is an old structure.
19 And we should make -- if we want another gym, we
20 should build a better gym than what we got,
21 because that's not very much an asset.

20:04:05

20:04:29

22 MS. HUFFMAN: So once again, I don't
23 want to get bogged down on my opinion. It's just
24 my opinion. And when we talked about a new
25 facility, the consensus was that there would be a

20:04:43

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1 gym over there.

2 MAYOR BENJAMIN: There would you be a
3 multipurpose.

4 MS. BURKE-JONES: Multipurpose.

20:04:53

5 MS. HUFFMAN: Some type of large space
6 that could accommodate what we needed.

7 MS. BURKE-JONES: Exactly.

8 MR. DEWS: And we did the Doty study.

20:05:05

9 The Doty study basically did an analysis on
10 everything and basically it gave us -- from a
11 brand-new building versus basically renovating
12 and it brought it down to -- I think it was
13 10,000 or 16,000 square feet. And that analysis
14 has been done. And you can start narrowing the
15 box and so forth and saying, hey, let's build off
16 of what we paid for before.

20:05:26

17 MAYOR BENJAMIN: So by the way, I want
18 to say I appreciate this conversation. This is a
19 critical, critical conversation and so I am so
20 appreciative of the comments tonight. Mr. Orel.

20:05:38

21 MR. OREL: I'd like Ms. Meade to correct
22 me if I'm speaking incorrectly, but up until this
23 point, everybody on Council, with the exception
24 of Mr. Kozinski, actually, and Ms. Huffman, too,
25 was kicking the can down the road as to

20:05:55

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1 demolishing these two structures, the Village
2 Hall and the Community Center. You kept -- you
3 were wishy-washy at the very least about doing
4 that. And that's all I got to say.

20:06:21

5 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you.

6 MS. MEADE: I'm just saying you have to
7 be clear, so thank you, Chief, for interpreting
8 and making that point. The other thing that I
9 think will be important in communication, and
10 please know I'm telling you this because I'm
11 trying to be helpful in you moving forward.

20:06:33

12 The other thing is you've also stressed
13 grants, getting grants and philanthropy. Again,
14 you have a six-month window. Again, if you sell
15 Tri B, that money could be allocated. Easterly
16 water project, if there's income tax, if you
17 decide to carve that out toward new, fine, but
18 residents will want to know, because you said
19 when it comes to the residents, asking them for
20 the least amount of money based on your efforts.

20:06:49

20:07:03

21 To date, publicly, I'm not aware of
22 those efforts being done behind the scenes or
23 openly. So if you are going to try and add to
24 the 10,000 square feet, a failure in the last
25 levy was, once you cut the footprint from 20,000

20:07:20

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1 to 10,000, you didn't cut the budget and you
2 didn't come up with a new rendering showing how
3 the 10,000 square feet footprint would be
4 utilized.

20:07:31 5 So whatever you propose, again, you
6 didn't have an exterior rendering, either. So
7 those things are going to be important going
8 forward. So, again, if you are trying to reduce
9 the burden on the taxpayer, make sure you have
20:07:44 10 some monies that you are showing how you're
11 reducing it. It costs this, here's how we're
12 reducing it. This is what we're going to ask you
13 for.

20:07:56 14 And again, I don't know how much of that
15 has even really been started, except those two
16 things I've mentioned.

17 MAYOR BENJAMIN: We've been working. I
18 can assure you we're working behind the scenes
19 and we've had some meetings and putting together
20 a toolbox, you know. I will mention just for the
21 record, Council President Pro Tem Dews and I met
22 with our state representative, Terrence Upchurch.
23 There's an application for some capital funds
24 from the State of Ohio that is due in March and
20:08:26 25 we're beginning to work on that.

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1 And, again, it's probably a long shot,
2 but we have to do our due diligence. We have to
3 at least go to the voters and say we tried.

4 MS. MEADE: Can I switch subjects now?
20:08:40 5 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Are we ready to move
6 on?

7 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Yes.
8 MAYOR BENJAMIN: This has been a
9 wonderful conversation. It's a conversation

20:08:50 10 we've needed to have, so I appreciate it. If
11 we're ready to move on, please go ahead.

12 MS. MEADE: This is a 30 second one.
13 CHIEF LOBELLO: Um-hum. (Laughter.)
14 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Sure, Pat.

20:09:00 15 (Laughter.)
16 MS. MEADE: I don't know what the sign
17 company's proper name is, but you have a big
18 section of their fence and it's been torn up or
19 broken, repaired. I don't know if anyone has
20 gone to them and asked them to repair it or what
20:09:09 21 the protocol was.

22 MAYOR BENJAMIN: They've had a lot of
23 major internal issues, cleanup issues that
24 they've been doing as well. I'll make sure that
20:09:21 25 we look into that one, too.

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1 MS. MEADE: That was it.
2 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Mr. Orel,
3 please.

4 MR. OREL: Yeah. I scheduled a final
20:09:28 5 inspection with the Building Administrator
6 explaining that I wanted to be on site for the
7 inspection. I arrived 15 minutes early. The
8 inspector never showed. Next day, I found that
9 the inspector, Scott Packard, was there earlier
20:09:42 10 than scheduled without notifying me or the
11 homeowner, so neither one of us were present at
12 the time of inspection. The homeowner, Evelyn
13 Albers, A-L-B-E-R-S, was home, but Mr. Packard
14 never announced his presence. And I was left
20:09:57 15 waiting for an inspection that already happened.

16 I found that -- I found out that the
17 inspection failed with the statement the entire
18 structure needs repair. This is after new
19 footers, headers, studs, roof and doors were
20 repaired. At the time I didn't understand how
21 "the entire structure needs repair" meant.

22 I asked what that meant and I received
23 no response. It was three months later I
24 discovered the permit was closed without
20:10:27 25 explanation. Neither I, nor the homeowner, Ms.

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1 Albers, was notified of this. To this day,
2 neither one of us received any paperwork showing
3 the project repairs met code or not. We only
4 know from the administration that the permit was
20:10:44 5 closed. And I found that out through the State
6 of Ohio, not Bratenahl Building.

7 So my question is why did it take three
8 months to find out and why did it not come from
9 Bratenahl Building?

20:10:57 10 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you for your
11 comment. Appreciate it. We addressed that last
12 month.

13 MR. OREL: No, you didn't, not those
14 questions.

20:11:04 15 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you. Any other
16 public comment?

17 Is there a motion to adjourn the
18 meeting?

19 MR. DEWS: So move.

20:11:23 20 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Second.

21 MS. COOKS: Ms. Burke-Jones?

22 MS. BURKE-JONES: Aye.

23 MS. COOKS: Mr. Dews?

24 MR. DEWS: Aye.

25 MS. COOKS: Ms. Hoefling?

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1 MS. HOEFLING: Aye.
 2 MS. COOKS: Ms. Huffman?
 3 MS. HUFFMAN: Aye.
 4 MS. COOKS: Mr. Kozinski?
 5 MR. KOZINSKI: Aye.
 6 MS. COOKS: Mr. Puffenberger?
 7 MR. PUFFENBERGER: Aye.
 8 MAYOR BENJAMIN: Thank you, everyone.
 9 (Meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.)
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CERTIFICATE

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4 I, Nancy L. Molnar, do hereby certify that
5 as such Reporter I took down in Stenotypy all of
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7 that I have transcribed my said Stenotype notes
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10 form of the proceedings had in said cause and
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Nancy L. Molnar
 Nancy L. Molnar, Notary Public
 within and for the State of Ohio

My commission expires April 25, 2029.

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