



ANNUAL COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATION WORKSHOP MARCH 30, 2015

Roll Call: Scott Pelot-Arrived at 6:40 PM
Dennis McGlone
Danny Grether
Dennis Pierson
Paul Tousley
Charlotte Whipkey
Rick Rodgers

Also Present:
Mayor Zita-Arrived at 6:30
Valerie Wax Carr
Ron Messner-Excused
Justin Markey
Karla Richards
Ann Campbell-Excused

Norton City Council and Administration gathered for the Annual Council and Administration Workshop on Monday, March 31, 2014 at approximately 6:00 PM in the Council Chambers of the Safety Administration Building. Following the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silent prayer, also to include Mr. Messner who has pneumonia and for Mr. Grether's wife's Grandmother's illness. Mr. Rodgers recapped what was discussed last year and turned the detail discussion over to Mrs. Carr. Mr. Carr noted we discussed economic development, park maintenance-capital improvements and future road programs (see attached). Under economic development, Mrs. Carr stated that we were looking at tax incentives or abatements for businesses. InSite will be working on a retainer basis as an arm of our economic department and will be here on April 2, 2015. D.B. Hart will be looking at the old Comprehensive Master Plan and particularly the Cleveland Massillon Road Corridor. The Park Board is enthusiastic and is looking at more beautification through the Adopt-A-Spot and the Tree City programs. Mrs. Carr stated we would be working with the schools more. Mrs. Carr noted that every community is having road issues and our road crews are out there every day filling pot holes. Mr. Tousley asked for more details about the Community Center HVAC system, and Mrs. Carr indicated she is working with Mr. Reynolds on this and are looking to start the bid process now. Mrs. Carr indicated she is looking into an energy fund that might help pay for this. We have applied for CDBG funding for a total of \$67,000.00 for all projects and received \$45,000.00, but they approved all three projects and hopefully the bids will come in lower. Mr. Rodgers commented on the walk about last year and suggested Ms. Whipkey schedule another tour in the near future. Mr. Rodgers stated a great deal has been accomplished in the last year with the roads; we are moving in the right direction with development and felt our parks are in a great place at this point.

Community Investment Corporation (CIC) & Greater Akron Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Rodgers stated this was mentioned last week and asked Mr. Markey to give an overview. Mr. Markey stated that a CIC is established under law and is not for profit. The purpose can be to help transfer your city owned property without having to go out for bid. The CIC can also undertake economic development activities by contract with the City. They can make loans and do other economic aid to businesses as well as raise funds for various purposes by doing fundraisers. Mr. Markey stated the previous CIC has with past members that has lapsed. Mr. Markey stated the Akron Chamber of Commerce can do all of this for you for a small fee, without having to resurrect your CIC. If you were to reinstate the CIC there must be a funding source already in place. Mr. Markey noted that typically you would want to have local businesses, and Mrs. Carr noted bankers and real estate brokers can be involved. Ms. Whipkey asked if there couldn't be a special ad hoc committee created for fund raising and Mr. Markey answered he believed that could be done.

Ms. Whipkey noted we do have the Business Development Task Force and Mr. Grether stated they are no longer active. Ms. Whipkey stated with the availability of the Akron Chamber doing what we would need a CIC for; she does not see the need to establish a CIC at this point. There was discussion as to the various parcels the City of Norton owns; including the former fire station lot, and various other lots. A CIC could act as an agent and take a commission from selling City property. Mrs. Carr stated our biggest issue is the funding source for the CIC and selling City property would be a source. Mr. Rodgers suggested we have Ms. Syx with InSite take a look and advise the City on this. Ms. Whipkey discussed in the past her concerns with conflict of interest with business owners and Mr. Markey stated we could see that something be in place to address this. Ms. Whipkey stated last time around the CIC meetings were never public and somehow we ended up with a President and Vice-Present. Mr. Pierson asked who was on board, how are they appointed and who do they report to? Mr. Markey stated you have an Administrative Officer, a Finance Director, President of Council and they appoint two other members within the community. Mr. Pierson inquired on the board being an independent organization and Mr. Markey agreed.

Council Mission Statement

Mr. Rodgers stated he and others felt this is a good idea to give us some focus. Mr. Rodgers noted some examples of mission statements from other communities. Mr. Grether stated he started a draft on one and noted that the City of Norton does not have one at all, and a lot of cities do this and it's advertised on their websites. Mrs. Carr stated the Parks Board had worked on one for them and it would be a good idea for the City to have one. Mr. Grether stated he wanted to bring his ideas forward at a Committee Meeting for more discussion. Mr. Grether read his idea of a mission statement as follows: *"Our mission is to continuously improve the community by paving the way forward for growth and prosperity through providing, promoting and attracting services, businesses and infrastructure expected by the stakeholders within the City of Norton"*. Mr. Grether stated he liked the word stakeholder because we are all stakeholders in this community. Ms. Whipkey stated she wanted something more personal to the citizens, not so much business oriented. Mr. Rodgers stated he felt we have two (2) different roles here; one with Administration and one with Council. Mr. Rodgers stated he felt we as Council are more directly charged with representing the residents. Unless we make this a joint mission statement it should be more conducive to what Council does. Mr. Grether stated he hears from all Council members and it sounds like we all know who we are to serve, who elected us, and who we are responsible to and that is why he did not incorporate the residents into the statement. We understand what we are trying to accomplish and that we are here to serve the residents. Ms. Whipkey asked what is the purpose of this and Mr. Grether stated it's a public statement or a reminder of what we are trying to accomplish and set some goals out there. Mr. Rodgers noted that one community had a local business highlighted each month on their webpage to encourage promoting this business. Mr. Rodgers stated this might be something to get people to support and shop in Norton. Mr. Grether stated we have all chosen to live here for a reason and this could be reflected in our statement. Mr. Grether stated we need to sell that to the public and give them the positives we have accomplished. Mr. Grether noted we do have several new businesses that have come here in the last year. Mr. Tousley stated he is not against a mission statement; however he felt actions speak louder than words. Mr. Tousley stated that although we don't need a reminder of who we are serving, he felt the residents need to know that we do. Perhaps we should state that we recognize who we are serving. Mr. Rodgers stated we are buying into this and we own it, so this is important to get it right and we should all be in agreement on it. Mrs. Patricia Reese commented that this all sounds really nice, but our community is unique. We have some areas that are close knit and you can walk to your neighbors, we also have some areas that have lots of space between us and that's what some of us wanted.

She cringes when she hears the word development. Maybe you should state we are a diversified community. Mr. Rodgers suggested we continue to work on this and discussed at the April 6, 2015 Work Session.

2016 Road Program

Mr. Rodgers stated that we have the contract with Michael Benza and Associates and as Mrs. Carr noted every community is dealing with their road conditions. Mr. Rodgers commented that he drove around town this past weekend and Knollbrook, off of Greenwich, had the best roads and noticed they had the cracks sealed. Mayor Zita replied that was a project they had done a couple years ago and Mrs. Carr added that we had money budgeted this year to do that type of sealing again. Mr. Rodgers went on to say that for the most part the real issue is where the roadway meets the curb in Norton Acres and wondered how much of the grant money could be used for the storm water repairs. Mr. Rodgers stated that with the road report that is forthcoming, he would like all of Council to seriously think of how we are going to fund future road programs for correcting the fixes we need. Mr. Rodgers stated its time to start thinking about a road levy. We are going to have to do something like this that is targeted with a specific time frame and we would need to take it to the public and sell it to them. Good roads to a community are essential. Mr. Grether stated although it's hard to put a dollar to this; however he questioned how much would a road levy raise? Mr. Rodgers stated he is still very green with this and that our \$500,000.00 is not doing much. Mr. Rodgers stated that the report coming back from Mr. Benza will have full repair costs. Mr. Rodgers commented that some communities are even doing renewal levies and they have good roads. Mr. Pelot asked what the $\frac{1}{4}$ percent is bringing in and Mayor Zita replied \$500,000.00. There was discussion on the permissive license tax fees and it was stated that we are at the maximum amount allowed by law. Mrs. Carr stated that all of this revenue is put back into the roads. Mr. Markey discussed some preliminary calculations that a 1 mill road levy would generate approximately \$85,000.00 so if you are talking about having over \$500,000.00 you would need \$7 or \$8 mills to cover that. At a home valued at \$100,000.00 that would be roughly \$245.00 annually for a \$7 mil levy. Mr. Pierson stated that we have a school levy that just passed and he hears more and more from the residents that they want to know where their tax dollars go. Mrs. Carr stated that most of the property taxes collected does not come back to the City, only a small portion of it. Ms. Whipkey stated she was aware of that, but she wasn't going out and ask residents to have \$245 added to their property taxes. Mrs. Carr stated that typically some communities charge hotel and motel taxes, entertainment tax that comes back into the CIC or direct this to roads. Mrs. Carr stated there are also entertainment taxes and if we could get the Barberton Speedway back up and running this could be an option. Mr. Pierson suggested we start charging for overweight vehicles to generate revenue. Mr. Grether asked about the specifics on how to do an entertainment tax as suggested for the speedway. Mrs. Carr stated she was not clear on that and we could also look at an admissions tax and she would have to look into this. Mr. Rodgers discussed the City income tax and how much that generates. Mr. Markey stated in 2012 the 2% generated about \$5,000,000 and a quarter percent would generate \$600,000.00 or more. It was pointed out that it would have to go to a vote of the people to raise income taxes. Mr. Tousley stated that although he is not advocating doing this but the City of Wadsworth does it by assessment. Mrs. Carr noted this is typical in most cities for reconstruction, not repaving. Mr. Markey stated that could be started by petition process and then on to assessment. Mr. Rodgers stated we have to be very careful how we do this and he has also heard that the school is potentially looking at an operating levy this fall. Mrs. Reese stated maybe the schools should hold back and let the City take their turn for a levy. Maybe the schools should be more prudent. We only have so many dollars in our piggybank to benefit both the school and the City.

Mr. William Paluch asked how many millions of dollars have been wasted on engineering that should have gone to our roads? Mr. Reese suggested using some of the Time Warner money until we get our roads in better shape and Mr. Rodgers responded he wasn't against using that money, but we need more than what is available. Mr. Pierson stated we need to look at every department and see where they could generate revenue. Mr. Pierson stated we have a huge pile of dirt at the service garage just sitting there and that maybe we should be selling it to the citizens. The City used to generate revenue and there's a reason for that, not that he was saying fine everyone within the City, but we need to use what is available. Mr. Rodgers stated we need to concentrate on our commercial taxes, employee income taxes, and other areas. We don't have the time to deal with the long term ideas, these roads are horrible and by throwing \$500,000.00 every year at them we are never going to catch up. All the allotments need work now. There was discussion about some neighborhoods having a homeowners association and Mrs. Carr stated that when you do, those are private roads and we will not plow or fix them. Mr. Tousley asked how can we possibly go to the residents and ask for more money after we did new hires during the budget review instead of putting money aside for the roads? One resident suggested we have a 1/4 percent sales tax, and Mr. Markey answered that only a County or State agency can levy a sales tax. Mr. Paluch noted that Coventry Twp., has their own paving machine and perhaps we need to contact them to see how much that cost and maybe it's more cost effective to do our own. Mr. Grether agreed this is a good point. Mrs. Carr stated we do have a Dura Patch machine and we intend to get this back up and running and we just have hired two (2) new employees that allow us to keep up with the patching right now. Mrs. Carr stated that cities that have their own paving matching requires proper employee training. Mrs. Carr stated she also feels the report will come back that most of our roads have no base. We have mostly dirt roads and we have been doing nothing more than band-aid fixes on top of layers, on top of layers, year after year. Mr. Pelot stated he felt we have some golden opportunities coming our way with the widening of Cleveland-Massillon Road and 76. We cannot continue to support its self off the backs of the taxpayers, get our taxes from the employees and we want to get the word out there that we encourage business development. Mrs. Carr commented about the new addition of the new cross country course at the Metro Parks. Mrs. Carr stated this will be the home course for the University of Akron and that a lot of people will be coming to these meets and there will be a need for lodging, more restaurants, and more gas stations. The reality here is they will all be staying in Wadsworth and not in Norton. Mr. Rodgers stated in thinking of this we need locations on Cleveland Massillon Road, at St Rt. 21 and St. Rt. 585. Mr. Pierson suggested we put this discussion on hold until we get that road report back. Mrs. Carr stated that she believed we were told about three months or so and she would get a definite answer on that. Mr. Russ Farkas, 3226 Greenbrier Drive, Norton, discussed the gas well that was installed on Greenbrier and Holiday Heights and that the City was supposed to get reimbursed for all of the damage to the roads in this area according to Mr. Ryland. Mrs. Carr stated she would look into this issue. Mr. Rodgers stated that with the cross country fields going in should there be some admission fees coming for vendors and maybe we could generate some revenue here. Mrs. Reese added there would probably be food trucks as well. Mrs. Carr stated that could be an option. Mr. Tousley asked about the 2016 Road program and if Medina Line was to be on this schedule. Mrs. Carr stated that we just received information on this and it is way out and they are looking for our commitment this year. They are looking at approximately twelve (12) miles being done with several entities being involved and Medina County is taking the lead on this project and they are paying for all of the engineering. All they are asking us to do is to pay for our portion of the construction in the amount of \$96,840.00 for Medina Line would be the City of Norton's share. This project date is in 2019 and they want to see the City commit to this and that we do have the funds set aside. There was discussion on setting aside a specific amount each year for the project and perhaps legislation passed a couple years ago for the project that needed to be examined.

General Questions & Answers

There were none.

Mr. Rodgers stated we have been talking about sewers and Nash Heights and all of the different cost estimates. There have been a lot of people putting out false information and he was very upset with the former Mayor Koontz and all of his articles about putting a cap on the sewers. Mr. Rodgers stated that even last week in the trading post article there was a figure of \$85,000.00 cost and all he is asking for is to put out the true numbers; all we want is the facts. Mr. Rodgers urged former Mayor Koontz to come to this Council and address his issues. Mr. Rodgers stated he has the actual numbers to hand out and has asked for the Administration and Council to confirm the numbers (see attached). We are back in the papers again and there is no reason for it. Mr. Rodgers stated he does not live in Nash Heights and he has no horse in this race. Mr. Rodgers had received a call from a Nash Heights resident pointing out that they had to pay more than \$5,000 with the tie in fee, abandonment of septic system, and connecting to the sewer. Mr. Pelot suggested we have something put on the website to state these are the preliminary numbers. Mr. Rodgers wanted all of Council to get behind the numbers and stand behind this. Mr. Rodgers asked Mr. Markey if his numbers looked correct and Mr. Markey stated although he did not have the data to compare it too, it looks accurate. Mr. Rodgers stated this is the reality of what the Nash Heights will be paying, with his additional out-of-pocket- costs of \$8,000.00 to \$12,000.00 with the \$3,000.00 tap in fee, landscaping, and lines from house; there is no such cap at \$5,000.00. There are no special favors for Nash Heights residents; it was the goal of some members of Council to save the residents as much as possible when they are burdened with the cost of sewer or water. Mrs. Carr stated that there is confusion that roll back money is used which is not true. Mrs. Carr stated that where the public is confused about it's the surcharge assistance and that we need to have more education on this subject that will assist Nash Heights and others in the model that everyone that has sewer pays into. Mr. Rodgers said that Mrs. Carr stated it would assist everyone in that model and Mrs. Carr agreed. Mr. Rodgers stated that the surcharges you are paying are in no way taking in enough funds to maintain and repair these systems and have been subsidized through the County charges; that is the way it works, Government takes money from everyone and then pays it out so we all contribute. Mr. Pierson eluded that Mr. Koontz was here at one time to meet with Mrs. Carr on a sewer plant proposal and Mrs. Carr stated that Mr. Koontz was here at city hall to welcome her upon her new position. Mr. Grether stated he has taken a lot of heat on the assessment issue and made it clear this is not about Issue 1. Issue 1 had a separate funding source and it was presented that you could lose services. Mr. Grether stated he voted no on Issue 1 because he did not want to lose those services. Mr. Grether stated this MOU is a different model and is a great proposal to bring all of this surcharge money from Barberton customers, should we use Barberton as a provider, into one pot to make improvements all throughout the three allotments, not just in Nash Heights. Mr. Grether stated he thought this was a great proposal to gather the proper funding. Mr. Pierson clarified that Issue 1 was defeated by 36 votes the first time and the second time it was under 100. Mr. Pierson stated that the \$5,000.00 was a compromise. Mr. Pierson stated that as Mr. Rodgers had stated previously, we are a city and we need to take care of each other. Mr. Grether stated he agreed we need to educate the public more and that also needs to be on the website so the residents know the general fund, police and fire will not be touched. The jury is still out here on which system we are going with. It's up to us to get out there and educate ourselves and the residents. Mr. Grether stated he would rather see the true costs come from the Administration rather than from Council and he would like to see that posted to the website at some point.

Mrs. Carr stated she has been accused that she is trying to promote sewers outside of the consent area. She is not; she is only following the plans that were laid out well before she got here. Mrs. Carr stated that the surcharges that every customer added into to the system only benefits everyone, by putting money back into the pot by paying that surcharge. Mrs. Carr stated its beyond her understand why as a city and good public policy you would not want to include as many people that want to tie in as possible. Mr. Rodgers stated it's simple; the few people that want to tie in, you are burdening many more that don't want to tie in. Mr. Pelot stated this whole model is based on the purpose to grow. Mr. Rodgers stated no; that the thing we are doing right now is satisfying an order by the EPA and that has nothing to do with Nash Heights. That model is based on growth of 10% over 20 -years; it has nothing to do with taking Golf Course Drive and other areas. Mr. Pelot stated that the model is based on the surcharge assistance off the growth of the sewer system. Mr. Rodgers stated as it stands that model will have a surplus of \$6,000,000.00 to \$7, 000,000.00 over 20 years and after eight years it will be in the black. Ms. Whipkey stated that's only with the addition of 1400 new customers and the model itself is based on new customers. Mr. Rodgers stated no; it was based on the current 1400 County customers that Barberton will gain and including Nash Heights. Ms. Whipkey stated there are only 400 with the County. Mr. Markey stated the model is based on all of the current Summit County customers plus all of the additional 304 Nash Heights. Mr. Markey stated that the model has it estimated at 1400 new customers over the twenty (20) years, like 50 connections per year after Nash Heights customers are added. . Mr. Rodgers stated he did not agree with this as he thought it was 10% total increase and wanted further discussion on this next Monday. Mr. Pelot stated the surcharge assistance is the same either way whether we go with gravity or vacuum, so former Mayor Koontz cannot say we are setting the rate at \$5,000.00 or giving more for the vacuum system. Ms. Whipkey asked what all is involved in crushing a septic tank and Mayor Zita explained that the tanks are pumped out completely, they smash the top and fill the tanks with fill. Mr. Pierson added they line the tank to prevent future leakage of any pollutants. Mr. Paluch stated our property taxes are high now and you gave an example of the Greenwich Roads paying assessments of \$1,100/year and now have to pay to tie in. We don't live in a ritzy community we live in Norton. Mr. Paluch stated that Wadsworth has new schools and their taxes are lower. Mr. Paluch threatened to put this issue back on the ballot if this is not addressed soon. There will be no more making money off of sewers and they should only have to pay what it costs to put the sewers in. Mrs. Carr stated that his statements are incorrect. Mrs. Carr stated that Nash Heights real assessments are more like \$18,000.00 and \$15,000.00 and we need to keep to the facts here. Mr. Rodgers concurred and Mrs. Carr stated those assessments had been lowered to \$8,000.00 and \$5,000.00 so if you want Nash Heights to pay the true costs you need to pay the \$18,000.00 and \$15,000.00. Mr. Rodgers stated the surcharge money is applied to the total assessment and that surcharge money is the people's money, which will bring the assessments down to the lower cost. It's not from the rollback or anywhere else. The fact remains over a twenty year period there will be a surplus which is for future development for the City of Norton and it is paid for by all residents that pay surcharges. Mr. Rodgers stated it is a fact that we put money in and take money out; that it wouldn't always be fair and shouldn't expect everyone to get an equal share. Mr. Paluch stated the \$3,000.00 tap in fee is unjustified. Ms. Whipkey pointed out that half that amount went to Barberton. Mr. Reese stated that all of the communities in the state of Ohio that have vacuum system didn't do it because they had too much money, or that over twenty (20) years it would exceed the cost of gravity or did they do it to save money? Could all of the engineers throughout the State of Ohio be wrong except for Mr. Demboski, he found that amazing? Mr. Demboski had an email to Mr. Petrich stated that he has never worked on a vacuum system. Mrs. Carr reminded everyone with the AirVac recommendation; they suggested we remain with Mr. Demboski's firm to deal with this as it would be cheaper to design due to what they had already done.

There was another engineering company we were going to interview also had some experience with vacuum systems. Mrs. Carr stated the fact is this is a joint decision with City Council. Mr. Reese stated that because Mr. Demboski has no experience with vacuum he did not express any concerns with vacuums one way or another. Mr. Rodgers stated we did hire EDG in the interest to save money, and we are not throwing Mr. Demboski under the bus here. We have to build the least expensive and functional system we can to save the residents money on this project. It's not just for Nash Heights, if these systems work, we can apply them to all areas within the City. Ms. Whipkey asked when will we have those true maintenance costs? Mrs. Carr stated very soon and she would suggest having all three involved to discuss these numbers at once, Barberton, AirVac and Mr. Demboski. Mr. Kevin Kerns, 3732 Golf Course Drive, Norton, Ohio, asked to hear from Council, the Mayor and Mrs. Carr if Golf Course Drive off of this assessment list or not and Mr. Rodgers replied that he is out of the project. Mrs. Carr stated the only potential is where the pump station is located, there is one house involved. This resident stated he has contacted a septic contractor for a new system and he was told it would cost \$8,500.00 for the newest state of the art system and supposedly when the water comes out of the system is drinkable. Mr. Pierson stated that Mr. Kerns needs to contact an attorney about his deed restrictions as it states all residents on the street would need to agree to a utility. Mr. Kerns stated he pays taxes every year and that he is not getting his money's worth. Mr. Kerns complained about all of the time wasted and changes in the plans, it all costs money. Mr. Rodgers stated he really believes this pump station will end up on Shellhart and he is not speaking for all of Council. Mr. Grether pointed out that there were seven of us to decide that. Mr. Rodgers stated he apologized as there were others to decide on the pump station location and pointed out the assessments were over twenty (20) years with the out-of-pocket money being upfront.

Adjourn:

There being no further business to come before it, the Council and Administration Workshop ended at 8:00 PM.

Rick Rodgers, President of Council

I, Karla Richards, CMC-Clerk of Council for the City of Norton, do hereby certify the foregoing minutes were approved at a Regular Council Meeting on Monday, April 13, 2015.

Karla Richards-CMC, Clerk of Council

NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM

****ORIGINAL SIGNED AND APPROVED MINUTES ARE ON FILE WITH THE CLERK OF COUNCIL****

All Council & Committee Meetings will be held at the Norton Safety Administration Building, unless otherwise noted.