

**MT. HEALTHY CITY COUNCIL MEETING
DECEMBER 21, 2005**

The City Council Meeting was called to order by President Sylvia Lawson at 7:00 P.M. Mr. DeBruler gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Mr. Lombardo, Mrs. Lingo, Mr. DeBruler, Miss Reusch, Mr. Roetting, and Mr. Custer. A motion to excuse Mr. Cook was made by Mr. Lombardo and seconded by Mr. Roetting. An aye vote carried the motion.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Auditor Jill Claire, Safety Service Director Bill Kocher, Mayor George Rouse, Police Chief Al Schaefer, Treasurer Deb Schaefer, and Law Director Steve Wolf.

MINUTES:

A motion to adopt the minutes of the December 7 Council meeting as printed was made by Miss Reusch and seconded by Mrs. Lingo. An aye vote carried the motion.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

CITIZENS/GUESTS/SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:

Steve Harness of the Mt. Healthy School Board introduced Mt. Healthy Superintendent **David Horine, Lori Handler** (Executive Director for Personnel), and **Todd Bowling** (Director of Elementary and Secondary Education). They gave Council a condensed version of a presentation for the school board about the **good things happening in the Mt. Healthy schools**. Mr. Horine said the district has moved from academic watch to continuous improvement, and this has happened once before. This time they intend to make sure they don't slip back. He also said that the football team has done very well this year and that having these student leaders significantly improves the environment in the high school. Discipline and behavior are markedly better this fall.

Mr. Horine said there are 3600 students in the district, of whom 67% are African American and 4% multi-racial. More than 50% are economically disadvantaged, as measured by application and eligibility for free or reduced cost lunches. This number is 60-90% in the elementary schools but less in the middle and high schools, probably because receipt of lunch assistance is viewed as a social stigma. Probably the true average is in the upper 60s. 17% of the students have disabilities. A lot of people move in to the district looking for the programs for students with disabilities that we provide. There are lots of transient students. The latest data from the state, from two years ago, shows that we keep only 46% of our kids for more than three years. Those four factors are tied, statistically, to lower achievement in school: Mr. Horine expressed his regret at breaking down student populations in this way, but pointed out that the non-economically disadvantaged white population in the Mt. Healthy schools scores extremely well. This population met 16 of the 21 state test standards, which would have a rating of "effective". Mr. Horine also pointed out that the test scores for the high school were actually only half a percent from achieving a rating of "effective":

Mr. Roetting asked whether it is true that the district is ranked based on its lowest-performing school. Mr. Horine said that this is not true; however, all subgroups need to make "adequate

yearly progress” in order for the district to do so and our district hasn’t attained that goal for two years in a row because the subgroup of kids with disabilities has not been able to make “adequate yearly progress.”

Ms. Handler said since obviously kids have different needs, the district looked at what they are doing that works well for some students, and what they need to do differently. They looked at the student population that stays in the system more than three years, and found that their achievement exceeds that of the transient population in almost every area. In some areas, for example 7th grade math, achievement is as much as 60% higher. Our population is largely transient, though, so the district looked at what they need to do differently to get better achievement from the transient students. Ohio proficiency test scores and graduation test results were 91%; up from 82% last year. Math was 76%, up from last year. Reading was 65%. The district is working to close the achievement gap for all kids. The African American population exceeds the state average for African American students in 16 of the 21 test areas. Their graduation rate is 81% versus a state average of 66%. Graduation rates for the white population are 83%, and for special education students, 86%. When they get to the high school level, the achievement gap is closing and our kids are graduating. Attendance exceeds the state average in all categories. The performance index looks at gifted groups and this is up from 76% to 80% over the last three years. Last year, the district improved in 8 of 11 areas. The pilot reading program for non-readers that was implemented for 6th graders at New Burlington produced dramatic improvements, but took lots of resources to implement.

Mr. Bowling said that the high school met every criterion to be designated a “school of promise” except that the percentage of economically disadvantaged students was less than 60%. As Mr. Horine discussed, the district believes that it is actually at least this high, but high school students don’t apply for reduced-cost lunches because they are stigmatized. The district is evaluated based on the results of three tests. For K-2, these are diagnostic tests of reading and math. For mid-level students, these are the Ohio Achievement tests in five subject areas, and in the high school, it is the Ohio Graduation Test, which also covers those five subject areas. Students take this in the 11th grade if they haven’t already passed it in the 10th grade. The district breaks down the test results and reteaches groups of students where they need it. This is important in order to demonstrate adequate yearly progress. The district has also worked to provide professional development resources to teachers for differentiating instruction so they can adjust to the needs of the high transient population. The district is also working very hard on early literacy remediation to make sure that the K-2 students really develop the skills they need. They have been working with the Langsford Center through grants and title funds to provide teacher training to help a wide range of learners. The district has an assessment test that they use to measure whether this is working, and it is working. Last year the district got the third grade reading checkpoint for the first time. They have recently purchased new science texts aligned with the state curriculum.

President Lawson asked about the population of Hispanic students. Mr. Horine said that we are fortunate to have been not much affected. We have a couple of part time teachers who help as needed, but we have only 1.4% of students with limited English proficiency.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

MAYOR’S REPORT: None.

SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Kocher said that earlier this month, the Mt. Healthy police participated in the "Shop with a Cop" program and took ten Mt. Healthy kids shopping with \$100 to spend on their families. They have participated in this program for the past several years.

The city is working with Midwest Utilities Consultants to address rising energy costs. They analyze our expenditures and make recommendations, and then get paid based on the savings achieved. Some things we are looking at include a different electric rate schedule for the pool, possibly a different electrical service carrier, opportunities to lock in lower monthly rates for natural gas, and some telephone system changes.

Ordinances 05-1469 and 1470 need to be acted upon tonight. New ordinances include one approving the contract with part time police officers. This has been in process for almost a year, and Mr. Kocher asked that Council approve it tonight so we can get the officers their retro pay. The fire department ordinance has the same pay scale as the existing ordinance but the text of the ordinance has been changed so that it is not tied to a specific year. The building official's rate has not changed, but there are increases for the other appointed officials tied to Council's increase. Full time and part time employees have some increases as discussed in the executive session last meeting. The part time employee ordinance has been changed in the same way as the fire department one, so it is not tied to a specific year, plus the lowest pay rate has been dropped and the assistant deputy treasurer pay range in box 10L has been increased to allow more "wiggle room". The PEAP contract resolution is the same as every year. They also provide random drug testing for our CDL licensees.

Mr. Kocher included a worksheet for the 2006 budget in the packets. Ms. Claire will roll this up into the appropriations ordinance for the next meeting. The planned beginning balance is looking pretty good. We are managing expenses, the tax department is doing a good job, and the inheritance tax is helping us although it will go away. Mr. Kocher went through the budget worksheet and mentioned highlights, including: a new police cruiser plus some money set aside to purchase two new cruisers in 2007, the same pool schedule as last year, a new park social fund to be mostly funded through benefits like the one last year, landscape maintenance to be performed by the company that currently holds the contract for grass cutting, a budgeted increase for utilities since we don't know exactly what will happen with energy costs, and some savings on computers since last year's big ramp-up doesn't need to be repeated every year. The waste budget is basically money in from residents that is just sent out to Rumpke. The planned rate increase that's in the contract is reflected here. There is a line item for maintenance on the new waste software. An item is included for new banners; we hope to purchase more next year. We have run out of poles for banners and are beginning to install them on overhead light poles. The Law Director's budget shows a decrease because we had to budget the full amount for a biennial audit last year but are only budgeting half the amount to be saved this year for next year. The Safety Service Director salary budget doesn't actually reflect a pay decrease—some things like unemployment have been moved elsewhere. Also Mr. Rissel's salary is in that line item and he wasn't here a full year last year. We need to paint the pool; the \$10,000 that will cost will be funded half from the parks budget and half from the tax credit rollback. The city is looking at \$17,000 for online tax calculation software for residents to use in filing. It will allow people to enter information from their W2 and should help avoid mistakes and tax department time in getting those mistakes corrected.

We do not have any community development block grant income planned for next year but we hope to receive some the following year. Some of the expenses from this year's CDBG have been paid but not reimbursed yet. This means that 2005 revenue is not quite what was projected, but we will receive that money in 2006, so all this does is decrease the carryover. The transfer to CIP item is \$25,000 from the general fund into street improvements. That will include Elizabeth Street Phase II, plus \$140,000 that this \$25K helps supplement to do grinding and overlay projects. There is also a transfer to the new Economic Development fund. There is a page near the back showing where the increases and decreases come from. We're saving money to replace the street department's 1987 pickup in 2007. The state highway is Hamilton Ave; we receive some state money for it. The fire department salaries show an increase because we didn't go to 24 hour staffing until October 1 last year. We project that we will have \$64,000 saved next year for a new ambulance. Mr. Kocher pointed out that once a special fund is created, that money can only be spent for the designated project. It cannot be moved elsewhere. The new Economic Development and Capital Projects special funds will be subject to that restriction. The expenses for a police car and a pickup in the Capital Projects fund are actually just savings for future purchases. The special fund for Compton Road will be used for work on that road this year. The beginning balances on this budget are the only things that will change unless Mr. Kocher is directed to change something.

Mr. Roetting commented that Mr. Kocher has worked very hard on this, and the fact that we will have a budget to pass in January is evidence of this. Mr. Roetting asked whether we will be tracking how much money the income tax credit rollback brings in. Mr. Kocher said that Ms. Law believes we will be able to. We have three revenue items in the tax department; income tax, delinquents, and the rollback. He commented that our preliminary estimate of rollback revenue is \$125,000 but we have budgeted for only \$97,000.

LAW DIRECTOR'S REPORT: None.

AUDITOR'S REPORT:

The November month end report is in the packets. The temporary appropriations ordinance needs to be passed tonight so we can pay bills in January until the final budget is passed. Ms. Claire requested an executive session to discuss personnel matters.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Ms. Schaefer stated that she balanced with the Auditor and the bank for the month of November. The Tax Department collected \$56,000 last month, and is working on the list of residents from the state, comparing it to the people who have filed taxes in Mt. Healthy.

ORDINANCES

ORDINANCE NO. **05-1469** An Ordinance Amending Chapter 39 of the Mt. Healthy Code of Ordinances Regarding the Municipal Income Tax. This ordinance received its third reading. A motion to adopt this ordinance was made by Mr. Lombardo and seconded by Mrs. Lingo. A roll call vote carried the motion 6-0, with Mr. Cook absent.

ORDINANCE NO. **05-1470** An Ordinance Making Temporary Appropriations and Declaring an Emergency. This ordinance received its third reading. A motion to adopt this ordinance was made by Mr. Roetting and seconded by Mr. DeBruler. A roll call vote carried the motion 6-0, with Mr. Cook absent.

ORDINANCE NO. **05-1472** An Ordinance Vacating an Alley Located Between 7404 Perry Street and 7408 Perry Street. This ordinance received its second reading.

ORDINANCE NO. **05-1473** An Ordinance Approving the Contract Agreement Between the City of Mt. Healthy and the Mt. Healthy Part-Time Patrolmen. Mr. Kocher asked that this be passed tonight so the patrolmen can receive their retroactive pay under the 2005 budget. A motion to suspend the Three Reading Rule was made by Mr. Lombardo and seconded by Mrs. Lingo. A roll call vote carried the motion, 6-0. Mr. Custer commented that he understands that we've already reached this agreement but that in future he thinks we should pay part time patrolmen more in order to attract people who will stay with the department. The wages we offer aren't competitive. Mr. Kocher said that they start at \$10.60/hour. A motion to adopt this ordinance was made by Mrs. Lingo and seconded by Mr. Roetting. A roll call vote carried the motion 6-0, with Mr. Cook absent.

ORDINANCE NO. **05-1474** An Ordinance To Set Compensation For the Fire Department Employees of the City of Mt. Healthy. A motion to suspend the Three Reading Rule was made by Mr. Lombardo and seconded by Miss Reusch. A roll call vote carried the motion, 6-0. A motion to adopt this ordinance was made by Mr. Roetting and seconded by Mrs. Lingo. A roll call vote carried the motion 6-0, with Mr. Cook absent.

ORDINANCE NO. **05-1475** An Ordinance To Set Compensation For Certain Appointed Officials of the City of Mt. Healthy. A motion to suspend the Three Reading Rule was made by Mr. Lombardo and seconded by Mr. DeBruler. A roll call vote carried the motion, 6-0. A motion to adopt this ordinance was made by Mr. Roetting and seconded by Miss Reusch. A roll call vote carried the motion 6-0, with Mr. Cook absent.

ORDINANCE NO. **05-1476** An Ordinance To Set Compensation For Certain Full-Time Employees of the City of Mt. Healthy. A motion to suspend the Three Reading Rule was made by Mr. DeBruler and seconded by Mr. Custer. A roll call vote carried the motion, 6-0. A motion to adopt this ordinance was made by Mr. Lombardo and seconded by Mr. Roetting. A roll call vote carried the motion 6-0, with Mr. Cook absent.

ORDINANCE NO. **05-1477** An Ordinance To Set the Compensation For Certain Part-Time and Seasonal Employees of the City of Mt. Healthy. A motion to suspend the Three Reading Rule was made by Mrs. Lingo and seconded by Mr. Lombardo. A roll call vote carried the motion, 6-0. A motion to adopt this ordinance was made by Mr. Roetting and seconded by Mrs. Lingo. A roll call vote carried the motion 6-0, with Mr. Cook absent.

RESOLUTIONS:

RESOLUTION NO. **05-948** A Resolution Authorizing the City of Mt. Healthy to Contract With the City of Cincinnati, Public Employees Assistance Program (PEAP). A motion to suspend the Three Reading Rule was made by Mr. Roetting and seconded by Mr. DeBruler. A roll call vote carried the motion, 6-0. A motion to adopt this ordinance was made by Mr. Lombardo and seconded by Miss Reusch. A roll call vote carried the motion 6-0, with Mr. Cook absent.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

Council decided by roll call vote to go into executive session, and went into executive session at 8:08 P.M. President Lawson called the meeting to order again at 9:02 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Custer and seconded by Mrs. Lingo. An aye vote carried the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:03 P.M.

Sylvia Lawson, President of Council

Margaret Roulier, Clerk of Council