

Diedre Cole asked for a **moment of silence in memory of George Gilbert who served on the city's Revolving Loan Fund Committee. John Hamilton called the meeting to order** at 5 p.m. after the **Invocation**, given by Diedre Cole, and the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

The clerk called **the roll** and the following Commissioners responded: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton.

City staff present: Paul Ricci – Fire Chief, John Orzech – Interim Police Chief, Anna Enderle – Planner, Jane Cullen – Project Engineer, Amanda Meyers – Paralegal, Don Icsman – Law Director, Nicole Ard - City Manager, Hank Solowiej – Finance Director and Kelly Kresser – Commission Clerk.

Upon motion of Jeff Smith and second of Keith Grohe, the commission voted to approve the minutes of the March 6 and March 11 meetings and suspend the oral reading. The President declared the motion passed.

John Hamilton **welcomed Boy Scout Troop #7**; they are working on their communication badges.

John Hamilton **welcomed Girl Scout Troop #369**; they are working on their Journey to Gold Award.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (*agenda items only*)

None.

PRESENTATIONS

Paul Ricci said it is a pleasure to **recognize individuals and organizations making contributions to the community**. He thanked Fire Marshal Rudy Ruiz who is a big part of the fire department's community risk reduction program, and Rudy's daughter, Christina, who assisted with the program by the Girl Scouts. Paul Ricci recognized winners of the **Jim Wichman Award** for exceptionally meritorious service for the citizens of Sandusky and the SFD:

- **Scott Ransom of Cousino-Harris Restoration** – built a fire sprinkler demonstration prop
- **Jackie Pruitt and Girl Scout Troop #369** – carbon monoxide alarm system program
- **Ron Rude of Firelands Area American Red Cross** – Safe-T Element cooking system
- **Lisa Rothacker of 1-800-Board Up** –supporters of fire service with Erie County Fire Fighter events

PUBLIC HEARING

John Hamilton opened a **Public Hearing regarding the 2013 budget for the City of Sandusky**.

Nicole Ard provided a recap of the city's vision, mission statement and focus areas which were accomplished through work sessions held in 2012 to help the commission make decisions regarding the **2013 budget**. The priority and focus areas will help the commission by guiding them in the choices they need to make. Input has been gathered through a series of community focus group meetings, meetings with members of the Audit/Finance Committee and a work session held by the city commission on March 6. Nicole Ard said three draft versions of the 2013 budget have been distributed. Over 200 employees work 24-hours per day, seven days per week to ensure roads are taken care of and ensuring citizens have water and sewer services and safety services provided by the police and fire departments. The general fund is estimated at \$16 million with \$15.9 of estimated expenses; this leaves a balance of \$3.7 million which is a 23% ratio for the general fund balance. The Finance Director prepares monthly statements to provide an overview and revenues and expenditures have both been decreasing. The majority of property tax income goes to the Sandusky City Schools and income tax is the primary source of income for the city's general fund. Proposals have been created for members of the Audit/Finance Committee because of a request for a balanced budget. There are a few vacant positions including the assistant police chief and the general services director which have both been removed from the 2013 budget. No changes were made to the police reserve officer budget. Operational changes have been made in the fire department to correct deficiencies. Contractual services encompass a number of different items and reductions have been outlined in different departments. Challenges anticipated are having a secure and stable revenue stream and the finance director has accounted for upcoming state funding cuts. The city needs to be creative and realistic to find revenue streams beyond grants to help sustain in the long term and continue to provide the services expected by citizens. The city is waiting to

see what will be needed to assist with funding for the Sandusky Transit System because of its change in status from urban to rural. The STS Administrator has been researching revenue options. The city will need to make payments for the Safe Routes to School program as this is provided on a reimbursement basis. Nicole Ard said an estimate has been provided for a critical mass to take care of numerous roads which need to be repaired and are in need of reconstruction. There was a recent CDBG public hearing which identified streets that may be completed through available funding by this program. The ongoing improvement project at Lions Park is continuing and the alleyway near Polk and Tyler Streets will be improved to help support the future multi-use facility at this corner similar to the Ferndale Drive project. These are economic development projects to help retain local business and help with environmental issues.

Nicole Ard said there are many challenges ahead for the City of Sandusky. There has not been an investment made in computer networking or replacement and the telephone system is in need of updating. The vehicles and equipment are in different states of disrepair and in need of replacement and/or repair. The city needs money for infrastructure, a road condition survey, road resurfacing, a class and compensation study, more robust training for staff, strategic planning for the police and fire departments for accreditation and for future planning and technology efforts - particularly for code enforcement. Nicole Ard said effort is also needed to address combined sewer overflows because of environmental obligations (cost benefit analysis for projects and activities) by federal and state governments. Nicole Ard said the city is discussing sharing services with other agencies (i.e. mowing of vacant and abandoned properties by an outside contractor), working with the school system and performing activities to ensure the civil services rules are up to date. Nicole Ard said there are grant applications for these next steps. Performance measures are being done to move forward. There were health insurance changes made this year and employees are paying a little more toward their insurance and the city is trying to make employees better off through their own personal wellness by creation of a wellness committee and by providing training opportunities. Nicole Ard said copies of notes made by staff regarding the budget process are available as identified in the newspaper.

Sharon Johnson, 1139 Fifth Street, said the newspaper recently reported the city is balancing the budget by eliminating three positions (assistant police chief, general services superintendent and engineer) and asked if an engineer will be hired. Nicole Ard said this position is not being cut. Sharon Johnson asked if the plan is for non-union positions to receive the same amount for raises and Nicole Ard said that is the plan. Sharon Johnson asked the cost to the city and Hank Solowiej said the total cost is \$54,000 for the fire department and \$64,000 for AFSCME employees. Sharon Johnson asked what the savings realized will be for health insurance and Hank Solowiej said approximately \$32,000 for fire department employees and \$55,000 for AFSCME employees. Sharon Johnson said she has seen the challenges and priorities and this looks like a wish list; she asked how the city will afford these and if bond restructuring will help pay for any of these items. Nicole Ard said she did not discuss utilizing any of the TIF or bond money for these items. Sharon Johnson said she attended three Audit/Finance Committee meetings and the recent community focus group meetings where services levels were discussed and the possibility of paying for services. Sharon Johnson said a list of cuts was presented by Nicole Ard which threw her (Sharon) into panic mode and she does not know if this was deception or a dog and pony show for the union. Nicole Ard said she wished to clarify she did not make a presentation to the Audit/Finance Committee proposing cuts; a public meeting was held on March 6 for the city commission and a closed session of the Audit/Finance committee was held prior. Members of the Audit/Finance Committee did not attend the March 6 meeting and this is where she (Nicole) provided information requested by members of the Audit/Finance Committee. Nicole Ard said there would be changes if revenues were not increased to meet expenditures. A list was not provided to the members of the Audit/Finance Committee in a public forum and she (Nicole) would like to be very clear about this. Nicole Ard said she provided information to members of the Audit/Finance Committee in response to their request and a copy was provided to Sharon Johnson. Nicole Ard said unions were not consulted and the budget is a projection. It was not known at the beginning of the year if the revenue projections would change and they have changed considerably. The city may not be able to do some of the items suggested, but it is her obligation to tell the public and the city commission what should be done. This is priority-based budgeting in order to have a good expectation from the residents and Nicole Ard does not know where the money will come from, but different things have been suggested. Sharon Johnson said she is shocked that two weeks later a balanced budget is being presented. Nicole Ard said she was also told the question of raising taxes should not be asked so this is where we are. Julie Farrar said the list being referred to by Sharon Johnson included possible cuts to be considered by the city commission and was not a blanket list of items to be eliminated. Community focus groups were held to see what is important to residents, and the city commission must help the city manager when things like this must be done and the budget is balanced.

Lance Warner, 1421 Columbus Avenue, said the city is going through difficult deliberations and can only cut so far without considering raising more revenue. By this he does not mean increasing taxes, but to increase the tax base by preparing the community to be ready for investment such as utilizing land for development which is not yet rezoned. The biggest impediment any developer has is not financing, it is the time it takes to develop. The city needs to position itself for development and he encouraged the city to look at opportunities to make it shovel ready.

Tim Schwanger, 362 Sheffield Way, asked if there will be a reduction of services with the proposed personnel cuts suggested. Nicole Ard said unfortunately, this means other personnel will have to take on additional tasks. As an example, the tire collection may be provided by a lower cost vendor but the trade-off may be to eliminate the yard waste drop off program. Nicole Ard said this is a balancing act on costs versus benefits and the number of persons involved. Tim Schwanger asked who sets direction with elimination of the position of general services director and Nicole Ard said this is provided by her. The person in this position oversaw 51 employees in seven different divisions. Interviews will be conducted later this week for the director of engineering services and depending upon the skill sets of these individuals, they may or may not take on some of these responsibilities. Nicole Ard said Paul Ricci has taken on supervision of some of the divisions from the department of engineering services and this is a change for the entire organization. The chief foreman in general services has stepped up and is working in areas he is not familiar with as well as the street foreman. Nicole Ard said when she got here there were employees in the sewer division who were boarding up homes, but they should be working at the sewer plant. Nicole Ard said she will not put people in situations where they are unsafe. Tim Schwanger said the city has indicated it will hire six employees to work at the Paper District Marina and three employees at the boat launch facility and based on this, he is curious if the line item for operation of the marina (\$57,500) will include electric. Nicole Ard said the city is in negotiation with the concessionaire and marina manager and terms for utilities are being worked out. Tim Schwanger asked if Pipe Street can be added to the list of streets needing to be repaved. Pervis Brown said the city needs to find the money for this as it will be a complete reconstruction.

Daniel Klinger, 1520 Harrison Street, thanked the city commission for doing a good job and thanked the city manager for doing the tough job of keeping the city in the black. For good building purposes, people need to have wisdom, knowledge and understanding and Nicole Ard has this because of experiences she has had and he hopes the city has much more success in the future.

Pervis Brown thanked all of the department heads and employees. Contrary to what has been written, this is not Nicole Ard's budget, it is the city commissions' budget and each department has input, starting with the finance director, Hank Solowiej. The "wish lists" are submitted by the departments and the finance director accumulates this information which is his job. He is the lead person handling the budget negotiations. Pervis Brown thanked city staff for their willingness to work toward achieving a balanced budget and for their sacrifice. When the city is unable to balance the budget, it is the final determination of the city manager to determine what to cut just like the head of a household. Pervis Brown said it was disturbing to read in the newspaper that members of the Audit/Finance Committee reported they did not approve the budget. Whether what was reported is true or not, this committee reports to the city commission and their approval or disapproval of the budget is not needed. Their function is to work with and advise the city commission and city manager and they are an advisory board for the city. It disturbing a member of a city committee would make a statement of this nature. Wesley Poole thanked Nicole Ard for the presentation and stated there has been a process to get the budget done. Reports are received from various places that take apart certain parts of the process and the end result is what the commission is here to achieve. Wesley Poole asked that before voting, the commission consider adding money to the training budgets (engineering, human resources and finance) to show a commitment to training. The city manager will still control and decide what is needed, but the employees should recognize there is a commitment to training and perhaps they may come up with some ideas and/or shortcomings themselves.

The President declared the public hearing closed.

CURRENT BUSINESS

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

ITEM #1 - ORDERED IN 3.11.13

[RESOLUTION NO. 013-13R](#): It is requested a resolution be passed in support of the Ohio Sea Grant and Stone Laboratory on Gibraltar Island and encouraging state legislators to restore funding to the Ohio

Sea Grant; 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 Diedre Cole, the commission voted to approve this resolution according to Section 14 of the city charter.

Discussion: Diedre Cole thanked her fellow commissioners for recognizing the importance of passing this resolution supporting Gibraltar Island and the Ohio Sea Grant program.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. Roll call on the resolution: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. The President declared the resolution passed.

ITEM #2

ORDINANCE NO. 13-024: It is requested an ordinance be passed **making general appropriations for the fiscal year 2013;** and declaring that this ordinance shall take immediate effect in accordance with Section 14 of the city charter.

Upon motion of Diedre Cole and second of Keith Grohe, the commission voted to approve this ordinance according to Section 14 of the city charter.

Discussion: Diedre Cole said she had asked how the cuts proposed at the March 6 meeting relate to the plan identified last year and stated Nicole Ard very eloquently addressed this tonight. Keith Grohe said he supports Nicole Ard's undying efforts with the budget and he has had some discussion with Hank Solowiej about starting 2014 with a \$400,000 budget deficit. This deficit needs to be a priority for Nicole Ard, Hank Solowiej and the commission. The city needs to be very specific as to what is planned to deal with this and he is certain it will be handled as well as the current situation. Julie Farrar said Nicole Ard has spelled out the budget situation and she has also spoken with Hank Solowiej and is happy to vote yes on the ordinance.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. The President declared the ordinance passed.

ITEM #3 – Submitted by Amanda Meyers, Paralegal

Budgetary Information: The cost associated with this purchase agreement is the total amount of the title examination, deed preparation, recording and transfer fees 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 total cost of the expenses from the nonrefundable earnest money deposit of six hundred eighty four dollars and eighty six cents (\$684.86) required to be paid by the purchaser. The taxing districts will begin collecting approximately one hundred twenty nine dollars and ninety two cents (\$129.92) per year in real estate taxes. The sale of this property will enhance surrounding property values and the taxing districts will once again begin collecting real property taxes.

ORDINANCE NO. 13-025: 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 #58-02037.000, located at 1815 Hayes Avenue, Sandusky, is no longer needed for any municipal purpose and authorizing the execution of a purchase 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 Keith Grohe, the commission voted to approve this ordinance according to Section 14 of the city charter. Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. The President declared the ordinance passed.

ITEM #4

ORDINANCE NO. 13-026: It is requested an ordinance be passed **ratifying, accepting and approving a collective bargaining agreement between the City of Sandusky, an Ohio Charter municipal corporation, and the International Association of Firefighters Local #327, the collective bargaining unit for certain employees of the Sandusky Fire Department, for the period January 1, 2013, through**

December 31, 2015, a copy of which is attached to this ordinance; 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 Julie Farrar, the commission voted to approve this ordinance according to Section 14 of the city charter.

Discussion: Diedre Cole said the amount of money per accident was increased from \$500 to \$1,000 and asked for an explanation. Paul Ricci said this is the line item for the cost of an accident which results in drug and alcohol testing. The damage now is \$,1000 for most small accidents and in addition, supervisors always have the ability to send employees for a reasonable suspicion test and this provides a measure of safety for the community.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. The President declared the ordinance passed.

ITEM #5

ORDINANCE NO. 13-027: It is requested an ordinance be passed **ratifying, accepting and approving a collective bargaining agreement between the City of Sandusky, an Ohio Charter municipal corporation, and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local #1519, the collective bargaining unit for certain employees of the City of Sandusky, for the period January 1, 2013, through December 31, 2015, a copy of which is attached to this ordinance;** 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 Diedre Cole, the commission voted to approve this ordinance according to Section 14 of the city charter. Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. The President declared the ordinance passed.

ITEM #6 – Submitted by Paul E. Ricci, Fire Chief

Budgetary Information: Firelands Corporate Health Center is the sole provider in Erie County for the contractually required annual testing for firefighters. Firelands Corporate Health Center maintains the firefighter's medical charts and current testing is based upon what each firefighter had tested for in the immediate prior year which means not all firefighters need to have all tests done which is a cost savings to the city. The total estimated cost for the medical examinations is not to exceed \$41,799.35. The cost for the exams is included in the proposed fire department 2013 budget.

ORDINANCE NO. 13-028: It is requested an ordinance be **passed authorizing and directing the city manager to expend funds to Firelands Regional Medical Center, Firelands Corporate Health Center of Sandusky, Ohio, for annual medical examinations and fit for duty testing to be completed for the Sandusky Fire Department in CY 2013;** 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 Keith Grohe, the commission voted to approve this ordinance according to Section 14 of the city charter.

Discussion: Paul Ricci said the fire department is working on a modified schedule based upon the number of red flags presented during the physical evaluation.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. The President declared the ordinance passed.

ITEM #7 – Submitted by Troy Vaccaro, Fleet Maintenance Chief Foreman

Budgetary Information: Based on service for a one-day per week pickup at \$10.50 per month per residence and a contract for nine months, the estimated amount for the 2013 yard waste collection service is \$57,550.50 based on last year's figure of 609 customers. This amount is subject to change due to additions and deletions of customers to the program. The cost of this service will be charged back to the customers in addition to a charge of \$.50 per month for administrative costs.

ORDINANCE NO. 13-029: It is requested an ordinance be passed **authorizing and directing the city manager to enter into a contract with Browning-Ferris Industries, Inc. dba Republic Waste Services of Sandusky, Ohio, for the 2013 yard waste collection service which is available for the period of April 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013;** 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 Diedre Cole, the commission voted to approve this ordinance according to Section 14 of the city charter. Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. The President declared the ordinance passed.

ITEM #8 – Submitted by Hank S. Solowiej, CPA, Finance Director

Budgetary Information: This submerged lands lease is payable by the City of Sandusky as the leaseholder. The Chesapeake Lofts Condominium Association, Mid-States Development Corporation's assigned sub-lessee, will reimburse the city for the cost of the lease payment pursuant to the Submerged Lands Lease Agreement SUB-2119B-ER between the city, Mid-States Bayfront Development LLC and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources does not allow a sub-lease holder to make a submerged lands lease payment on the city's behalf. Ordinance #12-063 was passed by the city commission on June 11, 2012, in the amount of \$13,764.34 for the period April, 2012 – March, 2013.

ORDINANCE NO. 13-030: It is requested an ordinance be passed **authorizing and directing the city manager to make payment to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Office of Coastal Management for rental payment on submerged lands lease file #SUB-2119B-ER for the period of April, 2013 through March, 2014;** 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 Diedre Cole, the commission voted to approve this ordinance according to Section 14 of the city charter. Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. The President declared the ordinance passed.

ITEM #9 – Submitted by Anna Enderle, Planner

Budgetary Information: The City of Sandusky will award the Volunteers of America \$65,000 to provide homeless prevention services including emergency rental, mortgage and utility assistance to low- and moderate- income residents in Sandusky under the rules and regulations of the Community Development Block Grant. Emergency rental, mortgage and utility assistance (gas, water and electric) will be provided for a maximum of three months. The maximum assistance is \$3,000 per family. There is no impact to the city's general fund.

ORDINANCE NO. 13-031: It is requested an ordinance be passed **authorizing and directing the city manager to enter into a subrecipient agreement with the Volunteers of America Northwest Ohio and to expend an amount not to exceed \$65,000 from the FY 2012 Community Development Block Grant funds;** 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 Pervis Brown, the commission voted to approve this ordinance according to Section 14 of the city charter. Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. Roll call on the ordinance: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. The President declared the ordinance passed.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Upon motion of Pervis Brown and second of Wesley Poole, the commission voted to accept a donation from Bill Waldock in the amount of \$3,569.21 for Christmas lights for the 2012 season. This check has been held in the finance office since December. The President declared the motion passed.

Nicole Ard said **she recently signed an agreement for the buoys near Cedar Point** and thanked Jane Cullen for her work with this.

Nicole Ard said information was distributed recently regarding a **request made by the Sandusky Bay Rowing Association to build a pole barn on city property located on River Avenue**. A clarification was made by ODNR that this property is on a flood plain, but not in a restricted portion. It will take time to move through this and to go through the appropriate state agencies if the commission chooses to approve this.

Upon motion of Jeff Smith and second of Julie Farrar, the commission voted to allow staff to move forward with the Sandusky Bay Rowing Association to build this pole barn on city property.

Discussion: Jeff Smith asked if this will create a problem if it takes several months to work out. Sandy Boyd, President of the Sandusky Bay Rowing Association, said they can work around this. She said they were looking for a definite answer as to whether or not this can happen.

The President declared the motion passed.

Nicole Ard said Anna Enderle is working on **environmental review materials** and this item will be presented to the commission along with staff from Mannik and Smith.

Nicole Ard said the **Planner job description is being reviewed** to determine how it will be advertised.

Nicole Ard said the city is moving forward with the **Ferndale Drive project** and Ed Dayringer is working on a contract regarding the sanitary sewer in this area so that the city can leverage the state's project and try to avoid duplication of costs.

Nicole Ard said John Orzech provided a **letter from the Erie County Juvenile Detention Center commending Detective Dave West and Officer John Powell who recently helped capture an escaped juvenile** within twenty minutes. Steps have also been taken to ensure this does not happen again. Nicole Ard thanked Sgt. Tracy Susana, Detective Gary Wichman and Officers Steve Ritterbach, Brad Wilson and Anthony Bath for their efforts.

Nicole Ard said the **special events guide** is complete and thanked Victoria Kurt for her work on this.

Nicole Ard said **Mills Creek Golf Course and the clubhouse is now open**. John Hamilton said the clubhouse is another local option for lunch.

Nicole Ard said the **boat launch facility is now open as well as other recreational facilities**. John Hamilton said it would be nice if the seasonal employees at the boat launch facility and the Paper District Marina are able to tie a bowline rather than sitting in the office. Diedre Cole said it would also be good if they did not park by the building.

Nicole Ard said she has had discussion with the **concessionaire for the Paper District Marina and they are working on an agreement with Sandusky Adult Education to build a pergola at this location** rather than using umbrellas. This would involve free labor, but the city may have to come up with funding to purchase the wood and anything done will go through the plan review process.

Nicole Ard said there was a recent **accident on the Milan Road overpass going onto Butler Street and the cost to replace equipment at this location** is approximately \$7,000 and the city will need to pick up this cost if the driver was uninsured.

Nicole Ard said staff in general services is working to find a **new vendor for the tire collection**. A local vendor has been located but the number of tires will be limited. This collection will help the ozone layer and the tires will be at the vendor's location rather than at city hall. City employees will not have to staff this collection and it will be supported by a grant to help offset costs.

Nicole Ard said a meeting was held with staff from Goodwill, the AFSCME union and grounds maintenance staff, Paul Ricci and Deb Leslie to discuss **mowing of nuisance properties**. Julie Farrar said this will be very helpful and the street department mows vacant and abandoned properties which takes them away from providing other services to the residents.

Nicole Ard said she received a message from a Sandusky High School parent about a **potential fundraiser involving painting house numbers and a blue streak on curbs**. This is not allowed in the city by code, but she would like to suggest another fundraiser for this parent group. Julie Farrar said when

her children were in high school, the cheerleaders painted the blue streak emblem at the foot of her driveway (personal property) and this could be an option. John Hamilton asked if the code could be adjusted and Don Icsman said there is a misconception about this. The code does not prohibit this, but it cannot be the only property address marking.

Nicole Ard said John Orzech is working on a **potential project to provide used safety vests to teachers at Sandusky Central Catholic Schools** and more information will be coming regarding this.

Nicole Ard thanked the President and Vice President of **Terra Community College for meeting last week and providing an update about their activities and possibly partnering with the city for economic development activities.**

Nicole Ard said George Poulos is working with **Ohio Regional Development Corporation to revise the city's CHIP application** to include approximately \$10,000 for rental assistance. This will be geared toward clients of Serving Our Seniors and developmental disability agencies whose clients face issues regarding affordable housing.

Nicole Ard said information was provided from the recent **Tax Incentive Review Committee** meeting and all items were approved. There is positive growth with area businesses.

Nicole Ard said there is a representative here from **Montgomery, Watson, Harza regarding the Big Island Water Works project.** Nicole Ard said at the next commission meeting, she will be asking the commission to approve an expenditure of approximately \$80,000 from the water fund for capital activities to close out this project. This is due primarily due to the timing of this project over the past four years and for plan review and coordinating of contractors. This will help to close out this project and meet state mandates.

Nicole Ard said Judy Corso provided information about the **Prelude to Sandusky Art Walk Walking Tour of Churches on Jefferson Street and Columbus Avenue.** This will be held on April 4 from 5 p.m. – 8 p.m. and involves the history of five area churches along with art vendors. The Sandusky Art Walk returns downtown on Thursday, May 2.

Nicole Ard thanked Matt Morgan from The Hero Zone who provided **technical expertise involving a city project for environmental software.**

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Julie Farrar said there are **two vacant positions on the Land Bank Committee** formerly held by Carrie Handy and Jim Lang. Julie Farrar asked if a representative from the fire department and the finance committee can attend future meetings.

Julie Farrar said a **local realtor, Annette Wilcox from Mike Myers Realty, is willing to list the city's land bank properties** which are either buildable lots or structures which can be rehabbed. Annette Wilcox has agreed to waive the listing fees so these properties can be advertised and sold.

Julie Farrar said the Dorn Foundation wrote a letter to the City of Sandusky regarding a **downtown parking master plan.** This letter stated The Dorn Foundation offered \$20,000 toward completing this and asked if there is \$18,500 available in the Battery Park TIF to get this done. Hank Solowiej said there is \$53,000 in this account.

Upon motion of Julie Farrar and second of Keith Grohe, the commission voted to accept this donation of \$20,000 and utilize \$18,500 of funds in the Battery Park TIF toward the cost to complete the master plan. This motion was amended to order in legislation for the next meeting to accomplish this.

Discussion: Diedre Cole said this is a great idea and asked what the effects of the new city engineer will be and what their input may be and Julie Farrar said this needs to be done and hopefully will be given to the new engineer to work on once hired. Diedre Cole said she recalls there was a parking study done previously and Jeff Smith said this information was provided by John Lippus, Sandusky Main Street

Association, regarding a discussion about utilizing parking to increase business and revenue. This outlined the importance of parking in a community. Jeff Smith said with the Rieger project starting, there will be retail spaces along with all of the other restaurants; retail and parking is essential. Wesley Poole said he could not open this email and asked what the finished product will be. Jeff Smith said there will not be a finished product, the idea is to assess what Sandusky has and what suggestions they may have and to create a plan based upon these assessments. Nicole Ard said there is a proposal from Kimley-Horn. Wesley Poole said he has some experience with parking plans and \$38,000 seems like a lot of money to tell us where people can park. There are different categories of parkers: residents, visitors to businesses and employees and a study will tell us where they are supposed to park. No matter what Kimley-Horn states, the city will have to decide what its priorities are for parking and how it will be utilized. Without more information about what this \$38,000 will be used for, Wesley Poole said he will vote no as this is something that can be done in-house. New space will not be created and the city does not have money to build a new parking garage and paying to receive this information is premature and is not money well invested. Nicole Ard said her understanding is this is not just for a parking study. If a study is done and it sits on the shelf, it does nothing for the city. This proposal is to create a master plan and an implementation plan and ideas will be given how to generate funds. Nicole Ard said her concern is to have a study performed but then no money will be available afterward to implement recommendations this will not meet expectations. Kimley Horn is a reputable engineering firm and they have done this in other communities. Diedre Cole asked if more information can be gathered and Nicole Ard said a copy of the Kimley Horn proposal can be forwarded as well as examples from other communities. John Hamilton asked if this will have relevance as other projects are completed and as the downtown continues to evolve. Nicole Ard said the Jackson Street parking lot needs to be repaired. Businesses are making significant private investment in this area including the Rieger and new restaurants, and the city needs to deal with this situation. Keith Grohe said when Lance Warner spoke he stated businessmen look at what can be offered, not what is in the works. They look 3 – 5 years down the road and this is progressive and outgoing and shows people the city is taking steps in the right direction rather than just talking about it and then not making a decision. Wesley Poole said it would not hurt to get a completed study from another community so the city has some idea what it is paying for. Julie Farrar said parking is a way to generate revenue and the city has not done anything with creation of wayfinding signage and 50% of tourists coming into town find their way downtown or to the west side of town and income can be generated by visitors to the community. The city also needs a master plan. Diedre Cole said she received this information this afternoon and regardless of how much money is available, the city needs to be responsible in spending any of it. Making a decision based on an email without any other concrete information is not something she is prepared to do. Diedre Cole asked for this motion to be tabled until the next meeting when additional information can be provided. Don Icsman said this expenditure will cost more than \$10,000 and an ordinance must be drafted in order to make payment. Julie Farrar asked that the motion be revised to order in legislation for the next commission meeting.

Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 6. Nays: Wesley Poole, 1. The President declared the motion passed.

Upon motion of Pervis Brown and second of Julie Farrar, the commission voted to hold an executive session regarding personnel, finance director. Roll call on the motion: Yeas: Diedre Cole, Wesley Poole, Keith Grohe, Jeff Smith, Julie Farrar, Pervis Brown and John Hamilton, 7. The President declared the motion passed.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Sharon Johnson, 1139 Fifth Street, asked Keith Grohe how he knows there will be a \$400,000 deficit next year and Keith Grohe said he has spoken with Hank Solowiej about this and this is the number being kicked around due to cuts in state funding. Hank Solowiej said the estate tax is being eliminated effective January 1, 2013 and will be zero next year. Sharon Johnson said a realtor agreed to list the land bank properties available and asked why this is not being bid as there are a lot of realtors in town. Julie Farrar said this realtor came to members of the land bank committee and this is an offer to list properties for the city free of charge and without cost to the city.

Tim Schwanger, 362 Sheffield Way, asked what is going on at the foot of River Avenue with the Sandusky Bay Rowing Association (SBRA). John Hamilton said interest was expressed by the SBRA to put up a pole barn to store rowing shells. Tim Schwanger said two Pipe Creek groups have been working at this site for the past several years and hopes the SBRA plans do not interfere with their plans. John Hamilton said perhaps these organizations can get together and merge projects. Keith Grohe said he hopes both entities can co-exist and other major cities have common pathways and it is critical to work through this to do it correctly. Tim Schwanger said these discussions should take place prior to

approval. Tim Schwanger said he has concerns with the downtown parking proposal and believes one was done in the last 15 or 20 years. When completed, the downtown was thriving. Tim Schwanger asked what the Sandusky Main Street Association (SMA) buy-in will be and Julie Farrar said the SMA was able to meet with the foundations and acquire \$20,000 so the city did not have to meet and do this legwork. Tim Schwanger said this is not monetary buy-in or incentive to follow the plan. Wesley Poole said there has been a lot of advancement in technology in the past several years including meters that accept credit cards. Also, pricing can be changed during the day depending upon demand. Wesley Poole said it is a question about what kinds of things will work well for Sandusky's downtown and it will be interesting to see what the latest things are.

Fred Farris, 1114 C Street, said he has a very serious harassment complaint against Roy Prewitt (an employee of the municipal court) who stated he (Roy) runs his own show and for Fred Farris to mind his own business. Fred Farris said on February 8, Roy Prewitt told him he wished he could lock him up and Fred Farris asked Judge Erich O'Brien to dismiss the complaint, but he (Judge O'Brien) would not put this in writing. Fred Farris said he was told to file a civil complaint. Diedre Cole said she is the liaison to the Human Relations Commission and to speak with her about the formal complaint process.

Matt Morgan, 1219 East Perkins Avenue, congratulated the city for having so many representatives at the BGSU Firelands Leadership Academy. This was worth the financial investment made by the city or by the elected officials. It was educational and provided good networking opportunities and he thanked those who attended.

The President announced a recess of the regular session at 6:57 p.m. One executive session was held beginning at 7:05 p.m. Upon motion of Julie Farrar and second of Pervis Brown, the commission voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 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