

**November 22, 2011**

**COUNCIL MEETING**

New Richmond Village Council met in Council Chambers in regular session on Tuesday, November 22, 2011 at 7pm. Present: Richard Hilt, Gary Skeene, Richard Mathews, Nicholas Wolf, Jack Conners and Vinnie Cochran - members; Ramona Carr, Mayor; Donna Hammons, Clerk; Randy Harvey, Police Chief and David Kennedy, Administrator.

Also attending:

Bob Beiser – 2740 St. Rt. 132

Bill Marsh – 2423 Country Place

Richard Feldkamp – 728 Washington Street

Judy Bandy – 208 Front Street

Paul Vanderbosch – 208 River Valley Boulevard

Kristin Bednarski – Clermont Sun

Noel Thacker – 302 Mill Street

Ernie Smith – 2378 St. Rt. 132

Rick Hinson – 1042 Old Rt. 52

**PUBLIC HEARING**

A Public Hearing was held to discuss Planning Commission text change amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. Case #2011-3 – Sections 8, 9, 10 & 11; Case #2011-4 – Sections 12 & 13; and Case #2011-5 – Sections 14, 15 & 16.

Kennedy discussed the continuing Planning Commission project to completely clean up the text language in the Zoning Ordinance. No questions were asked and the Public Hearing was closed.

Mayor Carr opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of November 8<sup>th</sup> were presented for approval. Cochran motioned to approve. Seconded by Conners.

Mr. Hilt: yes  
Mr. Skeene: yes  
Mr. Mathews: yes

Mr. Wolf: yes  
Mr. Conners: yes  
Mr. Cochran: yes

**David Kennedy, Village Administrator:**

The Ohio Revised Code permits municipalities to charge a rental charge for use of office space to enterprise accounts. Following discussions with the villages of Bethel and Ripley and a review of the ORC it is recommended to establish a rental charge of \$1,000 per month. This amount will be divided among the three enterprise funds – water, sewer and garbage accounts.

**FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE 2011-26 ESTABLISHING RENT TO BE PAID BY THE NEW RICHMOND UTILITIES DEPARTMENT (ENTERPRISE FUNDS) TO THE VILLAGE OF NEW RICHMOND (GENERAL FUND)**

**FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE 2011-27 AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE – SECTIONS 8, 9, 10 & 11.**

**FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE 2011-28 AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE – SECTIONS 12 & 13.**

**FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE 2011-29 AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE – SECTIONS 14, 15 & 16.**

The owner of 100 Front Street has submitted a Front Street Commercial Rehab application for a new awning. The total cost of the awning is \$1,000 which results in a 50% grant request of \$500. Design, etc. to be submitted to the Landmark Commission for their approval. Wolf motioned to approve. Seconded by Conners.

Mr. Hilt: yes  
Mr. Skeene: yes  
Mr. Mathews: yes

Mr. Wolf: yes  
Mr. Conners: yes  
Mr. Cochran: yes

The final step in completing the 220 Columbia Street demolition is the collapse of the foundation walls, leveling, straw and seeding. Cornerstone Development has submitted a bid of \$1,300. This property will eventually be put up for sale. Wolf motioned to approve. Seconded by Mathews.

Mr. Hilt: yes  
Mr. Skeene: yes  
Mr. Mathews: yes

Mr. Wolf: yes  
Mr. Conners: yes  
Mr. Cochran: yes

Appropriations need amended. Hilt motioned to suspend the three reading rule. Seconded by Skeene. Wolf asked for a more clear explanation about the adjustments

being made. It looks like \$6,000 is being taken from Parks and put in Administration. Kennedy replied these are just general adjustments.

Mr. Hilt: yes

Mr. Wolf: yes

Mr. Skeene: yes

Mr. Conners: yes

Mr. Mathews: yes

Mr. Cochran: yes

Hilt motioned to adopt **ORDINANCE 2011-25 AMENDING THE 2011 APPROPRIATIONS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** Seconded by Mathews.

Mr. Hilt: yes

Mr. Wolf: yes

Mr. Skeene: yes

Mr. Conners: yes

Mr. Mathews: yes

Mr. Cochran: yes

Mayor Carr asked Kennedy to have Fiscal Officer Baird list line items on future appropriation adjustments.

We have permission from the Ohio Public Works Commission to use up the additional money we have for the Sanitary Sewer Lining project. He is concentrating on the area around Columbia and Caroline Streets and the bottom of Short Hill. We are using \$30,000 for a change order.

The high service pump project is complete.

The old water plant listing on the auction website will go off December 7<sup>th</sup>. There have not been any bids so far. After that we will get the bids together to have the plant demolished.

The George Street lawn area will begin as soon as the Police Department remodeling is complete.

Cochran asked Kennedy about the two lots on Front Street that were given to the village by the descendants of the Black family. Kennedy said there are probably a couple more pieces of property. Cochran suggested that we look at buildable (not mitigated) property we own and put them on the market.

## **SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE 2011-23 ESTABLISHING SALARY DISTRIBUTIONS**

### **CALL OF MEMBERS:**

**Cochran** – At our last meeting we were to get information to make a decision about the old tennis courts, which were sold, to Bill Gilpin. He was to build two homes on this property within a certain time frame with the right of reversion back to the village if he did not. The last extension expired in August 2010. Cochran asked Carr if we have received an opinion from Korfhagen. Carr replied it is his opinion that the property

should return to the village. Korfhagen is going to draw the paperwork up. Carr will call Gilpin tomorrow.

**Conners** – Nothing to report.

**Wolf** – Nothing to report.

**Mathews** – We have dedicated employees. We have had a good year. We have a street crew that has remodeled the utility office and the police department, which most likely saved us thousands of dollars. We can talk about the dedication of our Fire/EMS Department getting up in the middle of the night to serve our citizens. The last pay increase these employees had was March of 2010. In March of 2010 we gave them a 3% raise. Unfortunately 1% of that came back to the village by way of the earnings tax. And there was an increase in the premiums for their health care. This year because of the economy and our current status we are unable to give raises. Which is understandable. Our lowest paid police officer is making \$9.50 per hour. Our lowest EMT is making \$11.00 per hour. We had a levy go down in November and I know this is a touchy subject. I think we need to do something for our employees. I think the timing is good that we can do something for our employees. Because as it was discussed in the Finance meeting a couple weeks ago we are going to have a carryover this year. It would be nice if it was a lot more, but it's not. Next year we are going to have to give some extra money to the Police Department. We're going to lose some money in various funds. And next year, again, we probably won't be able to give raises. The following year could be worse. So this is what I am proposing. Because we do have some money available that we provide our full/part-time employees with a one-time check that will not be added to their salary. This check can be called several different things – end-of-year check, holiday check, etc. This would be in lieu of any raise. To help them out at the end of the year. I will propose that full-time employees be given \$1,000 and we provide a pro-rated check for the part-time employees with a minimum of \$100. That money for the part-time employees is based on the number of hours they have worked this year. Also the option for the full-time employees that have a Health Savings Account to have the \$1,000 placed in their HSA. So that is my motion.

**WOLF:** I might add to this some. This comes to about \$27,000. As we think about our employees we can think of other things to spend the money on. Rich and I have discussed this from every angle. But the employees make this village. They are the ones out there in the cold nights moving snow. The Fire/EMS in the middle of the night. The money the street crew has saved the village in remodeling costs. I don't think we could spend the money in a better way. Yes, it's tight and it will only get worse year after year. So if we are going to do this we do it now or not do it. Because you won't be able to do it two or three years from now. Employees need to know we are thinking of them. That's my opinion. Because a year from now, two years from now I don't see any raise for anybody. But if they know see we are thinking of them now that we have a few bucks I think that will help out. So I will second your motion Richard.

**MATHEWS:** I would also like to add that this would be effective with the first pay period in December.

**COCHRAN:** If I may, I agree with absolutely everything you have said. I couldn't argue any fact you had. Other than timing. This is a hard one. This is probably in the top ten or less that we have had to decide. Everything you have said, taxes, insurance costs, has affected everybody in the village not just our employees. You did argue your point and it

was well taken. But then you could also argue that some people would say they are lucky to have a job. The way things look, my only question is, if we have to start cutting and the layoffs occur, how do you tell the first person you lay off when the \$27,000 may have kept them?

WOLF: Richard and I have not agreed on this. We've discussed this, we've played devil's advocate, and we've kicked this around for two or three weeks. To answer your first question – timing. And I totally agree with you. Do you think next year would be a better time to do this or the years after?

COCHRAN: Probably not.

WOLF: That's number 1. Now, number 2 – Layoffs. I can think of a million things that we would not do before we would cut employees. There are so many other things we would have to cut before we cut employees. To me cutting employees is the last thing you would do. Hypothetically, let's eliminate all the street employees. Who is going to cut the grass? Who is going to do snow removal? Who's going to do the odds and ends? You're going to contract it. How much do you save? On the other hand, we'll keep all the employees, but we won't be able to buy any blacktop, we won't have money to fix the mowers, we won't have the money to do that. So when you eliminate one you eliminate both.

COCHRAN: Not necessarily.

WOLF: Pretty much so. I just don't see a better time than now if you are going to do it.

COCHRAN: We have a carry over now. We know we're going to need it.

CARR: I'm like Rich. I'm like Nick. I'm like Vinnie. And probably like every council member here. I don't think anybody is saying the employees don't deserve a pay raise. I wish we had the money to give them a pay raise. But then Rich is saying the Police Department is short and is going to need money from the General Fund next year. Well, if we spend \$27,000 out of the General Fund and the General Fund is going to be short, what are you going to use to help the Police Department? You've got to look at it from all angles. And I know you have. I wish the money were out there to give them all a 3% raise that they well deserve.

MATHEWS: It's hard to disagree with anybody. If we can't afford this, then we can't afford matching grants. There's a whole lot we can't afford. We can't afford a backhoe lease, you can go on and on with the little things. However, like Nick said, we all agree our employees represent New Richmond.

COCHRAN: We do and we have for years.

MATHEWS: They have gone over and above what they are required to do. Next year we probably won't be able to give any type of increase. Whether it be an end of the year check, a percentage raise or anything else.

COCHRAN: I think that it's a wonderful idea. If I had the choice, and it may come to this, do we use it for a matching fund project? We have done a lot of projects and that's probably going to be the first thing we eliminate, our matching funds for grants. And then focus on day-to-day operations. That is probably what is going to have to happen in the future. So if you lean more that way then the employee becomes that much more vital. We're going to have to eliminate something to get something.

MATHEWS: The only reason this proposal was thought of is because we took in a little bit more in earnings tax than we thought we would. We're going to charge the Utility

Department rent next year. That's twelve thousand extra dollars. As tight as things are I think about the officer standing out on Rt. 52 at ten degrees in January. The EMT who gets out of bed at ten degrees to save our citizens. If we can't take care of these people. As their legislative body if we can't take care of these people then we should really start thinking about just shutting the whole thing down.

COCHRAN: I don't think that's an option. But we're definitely going to have to alter our management technique for the future. We won't have the money for improvements. To be honest, we should probably focus more on maintaining what we have.

MATHEWS: I would never have made the motion if this were added to their salaries. This is a one-time deal.

COCHRAN: How can it not be? It's taxable income.

MATHEWS: It will be added to their wages this year. But it will not be included in their pay for next year.

WOLF: It's not a salary increase. It's a one-time deal.

COCHRAN: That's all I have Mayor. Like I said it's the hardest decision we have had to make.

HILT: Here's the problem I have with it... we have a carryover this year. But, if I'm not mistaken, don't we lose our General Fund money in January for the entire year? The 3 mill-operating levy? That's what the carryover is getting eaten alive over. That's the problem I've got. I feel bad that if we do this and then in a year, maybe two years, we have to lay somebody off. \$27,000 could keep a \$13/hr person for a year. Just to give a little bonus, not really much of one. And to reiterate what everyone has said, we have the best employees around. I just don't feel good about telling someone a year or so from now they have to be laid off. It doesn't seem like a logical thing to do to me. As far as the nuts and bolts of things like the grants. Yes, we can cut back on grants. But the problem is you put down \$10,000 and get a \$100,000 project. To say that we are going to cut all that out and do what we can. We've got to have some other income to replace Beckjord. When you are talking about losing 36% - 40% of your General Fund budget. I don't know. I feel like I'm on the Titanic sitting here talking about this. I hate discussing it because of the employees. But there really isn't much we can do. It's hard to survive taking a hit like Beckjord. We formed committees to see what we can do. Maybe when Beckjord is gone something else will be built there. It's hard to replace that.

Unfortunately, half of our budget is salary. That's what gets things done, the labor not the materials.

NOEL THACKER (audience): Asked who seconded Mr. Mathew's motion. She didn't hear.

CARR: Nick Wolf.

Mr. Hilt: no

Mr. Wolf: yes

Mr. Skeene: no

Mr. Connors: yes

Mr. Mathews: yes

Mr. Cochran: no

Tie Vote. Mayor – no

Motion failed.

PAUL VANDERBOSCH (Council elect – audience): As a newly elected member to council he congratulates the members on this vote.

**Skeene** – Nothing to report.

**Hilt** – Chief Baird said the department has \$5,871 in excess funds from a 2010 grant. He was granted permission to use this money for an injury prevention program to distribute carbon monoxide detectors to New Richmond area residents. The department has ample smoke detectors. He is asking permission to establish procedures to distribute free CO and smoke detectors to New Richmond area residents. Hilt motioned to approve.

Seconded by Cochran.

Mr. Hilt: yes

Mr. Wolf: yes

Mr. Skeene: yes

Mr. Conners: yes

Mr. Mathews: yes

Mr. Cochran: yes

Wolf motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Skeene.

Mr. Hilt: yes

Mr. Wolf: yes

Mr. Skeene: yes

Mr. Conners: yes

Mr. Mathews: yes

Mr. Cochran: yes

Meeting adjourned at 7:35pm.

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**Mayor**

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**Village Clerk**