



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - DAN SKINNER
MONDAY MAY 2, 2016**

COMMITTEE MEETING: 7:30 PM

**PLACE: COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7232 E. MAIN ST, REYNOLDSBURG, OH 43068**

1. Call to Order

PRESENT: Skinner, Cicak, Luzader, Spalding, Joseph

ABSENT:

2. Approval of Agenda

Chairman Skinner: I would like to add 4.b., a discussion about our Committee meeting nights. I will make the motion. Mr. Cicak has seconded. All in favor say aye. "Aye."

3. Approval of Minutes

a. Community Development Committee – Committee Meeting – April 4, 2016

Minutes stand approved.

4. Discussion

a. A Resolution to Waive the Provision of Section 971.16 of the City's Codified Ordinances for the 2016 Tomato Festival. (First Reading 5/9/2016).

Ms. Bauman: Thank you Chairman Skinner and Members of Council. We are here tonight to ask for authorization to waive 971.16 for the Beer Garden for the 2016 Tomato Festival, and it is the same as it has been done in the years past. Greta Stake is here as a board member if you have any questions.

Chairman Skinner: Any questions for Committee or Members of Council?

Councilman Long: They are not moving it, Donna, are they?

Ms Bauman: No.

Councilman Long: Same security? Same fencing? Same wrist band?

Ms. Bauman: Yes, the same map area that I sent. Wrists bands Greta?

Ms. Stake: Yes.

Councilman Long: It worked very well the past few years.

Ms. Stake: The only difference is that the beer is going to be \$5 instead of \$4. A lot of people recommended that and that is about the only change.

Chairman Skinner: Any other questions?

RESULT:	REFERRED TO COUNCIL [3 TO 0]	Next: 5/9/2016 7:30 PM
MOVER:	Dan Skinner, At Large	
SECONDER:	Stephen Cicak, Ward I	
AYES:	Skinner, Cicak, Spalding	
ABSTAIN:	Luzader	

b. Committee Meeting Nights

Chairman Skinner: The next item is a discussion about the evening in which we meet. I have passed out some data that was collected by Ms. Beggerow that shows different evenings that other communities meet. Ms. Beggerow, would you mind talking through in summary fashion what you have found here? Based on your collection of data, did you find that Committees meeting twice a month is more common.

Ms. Beggerow: It is kinda across the board. Some committees meet on other nights. There are a couple that follow the same routine that we do. The ones that are on the lower half, I just went on their websites. Some of them don't do committees at all. It is hit or miss across the board. It is not uncommon for them to meet on other nights, or before Council. Grove City, specifically, meets right before their Council meeting. Hilliard, use to do what we do and a couple of years ago, they went to meeting before Council, and they said it has gone well for them. With everything, there is probably going to be some speed bumps.

Chairman Skinner: Any questions or comments by Members of the Committee?

Councilman Spalding: I just have one question. I appreciate the summary, but it looks like lots of cities do just two meetings a month. Dublin, New Albany, Powell, Worthington, Westerville. There are a lot. I would say it is much more common that they have two meetings a month, rather than four.

Ms. Beggerow: There was one, I do remember who it was, that actually has four work sessions, and they do Finance and Service one week, and the Safety and Development another. That would not work for us because of the way we do things. But, it was interesting how technically each of their Committees meet once a month, it is just that they split them up.

Chairman Skinner: Any comments from Members of Council?

Council President Joseph: Yes, looking at this list, and I knew our Clerk was assembly this, I asked her to do this some months ago, and it is interesting as you look at this, and you do have a variety of different ways that local Councils operate. It is very possible, without

knowing the histories of these cities and communities, that they have always operated that way, and that is the expectation that they receive from their residents. What we are talking about is reducing the number of times that we are in this building by 50%. The other observation I have had, and I have heard this so often, when we have had issues before Council, for example the Pit Bull issue, is that despite the fact that all the other communities in the area, save one or two, have no laws regulating Pit Bulls. We do and it is because what works in other communities, may not work here. One could make that same argument on this, that we have a system that works well, it is not broken, it flows well, it allows for community input, and frankly oversight by the Council. We have four times a month to review in a public forum what is going on in the City, and frankly, we are reducing it by half. We are also talking about, in a community where on average, Council Members make \$170 per meeting, we meet approximately forty-four times per year. We are talking about taking that to twenty-two times per year. So, we are talking about no adjustment in what Council members are compensated. We are talking about going from \$170 a meeting, to \$340 a meeting, for virtually no benefit to the City. The only argument I have heard is for making these changes is so Council Members and Department Heads have more free times for other things they want to do. There are no cost savings to the City. There is no benefit to the Community. So, I'm opposed to making any changes to how the Council and Committee meetings are constructed. As I said, if it is not broken, do not fix it. This is a convenience thing that has been suggested, merely for the benefit of Council Members and Department Heads. The Community does not benefit. The tax payer does not benefit. So, I recommend that we do not make those changes. As I said, other communities do things differently. We do things a maybe a little bit differently, but it works. I think we should leave out Committee structure as is. Thank you.

Chairman Skinner: Mr. Long.

Councilman Long: Thank you Chairman Skinner. President Joseph, there has not been a single Member of Council who has mentioned that out of convenience for us that we have decided to discuss moving the nights of our Committee meetings. Council Rules and the Charter very clearly state that it is up to the Chairman of the Committee, what night, where, whenever, that committee is going to meet. The one item I believe is respectful of the individuals that you see sitting here, is their pay is based on 2080 hours per year. They are sitting here now and technically not getting paid for it. What they would be able to incur would be comp time, but anything up and above that they are not compensated for being here. And once again, I am coming to the defense of myself and my fellow Council Members, I never once heard anybody here on Council say that they were looking for something more convenient or that we needed more time off.

Council President Joseph: Mr. Chairman, may I respond to that? I never specified Council Members, if I did, I misspoke.

Councilman Long: You said Council, yes you did.

Council President Joseph: I was referring to specifically, frankly Mr. Mayor, when I asked you what benefit there would be to the City, what kind of cost benefit to the City, you said,

"Your Department Heads could have time off to do other things that they wanted to do instead of being here, and not answer questions, because maybe there wasn't any." So, it was mentioned.

Councilman Long: You said Council specifically.

Council President Joseph: I am now amending that. I apologize if I said Council. I meant to mean elected officials in the City. If I said Council, I amend that. What was the second point you made?

Councilman Long: The Directors and salary.

Council President Joseph: In the private sector, in many ways they would function much like Department Heads in a corporation. They are salary. They put in eighty hours a week. I have know some hat have done that. You, yourself worked in the private sector. They are paid a flat salary in most cases, and if they have to work weekends, and they have to work evenings, or take business trips, most times they are not being compensated for that overtime. But that is the price they pay for being in a senior management position. I see our Department Heads in the same way. We are all here to serve the public. And, if we do not want to serve the public, we can go and do other things; if we are more interested in time off, or other benefits, that currently are not afforded to these individuals. I emphasize that people want to have their own time. But, people make a choice if they want to work in the public sector, whether it be an elected official, or an appointed official.

Councilman Spalding: I would like to comment on that too. I think Councilman Long's concern was about respect for our employees. You brought up a really good point about private sector. I was a very high private sector manager. And you know, I would never put my employee's through something that they didn't have to do. If I could release their burden somehow, I would do that as a good manager, rather than being a poor manager and saying you will show up because I tell you that you have to. Why not make it easier for them? It really would be that simple to say, ok, we are going to do everything and get highly organized and do it twice a month, instead of doing it four times a month. We could still get the very same tings accomplished and still give them the due respect that they deserve as our employees. We are kind of their managers, to some degree, and I think we are not taking their concerns into account at all.

Council President Joseph: But we represent the people. We are sent here under terms that they believe we should abide by. And now, we are talking about saying that just because we want to accommodate several other City employees, the citizens are going to have less oversight of City government, you can't say it won't be less because it will be, we are going to have less opportunity to review things before the City. We are talking twenty-two meetings a year. Twenty-two times a year to be in this building. That is, in my opinion, inadequate. For a city of this size, with the amount of business that flows through this Council, to dismiss our residents in that way, that we have more important things to do, or that we want to give people time off. There must be other ways to provide benefit to City employees, without short changing the citizens of this city by reduced oversight, and by just

being here for them. They are not here necessarily, but they expect us to be. I think it is wrong to make that change when most people don't even know it is going to happen. They expect us to be here. I have had people tell me, you only meet four times a month? They are surprised. I did a quick survey of people on my street. I asked how many thought it was a good idea to go to two meetings. I laid out the arguments, both pro and con, and I did not find a single person, especially since there is no change in salary. If you are cutting your pay, then they say sure. What are not talking about cutting pay. We can't under the terms of the City Charter. We are talking about reducing the amount of time we are here for the same pay. Most people thought that a very bad idea.

Councilman Clemens: I respect you getting the different cities and the different times. I do not plan on going to any of their meetings but the object is, I go for one reason. I ran to attend the meetings four times a month. I knew that when I ran. Now, maybe I want more time off, I don't know. But, people expect us to be here. That is what we ran on. Now, if you want to do it the next time, when you run, advertise that you are going to cut your times down to two times a month, instead of four. I see no reason why we can't be here four times a month. We all take vacation time. We all miss the meetings, and there is nothing wrong with that, we have other people pick up. Even though we don't have very many people show up, sometimes we do and sometimes we don't, that is not the point. The point is they can walk in that door anytime they want to on a Monday night, and if we are here, they can ask us questions. Some nights we have nobody. Some nights our agendas are small, and I understand that too. As far as employees, nobody respects employees more than I do. That is why I am going to vote for pay increase and so forth, probably for the Police Department also. But, we are paying good wages when you through in the compensation that we pay as far the health insurance and so forth, compared to what other communities do, and other employees do. We are not that bad, when people can make \$125,000, \$130,000 a year. That is not bad, plus what we pay as far as all your insurance, all your other benefits. I am here a lot, I don't see anybody with sweat dripping off of them and running outside because they are working that hard. I think everybody around this community, that works here, has good benefits, and they are good people, and I am not speaking against them. I think if they want this position, and this is the position they got appointed to, they are expected to be here. That is all I can say about it. I expected to be here. I have no problem being here two nights a month, if that is what you want to do. As far as pay, I don't even care about that, that is immaterial. And, I don't think that means anything as far as a councilman. But, I can not see any reason, if it is probably because I have been here on Mondays for fifty years. I am use to being here on Mondays. I have nothing else to do. I go home early, I watch Antique Road Show. I do not like to miss that either. I know people that use to come here on Council get up at the half and go home and watch football games because they come on Monday nights. But, we do not do that. We miss footballs games on Monday nights. We miss the big Super Bowl on Monday nights, so we can not see them. I think we are doing a good job being here on Monday nights, and I know that we are only here sometimes for Committee meetings for maybe only five or ten minutes. But then again, I have been here when we have been here three or four hours. We have had some good times and some bad times. I just think out of people's respect and out of our respect, this is something we should not even be discussing, to be honest with you. I will go with whatever Council feels. I don't even think it is worth discussing, to be honest with you. I'm sorry.

Councilman Cotner: Since we are finally really getting in to talking about this now, I guess we all better get our two sense in, so I appreciate you opening up this opportunity, and I appreciate the effort to show what other communities are doing. I think anybody in business knows one of the most dangerous things to say is, "this is how we have always done it." I agree that having people here just for a meeting and sitting just for the sake of sitting in a meeting is not a good use of time. But, as we finally look at this, I think there is possible middle ground. I am with Mr. Clemens. I am used to being here on Mondays. I will not say that the Community expects us to be here, but I do like the availability. I personally like that we are here. I like that I can tell people that they know where to find me on Monday nights. I think that is a respect to our citizens. But, nobody voted us to sit here every Monday night. I do not think that is going to change. But, I still do not love the idea. The perception I guess, I do not see a good enough value to me to make the change. But, even if we look at things here, even if we were to meet three times a month and through out a Committee and meet the second, third, and fourth weeks. We could also do away with the month recess and meet two or three times during that month. Really, I am not a big proponent to move it, I just do not see enough value myself right now is all, because I do like the accountability. I like saying to people that we are here and we are trying our best. Many of us are in more than two times a month anyway. We are coming, we are taking to people, and I appreciate all of our directors. They are always available, whether it is through phone calls, personal visits, emails. They do a great job for us. I certainly do respect that as well. I think we can do a better job reaching them. Maybe find ways that they do not have to show up every meeting when we are here. I think there are other opportunities aside from the change. Thank you.

Council President Joseph: One last comment I have, since we are talking about making changes to the Committees, each Committee would have to make this change. If any one of the Committees doesn't, it is kind of a moot point because you are still talking about four meetings a month. So, what is the point of moving the other committees to a single night, two times a month, if you are still going to have one, possibly two committees, based on the conversations I have had, are not going to be changing anyway. Keep that in mind. You may want to know up front before you make any changes, how literally every member of every committee feels on this issue, or you may be defeating your entire purpose of changing the date because you will still be here anyway. I recommend you do some time of headcount to know exactly where everyone is going to be, before you take any kind of formal action in this committee, because you have three more committees that basically have to agree to that same change, or you are defeating the whole purpose of changing the nights.

Councilman Luzader: When I ran for this office last year, I ran basically knowing that I would be here every Monday night. Even some of my respective constituents would ask me, are you going to be there every Monday night? I think in this day and age, public perception of government, whether it be local government, state government, federal government, the average person does not trust the government. I think going from four meetings a month to two meetings a month would basically kinda give them the perception that we are trying to hide something. Now, that is not my intent. I can see where there are advantages to both, staying at four meetings or going to two meetings. I just don't know that right now is the proper time to change.

Chairman Skinner: Mr. Mayor, you have heard a little bit of the feedback here, do you have thoughts with respect to the Administration? Is it a situation where it was an idea that was brought up for consideration, or are there strong feelings from the Administration?

Mayor McCloud: I have been coming down here every Monday night for twenty-one of the last twenty-five years. I simply saw it as an opportunity to avoid bringing everybody down here for a reading night that will typically last seven or eight minutes.

Councilman Clemens: I agree with the Mayor on this. I don't think they should be here unless there is an item on the Agenda they have to come for. I have not requested that everybody be here. I think if we have somebody here that is not a director, and we invite one of our other employees, they should be paid overtime, I have no problem with that. But, I think it is up to the Mayor's discretion on who comes and who doesn't. If he feels they are not needed, then they do not need to be here. That is the way I look at it. I am not saying that everybody has to be here. If they are not on the Agenda and the Mayor can answer the questions, fine. As long as we get the answers from the Administration, that is all that really counts. The Mayor knows what is going to be brought up. When there is only a small item on there, and so if he feels there should be something on there, all he has to do is ask the Director what he answer is, and he can put it himself. When we have a large Agenda, like we do this evening, we have a lot of papers, I will put it that way, I don't know how long it is going to be. But, on the nights that we do need people, it is fine to have our directors here. On the nights that we don't need them, I don't think they should be here. I don't ask them to be here and I am sure the Mayor could work it that way. I have no problem with that at all. If you have been reading the paper, and the publicity we have been getting, and the way I look at the Community right now is, to see us walk away and say they are only meeting two nights a month now, and we have all these problems. And, they don't really realize we don't have that many problems in front of us. They think we can cure everything and take care of it. But, there are situations we cant take care of. But, we are held responsible for what the school does. Half of the, still think we are head of the school system, and things like that. But, when we do go to two meetings a moth, instead of four, until we correct all the situations we have in the City, that are problems, I think people will look at us, and I don't blame them to be honest. And they wonder why we can do all this in two meetings, when we haven't corrected it in four meetings.

Chairman Skinner: I am going to table this for our committee for the time being, and maybe we can get some more feedback from the Community. A lot of people here have said Community members have spoken out against it, some in favor of it, so, we will table this for now. Any questions along that line?