

# Documenters

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## Committee of the Whole [afternoon session]

Documenter name: Tina Scott

Agency: [Cleveland City Council](#)

Date: June 3, 2024

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### Summary

- There was significant discussion of potential recreational marijuana dispensaries, regulation, permits and fair and equal opportunities.
- Committee members had in-depth discussions with a variety of perspectives on campaign contribution regulations for council, the mayor, and in cities surrounding Cleveland.
- Public Works and Capital Projects presented on numerous projects and funding justification of projects throughout the Cleveland area.

### Follow-Up Questions

- Does the City of Cleveland have a Department of Transportation (aside from Regional Transit Authority operations)? If not, why not?
- What's going on with Howse-Jones being left out of legislation that she should be listed on?

### Notes

**Council members:** Joe Jones; Kevin Bishop; Kerry McCormack; Deborah Gray; Richard Starr; Blaine Griffin, council president; Stephanie Howse-Jones; Michael Polensek; Kevin Conwell; Anthony Hairston; Danny Kelly; Rebecca Maurer; Kris Harsh; Jasmin Santana; Jenny Spencer; Brian Kazy; Charles Slife

### Economic Development

Thomas McNair, director of Economic Development, began by discussing ordinance [635-2024](#), which was not on the [agenda](#). McNair said that all of Cleveland's neighborhoods have significant and historical attributes and it's imperative to provide each neighborhood with the support and resources to sustain and thrive.

Burten, Bell, Carr Development Executive Director Joy Johnson provided data and spoke about past and current requested dollars designated to Burten, Bell, Carr.

Council Member Deborah Gray (Ward 4) said Buckeye residents are excited about the [Buckeye Corridor](#) and she supports all related projects.

**Ordinance 635-2024** was approved to be heard by full council.

*[Editor's note: You can find more information about the agenda items by selecting the hyperlinked ordinance numbers on the [agenda](#).]*

**Public Utilities Director Martin Keane presented on the following:**

**443-2024** Regarding manhole projects. Approved

**446-2024** Regarding water rates. Approved

**447-2024** Regarding sewage and service rates. Approved

**479-2024** Regarding website hosting. Approved

**480-2024** Regarding proprietary valves. Approved

**481-2024** Regarding repair parts. Approved

**526-2024** Regarding employee training and development Approved

Keane described each ordinance's project and objectives.

**Port Control Director Bryant Francis presented on the following:**

**468-2024** Director Frances asked for this ordinance to be held. Committee granted.

**470-2024** Regarding installing a weather station. Approved

**474-2024** Regarding USS Cod to operate as a museum. Approved

**475-2024** Regarding operation of law practice at Burke Airport. Approved

**476-2024** Regarding operation and maintenance of North Coast Harbor. Approved as amended.

**523-2024** Regarding leasing space at Burke Lakefront Airport. Approved as amended.

**524-2024** Regarding increase of leasing space at Burke Lakefront Airport. Approved

**527-2024** Regarding blast-resistant trash receptacles that would diffuse the force of explosions. Approved

**Public Safety Director Dornat "Wayne" Drummond and Assistant Director Nicole Carlton presented**

**548-2024** Regarding Cuyahoga County 911 plan. Approved

**547-2024** Regarding nominating and voting the Mayor of Euclid Kirsten Holzheimer Gail, to serve as chief representative on Cuyahoga County's 911 Program Review Committee. Approved

**630-2024** Involving agreement to send additional law enforcement services to the cities of Milwaukee and Chicago regarding the upcoming Republican National Convention and Democratic National Convention.

Council Member Michael Polensek (Ward 8) said no one took the time to contact him and notify him about 631-2024 or 631-2024. *[Editor's note: Neither piece was on the agenda.]*

Polensek asked that 630-2024 be put on hold for further discussion and review before consideration for approval.

**631-2024** Polensek said he was willing to hear 631-2024. Drummond explained it involved a grant from the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation for safety lights and signals.

Approved for full council to hear later that night.

Polensek read texts that he received about fireworks being illegally used and disrupting neighborhood peace over the weekend.

**City Planning's Joyce Pan Huang, director, and Shannan Leonard, zoning chief, presented:**

**529-2024**

Huang explained 57% of Ohioans voted "yes" on [Issue 2](#), which authorizes adult recreational use and allows individuals to carry up to 2.5 ounces of marijuana. Regulation of cannabis control and dispensaries are factored in.

Leonard described the ordinance's objectives, which include making [Cleveland's zoning laws more accommodating to dispensaries](#).

Chair Blaine Griffin (Ward 6) said he hopes there are enforced regulations regarding

signage of dispensary establishments.

Council Members Charles Slife (Ward 17) and Stephanie Howse-Jones (Ward 7) asked if Planning is ensuring enforcement strategy on dispensary establishments, licensing, etc.

Howse-Jones said the first licenses will be permitted to dispensaries already licensed for medical marijuana starting June 8. She said the City of Cleveland will receive at most four of those permits.

Approved.

#### **546-2024**

Safe Streets and Roads for All 2023 Grant, which is a plan for safety and improvements along St. Clair Avenue (through Wards 8, 9 and 10). City Planner Matt Moss presented.

Council Member Joe Jones (Ward 1) said that successful plans always include monitoring and tracking. Jones asked Huang if the existing traffic/pedestrian lane projects include monitoring. Huang responded that painting strips on pavement will not resolve safety issues among pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. Huang said her department is rigorously studying the matter and strategizing effective measures.

Approved.

**615-2024** Increasing council's campaign contribution maximum was introduced and moved to a full council vote this evening. Griffin said Cleveland has not raised its campaign fund amount since 2016 and Cleveland is falling behind with other cities increasing their limits. Griffin said some cities have no limits.

Griffin said he believes that \$3,000 from individuals and \$6,000 from political action committees (PACs) is a fair increase request (up from \$1,500 and \$3,000, respectively).

Jones questioned why there are any caps for Cleveland City Council members. Jones asked what is the mayor's cap. Griffin responded with \$7,500 from PACs (it's \$5,000 from individuals).

Jones made a motion to amend council's campaign contributions cap to equal the mayor's campaign contribution cap. Starr seconded. Griffin emphasized that he believes \$3,000 and \$6,000 are fair amounts to seek. Starr said fair amounts would be equal

amounts for all.

Council Member Deborah Gray said she has received numerous inquiries from her constituents asking why this ordinance is being rushed to approval.

The amendment did not pass. Griffin reiterated his recommendation of \$3,000 and \$6,000 as fair increases. He said this item will be considered at full council tonight.

**482-2024** Regarding allowing the process to begin tax increment financing for riverfront development and the Bedrock project.

Approved as amended.

**Community Development Director Alyssa Hernandez, Assistant Director Michiel Wackers, and Budget Manager Jeff Kucharski presented on the following**

**166-2024** regarding accepting [grants from HUD](#). Kucharski presented on the related budget matters. Kucharski said the overall grant total awarded was \$30.5 million last year and \$28.3 million this year, which is a reduction of approximately 7.1%.

Approved as amended.

**585-2024** Regarding computer software contracts.

Ahmed Abonamah, chief finance officer, and Jim Gentile, controller/assistant director of Finance, presented. Gentile said this ordinance is the department's effort to establish a system that better monitors grants. Grant is \$200,000.

Approved.

**Prevention Intervention and Opportunity (PIO)**

**636-2024** Regarding community-based Cleveland Project Thrives grant budget.

Approved and will be heard by the full council tonight.

**Resolution 590-2024** Regarding a tax budget for 2025. Approved.

**592-2024** regarding director of Finance and integrated payroll licensing.

**Public Works Director Frank Williams presented:**

577-2024 regarding contracts with Changeover nonprofit organization to improve four tennis courts at Thurgood Marshall Recreation Center. It is a donation with an estimated value of \$35,339.

Howse-Jones asked to be added as a sponsor on this piece of legislation.

Approved.

**583-2024** regarding rock salt annual contracting for Division of Streets.

Approved.

**Capital Projects: James DeRosa, director, and Keshia Chambers, assistant director, presented:**

581-2024 regarding funding from the Ohio Department of Transportation for preliminary study of a lakefront pedestrian bridge and accepting contracts. Chambers said \$5 million will be appropriated to stage 1 design.

Howse-Jones said she should be listed on this legislation and said she is being intentionally left off of this legislation and other legislation that she should be listed on. Griffin said he will ensure this stops right now.

Approved.

**544-2024** regarding adjustments to agreement with TurnDev for the new police headquarters development at 2530-2570 Superior Ave. Project would be a maximum cost to TurnDev of \$90 million.

Approved.

**469-2024** regarding approving Little Italy Redevelopment Corp.'s Random Road encroachment by installing a Guardians of Traffic Ohio historical marker (to highlight the artisans who worked on the sculptures on the Hope Memorial Bridge).

Approved.

**647-2024** regarding Public Works and allowing the Cleveland Charge to conduct and host games in Public Auditorium.

Council Members Polensek and Anthony Hairston (Ward 10) said they're concerned

about concession and revenue control and a loss to the enterprise account. Griffin, McCormack and Bishop support this project.

Polensek made a motion to incorporate an amendment that agreements regarding parking and concessions need to come back to council for concurrence and ratification. Approved.

Will be heard by the full council tonight.

**616-2024** Griffin said he needed to strike section 5. **Human Resources** Director Matthew Cole said this is to add a waste collection transfer station unit leader to the [pay band](#) and associated pay rates for the position.

Approved as amended. Will be heard by the full council tonight.

**241-2024** Regarding renaming a park in honor of [Shirley Chisholm](#). Approved.

**530-2024** Regarding pool policies. Approved.

**593-2024** Regarding parking infraction fines. Council Member Brian Kazy (Ward 16) moved to amend the fine for violating tree lawn and private driveway parking rules from \$200 to \$150. Approved as amended.

**620-2024** regarding urging CMSD to change the name of East Professional Center to Arnold R. Pinkney Professional Center. Griffin said Pinkney contributed significantly to education. Approved. Will be addressed to the full council tonight.

Meeting adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

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