

SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

June 21, 2010

Members of Safety Committee present: Chris Long, Nathan Burd, Fred Deskins, Jr.
Councilman Mel Clemens was absent.

Other members of Council present: Leslie Kelly, Doug Joseph, Barth R. Cotner, Council President William L. Hills.

Vice Chairman Long: I'll call the Safety Committee Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Item No. 2 on the agenda tonight is the approval of the agenda. Do we have any changes, additions or deletions? Any changes from Committee or Council? Hearing none, it will stand as written.

Item No. 3 is the approval of the minutes of the Safety Committee Meeting held June 7, 2010. Are there any changes, additions or deletions to the minutes? Hearing none they'll stand as submitted.

Item No. 4 - ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF REYNOLDSBURG, OHIO: Section 537.14 "Curfew" of Chapter 537 Offenses Against Persons REQUIRING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND ESTABLISHING A DAYTIME CURFEW FOR MINORS BETWEEN THE AGE OF SIX AND UNDER THE AGE OF EIGHTEEN- -first reading 6-14-10. I have a number of speaker slips here tonight; I don't have them in any specific order, so we'll go with the first one on the top. Mr. Norm Brusk.

Mr. Brusk: Thank you, Councilman Long. Thank you Council for listening to me. On this last week, we've discussed this particular ordinance. A lot of people came up talking about the constitutionality and that's where I would like to start. The State of Ohio requires compulsory attendance for minors between the age of 6 and under the age of 18. The constitutionality of this law is undisputed. It provides for the safety and well being of the community for good and compelling reasons.

Two, the daytime curfew ordinance supplements the compulsory attendance statute, not that it's a stand-alone statute, it supplements what's already in place. It enhances the general welfare and public safety. It is no more unreasonable or arbitrary than the compulsory attendance law and it is settled law that it meets all constitutionality requirements. The controlling case for Franklin County is IN RE Carpenter. There exists no Ohio cases contrary to the Carpenter case. Attorney Hood, City Attorney Hood, can provide details of this law and its history. I'm not going to go into that. This constitutionality really is nothing more than a smoke screen. It is not a real issue.

This ordinance was requested by the Police Department, Officer Mielke in specific, the School Resource Police Officer to help her and the police do their job more effectively. The city needs this ordinance because there are more and more incidences of youth roaming the street during school hours. The school's attendance officers are not able to counter this trend. The parents are unwilling or unable to control their children in some cases.

Some of the children roaming the streets are from other districts such as Columbus, so the attendance officers have no authority over them. Columbus, by the way, has a similar ordinance which has been effective in reducing the crime rate in their city. You'll hear from one of the

speakers on that issue. Without the proposed ordinance, the Columbus youths cross over the border to our city with resultant problems. Also the State Statute on truancy does not apply to those students who are suspended or expelled. This ordinance will address those shortcomings.

There are many reasons that the current truancy law is inadequate to deal with the situation in Reynoldsburg. As I mentioned, it does not cover children from other districts such as Columbus who come into Reynoldsburg to “hang”. It does not cover suspended or expelled students. Attendance Officers usually go after a child only after he/she is a chronic truant. Attendance Officers are generally not on the streets where the problems are occurring. The ordinance will provide the police with a means they currently do not have, to react immediately when children are not where they are required to be.

It’s about time that the police be seen as helpmates in this community and not the enemy. There is no doubt in my mind that the ordinance will not be abused. The children who have a legitimate reason to be on the streets will not be adversely affected. Let’s give our Police Department the tools they need in order to protect this community and preserve public safety. Thank you for your time.

Mr. Long: Any questions for Mr. Brusk, from Committee, from Council? Thanks Norm. The next speaker slip I have is a Mr. James Ackermann. James Ackermann.

Mr. Ackermann: Hi, can everyone hear me okay? Good. I’m here, I had a different view than what came down to the kid for the, they wanted to have the curfew law, daytime curfew law for the kids and I was under the impression that they were also talking about the Summertime too but I guess that’s not the issue here. So I think it would be a good idea because you know if there are two parents working in the day or one isn’t home and one doesn’t know where the kid is at or it was expelled from school and it was sent home then they can lead to a lot of headaches and problems and the kid will wonder, was it somebody else on the way home or wherever he’s going but what I’m trying to say is that on Livingston Avenue at the Huber home, that there was a guy that had a moving sale and I went over to see what he had and I said ‘are you moving because of the school tax that went up?’ He said ‘no, I’m moving because the crime is high over here because the Police can’t do much about the kids that are in this area come over from the apartment or from the School or wherever and they break into my home’ and I assume it’s in the daytime when nobody’s around. So I would say it would be nice to have the curfew hour because you know, what happens, it’ll be more like Detroit because I just happened to see that area and it’s pretty bad. I mean, you know, there’s no supervision, people burn homes down and boats down and you know, high crime and everything and drugs and so forth, but what I’m trying to say, if we don’t take action now and control it, this is where we’re going to lose ourselves into the future and we don’t want that situation down here in Reynoldsburg. We want to keep it as (inaudible) as we can. I understand Columbus had pretty much control over it and if they show good example, that’s what we need over here because we don’t need any more crime and so forth. We need to have it under control so that way you can have peace of mind that you don’t have to worry about someone in the daytime and come and you know breaking in the house or whatever and so I think it’s a good idea.

Mr. Long: Thank you, Mr. Ackermann. Any questions from Council for Mr. Ackermann? Next speaker slip I have is from Lieutenant Bob Meader from Columbus Police Department.

Lt. Meader: Sir, if it's okay, I'd like to defer to Officer Mielke from Reynoldsburg, please.

Mr. Long: Okay, Officer Mielke, Katherine.

Officer Mielke: Is it okay with you?

Mr. Long: That's fine, no problem.

Officer Mielke: Thank you very much. I'm Officer Katherine Mielke with Reynoldsburg Police Department. I'm also a resident of Reynoldsburg. I've been a law enforcement officer with Reynoldsburg for seventeen years. The majority of my years have been spent dealing with the juveniles in our community, whether it's through the DARE Program, working with the Juvenile Diversion Program and currently I serve at the High School. When our community came forward with concerns about our community and concerns of rising crime and wondering whether everybody's going to flee out of the community and leave this community, this is a wonderful community and when these concerns were brought to me, I had spoken to some of my fellow officers from Columbus in regards to how they've been dealing with various crime problems and one of those that was brought to my attention was their school attendance law. Now, Columbus Police Department refers to it as their Truancy Enforcement but it speaks directly to the same law that was brought forward to you and your committee. It is what we call our daytime curfew but in Columbus it's called the School Attendance Law. It mirrors theirs and I brought it forward to the Chief of Police and asked Chief Suci if he would be interested in supporting this legislation and possibly bringing it to Council. The reasons why is, as a School Resource Officer at the High School, I started noticing more and more times where our Detective Bureau was coming into the High School and speaking to some of the students in regards to burglaries, etc. Now, one of the things that continued to occur was a lot of those students that they wanted to speak to weren't in school because they were either suspended or expelled. Now our current truancy issue doesn't deal with suspended or expelled students because they're not in school, they're not required to be in school because they're expelled but it also doesn't state anywhere in the city or the community that these people have to be home during school hours. They can wander the streets. So what I did was, I pulled up the statistics most recently in regards to our school year in regards to specifically burglaries and Lieutenant Meader will talk in regards to Columbus' impact in regards to their malicious property crimes I believe is what they call it but we had 125 burglaries in Reynoldsburg since the beginning of the school year to the end of the school year, not including holiday breaks, not including weekends, because obviously we did have crimes on those dates, but I used those statistics solely for the time that the school year is in session. Seventy-two of those 125 occurred during high school hours, between 7:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. If a crime was reported at 3:15 p.m., I did not include it in those statistics. They weren't included in the

night time hours, because I was looking solely at related to the high school hours. Of those, we were able to solve 15, of those 15, nine involved juveniles that should have been in school or were suspended or expelled. So, obviously this brings attention to right now the fact is an officer can go and talk to a kid on the street at any time because of our truancy ordinances, but the kids say 'hey, I'm expelled' or 'hey, I do online school' or 'hey, I do this' and it's a legitimate excuse for truancy in regards to truancy, there's nothing that a police officer can do in regards to them being on the street. With this daytime ordinance, then we would be able to get involved with their parents. So let's say we have a kid that's on the street and his Mom is sick. So she's required him to be home to take care of her and she needs medicine, similar to our night time curfew. We call the parent up, say 'Mrs. Jones, your son Bob says he's on an errand to get you cough medicine from the grocery store. Is that true?' and she says 'yes, I'm sick. I've sent him on to do this business'. As part of this curfew, he would not be in trouble because he's on legitimate business for his parent. Likewise, in a situation involving home schoolers which I know there's been some concern raised in the community in regards to home schooling. When I was a DARE Officer, I was very interested and actively involved in our home school families. I have a lot of friends who home school and they are probably in my top ten list of best parents that I know because they are actively involved in their children's lives. If a kid is home schooled, let's say Susie is home schooled with Shaniqua and they both have the same Spanish teacher. You know usually, or sometimes, I can't say usually, sometimes they bring them all together for Spanish class or some specific subject and maybe those kids need to study together. So Susie walks from the Briarcliff neighborhood all the way over to Birchfield and we stop Susie on the street and say to Susie 'hey, you're supposed to be in school, right?' 'No, I'm home schooled', and we say 'well, what's your Mom's number' and we call the parent and the parent says 'yes, Susie's on her way to Shaniqua's house and they're going to work on their Spanish project and they always do this Tuesday at 4:00 p.m.' 'Okay, thank you very much, appreciate your time' and that ends the discussion with that child and the child goes on her way; so it's just looking out for the betterment of the community and being accountable and now every Tuesday, when officer so-and-so sees Susie walking down the street, he can say 'hey, Susie, how are you doing, have a good day' and we've just built a positive relationship between a Police Officer and a child. And now I'll stand for questions.

Mr. Long: Officer Mielke.

Officer Mielke: Yes Sir.

Mr. Long: The Ohio Revised Code is very specific that a School District will have an Attendance Officer on staff. Does Reynoldsburg have one of those?

Officer Mielke: They have Social Workers. I know that I deal directly with the Social Director at the high school. I'm not sure how each individual building works. That would be a question for the school administration. At the high school, we have Carol Jacobs. She's in charge of truancy. She meets with parents prior to filing truancy charges. We look at other opportunities for that child within the schools if they're not cut out for traditional school. We look at online schooling. The

school district allows for support services. It's going to be coming under a new name. I apologize, I don't know the new name of the schooling that they're going to try. We have Trailblazers, there are so many different avenues that the school district tries first to engage a child and keep them coming back to school. Even to the point where these kids are recognized by their teachers and their teachers will work with them. They'll do classroom checks where they send out a slip for every period to make sure that kid is attending that class of that period and if they're not, then they bring the kid into the Social Worker, she speaks with them. If they're having, maybe issues of the day or something where they're just not getting along well with the traditional classroom, they'll pull them into the office and they'll try and work one-on-one with that kid, taking their assignment from the classroom to give them some type of personal engagement to keep that child in school.

Mr. Long: So the Social Worker gets involved with the student once they've reached the habitual five consecutive absences.

Officer Mielke: Well, that's when they start looking at filing charges, but they start working with them from the get go. She and I have a great relationship, and if there's a kid that I notice that's kind of falling out, and the same thing with our security staff and even the teaching staff, because then they'll start getting them to that, to Carol Jacobs, so that she doesn't have to get them when it's too late. We'll start, hey, we're noticing that this student has skipped, you know, out at lunch time and we've also noticed that maybe she's having problems at home with Mom and Mom doesn't really know what to do with her because there's stuff that's going on in the evening hours. So there's a lot more to do with just saying that it's going to be a charge of curfew and off they go, but yeah, what ends up happening after a certain number of days, full days missed, is they file truancy charges against the child.

Mr. Long: Five consecutive is the minimum per individual.

Officer Mielke: Correct, but now this type of ordinance would even deal with the situation. Let's say for example we have a student, and this occurred in the last school year, a boy left school, didn't get permission from the school, didn't get permission from his mother, went home during lunch hour, came back to the school, on his way back another student who was out of school but suspended, jumped him on the way back to school and beat him up. So that child, if he knew that it wasn't right for him, that he could be in trouble, not only, you know, in school detention is what would happen to him for missing a class period, but conceivably he could be in trouble with the law, it might prevent him from making that trip home and then it would also hopefully prevent that child that beat him up from being out on the street, or at least an officer would have a better handle on getting in touch with that child that beat him up, because the officers did see, in this scenario, the officers did see the one child on the street prior to the incident.

Mr. Long: Thank you.

Officer Mielke: Any other questions?

Mr. Long: Any questions from Committee? Nathan.

Mr. Burd: Officer Mielke, thank you for your service to the schools and to the city.

Officer Mielke: I appreciate that.

Mr. Burd: In your scenario where Susie's walking to Shaniqua's house, what if Susie's mom is on the other line or what if Susie's mom decided to step outside and talk to her neighbor? How much of the officer's time would need to be consumed proving Susie's story? What if the phone doesn't get answered right away?

Officer Mielke: I would say that the officer's still going to try, because even if we look at taking this child into our care during the time frame that we're dealing with, the situation, our situation is going to be that, re-unite the child with the adult, with their parent, anyway. We're not going to take them off to jail. They don't go to jail. They come to the Police Department. If we can't get a hold of the parent on the scene, then they'll come to the Police Department and get their kid. If the parent says 'you know what, I'm sick and tired of Susie and she's just been a bad seed and I'm not coming to get her', then we would take her to Children's Services. So that child would never go in a situation where they're going to jail based on the initial contact with the police. I'm not saying they couldn't go to jail for being in violation of the school attendance law for nine times in one year, but....

Mr. Burd: My concern was just in the scenario Susie and Shaniqua both have valid reasons for not.....

Officer Mielke: Absolutely.

Mr. Burd:for being out; and so my concern was just the officer's time. I mean if, when we study these issues, you know, enforcement seems to be a trouble point. I'm just looking around the country at areas that have passed this and I just, I'm concerned about the time spent verifying stories that are likely legitimate. I know some are, you know better than I do about those but.....

Officer Mielke: Right.

Mr. Burd:my concern is the ones that are and how much time would be spent by the officer in those situations.

Officer Mielke: I think one of the things, and I think Lieutenant Meader will address that, is when we look at the decrease in the amount of crimes that occur that would allow our officers, instead of being tied up for 2 ½ hours on a burglary call where they're dusting for fingerprints and collecting evidence and putting information in the computer, they're available to be driving around the

neighborhoods patrolling and preventing those things from occurring. So I believe an officer thinking, okay, I've got 2 ½ hours that I could be spending on a potential burglary call or an extra 15 minutes, you know, getting in touch with this parent because ultimately they're going to have to get in touch with the parent anyway, that they would take the time to do so.

Mr. Burd: Thanks.

Mr. Long: Leslie.

Mrs. Kelly: Hi, Officer Mielke. Thank you for coming tonight. Have you, has there been any discussion regarding how this ordinance may affect the workload of the Police Department? Is there any concern that officers may be overloaded? That this might be just kind of one of those things where it's a great idea, but it just might be too much for us to implement?

Officer Mielke: Well one, I think the Chief wouldn't be in support if it was going to overload his officers. I could be wrong. I don't want to speak out of turn in regards to that, but I think it goes back to the fact like I said, Lieutenant Meader's going to share some statistics where during the first time they looked at their statistics from 2005 - 2006 where they didn't have enforcement of their school attendance law that they call truancy, to now after three years of their enforcement of it, they've decreased their burglaries and their malicious crimes by 44%. Now if we take 120, if we take those 72 burglaries that we had and ask those people, those 72 people that were burglarized, if they would like to be part of that 44% decrease and not have ever experienced that burglary, then I'm thinking they probably would say yes. So our officers are also going to say yes because it's going to mean less time they're spending investigating the burglary situation.

Mrs. Kelly: Mr. Long. I have one more question.

Mr. Long: Yes Ma'am.

Mrs. Kelly: When you file, when charges are filed, when they finally get filed after you go through the letter home, and meeting with the parent, and sometimes phone calls, meeting with the students and all things are in place to help a child not experience habitual chronic truancy and when they're finally filed, what would you say is the average time period it takes before those charges are actually heard, the child actually faces Court?

Officer Mielke: It can take, for a truancy charge, it can take anywhere, well first you've got to have all the different times of habitual truant. So that could in itself take a couple months, where you're gaining the evidence in regards to them being habitually truant and then for the Court to hear it and actually finally get to it, probably about six months. Somewhere between six and eight months and if we're working with the daytime curfew ordinance, those parents would be heard in Court and approximately, well they get notification in approximately three weeks from the incident that occurs.

So they would have their time in Court.

Mrs. Kelly: So the response would be more immediate with this.

Officer Mielke: That's right.

Mrs. Kelly: Okay.

Mr. Long: I have one more question Kathy.

Officer Mielke: Yes.

Mr. Long: I did some checking with the school district, because to go along the aspect as far as the manpower, I believe City Attorney Hood has mentioned that we had 100 individuals roughly in, home schooled, and he was pretty close. The school district has us sitting at 103, but what concerns me are the, I believe 330 on line students, that the program is presented to them in the aspect of being able to have the flexibility to work within their own schedules and their own time. So if we have a student who is more comfortable or more able to do his lessons in the evenings or the weekends, this legislation would still require them to stay inside, in their home, or under the care of a parent, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., during the normal school hours that he's already been excused from to go do the on line school.

Officer Mielke: Depending on what age school, that would be correct because the way that this law reads is it's to affect the predominant population in our community and you speak of 100 students that are home schooled and.....

Mr. Long: No Ma'am, I'm talking about the 330 on line school.

Officer Mielke: Oh, I'm sorry, the 330 that are _____ we have 1,700 in the high school alone.

Mr. Long: Right.

Officer Mielke: I'm not sure how many students are actually in the district.

Mr. Long: There are 6,700 in the district.

Officer Mielke: Oh, 6,700, okay. We have to, in this type of ordinance, we have to go with the majority. It doesn't mean that they can't go on legitimate business for their parents, but it does mean that they can't hang out on the street corner, or hang out in front of the local grocery store during the time frame that they are supposed to be at a traditional school.

Mr. Long: I agree with you, yeah.

Officer Mielke: Because what we're finding is those students, some of those students and not all, because that would be inappropriate to say, that there are some of those online students that are enticing the students out of the regular population to leave school for periods of time but not long enough to get them under truancy. They might entice somebody to leave the school building for a couple hours in the day and then go back to school so it does not effect them in regards to school truancy.

Mr. Long: I was also given relevant numbers that there are roughly 600 students in the school district who are listed as late arrivals and roughly 800 who are on early dismissal. That's going to be an administrative headache for you.

Officer Mielke: Actually not because.....

Mr. Long: With kids running all over the place.

Officer Mielke: Actually not because we've had a situation where we have dealt with early dismissal, and late arrival, and it is simply solved by putting a sticker on their ID that states what time they're to be in school, or what time they're to leave, and the school is willing to do that.

Mr. Long: Okay, I have no more questions. I'm sorry, Councilman Joseph.

Mr. Joseph: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Officer Mielke, I got a question from a slightly different perspective. The legislation cites that it would basically cover minors between the ages of 6 and under the age of 18. How would an officer determine that someone is not within that range? Like someone could be 18, 19 and look younger. How's an officer going to be able to determine that a person isn't a minor?

Officer Mielke: Well, I think a lot of times the officer's going to use their discretion and their reasonableness in any type of situation. I mean, the same thing that we do in a nighttime curfew situation. If we have somebody that looks 16 years old and they're 18 years old and we stop them on the street after midnight currently, we have to use our discretion and if I stop somebody and they look 16 to me and they say I'm 18 and here's my ID and I say 'sorry to trouble you, thank you very much, and have a nice day'.

Mr. Joseph: What about individuals that may not have their ID on them? Perhaps someone is out jogging, doesn't have their ID, can an officer take them in?

Officer Mielke: An officer has a right at any time, if they're investigating what they believe to be, that a crime has occurred, and if they're believing curfew as a crime, they have the ability to ask the person their age, their date of birth and their soc and their phone number and home address. If they

fail, if they say 'I'm not going to give that to you', then there's actually a law that makes that illegal for them not to provide the basic information based on the fact that the officer is investigating a crime.

Mr. Joseph: So if they provide that information, but didn't have an ID that could be checked on the spot....

Officer Mielke: Yeah, if we feel that the person's not being truthful, then we might verify 'okay, what's your Mom's name'? You know, is there any other way that I could check that information? Most people that are 18 years old are going to know their Social Security number and most people, obviously not all, but most people are going to have a State ID or a Driver's License on file that we could check through our LEADS System, so we'd be able to check through our computer data base.

Mr. Joseph: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Long: Thank you, Officer Mielke.

Officer Mielke: Okay.

Mr. Long: Lieutenant.

Lt. Meader: Council, thank you for giving me the opportunity to come and talk to you about what we have done in the City of Columbus. My name's Bob Meader, I'm a Lieutenant with Zone 5. I've been with the Columbus Division of Police for twenty years. I've been on Zone 5 which contains all the inner precincts for four years. On January 31st of 2007 we began what we called Operation 2007 which is our truancy program on Zone 5. I did not have a crystal ball that worked, but if I did, it wouldn't have told me what we have experienced over the last three years and that is an incredible decrease in property crime. We compare our property crimes when we're looking at what we call malicious destruction of property, which is typically your attempt theft from auto. In other words, somebody takes and breaks a window of a car, doesn't take anything. That's going to be a malicious destruction of property. We also look at theft from auto which is where they break the window, they take the GPS and we also look at burglaries, daytime burglaries and all these crimes are compared 9a to 2p, and they are compared excluding weekends, holidays, Christmas break, Spring break, those sorts of things. These are only days that the children are supposed to be in school. When we took a look at the, who was committing these crimes and we found out significantly through debriefing the children after we've captured them for truancy that often times what would happen is, when the children would come to school, after a birthday or certainly after Christmas, they got a Play Station 3, they got a Wii, they got whatever the new video game of the day was, when they told their friends and maybe their soon to be former friends, we would find out that one of them would go truant and would go and commit the burglary because word spread very quickly. Now what we also found was that once we began this enforcement, word spread quickly also and that helped decrease the numbers. Now when we take a look, I could just give you some quick

stats as to what we looked at and as Officer Mielke just previously said 2005 -2006 was the last full year that we did not have truancy enforcement on Zone 5. We began January of 2007, so we don't use the 2006 - 2007 for comparison because it was less than half the year. Our first full year of truancy enforcement, 2007 - 2008, those three crimes dropped 22%. The second year, comparing 2005 - 2006 to 2008 - 2009 school year, we were down 30% and then we just received the stats actually within the last couple of days and comparing the 2005 - 2006 school year to the 2009 - 2010 school year, we were down 43% which is obviously just less than half of the property crime we had in 2005 - 2006. That's what I meant by my crystal ball would have never guessed we were down by almost half of these property crimes. Now I know that it was mentioned, I think Mr. Burd mentioned about how much time would be spent what we call a force multiplier. When the officer, Officer Mielke referenced this, but when an officer's not out taking a burglary report which takes a significant amount of time and then when you try to upload that report, maybe it uploads, maybe it doesn't, you have to go back to the Police Station to do that. Just the fact that you're doing a neighborhood canvas knocking doors, you're dusting for fingerprints, you're collecting evidence, you're taking it to the property room or back to the Police Station as opposed to not taking that report at all. There is, it is very difficult to quantify how much that has helped taking officers whose time is precious in and of itself, and try, and having them go out and do other preventative patrol. We became so successful on Zone 5 that it is now, this program is now conducted citywide. It is conducted from Polaris to the south side and from far out east which of course borders Reynoldsburg to far west. Just this past year on Zone 5, the inner-city precinct, we captured 839 truants, and we charged 136 of them and I'll discuss how we charged them in just a moment. Citywide we captured 2,737 truants, just under 3,000 truants and we had 356 charges on 237 students. On Zone 5, we had, we captured 3 students that were truant, 4 time offenders; we had 3 that were 5 time offenders; and we had one each at 6, 8 and 9. They were not only not good students, they were not good truants, but we were able to capture them and help reduce our crime. When do we charge them? We charge them with school attendance and we charge them after we capture them for the third time. We were charging them after two times; however, it overwhelmed the officers with the number of charges and then we went to a pre-print charge which helped too. We charge them after their 3rd time. Mrs. Kelly, I know you asked how long does it take to go to Court. It takes anywhere in Columbus about 60 - 90 days before they actually do appear in Court. This is an unruly charge so they actually don't get taken to jail under any circumstances for this charge no matter how many times they're captured. When we capture them, we take them to the truancy center. The truancy center is located on south Ohio. There's also another one that's in the northeast quadrant of the city also that just opened. The truancy center is run by the YMCA, they process them, they enter them into a program, they contact their parents. If we cannot get a hold of a student's parent that is expelled then ultimately the last stop for us is Children's Services. We don't want to take them there, we don't want to overwhelm them and we have not. We've been able to work that out, but if we do come across an ECOT student or a home schooler, we do verify whether or not they are supposed to be in school, ECOT, if they've logged on in the last few weeks, if they haven't, we will take them in on truancy. If they are a home schooler, those are very easy to verify to include going to the residence or to a place where the students tells us they're supposed to be, but of course, you know, we're, our number one concern is for their safety. Our number two concern is for their education and of course, crime is mixed in there too. We've been very successful at this and I can take questions specific to Columbus. I don't, I won't reference Reynoldsburg, but thank you.

Mr. Long: Your online students, you refer to them as....

Lt. Meader: They're ECOT.

Mr. Long: ECOT?

Lt. Meader: That's a....

Mr. Long: And how do they verify to you that they are what they say they are?

Lt. Meader: They will tell us that they are ECOT, we will call, we have a, we've issued our officers a division phone and every time they come up with a new school somewhere in the city, they will enter it into the phone bank and they'll just call it. When they call, they let us know whether or not they're in school or they're a student of ECOT students who are untruthful with us....

Mr. Long: Right.

Lt. Meader:verify that and when we do that, if they are truly an ECOT student, there is no time that they're to be in school and we contact the parent and then they're released.

Mr. Long: Okay, so in the City of Columbus, the ECOT or virtual students are exempt from your daytime curfew.

Lt. Meader: That's correct. That's, they're exempt in practical application, not necessarily by statute.

Mr. Long: Right, right and each time you would pick a student up, you mentioned that you had one you picked up four times. Is it an M4?

Lt. Meader: No, there, it's an unruly charge, it's not a delinquent charge. Meaning that it's not a, it's not a minor misdemeanor, misdemeanor felony, it's none of those. It's a charge specific to being a juvenile and so they don't, they never go to what we call CDR, Court of Domestic Relations, juvenile jail it's commonly referred to. We never take them there for that crime. Now if they have a fail to appear on one, we would take them on that charge but that's because it's an independent charge just not attending school.

Mr. Long: This question would probably be for the City Attorney or so forth, but we don't have access to the "Y" to drop students off at, so I'm not sure our plan would, what would our plan in the City of Reynoldsburg be?

Lt. Meader: Well, if I could just address it at least on its face, the "Y" will take students from any jurisdiction, but it would be a drive for your officers.

Mr. Long: And there are charges also associated with it as well. We've already been approached by the management, Mr. Hurt, Don Hurt.....

Lt. Meader: Don Hurt, yes, I've worked with him down there.

Mr. Long: ...and he's the Director down there and he's attempting to get us into conversations as far as setting up some type of contractual agreement....

Lt. Meader: Very well.

Mr. Long:between the city and them. I'm sorry, Attorney Hood.

City Attorney Hood: That is correct. The YMCA is more than willing to accept any offenders that the Police Department pick up, but there would be a need for your referenced charges. I want to make sure we're clear here. There would be a contract put in place between the City of Reynoldsburg and the YMCA for financial contributions in order to let us partake in that particular program that they have up and running on south Ohio. So we have been in contact and are in discussions with them as well.

Mr. Long: In lieu of that Jed, what have you been thinking about in line for your legislative request?

Mr. Hood: Well, just as Officer Mielke explained to you, the Council earlier, the other avenues that are available under the statute, the Unruly Child Statute, the procedure that Columbus put in place is admirable. I don't know that it would fit for Reynoldsburg because of the time, distance, and the financial contributions in place, but we do have those other options that are available under the statute that I provided City Council, I believe last week.

Mr. Long: Okay.

Lt. Meader: If I could just dovetail that just slightly. Our westside officers, our far westside, West High School, Westland High School, that area, they don't actually take them to the truancy center because of the distance unless it's an extreme circumstance. They take them right back to the school or to home.

Mr. Long: Okay.

Lt. Meader: As a general rule because of the time. It would essentially be the same travel time for some of the far west precincts.

Mr. Long: Any questions from the committee, Nathan.

Mr. Burd: Thanks for coming over here tonight. Is it correct to say that the amount of patrol officers in the Zone is the same now as it was prior to the daytime curfew ordinance in the City of Columbus, or are there additional officers since then that are monitoring the area, do you know?

Lt. Meader: Yes, I do know. It's my area so I can speak very high, very definitely about it. The short answer says that there's slightly less officers, but I would like to back up and let you know that I do assign two officers for the Zone specifically to pick up truants because the problem was so significant. In the beginning, it was very easy to pick the truants up. It is difficult now because

the word has spread and when they see the cruisers they do go back to school or into a residence, not necessarily out committing a crime. So they, because of some injuries that we've had and I know that our redistricting plan has made the news and that's going to take effect on July 11th, we also in the City of Columbus, Columbus Public Schools has decided and I don't understand the whole plan at this point but they are not, it's my understanding according to the media, they are not busing the high school students in the coming year. So that's going to impact us in some way. What way, I don't know. So, to answer your question specifically, we have slightly less officers today than when we began the program in January of '07 due to injuries and attrition.

Mr. Burd: And the two officers whose sole responsibility is to enforce the curfew, I assume the other officers on patrol will have the same ability, but they are also, are doing other things, or is it only two people who apprehend juveniles?

Lt. Meader: Well, because of the way our language in our contract is, those two officers are rotated every 60 days. So I have a pool of officers that we keep drawing from. The other officers have that same ability. Typically, when they come across a truant, they know to call the Truant Officers and they come over and process them or they'll take them to the Truancy Center and then our Truant Officers will meet them there and process them.

Mr. Burd: Thank you.

Mr. Long: Is that all, those two officers only in a single zone?

Lt. Meader: They're assigned to a zone, but now it's, now the whole program is conducted citywide.

Mr. Long: Then each zone will have two officers assigned to truancy?

Lt. Meader: Yes, Sir except the west side one had one officer for some amount of time, but yes, essentially two per zone.

Mr. Long: Okay, in a relative geographic zone, Zone 5 would be comparative to the size of Reynoldsburg?

Lt. Meader: I don't know how, what's the square mileage?

Mr. Long: You had to ask, didn't you?

Lt. Meader: You asked first, Sir. Fourteen square miles? My zone's 12.3. It's the smallest of all the zones. The next smallest zone is 39 square miles before redistricting on July 11th. So we'll have to reconfigure those numbers, but my particular zone is 12.3 square miles and this year we captured 839 truants.

Mr. Long: Okay, so technically, or theoretically, we can sit back and say that if the legislation doesn't go through, or we opt to go ahead and put this back into the responsibility of the school district, they should have two full time truant or attendance officers on the street?

Lt. Meader: I see your direction. I, it's been effective in Columbus.

Mr. Long: Okay. All right. Thank you. Thank you, Sir.

Lt. Meader: Thank you.

Mr. Long: Questions from anybody else on the Committee, Council? Thank you, Lieutenant.

Lt. Meader: Thank you for the opportunity. I'll stick around if there's any followup.

Mr. Long: The next speaker slip I have is a Bill Mackin. Mr. Mackin.

Mr. Mackin: I'm a Blockwatch captain representing about 117 homes and everybody I talked to is for passage of this. They say it's a no brainer, no reason not to pass it. I also have a police report here, I don't know which one, incident report. There's 16 pages of it. This is just since January and this is for three streets. After ruling out all the miscellaneous stuff and squad runs and so forth, there are about 27 incidences between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. of police runs and comprised of stolen property, fraud, prowler, alarm systems disturbance, juvenile complaint, theft, wanted person, breaking and entering attempts. Now I don't have the breakdown whether it was school kids or not, but if you don't pass this thing, this kind of thing's going to increase. There was something else, oh, just to relate a personal incident, I don't know whether Reynoldsburg was in school a week and ½ ago? No? Okay. There was something I observed about 3:00 p.m., this is broad daylight. There's a school age child, probably somewhere between 13 - 14, not older than 16 or 17 walking down the street. I didn't pay much attention at first, but I kept watching him. He walked down the sidewalk and then he'd start to cross the street in front of a car, walk by the car, look in the driver's side, get back on the same side of the sidewalk. He walked about another 40 feet, there's a car across the street. He walks across the street, walks in the street, looks in the driver's side of the car, gets on that side of the sidewalk. This went on for less than a block. He crossed the street four times. Now he's either stupid or arrogant, but it's obvious that he was casing out cars, looking for something in them, key or whatever, and this was in broad daylight and this, if you don't pass this thing, this kind of thing is going to increase. Everybody I've talked to, they want to know why you wouldn't pass this and each individual that is against this, they want to know why. I've talked to numerous people and they're very concerned about this. They are concerned about crime in Reynoldsburg. It's called nipping it in the bud, call it whatever you want, but their most common thing was this seems to be a no brainer. Why wouldn't they pass it? That's about all, thank you.

Mr. Long: Questions for Mr. Mackin? Leslie.

Mrs. Kelly: Mr. Mackin, I would just encourage you, those individuals that you said that share your opinion....

Mr. Mackin: Uh-huh.

Mrs. Kelly:to invite them to come to Council and also express their opinion.

Mr. Mackin: Would you like letters from them?

Mrs. Kelly: That would be wonderful, emails will be great.

Mr. Mackin: Give me your email address.

Mrs. Kelly: My email is lkelly, actually you know, if you wait 'til after Council, I'll get it for you.

Mr. Mackin: Okay.

Mrs. Kelly: That would be great.

Mr. Mackin: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Burd: Sir?

Mrs. Kelly: And I'll forward them on.

Mr. Burd: Do you know if the police were notified of the incident you just spoke about?

Mr. Mackin: Yes. I followed the kid for about three blocks until the police showed up and then he.....

Mr. Burd: Because if it was 3:00 p.m., this ordinance wouldn't, I mean this curfew ends at 3:00 p.m., the ordinance we're considering. So what's important is that people call the cops when they see.....

Mr. Mackin: I didn't see the exact time but...

Mr. Burd: Well, close enough. I just want to make sure the cops were called.

Mr. Mackin: Okay.

Mr. Long: Thank you Mr. Mackin. The next speaker slip that I have is for Catrina Neumann.

Ms. Neumann: Good Evening, thank you for listening to my concerns over this proposed ordinance. I thought I might be able to offer a little bit of a different perspective. I've lived in the city, my family and I've lived in the city for about 6 years now. We are currently home schooling our two youngest children, but we also have two sons that graduated from Reynoldsburg High School, one in 2006 and one in 2009. Both sons were honor students, both are currently serving our country, one in Afghanistan, and our youngest is in basic training right now and that being said, I just would like to address a couple ways that I think this particular ordinance would affect our family or could have if it were our sons. What reason would the police have to stop to detain a student? Well, this ordinance would mean only their age. That would be the only reason the police would have to detain a student. It makes every young person in our community suspect during those particular hours of 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. According to *This Week* article,

the City Attorney, Jed Hood was reported to have said that “students especially at the High School have different release periods and that is why school officials are nice enough to volunteer to put the release times of those particular students on their ID badges. That way the officer would know whether or not they’re out of school legitimately.” Well, both of our sons would have been impacted by that statement. As a matter of fact, it would have made our oldest son late for work had he been stopped by a police officer because he had a job immediately after school and what adult in our community would stand for being detained by the Police Department just based upon their age? I think that’s just, that’s ridiculous and then secondly, I was appalled to read in the same article that it was thought to be a good idea to have a list of home school and charter school students available to the police. Since when in this country do we make lists of law abiding citizens to give to the police? How do you think it would affect an innocent kid who’s stopped just for simply being outside during the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. and one final observation, this not only affects my kids, but also our freedom, my husband and my freedom, to educate our children as we see fit. If our children, if my children are excused from compulsory attendance, they have the right to be in public places during those hours. I am free to educate them during any hours I choose, not just what the city determines to be school hours. So we have truancy laws in place, let’s enforce them. This misguided, proposed ordinance obviously is a convenient way to use our police force as truancy officers. Let’s not make every kid in Reynoldsburg suspect for the ones who don’t obey the laws. Thank you.

Mr. Long: Thank you, Ms. Neumann. The next speaker slip that I have is for Jor-El Godsey.

Mr. Godsey: Thank you Councilman. I appreciate the good work of the policemen that have been represented here and their thoughtfulness for the children of our community and I certainly do so the same for the Council members who are very interested as well, but frankly, I was a bit alarmed in hearing like, how many kids were captured, students were questioned, people were pulled aside. Now granted, if the truancy laws are not accounting for very key kids such as those expelled and suspended, then let’s get that list started. Let’s hand that list out, let’s identify and have greater partnership between the schools and the other enforcement people to identify those children so that they can be accommodated for accordingly, rather than just making every other child of that age who happens to not be in school for whatever other reason, an automatic suspect. That was of great concern. Just on that alone. Now it happens to be that I have two children who are being home schooled in my home and we are teaching them to be good, model students and frankly after what I heard from the Resource Officer in the school, I don’t want to let them out. You know I don’t want to let my kids out from all the things, the horrible things I’m hearing, but the neighborhood that I live in is a good neighborhood and we like to be able to have our kids be able to access, as I’m reading this it says “no minor between the ages of 6 and under the age of 18 yrs” and then it goes on to say “will be in public streets or public places” and those are the same places I want my kids to be so that they can be model students, model citizens and they can participate fully in what you have worked so hard to provide for us as residents of this city. I think it would be unfortunate to do otherwise. However, I do agree that we should, if the truancy laws are not in effect, let’s tighten those. Let’s make that happen. Let’s get more things going on that, address the very specific issue of constant trancies. Four times being tagged for being unruly. Many times being stopped, 6 - 9 months before a truant student has to be brought before the Court. Fix those things. Why cast all of this upon the City of Reynoldsburg for the good students and 6,700 students that are doing it right and those several hundred students that are in school and other

places for good reasons, for the handful of those who are acting out and acting inappropriately. It seems completely inappropriate to take those that are quick to not abide by the laws and then bind the many who are abiding by them and I would ask that you would consider not moving this any further and that the City of Reynoldsburg has many other good things. If we need to do anything, it's resource the officers, not with legislation, but with the right tools and the right ability to be able to address issues like this of crime and not simply students, young people walking around our streets. Thank you.

Mr. Long: Thank you, Sir. That's all the speaker slips that I have. I'm torn in the element as to whether or not, as some have spoken here tonight, as to whether or not we are dealing with a school issue or we're dealing with a curfew issue, as to whether or not it's something that should be addressed more strictly as far as the truancy laws. Are there comments or anything from the Committee, any comments from any individuals from Council? Councilwoman Kelly.

Mrs. Kelly: Thank you, Chairman Long. As somebody who has lived the truancy issue on a school, as a school person, I can tell you that there are absolutely steps that are in place that the schools go through. I actually lived an experience where it took me going down to Court five times with a child regarding truancy because it was continued, continued, reprimand, the child was reprimanded, continued, and then finally something happened. The reason I remember that so completely is on the sixth time I was down at Court with this young man, he ended up getting locked up but because by that point, he had stolen his Mom's van in the middle of the day, had been arrested for drunk, being intoxicated, public intoxication and was not a bad kid but was a very misguided kid. There were issues going on within that family and it ended up being something major had to happen before something was able to happen for them and there was counseling and everything else. I got to be a part of that. I really look at this as a tool that's part of the toolbox to help the Police Department more effectively do what they need to do. The fact that it's brought by the Police Department, I think says a lot and I would hope we would continue to have a conversation and discuss it more and hear from more people within our community. That's all.

Mr. Long: Thank you, Councilwoman Kelly. That's one thing that I would definitely like to say to the people here tonight. First of all, thank you all for coming out on both sides. It's this type of interaction and communication that we get from you people. Not only whether you are for or against something, but we're always willing to go ahead and listen to your recommendations or ideas on how things might be able to be changed or what recommendations you might have to be able to go ahead and pull things out, put things in. We're here to hear from you. So Mrs. Frazier, I'm going to make a recommendation that we hold, I'm sorry, go ahead.

Mr. Cotner: Thank you, Mr. Long. I just wanted to clarify something with Mr. Hood just so that I can make sure I'm understanding completely and everybody else is. One of the issues that has come up is about the online students who are being educated and the home school students. If an online student is eligible for release at 11:00 a.m. and he decides to walk to Kroger or McDonald's, he can sit in McDonald's all day then, is that correct? He went to school, he did what he needed to do. I mean he's, he's accepted.....

Mr. Hood: It says that for reasons other than being expelled or suspended. So if they haven't been suspended or expelled, they have, they're not required by law to be in school. That student

has fulfilled his obligation, whether it's being home schooled, ECOT, what have you. If they've fulfilled their obligation, this ordinance doesn't apply.

Mr. Cotner: Yes, that's what I thought and that's the same with Mrs. Neumann, Mr. Godsey, the same with their children. If they've done something and they want to walk to their neighbors on a public sidewalk, you know, if an officer stops them, they say 'we just wanted to make sure you are where you're supposed to be' and then they go on their way.

Mr. Hood: What this ordinance does it fills the hole of not being able to declare an expelled or suspended student truant. They are not required to be in school either, but they're either expelled or suspended so they've also gotten into some trouble for some reason. They're not allowed to be on the public roadways or in front of commercial establishments if this ordinance passes. Thank you.

Mr. Cotner: Thank you, Sir. Thank you, Mr. Long.

Mr. Long: Thank you, Councilman Cotner.

Mrs. Kelly: Chairman Long.

Mr. Long: Yes, Councilwoman Kelly.

Mrs. Kelly: I have a question of Mr. Hood before you let him, before you go back down there. Just to clarify for myself, would this ordinance allow the officers to deal with students that do not attend our schools, whether through home school or online school. They'd also be able to address and deal with any students who other.....

Mr. Hood: Columbus Public Schools, Southwestern Public Schools, absolutely.

Mrs. Kelly: Okay.

Mr. Hood: Yes.

Mrs. Kelly: Thank you, that's it.

Mr. Long: Any further questions? Mrs. Frazier, I'd like this held for a period of two weeks and brought back at our next committee meeting.

Mrs. Frazier: Okay.

Mr. Long: I will close the Safety Committee Meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Safety Committee

-- Nancy C. Frazier, Clerk of Council

June 21, 2010

(Transcribed - S. Cochran, Ass't. Clk. of Council)

SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

June 21, 2010

Members of Service Committee present: Doug Joseph, Nathan Burd, Barth R. Cotner, Chris Long.

Other members of Council present: Fred Deskins, Jr., Leslie Kelly, Council President William L. Hills. Councilman Mel Clemens was absent.

Mr. Joseph: I'll call the Service Committee Meeting to order at 8:25 p.m. Second item on the agenda is the approval of agenda. Are there any additions, deletions or changes to the agenda tonight? Seeing none, the agenda will stand approved.

Item 3 is approval of the minutes of the Service Committee meeting held April 19, 2010. Are there any additions, deletions or changes to those minutes? Seeing none, those minutes will stand approved.

Item No 4 - ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF REYNOLDSBURG ADOPTED BY ORDINANCE NO. 131-95 ON NOVEMBER 27, 1995 AND AS SUBSEQUENTLY AMENDED - 1755 Lancaster Avenue; from AR-1c to NC ; (.371 ac.), applicant, George J. Igel, V.- -second reading 6-14-2010. Does anyone on the Committee have any questions regarding this item tonight? Council? Anything additional from Administration? Okay, all right. I'll go ahead and make a motion that we send this on to Council for third reading. Seconded by Mr. Burd. All in favor vote "Aye". (All voted "Aye") Opposed. (No response). Motion carries. Thank you. That was our last item on Service Committee tonight, so I will close at 8:31 p.m.

Service Committee

-- Nancy C. Frazier, Clerk of Council

June 21, 2010

(Transcribed - S. Cochran, Ass't. Clk. of Council)

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

June 21, 2010

Members of Finance Committee present: Fred Deskins, Jr., Doug Joseph, Leslie Kelly. Councilman Mel Clemens was absent.

Other members of Council present: Barth R. Cotner, Chris Long, Nathan Burd, Council President William L. Hills.

Mr. Deskins: I will open the Finance Committee at 8:32 p.m. The first thing on the agenda this evening is the agenda. Any changes to the agenda from anyone this evening? Hearing none, it will stand as written.

Next is Item No. 3, approval of the minutes from Finance Committee Meeting held June 7, 2010. Are there any changes to the minutes from anyone? Hearing none, they will stand as written.

Item No. 4 - ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING CITY AUDITOR TO REMOVE ITEMS FROM THE CITY'S FIXED ASSET LIST- -first reading 6-14-10. Are there any questions from the Finance Committee? Any questions from Council? I'd like to move this legislation to Council for its second reading. Seconded by Mr. Joseph. Thank you Councilman Joseph. Any questions from Finance Committee, Council? All in favor vote "Aye". (All voted "Aye") Opposed. (No response). Motion carries. Thank you.

Item No. 5 - RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE TAX BUDGET OF THE CITY OF REYNOLDSBURG OHIO, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2011 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY- -read for the first time 6-14-10. President Hills has set a public hearing set for 6-28-10 at 7:15 p.m. in Council Chambers. Are there any questions from the Finance Committee, any questions from Council. If not, I would like to move this legislation to Council for its second reading. Seconded by Mrs. Kelly. Thank you. Any questions from Finance, Council? All in favor vote "Aye". (All voted "Aye") Opposed. (No response). Motion passes.

Item No. 6 - RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SEEK FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION FOR THE FUNDING OF VARIOUS CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (Brice Road

Improvement Project, from south corporation limit to East Main Street)- -first reading 6-14-10. Are there any questions from the Finance Committee, Council? I'd like to move this legislation to Council for its second reading. Seconded by Mrs. Kelly. Any questions from Finance, Council? All in favor vote "Aye". (All voted "Aye") Opposed. (No response). Motion passes.

Item No. 7 - ORDINANCE AWARDING DEPOSITS OF PUBLIC FUNDS- -first reading 6-14-10. Any questions from the Finance Committee, Council? If not I'd like to move this ordinance to Council for its second reading. Seconded by Mr. Joseph. Any questions from Finance Committee, Council? All in favor vote "Aye". (All voted "Aye") Opposed. (No response). Motion passes.

Item No. 8 - ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE CLERK OF COUNCIL TO CERTIFY GRASS AND WEED CUTTING COSTS FOR COLLECTION BY THE FRANKLIN COUNTY AUDITOR- -first reading 6-14-10. Any questions from the Finance Committee, any questions from Council? If not I would like to move this ordinance to Council for its second reading. Seconded by Mr. Joseph. Any questions from the Finance Committee, Council? All in favor vote "Aye". (All voted "Aye") Opposed. (No response). Motion passes.

Item No. 9 - ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE CLERK OF COUNCIL TO CERTIFY GRASS AND WEED CUTTING COSTS FOR COLLECTION BY THE LICKING COUNTY AUDITOR- -first reading 6-14-10. Any questions from Finance Committee, any questions from Council? I'd like to move the ordinance to Council for its second reading. Seconded by Mrs. Kelly. Any questions from Finance Committee, Council? All in favor vote "Aye". (All voted "Aye") Opposed. (No response). Motion passes.

Item No. 10 - ORDINANCE MAKING TRANSFER OF FUNDS FOR EXPENSES RELATED TO ASSET FORFEITURE- -second reading 6-14-10. Any questions from Finance Committee, any questions from Council? I'd like to move the ordinance to Council for its third reading with recommendation for adoption. Seconded by Mr. Joseph. Any questions from Finance Committee, Council? All in favor vote "Aye". (All voted "Aye") Opposed. (No response). Motion passes. I'll close the Finance Committee at 8:36 p.m.

Finance Committee

-- -Nancy C. Frazier, Clerk of Council

June 21, 2010

(Transcribed - S. Cochran, Ass't. Clk. of Council)