



COMMITTEE WORK SESSION DECEMBER 4, 2006

Committee Members Present: Ken Braman
Tom Jones
Dennis McGlone
Bill Mowery
Scott Pelot
James Price
Mike Zita

Also Present: Mayor Joseph Kernan
Claude Collins
John Moss
Jeff Pritchard
Karla Richards

The Committee Work Session convened on Monday, December 4, 2006 at 7:00 PM, in Council Chambers of the Safety Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Council President, Michael Zita.

Committee Work Session General Discussion:

Mr. Zita moved to modify the agenda and change the order for this evening, seconded by Mr. Mowery. Mr. Zita stated that after the sewer Freeze Sewer Rate Increase discussion, we would go into Public Comment then switch back to the 2007 Budget.

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

Motion passed 7-0.

Presentation by Johanna Nelsen-Summit County Development:

Ms. Nelson briefly discussed two new programs offered by Summit County for all residents in Summit County, except for those who reside in Barberton, Cuyahoga Falls and Akron as these communities have their own programs. Ms. Nelson stated that the First Home program is a down payment assistance for residents. Ms. Nelson provided a handout of the requirements for qualification, (see attached). Ms. Nelson also discussed the Rehab program for residents to assist them for minor housing repairs such as sewer connections, electrical, plumbing, roofing, gutters, etc. Ms. Nelson also provided handouts for this program (see attached).

Employee Health Care

Mr. McGlone turned this over to Mr. Collins for the details. Mr. Collins introduced Mr. Bob Lamm of Associated Underwriters to explain the details. Mr. Lamm stated that the plan is working well, there are no abuses and within normal range for diagnosis. Mr. Lamm stated that 98.2% of the city's employees used the physicians in the network. Mr. Lamm stated that with the renewal process, he is always looking for the best possible rates for the city. Mr. Lamm stated that he recommends Pan American again for the 2007 plan, however there is an increase of 3.9% for fixed costs. Mr. Lamm stated that Summa Health Care has been added to this plan, which includes Akron City Hospital and St. Thomas Hospitals. Mr. Lamm stated that the city's risk factor has gone down, possibly due to younger and healthier employees. Mr. Collins stated that the city's policy expires on December 31, 2006. Mr. McGlone moved to add this to Councils next agenda, waiving second and third readings with emergency language, seconded by Mr. Price.

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

Motion passed 7-0.

Re-appoint Dan Karant to Health Advisory Board:

Mr. Zita stated that Mr. Karant's current term will expire on December 31, 2006 and that Mr. Karant has expressed his desires to be re-appointed for another three (3) year term. Mayor Kernan stated that Mr. Karant has done a fine job serving on Norton Health Advisory Board, and he would like Council to confirm his re-appointment. Mr. Zita moved to place this on Councils next agenda, waiving second and third readings with emergency language, seconded by Mr. Pelot.

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

Motion passed 7-0.

Freeze Sewer Rate Increase:

Mr. Price stated that at the last meeting, Mr. Braman had suggested Council consider freezing the sewer rate effective in January 2007 for 3%. Mr. McGlone asked Mr. Collins for the exact costs now and with the increase. Mr. Collins stated that for water the current cost is \$1090, and the 3% increase would make it \$1120 or \$40.00 more. Mr. Collins stated that for sewer the current cost is \$2,740 and the 3% increase would make it \$2,820.00 or \$80.00 more. Mr. Jones suggested that as Council we should freeze both the water and the sewer rates. Mr. Price stated that the reason we wanted to freeze the rates is because he had some communications with Summit County, we also have a feasibility study starting in January. Mr. Price stated that by freezing the rates now, it would help the residents somewhat. Mr. Pelot reminded everyone that this would only apply to Norton fees, it does not apply to Summit County or Barberton rates. Mr. Price moved to place this on Councils next agenda, seconded by Mr. Jones. Mr. Collins asked if this is just for 2007 because in 2008 there is another scheduled increase? Mr. Price stated that he intends for this freeze to be for 2007 only because the feasibility study should be done sometime next year.

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

Motion passed 7-0.

Mr. Zita called for Public Comment and read a statement before calling residents forward, (see attached). Mr. Zita offered the members of Council to address this issue. Mr. Jones stated that it was Council Presidents intent to go to a vote whether or not the Summit County Sheriff should come and give us a presentation. Mr. Jones stated that we have had other presentations by County officials and we did not take a vote on that. Mr. Jones stated that he did not feel we need to take a vote to allow or disallow the Summit County Sheriff to give their presentation. Mr. Jones stated that all of the city taxpayers should have the opportunity to hear how much money they can save and what they can provide for this community. Mr. Jones stated that it's not that this department has not done a good job, that is not his goal. Mr. Jones stated that he contacted the Sheriff's Dept. some time ago because he has been hearing things, like we could save money. Mr. Jones stated that some retired employees had discussed this with Mayor Kernan approximately three (3) years ago. Mayor Kernan was told at that time that it was feasible to do so. Mr. Jones stated that the current officers would not lose their jobs, the Summit County Sheriff would retain them. You would have opportunities to advance. We would sign a contract and then if the Sheriff decides to leave, we would go back and see if we could hire a Police Dep. like the City of Green tried to do, which did not work. Mr. Jones moved not to take a vote at all from Council and allow the Sheriff to come in as we agreed upon back on November 20, 2006, there was no second to his motion. Mr. Jones stated that this city is hurting for money, we have not had a road program for some time. We need water and sewer and the city cannot grow without it. Mr. Jones stated that as an elected official, he is simply asking the citizens of this community to listen to a presentation by the Summit County Sheriff, that is all he is asking for. Mr. McGlone stated that Mr. Jones keeps saying this would save the city money, and asked Mr. Jones if he has talked to the Administration or Chief Carris at any time to see how much money we would save? Mr. Jones stated that the figures he has stated came directly from the Summit County Sheriff's office. Mr. Jones stated that we have had presentations from Summit County Engineers, the Akron Zoo, etc. and we have never taken a vote before on Council to allow a presentation. Mr. Jones stated that the residents have a right to hear a presentation from the Summit County Sheriff. Mayor Kernan stated that there is a difference between someone from the Akron Zoo coming in and talking about how they are feeding the monkeys versus how we are going to protect our citizens. Mayor stated that this subject has come up a couple of times over the last three years, and people have discussed this with me. Mayor Kernan stated that he has not brought this to Council because he does not think it's a good idea. The good idea is to have a Police Dept. that you have trusted for over fifty (50) years, who know how to police this community, and the citizens know they have always protected us and keep them here. Mayor Kernan stated that we all need to look at saving money, but not at the costs of the safety of the citizens. Mr. Jones asked Mayor Kernan if he thought the Sheriff wouldn't perform services as well as our current department? Mayor Kernan answered that he did not want to take that chance. Mayor Kernan stated that this city has been running better than it has in a long time, and this stuff didn't start until about a year ago. Mr. Jones asked Mayor Kernan if he was denying the fact that he had a meeting with some retired city employees? Mayor Kernan stated no-he told you that he has talked with people about this since he came into office as Mayor. Just because it may be feasible it does not mean that it is something that you should do. Mr. Jones stated that Norton's population is 11,523, City of Green is 29,636. Cost per citizen for Norton is \$171.70, for City of Green it is \$42.06. Mr. Mowery stated that as being the Chairman of the Safety Committee, we have never had any complaints or altercations about our Police Dept. Mr. Mowery stated that without arguing back and forth, you just don't dismantle the Police Dept. simply because of money, especially with the superior safety forces we have now. Mr. Mowery discussed the community involvement and visibility as being an integral part of the city, and you build from that. Mr. Mowery stated he would never support anything against our

Police Dept. and has always been for them. Mr. Mowery stated that he believed that Mr. Zita wants to finally put this to rest and end these discussions with a vote. Council has a lot more other problems to deal with and there are a lot more ways to cut money other than to cut into your Police Dept. We need to support them more and not put them under any more stress than what they are experiencing now, as well as the citizens of Norton. Mr. Pelot stated that the Norton Police Dept's exemplary record speaks for itself over the last fifty (50) years within the City of Norton. Mr. Pelot stated that the city, as he mentioned earlier and confirmed by Mr. Moss, is supported by approximately 15% of the residents within the city, including the Police Dept. employees. Mr. Pelot stated that there are better ways to increase our revenue or make other cuts, rather than jeopardize the safety and welfare of the residents. Mr. Pelot stated that he is adamantly opposed to taking a step backwards and doing away with our fine men in blue. Our police support the residents of this city every day, now it is our turn to support them. Mr. Jones again stated that all he is asking for is a presentation from the Summit County Sheriff. Mr. Zita stated that all they (Mr. Mowery & Mr. Pelot) are saying is that they are not interested, don't jam it down their throat. Mr. Zita stated that if they are not interested in the support once we have the figures that we need, we are not interested in the presentation either. Mr. Braman stated that he represents the residents in Ward Four, and a whole bunch of them contacted him this weekend to say that they want no part of this. Mr. Braman stated that he is compelled to do what his residents want him to do, and they overwhelmingly want to keep our Police Dept. Mr. McGlone concurred with Mr. Braman, he has had nothing but phone calls in favor of keeping our Police Dept. Mr. McGlone stated that with Mr. Jones telling them they can go work at the jail is like a slap in their face. Mr. Jones stated that was not correct, that some of them yes, but our regular full-time officers would be patrolling the streets that they patrol today, not in a blue uniform but a black one; not in a white car, but a black car. We would have immediate access to the Summit County Sheriff, they have a large Detective Bureau, experienced SWAT Team, Mounted Patrol, K-9 Unit, on an on, and they also have a helicopter. Mr. Jones stated that he is not against this department, he simply wants to save the taxpayers some money. Mr. Jones asked how many of the current officers will have the right to be promoted within their Department-it would be a really long time. Mr. Jones stated that the Sheriff's Department consists of 500 plus employees. There were twenty-five (25) last year within the Sheriff's Dept. Mr. Jones stated that he does not have a problem with what Council is saying tonight, he brought it to the floor and that's where its at. Mr. Jones reminded Council that we did have an agreement back on November 20, 2006 to allow Capt. Roach of the Summit County Sheriff to come in and put on a presentation, but apparently that agreement is no longer valid. If the minutes of November 20, 2006 on page #7 would show that we agreed to this, that is all he is asking for. Mr. Zita stated that at that time we did talk about it, there was no vote, it was just discussion. Mr. Jones stated he didn't know why there has to be a vote for someone to come in to put on a presentation, we just had one tonight from Summit County, did we take a vote on that? Mr. Zita replied that we did not. Mr. Jones asked if Council is setting a precedent here? Mr. Zita stated that he as already discussed this issue with the Law Director, and as Council President he is within his right as to how we are doing this. Mr. Jones asked the Law Director about his request for a legal opinion on the Charter from last Tuesday, and he has not received his official opinion. Mr. Jones stated that he now understands that Mr. Lyons does not intend to give it to him that you would give if verbally Council President, and asked to hear his opinion. Mr. Lyons stated that the question was whether the Charter prohibits the city from entering into a contract with the Summit County Sheriff to provide police services. Mr. Lyons stated that based in his research, he does not feel that the Charter would prohibit such a contract as it is written. Mr. Jones stated that he interprets the Charter in that section to mean that Council has a final say, and Mr. Lyons concurred.

Mr. Price stated that last week he did second Mr. Jones' motion to have the presentation from the Summit County Sheriff. Mr. Price stated that since then he has received several phone calls, talked with his kids and his wife, and people inside and outside of this community. Mr. Price stated that at that time he wanted to hear information, it does not mean that he does not support the Norton Police Dept. Mr. Price stated that he would support them to the end, however he thought that just getting the information was harmless. The Norton Police Dept. does a fine job, and Officer Davis knows his children, he has watched them grow up. Mr. Price stated that his children love these officers, and urged him not to do anything to make these officers upset. Mr. Price stated that at this point he is on his bicycle back peddling on this issue, and it is obvious that the residents do not want to hear this. Mr. Price stated that as being a Councilman at Large, he has to support what the residents are saying, he has always supported the residents and the Police Dept. Mr. Price stated that he hoped we do not have to take a vote tonight, because if we do he would be voting with the residents and the Police Dept.

Public Comment:

Mr. Zita opened the floor for public comments, and Mr. Zita reminded everyone about the five (5) minute rule, to be respectful and to address Council as a whole and not individually by name.

Chief Carris:

Chief Carris thanked Council for their support, and read a statement (see attached).

Mike Meden:

Mr. Meden, a Norton resident, stated that a lot of his thunder was taken with the previous comments and by what Chief Carris stated. Mr. Meden stated that as a lifelong resident of Norton, he has a few things to say. We have a certain rapport with these officers, they are our friends, or neighbors since he could remember. If it isn't broke, don't fix it. We will never know how many times these officers, who know the area and us, they know when something is a little out of place, and things could have been thwarted before there were started. Mr. Meden stated that he was upset with the way this whole thing has been handled. If money is the issue and we need to save it that badly, then why wasn't Chief Carris asked what could we do? Instead it was kind of a back door thing, lets just go around and get the Sheriff's dept. Mr. Meden stated that he thought this was a really bad idea. It really should end here tonight, lets not waste any more time or effort on something that's a dead horse. If we want to call ourselves a growing community and want to be a city, we need to start acting like one.

Rusty Watson:

Mr. Watson a Norton resident, stated that he owns a small business in Norton and thanks to the Norton Police Dep., they have always taken of him with some of the trouble he has had at his shop. They have always been on time, courteous and taken care of business. Mr. Watson stated that if this Council wants to save money, start by getting rid of Mr. Jones. Mr. Zita called a point of order. Mr. Watson thanked Council for and Mayor Kernan for doing a good job with this city. Mr. Watson compared Mayor Kernan and the current Council to the former Mayor Addis and Council for being in the papers and being an embarrassment to the city a lot of times because of the stupid things that have been said. We won't mention any names Mr. Jones, but you are seen around too much. Mr. Zita stated that was enough, Mr. Watson, your done with comments, this conduct will not be tolerated.

Neva Gibson:

Ms. Gibson, a Norton resident, thanked the city and Street Dept. for the beautiful job they did decorating Williams Park, it looks lovely again this year. Ms. Gibson stated that when she was young her mother always used to say, "your health is your wealth". Unfortunately she passed away when she was a teenager so she learned at a very young age just how true her statement was. Ms. Gibson stated that the same could be said about safety, how do you put a price on our safety? Ms. Gibson stated that she has dealt with the Norton Police Dep. for many years, wearing many different hats. As a homeowner, a school employee with the Safety Town, DARE Program and Shop with a Cop program. The Norton Police officers are a familiar face within our community. All of the officers she has dealt with over the years have been quick to respond, professional, and very caring. They are a noticeable force throughout the city. If the City of Norton announced to the public that it no longer has its own Police Dept., don't you think this would have a major impact on the increase in crime? Ms. Gibson stated that years ago Clinton wanted to do away with their Police Dept., and go with something cheaper, now that have the New Franklin Police Dep. patrolling their streets. Can the city save money if we outsource? Absolutely, Norton can always save money. We could save money by doing away with our Street Dept., or Fire Dept., EMS units, but the funny thing is that we need them. If you want to save money, be more business friendly so that we can get more businesses here to take some of the tax burden off of the residents. The residents of Norton are very blessed to have the caliber of police offers that we have. Can one put a price tag on safety? Absolutely not.

Shirley Adkins:

Ms. Adkins a Norton resident, stated that she has lived in Norton for twenty-eight (28) years, her husband Dan is a Police Officer and part of the Norton Police Dept. family. Ms. Adkins stated that many people here this evening have stated great things about our Police Dept., our Chief of Police and how things should be run. Ms. Adkins stated that we do not need to waste any more time, we need to vote or get this thing over with. This is a family, who better to depend on than your family and the Lord above, those are the only two you can depend on.

Don Cunningham:

Mr. Cunningham, a Norton resident, stated that as a resident for over forty-one (41) he pays his fair share of taxes in the city. Mr. Cunningham stated that we do have a low crime rate, and is proud and thankful for that. Mr. Cunningham stated that the safety and welfare has naturally been important to our city to make it grow in any way. Mr. Cunningham stated that he might not always agree with Council, however he does agree with the direction Council is taking on this issue. Mr. Cunningham stated that it should be put to bed. Let our patrolman understand what it is that they are supposed to do, let them get back to their jobs. This is just a waste to have that on their minds. Mr. Cunningham stated that we passed Issue #40 to have our Police Dept. as it is today, and now within two years there is talk to put it away and do something else. That is not what the taxpayers voted on at that time. Mr. Cunningham stated that we need to focus our energies on better things, we have water and sewer that has been needed for more than thirty (30) years. This is exactly why we don't have commercial businesses in here for our tax base. With water and sewer, it would improve our health, our safety and would be more business friendly to the community.

Megan Booth:

Ms. Booth, a Norton resident, stated that she spoke two weeks ago, and now everything has become quite the circus. Ms. Booth stated that she is not as proud to live in Norton as she was. A decision was made to get more information, and now we are afraid of that information. Everyone was excited about it that night, and now it's become a dirty word. It is not a personality issue; it is not anything else but trying to get information. Why are we afraid of getting information? Ms. Booth stated that she made four (4) phone calls to four (4) different Council members last night, and spoke with two (2) of them. Ms. Booth stated that one did not answer, and the other did not return her phone call. Ms. Booth stated that you all sit there and say that you have only received calls from people saying that are against this, well some of you didn't bother to take my calls, one of you did and you know that I am against it. Ms. Booth mentioned a letter that was circulated and signed by an anonymous "Dennis". Ms. Booth, who is a member of the Charter Review Committee, stated that this letter stated that the Charter Review Committee is trying to sneak a change past everyone. Ms. Booth stated that she wants to know who this Dennis is because he is obviously mistaken. Ms. Booth stated that when she circulates information, she uses her full name so that someone may get in touch with her. Ms. Booth suggested that this "Dennis" person come forward and not be shy, she would like to discuss this with him. Ms. Booth stated that he is accusing the Charter Review Committee of fraud, there is nothing that the Charter Review Committee could sneak past anyone. Ms. Booth stated that this is part of the problem with the City of Norton, they get all worked up about things and they make it a personality issue, when it is not. It is a dollars and sense issue, and from what she is hearing tonight is that the Police Dept. would be willing to work on cutting their budget. Ms. Booth stated she has been thrilled about their service, and does not have a problem with it. She also lived in the City of Green and that service was great because these people are doing their jobs, and she applauds them for this. Ms. Booth stated that she is not guaranteed a job forever, but this is what they are asking, is to guarantee their job forever. That's not what the real world is these days. Ms. Booth stated that when her father was working, in those days you worked for the same company until you retired. That's not the twenty-first (21st) century. Ms. Booth stated that she would like to see us move into the twenty-first (21st) century that also includes sewer and water. You hear that the budget is not where it should be, we need some money, and this is one way to do it. The City of Green has nineteen (19) full time deputies and they also added one School Resource Officer. Their budget is \$1,000,000 less per year than we spend, and this is a considerable amount of money. If we can't get it here, then we have to look at other places. If employees have gotten raises, then maybe they shouldn't have. Ms. Booth stated that those Council members that didn't call her back, that's why you didn't hear my comments. Ms. Booth indicated that she did leave a message for one of you, and you know who you are. Ms. Booth stated that she would appreciate it to at least get a call back. Ms. Booth stated that she spoke to several residents today and they were told that we were just disbanding the Police Dept. period-they didn't know anything else. Ms. Booth stated that it was in the Barberton Herald that we are going to have the Sheriff come in January, so who is going to file for a retraction there. Those citizens said we are already getting this information, when in fact, what she is hearing tonight is that we are not. So once again the City of Norton walks away with egg on their face, and she is not a proud citizen at this moment.

Nancy Jeffries:

Ms. Jeffries, a Norton resident, stated that she has lived here all of her adult life and also taught at Norton High School. Ms. Jeffries stated that she was extremely disappointed when she heard about the possibility of the disbanding the Norton Police Dept. at the potential saving of \$500,000. Ms. Jeffries stated that the cost to the community would be far greater than \$500,000.

Public Comment continued:

Ms. Jeffries stated that a great deal of revenues are generated by the Norton Mayors Court and if the Norton Police were eliminated, this would be absorbed by the Barberton Municipal Court, and we would no longer get this money. Ms. Jeffries stated that she worries that if this Police Dept., were in the hands of another agency, what would this do to the safety of our streets? Ms. Jeffries stated that our Police Dept., is there to monitor the speed limits, it would be a tremendous cost to the residents as far as property damage, human life. What about the safety of our homes, she does not really want to give burglars carte blanche to her home. Ms. Jeffries stated that the Norton High School has a very fine DARE program headed by Officer Davis. If his position is no longer there, what happens to this program., is it going to be eliminated? We need this program desperately. Ms. Jeffries asked about response time, adding that the current response time is phenomenal. If there is an emergency can we perhaps wait ten (10) to twenty (20) minutes or even hours before another department comes to our aid in an emergency situation—I don't think so. Ms. Jeffries stated that good people need good boundaries, and she admits that if there were no speed limits she probably would go too fast. Ms. Jeffries stated that we need boundaries and that is exactly what a visible Police force within our community does. Ms. Jeffries stated that if we need to trim the budget we do it in other ways, we do not do it by trimming down the Police, Fire or any other department that is responsible for our wellbeing and safety.

Rick Maier:

Mr. Maier, a Norton resident, stated that he has been a resident for fifty (50) years and he is very proud to live in Norton and be in Norton. Mr. Maier stated that he has served on more Committees and Commissions than he cared to think of. Mr. Maier stated his first appointment was to the Charter Review Commission in 1991. Mr. Maier stated that the Commission cited three (3) things to be proud of in Norton; our schools, our Fire, and our Police Depts. Mr. Maier stated that this year he served on the Road TAC and the Comprehensive Plan, and we said that we are proud of these same three (3) things. Mr. Maier stated that there are two men in this room right now that helped save his daughters life. Mr. Maier stated that several years ago she was involved in a very serious car accident. Mr. Maier stated that these Police Officers kept other bystanders from removing her from the car-probably saving her life. Mr. Maier stated that she spent seven months in a cast recovering from her injuries. Mr. Maier stated that he says a prayer every time he drives by the Norton Police and Norton Fire Dept. Mr. Maier stated that many years ago the Police Dept. was all personal rather than professional, this is not the case today. Mr. Maier stated God bless this Norton Police Dept.

Dennis Ozarchuk:

Mr. Ozarchuk, a Norton resident, spoke regarding the costs of the City of Green, they had the sense enough to bring in business. Mr. Ozarchuk stated that only recently has Council worked in this, and that Council should stop going backwards. There should be no more personal agendas here on Council, and Mr. Jones you should just resign now and do us all a favor.

Linda Carter:

Ms. Carter, a Norton resident, thanked Council for letting her speak again. Mr. Carter stated that she has a question and stated that she didn't know if its ok to ask this or not or if you have the answer. Is the city in the red? But is it in the red now? Is there anybody that here than can give me an answer on that. Mr. Moss stated that he didn't mean to be picky but by the term in the red you mean what? Ms. Carter stated clarified asking if we are losing money?

Public Comment continued:

Mr. Moss replied that yes, in some of the areas in the city we spend more money than is coming in if you look at a particular year. Ms. Carter asked as a whole? Mr. Moss replied that over the years we're still in the black in a sense that we have the money to pay for what we are currently doing. In a situation where that starts to go down, you have to say—well, what are you going to do about it, and we address that as it comes up. Ms. Carter said ok, you are separating, but just as a whole, is the city in the red? Mr. Moss replied-no. Mr. Moss stated that by law we can never spend money that we do not have period. So in that sense we are never in the red. There are times that we are spending down more than we are bringing in. Mr. Moss stated that some people may define that as being in the red, but we look at a resource base, we are not here to make money. Mr. Moss stated that over time you need to even things out and we are doing just that. Ms. Carter stated that she came again tonight to say that she is very strongly for the Norton Police Dept. and she is in agreement with a lot of people here. Ms. Carter stated that she thinks this should be resolved tonight because it looks like its already sewn up any way, Council has said. Ms. Carter stated that she and her husband spoke here last week. We both spoke for the Police Dept., and against the Sheriff's Dept. In fact the very next day I believe some intimidation is beginning to happen here from a member of Council. They are trying to get my husbands job, and this member of Council that is not for the Norton Police Dept., and his wife are causing trouble where my husband works and is trying to get his job. I think that is unethical and I think that it is unfair and I don't feel that is the kind of Council person we need serving on our Council. I'm very much for the Norton Police Dept., and I think the good citizens of Norton are here tonight, I think that everybody seems to be in agreement. Like I said, I am for getting this done tonight, thank you very much.

Joe Danko:

Mr. Danko, a Norton resident, stated that people are going back forty (40) or fifty (50) years in the Police Dept., lets go back sixty (60) years. Mr. Danko stated that he can remember at that time we had one (1) Constable, then came Cliff Diefendorff as the second Constable, then came John Van Hyning. Then it grew into what is today. When Norton had three Constables, they would get a call they wanted to get the Sheriff's Dept. to come and help them out. The Sheriff's Dept. would not come over, they wanted to take it all over in the 39's and 40's. So you look around this room here and I live on Cleve-Mass Road and I'll tell you what I see, I see those patrolmen, those cars going down the road. Mr. Danko stated that he used to be a hot rodder, but there is no way he'd do what these gentlemen do going down Cleve-Mass. Road. Mr. Danko stated that they are a bunch of fine looking men and he was for keeping this Norton Police Dept.,

Charlotte Whipkey:

Ms. Whipkey, a Norton resident, spoke regarding her concerns about the Charter being violated. Ms. Whipkey asked what are you going to do about our broken Charter? Ms. Whipkey stated that the Law Director advised the Mayor that it was ok to leave the city limits. Ms. Whipkey stated that the Charter was made to protect us-the residents and to take care of us, its called Home Rule. Ms. Whipkey stated that according to the Charter the Mayor is to be a continuous resident of the city, if not the Council President or Vice President shall take over. Ms. Whipkey stated that Council was not asked about this and she wanted something done to reinstate the Charter.

Public Comment continued:

Charlie Lemon:

Mr. Lemon, a Norton resident, stated that back in 1990 the Chief of Police was ran out of town because he was not a resident, however that wasn't the real reason. Mr. Lemon stated that outsiders don't live here, they don't know our community. Mr. Lemon stated a few years back Council got a raise in the past, lets give the Police Dept. a raise. Mr. Lemon stated that the city is still paying in loans for previous road programs. Mr. Lemon stated that this discussion has demoralized the Norton Police Officers by threatening the officers with their jobs. Mr. Lemon discussed growth and the loss of a potential hotel within the city years ago. Mr. Lemon stated that we have five (5) thorough fares within this city, and we could have the businesses like Montrose has or Wadsworth. Mr. Lemon stated that he wanted the city to leave his Norton Police Dept. alone.

Mr. Zita moved to remove the presentation by the Summit County Sheriff from consideration, and be done with this once and for all, seconded by Mr. Mowery,

Roll Call: Yeas: Zita, Mowery, Braman, McGlone, Pelot, Price
Nays Jones

Motion passed 6-1.

Mr. Zita called for a short recess before getting into the 2007 Budget discussions. Mr. Zita reconvened the meeting back to order at 8:30 PM.

2007 Budget:

Mr. McGlone turned this discussion over to Mr. Moss for the details. Mr. Braman stated that on page #3 the Requested and New Programs don't add up correctly. Mr. Moss indicated that the total requested amount for 2007 should be \$5,640,120.86 and would be corrected. Mr. Moss stated that the error was due to making a change in one column but not being carried over in to the next column. Mr. Pelot asked if we asked all of the Departments to keep their budgets within a certain percentage from 2006? Mr. Moss stated that we did not. Mr. Pelot inquired about some of the increases in the costs on page #4 Administrative Officer. Mr. Collins explained that in the last few years nothing was replaced in his department, now we truly need some of those replacements. Mr. Pelot asked Mr. Moss if he has a number for the overall differences from the 2006 to 2007 Budget for the entire city. Mr. Moss stated that he did not have those figures with him, however for the General Fund the increase is 7.3% overall. There was discussion on page #6-Building Dept. and the costs of a new vehicle. Mr. Collins explained that the request is for a Ford Escape to replace the 2000 Ford truck that is now being used. There was discussion as to the \$10,000 for demolition. Mr. Moss stated that this needs to be funded for if and when the city has to demolish unsafe structures. There was some discussion on page #9-Councils budget, specifically \$1720.00 for New Program. Mr. Moss explained that amount was put in place for a potential software program to assist with the minutes. Mr. Pelot inquired about the \$900.00 set aside for listening devices, and asked if this would be enough. The Clerk of Council stated that the lowest bid received was under that amount. Mr. McGlone noted no money in the 2007 Budget for a laptop replacement, and the Clerk of Council indicated that is being purchased before the end of this year, which is why it has been completely removed for next year. Mr. Moss concurred adding that a purchase order has already been approved and in process.

2007 Budget Continued:

Mr. Pelot inquired about the overtime amount for the Clerk of Court on page #10. Mr. Moss stated that as the Auditors requested the Court Computer Fund would no longer be used for payment of overtime, it would now come from the General Fund. Mr. Pelot inquired about the cost difference of what is collected and how much is paid in overtime. Mr. Pelot gave an example that if it costs \$5,000 in overtime to collect \$25,000 in a year, we may not want to limit this. Mayor Kernan stated that for a short time it would make sense to see what the numbers show to make sure the house in overtime on Saturdays and Sundays is paying off to that degree. Mayor Kernan stated that it tended to show this before in figures we had received, but this may be time to re-assess that. Mr. Moss stated that for Engineering page #11, we have reduced the budget from last year due to outside Engineering Services. It was originally budgeted at \$109,000 and we are projecting \$77,326 and we budgeted \$73,500 for next year, which still may be more than we really need. Mr. Moss discussed the software expense for the Finance Dept. of \$12,000. Mr. Moss indicated that this is to get the second half of Software Solutions Products. The payroll product was upgraded to the professional version of Egov. It was necessary because we could not keep up with the payroll processing requirements. Mr. Moss stated that we did not upgrade all of the software because we didn't want to spend the money at the time we had to upgrade payroll. As a result its like we have two (2) different programs running and they don't really talk to each other. Mr. Moss explained the General Government, page #13, and Mr. McGlone questioned the costs for elections of \$20,000 for next year. Mr. Moss explained that the costs of local elections are paid by the local governments, and its difficult to predict the costs associated including the Charter changes. Mr. McGlone stated that he just saw a memo from the Charter Review Commission that they want all Charter Changes moved from the primary election to the general election next year. Mr. Zita discussed the \$22,050 under #54451 and the fact that the previous spread sheet had \$19,600. Mr. Moss stated that was correct the actual figure is \$19,600 and we need to include \$1,000 for the costs of the Auditor of State, so \$20,600 would be appropriate and he would make that change. Mr. Pelot inquired about the total for the 2006 Estimate, and Mr. Moss indicated that there are some numbers here that are missing due to carryovers and other estimates. Mr. Pelot discussed the CCA costs on page #15, and asked how much additional income tax money is coming into the city? Mr. Moss stated that he did not have this figure, however he would see that Council had this response. Mr. Moss did indicate that the revenue has been growing because of this switch to CCA. Mr. Jones asked about the JEDD Legal Defense amounts. Mr. Moss stated that this was an area that cause an unbalance between the requested amount and the total, it does not add up. Mr. Moss stated that it was originally \$200,000 for 2006 and a better representation of what the costs might be. Mr. Moss clarified that both of these columns should be \$200,000. Mr. Pelot questioned the retirement amount on page #21-Police for \$30,000. Mr. Moss stated that we have three (3) Police Officers who are eligible for full retirement right now. It has been reported that two (2) of these officers may retire next year so we took a stab at the retirement costs to the city per employee, which is where we came up with \$30,000, and this number is usually buried in the salary account. Mr. Jones inquired about a Drop Program, and Mr. Collins explained that there is. Mr. Jones asked how this works and if the city is involved in this program? Mr. Collins stated that the city is not involved, and quite frankly does not even have to know about it. It is something between the employee and the pension system. They agree to work so long after they say they are in the program, their money is frozen in an account at a certain level. Mr. Jones stated that he thought they could put away say 50% or so, and Mr. Collins indicated that he thought it could be all of it. There was discussion on the salary, overtime and total amounts and Mr. Moss stated that the Police Dept. budget represents 40.26% of the total overall budget in the General Fund.

There was further review of the proposed 2007 Budget and discussion ended with page #25. Mr. Zita stated that we will need to meet again this Thursday, December 7, 2006 at 7:00 PM to wrap up the remainder of the review.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Mr. Collins indicated that Gardner Blvd. Phase II is now underway. Mr. Jones commented on the large sign announcing this project, and Mr. Collins stated that he believed this is a new requirement.

Adjourn

There being no other business to come before the Committee Work Session, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20 PM.

Michael Zita, President of Council

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