

John Hamilton called the meeting to order at 5 p.m. after the **Invocation**, given by Keith Grohe, and the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

The clerk called **the roll** and the following Commissioners responded: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton & Wesley Poole. Also present: Commissioners-Elect Dick Brady, Dennis Murray, Jr. and Naomi Twine.

City staff present: Paul Ricci – Fire Chief, John Orzech – Police Chief, Aaron Klein – City Engineer, Rebecca Corrigan – Chief Planner, Don Rumbutis – IT, Don Icsman - Law Director, Don Rumbutis – IT, Hank Solowiej - Finance Director, Nicole Ard – City Manager and Kelly Kresser - Commission Clerk.

Upon motion of Julie Farrar and second of Jeff Smith, the commission voted to excuse Diedre Cole. The President declared the motion passed.

Upon motion of Pervis Brown and second of Jeff Smith, the commission voted to approve the minutes of the November 12 city commission meeting and suspend the oral reading. The President declared the motion passed.

John Hamilton **introduced and welcomed the city's new chief planner, Rebecca Corrigan.**

PRESENTATIONS

John Hamilton thanked Darlene Armour, a volunteer for the City of Sandusky, who collected gift certificates from local restaurants for tonight's **PRIDE award winners**, as follows: Berardi's, East Side Café, El Grade Patron, Hot Dog Tony's, J. Bistro, Joe Sundae, Joe Wok, Lunch Box, Port Sandusky, Sandusky Yacht Club and Zinc Brasserie.

John Hamilton announced winners of the **2013 PRIDE awards** and provided them with their certificates: Rich & Tina Brown, 412 Cove Street, Gary & LouAnn Cebull, 1445 McKinley Street, Paulette Porter, 525 Wayne Street, William & Rosanne Poeschl, 1105 Wayne Street, Josette Hoover, 902 Central Avenue, Donald & Kim Corley, 403 Fulton Street, Mary Pfeiffer, 807 Dorn Drive, Jim & Marva Jackson, 519 Cold Creek, Theresa Rogers, 607 42nd Street, Sandra Sondergeld, 526 48th Street; and for commercial properties: Ryan Whaley for Green Door Mediaworks, 316 East Water Street and Davis & Pinchot Investments, LLC for 1002 Columbus Avenue.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (*agenda items only*)

Tim Stookey, 1307 Fifth Street, asked if every resident in the City of Sandusky will be getting a new water meter and if there will be access charges to the property owners. John Hamilton said these questions will be answered when the item is read (Item #7).

CURRENT BUSINESS

Upon motion of Pervis Brown and second of Julie Farrar, the commission voted to accept all communications. The President declared the motion passed.

ITEM #1 – Submitted by Amanda Meyers, Paralegal

ACCEPT TWO PARCELS OF LAND THROUGH LAND REUTILIZATION PROGRAM

Budgetary Information: The cost of this acquisition will be approximately the administrative staff time necessary for acquisition recording and transfer fees, and any costs to maintain and secure the structure. The city will recoup these costs upon sale. The taxing districts will not collect the delinquent taxes, assessments, penalties and interest currently due and owing in the amount of \$21,855.32 whether the city accepts the property or not. However, it is presumed that the city will be maintaining the property in the event of forfeiture to the State of Ohio, in which case the property will be exempt from taxation and the city will not be able to assess the property for the costs of mowing and maintenance. By returning this abandoned nonproductive land to tax producing status, the taxing districts will begin collecting approximately \$2,466.92 yearly in real estate taxes, which will eventually increase with rehabilitation and development of the property.

RESOLUTION NO. 045-13R: It is requested a resolution be passed **approving and accepting certain real property for acquisition into the land reutilization program**; and declaring that this resolution shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Upon motion of Pervis Brown and second of Keith Grohe, the commission voted to approve this resolution. Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. Roll call on the resolution: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. The President declared the resolution passed.

ITEM #2 – Submitted by Amanda Meyers, Paralegal

SALE OF PROPERTY THROUGH LAND REUTILIZATION PROGRAM

Budgetary Information: The cost associated with this purchase and sale agreement is the expense of obtaining the parcels and the clearing, grading and seeding of the parcels which will be paid with proceeds from previous sales of land bank property and held in the land bank account. The city will recoup the costs for the title search, survey, deed preparation and recording fees from the nonrefundable earnest money deposits of one hundred ninety eight dollars and fifty cents (\$198.50) to be paid by Mr. Hicks for Parcel #57-01015.000 and six hundred forty four dollars and twenty seven cents (\$644.27) to be paid by Mr. Hicks and one hundred seventy four dollars and twenty three cents (\$174.23) to be paid by Mr. Irby proportionately for Parcel #57-02505.000. Upon closing, the taxing districts will begin collecting a total of approximately three hundred forty dollars and ninety four cents (\$340.94) per year in real estate taxes.

ORDINANCE NO. 13-121: It is requested an ordinance be passed **declaring that certain real property owned by the city as part of the land reutilization program identified as Parcel No's. 57-01015.000 and 57-02505.000 located at 902 Hancock Street, Sandusky, are no longer needed for any municipal purpose and authorizing the execution of purchase and sale agreements with respect to that real property;** and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Upon motion of Keith Grohe and second of Wesley Poole, the commission voted to approve this ordinance. Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. The President declared the ordinance passed.

ITEM #3 – Submitted by Amanda Meyers, Paralegal

SALE OF PROPERTY THROUGH LAND REUTILIZATION PROGRAM

Budgetary Information: The cost associated with this purchase and sale agreement is the total amount of the title examination, commitment, deed preparation, recording fees and transfer tax. Any such costs shall be recouped by the city upon sale. By returning this nonproductive land to tax producing status, the taxing districts will immediately begin collecting approximately two hundred sixty nine dollars and eighty nine cents (\$269.89) in annual real estate taxes once again.

ORDINANCE NO. 13-122: It is requested an ordinance be passed **declaring that certain real property owned by the city as part of the land reutilization program identified as Parcel #56-00423.000 located at 330 Meigs Street, Sandusky, is no longer needed for any municipal purpose and authorizing the execution of a purchase and sale agreement with respect to that real property;** and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Upon motion of Julie Farrar and second of Pervis Brown, the commission voted to approve this ordinance. Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. The President declared the ordinance passed.

ITEM #4 – Submitted by Amanda Meyers, Paralegal

SALE OF PROPERTY THROUGH LAND REUTILIZATION PROGRAM

Budgetary Information: The cost associated with this purchase and sale agreement is the total amount of the title search, deed preparation and any other customary fees that may be due and payable in the ordinary course of the sale and purchase transaction. The city will recoup the cost of the expenses from the nonrefundable earnest money deposit of one hundred ninety eight dollars and fifty cents (\$198.50) required to be paid by the purchaser. The taxing districts will begin collecting approximately three hundred thirty nine dollars and seventy six cents (\$339.76) per year in real estate taxes.

ORDINANCE NO. 13-123: It is requested an ordinance be passed **declaring that certain real property owned by the city as part of the land reutilization program identified as Parcel #56-01049.000, located at 514 Perry Street, Sandusky, is no longer needed for any municipal purpose and authorizing the execution of a purchase and sale agreement with respect to that real property;** and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Upon motion of Jeff Smith and second of Julie Farrar, the commission voted to approve this ordinance.

Discussion: Julie Farrar thanked Amanda Meyers, staff in the law department, and members of the land reutilization committee for all of the hard work done, and said leaps and bounds have been made in taking homes of no value and tearing them down; some are being rehabbed and some lots are being split and improved. Tax dollars will come back into the city and property values will increase as a result.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. The President declared the ordinance passed.

ITEM #5 – Submitted by Hank S. Solowiej, CPA, Finance Director

PAYMENT - PROPERTY, CASUALTY & LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR 12.13 – 12.14

Budgetary Information: The annual cost has become part of the annual operating budget and the City of Sandusky's total cost for 2013 – 2014 will be an amount not to exceed \$390,000. The insurance year is December 1, 2013 through November 30, 2014. Based on exposures, the cost will be distributed to the general fund (\$228,150), street fund (\$33,930), water fund (\$60,723) and sewer fund (\$67,197). The prior year ordinance was passed by the city commission on November 26, 2012 (Ordinance #12-114) that covered the period December 1, 2012 through November 30, 2013 for an amount not to exceed of \$390,000.

ORDINANCE NO. 13-124: It is requested an ordinance be passed **authorizing and directing the city manager and/or finance director to make payment to Arthur J. Gallagher & Company for property, casualty and liability insurance costs for the period of December 1, 2013 through November 30, 2014;** and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Upon motion of Pervis Brown and second of Wesley Poole, the commission voted to approve this ordinance. Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. The President declared the ordinance passed.

ITEM #6 – Submitted by Aaron Klein, P.E.

AGREEMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL DESIGN SERVICES WITH JONES & HENRY ENGINEERS, LTD. FOR THE EAST END SEWER IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

Budgetary Information: The engineering consultant fee is \$300,000 to be paid from sewer funds and not to be exceeded without approval from the city.

ORDINANCE NO. 13-125: It is requested an ordinance be passed **authorizing and directing the city manager to enter into an agreement for professional design services with Jones & Henry Engineers, Ltd. for the east end sewer improvements project;** and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Upon motion of Jeff Smith and second of Keith Grohe, the commission voted to approve this ordinance.

Discussion: Wesley Poole asked the engineer to explain why we are doing this, its importance and what is driving the expenditure. Aaron Klein said this is listed in the general plan updates and this project was in the original general plan. The revision has been approved and its intent is to minimize the local flow going into the sewers which are more downstream where there are already overflows. This project is not to eliminate or reduce overflows at this point, but it is needed so we can do the next few phases of the project to eliminate the overflows. Aaron Klein said this is a project mandated by the Ohio E.P.A. Dennis Murray asked about the size of the project or a sense of this and other projects in the works. Aaron Klein said this is an approximately \$2 - \$2.5 million project upon completion, and the general plan has about six different components to it. There is a range as to what needs to be done to reduce overflows. Aaron Klein said he can provide additional information to the commission. Dick Brady asked if these expenditures are dollars that will be shared with Erie County on a percentage basis and Aaron Klein said the intent is to have these discussions with the county. There are many factors and variables depending on what the projects are and their cost, and there needs to be more discussion about what the actual cost will be to the city as well as the cost-sharing.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. The President declared the ordinance passed.

ITEM #7 – Submitted by Douglas A. Keller, Water Services Superintendent

PURCHASE OF NEW SENSUS WATER METERS FROM HD SUPPLY WATERWORKS

Budgetary Information: This purchase will be paid 50% from water funds and 50% from sewer funds.

ORDINANCE NO. 13-126: It is requested an ordinance be **passed authorizing and directing the city manager to purchase new Sensus water meters from HD Supply Waterworks of Ashland, Ohio, for the purpose of conducting a pilot study in anticipation of replacing all water meters within the City of Sandusky;** and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Upon motion of Jeff Smith and second of Wesley Poole, the commission voted to approve this ordinance.

Discussion: Aaron Klein said there is no plan for any excess charges to residents. There are approximately 10,000 water meters in the city and this amount will not cover this. The estimate was \$3 million to replace all of them. The intent is for these to be placed at residential properties in Zone 5 which is at the south end of the city. John Hamilton asked to compare the current situation with what is being proposed. Aaron Klein said the meters are 23 years old and the technology has improved so accuracy has improved. Most water meters have a 20-year life span so this has already been exceeded. The city has started to lose some of the reliability of the existing meters in the system which means we are not billing less or providing more water as the meters tend to fault low. This is being analyzed for better accuracy and awareness of breaks, bad meters or other problems. This project is designed to assist with getting better readings and the new meters will be designed with telemetry units so they can be read remotely; this will help with manpower. Wesley Poole said long-term, it looks like the city will be purchasing a lot of meters and asked if the engineer could offer this to Erie County to help with the cost and Aaron Klein said the City of Huron is utilizing a different meter, but he can contact Erie County to see where they are.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. The President declared the ordinance passed.

ITEM #8 – Submitted by Scott Kromer, Foreman, Sewer Maintenance Division

PURCHASE OF MUFFIN MONSTER CHANNEL GRINDER

Budgetary Information: The budgetary estimate for conversion of the channel grinder is \$20,340 and will be paid with sewer funds.

ORDINANCE NO. 13-127: It is requested an ordinance be **passed authorizing and directing the city manager and/or the finance director to expend funds for the purchase of a Muffin Monster channel grinder for the Cedar Point main wastewater pump station from JWC Environmental of Buford, Georgia, in the amount of \$20,340;** and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Upon motion of Julie Farrar and second of Pervis Brown, the commission voted to approve this ordinance.

Discussion: Keith Grohe said he will abstain because he is employed by Cedar Fair. Julie Farrar asked Aaron Klein to explain what a channel grinder does and Aaron Klein said a lot of larger items that dump into the sewer system are ground up before they get into the pumps, and this device will help them from clogging.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 5. Abstain: Keith Grohe, 1. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 5. Keith Grohe, 1. Abstain. The President declared the ordinance passed.

ITEM #9 – Submitted by Paul E. Ricci, Fire Chief

FY 2013 ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTER GRANT FROM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Budgetary Information: The total amount of the grant funds applied for is \$22,500 to purchase rescue rope, webbing, rescue tripod, anchor straps, carabineers pulleys and other personal safety equipment.

The matching funds required for this grant is 10% of \$2,250 which will be provided from the fire department's proposed 2014 operating budget.

RESOLUTION NO. 046-13R: It is requested a resolution be passed **authorizing the filing of a grant application to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency grant programs directorate for the FY 2013 Assistance to Firefighters grant program and, if awarded, authorizing the city manager to execute any required agreements;** and declaring that this resolution shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Upon motion of Pervis Brown and second of Keith Grohe, the commission voted to approve this resolution. Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. Roll call on the resolution: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. The President declared the resolution passed.

ITEM #10 – Submitted by John Orzech, Police Chief

CONTRACT WITH ERIE COUNTY GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT FOR BULKY & SOLID WASTE VEHICLE INSPECTIONS

Budgetary Information: The city will collect an annual registration fee of fifty dollars (\$50) per vehicle, for the purpose of inspection, administration and enforcement of Chapter 955. One half of the permit fees collected will be paid by the city to the Board of Health for providing bulky and solid waste vehicle inspection services.

RESOLUTION NO: 047-13R: It is requested a resolution be passed **authorizing the city manager to enter into a contract for services with the Erie County General Health District Board of Health for bulky and solid waste vehicle inspection services;** and declaring that this resolution shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Upon motion of Julie Farrar and second of Jeff Smith, the commission voted to approve this resolution. Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton and Wesley Poole, 6. Roll call on the resolution: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton & Wesley Poole, 6. The President declared the resolution passed.

ITEM #11 – Submitted by Kelly L. Kresser, CMC & Commission Clerk

A request has been received from the Ohio Division of Liquor Control for a TREX liquor permit transfer of C1 (*Beer only in original sealed container for carry out only*) and C2 (*Wine and mixed beverages in sealed containers for carry out*) liquor permits from Speedway LLC dba Rich Oil #3732, 520 South Broad Street, Lancaster, OH 43130 to Speedway LLC dba Speedway #7330, 2227 Campbell Street, Sandusky. It is requested the commission clerk be authorized to notify the Ohio Division of Liquor Control the city has no objection to this request.

Upon motion of Julie Farrar and second of Keith Grohe, the commission voted for the city commission clerk to notify the Ohio Division of Liquor Control the city has no objection to this request.

Discussion: Pervis Brown asked if this is for the new Speedway which is being built and Julie Farrar indicated it is.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton & Wesley Poole, 6. The President declared the motion passed.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Nicole Ard welcomed Rebecca Corrigan to the city as this is the first day of her employment. She brings a wealth of experience and previously worked for Cuyahoga County as well as communities within Cuyahoga County (Beford and Berea).

Nicole Ard thanked Barnes Nursery for donating the Christmas tree at Schade Mylander Plaza to the city. Nicole Ard also thanked Bill Waldock who donated holiday lights for the downtown displays. Nicole Ard thanked Jules Bahnsen for his special activities. Nicole Ard thanked Value City Furniture and the holiday coalition for the reindeer night.

Upon motion of Pervis Brown and second of Keith Grohe, the commission accepted a donation in the amount of \$100 from Platinum Restoration for the fire department trust fund. The President declared the motion passed.

Upon motion of Julie Farrar and second of Jeff Smith, the commission voted to accept a donation in the amount of \$100 from Sandusky Firefighters Local #327 for the fire department trust fund. The President declared the motion passed.

Upon motion of Julie Farrar and second of Jeff Smith, the commission voted to accept a donation in the amount of \$300 from an anonymous donor for the fire department's awards dinner.

Nicole Ard asked the commission to **confirm a date for the session regarding the 2014 budget.** After brief discussion, the commission determined this will take place on Tuesday, December 17 beginning at 5 p.m.

Nicole Ard asked the commission if they would like to have **a briefing from George Poulos regarding the city hall rehabilitation project.** George Poulos would be able to speak to the work done previously and could do this during an upcoming city manager's report or at a separate session. Jeff Smith said he thought it would be a good idea for this to take place during a meeting separate from a regular commission meeting.

Nicole Ard said work has begun at the **Keller Building.** Nicole Ard has not yet received information from the developer whom she emailed the commissioners about.

Nicole Ard said there was a recent **ribbon cutting at Terra Community College and there are people from Sandusky who are in the hospitality industry.** This will help provide management opportunities to get hands-on experience, including those from Cedar Point and Kalahari, who have been involved in starting the program.

Nicole Ard said some of **the city's police officers recently participated in a chili cook-off** for a very good cause on Veteran's Day.

Nicole Ard **thanked Officers Costante, Youskievicz and Sgt. Dahlgren in the police department for their work in learning a new records management system** and noted they are now able to train the trainer when the program starts in January.

Nicole Ard asked **John Orzech to provide an update regarding 2014 priorities in the police department.** John Orzech said he has been addressing some of the goals established when appointed to the position of police chief in April. The primary concern is community outreach and quite a bit was done in the summer and fall season by attending community events; a liaison program has been established with 30 different organizations in the City of Sandusky. Police officers have volunteered to be a name and face behind the agency on a regular basis. Another goal is to establish a strategic plan for the police department. The commission recently approved a vision and mission statement for the entire city which will be used to develop a departmental plan. John Orzech is aware the fire department has already established a strategic plan and this process will take approximately one year. A promotional exam was given recently for the positions of Sergeant and Lieutenant and once the assessments are approved by the Civil Service Commission, the organizational restructuring will move forward. John Orzech said employee and supervisor training is of primary focus which has been lax for a number of years, especially for front line supervisors. Advanced courses are being explored to further their education and leadership skills. Sgt. Danny Lewis recently completed the FBI Academy and Sgt. Dahlgren will be attending the Ohio State Patrol Public Safety Leadership Academy starting in March. This is a ten-week program which is provided by Ohio State. Other supervisors are enrolled in training through Police Executive Leadership College (PELC) or other organizations and over 2,000 hours of training were realized this year including psychological training for things police officers have to deal with on a daily basis. Most training has been done through established work schedules and without the use of overtime. This is a credit to the officers, the union and management to be professionally trained and to garner as much knowledge as possible. Other training includes firearms instruction and defensive tactics which produced camaraderie for the officers at the firing range. John Orzech said top priorities going into 2014 include the implementation of a new records management system and the "live" date is January 1, but there will be training prior to this. Sgt. Dahlgren will be the administrator and the department will be able to provide online reporting with this new system. The system has mapping to focus specific crime in specific areas for a better direction of resources. The policy and procedure manual is scheduled to be updated by the end of 2014. Pervis Brown said as the commission liaison to the police department, he has seen a transformation in the department the department and is in a good position; the chief is doing an outstanding job and taking the department to a new level and the commission should provide support for him.

OLD BUSINESS

Julie Farrar asked for a **status of the light post at 149 Water Street** and Aaron Klein said after work is done with the concrete, the pole will be repaired, hopefully next week. Aaron Klein said this pole was hit by a vehicle and is a special decorative light and pole which is not easily replaced. The one to be installed is the last one in stock and these are no longer being manufactured.

Julie Farrar asked about a **memorial tree at Lions Park** and stated the reason for its removal was because it died.

NEW BUSINESS

Pervis Brown said the newspaper recently printed accusations concerning the city commission evaluation of the **charter officers** and said he would like to clear the air as people are misinformed about the process. The charter officers are evaluated utilizing one form which was developed by former Commissioner Kim Nuesse. The charter officers are brought in and each of the commissioners provide their evaluation vocally, and the charter officers then have an opportunity to respond and this is the way the process was designed. For some reason, a false allegation was made the commission did not consider any written statements; this is not true. The article stated, "It's unclear if any of the five commissioners who approved the evaluation even read the dissenting views of Cole and Poole." Pervis Brown said there was no dissenting written statement from Diedre Cole and this statement is not true. Each of the charter officers are treated the same and the commissioners all concurred with the evaluation(s) and for someone to say anyone was treated different, this is untrue. Nothing was ignored including written opinions received; the only one which was received by the commission was from Wesley Poole.

Dennis Murray asked to engage the commission in a **discussion about the 2014 budget** and the calamity upon the city in about five weeks; charts were distributed by Dennis Murray. In context and pursuant to the city charter, the manager is to provide an estimate of what the budget will look like for the next year by November 1 and this has occurred. Dennis Murray said he understands, in speaking with members of the Audit/Finance Committee, they are concerned about the amount of shortfall which he estimates will be closer to the range of \$1.3 – \$1.4. The budget starts January 1, not at the end of March when the commission proceeds to approve the budget, and if no corrective action is taken until then, three months will be lost to deal with this shortfall and the options to address it. We have conversations place about cutting to the bone, but the graphs put together with information provided by Hank Solowiej show the city has already done this. The first chart shows revenues and expenses in absolute dollars during the past ten years or so. The second chart tells a very important story about what is happening and shows, in inflation-adjusted dollars, how much the city has cut and these cuts have been tough, well beyond the loss of population. The next chart shows the inherent unfairness of what the General Assembly has done to municipalities across Ohio as they are only concerned about a certain sector of the population. Dennis Murray said he disagrees with this policy which is to take care of the job creators in the top one percent and dig at all the tax cuts and leave the cities to foot the bill. This chart shows the state cut impacts for the period 2004 – 2014 with estate taxes eliminated and half of the local government funds eliminated; another hit will be realized by the current general assembly of their so-called reform with municipal income tax (\$100,000 - \$150,000). Dennis Murray is very concerned the shortfall number the city is looking at, along with health care increases, will be closer to \$1.4 million. Dennis Murray said none of the commissions' budgets would have balanced for the last ten years, but this is not the fault of the city or of the hardworking men and women employed by the city; this is what the general assembly has done and the city has to deal with it. His concern is there is a cliff on the City of Sandusky as of January 1 and he does not want to be in a position to continue spending money when the city can take corrective action now. This is wrong, it is painful, and it should not happen, but the city does not have any choice because it does not have the money. Dennis Murray said it took him a long time when he was a commissioner (the first time) to get a sense for how profoundly separate the two halves of city government are – the utility side and the municipal government side. The two have nothing to do with each other and it is as if there are two separate governments that go on. The utility side is rate-funded and the city has the ability to increase sewer and water rates as necessary. If the EPA comes along and mandates the city to do certain things, the city does them or they will be fined or could be sued. Just because these funds are fine, it does not mean the police or fire departments can use them as, by law, they are separate and we cannot. The next chart shows the expenses from the general fund which are separate from the sewer/water and street funds. Block grant monies are not included in the general fund and these are all separate pools of money and the general fund is the one which he fears will be short by \$1.4 million and where the cuts will be made. Dennis Murray said he thought when going into this process there would be no sacred cows, but there may just be one: the

greenhouse, and for a lot of good reasons. The next chart shows how much the city has cut and it is getting hard for folks to do their jobs, but there are just fewer and fewer of them. The last chart shows where cuts have actually been made in each department or division as they relate to the general fund. Dennis Murray said he has been told forestry/horticulture and city hall employees have been cut enough and he gets that message, but he does not know where to go or where the citizens of the community want to go. The commission needs to consider options and not wait until after January 1 as a lot of options will have been lost and the city will begin spending its reserve; this will lower the city's bond rating. Dick Brady said this approaches a filibuster and he will be brief. This is not a small problem, it is a huge problem. \$1.3 million should knock all of our socks off and this needs to be dealt with sooner rather than later through meaningful discussions in order to put a "fix" in place. Dick Brady said he would like to see ideas regarding available cuts in different departments and the city cannot go through a long drawn out process to get the public's input and the commissioners should rely on the department heads who know best, along with the members of the Audit/Finance Committee. The commission needs to look at what can be trimmed and their impacts. Dick Brady said his wife is a member of the Cedar Point Gardener's Association and he took quite a beating about removing dollars from the horticulture department or the greenhouse. He looked at the largest budget and thought perhaps there is money there, but he has found out that perhaps there is not and there are two sides to every story. Everyone wants the same thing, but "not in my backyard". There will be shared pain from around the table. John Hamilton said a work session has been scheduled for December 17 to discuss these things. Wesley Poole thanked Dennis Murray for starting his work early and said he is looking forward to working on the 2014 budget along with the citizens.

Julie Farrar said Dennis Murray is right on target with the loss of finances, but she has been here for six years and has seen many cuts made. The light post she mentioned earlier has been down for almost three years but the city did not have the manpower to take care of it to ensure the downtown looks like it should. An orange cone decoration was in front of a reputable doctor's office and it seems this has been the compass of the city. The whole city needs to look at **increasing the city's income tax** which has been at one percent for 47 years. People continue to want this and want that – plowing streets, picking up leaves, etc. – but there are only so many employees and the city has had to obtain grants to ensure there are enough fire fighters. Julie Farrar said she is willing to invest in the future of her city and could not imagine living anywhere else; she is not paying the same amount for a gallon of milk as she did a few years ago.

Upon motion of Julie Farrar and second of Jeff Smith, the commission voted to hold an executive session regarding personnel, law director. Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown, John Hamilton & Wesley Poole, 6. The President declared the motion passed.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Sharon Johnson, 1139 Fifth Street, asked if the executive session is for personnel and John Hamilton affirmed it is. Sharon Johnson said the city wants to direct truck traffic from First Street to Fifth Street and suggested sending them to Cleveland Road instead. Aaron Klein said the contractor was asked to send truck traffic to Cleveland Road. Sharon Johnson said she has heard \$500,000 of the budget shortfall would come from the EMS fund and Wesley Poole said this would be an option and whether it is paid for out of his left or right pocket, he did not intend for this. Hank Solowiej said this was noted in the first draft of the 2014 budget which was distributed on November 1. Hank Solowiej said the work session on December 17 will cover budget issues. Sharon Johnson said if the city is going to raise income tax, they should not turn around and build a new city hall and she is not for this and it is not right.

Tim Stookey, 1307 Fifth Street, said Chief Ricci and the staff in the Sandusky Fire Department have been to his home three times to care for his wife and thanked them for having the necessary training to take care of her. The police department should be commended for helping with speeding on Fifth Street. The condition of Fifth Street may be slowing motorists and if something is not done with it, a catastrophe could occur. The transit bus and vehicles from the fire department cannot drive in certain areas on Fifth Street without crossing over the centerline. At the corner of Sycamore Line and Fifth Street, there is a large hole near the telephone pole and there are ruts like this along the street. He is worried one day he will come to the commission meeting to report losing a neighbor's son. Tim Stookey said he was a mail carrier for 46 years and sees how the residents of the community are struggling severely and are eating peanut butter and jelly because they cannot afford anything else. He demanded, with the help of the commission, to have a study done to determine who pays these taxes. Rather than charging Perkins Township residents to work in this city, the city should change to another philosophy with the cooperation of Erie County and asked what would be wrong with a sales tax to benefit everyone.

The President announced a recess of the regular session at 6:20 p.m. One executive session was held beginning at 6:30 p.m. Upon motion of Pervis Brown and second of Keith Grohe, the commission voted to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m. The President declared the motion passed.

Kelly L. Kresser, CMC
Clerk of the City Commission

John F. Hamilton
President of the City Commission