

CITY OF REYNOLDSBURG
REYNOLDSBURG CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
SEPTEMBER 16, 2013
7:30 P.M.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 7:30.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilwoman Kelly: The first item of business is approval of the agenda. Are there any changes or deletions. (No response.) Hearing none, they will stand as written.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 7-15-13 AND 9-3-13.

Ms. Kelly: I will hold Item 3, approval of the Minutes of the Community Development Committee Meeting held July 15 and September 3rd.

4. PRESENTATION FROM THE REYNOLDSBURG SOCCER ASSOCIATION

Mr. Lee Jeffers: Good evening. My name is Lee Jeffers. I'm the Vice-President of the Alliance Soccer Club. We're part of the Reynoldsburg Soccer Association. Tonight we just wanted to speak briefly about who we are, what we've done with Reynoldsburg Community Parks and what we want to do in the future.

Reynoldsburg Soccer Association -- we became the Alliance Soccer Club. In 1988 is when Reynoldsburg Soccer Association was formed. Families of the RSA and the Alliance Soccer Club, we created the soccer fields on the north part of Civic Park, brought in dirt, removed shrubs, brush and rocks, leveled the area to make it a suitable playing surface as it is today. Parks and Rec is using the fields now. Our club is using the field as well as other organizations. We've trained over 2,000 to 3,000 Reynoldsburg kids since our inception in 1988 and we look forward to continuing and increasing that number over the years.

We also provide concessions for the Reynoldsburg Parks and Rec program as well as during our games, the Alliance Soccer Club games. The 4th of July festivities that are held at Civic Park, we provide the concessions for that as well. The Tomato Festival, when it was at Civic Park we also held it there. We are a self-sufficient club. We own the equipment in the concession stand as well, the cabinets, the freezers, the supplies, etc., all of those are provided by the Alliance Soccer Club. Up until a few

years ago – up until last season, actually, we did provide services for the field as well. The fertilization and weed treatment of the fields, we provided that out of our expense and that was kind of a way of paying back for use of the field, and we felt that a partnership with Parks and Rec was something that we could do to help them as they were helping us.

As a history, we've helped train Parks and Rec coaches over the years and it's something that we've offered at least in the last 13 years that I've been part of Reynoldsburg. I know when I started out as a coach with the Reynoldsburg Parks and Rec, it was something that they offered at that time to all the coaches. That was before I knew about Alliance Soccer Club. Additionally, we have assisted in the recent years with the player evaluations through Parks and Rec. As it's done with all the other sports, soccer was implemented. We basically rate or scale, rank the players as they go through a series of drills, and that helps to even out the teams and the players throughout the Parks and Rec and that was something that we helped develop as well.

We organize free clinics on Friday evenings for Parks and Rec players and held it open to anyone to participate. We also run the current soccer type program that's held on Saturday mornings. We've done that over the past five years. To create a segue from the soccer type program into a more competitive soccer atmosphere, we've created an academy program with the Alliance Soccer Club to have the U8s and U9s, the under eight and under nine-year-old kids, to move up and to get a more competitive level of soccer play.

We've also hosted the Tomato Cup Soccer Challenge. This will be the fifth year that we've had the Tomato Cup Soccer Tournament at Civic Park and we've gradually increased over the years. Our very first year in 2009 we had 17 teams and we've increased over 300% in five years. Last year we peaked out at 82 teams with a gradual drop this year to 75 teams and that'll be held this coming weekend, September 21st and 22nd. We have 13 clubs from out of town and 2 from out of state this year, so we actually bring in a large number of teams and we actually bring about 4,000 individuals to the City of Reynoldsburg during that weekend, with hotel revenue and other sales through restaurants and such. We've continued to see that growth and help out and we want to pick up the City of Reynoldsburg and let everyone know who we are. We've hosted that tournament proudly. We have a great family base that volunteers their time to help run that tournament. It's actually a very good time and everyone enjoys it and we actually want to invite all of you out there as well. We did extend an invitation to Mayor McCloud and he has accepted. He is going to present trophies during the championship presentations to each age group, so that was actually very nice to have him come out there this year.

As a closing, the Alliance Soccer Club -- we abide by the United States Soccer Federation in how we train our players and it's something that creates a competitive atmosphere; but we focus on the technical, the tactical, the physical and psychological aspect of the game, and create a fun experience for the players all the while teaching them the aspects of the game in order to create a better player. We have players that

have moved on in high school, players that have moved on in college, Ohio Olympic Development Program, so we've seen a large from our players and they continue to grow. We have teams now that range from the under 8 age division to the under 13. We have five teams. And the level of play, varies. At the younger age we usually start them at a lower division and they work their way up. Our 13-year-old girls team is in the A Division in the Mid-Ohio Select Soccer League. The Alliance Soccer Club is sponsored by Reynoldsburg Soccer Association as I mentioned before. RSA provides organizational structure for the select soccer teams here in Reynoldsburg and southeastern Franklin County. We're a member of Mid-Ohio Select Soccer in addition to being a member of the South Youth Soccer Association and are affiliated with the United States Soccer Federation. Thank you very much. What we wanted to do is just present who we are and what we plan to do in the future and hope that each and everyone of you come out to the tournament this weekend. We're expecting a large crowd.

Mr. Long: I've had three stepsons who all three, over 20 years, played in the RSA, so I know the value of what you actually give to our community and you're to be applauded for the way it has evolved into Alliance. I know I've spent many a weekend in that concession stand.

Mr. Jeffers: And we appreciate that.

Mr. Long: Very proud of you guys. Thank you.

Mr. Jeffers: Thank you.

Ms. Kelly: Anybody else? Any questions? (No response.) One of the key points that I want to point out. First of all, thank you. Very good presentation, pdf here. The Tomato Cup Tournament, you have that your current player count is about 1,050 per projected total of 4,000 people attending.

Mr. Jeffers. Yeah. With 1,050 players—

Ms. Kelly: Yeah. That is huge. That's a huge number of potential revenue coming into our city, so thank you for that. That's very valuable. You are a very valuable organization to our community. Your commitment to the families and the community of Reynoldsburg is to be commended. Personally, myself, I too have spent numerous weekends in that concession stand having had my children play. One of the things that I think makes Alliance Soccer so special is that you teach not just the tactic and the techniques, but you really teach strong value of sportsmanship and you create this in a community organization, but because it's a community organization you really develop a sense of family that reaches far beyond soccer. My son, some of his best friends are kids he played soccer with. Some of our best friends are families that we play soccer with and we sat and watched soccer. So thank you very much for all you do and thank you all five families and kids for coming out. It's especially nice for me to look

at some of you girls and you've all grown up so much. So, thank you very much. Anything else? (No response.) Okay, thank you very much.

Okay. I am going to hold Item number 5 for two weeks, the Discussion Youth Conference. Mr. McGrady is not here to share any additional information, so we'll put that on hold for two weeks and I will bring the Community Development Committee to a halt at 7:40. And I'm going to take a brief second and let you guys know if you want to stay you are welcome to stay, but if you would like to go, now would be the time.

SAFETY COMMITTEE

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Long: I'll open the Safety Committee at 7:38.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Long: Item number 2 on the agenda is the approval of the Agenda. Are there any changes, additions or deletions? (No response.) Hearing none, it'll stand as written.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 7-15-13 AND 9-3-13.

Mr. Long: We're going to hold this item. That takes us to Item number 4.

4. DISCUSSION OF CODE ENFORCEMENT PRACTICES – ON 6-3-13 ITEM WAS HELD FOR TWO WEEKS.; ON 6-17-13 ITEM WAS HELD FOR TWO WEEKS AT TIME OF APPROVAL OF AGENDA; ON 7-1-13 ITEM WAS DISCUSSED; NO DETERMINATION ON DISPOSITION WAS MADE.

Mr. Long: Now, although that's the way it's written, I believe that the discussions that we had during that meeting, Mr. Barrett, bore some fruit. I believe that we actually came to some conclusions of some possible solutions and things that might move us forward. When it comes down to the next budgetary time, we'll be able to go ahead and take a look at perhaps adding a couple of code enforcement officers that during our busy time will help relieve some of the pressure off the individuals that we currently have working now. With that said, do you have any further questions for Mr. Burd, the Service Director?

Mr. McGrady: Well, I've been looking at this and I had a question. Did everyone get Mr. Burd's proposal plan for the additional staff? Did everybody see that?

Mr. Long: Yeah.

Mr. McGrady: I'm looking at blank faces. Did everybody get – okay, cool. I wasn't sure if that just went to you and I or the whole group. I had some time to just kind of revisit it and get up to speed with it and I thought in the interest of moving it along and then trying to get some productive closure to it, I broke it down into what I saw is four key areas and I've bounced back and forth on it a little bit because, frankly, I feel like the administration should be leading us because really it kind of comes to pride in the City. I mean, and really how we present ourselves, but I guess maybe it's up to us to make some suggestions. I'd like to have the improvement plan in place, Mr. Burd, if that is exactly what you want to go forward with and some type of more structured fashion on what it is. I know we talked about currently, the quote was your people have to drive by nine violations to get to the one that was reported. I mean, we can take photos over and over again, but clearly you need some feet on the street. So just, again in an interest to move things along, I would like maybe if you would put out just your recommendations on how you can get that addressed I guess more consistently is the word.

Mr. Burd: Sure. The memo that discussed staffing threw out three different scenarios. It was to add one seasonal code enforcement officer. Another scenario said two seasonal employees. This would be from April to September which are our very busy months and the third was two add additional part-time code enforcement officers year-round. That would double the current staff we have. I can prepare something. Council's going to need to fund something. And so I think their intent – I was talking to the Mayor about this – is to propose something in the next budget. I would personally prefer to add two more officers. We can do it seasonally, but we have the workload to have two more officers year-round. It would cost us about \$41,000 and what we currently pay the two officers we have, if doubled it. And so that would be my recommendation and I think you'll something like that written into the budget.

Mr. McGrady: That makes sense so we'll just kind of keep an eye on that portion of it.

Mr. Burd: Yeah.

Mr. Grady: So that's one. The second item, I think, that needs addressed is the sidewalk situation. Clearly, you know, we started down the path and, Mel, you remember parts of that, but I think we got to a certain area and we just stopped. So instead of going back and forth on that, would it be possible for you to also propose how we can get back on top of the sidewalks again?

Mr. Burd: In terms of like assessment projects in terms of picking a neighborhood and—

Mr. Long: However we did it last time—

Mr. Burd: The way we did it on the north side neighborhood, and this was you know a decade or so ago, is there were sidewalks one after another deemed to not be ADA compliant.

Mr. Long: Right.

Mr. Burd: So there were trip hazards everywhere. They were falling apart and we were basically told as a City that we had to do something about that and so we did,. Residents were given the opportunity to have it done themselves for the sidewalks in front of their properties or to have the City do it and have it be assessed. We don't have a similar situation in terms of ADA compliance issues. Obviously there are portions of sidewalks that are problems. We do write violations for sidewalks. We wrote seven a couple of months ago. Those are longer repairs. That's not something someone can do in a day or a week. But, you know, in terms of massive projects, it's not really something that co-compliance necessarily looks at in terms of how to find a neighborhood-wide sidewalk installation. So, again, I'm not exactly sure what you would expect our two code enforcement officers to do about that.

Mr. Long: Mr. Harris has got an idea.

Mr. Harris: Just a statement concerning sidewalk assessments. Back in – well, we're going back aways on this one. Brad, and Mel and I are probably the only ones around that remember. Mel, you were Service Director when the first sidewalk program was done. The ordinances passed at that point had a schedule in what order different neighborhoods would be done. And if you're going to do any assessment programs, you're going to have to change that ordinance because there are still a couple of sections in the City that have not been done. So you would have to – if you're going to do an assessment program, you would have to modify that ordinance before you did any more assessment programs because that would not make you compliant with the City's ordinance. And Mel probably knows a little bit more about it than I do.

Mr. Clemens: The ones that haven't been completed should be completed. It's that simple. We've never had, in the last few years, a Service Director that wanted to do it. It's a section that involves trees being removed and such things as that. I think we should finish the sidewalk program and then if you, you know, then the co-compliance can – as they check bad situations they can order it in. I mean, the law is the homeowner is responsible for the sidewalk, keeping it -- and that's the law. So, I mean, we can force sections in that way. But I think we should, before we start another program, we should finish the program that we have.

Mr. Harris: There's a big portion that was not done. There was virtually nothing Licking County done, so the Licking County portion, I believe, just had one sidewalk repaired and many of those houses, some of them were built in the 70's and some of them, the newer section started in '05 maybe. So those are now 15, 20 years old. So there's a number of places in the City that, assuming Mr. Clemens is right, that should

be looked at for sidewalk assessments. But if you're going to do one, you either need to stick to the program that was originally set up or you have to modify it.

Mr. Clemens: When it was set up as a program, it was to encompass the whole City. That made it fair for everybody that's in the City. I mean, I know when it started, we started in Ward IV. That was the worst section, and moved on over and around and come back. And now we have sections that should be done on the other side of Brice Road and so forth. But, like I said, everybody was supposed to have – be involved in the sidewalk program. My thought would be, and it's not a situation people enjoy, don't get me wrong on that, but I think we should finish our sidewalk program before we start another one. It has been done long enough ago and I would say we started it probably almost – maybe almost 20 years ago, maybe before that because I was Service Director and it's been a long time ago. It may time to even start again. In other words, and the reason is the concrete that is used these days is not as strong as what was used back in the old days and some of these sidewalks were put in 50, 60 years ago. It's better concrete by far than what they use nowadays so, I mean, what we did 25 years ago is starting to break up again over in my Ward. So, I mean, it's a continuous process. But I think before we start another one we should finish the old one.

Mr. Harris: Another thing is there was money appropriated by Council whenever that was, 20 some years ago, and there is a fund set up, a sidewalk construction fund which that's what it was set up to use, was to do assessment projects. And right now there's about \$650,000 in that sidewalk fund and it's not getting a lot into it anymore because most of the sidewalks – the sidewalk programs that are done and now all paid off. So there's about \$650,000, so you could do a fairly decent sidewalk program. The money is already in that fund in order to do the assessment project, but unless you've done an assessment project, it's a long arduous thing where you have to have meetings with neighborhoods and then they have to be marked and if you want to get with me, I can explain to you how it works and you guys can take a look at it. But, yeah, you just don't say, "Tomorrow we're going to do sidewalk program." It's a lot more difficult than that.

Mr. Clemens: This would be the time to be thinking about doing it because it would take now to spring to get one started. I mean, to get the construction started because it does take a lot of footwork.

Mr. : I'm just curious, if we already have it set up as an ordinance why do we stop it and who's responsible to keep it moving?

Mr. Harris: Sidewalk four and five, there were some construction problems and there was potential litigations and that kind of stuff and that's why it was—

Mr. : Who does it fall under, is my question? Who's responsible to keep it moving? I understand the dynamics --

Mr. Harris: It was not – the next section did not come along, first of all, for a couple reasons. There was not enough money in the sidewalk fund to fund anything of any size and Council did not want to put any more money in it so, therefore, it made it difficult to get a sidewalk program going. The other major problem is, if you look at Bramblebrook, there's a lot of trees and tree lawns which is causing those to break up and the removal of the trees would become a contentious issue.

Mr. : I understand. Who's responsible to keep the program moving?

Mr. Harris: The people who want to fund it.

Mr. : And that's someone in the City--

Mr. Harris: That would be the Service Director.

Mr. : Here we go. Okay. _____ we figure that out—

Mr. Clemens: I don't think it's fair to—

(Several talking at once – inaudible.)

Mr. _____: This is the first I've had a conversation about sidewalks but I'll tell you, if we have money to do it and if we want to dig out the ordinance that the Councils before you passed to find out where we are, I have no problem with going through the process. I have no problem doing it, but I've heard horror stories about sidewalk assessments. And I get calls about the one that was done 12 years ago still and I'm not afraid of that. I'll happily to do that but literally this is the first time since I've been in this job that I've heard sidewalks mentioned beyond the monthly evaluations we right.

Mr. Clemens: The problem is, and these are horror stories, people will complain. They don't want to pay for it. It's the law that they take care of it. Here's the story. You've got to have guts to do it. We had guts in the old days and we did it. Now, you can't be a nicey-nicey person. I mean, the law is the law. If we do it, they're responsible for the sidewalks to be assessed to them. Trees are also – and we've got to look at it two ways. The trees are on their property. Now, the City – you know from the sidewalk to the curb, it's still their property and if the tree's in there they have to remove it. Now, you've got a big argument about that. I mean, it isn't going to be nice and that's why probably it wasn't done. But if you're going to do sidewalks, finish what we started.

Mr. McGrady: Yeah. It makes sense. I mean, it's almost unfair to the people that have already done it.

Mr. Clemens: Correct.

Mr. _____ : It makes perfect sense. I mean, I don't understand. So good. So you'll report back on that?

Mr. _____ I'll try to find the ordinance from a couple decades ago that will allow _____ schedule and see where we were on it and then see what funds match the next project and I have no problem pursuing this. But it isn't just the Service Director, just to be crystal clear.

Mr. Clemens: No. It would be here.

Mr. McGrady: Okay. I said I had four things. That was two, then. The third one is we brought up trees. I'm not sure if we were talking about all the dead – oh, I'm sorry. Ma'am, would you like to say something regarding the sidewalks?

Ms. Acoasta: _____ Acoasta and I'm a 6550 Old Mill Run. I just had two questions. I don't know a lot about construction, but I've heard a lot about the water pipe issues that are going on in Reynoldsburg. The water pipes affect the sidewalk projects. I mean, is there a possibility that we would put a sidewalk in or somebody would spend money on that and then have that damage if there's a water pipe break?

Mr. : There is no – the water mains that are being replaced, most of them are in the street.

Ms. Acoasta: Okay.

Mr. : So they don't affect – and they're 4 feet under the ground so they're not going to affect the sidewalk anyway.

Ms. Acoasta: I'm just saying a couple of people that have that – I can't remember. From the sidewalk to the street I can't remember what that's called, but I've seen that torn up—

Mr. : The tree lawn area. Yeah. It can be torn up for a water -- more likely than the street side, it's the homeowner's side where their line to the house hooks into the main. It goes under the sidewalk to go to their house. If that line breaks and they have to replace it, they have to dig up the sidewalk and it's the homeowner's responsibility to dig up their sidewalk and they have to replace it.

Ms. Acoasta: Okay. But that's on the homeowner's side.

Mr. : That's on the homeowner's side.

Ms. Acoasta: Okay. The other question I had was do we have any idea what percentage of homes in Reynoldsburg are vacant right now and would that affect how we would go about a sidewalk project? So, if a home is vacant and we try to contact the property owner and they won't pay for it, does the City wind up paying for that?

Mr. Harris: It goes on their tax duplicant and when the house gets sold, it has to be satisfied before they can sell the house.

Ms. Acoasta: How many homes – do we know right now are in foreclosure or vacant where people aren't paying that at all?

Mr. : It would be assessed to the bank.

Ms. Acoasta: So it would get paid regardless. Okay, I just wanted to make sure we weren't going to end up paying for the vacant properties.

Mr. Harris: In order to sell a house, you have to have a clear deed. Those liens have to be satisfied before that bank could sell a house.

Ms. Acoasta: But what if they're not interested in selling?

Mr. Harris: At some point in time, they're going to sell it.

Ms. Acoasta: Okay, so it would go against them and we're not going to wind up paying for that.

Mr. : Okay, just continuing with some of the other discussions we had when we were working on this, the tree issue came up as far as the ash trees that are dying everywhere. Ever since that was brought up I can't help but drive around and notice how many of them there are. There's a significant amount. And while I agree with Mr. Harris, it's not typical city business to even consider that. There's a lot of trees and I know windy days are coming and pretty soon it'll be city business. So I would ask that maybe you would take that under consideration, maybe speak to the administration on it or Mr. Harris, or whatever. Maybe there's a plan that we could have just to assist people to get rid of them. Not to cut them down, but maybe to make it easier for the people who can't have a lot of money that has a tree that's going to go on a power line or across the road.

Mr. : I had a phone conversation this week with a representative from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. We'd heard that there are grants available in other parts of the state for public trees, not private trees, to help out cities. Councilman Clemens passed a note along to me a few weeks ago. And the feedback I got from ODNR was that there will likely never be a state or federal program to assist on private property. We've also been searching for nonprofits, environmental groups, anybody who may take this project up to help us out. We have not had luck yet, but we talk about this quite a bit and I talked about it to _____ Zader last week after Council. It's something that we have to figure out how to address, because these trees are an issue – both public trees and private trees. So it's something that we are looking at, trying to figure out how to get our arms around it.

Mr. Clemens: I think as I've read and as I've talked to people, most cities handle it if the tree is on private property and it isn't a situation where it would harm somebody, they don't really bother them on it. But if it's a situation where it would fall on another property or it would fall across the street or across a sidewalk, then the city has them take it out. I think the thing we should watch is trees that have limbs that come over the sidewalk and there are some. I could point some out that are bare, ready to fall, because those are dangerous for the kids and different people. But if it's in their backyard and the only people that could be harmed by it is them, other cities aren't forcing them to take it out.

Mr. : I think the code here in the city, Section 543, the tree needs to be adjacent to a street for us to be able to declare it as a dangerous tree. And we're written a few of those this year and we're working with property owners to get a few removed, but in the past several years we haven't done any. So it's an area that we need to be a little bit more vigilant.

Mr. : Thank you. I'm glad we're on that. And four probably dovetails into the first one and that was just having a plan to get on top of the commercial real estate, which was the last set of pictures that we did. It seems like the commercial real estate is almost a problem in and of itself. You probably agree. My guess is your proposal and recommendations on Item 1 are going to blanket residential and commercial.

Mr. Burd: Yeah, the two code enforcement staff do residential and commercial, so if we had four they would be doing residential and commercial. We'd double the amount that we could get done. And I mentioned this last time and I'll mention it again, it's not to sidestep the commercial issue, but when we respond to complaints, it's almost always residential. These are people who don't like something that's happening in their neighborhood. And my guess is and I don't have any research to back this up, but my guess is that when people have a commercial problem, they walk into a business and say, "Hey, what's your problem," and they don't necessarily inform us of it. Now that doesn't mean they can't see it if we're out doing our patrols, but a lot of the issues that we get called about are residential issues. We certainly could do more on the commercial side if we had more staff and, obviously, that will be part of the game plan if we can move forward on that. We did have a conversation late July with our staff about commercial properties and they are looking at them.

Mr. : It all kind of goes full circle on the whole sense of pride for this community and putting our best face out there on a daily basis and I think that you really can impact our city. I made a statement a couple weeks ago about property value and really where we need to be focusing our time. So that you for considering that and I guess we'll plan on following up when you come back to us.

Ms. DeBrock: I've got a question. I think a lot of times homeowners – sometimes homeowners probably don't care, they can't afford, but sometimes they don't realize they're not doing something that they should be. Is there – now that we have the website up and running, can we do a, "Did you know it's illegal.."

Mr. Burd: We're working on a section of the website just about code issues and nothing else. It's almost done. It'll be ready soon. Not everybody looks at the website, but we're getting more and more hits every month, so that will be helpful. From time to time we do proactive things to try to get the word out. This year the Street Department put a flier on the door of every home where a tree was potentially about to be in violation for hanging over the sidewalk too low and for hanging over the street. So that was more of an educational thing. We also did a pilot project where we wrote 10 violations for trees. We got compliance on, I think, about half of them and then we're still working with the other half. But you're exactly right, most people have no idea they're doing something wrong and that's true especially with things like when can their trash cans be out. You know, they don't know. The guy in my court, I _____ and he has a bunch of trash out and legally by our code, that can't be there until Wednesday afternoon. So people just don't have any idea. We hope that when they get the notices they learn something along the way and it helps them avoid it next time. There are people who will do better and there are people who will commit violation after violation, so we just deal with them the best we can.

Ms. DeBrock: If we can get the word out, I think a lot of citizens will look at that and take the action they need; but, for the ones that don't, that's why we need the code officers out there. Then I think also we need to make sure that the public realize that they can talk to anyone on City Council or the City Administration if there's an area of concern, because everybody has their little things that bother them. One of the things that I did a drive along with a police officer on Friday night and it was very educational. I'm very glad I did it. I would suggest anyone to do it. But what I was told, some of the vacant land that just looks like a vacant commercial land, there's all kinds of debris inside the shrubs and you start wondering if that could be a health hazard. And I'm not sure that we actually have anything on the books to – if you can't see it, do you know it's there? I think maybe we need to have someone look into vacant commercial land where it's – if it potentially could be an area of dump, that there might be items in the bushes that could cause harm to children or anyone else using it as a cut-through. I think that's something that we want to possibly have conversations about.

Mr. : Did you have something else, Councilman Clemens?

Mr. Clemens: Well, I think – and this has nothing to do with Nathan, because I've talked to him about it and he's trying to handle it. I don't understand, because I look at other cities – I don't understand why our commercial people do not want to take care of their properties. I don't understand that. I go through Gahanna, and I go through Westerville, and I go through Grove City and we have commercial property that looks terrible. Now Nathan has taken care of one and it's a problem for the city to do it, but I'm not afraid to say it, Lowe's that's up here is an entrance to the city, that big property sitting up there and they have the big monuments. You can't even get them to cut their grass half the time. It looks like weeds. The bushes look like weeds. You look across the street – and I don't like to say Columbus property looks good – but Columbus looks good compared to that. And that's the entrance to our city. They've got two big

monuments. They've got a monument down at the other end. They don't bother cutting the grass in between, they don't cut it out on the road and it's not the city's – I know Nathan's been on them and they got it really fixed up good once, but then you've got to keep on them all the time and we shouldn't have to. That's the part I don't understand how the other cities operate, because you can drive through there, you can see all their city property cut and the other businesses cut, and the buildings looking good and all that, but ours don't seem to care and that's what gets me. Drive down Brice Road and see what they think of their commercial, or up Livingston Avenue. We do have business organizations. Maybe I should come to one of the meetings and cry and tell them what I think about it. Maybe that's my fault. And I don't blame that on the city, or the Mayor, I don't blame it on Nathan. I just don't understand it, let's put it that way. Those are entrances to the city, just like coming up Main Street. Until you get to where we took care of it, it looks like heck.

Mr. Burd: Just one comment on that and I appreciate that and we are still working on the one you mentioned. When it comes to mowing commercial properties, the one you mentioned cost \$1,000 to mow from start to finish.

Mr. Clemens: I'd do it every week to them.

Mr. Burd: Here's the thing. I mean I don't have a problem with that, but we have to front those costs and we had to access that property the costs and we're waiting for payment. If we do that consistently, that's our entire grass budget the way it currently stands. So my point is that if we're going to do this weekly or bi-weekly, we – and I'm not trying to put it back on Council, because when I was on Council, I approved the grass budget the same as you all do, but it's going to be larger in the request this year for that very reason and I'll be talking about that come budget time. But we do front the cost for those and, as you all know, we don't have unlimited funds to cut every high lot we see.

Ms. Kelly: Nathan, just real quick. I know you are incredibly busy and you get a lot of questions from us a lot of times, but I just want to thank you for responding so quickly to my request for information for the issue in my Ward. You were very timely which allowed me, then, to be very timely with my constituent, so I really appreciate that. And then I didn't even know you were doing it, so thank you very much for exploring possible solutions for the ash tree issues. Personally I am praying you come up with a solution.

Mr. Burd: I've seen your yard. I know.

Mr. Long: Any further comments for Nathan? (No response.) I guess that the next step then will be we'll just kind of cool our jets until we hear something from you as to what might be possible with the sidewalk program and, as Councilman Clemens said, by the time we could even get anything going with that it would be next spring and then, naturally, we'll continue to dig for possible resources we can pull as far as the ash trees and we'll be back to talk to you at budget time about your code enforcement officers.

Mr. Burd: All right, thank you.

Mr. Long: And I will end the Safety Committee meeting at 8:09.

SERVICE COMMITTEE

Chairman Clemens: I'd like to open the Service Committee meeting at 8:10.

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Clemens: Are there any items to be added or deleted? (No response.) If not, they'll stand approved.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Mr. Clemens: I'd like to hold the Service Committee minutes for 7/15 and 9/3/13 to a later date.

4. ORDER APPROVING SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE PERMIT 6748 EAST MAIN STREET, PROPOSED USE CHILD CARE. APPLICANT RED CONSULTING. ADDED 7/8/2013, REGULAR COUNCIL AGENDA AND READ FOR THE FIRST READING.

Mr. Clemens: Is there anyone here that's representing? Please give your name and address.

Mr. Todd Dillon: Good evening. My name's Todd Dillon. I'm at 6475 E. Main Street, Ste 137, Reynoldsburg, Ohio.

Mr. Clemens: We've held this as there's a discussion pertaining to the fence in the rear.

Mr. Dillon: Yes and also I apologize for last meeting, not showing up. There was confusion on my end. So I apologize for delaying that. From the first reading we prepared just a blow-up of the fenced in area with some photos for discussion purposes. So what we did in here was put some more specific details on the playground area, dimensions, and then we did the photo key, kind of flipping through the other pictures just to kind of give an idea of what's where as it relates to the play area. Also, just wanted to kind of bring up the statute as it relates to outside play area as governed by Ohio Department of Job & Family Services. ODJFS is the agency that's responsible for doing the inspections of the childcare facilities to make sure that each childcare facility is in compliance. So within section 5101.2-12-14 titled "Outdoor Play Requirements for Licensed Childcare Centers," it describes some different items that are required and specifically what I wanted to bring up was it letter C it says, "The center shall have onsite a safe, sanitary, outdoor play area free of hazardous conditions which shall meet

all the following requirements: provides at least 60 square feet of usable space per child using the area at one time; is well defined by a fence that is safe, in good repair, or natural or other barrier; fencing is not considered outdoor equipment.” It talks about gates and I can talk about that further, but then number 5 is “maintain free of heating and air conditioning units, generators, foreign objects and rubbish where these items are fenced or made inaccessible to the children.” There’s other requirements there, but those are the ones that I wanted to highlight for you guys. In general we feel that the plan that we set out meets all of those guidelines. I talked to the operators. Their standard is they take out in groups at a time by age, they go out for 45 minutes at a time and then they bring the next age group out, with exception of the youngest group because there’s more children in that class, different needs for different children. They break that class up into two sections and some kids may not even partake in the outside if they’re too young. That’s kind of my brief presentation and if you have any questions, I’d be willing to answer those.

Mr. Clemens: How much square feet area do you have?

Mr. Dillon: Eight hundred seventy-five square feet.

Ms. Kelly: Just so that I’m clear, photo 1, I see the blue door and then to the right I see a grassy area with the light poles and to the left, grassy area with the light poles. Is that whole area going to be fenced in? That’s the play area?

Mr. Dillon: To the right of that.

Ms. Kelly: Okay, so the door will not be fenced in?

Mr. Dillon: Correct.

Ms. Kelly: So to the right of the blue door, that whole area right there’s going to be fenced in. So if I go to photo 2, from the sidewalk that I see straight back to the other sidewalk, that will be the fenced in part with the two light poles?

Mr. Dillon: That’s correct.

Ms. Kelly: That does not seem like a lot of space. Okay. In photo 3 where it shows a mechanical courtyard fence, that equipment that’s right there, the green maybe an air conditioning unit or an electrical box or whatever.

Mr. Dillon: It’s a transformer.

Ms. Kelly: Is that part of your property or this existing property, or is that—

Mr. Dillon: If you look at photo 2, on the opposite side of that sidewalk, that’s photo 3, so that’s outside of the fenced in area or the proposed fenced in area. The children have no need to even go down that sidewalk.

Ms. Kelly: When I look at photo 3 – photo 2 and photo 3 where the – in photo 3 you see how the sidewalk comes out and then it will end into the mechanical courtyard. The fence for the playground area, will it incorporate that portion of the mechanical courtyard? See what I'm saying? Will it abut it like this?

Mr. Dillon: Yeah, it will abut up against that fence.

Ms. Kelly: Okay, but will it there be an entrance into the mechanical courtyard from the playground?

Mr. Dillon: There will not be.

Ms. Kelly: So the gate – cause when I'm looking at that and how it's going to abut up there, how, if you do not have an entrance from the playground into that mechanical courtyard-- Do you see what I'm talking about? Right now the gate is there.

Mr. Dillon: The intent is for the gate to be – it's not shown—

Ms. Kelly: You can see it right there. You can see the gate into the mechanical courtyard right there. You see what I'm saying? You would have to – if you take a fence just along the grassy area, so if you used the sidewalk as the outline, the gate would have to be just that little corner of sidewalk by where that door is to get into the mechanical courtyard, because otherwise you're going to have to have the doorway – Photo 5 is better. It shows you-- Do you see what I'm saying?

Mr. Dillon: Yeah and just for reference – we should have a dimension here but we don't – those gates are typically 36" wide. So the intent is to move the gate to the end of the sidewalk, basically kind of replacing the gate at the end of the sidewalk so the entrance to that mechanical courtyard will be completely outside of the children's play area.

Ms. Kelly: I mean if you look on here, if you look on 5, you see how small, if you just draw a line right there, just where this is your – if you take your fence just right along the grassy area, that's going to be a really small area that you're going to be able to do that. You definitely don't want to have the ability, even accidentally, for kids to get into a mechanical area, nor do I think that would meet the qualifications for the state if you had an entrance into that from the inside.

Ms. DeBrock: I've stood back there and it seems very small. From the documents it says that it's 17' from the edge of the building to the sidewalk over by the existing entrance. It's been a while since I've stood there, I just remember it being such a narrow strip and then I look at the photograph and the scale. I just wonder – it doesn't look 17'.

Mr. Dillon: Our architect went out there late last week and measured everything. That's what this is based off of, her field measurements.

Ms. DeBrock: It doesn't look like 17'.

Mr. Clemens: What kind of a wood fence will it be?

Mr. Dillon: It's 6' tall wood slat fence, similar in looks to what the service area fence looks like, there at the privacy fence.

Ms. Kelly: And those light poles-- I'm sorry.

Mr. Clemens: Go ahead.

Ms. Kelly: Those light poles don't present a safety hazard?

Mr. Dillon: We have other facilities that we own, they do have padding for the light poles. Obviously when they set up the play area, they don't set up things around those light poles. So that's how they take care of them. But the daycares also like them because dusk and – at dawn they like to have the additional light in those play areas for safety when the kids are out later in the afternoon.

Ms. Kelly: I was just thinking if you look at those light poles and you don't set up anything near them, you're cutting down your play area significantly.

Mr. Dillon: I think that in regard to those light poles, that if it would make Council feel more comfortable, we could look at removing those from the play area and installing wall packs on the walls to provide lighting in that area.

Ms. Kelly: If you look at Photo 2 and look at the architect's drawing, it looks like to the right of the existing doorway they're planning on putting a new wide concrete walk to the right and then a glass door, a new door. So that area that we're looking at right now will actually have a section that looks like there's a 5' section taken out of it for the – out of a portion of it for the new glass.

Mr. Dillon: Yeah, that sidewalk will be the same width as the existing sidewalk that's there. As I was talking about the requirements by the state, they require that certain age groups have direct egress from the classrooms. So that's why that would need to be installed.

Ms. Kelly: I know I would feel better about the lights coming out. That just seems like a major safety hazard having those big light poles in that play area.

Mr. Clemens: You're going to match the existing fence, am I correct?

Mr. Dillon: Yeah, it will obviously look newer. It will be brand new, 6' tall wood privacy fence.

Mr. Clemens: That's what I'm talking about. You're going to match the existing fence or are you going to put up a dog-eared fence? I want to know what you're going to do.

Mr. Dillon: Oh, the exact look. To be honest, we hadn't put that much thought into the specifics.

Mr. Clemens: But I have. I want it to look half way decent, that's what I'm saying.

Mr. Dillon: Understood. If Council would feel more comfortable to match this exact fence.

Mr. Clemens: You'll match the existing fence?

Mr. Dillon: Yes.

Mr. Clemens: Okay, that's better. You know you do have to get a permit?

Mr. Dillon: Yes, sir.

Mr. Clemens: Are there any other questions on this issue? (No response.) If not, I'll make a motion we move this on for a second reading. Do I have a second. Second by Councilman Long. All in favor, say "aye." (All voted "aye.") Thank you.

That ends the Service Committee meeting at 8:27 p.m.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Cotner: I will call to order the Finance Committee meeting at 8:27.

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Cotner: I would like to add one item, Item 6 to request Council to authorize the Mayor to enter into contract with Zach Woodruff to consult on the 2013 tax levy campaign, request Council appropriate \$17,000 from the Unappropriated General Fund to account number 110.522.5339, Miscellaneous Contract Services, to pay campaign expenses. I'll make a motion to add that. Is there a second? Second by Councilman Barrett. All in favor, say "aye." (All voted "aye.") Okay, thank you.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Cotner: We will hold on the minutes.

4. DISCUSSION TO REQUEST CITY COUNCIL AMEND CHAPTER 160.02(A) TO ALLOW CITY COUNCIL TO EMPLOY ONE FULL TIME ASSISTANT CLERK OF COUNCIL. CURRENTLY CITY COUNCIL'S AUTHORIZED TO EMPLOY TWO PART-TIME POSITIONS AND THIS CHANGE WOULD CONSOLIDATE THE TWO PART-TIME POSITIONS TO ONE FULL TIME POSITION.

Mr. Joseph: I asked the City Attorney to prepare this and I know it's something that we've kicked around for about 6-7 months, that we were going to take the two part-time positions and roll them into a full time position and this seemed to be the good time to do it as we have this turnover with our Council staff. So this is kind of a starting point document making it full time. We haven't changed the classification, but that, again, is something that can be altered from this starting point.

Mr. Cotner: Anybody on Council or Finance Committee have any questions about this?

Mr. Clemens: We can make some changes as it goes?

Ms. Kelly: Yes.

Mr. Joseph: If I could interject just one other thing. Obviously this is something we can take a lot of time to work on, or this is something we can do quickly, cause we can't advertise and start going through the process of hiring an Assistant Clerk until this legislation has been passed. So if we want to kind of have both of our staff members kind of learning and achieving at the same time the various duties of the job, we may want to move this quickly. But if Council's not comfortable moving something quickly, we can obviously take our time and—

Mr. Clemens: I have a question on this. Since I wasn't involved in the other and I think a good job was done, don't get me wrong. But as far as this advertising, we don't even have to do that, period. Council members took out of the whole list of applications and moved it down to 12 members and interviewed them. They were here for a full time position. Now we're going to have a full time position. My thought to save the time would be of those 12, 11 are left, that we contact them and see if they're interested in coming and being interviewed for a full time position as an Assistant at a lower rate and not have to go through the advertising part of it, because we do have the people that applied for a full time position. You have cut it down from 80 to 12 or whatever it is, so you do have 11 or 12 good candidates. If you also wanted to add in the ones that applied for the part-time job since it was advertised like that, check that list and if you feel any of those are capable to be interviewed, but I don't think we have to go through that advertising situation again. I don't see any reason for it.

Mr. Joseph: That was also my initial inclination as well. I know several Council members wanted to go through the full process again. So, again, that's a discussion point.

Mr. Clemens: That's why I'm bringing it up. I don't think it's necessary.

Mr. Long: I've got a question for you. We're a public body and we have a classified position that is going to be filled. Are we required—

Male: Yeah, you have to follow the Civil Service laws and our Civil Services rules that sometimes supercedes the state laws sometimes. We interject our own process into the hiring, but President Joseph's correct. You have to amend Chapter 160 before we really have these discussions. I understand they go hand-in-hand, but they're a bit premature at this point. The Mayor asked that immediately and I don't know it off the top of my head. I'd have to look at it. But if it's a classified position, we would have to abide by the Civil Service Laws. I know like my assistant, your assistant, or your clerk is an unclassified position. You can hire whomever you choose, just like I can hire whomever I choose as well without abiding by those laws, because in our code and the charter it provides for that. So that's something to think about, but it won't be a hindrance as far as going forward, I'm sure.

Since you did call me up, I wanted to make sure that you guys did look in the materials I prepared for you all. It does reflect the 2013 changes that the Mayor had sent down and we had asked you to change Chapter 160, so it does reflect the current pay scale, which is a little bit different. There's significant changes from the old materials of 2011, so you'll want to look at that before you go forward.

Mr. Clemens: I have no passing it on with the change in 160. It's the process we've got to follow afterwards, that we're going to have to have a meeting and discuss.

Mr. Cotner: Yeah, I think once we've passed something, then we can discuss who we approach.

Mr. McGrady: I don't see any reason that we would hold things up. I think we ought to get this moving forward and send it on to Council and start through the reading process.

Mr. Joseph: When having the legislation prepared, the City Attorney and I discussed where we wanted to start the pay grade and it was determined since it has been adjusted we would leave it at a 5, which that range is \$27,820 at the low end to \$37,199 at the high end. So if we want to move something forward, obviously we can move this document, we can change the scale. That's something additional that we'd have to make a decision on before moving it on. I know, Councilman Clemens, you initially said you thought we should possibly look at a different scale on the pay. Is there something other than the Level 5 that you felt was appropriate?

Mr. Clemens: What's the lowest position on the classifications

Mr. Joseph: I believe our two previous part-time positions totaled about \$35,000 a year when we had the two part-timers. That was what they were paid in a combined pay rate annual.

Mr. Clemens: Five would start at \$25,000 or we could up it, depends on where we start it at. I want to hire somebody's that capable and we should pay them a capable wage. It's not going to be just a clerk or something like that. Somebody has to learn the position and possibly take over some day or, if something happens, take over immediately.

Ms. Kelly: So if we started them, just so I'm clear for myself, at Grade 5, they can be hired in anywhere from \$25,000 to \$37,000.

Mr. Clemens: Right.

Mr. Joseph: Mr. Clemens, would you prefer a different level?

Mr. Clemens: Well, yeah, I would go with a 7 because you can hire anywhere between there. I think it should be at a higher grade really, because we're hiring somebody that's going to be capable of doing the job and a 7 doesn't – the pay scale isn't that much different other than the pay number. I mean that's what the deal is. A 7 is starting at \$28,000 and 5 is at \$25,000. Now surely we're going to pay them more than what that is, but it gives you – it depends on how long they're here. It gives you time for them to increase in their pay.

Mr. Joseph: I agree with Councilman Clemens. I think a 7 would still be fine because the range is big enough that based on who we interview and what we believe their qualifications are and what they are entitled to receive in income based on their skills, I think that's probably a good range.

Ms. _____ Acoasta: _____ Acoasta again, 6550 Old Mill Run. If we moved to a full time position, is there a change in benefits for that person? Are we talking about retirement benefits now, etc., from the part-time positions that we had before?

Mr. Harris: The part-time position does get everything other than medical insurance. Full time would give them medical insurance, so that's the only difference.

Ms. Acoasta: How much more is that on top of the salary?

Mr. Harris: \$20,000 if they get family coverage. It depends on who you get obviously.

Ms. Acoasta: So there's a \$20,000 difference in moving from a two part-time to one full time position. Is that what I'm understanding? Can I ask what-- This is an assistant to the Clerk of Council. What is the main reason for moving this to one full time from two part-time positions? I mean what duties does that person perform that would be better performed by one full-time position than two part-time? Twenty thousand dollars is a lot, so I'm asking.

Mr. Joseph: Initially we have two full time – we had a full time clerk, a full time assistant clerk and a part-time assistant clerk. And the assistant clerk we had decided she wanted to go part-time, so we modified that for her, cause otherwise she was probably going to leave. We liked the work she was doing, so we decided to make that change. It saved the city a little bit of money and we still got a chance to keep her. Then she retired and we didn't fill the position. Then we had the full time clerk, she was here 26 years, and she probably did the job of three people. So we had our part-time clerk who retired two weeks after our full time clerk. I think it's probably the belief of at least a number of people up here that because now we've hired a new clerk that's going to be needing a lot of time to learn the ropes and while I'm sure she'll do a fine job, she just won't have the ability to probably do things in a speedy way. It will take her more time to go through records, go through files and things like that. And the things that our previous clerk could do maybe a little bit more than one new person could handle. And also one thing that has been talked about is a continuity plan. You know, one person leaves and we have someone that can step in Day One to do the position. We didn't have that and that, in some ways, has paralyzed Council's ability to function quickly. You've noticed we've not had all of our minutes approved in a number of meetings because we just simply – because we've been understaffed and because we've had new people. We had an acting clerk for a while, now we have a new clerk that's learning the ropes. We just don't have the time to get these minutes prepared and Council needs that information in a timely way. So I think those are some of the rationale behind moving it back to a full time position and that way we have people in place that can move in on a moment's notice to take over and we don't have this type of situation where Council's kind of waiting on people to get trained frankly to be able to do the job.

Ms. Acoasta: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Cotner: Are there questions or comments from committee? (No response.) Okay, so then what we want to do is modify this to make it the pay grade being a 7, and then we'll send it forward to Council next week for its first reading.

Mr. Joseph: Do we want to do a reading, or do we want to move it so we can pass it? Because, again, we can't do anything until we've changed this 160 ordinance about who we want to hire. We can't even talk about it.

Mr. McGrady: My recommendation would be to move it forward as an emergency.

Mr. Cotner: I'm fine with that. I agree the sooner we do it the better.

Mr. Joseph: We won't get up to a full staff complement until we do that. We're at one person now who's now learning the position.

Mr. Cotner: Okay. So I'll go ahead and make a motion to send this forward with a recommendation for adoption as an emergency. Do we have a second? Second by Councilman Long. All in favor say aye. (All voted "aye.") Opposed? (None.)

Mr. Joseph: And you did that with a 7, correct?

Mr. Cotner: With a 7.

5. PLANNING COMMISSION

Mr. Cotner: Item 5 always seems to be on here, looking for people for the Planning Commission. So tell your friends, tell your neighbors.

Mr. Joseph: Would you remind everybody, what is the party affiliation that this next member must be?

Mr. Cotner: An independent.

6. REQUEST FOR COUNCIL TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR A NEW CONTRACT WITH ZACH WOODRUFF TO CONSULT ON THE 2013 TAX LEVY CAMPAIGN.

Mr. Harris: Thank you, Chairman Cotner, members of Council. We had some discussion about this last Monday night. I know several of the Council members have met with Mr. Woodruff to discuss his ideas and I'm sure he'll get with everybody as he can over the next or so. A lot of discussion about this. Council was very unhappy with the way the last campaign was run. They wanted some things changed. The Mayor, the City Attorney and I went out and looked at several people. We chose Mr. Woodruff. He had run this type of campaign before for the City of Whitehall and everybody seemed to be happy with his ideas and some of the things he wants to do. We're asking that you allow the Mayor to enter into a contract to hire him and appropriate the money to run the informational only that we'll be paying for out of this – the informational campaign to let people know what's going on with the levy. And, with that, I'll answer any questions.

Mr. Cotner: Questions for the Auditor?

Male: I don't necessarily have any questions for you, Dick. I've checked around. You look at a number of the different communities and they do have budgets that are set aside to promote the services within city to ensure that the citizens are informed of all different services that can be provided. And, in some cases such as the City of Gahanna, the City of Whitehall, they also then do expound the elements as far as what

could be done if revenues were at this, or revenues were at that. So I understand that I had some concerns as well when I first saw this piece of legislation the way that it was written, but now that the clarifications have come across, I fully understand that it is strictly the money being allocated and spent to promote the City of Reynoldsburg of what we could do here and it is not going to be spent on T-shirts, yard signs and things of that sort. That's different for me.

Mr. Harris: The other thing and we tried to make it very clear to everybody we've talked to about this is this is factual only. The City Attorney will be approving everything that goes in these ads or everything involved with this including website and everything else. No place in it will it say vote for, support, go to vote. It's not a get out to vote campaign. In fact the web name is going to be ReynoldsburgFacts.com when they get it up and running. So it is strictly a factual presentation. Many of those facts Council has talked about and seen in this room and it will only be a factual presentation. It will not be a sway presentation to say vote for, support, get out to vote, those kind of things. Yard signs will not be used. It will strictly be basically direct mail.

Ms. Kelly: I just wanted to say thank you to the Mayor for pursuing this avenue to help make sure we have informed voters. I had said before that just because we put it on the ballot gives people the opportunity to vote, but doesn't give them the opportunity to be informed. So I like that the city is making an effort to make sure people are informed. Whichever way they may vote, at least they're going to be able to make an informed decision. So thank you. I commend the effort.

Mr. Cotner: That's been one of the biggest criticisms that we've all heard that nobody knows what's going on and there's not enough information. So I'm glad that we are taking steps to share the message of what some of the issues could be and where the challenges that the city faces are. Thank you very much for putting the effort in.

Mr. Joseph: Thank you, Chairman Cotner. I had comments about this issue last week. I won't rehash those. My position is clear that I'm opposed based on what was said last week. However, what I would like to mention tonight is that I find it very interesting that members of Council met with Mr. Woodruff to talk about this issue, but obviously not everybody was invited to speak with him that might have questions. That probably would have been very helpful for every member of Council to have been invited to speak with Mr. Woodruff so they could have found out exactly why this issue is supposedly permitted. I'd like to know who exactly met with Mr. Woodruff and what was discussed? Was it a meeting that violated the open meetings rules? It sounds like a secret meeting to me, Mr. Harris.

Mr. Harris: They were met individually. So unless individual people are not allowed to meet on these kind of things, it certainly is not. The City Attorney was present if you'd like to ask him.

Mr. Joseph: That is fine. Why were only certain Council members invited to meet with him?

Mr. Harris: Availability.

Mr. Hood: I was present this evening when Ms. DeBrock and Ms. Kelly met with Mr. Woodruff. I understand that Mr. Cotner met with Mr. Woodruff. I was also present with Mr. Barrett at a separate occasion when he met with Mr. Woodruff. It's my understanding that Mr. Woodruff is reaching out to each individual Council member, including you, Mr. Joseph, to meet with you in the very near future. There was no secret meeting that occurred. There certainly was no violation of open meetings law. I would not allow that.

Mr. Joseph: Well, I appreciate that and I'm glad that was clarified. But when we hear that Council members were meeting with Mr. Woodruff and there's no further clarification or explanation, I mean it's very easy to get – to make a judgment based on very sketchy evidence.

Mr. Hood: Well, I'll apologize for that. But, like I said, it is my understanding that Mr. Woodruff will reach out to you as he has with other members of Council and your schedule permitting, he will make a time to meet with you at your convenience.

Ms. Kelly: I can add that I almost didn't make the meeting because I was running late.

Male: Mr. Hood, for clarity, the Sunshine Law allows two elected officials to meet.

Mr. Hood: You can't have a majority of any public body. In this case it would be three.

Mr. Cotner: I don't want there to be any doubts about anyone's integrity in this in any way, shape or form, because I can guarantee that no one is attempting to do something underhanded, undermined, or behind closed doors. And to imply that any member of Council or Administration would be doing so, I'm certain is not appreciated, because we are all here serving. I gladly met with Mr. Woodruff to understand what his plan could be for the city and sharing information. I am wholly supportive of getting that message to the community so that they know what needs this city faces. We've got the different reports we've talked about time and time again, but we know those and the general public, unfortunately, still does not. So trying to get someone to help the city to spread the message and to make sure they understand what the city could do or where our shortfalls may be I think is very helpful. That's what I would support wholly is getting the message out. We've heard it time and again. No one knows what's going on and they need to hear about that, so that's what I would support in this issue is making sure that that message is shared.

I'd like to make a motion then to send this forward to Council with a recommendation for adoption as an emergency. Second by Councilman Barrett. All in favor say "aye." (All voted "aye.") Opposed? (None.) Thank you.

Any other comments by members of Council or anyone else? (No response.) Seeing none, then I will adjourn the Council meeting at 8:49 p.m.

This document was prepared by:
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