Fighting has to stop in East Cleveland

By all accounts, East Cleveland Mayor Gary Norton has done a stellar job in trying to right his city that sits on a precipice.

As the chief executive officer of one of this state’s poorest municipalities that is predominately inhabited by African-Americans, Norton has reached out beyond the city limits to enlist private, public and non-profit organizations to revamp East Cleveland.

Unfortunately, East Cleveland Council President Joy Jordan has been nothing but an antagonist thorn in the side to Norton; coming to a point where earlier this year he had to have her removed from his office.

Last year, this newspaper outlined on this page how the incessant bickering among the heads of the executive and legislative branches needed to get their acts together.

It seems our advice fell on deaf ears to Dr. Jordan.

Last week, Ohio Auditor Dave Yost downgraded East Cleveland to “fiscal emergency” status from “fiscal caution” because the city was unable to submit a plan to erase last year’s $5.87 million deficit.

And now a team of state officials will be stepping in to help Norton and Jordan create a financial recovery plan.

To the outside world, it looks as though a city run by African-Americans again can’t get its act together.

We hope that Dr. Jordan will take advantage of this help from the state and work with Mayor Norton to come to a consensus on establishing a budget.

There is no doubt that the city must be frugal in coming up with a plan that will not diminish vital services too much, but in the end, hard choices must be made.

It’s time for healing in East Cleveland, especially as Mayor Norton tries relentlessly to bring the municipality back to some semblance of prominence in the Greater Cleveland area.