

Cuyahoga Falls City Council
Minutes of the Public Affairs Committee Meeting
March 16, 2009

Members: Vince Rubino, Chair
Kathy Hummel
Ken Barnhart

Mr. Rubino called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes from the February 17, 2009 committee meeting were approved as submitted.

Legislation Considered

Temp. Res. B-23

Discussion:

Temp. Res. B-23

A resolution supporting the passage of statewide legislation to provide mortgage foreclosure relief in Ohio and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Mader stated this was in support of some bills and legislation pending in Columbus. Most of the House Bills are self-explanatory except for H.B. 3. He stated that some of what H.B. 3 does is modify court procedures with respect to residential foreclosure actions and declares a six-month moratorium. It allows a court to remodify an agreement if it is in the best interest of both parties. It enables a borrower to stay on the property after it sells at foreclosure. He stated he was challenged by a resident to come up with something to encourage our State to do something to help. The mortgage industry is in a bad situation. Mr. Arrington added that the reason for the vague language regarding H.B. 3 is that it had not been drafted yet. They knew it would have moratorium language. It will provide for a court to be able to modify mortgage terms that is beneficiary to both parties. It is not without controversy, however. He stated that rights of tenants are affected by foreclosure. Mr. Rubino added that there are various departments to help people with foreclosure questions and issues. He recommended interested individuals visit the website www.ohio.gov.savethedream or call 1-888-404-4674. It advises people what to do when faced with foreclosure questions and concerns.

Ed Davidian, Meadow Lane, stated he was in support of B-23 and appreciated the City taking a stand where other cities have not. Many people are leaving northeast Ohio in increasing numbers. Many of them may have made financial mistakes but most are victims of the crisis facing our country. Some families are only a few payments behind but their home is being foreclosed on. There is no mercy from the banks. Empty homes also invite vandalism. Foreclosures affect the City and school system. Tonight, the City is taking a stand to help these people. He pointed out that this does not take into consideration people who give up or are renters being evicted, or a deed in lieu of foreclosure. He asked that a task force be established to help people before it goes into foreclosure. He appreciates that the City is concerned about the citizens who live here.

Committee recommended bringing out Temp. Res. B-23 for approval.

Bill Rhines, 1868 Windsor St., asked if anything could be done about the parking lot at Bailey and Broadway, which is an eyesore. Mr. James stated he has talked to Fred Guerra who has established a rapport with the owner. They are keeping a close eye but they still need feedback. They are working with the owner to reach a happy medium.

Mrs. Hummel indicated she gave the Clerk two articles that appeared in USA Today. One is regarding rentals and foreclosures and how rentals play an important part in a community. The other article is about coal fire plants.

Mrs. Hummel also commented that she would like for Council to see the consolidated plan introduced next week if possible. She is aware that it is still in draft form but it is an important issue and Council would like to have as much time as possible in which to review it. Whatever gets approved, the City is going to live with it for five years. Mrs. Klinger concurred with Mrs. Hummel. This plan is very critical. It is for five years and is a lot of money.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.