



**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
NOVEMBER 21, 2005**

Committee Members Present: John Conklin
 Dennis McGlone
 Bill Mowery (Left at 9:00 PM)
 Scott Pelot (Excused)
 James Price
 Brenda Hlas
 Mike Zita

Administration Members Present Mayor Joseph Kernan
 Claude Collins
 Jeanne Zerga
 Jeff Pritchard

The Committee of the Whole convened for a meeting on Monday, November 21, 2005 at 7:00 PM, in Council Chambers of the Safety Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Brenda Hlas, President of Council, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silent prayer.

Committee of the Whole General Discussion:

Mr. Conklin suggested we address all the other items on the agenda first, then go into the 2006 Budget. All members present were in agreement.

Administration Building Sewer Pump Station:

Mr. Price stated that the current septic system at the Administration Building and the Community Center is beyond repairs and needs to be corrected. Mr. Price stated that this was authorizing the Administration to go out for bid for this project. Mr. Collins stated that the city has orders from the Health Department and the Ohio EPA to either improve the system or connect to a nearby sewer line. Mr. Collins stated that the nearest sewer is about 440 feet away, adding that it's better to connect to the sewer and abandon the current system. Mr. Collins stated that he has contacted CT Consultants for the engineering for this project and has a projected cost of \$65,250.00. Mr. Collins stated that we have placed \$70,000.00 in the 2006 Budget for this. Mr. Collins indicated that initially Summit County was going to do this at no cost, however as time went on it was clear the city would be responsible. Mrs. Hlas inquired if we would still be within the budget, and Mrs. Zerga stated that we would be within the 2006 Budget, adding that there is \$78,866.00 in this fund. Mr. Conklin inquired if this also included the hotel nearby and Mr. Collins stated that it does not, you would need a totally new system and plans to include this. Mr. Collins stated that he has paid CT Consultants a small amount to get some preliminary numbers. Mr. Price moved to place this item on Council's next agenda, seconded by Mr. McGlone. There was discussion as to the need for emergency language and Mr. Collins stated that he would like to see it because this needed to be addressed soon. Mrs. Hlas inquired if this bid approval would come back to Council, and Mr. Collins stated that it may or the Board of Control could also approve it. There was discussion on the amount the Board of Control approves and this amount would be higher. It was agreed that the proposal would come back to Council.

Administration Building Sewer Pump Station continued:

Roll Call: Yeas: Price, McGlone, Conklin, Mowery, Zita, Hlas
Nays: None

Motion passed 6-0.

800 MHZ Radios:

Mr. Conklin stated that there were some lingering questions from Council regarding the necessity for the number of radios. Mr. Conklin asked Council if they still have issues or questions, now that we have the response from the Administration as responded to their questions and concerns. Mr. McGlone stated that Mrs. Tompkins, a Norton Resident, has questions to address. Mrs. Tompkins questioned why we need 100 radios when we have 55 employees and 25 cars? Mrs. Tompkins also questioned the \$12.00 monthly maintenance fee, and wondered about the projected life span on these radios? Mrs. Tompkins was concerned that we would be paying on these for the next 12 years when the equipment may not last that long. Mr. Collins replied that it has been his experience that they would last at least 20 years, and that Motorola builds the best radios. Mr. Collins used the Fire Dept. as an example; they have a total of 41 radios, 30 are portable or hand held, and there is also one in every vehicle. They need the ability to be away from the vehicle and in the field with a working radio, adding that these numbers are replacing what they currently use now; no additional ones are being purchased. The departments did ask for more initially, however we trimmed it back to the current use numbers. Mr. Zita stated that he raised this issue at the last meeting regarding the total numbers and if they in fact really were necessary. Mr. Zita stated that he just wanted to make sure that we are not buying more than we need just to sit on a shelf and collect dust. Mrs. Tompkins inquired if this would be a bid project, and Mr. Collins stated no. Mr. Collins stated that this is a Motorola system and they would only allow Motorola radios to be used on their system. Mrs. Hlas stated that she understood we are receiving a grant for 75% and the city is putting up the remaining 25%. Mrs. Hlas inquired if this amount would also cover the installation into the vehicles, and Mr. Collins stated that she was correct. Mr. Conklin stated that this item is on Council's next agenda for its second reading on Monday.

2006 Budget:

Mr. Conklin stated that our last discussions ended with the Community Development Dept. and started the discussions from this item forward. **Building Dept. Fund:** Mrs. Zerga indicated that Mrs. Hlas wanted her to put the \$10,000.00 for demolition back in based on the \$12,000.00 savings the city will receive from the contract with the Barberton Health District. **Finance:** Mrs. Hlas felt the Finance Dir. Salary should be 95% not 75%, and Mrs. Zerga agreed to this correction, same with the Income Tax Administration, it should be 5% not 25%. Mr. Conklin inquired about the JEDZ agreement status. Mayor Kernan stated that talks with Barberton are very slow and complicated. Mayor Kernan stated that he believes we have resolved 85-90% of the businesses at our end. **Police:** Mrs. Hlas stated that it had been mentioned several times to show the Police Chief separate and Mrs. Zerga stated that she would correct this for next year. Mrs. Zerga reminded everyone that after all of the changes and discussions, they would receive all new spreadsheets to reflect those changes. Mrs. Zerga stated that the overtime has been reduced to \$93,000.00, fuel was reduced to \$75,000.00, and that the equipment 911 is a new account for \$21,000.00. This is an enhancement to the current 911 system for tracking cell phones, and the city may receive grant for \$20,000.00. Mrs. Zerga stated that the total costs is around \$45,000.00 and is shared with the Police, (50%) and Fire/EMS (50%). **General Government:** Mrs. Zerga stated the Health District Contract was reduced to \$75,000.00 due to the changes with the MAD formation. Mrs. Zerga stated that the Equipment Fund was eliminated as well as Building Repairs.

2006 Budget Continued:

Mrs. Zerga stated that Mr. Weinsheimer had received estimates to repair the rotting wood to this building totaling \$63,000.00, but this was eliminated. Mr. Conklin asked if it is wise to hold off on repairs to the buildings. Mayor Kernan stated that there is always a question of repairing the roads or the building. Mayor Kernan decided it was best to address the roads this year, and if we are better off than we thought mid year, we could address the building repair issues. **Law Dept:** Mrs. Hlas stated that if this reflects no pay raise, why the increase in Professional Services, and would like to have this reduced to \$2,000.00. Mrs. Zerga stated that she based this on the current expenses, and after further discussions, Mayor Kernan authorized Mrs. Zerga to reduce it to \$2,000.00. **Engineer:** Mrs. Hlas questioned the \$82,684.00 for salary an engineer 2 days a week. Mrs. Zerga stated that this figure was an error--the correct number should be \$72,100.00 for 2006, adding that this reflected a carry forward from last year into this year. Mr. Conklin asked if there is a renewal agreement this year? Mr. Collins stated that this is a contract that is negotiated yearly, not legislated. Mrs. Hlas was concerned that this would never come back to Council for review unless the Administration is unhappy with it. Mr. Conklin inquired about the intentions of a road program, and the Engineer being here two days a week, would he be able to keep up? Mr. Collins stated that he would not. Mrs. Hlas inquired as to what point would we need a full time Engineer? Mr. Collins stated that this arrangement has worked, he does not like it much, but it works. Mr. Collins stated that we are all doing some part of engineering on a daily basis and this is working well. Keep in mind that yes we may have an Engineer physically here two days a week, however we have access to the entire firm full of experts at our disposal. Mrs. Hlas stated that when we had a full time Engineer on staff several years ago and we were paying \$ 65,000.00 full time including benefits, now we are paying \$72,000.00 for two days a week. Mr. Collins stated that the prior Engineer had no staff; we are getting a full staff for what we pay. Mr. Pritchard stated that to have an Engineer and a full staff of engineering experts is like have the best of both worlds. Mrs. Hlas stated that this may be true, however we are paying to having the best of both worlds. Mrs. Hlas stated that she felt it was an inconvenience to the residents and the developers to have an Engineer here only two days a week, adding that at some point the city must consider getting a full time engineer. Mayor Kernan suggested doing a survey to see if this is reasonable and feasible to do. Mrs. Hlas agreed this was a good idea and that Council should take a look at this report every year or so. **Parks:** Mrs. Zerga stated with the pending legislation regarding the change in how Boards and Commissions are paid, the OPERS and Meditax would be changed. Mrs. Zerga stated that under Equipment \$60,000.00 for playground equipment was removed; it is reflected under Capital Improvement Fund #410. Mrs. Zerga stated that the \$15,000.00 for sidewalks was removed. **Planning Commission:** Mrs. Zerga stated that as with all of the Boards and Commissions the OPERS and Meditax numbers would change. **Transfer Out:** Mrs. Zerga stated that \$50,000.00 has been eliminated to set money aside for a road program. Mrs. Zerga stated she has created an account to transfer \$100,000.00 to the Road Program Fund. Mrs. Zerga stated that she created two new accounts; Note Payment Equipment and Note Payment Johnson Water Line and appropriated \$25,000.00 each. Mrs. Zerga stated that next year we have to start paying down the notes, and if we do this they should be paid off within five years. **Service Dept.:** Mrs. Zerga stated that the \$13,700.00 for part-time clerk was eliminated, and under rents and leases we have appropriated \$16,950.00 for current leases and to include and renting a sweeper for two months, and boom mower for one month. Mrs. Hlas stated that when she talked with Mrs. Zerga last week it was discussed to change overtime to \$40,000.00 Mrs. Zerga stated that she would change this. There was discussion on the use/abuse of overtime and Mrs. Hlas inquired as to how much has been used to date? Mrs. Zerga stated that \$27,960.00 has been used to date with a balance of \$17,000.00. Mrs. Zerga stated that if it snows, we will use the money, if it doesn't we will not use it. **Fire and EMS:** Mrs. Zerga stated that \$50,000.00 was approved for the Chief's retirement payout and Acting Chief.

2006 Budget Continued:

Mrs. Zerga discussed the \$1500.00 cost for civil service testing and the share for the 911 enhancements for cell phones. **Community Center:** Mrs. Zerga stated that there is \$18,000.00 for repairs to the building. This is to repair the wood, gutters, and downspouts. Mrs. Zerga stated that in order to operate the Community Center we need to transfer \$20,000.00 from the General Fund and \$18,300.00 from the Rainy Day Fund. Mr. Zita questioned making repairs to the Community Center and doing nothing to the Administration Building. Mrs. Zerga stated that Mr. Weinsheimer did receive estimates for the repairs to the Community Center. Mr. Collins added that the wood at both buildings is cedar and there are bees boring holes in the wood at the Community Center. **Historical House:** Mrs. Zerga stated that is \$300.00 approved to tie the gutters to the downspouts at the building. Mrs. Zerga stated that under Equipment-there is \$6,000.00 budgeted for air conditioning, provided that Historical Society reimburses us. Mrs. Zerga stated that we would need to borrow \$1,400.00 from the General Fund to operate. **Court Computer Fund:** Mrs. Hlas inquired if money in the fund could be used to make repairs to the building in which the Court is housed? Mrs. Zerga stated that she was not sure but would look into this. **Road Program Fund #170:** Mrs. Zerga stated that \$167,500.00 has been set aside for a road program, \$100,000.00 from the General Fund and \$67,500.00 from the Permissive License Tax fund. Mrs. Hlas discussed all the changes previously discussed totaling about \$55,000.00 and she wants to take all of this and transfer it over to the road program. Mrs. Hlas stated that we would still have more revenue once the County re adjusts the property tax for the new re-evaluations in January. Mr. Conklin felt that \$55,000.00 is not enough for roads, and Mr. McGlone questioned where this \$55,000.00 would stay if not placed in the Road Program Fund? Mrs. Zerga stated that this would remain in the General Fund. There was further discussion on this issue and Mrs. Zerga urged everyone to keep in mind that you can appropriate all you want for a road program, but if the unions and health care rates come due, where do you think the money is going to come from? Mr. Conklin agreed and with binding arbitrations, they can take it. Mrs. Hlas stated that at the very least we are the ones that put it there, it would be the unions that take away our road program. Mrs. Hlas stated further that this is what she wants to do and asked the remaining council members what they wanted to do. No one else responded. Mr. Conklin stated that the remaining four council members present would be the ones to deal with this because he and Brenda will not be here and urged the members to speak up on this issue. There was no further comment to Mrs. Hlas' suggestion and she directed Mrs. Zerga to move all of the \$55,00.000 over to the Road Program Fund. Mr. McGlone stated that he felt by setting aside \$167,000.00 for a road program this was a good start. Mr. Zita stated that he did not want to strap it so close. Mrs. Zerga reminded everyone that things always come up that you do not expect. Mayor Kernan suggested we go half way, place \$25,000.00 in there now and when we go out for bid and the money is still there, we will use all of it. Mr. Conklin discussed the re-paving of Rt. #21 project, which is up in 2009, and the fact that our share will be \$350,000.00 for this. We have no line item in the budget for this, and recalled borrowing the money for this in 1999, which we are still paying the bonds on this. There was further discussion on his issue, and Mr. Conklin moved to transfer the \$25,000.00 savings now into the road program with the intention of transferring the remainder when we go to bid, seconded by Mr. Price.

Roll Call: Yeas: Conklin, Price, McGlone, Mowery, Zita
Nays: Hlas.

Motion passed 5-1.

2006 Budget Continued:

Capital Land Improvements: Mrs. Zerga stated that there is \$20,000.00 for a feasibility study with a grant for the ball fields. Mrs. Hlas discussed the fact that there are no lights for the fields and was not in favor of approving ball fields without lights, but yet we have \$60,000.00 for playground equipment. Mrs. Hlas stated that she realized that this new playground equipment is needed. Mr. Pritchard explained that the preliminary costs for lights exceeded \$190,000.00 and we already have the money for the fields. Mr. Pritchard stated that lighting could be added at any time. Mrs. Hlas questioned if anyone bothered to look at getting grants for the ball fields or the lights? Mr. Pritchard replied that as with any kind of grant, you still need the matching funds. Mrs. Hlas stated that we have the matching funds, \$237,177.77 to be exact. Mrs. Hlas asked Mr. Pritchard to look into obtaining grants for the fields and for the lighting. There was discussion as to the delay in starting the fields. Mayor Kernan stated that he would like to see this take place sometime in 2006. Mr. Pritchard stated that now is really a good time to clear the land and get the fields started, and we are ready to go out for bid, we just need the authorization to do so. There was further discussion on this and Mr. Conklin moved to place a resolution authorizing the Administration to go out for bids for the construction of the ball fields for 2006 on Council's next agenda, seconded by Mr. Zita. Mayor Kernan stated that he thought the timing was wrong. Mayor Kernan stated that he would like for the residents to see we are working on providing better roads before we started on the ball fields. How is the community going to take it seeing new ball fields when our roads are falling apart and we have no fully funded road program? Mr. Mowery stated that we need to put back some money for future use, and he felt we should wait on the ball fields. Mr. Conklin strongly disagreed, stating that this town is famous for sitting back and waiting. Mrs. Hlas stated that we have been paying for a ball field that we don't even have, for nearly three years now.

Roll Call: Yeas: Conklin, Zita, McGlone, Price, Hlas
Nays: Mowery

Motion passed 5-1.

There was further discussion on all of the suggested changes to the proposed 2006 Budget. Mrs. Zerga stated that we would make all of the adjustments as discussed and resubmit this to council along with the exhibit. Mr. Conklin moved to place this on Council's next agenda for a first reading, with the changes as discussed. Mr. Conklin stated that the second reading would take place on December 12, 2005, and would waive the third reading at that time. Mayor Kernan stated that he believed according to the Charter, this would take effect immediately upon its passage, and that emergency language is not required, and the Clerk concurred.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Mrs. Hlas wanted to discuss the Boards & Commissions pay arrangements adding that this does need to be addressed now in order for the 30-day waiting period to go into effect on January 1, 2005. Mr. Zita stated that the Boards & Commission members would no longer receive a paycheck but a compensation check. Mrs. Hlas stated that they would actually receive more money because we would not be deducting any taxes from this. Mr. Zita moved to place this item on Council's next agenda, seconded by Mr. Price.

Roll Call: Yeas: Zita, Price, Conklin, McGlone, Hlas
Nays: None

Motion passed 5-0.

New Business Continued:

Mr. Zita discussed the Gardner Blvd. Phase II Equalization Board appointments. Mr. Zita indicated that he has contacted two of the previous members, one has accepted, and he is still waiting a reply from the other. Mr. Zita stated that he has to find one more member willing to be appointed. Mr. Collins stated that due to some letters having to be served personally by a Police Officer, this puts a 28-day hold on any process. Mr. Zita stated that he intends to get the Board established soon.

Topics for next Work Session:

Mrs. Hlas indicated that the Clerk would forward the pending Matter Referred list to the Administration to assure that all items are reflected.

Public Service Announcements:

Mr. Carris Sr., commented on the recent letters from the Mayor of Wadsworth that have been published in the local papers lately. Mr. Carris Sr., stated that he would like to see the Mayor do a monthly letter to the residents and aired on Channel 15. Mr. Carris Sr., stated that he would like to see a reporter from the city once a month, like what Mrs. Hlas did with her newsletter. Mr. Carris Sr. stated that we have this great Channel 15, however, he felt it is not used enough to inform the public on the activities at City Hall. Mr. Carris Sr., stated that he hoped that Mrs. Hlas and Mr. Conklin would continue to stay active with city politics. Mr. Pritchard commented on a positive newspaper article in the Trading Post last week regarding the new 3.5 million dollar Albrecht Plaza, adding that the North Akron Savings & Loan will have their open house & dedication on December 9, 2005.

Mrs. Elaine Tompkins inquired as to the status of the Charter Review Commission. Mayor Kernan stated that he thought needed to be appointed this year when in fact it is not to occur till 2006. Mrs. Tompkins inquired as to how this could have happened. Mayor Kernan stated that there is a date certain in the Charter and he was going from the date the previous Mayor appointed the last Charter Review Commission. Mayor Kernan stated that there was no appointment prior to this for ten years or better. Mayor Kernan stated that just to keep us on track he intends to appoint those members he has already selected in 2006.

Adjourn:

There being no other business to come before the Committee of the Whole, the meeting was adjourned at 9:22 PM.

Brenda K. Hlas-President of Council

Date approved: November 28, 2005

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ARCHIVED IN THE CLERK OF COUNCILS OFFICE**