



COMMITTEE WORK SESSION NOVEMBER 21, 2016

Committee Members Present:

Rick Rodgers-Excused
Dennis McGlone
Joe Kernan
Dennis Pierson
Paul Tousley
Scott Pelot-Excused
Charlotte Whipkey

Also Present:

Mayor Mike Zita
Valerie Wax Carr
Ron Messner
Justin Markey
Karla Richards
Ernie Reynolds
Chief Schultz
Chief Dalessandro

The Committee Work Session convened on Monday, November 21, 2016 at 7:00 PM, in the Council Chambers of the Safety Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Charlotte Whipkey, President of Council. Following a salute to the flag and the Pledge of Allegiance, there was a moment of silent prayer. Ms. Whipkey apologized for the prior cancellation of the Finance Committee earlier this evening due to a lack of quorum.

General Topics of Discussion:

2017 Budget Discussions

Mr. Messner noted Page #44 Service Dept. and is a .07 % decrease. Mr. Tousley asked about the full time employees and if we are adding an employee or if the increase was due to pay increases. Mr. Reynolds stated one employee is retiring at the end of this year, but we are not increasing the number of employees. Mr. Messner stated the increases are due to the increase in wages of 1.5% across the board. Mr. Pierson asked of the replacement is for the mechanic and Mr. Reynolds replied no. Mrs. Carr noted we have an operator retiring and we have to use the union process which is a domino effect. We will need the posting of fifteen (15) days for this open position and interviewing probably the first week of December as the operator is retiring in December. Mrs. Carr noted we did get our cost comparisons for basic oil changes and they will be done at Rick's Auto Body as Mr. Pierson had inquired about this last week. Mr. Messner explained that he had added \$40,000.00 under lease payments anticipating acquiring a new snow truck.

Mr. Tousley discussed the light winter and need for less salt last year and asked if this just rolls over for next year. Mrs. Carr stated we have already filled our barn with our salt purchases needed for next year. Mr. Reynolds replied we used half of our budgeted salt amounts. Mr. Messner replied this year we budget expecting to use more salt this year because we expect to have a heavier winter this year and it does roll over if it does not get used up. Mayor Zita pointed out we had purchased salt before the increase went into effect. Mr. Pierson asked about the credit for salt overpayments and Mr. Messner replied we did already get this and it was about \$19,000.00 in 2015. Mr. Reynolds stated he has been able to stock pile items like gravel and pipe which he was never permitted to do in the past until Mrs. Carr and Mr. Messner came on board; this allowed him to get it cheaper this year than he was about to do last year and he is ready for next year already. Mr. Tousley asked about the new energy contract with Gardiner and where will these savings start to show up in the budget? Mr. Messner stated the finalization of the contracts is just about done and the program really does not start until early next year and Mr. Markey noted this is set to begin in March 1st, 2018. Mr. Messner stated he has budgeted normally for utilities and is hoping to see it go below the \$26,500.00. Later, it should be a total of \$60,000.00 for the lease and after that the \$10,000.00 for the audit. Once we can determine that everything is all a go then we could forgo the \$10,000.00 audit fee and continue with the regular lease payment after that. Mr. Messner stated they are guaranteeing a savings of \$60,000.00 to \$70,000.00 in savings with the audit and once you remove the audit payment they will no longer guarantee the savings. Ms. Whipkey asked if we are not paying for the audit anymore do we still get difference? Mr. Messner replied we are not paying for it until it happens. Mr. Markey stated that in with the payment of the audit fee you are guaranteeing the savings, if you forgo the audit, you will no longer be guaranteed the savings. Only need to do the audit is to guarantee you are getting the savings you were promised once those savings are realized you can stop the audit. Mr. Pierson asked about the safety line item in the Service Dept. Budget, and Mr. Reynolds stated that would be for safety cones, and protection of the employees. Mr. Messner moved on to page #50-Fire Division through 56-B and noted Chief Schultz is present for any questions. Mr. Messner noted that in 2016 the levy was renewed and prior to that we have renewals every five (5) years. In the past Fund #108 and Fund #109 had some \$230,000.00 left over in the older levies sitting in these funds since they have been retired and could be used this year as a carry over. Mr. Messner indicated he discussed this with the Chief to use this money because it is ours. Mr. Messner noted the items in red on page #51 and #56-A and some of these lines have numbers (Auditor/Treasurer) zero (0) fees back on page #51 and we will now pay this money out of Fund 108 instead of using Fund 105; so on and so forth. Mr. Messner discussed the professional services and the Chief had reminded him that was all combined back on page #56-B for \$23,000.00. Mr. Pierson asked if Mr. Messner is making any journal entries when he combines these? Mr. Messner replied no it's sitting there in its own fund and anything that would normally paid out of Fund 105 will be paid under Fund #108. Mr. Pierson wanted to see paper trail showing this money was moved. Mr. Messner stated when the billing comes in we will code it as being paid out of Fund 108. We are trying to use these monies in the old and expired levies so we no longer have to keep tracking them in future years. Mr. Messner stated that in 2017 with the monthly budgets you will see the transactions in Fund #104, Fund #105, Fund #108 and Fund #109. Ms. Whipkey stated the plan is Fund #108 and Fund #109 will basically be down to zero and will go away and will drop off of the financial data. Mr. Messner concurred adding that we will continue to spend these funds down until they are all spent and used up. Mr. Pierson clarified that there would be a reflection of the carryover from last year into this year's budget.

Mr. Messner concurred, and that it's been sitting there all of 2015 and we did not use any of that money this year. Starting next year he will open up all four (4) budgets so going forward you will see this all reflected in the monthly budget reports starting in January. Ms. Whipkey clarified that in 2017 Funds #108 and #109 will eventually be down to zero and Mr. Messner concurred. Chief Schultz stated he has the most manpower, the most equipment and the most expensive equipment to buy, and even if you replace each of the Police vehicles, you will never come close to the costs of one of our ambulances. Chief Schultz stated that our costs for repairs are the most expensive because not anyone can work on them you have to be certified. Mr. Pierson asked what the percentage of increase for emergency services is and Mr. Messner stated it has gone up about 8.5% from last year and a lot of the increase is in salary and benefits which is dictated by union contracts and is negotiated. Mr. McGlone noted the biggest salary increase is in the part time EMS. Chief Schultz commented there are ten (10) shifts available on Saturday and Sunday and thru the week there are nine (9) each day. We are currently at twenty-two (22) total part-time employees and had some that retired and resigned. Mr. Pierson asked if we are paying them benefits and Chief Schultz replied no. Mr. Tousley asked if next year with the budget increases does he plan to hire more part timers and he replied no even though we could use them. Chief Schultz stated the budget is driven by calls and we are at bare bones right now. We had a 20% increase in call volume over the last 5 years and probably will still see another 4% this year just in run volume. We have had a 30% increase in EMS calls, although fire calls are down the EMS calls have increased, and 11% of the overdoses in Summit County happen here in Norton. Our overdoses are at a 90% increase from last year and an 88% increase in the use of Narcan and the reason that is less is because in some cases when we get there it's too late to administer. This is a strain on the fire department and the police department. Chief Schultz stated in one home we had four (4) overdoses at the same time; that wipes out an entire shift as it takes all three (3) of our trucks plus we have to call for help. Mr. Pierson asked are we restricted in our labor contract in the number of part timers we can have and Mrs. Carr replied no. We are using the same amount of hours for part time with more people due to the twenty-nine (29) hour threshold for the Affordable Care Act. Mr. Pierson asked if we are guaranteeing in the labor contract that the full time people will have forty (40) hours and Chief Schultz replied yes. If there is a shift to fill and a part time person signed up for it, as long as they will not go over the twenty-nine (29) hours, they can fill it. Mrs. Carr stated she had asked for the Chief to break out the number of runs and because of the number of heroin overdoses because not only is this affecting the lives in the community but it is affecting our budgeting process. Mrs. Carr stated its impacting the community when a call for a heart attack comes in and we are out on an overdose run. It's not ok that 11% of overdoses in Summit County are happening in Norton and it is hurting us because of all of the highway exits in the community and we have become somewhat of a dumping ground. Chief Schultz stated that is unfortunate because these exit areas are where some overdose victims get dropped off because the other party does not want to get involved or get in trouble. Mrs. Carr stated we need to get cooperation from the Council, the Administration, Police and Fire to figure out how to deal with this because this is only going to get worse and we need cooperation with Council and all departments to figure out how to put a stop to this. Ms. Whipkey asked if we had cameras at the exits and if this would help? Chief Schultz stated that it really does not matter because they are doing it in their homes and to the extent of even doing it in the parking lot at McDonalds and that has become an active dumping ground because they are easily found. Chief Schultz stated there is no magic pill to solve this. Mrs. Carr stated we are not going to solve this tonight, but wanted to get the information out there.

Mr. McGlone asked if you have a lot of repeat customers and Chief Schultz replied yes. Mr. Pierson asked about that 11% percent and if this was all Norton residents or did they have the number of how many were? Chief Dalessandro replied there is some reporting done by Summit County Health on that and that the majority of them were 44203 zip code residents and it's not broken down between Barberton and Norton. Mr. Pierson asked if anytime a squad pulls out from the bay is that technically considered a run and Chief Schultz replied yes. Mr. Messner noted that the property values dropped \$32 million from the last CAFR, and if these continue to drop we need to look at these levies. There is one levy we need to look at and Chief Schultz stated in 2007 we passed this and it will expire in 2018. Chief Schultz stated there were four (4) levies at one point in time and we are down to two (2) now and the 2007 levy is a permanent levy. The one that was renewed this year and is a five (5) year levy as that is what had been a problem in the past. Some of those older levies had never been looked at for over twenty (20) years. Chief Schultz stated that the permanent levy is the one that will need to be addressed at some point. Mr. Messner stated one levy was 4.6 mils and the other one is was 3.0 mils. Chief Schultz stated that in 2012 we took a nine (9) percent hit in our property values and it really has not gained any since then. Mrs. Carr noted the property levels have dropped over all of Summit County and not just in Norton. Mr. Pierson argued that property values have dropped every quarter for over the last three (3) years and they continue to fall. Mr. Pierson stated we are losing our tax base due to the aging population and you have got to start understanding the market you are serving, or you guys in the different departments will have to make cuts and deal with less like the private sectors have done. Mr. Pierson added we have to start getting smarter with our money. Chief Schultz noted we are just not generating enough money and looking at other communities with less millage and are generating more revenue. Mr. Messner discussed the issues last week raised with InSite Development and we have got to use them and their tools to bring in new businesses. We need to have employers that can offset what the residents will have to pay. Mr. Pierson stated that if InSite is not a marketing firm he wants to see benchmarks; he wants to see results and when you can't perform you are done. Mrs. Carr stated she has reached out to Mr. Pierson via email and text messages to coordinate with him for the next update meeting with InSite so take advantage of those things.. Mrs. Carr indicated that she has already invited the Council to come to the December 13th Planning Commission meeting and address our zoning codes that need to be addressed; we have to address our zoning code as it is part of the problem. Look at the zoning map as we have no rhyme or reason. Mr. Pierson questioned if they were planning on bringing that forward for us to address and Mrs. Carr concurred, but stated it takes time. Mr. Pierson went back to the billing from InSite, stating it wasn't enough and used the AP gas station as an example of it going on for about fourteen months with their involvement. Mrs. Carr encouraged Mr. Pierson to come to the update meeting on that and see the complications involved; some of the other Council people call her and she informed them as to what they were doing with that. Mrs. Carr noted that both Barberton and Wadsworth had the luxury to purchase that land for abandoned gas stations for which we have no money; we are working with the land bank to make that happen and we are using every tool that we can to accelerate this process. We are doing everything we can, using free money or resources as we have none to accelerate it. Mr. Pierson stated he has asked if the owner of the AP gas station is delinquent in their taxes? Mr. Markey replied yes they are and we don't control when the foreclosure process begins as that is done by the County; the land bank has the ability to essentially foreclose on the property.

In order to do all of that they have to have several steps to go along including working with other agencies, but a phase one environmental assessment needs done first; there are a lot of steps to go through. Part of it is getting the EPA to say they are not coming after the City of Norton or the land bank later after they become the land owners. Mr. Tousley asked to continue this discussion later as this is not fair to the Chief. Chief Schultz stated he has been trying to get a brown field grant for that property for the last several years and until we own that land we will never get it. Chief Schultz noted there is also \$17,000.00 in his budget that may or may not be spent, because we have applied for a grant for a new ambulance and our share is \$10,000.00. We have also applied for a grant for new heart monitors and a cascade filling tank for our bottles for our air packs. We currently have two older Ford van chassis that are basically money pits and if he can write a grant for that we could get a new vehicle. Mayor Zita noted we will need matching funds for most of those grants. Mr. Pierson asked about the heart monitors and if the Chief has worked with Cleveland-Clinic or Akron General for any assistance? Chief Schultz stated not for the heart monitors as they are in transition with Akron General right now; we will see what happens with it later as they have helped us in the past when they gave us a new electric co and paid for our recorder and recording software. Chief Schultz noted we did get \$24,000.00 from ALCOA for equipment and unfortunately we will be putting ballistic vests on our trucks. Mr. Messner went on with the Police Dept. Budget, on page #15, and stated there is a 10% increase from last year and a lot of that is in the employee benefit area. Chief Dalessandro explained the Lexapro program and last year the Dept. of Justice came down with a consent decree for Cleveland and Cleveland areas to update use of force, pursuit and all polices. It is a company that we send our policies and procedures to and they make sure we are compliant. They also send all the officers daily briefings where they are required to read the information, to understand it and sign off on that. Chief Dalessandro stated part of the Lexapro cost is the Ohio Police Officers Training Academy requiring twenty (20) hours of CUE training. Last year we offered this training here to offset any additional travel expense. Mr. McGlone asked about the 25% increase in health care and Mr. Messner noted some officers got married and started having families. We are continuing to work with the unions during meetings and have to renew by December 1, 2016 and we are hopeful to keep the same plan at a reduced cost. Mr. Pierson asked about the hiring of the new employee with the Federal Grant. Chief Dalessandro replied that employee will be sworn in on December 3, 2016 and that officer will fall into the general pool of officers for patrol division. Mr. Pierson stated that last year this Council approved monies for a DARE officer and asked if that is reflected in this budget? Mr. Messner replied yes, it's listed on page #17. Chief Dalessandro stated that we currently have a DARE officer now, Officer Starling, and he just completed a two (2) week training program that was paid by the school. We will be receiving a grant for a little over \$10,000.00 for these officers in the school and he is not a full time officer for the school. Mr. Pierson asked if this is a one-time deal and Chief Dalessandro replied no we will have to re-apply for this grant every year. Chief Dalessandro stated that with that Lexipol training this will also make sure we are in compliant of the grant requirements. Mr. Tousley discussed the full time officers going up about \$134,000.00 and part timers up about \$44,000.00 and asked if this is because you are adding more officers or the costs of benefits? Chief Dalessandro replied since 2014 we were down to eleven (11) full time officers which is the lowest we have ever been since the early 1990's. Our current staffing is sixteen (16) and we have been slowly increasing this and that is the reason for the increase in costs.

Mr. Pierson asked about the current contract and the number of hours a full time officer is offered to part time officers. Chief Dalessandro stated this will be the current staffing levels going into 2017, with no additional staffing. Chief Dalessandro stated full timers get forty hours and explained the contract currently reads that there has to be two bargaining units per shift so once it goes below that, he has to offer it to full time and normally three to four officers are scheduled per shift full time; if one takes off he can utilize part time. Mr. Pierson suggested increasing the part timers with no benefits to cut cost on paying overtime to the full time, and Chief Dalessandro replied yes and we already do this now. Mr. Tousley asked about the profession service line item dropping by about \$11,000.00 for the Verizon and blood draws costs being down and Chief Dalessandro explained the blood draws cost about \$100.00 each OVI arrest that is not alcohol related and we send that to the Medical Examiner's Office. The Verizon costs are for the air cards that are for the MDT's in each cruiser. Chief Dalessandro stated that some of the decreases are from less costs for new employees hired and having to send to polygraph and psychological testing which are \$500.00 each and we are paying for this same test for the applicants. Chief Dalessandro discussed the jail services from 2013 to 2017 has tripled because the Summit County Jail shut down an entire wing and we have to send defendants to Barberton where we pay for their internment until space is available because the County will only take felonies. Chief Dalessandro stated he also has looked at the call volume increase and this is up substantially from last year with over 1600 calls this year. He did not feel we have seen its peak yet this year especially with this Fentanyl drug coming in from China. Mr. Tousley asked Chief Dalessandro if he has reached out to our State Reps and Chief Dalessandro replied yes. Chief Dalessandro added that last week we had over six-hundred (600) Norton residents attend the meeting at Grace Church. Chief Dalessandro stated we have reached out to the Perry Association for their assistance so any heroin user struggling with the addiction can come into the police department and they can call to get them some individual help. Mr. Tousley stated this epidemic is not just the typical partiers and Chief Dalessandro replied no it's not and people can become addicted with the very first dose. Mayor Zita stated last week Grace Church had taped the event and suggested Council takes the time to review this; toward the end there was a medical doctor that explained this in detail and in layman's terms. Mayor Zita gave the website to access the link to view the event as: <http://norton.graceohio.org>. Mr. Tousley started he understands some of this is all started by a prescription drug and he was not sure how or where Council can address this. Chief Dalessandro concurred this was exactly how this happens and was part of his opening statement at the church meeting. Chief Dalessandro stated that his own personal experience his own nineteen (19) year old son had his wisdom teeth out and that doctor prescribed him thirty (30) Percocet pills which he would not let him take. Mr. Pierson asked about ammunition cost of \$3500.00 and if this is for qualifying? Chief Dalessandro replied yes, in addition to duty ammunition, etc. Chief Dalessandro commented on the required range times starting next year for all to be familiar with their scopes. We have already set up four (4) scheduled shoots for next year and a lot of experience comes from muscle memory. Mr. Pierson asked if the video arraignment was for the software costs for the body cameras with only part of the cost covered by the grant. Chief Dalessandro stated that was correct and that currently Barberton, Norton and Copley are working on a grant for these costs for the next contract. Mr. Messner discussed the Enterprise Fund Road Program page #72, Debt Services, etc. and is very self-explanatory. Any others are also important, but we may not need to spend a whole amount of time on these item by item as they are small; he advises Council to look them over and if they have questions to please submit them.

Mrs. Carr handed out her memo relating to the 2017 Road Program details (see attached) that is contained on page #72. Mrs. Carr noted this is all potential until we go out to bid with the County and follows the Benza report. Mrs. Carr noted the crack sealing we can actually do this cheaper in house in addition to getting back on track with the road striping with \$20,000.00 allotted. Mrs. Carr noted we are looking at spending \$204,000 in motor paving. We are also looking at two (2) types of resurfacing; one is a hot mix asphalt which is heavier and will be applied to Summit Road at about \$236,000.00. Mrs. Carr noted that we all know that Easton Road is in need of major repairs and the need for a hot mix and a pulva mix. Mrs. Carr stated that in general last year we did 2.6 square miles and this year we will do 2.32 square miles with a little less costs. Mr. Tousley asked about Medina Line Road missing from the listing. Mrs. Carr replied this is not being addressed until 2019. Ms. Whipkey stated we are getting a lot of help on that project from Medina County and Summit County. Mr. Tousley asked if Mrs. Carr felt the Benza report has been helpful and if it needs updated in the future? Mrs. Carr replied absolutely. Mrs. Carr noted that Mr. Benza has retired and his company has broken up, however she knows where those engineers have moved on to and she has contacted them to see if they would continue to work with us and they have indicated they would. Mr. Messner stated on page #74 we have set aside \$100,000.00 for construction; next year we have applied for CDBG grants for park pavilions, etc. Mr. Messner stated on page #76 we have only two (2) capital projects and set aside \$100,000.00 for construction for Newpark and we have applied for OPWC loan as a match. Mrs. Carr noted the bid opening is November 29, 2016 so Council will need to have at least one meeting in order to accept those bids. Mr. Messner discussed Cleveland-Mass Road widening project and the further designs needed for Phase II and Phase III. We have left \$250,000.00 in for the property acquisitions. Mrs. Carr noted the section from Weber has been delayed until 2018, but we still need to clear the way for it and we have three property owners that have not settled yet and we may have to bring legislation to Council to go to court at some point because we are both so far apart on the numbers. Mr. Pierson asked about the paving along Shellhart of about 45 yards including curbs and everything down into Norton Acres? Mrs. Carr explained this is related to the sewer portion project and some of the storm water facilities and goes into the catch basins. Mr. Pierson asked if this is a shared expense and Mrs. Carr replied, yes it's either an 80-20% split or a 90%/10% split. Mr. Messner stated that basically completes the 2017 Budget and he will be working with. Mr. Markey for the legislation and Exhibit A and will be less than last year and is a total around \$12 million instead of \$18 million. Mr. Messner suggested if any of you have questions to please email them to him so we can address them. Mr. McGlone suggested we have a first reading on November 28, 2016, a Special Council on December 5, 2016 for the second reading and the 3rd reading on December 12, 2016. Ms. Whipkey stated that may be the only reason for a meeting on the 28th. Mr. McGlone stated he understands some on Council have concerns with waiving the readings. Mr. Tousley stated he appreciates the consideration and he will be present if there is a meeting but wouldn't vote no if we don't. Mrs. Carr stated that on December 5, 2016 she will have legislation prepared for the Newpark Drive for a first reading, and adopting on December 12, 2016. Ms. Whipkey had suggested not having the meeting at all on the November 28, 2016 as the budget was the only item and since we are having specials on December 5, 2016, and we can waive the final third readings on Dec. 12, 2016.

Unfinished Business:

Mr. Tousley had asked several weeks back about the intersection of St. Rt. 585 and Eastern Road with the high traffic and where we are on this.

Mrs. Carr noted Mr. White had been working on this with conjunction of Wayne County and she would look for a report on this. We have also restriped this area hoping this helps in the safety issues there. Ms. Whipkey asked Mr. Pierson about his concerns with InSite in relation to KDA and he was to meet with him and inquire about InSite to KDA, did he have any information as to how helpful InSite was and Mr. Pierson stated no that the owner was too busy pouring concrete and he was there for another purpose. Mr. Pierson asked on a follow up on the heavy weight truck traffic on Easton Road. Mrs. Carr stated the Chief and her have discussed this with State Patrol and if Council wants to bring them in with the weight scales that money generated would go to them not the City and they were very clear in telling us that there is no discretion here with garbage trucks, school buses that is overloaded. Mrs. Carr also noted that she has had difficulty reaching out to Shaker Heights. Mrs. Carr noted she also has an issue with the City getting involved with the weight scales as we do not have the manpower to enforce this. Mr. Pierson stated the first step should be to talk to the current Superintendent and do a follow up with the next one coming in at the school. Mrs. Carr stated starting January 9, 2016 we will see an increase in bus traffic there although she believed it involved other traffic as well. Mr. Pierson stated a resident had complained about a city school bus sitting at the intersection with their school zone lights flashing for fifteen (15) minutes while other buses went through and asked Mrs. Carr to follow up with the schools on this. Mrs. Carr stated that we have applied for marking Easton as a school zone for up to 300 ft. due to the high count for teenage drivers. Mr. Pierson urged to have more traffic enforcement in this neighborhood and Mrs. Carr indicated she would discuss this with the Chief Dalessandro.

New Business:

None

Topics for the next Work Session:

Bids for New Park Drive

Public Comments:

No one signed in to speak.

Public Updates:

December 12, 2016 is the next Regular Council meeting.

Adjourn

There being no other business to come before the Committee Work Session, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Charlotte Whipkey, President of Council

NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM

****ORIGINAL SIGNED AND APPROVED MINUTES ARE ON FILE WITH THE CLERK OF COUNCIL.**** All Committee Meetings will be held at the Norton Safety Administration Building, unless otherwise noted.