SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
January 17, 2006

Members of Safety Committee present: Brett Baxter, Ron Stake, Doug Joseph, Donna Shirey. Other members of Council present: Preston Stearns, Mel Clemens, Council President William L. Hills. Councilwoman Antoinette Newman was absent.

Mr. Baxter: I'll call to order, the Safety Committee, at 7:36.

The first order of business is approval of the agenda. Are there any changes or requested changes?

Mrs. Shirey: I have an addition.

Mr. Baxter: Go ahead.

Mrs. Shirey: I have an e-mail here from George Mussi in regards to the speed limit on Main Street during the construction to be reduced to 25 miles per hour.

Mr. Baxter: Very good. And I'll go ahead and add that as 3c on tonight's agenda for discussion. That requires a motion, Nancy?

Mrs. Frazier: (Inaudible).

Mr. Baxter: Then I just need to approve it. Okay then. Does that require a vote or just approval from the Chair?

Mrs. Frazier: A vote, please.

Mr. Baxter: Okay. So I'll go ahead and ask for a vote for the change of the agenda. Are there any other changes before I do that? (No response). Hearing none, then I request that we add 3c, the speed limit discussion on Main Street in the construction area. All in favor? (All voted "Aye"). All opposed? (No response). Hearing none, we'll go ahead and add that to the agenda.

The next item on the agenda is approval of the minutes of the Safety Committee meeting held 12-19-05. Are there any changes or additions that need to be added or removed from those minutes? (No response). Hearing none, they'll stand approved.

3b is approval of the minutes of the Safety Committee meeting held 1-3-06. Are there any changes or additions? (No response). Hearing none, they will stand as approved.

Going to 3c, it's going to be a discussion on the speed limit from an e-mail sent to Council earlier today from George Mussi discussing concerns with Main Street in the area of the construction from Streetscape. So I'll go ahead and open it up. You brought it up, Councilman Shirey. So do you want to talk about it, and your concerns?

Mrs. Shirey: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Baxter. I apologize. I don't have copies for everybody. I just received this e-mail prior to coming here. What this basically states is that, the concern is the safety for the citizens of the speed limit during the construction on Main Street being reduced to 25. Basically, what he is saying is that, the traffic going westbound is going faster than the posted speed limit, which not only makes it a safety issue, but it's very difficult for cars trying to get in and out of businesses. In addition, with the traffic lights being in sync, they create more congestion which backs up traffic. It makes it harder to move in a more efficient manner. As we all know, with Streetscape going on, there is a lot of congestion going on there. I myself, I have found out coming into this parking lot, the other night, was facing oncoming traffic. Because I could not see that there is not a left hand turn lane. And I think as you and I were just commenting too, that another car was doing the same thing as well tonight. So, I think there's definitely some issues out there and I think we need to find out what we can do to resolve not just the speed limit, but also get the markings on Main Street resolved, to help the citizens too.

Mr. Baxter: Well, thank you. And I appreciate your comments. I did have a conversation earlier and it was dealing with my own observations with a car pulling into the oncoming traffic which was heading westbound making a left as it pulled into the street there where Big Bear is. Not Big Bear excuse me, Kroger's. And again, he must have thought he was in a turn lane; he, or she, or whoever the driver was, was in a turn lane, but it wasn't, and it stopped all traffic. So obviously with the weather being what it is tonight, you can see why it's difficult to see, and people are making errors in judgment in driving. So there are some safety issues. And what I'm going to ask is that Mayor, if we could have someone take a look at that at least from a safety standpoint. And maybe there are some things that your administration can recommend to maybe make things a little bit smoother on Main Street. And look at the recommendation that George Mussi has supplied. And Nancy, I will submit that e-mail to you when I get home tonight so you can give it to the rest of the Council members for their review. Because I heard it came to me as well. Were we the only two on that e-mail?

Mrs. Shirey: It was to you and I, and then courtesy copy to Nancy Frazier, Dave Parkinson, and Bill Hills.

Mr. Baxter: Okay. So Nancy then, you should already have a copy in your e-mail today then.

Mrs. Frazier: Do you want it copied to everybody?

Mr. Baxter: I would like to have them all have a copy of it. Yes, please. So I think at this point, the best thing to do is just to put it back into administration's hands to review what the situation is and look for a recommendation, Mayor, from your side?

Mayor McPherson: We'll take care of it.

Mr. Baxter: Alright. Thank you. With that said, are there any other comments from committee? (No response). From members of Council? (No response). I know it's rather new. It happened earlier today so I didn't expect everybody to be up to speed on it. So we can go ahead and talk about it again at our next meeting.

Mr. Stake: I hadn't seen it, Mr. Baxter.

Mr. Baxter: Alright. I think it would be unfair to expect everybody to be up to speed that quickly. So, thank you. Hearing no other conversations on this, I'll go ahead and move to item 4. Discussion, Authorization to apply for a the G.R.E.A.T. Grant. Do we have anybody here to discuss that? I see the Mayor coming up. That's somebody.

Mayor McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Baxter. This is the Gang Resistence Education And Training Grant for 2006, 2007. If we get the Grant, there is absolutely no cost to the City of Reynoldsburg on it. So we're asking Council to authorize us to go ahead and apply for the Grant and get the money.

Mr. Baxter: We've done this before, Mayor, if I remember, correct?

Mayor McPherson: Yes.

Mr. Baxter: Is this one of the types of Grants in which we take from the General Fund, and then as the Grant comes in, we reimburse it? How would that actually happen?

Mayor McPherson: No. There's actually a 10% match. But that 10% match comes from the officer's salary, which is already budgeted and appropriated.

Mr. Baxter: Okay. Very good. Do we have any questions from Council, or from the committee? (No response). Hearing none, I thank you. And I will ask that this is I believe, was this scheduled as an emergency? Yes, is was. For the financial needs of the city government. So I guess you'll have this go to Council with recommendation for an emergency? Is that what you're looking for, Mayor?

Mayor McPherson: Yes.

Mr. Baxter: Okay. Then I'll so move that we send this to Council with a recommendation of adoption with a provision for emergency for the financial needs of the city government. Do I have a second? Second by Mr. Stake. All in favor? (All voted "Aye"). Any opposed? (No response). Hearing none, motion carries. Thank you, Mayor.

And the next item on discussion here is a liquor permit request. It's a new one from Capital City Beverage, Inc., dba Metro Beer & Wine Drive Thru at 6785 E. Main Street, Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068. Mayor, I'm under the impression this isn't quite ready at this point.

Mayor McPherson: This is not quite ready. We will have a letter to Council prior to the Council meeting next week. It doesn't look like there's going to be a problem, but we still need to finish up the report on it.

Mr. Baxter: Okay. With that said, I'll just go ahead and put this on hold. And if there's any issues, you can let us know next week and we can always add it to the next week's conversation...

Mayor McPherson: Right. Well, we should be able to let you know by the end of this week.

Mr. Baxter: ...otherwise, I'll have Nancy go ahead and return it. Does that sound okay, Nancy? Have I got that right?

Mrs. Frazier: Yes.

Mr. Baxter: Well, I thank you. Mayor, I thank you. With that, I have nothing else on the agenda and I'll go ahead and adjourn the Safety Committee at 7:44.

Safety Committee
January 17, 2006
- - -Nancy C. Frazier, Clerk of Council
(Transcribed - Susie Smith)

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
January 17, 2006

Members of Finance Committee present: Ron Stake, Mel Clemens, Brett Baxter. Councilwoman Antoinette Newman was absent.
Other members of Council present: Preston Stearns, Doug Joseph, Donna Shirey, Council President William L. Hills.

Mr. Stake: And I'll call the January 17 Finance Committee to order at 7:45.

The next item on the agenda is approval of the agenda. Any members of the committee have any changes to the agenda? (No response). I would like to add Discussion, the Police, Parks and Recreation Impact Fee Study that was done by EMH&T in November 2005. I don't believe I need a second on that. All in favor, state aye. (All voted "Aye"). Opposed? (No response). Motion passes. I'd like that to be 3c.

The next item on the agenda is 3a, approval of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held December 19, 2005. Are there any changes to those minutes? (No response). None being heard, they'll stand as submitted.

Item 3b is approval of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held January 3, 2006. Are there any changes to those minutes? (No response). None being heard, they'll stand as submitted.

And item 3c is, Discussion, Police, Parks and Recreation Impact Fee Study. I would like the members to please get familiar with this study done by EMH&T. Mr. Parkinson, if you could have the person who did this study for us, to be at the next committee meeting and be able to answer some questions, that would be helpful. Any questions? Mr. Baxter.

Mr. Baxter: Yes. I'd like to make sure we had John Brandt available if he could, so he could also talk to us about the impact fees and how we could best utilize those fees.

Mr. Stake: Mayor, okay? Mr. Brandt will be here?

Mr. Baxter: Would he be able to be here next week...at the next meeting?

Mayor McPherson: Yes.

Mr. Baxter: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Stake: This is something that we've been looking at for a couple of years. I believe this came out of the Ad Hoc Residential Zoning Committee. I think it was recommended back then that we do look into impact fees. I don't think there was any recommendation to implement impact fees at that time, but there was some discussion about that. So, if we can just review this and then get some questions answered at the next committee meeting. Are there any questions from the committee? Mr. Baxter.

Mr. Baxter: A couple of quick ones. Number one, I want to make sure that all Council members have received the report from EMH&T. I know I see one over there. You have one, Ron. But has everybody received this same document? I know I had asked for that to happen some time and I wanted to make sure they had it, if they were able to go through and read through this. Secondly, I also would like to make sure we understand how we can utilize those impact fees. I know when I first was discussing it last year and wanted to bring it to Council to be discussed, the conversations were based around several different areas. And I know we're looking at from police sub-stations, to the ability to pay for vast or additional things like that from a safety standpoint. So I want to make sure we understand fully how we can utilize the impact fees and how long it takes to get them initiated and that whole process. So that's why I think I'd like to have EMH&T explain that to us.

Mr. Stake: Well, I think it's laid out in here that there's only certain ways that impact fees can be implemented, or I guess put in place, and used for only certain things. So I know there are, there's quite a bit of information in this study. And I see Mr. Parkinson back there. Did you want to say something?

Mr. Parkinson: If I could, please.

Mr. Stake: Sure. Go ahead.

Mr. Parkinson: Without trying to impose, if we could be provided some indication of some questions, or concerns, or issues that you would like discussed in two weeks. If we could get some advance notice of those we could be better prepared I think to address and make it a very worthwhile engagement. So I think you all have my e-mail. Just shoot me e-mails on anything that pops into your head as you're looking at it or that you'd like us to better explain.

Mr. Stake: Thank you, Mr. Parkinson. That's a good suggestion. I always encourage that so people can be prepared. And there may be some questions that come up tonight that maybe you could jot down that might be helpful as well. Mr. Clemens, did you have any questions or comments?

Mr. Clemens: No. Other than I agree. That's why I spoke to you about bringing this up. That we do need Evans, Mechwart to be here to explain it. I went over it quite a few times and I know that there are parts that I am not completely happy with. And I'd like some explanations on certain things that we could do and not do. I think everybody else will have too, probably. And it's not something that's going to happen over night. It's a draft to start with. So if there's any changes, we want to discuss and make changes before it comes to us in its final form. I just think it's time to get it started for discussion. There could be a lot of questions on it. And I'm not one for e-mailing very much, unless I can get my wife to do it.

Mr. Parkinson: (Inaudible).

Mr. Stake: And Mr. Clemens, if I could just follow up. I think, you and I had a discussion about the discrepancy between the Parks and Recreation part and the Police part. And I guess that would probably be the first question, Mr. Parkinson, is..why the difference there and the logic behind that?

Mr. Clemens: I've read the reason. But it's hard to understand all the way that you figured it out. And there's a possibility that we can re-figure it out and change it around a little bit. But any how, the discrepancy is big. And that's one thing that I'm interested in really.

Mr. Stake: Okay. Mr. Baxter.

Mr. Baxter: While we have Mr. Parkinson here, the questions that I'm looking at are, the numbers from revenue were based upon 2000 census. Okay? And I just wanted to get a better feeling and grip around where the revenue dollars were coming from and what the expectations were. How they build that model. So we can realize the real revenue that is possible from these. Because you read the number, you see big numbers, but I just can't get my hand around, how did that actually happen?

Mr. Stake: Mr. Clemens.

Mr. Clemens: Yeah. I think one thing, and as I read what it's based on, I can understand projections. But I know what we did a year ago as far as permits for housing. And I know what we did this last year which was quite low compared to what we usually do. And you have to have property to do this on. This has to be based on annexations. You've got to talk, when we consider something like this, you've got to talk about how many houses or how many permits are going to go out. If we're only talking about 100 a year, we're only talking about taking in $200 a house, or $250 a house, you're talking about years, and years, and years before you can accomplish anything. We may have to go higher on money or something like that. But I think you've got to be realistic as you look through the report on what is projected as far as housing is concerned and as far as condos are concerned. And only look at it and think if you believe that's what it's really going to be. And I think that's something you really have to look at. So there's just things like that I think you ought to read over. You look at the projection of what's projected, and that's how it works, because that's where we're going to get our money. So you've really got to believe in that projection if you're believing in anything. I think that's something we have to discuss.

Mr. Stake: Thank you. President Hills.

Mr. Hills: Just to summarize, and I think there's a lot of good questions, and I see Dave writing. The bottom line is, I'm not sure where the directions came. I know we wanted to see an impact fee study. But I think some of the key things ___________ David is, when an impact fee gives seven times the amount of money that Parks and Recreation gets per household than it does to the Safety Department, that raises some issues. And it looks like your base numbers are saying there would be 270, 290 homes a year, and we haven't built that many homes here for a number of years. And so I guess, I'm sure you have something that you use to put all this together. And I guess a real synopses of it other than just the back of your pages, because I know I was surprised to see the Parks and Rec in an impact fee study I guess at all. I know that is one of those things subject to impact fees but I wasn't aware that it's seven times more valuable to us right now as the Safety Department. So it's just a little surprising to see the break down to that one.

Mr. Stake: Thank you, President Hills. Are there any more questions or comments from members of Council? (No response). One thing that we do need to keep in mind with something like this is, if we're going to do impact fees, it's not only going to be for residential development. It needs to be for commercial development from what I got from this study. What affect is that going to have on bringing commercial development into Reynoldsburg? I think that's something Council needs to consider as well.

Mr. Hills: Thank you. A point well made.

Mr. Stake: Thank you. Mr. Baxter.

Mr. Baxter: And Ron, you make a great point there as far as commercial. And one of the things since I had quite a bit of involvement behind this last year, that's a lot of the questions we had when we did have representation talking about who already has impact fees. So it was very enlightening to see that it's not just a Reynoldsburg situation. You know, Dublin and Upper Arlington and many other communities that are surrounding us. And I'm not suggesting they have them, but many of them that surround us already are utilizing these. Including Pickerington at this time. So it's not a matter of, are we reaching out to a resource for funding but moreover, we're losing out on the opportunities to impact our safety, and service, and our Parks and Rec. Because we aren't taking advantage of something that we should be. So I think that's something I would like to have a conversation on, when we do bring everybody, to see not just our little part of the world, but the entire community as a whole and how it's impacting it.

Mr. Stake: So, are you envisioning bringing in people from other municipalities in here to talk to us about that? Is that what you're saying?

Mr. Baxter: Well, I know EMH&T has a specialist that knows specifically impact fees, and she had been in front of us once before. I think her name was Susan, wasn't it?

Mr. Parkinson: Kim Keefer.

Mr. Baxter: Kim, yes. So maybe we can have her come in. Because she was very knowledgeable and very helpful the last time she came in when Eric was running the meeting.

Mr. Stake: I believe Mr. Parkinson, she would be the one who would come before us, correct? She's the one who did the study, correct?
Mr. Parkinson: (Inaudible)

Mr. Stake: Okay. Thank you. Are there any more questions or comments from members of the committee or members of Council? (No response). Okay. Then I would, as I said, just have this for discussion this evening, and I'd like to send this on to the next committee meeting. Is there a second for that? Second by Mr. Baxter. Any further discussion? (No response). All in favor, state aye. (All voted "Aye"). Opposed? (No response). Motion passes. Thank you.

The next item on the agenda is item number 4, Discussion, Authorization of merit increase (2%) for those eligible employees covered by Chapter 160; and authorizing City Auditor to pay increases. The members this evening had on their desk, the City of Reynoldsburg, Ohio, Policy and Procedure Manual, Administration of Pay Plan, Section 3.20. And I think the relevant part is in (b) on that page. B1 primarily, where it says, 'all such employees shall receive a percentage increase'. I know there's been some confusion around here for a few years by different appointing authorities on how this pay increase should be divided up among the employees. And to me, I think it's pretty clear that when Council appropriates the money in the budget, that anybody who's met the acceptable level, gets the merit increase. And this year the Mayor asked for a 2% merit increase and that was what was figured into the 2006 appropriations. And that's how it works. So, does anybody disagree with me? Yes. President Hills.

Mr. Hills: Just to clarify something. I certainly don't disagree with what it's saying. I do think as you look at the, if you look into the next paragraph it says, 'evaluation for the period 12-1-02 through 11-30-03 shall be considered practice evaluations. Any merit increase as of January 1, '04 shall be the same for all employees'. The next sentence says, 'beginning January 1, 2005 merit adjustments shall be made based on actual evaluations'. I do know, and I think probably I'm the only one, and maybe Mr. Clemens, I don't think you were here then Ron, when we had a number of meetings with Clemans/Nelson, there certainly were discussions of money that was put in the pot. The pot was, here Bob, here Mayor, is the amount of money you can give for raises. Evaluations and merit will determine how he was going to expend those dollars. I will be the first to say, it certainly doesn't say that that pot's in here. I do know that these proposals and discussions were tweaked a number of different ways. And I was the first to believe, and I'm not sure Mel would disagree with me, that it appears what we all talked about, or what was talked about at the time when Clemans/Nelson is not what it's come out. I think it was tweaked. And it does say what it says. The one sentence I read beginning January 1, '05, the merit adjustments will be made based on actual evaluations. I'm not sure if that fits there once you look at the 2%. But you may have to at the same percentage. But it is what it says. I will be the first to admit that. I'm just not, it says, not what I thought it was saying when we discussed it. It is what it says.

Mr. Stake: Thank you, President Hills. And as I said earlier, there's been some confusion on this. I was there when Clemans/Nelson came in and gave us their report. So if people recall, this was rather thick. This Policy and Procedure Manual is rather thick. So to go line by line over everything, I'm not sure we understood all the ramifications. But this is not something we can't change. Mayor, I believe you talked last year about bringing forward some legislation that may change this. And I think everybody envisions that merit to mean that employees who perform better than others, get more money. I mean, that's pretty much, I think how we all thought it was going to work. Although, it doesn't say that in here. And you know, I try and go by what's in front of me and what's written and documented and that's what we're trying to do. Mr. Clemens.

Mr. Clemens: And I think you're right on that, Ron. And Bill is too. I have a misunderstanding. My thought was that the 2%, there will be a pot go in of money that went into each department. And plus the Auditor, and plus the City Attorney's office. And then how that pot of money, they decide who gets the amount. Whether it's less or minus and so forth. And like you say, it's not in here. I mean, that was just what my understanding was going to be. And I thought that was a true way that you did a merit. Some people might get 3 and somebody would bet 1. And I thought that's how it would be operated. But it doesn't say that here. And you're correct in what it says. And if there needs to be a change, that's something that we can discuss later.

Mr. Stake: Yes. And President Hills, I understand where you're coming from in that paragraph. I interpret that to mean to be a practice year and everybody does the evaluations and we practice, and then everybody gets the same amount whether they met the acceptable level or not. Not to interpret that word, 'the appointing authority' can divvy out different amounts of money to employees. And I have no problem with giving employees who perform better, better pay increases, don't get me wrong. I have no problem with that. But I don't think it says that in here. So if we want to change that, let's change this and we can do that next year. But in the meantime Mayor, you brought us some legislation here where you do want to do the merit increase. And the evaluations have been done. The appointing authorities know what the evaluations are. They know which employees have met the acceptable level. And I don't think there isn't any employee who hasn't met the acceptable level.

Mayor McPherson: That's correct.

Mr. Stake: However, in your request here, there are some employees who would not be getting the pay increase. And if you'd like to pick it up from there, that would be fine.

Mayor McPherson: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Stake. The comment that you made earlier about bringing forward some things about 160, you and I talked last year about several other issues as well as this issue. And we will bring those recommended changes down to Council. I'm not going to give you a time line because I showed you today some of the things we're working on. But it is in our pipeline to bring those changes down to City Council. You'll see on the request that I turned in to City Council, we provided a list of names. Those names are people that are eligible for a pay increase this year. And the ones that were not on that list are employees that have, effective December 1, requested that the Steel Workers represent them in a union. So those people were excluded, and the attorneys have advised us that once that form is filed with SERB, everything becomes status quo. You can't change any of their pays, or benefits, or anything else. So we disagreed with the Steel Workers as to who they put on their list. We did in fact, have a conversation with SERB today as well as the Steel Workers Union. They have agreed to use the bargaining unit members consistent with what we sent to SERB and said, this is what I think you meant, not what you actually turned in. So as a result of that, we will be updating that list. I'll be getting with the Auditor's Office tomorrow. We'll be updating the list that you have, and we're adding approximately 8 more individuals to that list that are now eligible for the 2%, and are not going to be a part of the Steel Workers Union. You should be aware that the election as to whether or not the Steel Workers become the union or not. It will be February 27 between the hours of 4 and 5 here in the conference room upstairs. And all the rest of the individuals that the union named in their petition to SERB, then will vote as to whether or not they want to have a union or not. So any way, I will be changing that list and then providing you an updated list. Including, I believe, there's approximately 8 people now, 8 more people that will be on the list that will be eligible for the 2% raise. You'll also notice in there, that I did in fact, ask for an emergency. It's an emergency for the financial well being. Not only of the city, but of the employees. And I think that if we're going to give them the 2%, we should just give it to them and let the Auditor put it on their pay checks and move it forward. There really is no reason I don't think, to drag something like this out. But you know, that's just my recommendation to City Council. For not only the financial needs of the city, but for the financial needs of the employees, that they be given their 2% pay increase as soon as possible.

Mr. Stake: Okay, Mayor. And the money has already been appropriated.

Mayor McPherson: The money has already been appropriated. I would, just one other thing. Let me make sure everyone understands that, even though I've only asked for the 2% pay increase, I think we're all very aware, that the City of Reynoldsburg had a 9.9% increase in our health insurance benefits this year, cost. And as a result of that, I'll take a family, and I'm going to round these numbers. I'm not going to be exact. But if you have a family medical plan with the City of Reynoldsburg right now, that will go up approximately $100 a month. That's approximately $1200 a year. So that is also being picked up by the City of Reynoldsburg, in addition to giving these employees a 2% pay increase. So it's not as if we're just saying 2%. We have to look at the whole benefit package that we're giving to the employees. And $100 on a family membership, that is a substantial amount of money depending on where you are on the pay scale, what the actual percentage is. But that's pretty substantial to pick up that kind of a benefit from the city's standpoint. So that's why I recommended a 2% rather than the 4 that I had originally been talking about.

Mr. Stake: Okay. Thank you, Mayor. Are there any questions from members of the committee? Mr. Baxter.

Mr. Baxter: Yes. I just have one question here. And I know that, and I thank you for passing this out, Ron. But, if you notice in Section 1, it states that, and I'm reading from the second sentence at the end to the third sentence. 'Whose performance meets or exceeds an acceptable level for previous evaluation'. I also want to bring your attention to Section number 4 would state, 'performance that does not meet or exceeds acceptable levels'. That is a term that implies that you don't meet it or you have to exceed it. But yet we're originally stating that 'meets' is an acceptable level. Not 'exceeds' to be able to pay out increases. So what I'm trying to get at here is the terminology that we're using doesn't make sense. Because we're stating that you have to, does not meet, to disqualify for the increase as, or exceed acceptable levels.

Mr. Stake: Mr. Baxter, I don't think there's anybody who hasn't exceeded the acceptable level. So I don't think there's an issue with that at this point. And that's something that...

Mr. Baxter: Do we have 'meets'?

Mayor McPherson: Pardon me?

Mr. Baxter: Do we have anybody who meets the level?

Mayor McPherson: Every one, every employee met or exceeded the level.

Mr. Baxter: Or exceeded, correct?

Mayor McPherson: Right.

Mr. Baxter: And I'm just looking at the...

Mayor McPherson: And if they don't, then there is a procedure. And I think the section you're reading is a procedure if they don't meet for an appeal process. And there's a time limit that they don't get the pay increase, then they can come back I think in maybe 6 months. I'd have to re-read it. But then if they meet the minimum qualifications, then they can be given a partial pay increase for the balance of the year.

Mr. Baxter: And we don't have anybody who falls under that at all.

Mayor McPherson: We don't have any one that fell into that category.

Mr. Baxter: So we don't need to address it at this time is what you're suggesting, Mr. Stake?

Mr. Stake: Right. That language could be addressed when the Mayor wants to address the rest of this. But your point is well taken. It's not the first time that we've disagreed with HR professionals.

Mayor McPherson: There are many, many items when we go through 160 that, I know Ron and I talked about last year that, we're just not quite clear on. And I think when we bring forward, issues about salary, we're also going to be bringing forward several other issues that need clarification, and need a little tweaking. So we'll be bringing all of those forward and that will be a part of the review also.

Mr. Baxter: I think the point I'm trying to make Mayor, is that there are two terms that are diametrically opposed. You either don't meet, or you exceed, or you meet. But you don't not exceed, nor do you as well exceed. You can't do them both is my point. So that terminology in that section is...

Mr. Stake: And your point's well taken.

Mr. Baxter: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Stake: Thank you.

Mayor McPherson: We'll remember that. And if we don't, remind us.

Mr. Stake: President Hills.

Mr. Hills: One question just for clarity. And Mr. Baxter, you are correct. Oftentimes, once you re-write something, it is much clearer the second time. And you have a tendency to read what you wrote the first time. But to clarify, you say that there's 8 people who aren't going to be on the excluded list. So in essence, there have been 26 excluded, we're down to 18 people who are going to be involved in the voting process.

Mayor McPherson: That's correct.

Mr. Hills: Okay. I was just looking at it from the other way to be sure the numbers are right.

Mayor McPherson: I try to minimize that number.

Mr. Hills: I think you did minimize it from 26 to 18. That minimizes it.

Mr. Stake: Okay. Thank you. Mr. Baxter.

Mr. Baxter: Just one follow up here, and I promise just one follow up, Ron. We're talking two different issues here, are we not? We're talking about the legislation at hand and we're talking about the issue of a union, correct? These are two separate issues.

Mr. Stake: Well, no. It's part of the issue. Because there are some people who will not get the pay increase because they are part of the bargaining unit that will vote on whether they want to be in a union or not.

Mr. Baxter: Right. And that's the question I'm getting to. Have they determined what their base line to begin their salary at? Or is that something to be bargained?

Mayor McPherson: The thing that everyone needs to understand is, when and if, they elect to go with a union, everything begins from zero.

Mr. Baxter: You start the whole bargaining ____________.

Mayor McPherson: The bargaining unit starts from scratch. There is nothing locked in. There are no wages locked in. There are no benefits locked in. Nothing. You're starting from ground zero. That's what negotiating a contract's all about. You know, you probably look at some of the other contracts around the belt way and see what similar people are making. Closest one that has this representation would be Gahanna. And we do in fact, have a copy of Gahanna's contract I believe. Or our legal counsel does. And there are just, there are a whole lot of issues that are in the contract that we haven't, or don't deal with. And on the flip side of that, I guess if I were to sum it up, I would say that there are probably going to be some things that will be better, and there are things that are going to be a lot worse. And that's why, when you negotiate a contract, you start from ground zero. There is no hourly rate that's going to be started. And Council needs to understand, that once the negotiations are through, it's just like negotiating the FOP contract. We bring it to City Council. You still have the option of accepting or rejecting it. So it's not a simple process, nor is it a short process. And we just have to travel down that road once the election is held. If they're successful, then that's the avenue that we'll take. And if they're not successful, then we go back to what we're doing now.

Mr. Stake: Okay. Mr. Clemens.

Mr. Clemens: Yes, Mayor. If this is approved, then you'll be coming to us, you will have consultants on this to help you? You'll come to us at that time, financially?

Mayor McPherson: Yes. We will continue to use our labor counsel. You almost have to. Because those are, once you start dealing in contracts, labor contracts, that's an area that, you know, it's a very, very special area.

Mr. Clemens: Since it's a beginning one, it's going to be...

Mayor McPherson: Exactly. It's critical that we also include in the contract, things that we have a concern about.

Mr. Clemens: But you'll be coming to us for some financial help at that time?

Mayor McPherson: Yeah.

Mr. Clemens: Okay.

Mr. Stake: Because I don't think we've appropriated any money in this years budget for any of this.

Mr. Clemens: No. We didn't. That's why I was bringing that up.

Mayor McPherson: We didn't.

Mr. Stake: That's a good point, Mr. Clemens.

Mayor McPherson: So we'll probably be getting an estimate of what it's going to cost. And again, but it's kind of premature now because the election may prove to be against the union as well. I don't know. I've done my best to take a neutral attitude on all of the issues. But I can assure you, that beginning this coming week, now that we know what the election date and all is, I will be sending out information regarding union, regarding the city, regarding our benefits, regarding our salaries. And I'll be discussing issues that are fact. The one thing that a municipality or an employer is allowed to do, is discuss the facts. And so I will be discussing the facts about what unionizing means or what's staying the way we are means. So any time I send anything out like that, I will make sure that City Council also gets a copy of it. But there's a lot of questions that they need to be asking and I'll put those out as a help to the people that are considering it. And on the flip side of that, they need to know what some of the consequences are that unionization brings also. And I think all of you sitting there, just like most of them probably know that with any up side, there's a down side, and any down side, there's an up side. But somebody needs to point it out to them what those are.

Mr. Stake: As long as you're on the up side, right?

Mayor McPherson: We want to be on the up side but we don't want to deny them the right of sharing the up side too.

Mr. Stake: That's right. They do have the right to organize it if they would like to.

Mayor McPherson: Exactly.

Mr. Stake: I for the like of me, can't imagine why they would want to. I certainly respect the employees that we have. One of the facts, you're talking about the facts, one of the facts is, that unfortunately, our hands are tied. We can not give the salary increase to the folks who are part of the bargaining unit at this time.

Mayor McPherson: Well, and I think that's, rationally when you think about it, you don't want to do that because when and if they decide to be union, those wages all become negotiable. At this point they are what they are as of the day they filed and then you go from there.

Mr. Stake: Okay. I see our City Attorney getting up over to the microphone. Mr. Underwood.

Mr. Underwood: Did you pick up the 9 ½% health insurance increase for bargaining people?

Mayor McPherson: We did. However, that is being looked at by legal counsel as we speak. When I was informed today that wages and benefits were to be frozen effective December 1, obviously in January, our rate increase went up. That is an increased benefit and our labor counsel is looking at that issue right now. And that may be something the employee will have to pay. I don't know this to be a fact yet.

Mr. Stake: We just don't know yet.

Mayor McPherson: That's why I didn't discuss it. I don't know what the answer is at this point. It truly is a benefit though.

Mr. Hills: Will you let us know when you do know?

Mayor McPherson: Oh, absolutely. I hope to know by Thursday or Friday, was the time line I was given on that question.

Mr. Stake: Okay. Mr. Baxter, do you have another question?

Mr. Baxter: Yes, sir. Thanks for your patience, Mr. Stake. Mayor, the question I have is, let's say this all comes to _____________, and we do decide to unionize here at the city with these workers, and the workers decide to enter into the union. Would they then have to take then, whatever contracts that were established? So therefore, if they were paid less, they might take a pay decrease by joining the union. So if they're bargaining, for example, what we gave them now instead of 2%...

Mr. Underwood: That's really premature to be talking about now, Mr. Baxter. You can't be talking about that.

Mayor McPherson: That's all part of the union negotiations down the road. And at this point, I don't think anybody has any pre-conceived ideas of what will be or won't be.

Mr. Baxter: Well, if we're preventing it for those who are organizing, then I'm just wondering with those who accept it, what the ramifications would be.

Mayor McPherson: I don't know.

Mr. Baxter: You can't discuss it? Alright.

Mr. Stake: Mr. Clemens.

Mr. Clemens: Yeah. I think one thing we have to be careful of is what we discuss, period. And I think it's something that should be left to the administration. It's an administrative function and you'll let us know what's going on. But I think as of now, we should stay completely out of it with our thoughts and any discussion. Because I know that that's illegal if we get into it too much.

Mayor McPherson: And you're right. And that's why I sent out that list originally when this first came up is to what you can and can't, can't talk about and question. And that's basically where I am right now. I pretty much leave it up to the legal beagles at this point. You know, the Bill's of the world. Because that's where it actually is at this point. And until the election, and if the election is successful on their standpoint, then we'll enter into negotiations. Those will all also be done behind closed doors and you'll be kept abreast during Executive Sessions. But the actual negotiations and the conclusions of negotiations will come to you for final approval. That's the way it works.

Mr. Stake: Okay. Thank you, Mayor. And I guess, getting back to this, really we're talking about this in context, at least I was, in context with the pay increase. So I know we did get off on a couple of tangents. But Mayor, so you want this to go forward, I would imagine you're asking for an emergency which I don't have a problem with. I don't know if anybody else at the table has a problem with it. But we do need to revise this list. So would it be okay to send it forward for a first reading?

Mayor McPherson: Either that or I'm sure I can get the list revised by tomorrow and either fax it to you. But it will certainly be in your packet by Friday. The only difference will be, it's going to add 8 names to it.

Mr. Stake: Okay. Anybody at the table have a problem with that? (No response). Okay. Any other questions or comments from members of Council? (No response). Then I'll make a motion that we send this forward with recommendation for adoption as an emergency with the changes coming down from the Mayor. Do I have a second? Second by Mr. Clemens. Any further discussion? (No response). All in favor, state aye. (All voted "Aye"). Opposed? (No response). Motion passes.

Mayor McPherson: Thank you, very much.

Mr. Stake: Thank you, Mayor. Item number 5 is ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF REYNOLDSBURG, OHIO: SECTION 127.01

"COMPENSATION" OF CHAPTER 127 PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL. It had its second reading on January 9, 2006. Just to recap, this and the next two ordinances are to bring salary increases in line, all elected officials salary increases would be applied equally with all elected official. It's just a change of language. Are there any questions or comments from members of the committee in regards to this? (No response). Members of Council? (No response). Mayor.

Mayor McPherson: Just a thought. In looking over the cap that you're putting on the increase, has Council considered putting a minimum on? You know, if you'll recall, during the last couple of years, the cost of living index was less, what .9% or 1 point something percent. If you're going to cap the max, would you consider capping the minimum? Now this won't affect me because you know, until another election from now. But I think when you start capping things, you know, that cap goes both ways. So just throwing this out as a suggestion for conversation.

Mr. Stake: Well, and thank you Mayor. Although this is the language for us. We have the language that you have here that we have in front of us tonight. So we would all be treated the same way. All elected officials.

Mayor McPherson: Well then, that's what I'm saying. I'm concerned that we're starting to treat elected officials different than we would anybody else. You know, typically we're going to give an employee a minimum raise of some sort. And if the cost of living index is .05%, then elected officials are going to get substantially less than all the other employees. And kind of you know, I don't want people thinking that just because you're an elected official you're a second class citizen as far as pay goes. So again, I'm just throwing that out to you. It really doesn't matter to me one way or the other. But when you're capping it maximum, you also maybe ought to think about capping a minimum. Just a suggestion.

Mr. Stake: Thank you, Mayor. Are there any questions or comments from members of the committee? (No response). Members of Council? President Hills.

Mr. Hills: The only comment, and I certainly appreciate the Mayor's statement, I think there are a couple of things that need to be noted. The CPI has often been, and was for minimum for a period of time. And the CPI this year certainly jumped from what, 1.5% to 1.7% up to 5.2%. And so you kind of derive the benefit there that there was no limits put on ___________ established a few years ago. And the 4% seemed to be a reasonable ____________. I think Bob, you've been elected for what, 7 times or something? And you've only had increases in the last 1 or 2 of your elections. Because many people have been elected in this city for 4 year terms at a frozen rate. And it wasn't until about 4 or 5 years ago the State of Ohio started recognizing ______________. So I think setting minimums, I'm not sure we set minimums for our employees. So I certainly appreciate what you're saying. But I don't personally see where there's a great advantage to a minimum when you have the CPI before the 4% maximum.

Mr. Stake: Thank you, President Hills. Are there any other questions or comments from members of Council? (No response).

Mayor McPherson: If I could just comment on Mr. Hills comment there.

Mr. Stake: Mayor, go ahead.

Mayor McPherson: If you're going to rely on that index, then you should just rely on the index be it up or down.

Mr. Hills: That doesn't deserve comment...we don't agree.
Mr. Stake: Well, there were several years I guess, where there was no increase at all for anybody. So even with the minimum 4% I guess, or maximum 4%. I think that's substantially better than what there's been in the past. So I'm comfortable with it myself. So unless anybody else on Council wants to change that. I will recommend that we send this forward with recommendation for adoption. Is there a second? Second by Mr. Baxter. Any further discussion? (Tape Change). All in favor, state aye. (All voted "Aye"). Opposed? (No response). Motion passes.

Item number 6 is the other part of this. ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF REYNOLDSBURG, OHIO: SECTION 147.03 "COMPENSATION" OF CHAPTER 147 DEPARTMENT OF LAW. And this is the same language. It has to do with the City Attorney. Would the City Attorney like to weigh in on this?

Mr. Underwood: Not particularly.

Mr. Stake: Okay. Members of the committee?

Mr. Baxter: Councilman Stake, when it says Department of Law, is that all associates within inside the Department of Law? Or the Law Director? Because if I remember right, didn't it first describe the Law Director and how we are....

Mr. Underwood: That ordinance only affects the City Attorney.

Mr. Baxter: So it's just the City Attorney.

Mr. Underwood: We don't have a Law Director. It only affects the City Attorney's salary. The one for the City Attorney.

Mr. Stake: Yeah. '147.03(a) Salary for the City Attorney shall be'. I don't see anybody else listed on here.

Mr. Baxter: Okay. I just wanted to make sure that it's not confusing it when you say Department of, that that implies the entire department should be treated the same.

Mr. Stake: Okay. Are there any other questions or comments from members of the committee? (No response). Members of Council? (No response). Then I will make a recommendation, or motion that we send this on to Council with recommendation for adoption. Second by Mr. Clemens. Any further discussion? (No response). All in favor, state aye. (All voted "Aye").

Opposed? (No response). Motion passes.

And item number 7 is ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF REYNOLDSBURG, OHIO: SECTION 141.01 “COMPENSATION” OF CHAPTER 141 MAYOR. And Mayor, you already spoke on this. Do you have anything else you’d like to say?
Mayor McPherson: I was speaking on behalf of the City Attorney, and the Auditor, and City Council. Not myself. So mine’s fine. Leave it alone.

Mr. Stake: Okay. Thank you, Mayor. Any other questions or comments from members of the committee? Mr. Baxter.

Mr. Baxter: Just one comment. I thought the Mayor had told me, if he ran again he was going to run for free.

Mr. Stake: He might run for free but he’s not going to serve for free. Alright. Are there any other questions or comments from members of Council on this? (No response). Then I will make a motion that we send this on with recommendation for adoption. Is there a second? Second by Mr. Clemens. Any further discussion? (No response). All in favor, state aye. (All voted “Aye”). Opposed? (No response). Motion passes.

And I will adjourn the Finance Committee at 8:29.

Finance Committee
January 17, 2006
- - -Nancy C. Frazier, Clerk of Council
(Transcribed - Susie Smith)