



## COMMITTEE WORK SESSION MARCH 17, 2008

**Committee Members Present:** Ken Braman  
Brenda Hlas  
Tom Jones  
Dennis McGlone  
Bill Mowery  
Mike Zita  
Scott Pelot-Excused

**Also Present:** Mayor David Koontz  
Rick Ryland  
John Moss  
Jeff Pritchard  
Karla Richards  
Ann Campbell

The Committee Work Session convened on Monday, March 17, 2008 at 7:01 PM, in Council Chambers of the Safety Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Council Vice President, Mike Zita. Following a salute to the flag and the Pledge of Allegiance, there was a moment of silent prayer.

### **Committee Work Session General Discussion:**

#### **Resolution of Necessity for Berry, McGowan, and Wadsworth Roads**

Mr. Jones stated that Mr. Ryland held a meeting with the property owners in this area a few weeks ago and asked Mr. Ryland for the details. Mr. Ryland indicated that the original water lines dating back to 1939 and that this project will replace the existing lines with a new eight (8) inch main line, and hydrants would be installed every three (300) hundred feet. Mr. Jones questioned the total cost that the City would have to contribute to this project? Mr. Ryland indicated that this is Issue I money and is a 50/50 split. Mr. Ryland indicated that this is approximately \$360,000.00 of Issue I money and the rest will be assessed. Mr. Ryland indicated that the city has paid for the engineering for the project, and any overruns become the City's responsibility once the assessments are filed. Mr. Jones asked if the City has the money for any overruns. Mr. Moss replied that the assessments contribute the other half, however if there are any overruns we would look to the Water Fund to pay that cost. Mr. Jones inquired on how the assessments are based. Mr. Ryland indicated that for this project it would be based on the actual foot of frontage on the property.

Resolution of Necessity for Berry, McGowan, and Wadsworth Roads continued:

Mr. Jones asked if these residents were comfortable with this idea. Mr. Ryland indicated that they liked the idea, however they have no idea what the total assessment would be. Mr. Zita asked if the city has an idea on the numbers. Mr. Ryland replied we have preliminary numbers such as 120 foot of frontage is roughly \$4,200.00. Mr. Jones questioned if this needs emergency language. Mrs. Richards indicated that with an assessed project it is customary to go all three readings. Mrs. Elaine Tompkins, a Norton resident, asked Mayor Koontz if he has reviewed these figures? Mayor Koontz replied yes. Mrs. Tompkins inquired if the ten (10) percent for construction contingencies and six (6) percent for short term interest was standard. Mayor Koontz replied yes and the ten (10) percent is a contingency at the time prior to design. Once the job goes out for bids, you will have actual numbers, this is just an estimate. Mayor Koontz deferred the six (6) percent short term interest question to Mr. Moss for clarification. Mr. Moss indicated that interest is normal for the financing and it is included in the assessment. Mr. Moss stated that there are two (2) components here; first there is interest that accrues during the time of the construction, and is shared by the residents and the City 50/50. Mr. Moss stated that secondly, there is a bond and the cost of that bond finances the money until the assessment is collected. Mrs. Tompkins inquired about penalty and premium clauses so if they are late in completing, would they pay a penalty? Mr. Ryland stated that the contract has not been written yet, however he has seen that in past contracts it does not apply to the City of Norton. Mr. Jones asked Mayor Koontz if he was at the meeting a few weeks ago, and Mayor Koontz indicated that he had a prior commitment and could not attend. Mr. Jones moved to place this on Councils next agenda, seconded by Mr. Braman

Roll Call: Yeas: Jones, Braman, Hlas, McGlone, Mowery, Zita  
Nays: None

Motion passed 6-0.

Ord #34-2008 Salaries, Finance Dep. Position, MPO

Mr. Zita stated that they held off on this legislation last week because of a couple of questions that have now been addressed and changed. Mr. Zita stated that the salary for the Dep. Director of Finance states \$40,000.00 to \$50,000.00 however the MPO Schedule reflects the incorrect number and it needs to be corrected. Mr. Zita clarified the correct salary for Mr. Moss is \$58,902.48. Mr. Jones stated that he was not sure how the rest of Council feels and that it is nothing personal against Mr. Moss, however he has a problem with Mr. Moss' work schedule. Mr. Jones stated that Mr. Moss' hiring ordinance was passed two (2) years ago tonight, and that Mr. Moss was elected last November as the City of Wadsworth's Auditor. Mr. Jones stated that he reviewed the minutes from March 6, 2006, which states: "*Mr. Pelot inquired if Mr. Moss would be working both jobs. Mr. Moss stated that he would need a little bit of overlap in the first few weeks*".

Mr. Jones stated that he was not sure what that overlap meant, was he going to resign or continue to work both jobs? Mr. Moss stated that at the time he accepted this position and the salary, and since then his thoughts have changed. Mr. Moss stated that initially he thought that if he came in here and did a really good job, the City would make the position more in line with what it should be and that has fallen by the wayside, as did his thoughts on what he should do with his time. Mr. Jones asked Mr. Moss if he works 40 hours Monday through Friday and Mr. Moss replied yes, however he does not do it from 8:00 to 4:30 PM. Mr. Jones asked if these hours are acquired on weeknights and Mr. Moss replied yes, adding that sometimes it includes Saturdays and Sundays. Mr. Jones stated that in essence you are not here for your staff in the Finance Dep. all of the time and Mr. Moss replied no. Mr. Ryland stated that initially it was confusing when Mr. Moss would be here, however we now have a computer calendar program that tells everyone where all employees are at all times of the day. Mr. Ryland assured Council that Mr. Moss works his 40 hours and then some, and what Mr. Moss brings to the table is very valuable. Mr. Jones stated that he does not have a problem with the knowledge Mr. Moss has, however he is comfortable with paying him for 40 hours Monday through Friday. Mr. Ryland stated that there are very few of us as Directors that work a 40 hour work week, in fact most of us put in 60 or 65 hours. Mr. Ryland stated that you cannot relate to the number of hours they put in, it is the quality of work they perform. Mr. Ryland stated that he has no problem with Mr. Moss' schedule and he is pretty much on call and can be reached any time. Mr. Jones asked Mayor Koontz how he felt about Mr. Moss, considering that he did not appoint him? Mayor Koontz stated that he does not have a problem with Mr. Moss, he is very pleased with the expertise he provides in financial matters and other matters. Mayor Koontz strongly recommended this increase based on the performance he has given the City. Mr. Jones asked Mayor Koontz if he authorized this increase, and Mayor Koontz replied yes. Mr. McGlone questioned the memo from the Union that Council received and asked Mr. Ryland to explain it. Mr. Ryland indicated that Mr. Moss might have used a poor choice of words on his initial memo requesting to "replace" Ms. McCall's position. This is a new position being created as Dep. Director of Finance. Mr. Ryland stated that Ms. McCall does have a five (5) year recall under the disability clause within the Union contract. Mr. Moss is seeking to establish this new position with a higher level of accounting and entries to assist Mr. Moss. Mr. Ryland indicated that we need to focus more on ledger entries so we can focus more time to investments and more analysis on how we are spending our money. Mr. Ryland stated that he has no problem sitting down with the union to discuss this issue. Mr. Ryland stated that we are looking at apples and oranges, they are two different things. Mr. McGlone stated that he agreed with Mr. Jones' comments, and he was looking at giving everyone three 3% raises. Mr. McGlone stated that he has also had problems reaching Mr. Moss sometimes. Mr. McGlone stated that he would like to see some type of a schedule for Mr. Moss so Council knows when he is in. Mr. Jones questioned if we do hire a Dep. Director would we bring the income tax collection back from CCA that we are paying \$123,000.00 a year for? Mr. Moss replied no because you would not be providing sufficient personnel to do that.

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Mr. Jones stated that with the savings you could hire two (2) full time employees with benefits. Mr. Moss stated that he has received numerous complaints about CCA; the residents don't like the level of service, the way they answer the phones, the forms. Mr. Moss stated that you would have to overcome these deficiencies and provide a higher level of service. Mr. Moss stated that we should talk about a business plan if we are thinking of doing this and do it right.

Mrs. Tompkins stated that for the record she is not looking for a job. When we adjust salaries we always ask is it in the Budget and the MPO? Mrs. Tompkins discussed the total number of 206 employees and felt that this was excessive. Mrs. Tompkins stated that you should keep in mind that when we do the Budgets we do them on the heavy side, and we show the revenue with the least amount possible. Mrs. Tompkins stated that we have an opportunity to keep tighter and better books when you are approving it in November or December. Mrs. Tompkins stated that she thought the Police Dep. was Union however we have three (3) employees in the Police Dep. that are exempt. Mrs. Tompkins stated that this needs to be discussed. Ms. Charlotte Whipkey, a Norton resident, spoke regarding her issues with 206 employees and asked why we need that many slots to put people in. Ms. Whipkey questioned why Mr. Ryland is not listed in the legislation because it was stated a few weeks ago that he would also be getting a raise. Ms. Whipkey questioned if any of these employees have received raises already this year because it was her understanding that Ms. Campbell has already received a raise this year. Ms. Whipkey stated that Ms. Campbell has attended school and this is also tied into her increase, and asked if Ms. Campbell paid for this or did the City? Mr. Ryland stated that he did not put himself in for a five (5) percent raise. Mr. Ryland stated that he put himself in for a 3% raise, which is why he is not listed on the legislation. Mr. Ryland stated that Ms. Campbell did receive a 3% pay raise on January 1, 2008, however that did not take into account that she completed the Municipal Clerks training in addition to the House Bill 9 training. This is the reason for the additional request. Mr. Ryland stated that the City of Norton paid for her education. Ms. Whipkey stated that we paid for her to better herself to go somewhere else and get a better job, and then we are going to give her another \$2,000.00 raise on top of what she makes? Mr. Ryland stated that he did not think Ms. Campbell is going somewhere else, and Ms. Whipkey clarified that she meant if she goes somewhere else. Mr. Ryland stated that the object is to train our people so that we have cross training, and that she could fill in for Mrs. Richards and keep up the record keeping that is so highly required and necessary for the City. Ms. Whipkey stated that Ms. Campbell has received more like a 10% increase this year; \$33,000.00 to \$35,000.00 is 6.5% and if she already has received a 2.5 % to 3.0% raise for this year that is closer to 10% just for this year alone. Ms. Whipkey commented on Mrs. Tompkins statements about the Police Dept. being listed in our budget. Last year we went to court saying we didn't have the money to pay our Police Dept. and the way our budget is made up we lost the court case once the court saw we had the extra money in our budget.

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Ms. Whipkey stated that we need to get the police out of the salary budget much like the Fire Dept. Mr. Andrew Lehner, a Norton resident asked if the salary ordinance would affect our property taxes? Mr. Moss replied no we cannot change the property taxes without a vote of the people, however the Mosquito Abatement District (MAD) can. Mr. Lehner questioned where we are getting the money to pay for these increases? Mr. Moss replied that we have revenue increases that occur each year and we try to balance the cost increases that also occur. Mayor Koontz questioned the percentage of property tax that goes into the general fund? Mr. Moss stated that it may be 20% and the majority goes into the schools. Mr. Pritchard stated he thought it was more like 12% and Mr. McGlone stated that it is more like 8%. Mr. Zita stated that Ms. Whipkey had concerns about Ms. Campbell's education expense adding that the city also pays for other required training and Mr. Ryland stated that we have required training for Police, Fire and EMS as well as other departments. Mr. Jones discussed the issue with CCA and that he would like Council to take a good hard look at this and do away with CCA after this year and give CCA notice prior to January of 2009. Mr. Jones stated that he would like to look at the employee health care benefit package. Most companies today require their employees to contribute a certain percentage, however he was not sure what that percentage should be. Mr. Jones stated that most of the citizens in our community do contribute to their health care package. Mr. McGlone questioned if employees are required to reimburse the City for education expenses after they leave? Mr. Ryland indicated yes it is in the Union contracts. Mr. McGlone stated that he would like to see a report on where we stand on CCA, how much we have benefited the City, the total costs. Mr. Zita moved to add Ord. #34-2008 on Councils next agenda, seconded by Mrs. Hlas.

Roll Call: Yeas: Zita, Hlas, Braman, McGlone, Mowery  
Nays: Jones

Motion passed 5-1

**Unfinished Business:**

Mrs. Hlas removed the Tax Credit issued from the Matters Referred listing, it has been there since March of 2006.

**New Business:**

Mr. Jones asked Mr. Ryland about the status of St. Rt. 261 and Mr. Ryland replied that he spoke with ODOT last Friday and indicated to them that the City wants to sell this project in July and not October. Mr. Ryland stated that ODOT was not happy about this and that he would be submitting this request to ODOT in writing.

Mr. Ryland indicated he has spoken with Mr. Wichert of Wichert Insurance and would like to have the employee health care insurance discussed at the April 7, 2008 Committee Work Session because the current policy expires on April 31, 2008.

**Public Comment-Non Agenda Items:**

Mr. Andrew Lehner discussed the recent snowfall and the large number of accidents along Greenwich Roads and Easton and asked why we have so many? Mr. Lehner stated that every morning he drives St. Rt. 21 north to work and during the bad weather, he never sees any salt trucks. Mr. Lehner suggested the City talk with ODOT and maybe Copley Twp. Mr. Lehner discussed the poor sound quality on Channel #15, and asked to have this looked into.

Ms. Charlotte Whipkey, asked if the city has ever been repaid by Ms. Conley for her education expenses? Mr. Ryland indicated that Ms. Conley is still making payments to the city. Ms. Whipkey asked how long would take to pay this off and Mr. Ryland indicated that he did not know.

Mrs. Elaine Tompkins, stated that we (the residents) do not just come to the meetings each week to complain, we are just asking you to take a look at the books and do it better. Mrs. Tompkins stated that she has asked for a simple listing of what comes in and what goes out on a monthly basis. This is something the residents should be able to look at. Mrs. Tompkins reminded everyone that all of you work for us.

**Topics for the next Work Session:**

Employee Health Care Package and CCA Update. Mr. Ryland stated that he would also like to address raising the EMS billing rates the city charges at the next Work Session. Mr. Ryland stated that the net effect to the residents would be zero. Mr. Jones asked what we are currently getting, and Mr. Ryland stated that ALS (Advanced Life Support) transport is \$500.00, BLS (Basic Life Support) transport is \$350.00 and non-transport is \$125.00 and we charge \$7.00 per mile. Mr. Ryland stated the proposed increases are \$600.00/\$460.00/\$120.00 and \$10.00 per mile.

**Adjourn**

There being no other business to come before the Committee Work Session, the meeting was adjourned at 7:46 PM.

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Mike Zita, Vice President of Council

**\*\*NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM\*\***

**All Committee Meetings will be held at the Norton Safety Administration Building, unless otherwise noted. If you do not have access to Time-Warner Channel #15, you may request to view a copy of any VHS recorded meeting in Council Chambers. Please contact Ann Campbell in the Administration office to make the necessary arrangements at (330) 825-7815 ext. 14.**