

BLUE ASH CITY COUNCIL

April 3, 2008

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A regular meeting of the Council of the City of Blue Ash, Ohio, was held on April 3, 2008. Mayor Robert J. Buckman, Jr. called the meeting to order in Council Chambers at 7:00 PM.

**OPENING CEREMONIES**

Mayor Buckman led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councilman Rick Bryan, Mayor Robert Buckman, Councilman Lee Czerwonka, Councilman Henry Stacey, Councilwoman Stephanie Stoller, Councilman James Sumner, and Vice Mayor Mark Weber

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager David Waltz, Deputy Solicitor Bryan Pacheco, Clerk of Council Jamie Eifert, Deputy Clerk of Council Sue Bennett, Treasurer/Administrative Services Director James Pfeffer, Parks & Recreation Director Chuck Funk, Service/Public Works Director Mike Duncan, Fire Chief Rick Brown, Human Resources Officer Margaret Main, Assistant to the City Manager Kelly Osler, and interested citizens

Mayor Buckman asked for a moment of silence in honor of Army Staff Sergeant Matt Maupin, the Cincinnati-area soldier who had been missing in action in Iraq for approximately four years, and whose comrades recently confirmed that he had made the ultimate sacrifice for his country.

Mayor Buckman appointed Kelly Osler to read the legislation in its entirety in the rear of Council Chambers.

**ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA**

Councilman Bryan moved, Councilman Czerwonka seconded to accept the agenda. A voice vote was taken. All members present voted yes. Motion carried.

"1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

2. OPENING CEREMONIES

3. ROLL CALL - Clerk of Council Jamie K. Eifert

4. APPOINTMENT OF PERSON(S) TO READ ORDINANCES IN FULL IN REAR OF COUNCIL CHAMBERS

5. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Regular Meeting of March 13, 2008

7. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Communications to Council - Clerk of Council Jamie K. Eifert

b. Reports From Outside Agencies

8. HEARINGS FROM CITIZENS

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Finance & Administration Committee, Rick Bryan, Chairperson

1. Ordinance No. 2008-23, authorizing a multi-year collective bargaining agreement with the Blue Ash Patrol Officers Benevolent Association

2. Ordinance No. 2008-24, authorizing payment for routine utility services

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3. Ordinance No. 2008-25, transferring funds
- b. Public Works Committee, Henry S. Stacey, Chairperson
  1. Ordinance No. 2008-26, amending Ordinance No. 2008-7 regarding the Blue Ash and Hunt Road Improvements Project
- c. Public Safety Committee, Stephanie Stoller, Chairperson
  1. Ordinance No. 2008-27, authorizing purchase of replacement radios utilized by the Fire Department through the State of Ohio's Cooperative Purchasing Agreement and authorizing sale of existing units

10. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Property Acquisition and Personnel Matter

12. ADJOURNMENT”

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Councilwoman Stoller moved, Councilman Bryan seconded to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of March 13, 2008. A voice vote was taken. All members present voted yes. Motion carried.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

**Communications to Council**

There were no communications presented to Council.

**Reports From Outside Agencies**

There were no representatives from outside agencies present at the meeting.

**HEARINGS FROM CITIZENS**

No citizens wished to address Council.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Prior to the Council meeting, Council members received the following report describing agenda items:

“The following offers a brief description of the topics included on the April 3rd Council agenda:

**9.a.1. Ordinance No. 2008-23 - Authorizing a multi-year collective bargaining agreement with the Blue Ash Patrol Officers Benevolent Association**

The City entered into negotiations with the Patrol Officers' bargaining unit beginning in October 2006. After 17 months of negotiations, we have reached agreement, with the major changes between the old and new contract summarized below. Of particular note are the changes in the insurance clause, as well as elimination of the classification of Investigator. Due to the extended length of negotiations, the new contract period begins December 15, 2007 and will continue for a three year period of time. A summary of the major changes is shown below:

- Section 2.1 and throughout the contract – Updated bargaining unit to Blue Ash Patrol Officers Benevolent Association to reflect the change that took place in July, 2007. The Patrol officers decertified with the Fraternal Order of Police and created their own bargaining unit. Also, the classification of Investigator was removed.
- Section 8.2 – Modified disciplinary action to remove temporary reassignment, and to add a one step reduction in pay for 180 days.
- Section 8.4 – Changed language to have officers abide by the City's new Drug and Alcohol Policy. Now that the City of Blue Ash has incorporated certain provisions for drug testing in all

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of its contracts, it may experience a cost savings through a reduction in the Bureau of Workers' Compensation rates.

- Section 9.1 – Added language allowing Chief to suspend an employee with pay, pending a pre-disciplinary conference. This language clarifies an already existing management right.
- Section 9.4 / 10.12 – Added No Loss/ No Gain language regarding participation in instances of disciplinary action/grievances. If on-duty, the employee is not penalized for leaving his/her duties to participate. Conversely, if off-duty, the employee is not paid to participate, except for the employee facing discipline or employees asked to attend on behalf of the City. The provision also requires witness identification 24 hours before the pre-disciplinary hearing, instead of one hour.
- Section 9.6/9.8 – Extended the response periods for a grievance from 5 to 7 days for a written decision. The City also obtained an extension of time from 24 hours to 72 to provide for a tape recording of the pre-disciplinary hearing.
- Section 10.3 – Added language providing for a grievance being in written form with the signature of the BAPOBA rep indicating approval of the grievance by the BAPOBA. This requires the bargaining unit employees to at least notify the BAPOBA of the existence of a grievance.
- Section 10.4 – Added a new provision to the contract which clarifies that the BAPOBA has final authority at all times to decline to process a grievance further if they believe it is without merit.
- Section 10.6:
  - Removed Civil Service from the grievance process;
  - Step 4B: Added Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services, in addition to using AAA (arbitration).
- Section 11.1 – Newly hired officers who attend the academy to receive certification may have their probationary period extended by the Chief of Police.
- Section 16.1/16.2 – A change in work week from an 80 hour work period to an 86 hour period to reflect current practice in compliance with the FLSA.
- Section 16.3 – The work schedule for the members of the bargaining unit consists of four (4) consecutive shifts of 8.5 hour days followed by two (2) consecutive days off, or five (5) consecutive shifts of eight (8) hour days.
- Section 16.4 – Added language regarding shift bids or changes being awarded by seniority according to current practice.
- Section 16.5 – Added language regarding the City's right to manage work schedules. This was language previously agreed to in a memorandum of understanding, which has been incorporated into the agreement.
- Section 16.6 – Language was added to clarify that the Chief of Police has the sole discretion to determine, assign, and manage any special assignments.
- Section 16.7 – Language added explaining how special assignments will be made vis-à-vis shift assignments.
- Section 16.9:
  - Compensatory time may be accrued up to 200 hours a year. This is a refillable accrual, but is a reduction from the current level of 254.
  - City has the right to buy back an employee's compensatory time in excess of 80 hours, twice a year.
  - If the employee and employer can not mutually agree to a time to schedule compensatory time, then the employee can accept pay for the hours requested or withdraw the request.

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- Section 16.14 – The City will attempt to equally distribute overtime opportunities as outlined by this provision. The language reflects current practice.
- Section 18.1 to 18.5 – Changes in the Special Events language include offering overtime opportunities to full-time Patrol Officer first, then to auxiliary officers and other agencies if necessary.
- Article 19 – Auxiliary Officers  
This new article speaks to the order of training and assignments. It clarifies that Auxiliary Officers will not be assigned as beat Patrol duties or to investigative duties. It also outlines that training opportunities and other assignments will be offered first to Patrol Officers unless it relates directly to the duties and assignments of the Auxiliary Officer.
- Section 20.1 – Wage increases are as follows: 3.5% retroactive increase for 2007 (12/17/06 to 12/14/07); 3.25% in 2008; 3% in 2009; 3.25% in 2010. Investigator classification removed from the contract.
- Section 21.1 – Annual longevity compensation to be \$5 per month of service, rather than \$4.
- Section 22.1 – Changed the language to reflect that the employer will pay the same percentage of health insurance premiums for Officers as for all other non-bargaining unit employees. Patrol Officer contributions to the premium cost will not exceed 5% in the first year, 7.5% in the second year; or 10% in the third year that premium contributions are implemented. If the employee does not elect health insurance coverage through the City of Blue Ash, they will be eligible for a payment of \$2,000 per year.
- Section 23.1 – Uniforms will be issued by the Department. Employees will receive an annual stipend of \$500 for uniform maintenance expenses. This is preferable to the present system of reimbursement – it reduces the administrative burden while allowing the City to budget more accurately.
- Section 24.2 – Language added that employees may have to exchange off-days and/or shifts to attend voluntary training.
- Section 24.4 – Language added that if meals are included in a training fee, adjustments may be made to the per diem compensation.
- Section 26.1/26.4 – Language clarifying that vacation payouts will continue be administered consistent with current practice.
- Section 27.7 – Donation of sick leave to other staff language now consistent with the Code of Ordinances.
- Section 27.10 – Clarification that at least one fitness test will be administered annually and the incentive ribbons awards increased nominally.
- Section 30.2 – Union leave days (to attend to BAPOBA business) may be carried over into the following year, not more than 12 union leave days may be used annually.
- Section 31.1 – Language added to clarify that if an employee's attorney or representative cannot respond within two hours of the incident, a statement may be required prior to consultation.
- Contract period from December 15, 2007 – December 10, 2010.

Please address questions regarding this ordinance or agreement to the Human Resources Officer or Treasurer.

**9.a.2. Ordinance No. 2008-24 - Authorizing payment for routine utility services**

Ordinance No. 2008-24 addresses payment to various companies for services expected in 2008 for utility-type expenses required for normal operations of City owned facilities, properties, and operations for the provision of municipal services to citizens. Included is authorization to purchase electricity, natural gas, external phone services, internal phone services and products, domestic water, and public sewer. Although this ordinance represents the expenditure of routine and budgeted items, the Administration has not presented a similar ordinance in the past because of the monopolistic nature of most of these markets. An ordinance is being presented at this time due to the changing marketplace and expanded options available to utility consumers. With aggregate 2008 expenditures to each of

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these vendors exceeding the ordinance threshold of \$25,000, the Administration is seeking formal Council approval to assure compliance with potential audit requirements.

Sections I through III respectively of the ordinance authorize aggregate 2008 payments to Duke Energy (or to an alternate provider if authorized by Duke Energy) for electricity and natural gas not to exceed \$797,000; to Greater Cincinnati Water Works for water and sanitary sewer services for an amount not to exceed \$185,000 in 2008; and to Cincinnati Bell Telephone for external telephone, network connectivity lines and fiber, optic cables, and data connection services for an amount not to exceed \$74,500 in 2008.

Section IV of the ordinance addresses internal telephone system needs for 2008 and includes not only the routine expected expenses associated with these systems, but also funds to upgrade the internal system for certain City locations, including the Municipal & Safety Center complex, North Fire Station, Service Garage, and Recreation Center (including the internal phone services and systems needed to accommodate the renovation project currently underway). Overall, these facilities are in need of newer platform software and related equipment and services, including the City's second multi-year maintenance contract with Inter-Tel. Section IV authorizes an expenditure amount to Inter-Tel for an aggregate amount not to exceed \$42,000 for these services.

Please direct questions regarding this ordinance to the Treasurer.

### **9.a.3. Ordinance No. 2008-25 - Transferring funds**

The attachment to this ordinance reflects changes relating to only three issues.

The first involves Fund # 441 which relates to the construction fund for the Blue Ash/Hunt Road Improvements Project. The Finance Office needs to shift a revenue appropriation from one account to another within that fund in the amount of \$2,890,000. This was done because it is necessary to record the proceeds from the ten-year, no-interest loan the City is receiving for this project in a separate line item on the revenue side.

The second item involves a necessary transfer of \$90,000 from the Contingency area into the Street Construction Maintenance & Repair (SCMR) account #221. Service/Public Works Director Mike Duncan has been working with the City Engineer on continuing projects, including the grant the City has been awarded related to signal improvements in the Downtown Blue Ash traffic corridor. In order to be eligible for the grant, it is necessary to move forward with the engineering related to that project, and only a portion of those costs were included in the Proposed and Final Budgets. This supplemental allocation of \$90,000 will provide adequate funding to complete the engineering for the project, so it may be implemented in accordance with the grant and construction timetable.

The final item involves a transfer from the Contingency area of \$47,000 to provide the capital for the Fire Department to acquire the 12 new radios described in the comment for Ordinance No. 2008-27 later on the agenda. A significant portion of this amount will be recovered, and returned to the General Fund, upon the proper disposal/sale of the older radios, also described later in this memo.

Please direct questions regarding the transfer to the Treasurer.

### **9.b.1. Ordinance No. 2008-26 - Amending Ordinance No. 2008-7 regarding the Blue Ash and Hunt Road Improvements Project**

Ordinance No. 2008-26 addresses the need for the first change order associated with the Blue Ash and Hunt Road Improvements Project. This major road improvement project was formally bid in late 2007, with formal Council approval of the contract to C J & L Construction occurring in January via passage of Ordinance No. 2008-7. As can be expected with a road project of this size, changed site and soil conditions have necessitated the need for various changes, with the items authorized via Section I of the ordinance summarized below:

- Deduction of Item 22 in the original bid award (6" unclassified pipe underdrain) and addition of Item 114 (6" perforated pipe with sock underdrain) at an additional unit cost not to exceed \$6.50 per foot. This change is necessary to assure a more suitable type of underdrain given the soil type found on the project.
- Addition of Item 115 (installation of 12" ductile iron pipe) at an additional unit cost not to exceed \$88 per linear foot. This change is necessary in order to accommodate the shallow installation depth required for the pipe. Iron pipe will better resist crushing.
- Addition of Item 116 (location of underground utilities) for an additional amount not to exceed

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\$7,600. This change is necessary to accommodate additional costs to determine the exact location of the many pipes and conduits associated with underground utilities. This line item is an unexpected change since it could not have been identified prior to construction.

- Addition of Item 117 (concrete encasement of pipe) for an additional amount not to exceed \$1,571.35. This change is necessary in order to accommodate additional costs to enhance protection of the pipe from potential crush damage in areas where there is limited cover over the pipe.

The estimated total additional project cost (based upon estimated quantities) of the items described above is \$45,691.35, resulting in the total estimated contract amount to increase to \$2,511,848.81. Ninety-five percent of all project construction costs are being financed via a ten-year, no-interest loan.

Section II of the ordinance addresses the item briefly discussed by the City Manager at the March 13th meeting regarding the cooperative effort which resulted in the discovery of the need to replace an older, existing waterline which lies within the road's project area. The Service/Public Works Director, with assistance from the engineers at CDS, were successful in persuading the Greater Cincinnati Water Works (GCWW) to replace and upgrade this pipe now, utilizing the City's contractor, thereby avoiding future damage of the roadway about to be rebuilt. Although Blue Ash would remit payment to the contractor for this work to replace this waterline on behalf of GCWW, Section II authorizes an agreement between Blue Ash and GCWW to assure reimbursement to the City for this work upon its completion, or possibly payment in advance of its installation.

Please address questions regarding this ordinance to the Service/Public Works Director.

**9.c.1. Ordinance No. 2008-27 - Authorizing purchase of replacement radios utilized by the Fire Department through the State of Ohio's Cooperative Purchasing Agreement and authorizing sale of existing units**

Ordinance No. 2008-27 addresses a recommendation from the Fire Chief to purchase replacement communication equipment (radios) utilizing the State's Cooperative Purchasing Program from Motorola Inc. (via Mobilcomm, an official agent of Motorola). Section I of the ordinance authorizes an amount not to exceed an estimated \$3,850 per radio. The Chief recommends purchase of these newer radios due to their increased technological capabilities. Most importantly, the newer technology would allow the ability of the radio to accept voice files. This allows firefighters to switch channels on their radios while hearing a voice telling them which channel they are on. The current radios do not possess this feature. This capability would be extremely important in cases where firefighters have limited visibility in a dark or smoke-filled area.

Related to Section I above, Section II of the ordinance authorizes the Fire Department to sell older (2001) existing radios. The Chief is in the process of contacting every potential area department in Hamilton and Clermont Counties who could utilize these older radios, representing the only market since not all communities operate off the same frequency. To date, at least 40 of these radios have been "spoken for," with as many as 47 available for sale. The sales price for each unit will vary, depending upon each unit's condition, attachments, and charger options, and revenues for each radio are estimated to range between \$600 and \$750. Because the aggregate value of the units to be sold exceeds \$10,000, Section 113.01(a) of the Code requires formal Council approval to dispose of items in this fashion.

Although the purchase of these new radios was not anticipated within the Final Budget, the Chief is suggesting that most of the cost of these new radios would be covered by the revenues from the older units to be sold, and also from capital funds saved from the purchase of the new medic unit. A transfer is necessary to fund the purchase of the radios now, which would be primarily "paid for" with the revenue from the sale of the old radios. The new ones need to be in use and in service before the old ones are sold.

The Fire Chief may seek approval later in 2008 for the purchase of several more of these radios, with his recommendation to be based on the performance of the 12 being purchased at this time. Fewer of the new radios will be needed due to a new "shared" radio bank for firefighters and paramedics on duty, instead of every full- and part-time staffer having their own radio. Currently, each has one of the older radios due to their "availability" from being taken out of service from the Police and Service Departments.

Please direct questions regarding this ordinance to Chief Brown."

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**Finance & Administration Committee, Rick Bryan, Chairperson**

Councilman Bryan asked the Clerk to read Ordinance No. 2008-23 by title only.

THEN WAS PRESENTED AND READ BY TITLE ONLY:

ORDINANCE NO. 2008-23

AMENDING SECTIONS 131.07-2(e) AND 133.18-2(e) OF CHAPTERS 131 AND 133 RESPECTIVELY OF THE BLUE ASH CODE OF ORDINANCES; AND AUTHORIZING A MULTI-YEAR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WITH THE BLUE ASH PATROL OFFICERS' BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION (BAPOBA); AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Councilman Bryan moved, Councilwoman Stoller seconded to suspend the rules of Council requiring a second reading of the ordinance. The Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Stoller, Sumner, Weber, Stacey, Czerwonka, Bryan, and Mayor Buckman voted yes. Seven yeases. Motion carried.

Councilman Bryan moved, Councilman Stacey seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 2008-23. In addressing a question from the Mayor, Human Resources Officer Margaret Main commented that though the negotiations did take a while, the Administration is pleased with the resultant contract. There being no further discussion, the Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Sumner, Weber, Stacey, Czerwonka, Bryan, Stoller, and Mayor Buckman voted yes. Seven yeases. Ordinance No. 2008-23 passed.

Councilman Bryan asked the Clerk to read Ordinance No. 2008-24 by title only.

THEN WAS PRESENTED AND READ BY TITLE ONLY:

ORDINANCE NO. 2008-24

AUTHORIZING PAYMENT FOR EXPENSES ASSOCIATED WITH VARIOUS PUBLIC UTILITY SERVICES DURING IN 2008; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Councilman Bryan moved, Councilwoman Stoller seconded to suspend the rules of Council requiring a second reading of the ordinance. The Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Weber, Stacey, Czerwonka, Bryan, Stoller, Sumner, and Mayor Buckman voted yes. Seven yeases. Motion carried.

Councilman Bryan moved, Vice Mayor Weber seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 2008-24. There being no discussion, the Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Stacey, Czerwonka, Bryan, Stoller, Sumner, Weber, and Mayor Buckman voted yes. Seven yeases. Ordinance No. 2008-24 passed.

Councilman Bryan asked the Clerk to read Ordinance No. 2008-25 by title only.

THEN WAS PRESENTED AND READ BY TITLE ONLY:

ORDINANCE NO. 2008-25

PROVIDING FOR THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS AND AMENDMENTS WITHIN THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE NO. 2008-3 FOR THE YEAR 2008 (AS SHOWN ON ATTACHMENT); AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

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Councilman Bryan moved, Councilman Stacey seconded to suspend the rules of Council requiring a second reading of the ordinance. The Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Czerwonka, Bryan, Stoller, Sumner, Weber, Stacey, and Mayor Buckman voted yes. Seven yeses. Motion carried.

Councilman Bryan moved, Councilwoman Stoller seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 2008-25. There being no discussion, the Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Bryan, Stoller, Sumner, Weber, Stacey, Czerwonka, and Mayor Buckman voted yes. Seven yeses. Ordinance No. 2008-25 passed.

**Public Works Committee, Henry S. Stacey, Chairperson**

Councilman Stacey asked the Clerk to read Ordinance No. 2008-26 by title only.

THEN WAS PRESENTED AND READ BY TITLE ONLY:

ORDINANCE NO. 2008-26

AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2008-7 RELATED TO THE BLUE ASH AND HUNT ROAD IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT FOR THE SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS AS DESCRIBED BELOW; AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A REIMBURSEMENT CONTRACT WITH GREATER CINCINNATI WATER WORKS FOR CONTRACTOR'S REPLACEMENT OF AN OLD WATERLINE IN THE PROJECT AREA; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Councilman Stacey moved, Councilman Bryan seconded to suspend the rules of Council requiring a second reading of the ordinance. The Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Stoller, Sumner, Weber, Stacey, Czerwonka, Bryan, and Mayor Buckman voted yes. Seven yeses. Motion carried.

Councilman Stacey moved, Councilwoman Stoller seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 2008-26. There being no discussion, the Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Sumner, Weber, Stacey, Czerwonka, Bryan, Stoller, and Mayor Buckman voted yes. Seven yeses. Ordinance No. 2008-26 passed.

**Public Safety Committee, Stephanie Stoller, Chairperson**

Councilwoman Stoller asked the Clerk to read Ordinance No. 2008-27 by title only.

THEN WAS PRESENTED AND READ BY TITLE ONLY:

ORDINANCE NO. 2008-27

AUTHORIZING PURCHASE OF COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT (RADIOS) TO REPLACE OLDER EXISTING UNITS UTILIZING THE STATE OF OHIO'S COOPERATIVE PURCHASING PROGRAM AND AUTHORIZING SALE OF THE OBSOLETE/SURPLUS EQUIPMENT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Councilwoman Stoller moved, Councilman Czerwonka seconded to suspend the rules of Council requiring a second reading of the ordinance. The Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Weber, Stacey, Czerwonka, Bryan, Stoller, Sumner, and Mayor Buckman voted yes. Seven yeses. Motion carried.

Councilwoman Stoller moved, Councilman Czerwonka seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 2008-27. In addressing a question from Councilwoman Stoller, Chief Rick Brown verified that the new radios will have the capacity to handle voice files. There being no further discussion,

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the Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Stacey, Czerwonka, Bryan, Stoller, Sumner, Weber, and Mayor Buckman voted yes. Seven yeases. Ordinance No. 2008-27 passed.

**MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

In addressing a question from Public Information Officer/Deputy Clerk Sue Bennett, Council Members confirmed that they prefer to walk in this year's Memorial Day Parade.

Parks & Recreation Director Chuck Funk commented that the staff from most City departments have been busy relocating the offices and fitness equipment to their temporary homes while construction will be taking place. He thanked the Service Department, Facilities Maintenance, Parks & Grounds, and IT for their assistance in moving the fitness equipment. The Recreation Center will reopen tomorrow morning at 6AM, after having been closed since Monday. The construction fence surrounding the work area is in place, and the building is being readied for Phase II construction to begin. Demolition is expected to start within the next few weeks.

City Manager David Waltz commented that the Administration recently received a report from the City of Cincinnati regarding the airport relocation efforts. The report is very similar to the plan Blue Ash prepared about 1½ years ago. The City of Cincinnati has also submitted a request for \$9.7 million in grant funding from the Federal Aviation Administration towards the project. Cincinnati estimates the total cost of the two-phased relocation to be \$20 million.

Mr. Waltz commented that the City's request for State capital funding for the Performing Arts & Conference Center efforts has been recommended for funding in both the Ohio House and Senate. The City's consultant believes the City has a good chance of receiving perhaps \$150,000.

Mr. Waltz commented on the recent positive news that Blue Ash has been included in *FORTUNE Small Business* magazine's list of 100 communities as one of the best places to live and launch a new business. Blue Ash was the only community from Ohio included on the list. Blue Ash was listed as #62 on that list. He explained that this award is especially exciting because it ranks Blue Ash nationally not only as a great place to do business, but also as a superb place to live. It represents a true team effort as the magazine's factors for selecting Blue Ash included overall quality of life factors, such as recreational opportunities, housing, business environment, etc.

Mr. Waltz also mentioned that the Blue Ash Golf Course was also ranked by *City Beat* magazine reader's as the "Reader's Pick" for their favorite golf course (public or private). The Blue Ash course out ranked prestigious area courses such as Shaker Run, Camargo Country Club, The Vineyard, and California. The Blue Ash Course was also ranked within a *Cincinnati Business Courier* list as one of the Cincinnati area's most difficult courses.

Mr. Waltz commented that the City has received some of the results from the recent citizen survey conducted by the University of Cincinnati Institute of Policy Research (although not all results are available yet). One interesting fact was that of the 500 adult residents surveyed, 98.7% indicated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with Blue Ash's overall quality of life. Another interesting note was that residents seemed to support financial assistance for business redevelopment in Downtown Blue Ash. He hopes to have all results available for Council at the late April or early May Council meeting.

Deputy Solicitor Bryan Pacheco reminded Council that their Financial Disclosure Statements required by the Ohio Ethics Commission are due by April 15<sup>th</sup>.

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Mr. Waltz reminded Council that he would be out of town next week on the business trip to the Netherlands with representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, including President Ellen van der Horst (who is also a Blue Ash resident). The Cincinnati Symphony is currently on a European tour, and the group will be hosting business receptions and tours.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

After all items on the agenda were acted upon, Councilman Bryan moved, Councilman Sumner seconded to convene an Executive Session to discuss matters pertaining to personnel and property acquisition. The Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Czerwonka, Bryan, Stoller, Sumner, Weber, Stacey, and Mayor Buckman voted yes. Seven yeases. Motion carried.

After matters pertaining to personnel and property acquisition were discussed, Councilman Sumner moved, Vice Mayor Weber seconded to convene to the regular meeting. A voice vote was taken. All Council members voted yes. Motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT**

All items on the agenda having been acted upon, Councilman Sumner moved, Councilwoman Stoller seconded to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken. All members voted yes. The Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:45 PM.

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Robert J. Buckman, Jr., Mayor

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Jamie K. Eifert, Clerk of Council

MINUTES WRITTEN BY:

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Susan K. Bennett, Deputy Clerk of Council