



COMMITTEE WORK SESSION OCTOBER 17, 2011

Committee Members Present: Todd Bergstrom
Don Nicolard
Brenda Hlas-Excused
Bill Mowery
Ken Braman
Mike Zita
Scott Pelot

Also Present: Mayor David Koontz
Rick Ryland
John Moss
Karla Richards
Ann Campbell

The Committee Work Session convened on Monday, October 17, 2011 at 7:03 PM, in the Council Chambers of the Safety Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Scott Pelot, President of Council. Following a salute to the flag and the Pledge of Allegiance, there was a moment of silent reflection.

General Topics of Discussion:

Centralized Tax Collections

Mr. Nicolard turned this discussion over to Mr. Moss for the details. Mr. Moss stated that the State has proposed centralizing municipal income tax and most communities are addressing this issue with a resolution stating their opposition to it. Mr. Moss noted that it was mandated several years ago that we must have the same collection date as the federal government. Mr. Moss expressed concerns that if this takes effect it will become a real mess. The State will take over collections, and then turn over any monies due to us. That's a large amount of entities to be collecting on and it would be hard to track back what was properly collected. Mr. Moss discussed all of the different tax rates and credits for each municipality and the only way to standardize this is to have all cities at the same rates and credits. Mr. Nicolard stated he felt the most efficient way is to have less people out there touching the process. Mr. Pelot asked how much support is this getting out there and Mr. Moss replied not much at the municipal levels, adding there is no actual proposal on the table at this moment. There was brief discussion on CCA (Central Collection Agency) and Mr. Bergstrom asked in any event should we be looking at a different program regardless of the outcome? Mr. Moss stated he believes this is serious discussion proposed by the CPA's not so much by the government. Mr. Bergstrom suggested maybe having some CPA's come in and talking with us about it.

Mr. Nicolard stated he was not in favor of CCA, but private sector is better than public and would rather see a resolution passed on this. Mr. Moss stated he would be happy to contact the Society of CPA's and ask for their comments, this would be a good idea. Mrs. Elaine Tompkins, a Norton resident, stated that she has mentioned to the Clerk of Council in the past as its also been on the agenda in the past, she is not in favor of CCA. We are spending \$190,000.00 to them for our income tax collections, we should be using someone locally. It was discussed in that past that CCA was to be temporary, to get us up to speed on our delinquents and may be a way to save money. Mr. Moss stated there may be some truth to that, however he was concerned with some of the comments made about CCA. Mrs. Tompkins stated she felt it was premature to call for a resolution until you really see what is on the table. Mr. Robert Copen, a Norton resident, stated the State will do as they damn well please with it, and shove it down our throats. CPA's will tell you the problem is not with the Norton taxpayers, it's with CCA. Mr. Copen gave a brief background on all of the problems a local business has had with CCA over the last several years and it took Mr. Moss to intervene to get it right. Mr. Copen stated that if you look at how many communities CCA services, he felt that they have more than they can handle. Mr. Copen suggested that the CPA's get together with CCA and work out all the problems. Ms. Charlotte Whipkey, a Norton resident discussed CCA costing us \$190,000.00, which is more than double than when we started. Mr. Moss stated that part of that is because our tax revenue has gone up. Ms. Whipkey added partly because of them collecting it. Ms. Whipkey stated she found it ironic that you are suddenly worried about a company losing employees, when you were not concerned with smaller trash companies had to go through when we went with J & J. Ms. Whipkey stated she found ironic that you are sitting here talking about giving up our rights or not having our rights when we sit here and put forth Charter amendments giving back rights to the State. Where is the middle ground here? Ms. Whipkey stated you need to stop now and look into it, it may not sound so bad. What's the rush. Mr. Pelot asked Mr. Moss to look into the CPA information and we would add this to the next Work Session agenda. Mr. Nicolard stated he is not real happy with the State mandated electronic tax filings for businesses through the Ohio Business Gateway. He has concerns with auto deductions from his business checking account.

Amend Ord. #14-2008 AMATS Funding-Cleveland-Massillon Road Widening

Mr. Mowery stated that it appears we need more funding for this project. Mr. Ryland stated this is a 90/10 split, with Norton picking up the 10 percent. Mr. Ryland noted with the heavy rains in July, it had a lot to do with it. Originally the plans called for three (3) environmental studies, now its up to thirteen (13) and intersections will be totally redesigned. We are asking to resubmit from roughly \$11,600,000.00 to \$12,000,000.00 which is mostly due to the environmental studies and our portion will still remain at 10 percent. Mr. Bergstrom asked if this new number would reflect the total project cost and Mr. Ryland replied yes. Mr. Bergstrom stated he felt \$1,000,000.00 in extra engineering was high and wanted to know the exact additional engineering before moving forward, and Mr. Pelot agreed. Mr. Ryland stated he could get those numbers however, he did not have them with him this evening. Mr. Ryland stated you also have to figure in the costs for right of ways, which will need to be added in later on.

Mr. Bergstrom stated he was concerned with the project being pushed back to 2015 and they there still could be more cost increases. Mr. Ryland agreed, adding that easements and parking spaces will need addressed and preliminary calculations indicated those parking spaces if truly owned by the residents are valued at \$10,000.00. This will have to be paid to them if truly owned by the property owner. Mr. Ryland stated that when you are spending over \$12,000,000.00 on a project and have three (3) to five (5) entities involved, they want to be sure they are right. Mr. Nicolard stated that from 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM in front of his business on Cleveland-Massillon Road its nothing more than a parking lot. This project is important to the health and safety but also to the development of this community. The reward to the city is so great, its not worth putting off or delaying over \$100,000.00 in costs. Mr. Nicolard stated once again its our age old problems of the past the held us back, so nothing was done. Mr. Ryland noted at the western side along Cleveland-Massillon Road there is a huge fiber optic cable that will need to be moved. Mr. Ryland also noted that the main intersection has on average forty-two (42) accidents per year and is one of the highest in Summit County. Mr. Moss stated that our share is approximately \$1,100,000.00 and we just cannot say we aren't going to do it. Mr. Pelot stated he would at least like to see this on the agenda next week, pending we get a breakdown on the engineering costs as requested. Mr. Pelot asked about the EPA studies and who is doing these, Mr. Ryland replied the EPA. Mr. Pelot asked who is doing the engineering studies and Mr. Ryland replied GPD Group. Mr. Mowery moved to add this to Councils next agenda, seconded by Mr. Bergstrom. Mr. Ryland stated that he would be meeting with AMATS in the morning and would get a better timeline on their need of this legislation.

Roll Call: Yeas: Mowery, Bergstrom, Nicolard, Braman, Zita, Pelot
Nays: None

Motion passed 7-0.

Unfinished Business:

Mr. Bergstrom asked Mr. Ryland if there were any updates relating to the sanitary sewers and Mr. Ryland replied we had a very good meeting last week, its now in the hands at Summit County. Mr. Pelot asked about the status of the Safe Sidewalks program and Mr. Ryland replied that the final application went in last week to get reviewed.

New Business:

Mr. Bergstrom asked at about AMATS money has available for communities and asked of we should be applying for any? Mr. Ryland advised that we have already applied for "Connect Cities" with Norton and Barberton. This is for extending the trailways into Barberton and then onward to the towpath south. Mr. Bergstrom discussed the home occupation businesses in Norton and wants to develop a better way for them to get permits processed to make the whole process from start to finish easier, while at the same time not being a detriment to the surrounding neighbors. Mr. Pelot stated that he has been discussing this already with Mr. Moss on what we can do to help. Mr. Ryland stated that with the upcoming zoning review with D.B. Hartt, this would be addressed. Mr. Ryland stated the big question here is when does a hobby end up becoming a home business?

Mr. Bergstrom suggested the Economic Development Committee place this on their next agenda to discuss. Mr. Pelot stated once we ever fill the position of Economic Developer this would definitely be addressed. Mr. Nicolard noted that its really rough for our Economic Development Committee to move on this without a full time Economic Developer on board. Mr. Ryland stated that Mayor Koontz has requested that as part of being a Tree City USA, he would like Council to address a new resolution to replace trees being cut on city property. Mayor Koontz would like a one for one replacement for any trees being cut down or destroyed in the parks or on city property. Mr. Ryland noted that we have several trees near city hall that have the emerald ash disease which have to be cut soon, and would like this in place before doing so. Mr. Zita moved to add this to Councils next agenda, seconded by Mr. Nicolard.

Roll Call: Yeas: Zita, Nicolard, Bergstrom, Mowery, Braman, Pelot
Nays: None

Motion passed 6-0.

Public Comment-Agenda and Non Agenda Items:

There was no one signed up to speak.

Topics for the next Work Session:

CPA discussions

Adjourn

There being no other business to come before the Committee Work Session, the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 PM.

Scott Pelot, President of Council

****NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM****

All Committee Meetings will be held at the Norton Safety Administration Building, unless otherwise noted.