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City Council

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Agency: [Cleveland City Council](#)

Date: Feb. 3, 2025

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Summary

- Some public commenters called for Cleveland to establish itself as a “[sanctuary city](#).”
- Canon Healthcare is receiving income tax credits and property tax abatements.
- Total proposed budget appropriations for 2025 are \$2.1 billion.

Follow-Up Questions

- I don't understand two of the ordinances, 1141-2023 and 99-2025. What exactly is changing?

Notes

The Cleveland City Council [meeting](#) on Feb. 3 was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Ward 6 Council Member and Council President Blaine Griffin. Clerk of Council Patricia Britt called the roll. Council members in attendance:

Ward 1 - Joseph Jones

Ward 3 - Kerry McCormack

Ward 4 - Deborah Gray

Ward 5 - Richard Starr

Ward 6 - Blaine Griffin

Ward 7 - Stephanie Howse-Jones

Ward 9 - Kevin Conwell

Ward 10 - Anthony Hairston

Ward 11 - Brian Kazy

Ward 12 - Rebecca Maurer

Ward 13 - Kris Harsh

Ward 14 - Jasmin Santana

Ward 15 - Jenny Spencer

Ward 16 - Brian Kazy

Ward 17 - Charles Slife

Council Members Kevin Bishop (Ward 2) and Michael Polensek (Ward 8) were not in attendance.

A moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance followed the roll call. Griffin then read the rules and codified ordinances pertaining to public comment.

At the direction of Griffin, Britt dispensed with the journal. (Note: to dispense with the journal is a routine motion made when council members agree that they do not need to go over the past meeting minutes in detail and can move on to agenda items).

The public comment portion of the meeting then commenced. Ten individuals provided comment as outlined below:

1. **Annie McAneny**, Cleveland Heights – Representing the Cleveland Liberation Center, McAneny voiced her strong opposition to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) potential targeting of local schools. "ICE has no place in our schools, we owe them nothing, so we will tell them nothing," she said.

In addition, McAneny, who said she is an educator in Cleveland, called on the mayor and City Council to pass legislation to protect immigrants, saying, "We demand that the city passes legislation which prevents police in Cleveland from collaborating with federal immigration on arrests, detentions, or any enforcement of federal immigration law, and this includes preventing the use of Cleveland jails for immigration detention, prohibiting ICE entry into jails without a judicial warrant, and preventing the sharing of information on immigrants with the federal government."

2. **Riley Petro**, Ward 17 – Representing the Party for Socialism and Liberation and the Cleveland Fights Back Network, Petro said, "In mere weeks since the inauguration of Donald Trump's second term as president, many members of our communities' worst fears have already come true." He thanked Mayor Justin Bibb, Griffin, Howse-Jones, Conwell and Santana for being "outspoken in wanting to protect against unlawful deportations in Cleveland."

Petro then expressed disappointment in Santana for her [comments during the Cleveland City Council](#) meeting on the evening of Jan. 27, where she called a lack of protest in response to [an ICE raid at Cilantro Taqueria in Cleveland Heights](#). Her comment can be

viewed [here](#). Petro described her remarks as “unwarranted criticism” and “baseless.”

Petro also called for legislation to prohibit local law enforcement from collaborating with federal immigration authorities. He concluded, “At the end of the day, it is only we that can keep each other safe.”

3. **Andre Dailey**, Ward 8 – Dailey recited a portion of a poem called [“The New Colossus”](#) by Emma Lazarus (1849-1887). Part of the poem appears on the Statue of Liberty: “Give me your tired, your poor/Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free...” He asked for the mayor and council to ensure that ICE is not given access to Cleveland schools.

4. **Justin Evaristo**, Ward 6 – Representing the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), Evaristo, a member of the Latino community, said he was moved to provide public comment “because these stories of families being torn apart by ICE have left me devastated.” He then expressed surprise by “seeing certain members of this council use this tragedy as an opportunity to bash activists and organizers like myself...”. Evaristo further said the platform of the DSA includes a demand for an end to detainment and unconditional amnesty for all immigrants.

5. **Sara Fadlalla** – Fadlalla urged Cleveland City Council to pass an ordinance designating Cleveland as a “sanctuary city,” cancel [ShotSpotter](#), drop the charges against Chairman [Fahiem](#) (of New Era Cleveland), and “stand with us as we unite to stop our complicity in genocide here and abroad within apartheid Israel.” She emphasized that these “crises are linked.”

6. **Faouzi Baddour**, Ward 11 – Representing the Coalition for a Better Cleveland, Baddour began his comments by thanking Council Members Brian Kazy and Rebecca Maurer for “voting no the [maps](#),” referring to the redistricting plan that will reduce the number of City Council wards from 17 to 15. He criticized those who supported the measure, saying they “took liberty in ripping communities apart and slaughtering a sense of community.” Baddour urged council to “come back to the people.”

7. **Isabella Robert Llorens**, Cleveland Heights – Speaking on behalf of the Cleveland Liberation Center, Llorens identified herself as being from “Puerto Rico, a nation colonized and occupied by the United States.” She highlighted the center’s work and challenged City Council, asking, “What are you, as our elected officials, doing to protect the communities you’ve been sworn to serve?” Llorens urged council to take action by passing legislation to designate Cleveland as a “sanctuary city.”

8. **Teri Wang**, Ward 3 – Former Cleveland Community Police Commissioner Teri Wang criticized the commission’s effectiveness, highlighting “structural flaws” that undermine its impact. She identified three major obstacles to its success: Inadequate executive

leadership, the absence of independent legal counsel, and a shortage of skilled and committed commissioners. Wang urged City Council to reject the mayor's recent nominees and reopen the application process to ensure stronger leadership and greater accountability.

9. **Brenda Bickerstaff**, Ward 9 – Bickerstaff, representing Citizens for a Safer Cleveland, cited the need for Black Shield union representation on the Cleveland Community Police Commission. In addition, Bickerstaff addressed Santana, saying she was appalled by her comments at the City Council meeting held on Jan. 27.

10. **Darrell Houston**, Bedford Heights – Houston called for legislative action to address out-of-state landlords not taking care of their properties. He also called on Bibb and Griffin to “figure out what’s going on with that water department and the utilities.” He said there are issues but did not specifically say what the issues are.

Houston's remarks concluded the public comment portion of the meeting.

Next, the clerk read Resolutions of Condolence. They were by Council Member Conwell for Geraldine "Gerri" Drakeford Barnett, by Council Member Bishop for Ahmed Drake El, and by Council President Griffin for Marilyn Chorman. Council Member Hairston entered a Resolution of Condolence on behalf of Council Member Polensek for the Rev. William M. Jerse of St. Jerome Parish.

Resolutions of Congratulations then followed. They were by Council Member Spencer for Michael McDonald, by Council President Griffin for Jason Harper Lucas, and by Council Member Slife for Francis McGarry, Michael Conkey, Shannon Corcoran, Kathleen Schmitt, and Mary Kathryn Murphy-Joyce.

Finally, a Resolution of Recognition for the Village of Healing was entered by Council Members Gray, Griffin and Howse-Jones.

Next on the agenda were the readings of legislation by Clerk of Council, as outlined below:

First Reading Legislation: Emergency Ordinances Referred

[156-2025](#) (Sponsor: Blaine Griffin and By Departmental Request) – To make appropriations and provide current expenses for the daily operation of all municipal departments of the City of Cleveland for the fiscal year from January 1, 2025, until December 31, 2025, in the sum of \$2.1 billion.

[157-2025](#) (Sponsors: Jenny Spencer, Stephanie Howse-Jones, Kevin Bishop, Blaine Griffin and By Departmental Request) – Authorizes the City of Cleveland to enter into

contracts with Svona Studio LLC, Lauren HB Studio, and Kistler Studio LLC to design, produce and install public art at the recently renovated Clark and Sterling Recreation Centers at 5706 Clark Ave. and 1380 E 32nd St., respectively, and the new Fire Station No. 26 on Kinsman Road, at a combined cost of \$315,813.

First Reading Legislation: Emergency Ordinances Read in Full and Passed

[158-2025](#) (Sponsor: Deborah Gray) – Authorizes the use of Ward 4 Casino Revenue Funds in the amount of \$5,000 to support the Reddog Nation youth football and tutoring program by Burten, Bell, Carr Development, Inc.

[159-2025](#) (Sponsor: Charles Slife) – Authorizes the issuance of a permit to the Cleveland Housing Network for the 2025 [Believe in Home 5K & 1 Mile Walk](#) taking place on Aug. 9. The event, managed by Hermes Sports & Events, will [close portions](#) of Rocky River Drive and other residential streets in Ward 17.

[160-2025](#) (Sponsors: Anthony Hairston, Blaine Griffin and By Departmental Request) – Authorizes income tax credits for Canon Healthcare USA. The City of Cleveland will provide a 50% payroll tax credit on the 2.5% income tax withheld by Canon Healthcare USA for a term of five years. The firm intends to create 50 jobs with annual payroll of \$7.5 million.

[161-2025](#) (Sponsors: Anthony Hairston, Blaine Griffin and By Departmental Request) – Authorizes tax abatement for 10500 Cedar Ave., the former IBM building where Canon Healthcare USA will be headquartered. The ordinance reinstates the previous tax abatement agreement with 105th Cedar Partners, LLC which had four years remaining when IBM vacated the property and extends the abatement for an additional five years.

Second Reading Legislation: Emergency Ordinances Passed

[1141-2023](#) (Sponsors: Kevin Bishop, Blaine Griffin and By Departmental Request) – Enacts new sections of the Codified Ordinances of Cleveland, 502.01 to 502.06, 503.014, 505.16, and 514.091, relating to sidewalks and right-of-way.

[1353-2024](#) (Sponsors: Kerry McCormack, Kevin Bishop, Blaine Griffin and By Departmental Request) – Authorizes ODOT to perform stabilization work to the foundation of Tower B of the Detroit-Superior Bridge.

[1358-2024](#) (Sponsors: Michael Polensek, Blaine Griffin and By Departmental Request) – Authorizes the City of Cleveland to renew contracts for towing vehicles with various vendors for a term of two years. The vendors include DeJesus Towing, Icon Towing, Smithsons Towing, Kufner Towing, Parma Towing and Salvage, Interstate Towing & Transport Specialists, Regal Auto Body and Service, United Towing Services and Seaway

Gas & Petroleum.

[22-2025](#) (Sponsors: Kevin Bishop, Blaine Griffin and By Departmental Request) – Authorizes the Director of Public Works, Parks and Recreation and/or Finance to enter into a contract with one or more professional consultants to recommend or procure property insurance for Huntington Bank Field.

[99-2025](#) (Sponsors: Kerry McCormack, Kevin Bishop, Blaine Griffin and By Departmental Request) – Authorizes \$3 million that has previously been allocated for improvements to the West Side Market to be performed by the city to be reallocated for the improvements to the West Side Market contemplated under Ordinance No. 532-2023, passed May 15, 2023.

[126-2025](#) (Sponsor: Brian Kazy) – Amends the contract with DigitalC so that the company receives [about \\$1 million less than anticipated](#) due to new internet household subscriptions. DigitalC reported that, in 2024, it reached 2,802 Cleveland households when the metric was to reach 3,500.

All ordinances received 15 yays except 126-2025, which received one nay from Harsh.

Next on the agenda were introductions. Conwell introduced former Council Member TJ Dow. Brian Kazy introduced Ward 16 resident John Eckerly (spelling uncertain).

Following introductions were announcements. Conwell announced a proposal to work with University Circle institutions on holding a job fair for persons with disabilities. Slife announced a fundraising goal of \$5,000 to support juvenile cancer research in conjunction with St. Mark School. Finally, Howse-Jones extended an invitation to the art exhibition "Artists Run the Streets" in celebration of Black History Month. The event will be held on Thursday, Feb. 6, from 5 to 7:30 p.m. in City Hall's rotunda.

Next, Howse-Jones acknowledged and thanked retiring District 3 Commander for the Cleveland Division of Police Robert Tucker for his service.

To close the meeting, Conwell and Jones provided comments in support of Black History Month. Jones lambasted "the continuing hate towards the African American community, the continuing judgment without due process..."

The meeting adjourned just before 8 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.