

NEW PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL MET IN REGULAR SESSION IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON FEBRUARY 12, 2024 WITH PRESIDENT KEMP PRESIDING. COUNCILMAN WALKER OFFERED A PRAYER, AND ALL IN ATTENDANCE RECITED THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

MR. KRIS KREINBIHL
MR. DAN LANZER
MR. MITCH PACE
MRS. CHERYL RAMOS
MR. STEVE RIPPETH
MR. TOM SIMMELINK
MR. MIKE WALKER

EXCUSED ABSENCES: AUDITOR BETH GUNDY

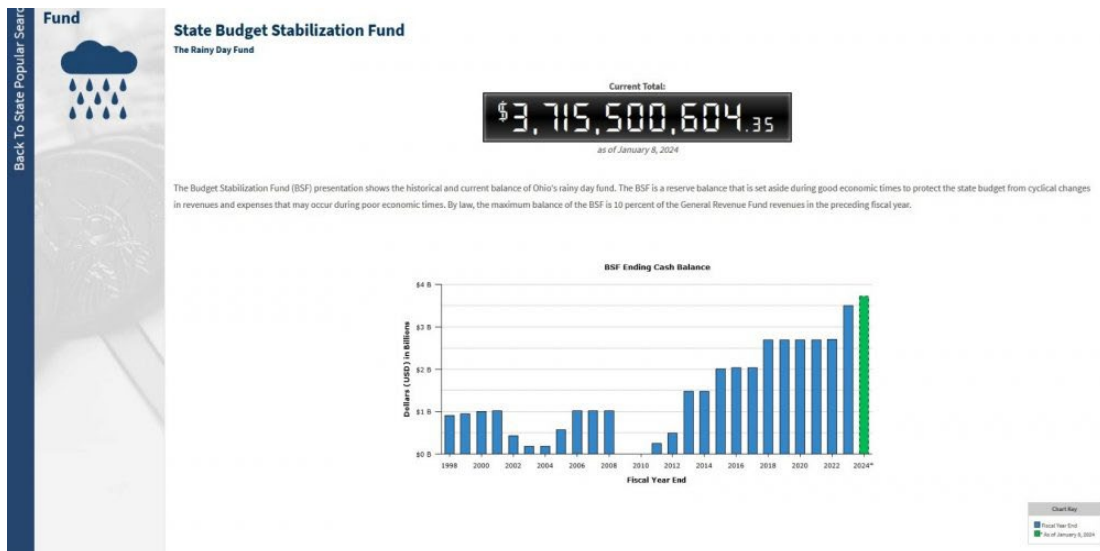
- MR. PACE MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA
MR. WALKER SECONDED THE MOTION
7 YEAS
TONIGHT’S AGENDA HAS BEEN APPROVED

- MR. SIMMELINK MOTIONED TO APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 22, 2024
REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL
MR. KREINBIHL SECONDED THE MOTION
7 YEAS
MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 22, 2024 REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL HAVE BEEN APPROVED

CORRESPONDENCE CLERK, JULIE COURTRIGHT

1. *To Council and Administration from Mayor Day, dated January 25, 2024. This is an email titled “The Unveiling of Lacey PAC Communication Boards at Tuscora Park”.*
2. *To Council Clerk from Treasurer Gerber, dated February 1, 2024.*
3. *To Council and Administration from Income Tax Administrator for the City Carla Loos, dated February 1, 2024. This is the January Month-End Report.*
4. *To Council and Administration from Mayor Day, dated February 2, 2024. This is an email titled SpringVale Rapid Care Open House Ribbon Cutting Ceremony with an invitation to the event as the attachment.*
5. *To Council and Administration from Mayor Day, dated February 12, 2024. The Mayor’s Report.*

City Finances and the State's Rainy Day Fund



Over \$3.7 billion dollars: that’s how much money the State of Ohio is holding in its State Budget Stabilization Fund, otherwise known as the “Rainy Day” fund. And as the attached graphic shows, that number has been increasing since 2022 and is on track this year to hit its maximum balance allowed by law (Source: <https://checkbook.ohio.gov/State/Resources/BSF.aspx>). Ohio’s 88 counties used to receive 3.68% of the State’s General Revenue Fund (GRF) to disperse to municipalities and townships as Local Government Funds or LGF. In 2012, the Ohio Legislature slashed that percentage to 1.66% to fill the state’s projected \$8 billion budget hole (Source: Ohio Municipal League LGF white paper). In the State’s last fiscal budget, that LGF percentage increased to 1.7%. I bring this to your attention because New Philadelphia, as are many Ohio cities, is facing increased operating costs: in our case in funding safety forces. Inflation is taking its toll on City finances. It might not be raining in Columbus, but it’s raining in New Philadelphia and Tuscarawas County. I brought this to the attention of State Senator Al Landis. And he’s agreed to a meeting to discuss LGF and our need to see the percentage restored to 3.68% or higher. The State of Ohio can clearly afford it. In the future, City taxpayers could face a decision to pay more for safety forces while the State sits on that amount of money waiting for a rainy day.

Working with NP Schools Administration to Find School Locations

The City’s administration is working with New Philadelphia City Schools to help find a suitable location for construction of new school buildings. We recently sat down with Superintendent Wentworth and her team to discuss the location choices revealed in recent public meetings. Ideally, a new location should fit into the City’s Master/Vision Plan for future growth. The Master Plan encourages the location of new middle and high schools in the vicinity of Buckeye Career Center and the Kent State-Tuscarawas campus. The education hub that could be developed by connecting all three institutions would be unique to Eastern Ohio and would give our children educational opportunities not seen in other communities. In addition, there would be savings in transportation costs and eliminate the need for redundant facilities for academics, athletics, and extracurricular activities. We will continue to partner with the school district to find suitable locations.

Have You Noticed the Latest Improvements at Tuscora Park?

Take a few minutes to walk or drive through Tuscora Park to view the improvements being made to Field #1, the high school baseball field. The Turf Tuscora Diamond organization has raised money through grants from local foundations and from individuals to begin transforming Field #1 into a baseball stadium. A new scoreboard and outfield fencing have been installed. Next, new dugouts and a new backstop will be installed. On another note, RTY has purchased a mini-Ferris wheel kiddie ride and has plans to acquire three more kiddie rides to install at the park. And the main Ferris wheel will be undergoing more repairs this spring, with hopes that it’s up and running sometime this summer. Also, the restrooms by the tennis and pickleball courts are being renovated. The inside is nearly completed. The outside will be finished in the spring.

And How About the Soccer Field Improvements at the Southside Community Park?

Councilman Kris Kreinbihl and other members of the New Philadelphia Youth Soccer Association have taken it upon themselves to raise the money needed to install fencing around the high school soccer fields and build new dugouts and bleachers. Our kids will greatly benefit from their efforts. Thank you!

The City is also helping with the improvements by spreading a new layer of crushed stone over the soccer fields parking lot.

A Presentation by Flourish Founder Michaela Thomas

Her day job is the Community Engagement Director for the Stark County Sheriff’s Department. And in her spare time Michaela Thomas created the very popular Newsymom website, which is full of information for moms of all ages. Now she has launched a new project for moms called Flourish, and it’s located at New Towne Mall. President Kemp, I would like to give the balance of my time to Ms. Thomas, so she can explain the concept for Flourish, and how, I feel, it will greatly benefit our community.

Michael Thomas gave a presentation to City Council, Administration, and Audience Members.

Mr. Rippeth had the following question for Mayor Day:

With respect to the Local Government’s Fund, would it help for the City Council to take up a Resolution and encourage our State Legislatures and the Governor to reinstate those funds for us?

Mayor Day:

That would be very helpful.

Mr. Rippeth asked Mr. Fete to draft a Resolution for the President to assign to the Finance Committee.

Mayor Day requested an Executive Session after the Legislative Agenda during tonight’s Council Meeting to discuss a personnel matter in the Service Director’s Department.

MR. PACE MOTIONED FOR AN EXECUTIVE SESSION
MR. SIMMELINK SECONDED THE MOTION
7 YEAS
COUNCIL WILL GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TONIGHT

SERVICE DIRECTOR..... Service Director Ron McAbier:

Mr. McAbier had the following report:

I just want to expand a little bit on the Mayor’s Report regarding the soccer fields and the way they’ve come along. I just want to say thank you to Councilman Pace for his work with the baseball fields, and now, with Councilman Kreinbihl’s help, work is being done on the soccer field. It’s been much needed for many years.

Mr. Rippeth had the following statement:

On behalf of Buckeye Career Center, the Street Department did a great job with helping us put up some signs for an event that we were holding at Buckeye. We appreciate their dedication and work with helping us to control that traffic pattern.

AUDITORMS. BETH GUNDY.....EXCUSED ABSENSE

SAFETY DIRECTORMR. GREG POPHAM.....NO REPORT

Mr. Popham had the following report:

On January 30th three 2023 Police Cruisers were delivered to the City, and I’d like to thank everyone here for that. Also, by the end of this evening the Police Department will have answered this year over 1200 calls so far. I want to give our hats off to them. In the past few months there have been some major crimes that have been basically solved here in New Phila through the great work of the officers in the Police Department.

TREASURER . . . MR. TOM GERBER.....NO REPORT

LAW DIRECTOR.....MR. MARVIN FETE.....NO REPORT

BOARD/COMMISSION REPORTS:

PLANNING COMMISSION.....MAYOR JOEL DAY

The Planning Commission will be meeting here in Council Chambers tomorrow at 1:00 PM. We Will be discussing the ongoing zoning study as well as the auction of some City parcels on Commercial Avenue.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS.....MR. RON MCABIER

The Board of Zoning Appeals will not be held tomorrow with no variance requests to be heard.

AIRPORT COMMISSION.....MR. DAN LANZER

On the onset of the pandemic we moved the airport meetings here to Council Chambers so we'd be Able to spread out more. After discussion we have decided to move it back to the airport and have our Meetings there. The first one will be tomorrow at 6:00 PM in the conference meeting room at the Airport. This way we'll be able to walk out and see what we're discussing. We are having a meeting Tomorrow night at 6:00 PM at the airport.

PARK BOARD.....MR. MITCH PACE

The fence at Field 1 at Tuscora Park has been completed. That's an ongoing project run by Turf Tuscora Diamond, a couple community members got together and put that on. The scoreboard's Up, the fence is done. There is work that's going to be done on the batting cages. We're Working to get those removed. Also, RTY has a new train coming and a mini ferris wheel for The little kids. We are meeting this Wednesday at noon at the park pavilion. We'll also have the 2nd Annual Fishing Derby on the last Saturday in April.

CEMETERY BOARD.....MR. MITCH PACE.....NO REPORT

HEALTH BOARD MR. TOM SIMMELINK
The Health Board will be meeting this coming Wednesday at noon.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

FINANCE COMMITTEEMR. STEVE RIPPETH.....NO REPORT

.

PUBLIC WORKS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE...MR. DAN LANZER...NO REPORT

SAFETY, HEALTH, AND SERVICE COMMITTEE.....MR. TOM SIMMELINK....NO REPORT

ZONING AND ANNEXATION COMMITTEE.....MRS. CHERYL RAMOS.....NO REPORT

SALARY COMMITTEE.....NO REPORT.....MR. KRIS KREINBIHL....NO REPORT

PARKS AND CEMETERY COMMITTEE.....MR. MITCH PACE.....NO REPORT
Mr. Pace noted that the fence on the Fair Ave. side of the cemetery has been fixed.

SPECIAL AND CONTACT COMMITTEE.....MR. MIKE WALKER

Mr. Walker had the following report:

We met this evening at 7:00 PM and adjourned at 7:30. We have two ordinances that will be on the Agenda of the next Council meeting, and two that were tabled for more information. We moved forward a liquor license request. We also had a discussion about DORA. That will end up becoming a public meeting on a non-Council meeting night.

ROLL CALL VOTE FOR THE LIQUOR LICENSE REQUEST

7 YEAS

THE LIQUOR LICENSE REQUEST FOR UNCLE PRIMO'S HAS BEEN APPROVED

VISITOR'S COMMENTS

Kerry Metzger of New Philadelphia had the following comment:

I would like to speak tonight about an initiative by Empower Tusc, Coalition, which is a coalition of 12 different sectors across Tuscarawas County including business, health, parents, and school districts. We have hundreds of members involved with the coalition. Our function is to reduce youth drug use and misuse, as well as suicide prevention. We will be fully engaged in your discussions when you determine whether or not a DORA is really a good idea to initiate in New Philadelphia. As you contemplate that decision, the main concern that Empower Tusc has is changing the norm of the community. You need to keep in the back of your mind whether this is the right thing to do to change the community norm. Studies have shown that when communities your stance on alcohol and drugs, the youth will get the perception that it's not harmful. We have a very conservative community here in New Philadelphia. Empower Tusc is available with information as you make a decision.

Dale Burk of 1003 Ray Ave. NE had the following comment:

The thing that troubles me about DORA is it seems in every community their solution to economic situations seems to be alcohol. I'm really concerned about what kind of a message we're sending to our children because in schools we tell our children to stay away from drugs and alcohol, and then as adults we say it's okay and necessary for when you want to have fun. So, when you're thinking about this situation for the downtown area, I agree that possibly it should be contained. When you open it up to a large area you're affecting businesses that want nothing to do with the idea. As far as City expense you'll find out as it goes that there are some hidden costs in conducting a program like this. We are inadvertently stoking the fire by making moves like this in the downtown area with the dollar sign as the bottom line. Move forward cautiously.

Jim Knisely of 322 Bowers Ave. NW had the following comment:

I just want to say I respect everyone's opinions. I understand that there's going to be some controversy with a decision like this. I just want to say about hiring an outside firm, Coshocton did hire an outside firm although some of the others did not. A couple of the Mayors actually offered for us to copy their legislation so that is available if you would like some help in getting ahold of those people I would be happy to do that. If anyone on the Committee would like me to interview more of the Cities I would be happy to do that. Our concept is not only to develop the downtown but make this a better City for everyone.

COUNCIL COMMENTSNONE

READING OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

ORDINANCES:

9-2024 AN ORDINANCE BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW PHILADELPHIA, OHIO TO PERMANENTLY REZONE THE FOLLOWING PARCELS IN THE CITY OF NEW PHILADELPHIA, OHIO FROM RESIDENTIAL ZONE TO BUSINESS ZONE.
2nd Reading

10-2024 AN ORDINANCE BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW PHILADELPHIA, OHIO TO PERMANENTLY REZONE THE FOLLOWING PARCEL IN THE CITY OF NEW PHILADELPHIA, OHIO FROM RESIDENTIAL ZONE TO INDUSTRIAL ZONE.
2nd Reading

RESOLUTIONS: NONE

COUNCIL TOOK AT 5 MINUTE BREAK AT 8:16 PM BEFORE ADJOURNING INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:20 PM. COUNCIL RECONVENED INTO REGULAR SESSION AT 8:42 PM.

UNFINISHED OR OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

With no other business to discuss Mr. Lanzer motioned to adjourn at 8:42 PM.

CLERK OF COUNCIL _____
Julie Courtright

APPROVED _____

PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL _____
Don Kemp