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City Council

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Agency: [Cleveland City Council](#)

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Summary

- The city is moving forward with a plan to sell some city-owned property. (Ordinance 111-2024)
- The city is interested in partially financing a [pickleball](#) facility. (Ordinance 107-2024)
- An agreement for [pilot](#) training at Burke Lakefront Airport was introduced. (Ordinance 116-2024)

Follow-Up Questions

- Why isn't the pickleball facility being created at a Cleveland recreation center?
- Does the city partner with other organizations for internships?

Notes





The meeting was called to order by Council President Blaine Griffin. All council members were present. The meeting agenda, minutes and a list of other meetings may be viewed on [Cleveland City Council](#) Legistar.

Griffin read the guidelines that will be implemented in the event of “disruptions of Cleveland City Council meetings.” He outlined a six-step process that includes:

- an overview
- a warning process
- recess of the meeting, per Robert's Rules of Order (City Council has no rules for a recess)
- leave of the council members from chamber
- clearing of the chamber of everyone except those representing the media
- the resuming of the business meeting at the end of the recess period

Public comment

Seven of the 10 registrants for public comment were present.

1. Stephen Katanovic was the first to speak. He said that eight years ago he was wrongly accused of inappropriate behavior and “banned for life” from the Galleria at Erieview Tower, which houses the YMCA. He then asked that the council “work for peace” with regard to the Israel-Hamas War.
2. Shereen Naser, a Ward 15 resident, spoke regarding the Israel-Hamas War. She sought a “partnership” with the council for a ceasefire resolution. She said, “You all have everything you need to be in partnership with us. I think that if you weren’t in your current seats you’d be sitting back here with us.”

“We come every week cause we still have hope.... I, together, want us to build a beautiful Cleveland that speaks for justice that welcomes all and that prioritizes people over war.” She ended by saying commenters are asking council to “Raise your voices with us, to act with us, please.”

3. April LaRow, a business owner in Ward 7, came to speak in her capacity as a nurse

to say that the [healthcare system in Gaza](#) has been “decimated.” She said that she felt ashamed to be a lifelong Clevelander and disagreed with the statements released to the media on behalf of the council, referencing the [Cleveland City Council statement on ceasefire](#), and cited the resolution passed by Cleveland City Council supporting Ukraine after Russia invaded. She ended by saying, “It’s all of your jobs to be a voice of the people and not your donors.”

4. Rev. Pamela Pinkney apologized for comments she made to elected officials during the Sept. 25 council meeting. She said that she does not attend council meetings to “bash, fight, and argue or insult or embarrass anybody.” She asked that legislation be drafted that protects the rights of heterosexual Christians. She ended by saying, “It is time for world peace.”
5. Dontez Taylor spoke about concerns related to inmate education [at the Cleveland Juvenile Detention](#) center. He asked that the council create a program to help those released from the detention center to apply skills or diplomas, earned while in detention, in society. He also spoke about [alleged abuse of children while in the care of Cuyahoga County](#).
6. Sarah Popivker, from Cleveland Heights, spoke about allegations of [sexual assault against Jewish women](#) during the Hamas attack on Oct. 7 and against those currently being held hostage. She commended the council for condemning the Oct. 7th attack and encouraged them to stick with their decision to not pass a resolution calling for a ceasefire. She said that a ceasefire without the release of all the hostages would only be “rewarding the bullies, like the ones present here tonight who have been bullying you every week.” *[Editor’s note: Griffin [announced prior to this meeting](#) that council does not feel it is in a position to pass a ceasefire resolution.]*
7. Alec Popivker, also from Cleveland Heights, opened by acknowledging the loss of [American soldiers](#) in an attack in Jordan on Sunday. He offered a prayer. He also encouraged education in American schools and colleges over propaganda.

[Editor’s note: Find the full public comments on [Public Comment CLE](#).]

Legislation for introduction and referral

Eighteen ordinances were introduced. These involved contracts for vending machines at city buildings, audit of council’s communication programs, Crime Stoppers reporting, fair housing, building renovations, employee benefits, sale of city-owned property and cell

phones/wireless devices for city employees. Ordinance 145-2024 was also introduced regarding financing for the renovation of homes in “strategically targeted areas” and a beautification pilot program in Wards 5, 10 and 14.

First reading emergency ordinances read in full and passed

Two ordinances passed. One was regarding the Pigskin Classic 5K and the other regarding the Slavic Village Development Corporation. Both passed with 16 yeas.

Emergency resolutions read in full and adopted

Seven resolutions regarding permits passed with 16 yeas.

Second reading legislation

There were four ordinances passed with 16 yeas. These involved the acceptance of grants for mental health services for people experiencing homelessness and the operation of the Cartel Gang Narcotics Laundering Task Force. The ordinances were also related to the Transformative Arts Projects Fund Program and an authorization for an intern from the National Forum For Black Public Administrators.

Resolutions

Council Members Charles Slife, Joe Jones, Kevin Bishop, Griffin, Deborah Gray, Richard Starr and Stephanie Howse-Jones requested condolence resolutions from the floor.

Introductions

Griffin acknowledged current and former elected officials in attendance.

Announcements

Council Member Kevin Conwell extended an invitation to the groundbreaking ceremony for the [Glenville Library](#) on Saturday, Feb. 3. The event will be held from 10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Miscellaneous

Council Members Rebecca Maurer and Jenny Spencer both made statements regarding the willingness of Cleveland City Council to hold a vote on the issue of a ceasefire resolution regarding the Israel-Hamas War.

Maurer said, “Israel has the right to exist, but so does Palestine.”

“[The U.S.] bears a shared responsibility for Israel’s actions, military and otherwise.” She apologized for not adding her voice to the many around the world calling for a ceasefire,

saying, "Sometimes all you can do is the next right thing." ([Cleveland City Council on ceasefire](#))

Spencer discussed the council president's statement that the council would not be issuing a ceasefire resolution. Spencer acknowledged the power of organizing, protest and advocacy. She said, "The people who have come to Cleveland City Council are exercising important rights as citizens in a free, democratic society. May we as a society never lose these rights." ([New public comment rules at Cleveland City Council](#))

Spencer also acknowledged the body's continued commitment to public comment for Cleveland residents at Cleveland City Council meetings.

The next meeting will be Monday, Feb. 5 at 7 p.m. Free parking is available on the outside upper parking deck behind City Hall on Mondays after 5 p.m.

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