

**NORTH RIDGEVILLE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
MINUTES OF
SPECIAL MEETING**

JULY 28, 2003

CALL TO ORDER 10:00 A.M.

President of Council David Gillock: I'd like to call to order this Special Meeting of the North Ridgeville City Council. Would the Clerk please read the notice, T 92-2003

READING OF NOTICE

Clerical Aide Sandy Hall read the notice of the Special Council meeting in full as on file in the office of the Clerk of Council as it relates to T 92-2003, a resolution declaring it necessary to levy an additional tax for the purpose of providing for the payment of salaries of permanent police personnel and providing and maintaining equipment used directly in the operation of the Police Department.

ROLL CALL

Present were Council Members Allen Swindig, Josanne Pagel, Bob Olesen, Bernadine Butkowski, Denny Johnson and President of Council David Gillock. Absent was Council Member Nancy Buescher.

Also, present were Mayor Deanna Hill, Safety-Service Director Jim Johnson, Engineer Larry Griffith, Auditor Chris Costin and Clerk of Council Chuck Norris was represented by Clerical Aide Sandy Hall.

Absent were Law Director Eric Zagrans and Clerk of Council Chuck Norris.

SPECIAL MEETING

T 92-2003 A RESOLUTION DECLARING IT NECESSARY TO LEVY AN ADDITIONAL TAX FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING FOR THE PAYMENT OF SALARIES OF PERMANENT POLICE PERSONNEL AND PROVIDING AND MAINTAINING EQUIPMENT USED DIRECTLY IN THE OPERATION OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.

First Reading

President Gillock: Is there any discussion?

motion by Mayor Hill to dispense with second and third readings, 2nd by Swindig.

President Gillock: Is there any discussion on dispensing with second and third?

Council Member Pagel: After digesting all the information that the Auditor gave us in the last week, I would have to withdraw my support for this tax levy. I have worked and worked and worked on these numbers and I appreciate the Mayor giving us some ideas as we have requested from her, but I believe that it is still is not going to be a complete 10 percent cut which we really need for the future. We have been working in a deficit and we have been having to cover that deficit with surpluses. In the numbers that I have looked at, I just came up with, I believe the figure that the Auditor gave us was 1.6 million dollars possible deficit for 2004. I have looked at, if we change the split to 100 percent, the Auditor himself said that would come in at 400,000 thousand dollars. If we looked at health care costs of maybe the City itself anti-up health care costs

at 100 dollars a month, which is not unreasonable. That's a usual national average that would bring in 200,000 dollars to put towards what we pay for that. No tax credit, the Auditor himself said that if we got rid of the tax credit for people here, that would be 200,000 dollars and then other smaller, smaller amounts, possibly the police support car system, getting rid of that at 40,000 dollars. Just the net alone, I've come up with 1.2 million dollars. I think at this time the City needs to look internally. We need to tighten our belts. We cannot be held to saying that union negotiations keeps us at bay. That's not true. If the unions know that we cannot pass a 1.6 million dollar deficit, no deficit budget. We cannot do that. We cannot negotiate contracts and pay out salaries if we do not have the money for that. They will come to the table in good effort, I believe, to help us with those negotiations. I think we need to look at the whole system of running the City. I asked before about the operating budget, how much it cost to run the City per month. I figured that out to be somewhere around 750,000 dollars a month. We need to keep that surplus two to three months in our banks, as far as if something like this does happen that we run in the deficit. Deaconess Hospital right now is going through this. For the past three weeks those employees at Deaconess Hospital have not been able to have their direct deposit checks. They haven't gotten their paychecks because they are running in a deficit. They are at a crisis. I personally don't want the City to get into a crisis. I think we can head this off. Some other different types of looks that we can look at without layoffs is possibly the value of the Engineer. We were told this Engineer doesn't have to out source. We out source a lot of stuff in the past. We don't have to do that in the future and I think that will cut some of our costs. The overtime, I am ready to present a resolution for a moratorium on overtime. Nothing non-essential and I think we need to describe that and make that more specific to what we're talking about. I believe each Department Head needs to look internally, not suggested but needs to say, we need to cut each department 10 percent. You need to start looking. There are ways to do that without layoffs. You can do flexible hours scheduling. You can look at your purchasing, your ordering. You can look at the use of the machines, the fax. Things that we take for granted on a day to day basis. I believe that with the recommendations that the Mayor had, and some of them are pretty good, but I think that we need to really, really look at that. Why is there a difference in the Auditor saying that the personnel services, during the Police, is only 65 percent of the cost but the Chief has calculated 89 percent of the cost. There are discrepancies in what we're looking at in our budget. I'm prepared to submit ordinances in mid-September to address different cuts without layoffs. I really believe the City needs to take the full frontal approach, attack this and see what we can do with creative financing so that we do not need a tax levy and do not put the burden on the residents. Thank you.

Mayor Hill: Mr. President, those are all valid suggestions and things that we could take a look at, however, to fail to give the voters the opportunity to vote for a Police levy, the logic escapes me. It's like, we need to make cuts and we need another, probably, 900,000 dollars that can be dedicated to the Police Department, but we're not going to do the 900,000. We're not even going to let people decide whether they want to vote for a Police Levy bringing in approximately 900,000 because we need to do other things first. We need to do both, actually. Now, it has been explained over and over that the Fire Department has both the Paramedic Levy and a Fire Levy that protects them from the drawing from the general fund, however, since it is a Safety issue and since it is

merely giving people the opportunity to make a decision, it doesn't make sense not to allow them to do that when it's so desperately needed. My support for the Police Levy will be there and it is my hope that rather than using what we have to do to cut internally, so therefor, we're not going to let people decide whether they want to open their wallets or not. As I said, the whole logic just eludes me. I will continue to support placing it on the ballot and letting people have their say.

Council Member Butkowski: Mr. Chairman, after we had our Finance meeting and everyone gave their input and it came out in the newspaper that we were going to be putting a Police Levy on the ballot, I have been approached many different times by a variety of people here in the City and they just flat out said, I will not support this levy. They said we've tightened our belt at home, I would like to see the City tighten its belt, too. They were very adamant about it with a variety of things that, I'm not doing to discuss here but, they just would not support it and no one has told me that they would support this levy and I don't that if they don't like the Police Department, they just can't afford it. I think that we have asked the City employs and all the City Departments at our last appropriation meeting to cut their budgets by four percent, which we did do with the appropriations. There's not a lot left in there but we have to cut more because we have to show the people that we're cutting just like they're cutting at home. There's a wide variety of people out there that are the quiet ones that are cutting their budgets and hoping that when they go to the grocery store they can buy a few groceries to come home. There's more and more people that are going to Community Care every week because of that. I think at this point we have to show that we are cutting as much as possible and hopefully, if we can cut through 2004, by that time the economy will be turning around. There's little glimmers of hope that it is and I guess we're just going to have to go with that now. I could not convince anyone that they should vote for this levy. I think it would be an impossibility to sell this. I cannot support something that the people have told me that they don't want.

Council Member Olesen: Mr. President, I think when it was put on the table that there are cuts that could be made to reduce the deficit and possibly even more cuts than we anticipated. The voters have rallied around this and I don't think there's a chance in the world at this point, from what I hear from constituents, that this could be passed.

Council Member Johnson: Mr. President, as everybody knows, we don't get a lot of feedback from the public on most issues. The feedback I've gotten on this one has been rather large and very passionate. I don't think there's any support out there at this point for a levy. I think it's simply delaying the inevitable. We need to put our house in order and then if we need to come back and ask the voters for a levy, I think it might be more agreeable.

Mayor Hill: Mr. President, I'm still not understanding the logic here. We hear from a few people. We talk to a few people. We have not made any attempts and any concrete results of tightening our belts. Remember, this wouldn't go on the ballot until November. But what you're saying is, I don't think people will support it therefor I'm not going to give them the chance to vote one way or the other.

Council Member Swindig: Mr. Chairman, I have been giving back for the last five years. I took a lot of heat for giving back part of my salary. Council wants the Administration and Department Heads to give back but, I don't see Council offering to give any part of their salaries back. Thank

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you.

Council Member Pagel: Mr. Chairman, when I talked about a 10 percent cut, I meant every single department. I believe it starts at the head and I am ready to introduce an ordinance in September that will have a 10 percent cut for Council's pay. I don't believe any Member runs for Council for the money because the money is not there. I think in a show of good faith, it starts at the top and it goes down. I believe a tax levy will not stop the spending. You are putting a band-aid on a wound that will continue to bleed if we do not stop the spending. The buck stops here. It stops here. We are to take control of this, clean our house of unnecessary spending, tighten our belts just like every single household has had to do, me personally has had to do. I know what it is to have to take that budget and make it smaller. I believe everyone here and I believe we need to do that with the City before we ask the voters to open their wallets.

Mayor Hill: Mr. President, I take offense at saying unnecessary spending. I would urge the Councilwoman to go through the budget, which is by the way established by City Council, urge her to go through the budget to determine where she believes there is unnecessary spending within any department in this City. They have consistently, Council has consistently set up a budget, determined how the money will be appropriated and divided among the Departments, and each and every year the departments have, at the end of the year, demonstrated that they didn't even use up the money. They always ended the year in the black, us up the money that was appropriated by City Council. When the Councilwoman says, yes, Council can start with a 10 percent cut. That's 10 percent of \$7,000. Ten percent of a department head's pay or somebody who works here full time, has quite a different impact.

President Gillock: Anyone else? We have a motion to dispense with second and third readings. Will the Clerk please call the roll.

Yes, 1 No, 4 (Pagel, Olesen, Butkowski, Johnson) Abstain, 1
(Gillock)

Clerical Aide Sandy Hall: Motion fails.

President Gillock: That concludes the Special meeting on T 92-2003.

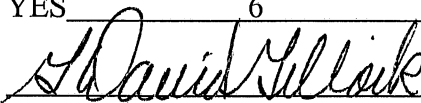
ADJOURNMENT

President Gillock: That concludes the Special meeting on T 92-2003.

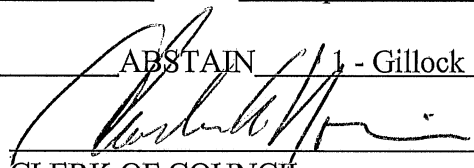
Meeting adjourned at 10:21 a.m.

MOTION Butkowski 2ND Johnson DATE September 2, 2003

YES 6 NO 0 ABSTAIN 1 - Gillock



PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL



CLERK OF COUNCIL