

**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**JANUARY 8, 2025**

**\*Audio recording of full meeting will be available on line on the city's website\***

Niles City Council held its regular meeting on January 8, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the Niles Senior Center in Niles, Ohio.

The meeting was called to order by Council Pro-Tem President, Doug Sollitto and the Clerk, Nicole Bacak, called the roll:

Weddell- P, Johnstone-P, Sheely-P, Devorich-P, Julian-P, Lastic- P, Sollitto- P, Marino-NP

It was moved by Devorich, seconded by Lastic to excuse President Marino from the meeting. Motion carried.

It was moved by Johnstone, seconded by Sheely to accept the minutes from the December 18<sup>th</sup> regular meeting and place them on file.

Motion carried.

**REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

**FROM-** Ohio Division of Liquor Control

Notice to Legislative authority- To: Red Lobster Hospitality LLC DBA Red Lobster #366

It was moved by Sheely, seconded by Julian to accept, and refer to the Police Chief and Safety Director for their recommendation.

Motion carried.

**FROM-** Billing Department

Billing adjustments for December 2024

It was moved by Julian seconded by Lastic to accept and place on file.

Motion carried.

**FROM-** Police Department

Annual Report for 2024

It was moved by Julian seconded by Lastic to accept and place on file.

Motion carried.

**FROM-** Planning and Permitting Department

Annual Report for 2024

It was moved by Johnstone seconded by Sheely to accept and place on file.

Motion carried.

Mr. Johnstone wanted to highlight that on the back of the report was Ms. Rozenblad's grant allocations that were received. He wanted to make sure that she was recognized for this.

**FROM-** Mayor's Office

Letter to safety committee and council- Veto of draft 144-24

It was moved by Julian seconded by Lastic to accept and place on file.

Motion carried.

**MEMBERS OF THE AUDIENCE TO ADDRESS COUNCIL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

(Public comments began at 6:25 into recording)

George Kuriatnyk- Mr. Kuriatnyk said he mentioned this at the last meeting and the contract. He wanted to know if it was true that eight employees received a \$3.00 an hour raise on top of the percentage, along with one employee from the billing department. Pro Tem President Sollitto said he has no knowledge of this. Mayor Mientkiewicz asked if they could speak about this, and Law Director Zuzolo said no because it has not passed yet. They will be going into executive session on this.

**COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Safety Committee meeting minutes- March 20, 2024. Clerk noted that all minutes have now been received.**

**It was moved by Sheely, seconded by Julian to accept and place on file.**

**Motion carried.**

**Law Director Zuzolo asked for a motion to adjourn into executive session under ORC 121.22 G4 to discuss collective bargaining agreements.**

**It was moved by Johnstone, seconded by Sheely to adjourn into executive session pursuant to ORC 121.22 section G4.**

**YEAS: 7      NAYS: 0**

**Council adjourned into executive session at 6:07 P.M.**

**Council reconvened from executive session at 6:40 P.M.**

**It moved by Lastic, seconded by Johnstone to return to regular order.**

**YEAS: 7      NAYS: 0**

**ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTION**  
(Legislation began at 42:31 into recording)

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_ ( Draft No. 157-24)**

**AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AN INCREASE TO THE POWER SALES CONTRACT RESOURCES SHARE OF THE AMP R.I.C.E. PEAKING PROJECT**

It was moved by Julian, seconded by Devorich to give a third reading to this draft.

**YEAS: 7      NAYS: 0**

It was moved by Julian, seconded by Lastic to adopt this Draft No. 157-24.

**YEAS: 7      NAYS: 0**

This Draft No. 157-24 has been adopted on the 8th day of January 2025.

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_ ( Draft No. 160-24)**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 1402.10, "DWELLING PERMIT" OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NILES, IN PART, TO ADJUST INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS AND INCREASE PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

It was moved by Johnstone, seconded by Sheely to suspend the rule requiring three readings to this to this draft.

**YEAS: 7      NAYS: 0**

Rules are suspended

It was moved by Johnstone, seconded by Lastic to adopt this Draft No. 160-24.

Mr. Johnstone just clarified that this draft was accidentally left off the last agenda and was only receiving its second reading tonight. He is asking for suspension tonight so the changes would take place in the beginning of 2025.

**YEAS: 7      NAYS: 0**

This Draft No. 160-24 has been adopted on the 8th day of January 2025.

**The following drafts will be part of the consent agenda, being brought to the floor for the first time, passed together with suspension of three readings, and as an emergency.**

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_ ( Draft No. 01-25)**

**AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SALE BY INTERNET AUCTION OF CERTAIN OBSOLETE ITEMS NO LONGER NEEDED FOR ANY MUNICIPAL PURPOSE BY THE CITY; AND, DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_ ( Draft No. 03-25)**

**AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF NILES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STATE OF OHIO COOPERATIVE PURCHASING PROGRAM; AND, DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_ ( Draft No. 04-25)**

**AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF THREE 2024 DODGE DURANGO PURSUIT VEHICLES BY DIRECT PURCHASE FOR THE 2025 CALENDAR YEAR; AND, DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_ ( Draft No. 05-25)**

**AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF MONIES FROM VARIOUS ACCOUNTS TO THE UNCLAIMED FUND 663 AS SEVERAL CHECKS REMAIN UNCASHED FOR MORE THAT ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY DAYS (180), AND, DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_ ( Draft No. 06-25)**

**AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY DIRECTOR and/or FIRE CHIEF AUTHORITY TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION AND ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS FOR THE ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTER GRANT PROGRAM; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_ ( Draft No. 07-25)**

**AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A THEN AND NOW PAYMENT REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY REPAIRS FOR MCKEES LANE TO KIRILA CONTRACTORS, INC.; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_ ( Draft No. 08-25)**

**AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE LABOR AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF NILES AND THE AFSCME OHIO COUNCIL 8, LOCAL 506 (AFSCME) BARGAINING UNIT; AND, DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_ ( Draft No. 09-25)**

**AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE LABOR AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE CITY OF NILES AND THE OHIO PATROLMEN'S BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION (DISPATCHERS); AND, DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_ ( Draft No. 10-25)**

**AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE TREASURER TO CONTRACT WITH THE OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE FOR ASSISTANCE WITH RECONCILIATION AS NEEDED; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_ ( Draft No. 11-25)**

**AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE DIRECTOR and/or PARK BOARD to PURCHASE THROUGH SOURCEWELL COOPERATIVE A VENTRAC TRACTOR AND ACCOMPANYING EQUIPMENT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_ ( Draft No. 12-25)**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ISSUE A REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING SERVICES FOR 2025; AND, DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_ ( Draft No. 13-25)**

**A RESOLUTION PURSUANT TO OHIO REVISED CODE 719.04 DECLARING THE INTENT TO APPROPRIATE CERTAIN PARCELS IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THE TRU NILES SIGNAL UPGRADE PROJECT; APPROPRIATING THE NECESSARY FUNDS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

It was moved by Julian, seconded by Lastic to suspend the rule requiring three readings to this consent agenda.

**YEAS: 7      NAYS: 0**

Rules are suspended.

It was moved by Julian, seconded by Sheely to adopt this consent agenda.

**YEAS: 7      NAYS: 0**

This consent agenda has been adopted on the 8th day of January 2025.

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_ (Draft No. 02-25)**

**AN ORDINANCE APPOINTING AND REAPPOINTING MEMBERS TO VARIOUS  
BOARDS AS REQUIRED BY THE OHIO REVISED CODE AND/OR NILES CODIFIED  
ORDINANCE, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

It was moved by Julian, seconded by Sheely to give a first reading to this Draft 02-25.

**YEAS: 7      NAYS: 0**

This Draft No. 02-25 has received its first reading on the 8th day of January 2025.

**MEMBERS OF THE AUDIENCE TO ADDRESS COUNCIL FOR GENERAL PURPOSE**

(Public comments began at 49:57 into recording)

Richard Strong: Mr. Strong wanted to address the mayor's letter to council about the veto. Mr. Strong said the entire letter is a lie. The idea of head-on collisions has nothing to do with guardrails. The contention between ODOT and the engineers is another lie he tries to sell. ODOT actually said it was the city's prerogative if they wanted to put it up, and under Ohio Revised Code it is. The county engineer says a guardrail should go there. ODOT language explains a guardrail as for the purpose of separating traffic from pedestrians and/or buildings or structures. The mayor has been completely disingenuous, and he is tired of it. The "no" votes for the guardrail are uninformed at best. He feels the mayor has to lie.

President ProTem Sollitto wanted to comment on the veto. He doesn't want to get into the specifics of it, but he does not like to see a veto. He hopes that when this goes back to the safety committee with Mr. Sheely, that there can be a modification met. This is a conversation for another day. Mr. Sheely said he will be doing some research on this first before bringing it back up. He brought the legislation up as a public safety issue. It was recently brought to his attention that there is a similar situation in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. Over the past ten years, a gentleman's house has been struck multiple times, and the city has put up signs. The gentleman's insurance is threatening to cancel his coverage. President Pro Tem Sollitto said he would these conversations to take place at a committee meeting so he has time to do his research.

Dee Sebben- Mrs. Sebben wanted to give a shot out to the safety forces in the city of Niles. At the veteran's dinner that was held, they raise enough money to put a tree up at the police department and gifted 33 veterans at Washington Square. She called a week before they delivered the gifts and there were three additional veterans added on. They were able to give to them also. She wanted to thank everyone who helped support this. Mrs. Sebben thanked Chief Holland for his support also.

George Kuriatnyk: Mr. Kuriatnyk said him and Mr. Strong finally agree on something and that he forgot the mayor is a crook. He said council voted yes on the contract to give the \$3.00 hour raise to those employees and at the next meeting he is going to bring all of the paperwork to show the gps. It will show that for 5 hours and 42 minutes, they are parked per day at the garage, which is close to 30 hours per week. He also has their work schedules, which shows 78.2% of their work is done after hours of overtime. They also have a 10-hour work schedule that ends in October. So, they are getting 10 hours of overtime on top of this to sit at the garage. He believes one other person got this raise that works in the billing department and asked the mayor if this was his cousin. Mayor Mientkiewicz said his statement was inaccurate. There was no additional raise for anyone in the billing office.

He said this at the last council meeting, but he would like council to get with the police department and look at the charges the city gets at Maddens. Next, he wanted to talk about the nuisance board, which he has spoken to Mr. Johnstone about. He has had 42 people call him because they know he is involved. He has received calls about looking into people being parked too closed to other people's property. He wishes the nuisance board would get together and look at doing something different. Maybe have the residents come to them first before they go to council, because it would save them time. Lastly, he has been asked if he is going to run for office come election time. He will be running for either first ward or president of council.

President ProTem Sollitto asked Mr. Sheely to look into the question about Maddens and what the city actually gets paid and what the rationale is behind it.

### **MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS**

(Miscellaneous remarks began at 1:00:40 into recording)

Mayor Mientkiewicz wanted to comment on the unfortunate news that broke yesterday about the closing of Sparkle grocery store downtown. They feel for all of the employees that are going to be effected by this and hopefully this leads to a brighter path for all of the employees. He did have an opportunity to speak to the property owner and this seems to be a bigger issue than just the Niles location. There seems to be issues throughout the corporation. They are going to watch this very closely. The city has spent a great amount of time trying to improve the downtown area and the last thing they need is another vacant building. He is confident that this building will be listed on the market, and they see some movement on it. President ProTem Sollitto agreed that they should keep an eye on it and keep Mr. Johnstone and the CIC up to speed on it.

Mayor Mientkiewicz shared that last Friday a local gentleman from Girard received the congressional medal of honor. He wanted to recognize Mr. Ken David on receiving this prestigious award. He has also won the Silver Star and the Medal of Valor award. Along with Mr. David, there was a local Niles resident at the White House during this ceremony and that was Bob Marino Sr. He was there to watch his good friend Mr. Ken David receive this award.

Finally, Mayor Mientkiewicz knows Mosquito Creek has been a topic of conversation for the city. The city was recently awarded federal funding for a feasibility study to ecosystem restoration, recreation, and the overall revitalization of the creek. He knows this is very close to Mr. Weddell with it being in his ward and also Mr. Sollitto. He knows council as a whole has had concerns because they addressed it in the budget with appropriating money for removing trees and the shoreline issues. This is being conducted by the Army Corp Engineers, and it has been a very lengthy process. Mayor Mientkiewicz believes he first reached out to them in 2019. He is excited Congressman Joyce pushed this through and got it approved for 2025.

Mr. Weddell would like to thank everyone involved in helping to secure the funding for Mosquito Creek. He is glad it is coming together.

Mr. Johnstone reminded everyone that there is a CIC meeting on Tuesday January 14<sup>th</sup> @ 4:40 P.M. at the Wellness Center. There will be updates to the grant program being discussed that he will bring back at the next meeting.


Mr. Sheely thanked Mrs. Sebben and told her to keep up the good work. The work that she does for the veterans is fantastic. He has a lot of family that has served in the military and he appreciates it.

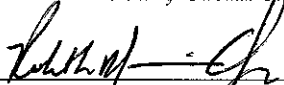
Mrs. Devorich wished everyone a happy new year.

Mr. Sollitto wanted to make sure there was still follow up on Mrs. Sebben's property. He doesn't want to be too redundant, but the veto does concern him. He hopes when it goes back to the committee that they can come to an agreement. He wanted to thank Mr. Dave Petrilla again for his work on the Winterfest. Lastly, he knows there is a program to purchase benches in the parks. He knows people are interested in purchasing them and he would like to see them in Iowa park.

### ADJOURN

It was moved by Julian, seconded by Weddell to adjourn the meeting.

  
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Nicole Bacak, Clerk of Council

  
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Robert Marino Jr., President of Council