

**ST. BERNARD CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 20, 2005**

The regular meeting of the St. Bernard City Council was held Thursday, January 20, 2005.

President of Council, Mr. Curtis Walden – The meeting was opened with a prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call showed that all members were present.

Mr. Burkhardt made a motion to suspend with the reading of the minutes, Mr. Stegman seconded the motion. Council agreed 7-0.

REPORTS OF CITY OFFICIALS

MAYOR, JOHN ESTEP - There was a question about the mileage on the cars, I just wanted to reiterate that I was checking with a representative from UPS, the average cost to operate a vehicle is \$.51 a mile. We figured a low mileage a year of about 10,000 miles would save about \$5,000.00 per car and pulling the five cars off that we have, it should save about \$25,000.00 a year. We have made arrangements with some emergency vehicles for both Chiefs to be available so the safety of our citizens wouldn't be compromised at all.

The letters have been sent to the Union Reps, notification of the upcoming, probable layoff. I believe there is still one meeting that is going to be scheduled. I believe it is tomorrow with the Safety Director, Ms. Luken, and the FOP.

AUDITOR, Walter St. Clair – The month of December reports for the city's investments and for the balances in our various bank accounts have been given to each Council Member, the Treasurer, the Planning Director, the Tax Commissioner, and each Labor Union.

Before Council tonight is Ordinance No. 3, 2005. This Ordinance amends Ordinance No. 1, 2005 to provide larger appropriations for the month of January than the level of appropriations given in Ordinance No. 1. The amended line items are in bold print, and if there are any questions on them I will do my best to answer. In addition there are an additional four line items that need to be changed or added to this Ordinance. They are the Fire Chief's salary, which is line 7A, needs an additional \$2,000.00 to bring it to \$8, 513.88. Line 7 – A1, the Firemen's salaries, needs to be raised \$45,000.00 to \$195,951.21. Line item 2-0-2, Service Department salaries, needs an additional \$20,000.00 to raise it to \$109,299.25 and overtime for streets, which is line item 33-1A needs an additional \$2,000.00 to bring it to \$9,711.98.

DIRECTOR OF LAW, Ed Geiser - No report.

TREASURER, Tim Bollmer - No report.

SAFETY DIRECTOR, Beth Luken, - No report.

SERVICE DIRECTOR, Joe Kempe – No report.

TAX COMMISSIONER, Sheri Williams,- Not report.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

FINANCE, Mr. Phil Stegman – The Finance Committee met with the Administration on Jan. 17 to revisit the budget. They handed out a proposed operational budget and a proposed cut of services letter that will be going out soon. The Administration will be sitting down with the three depts., hoping for financial help. These are challenging times, but I hope we can get through them.

The Finance Committee will meet with the Administration on Monday, January 24th, at 6:30 pm to put the final numbers to the budget so we can discuss them at the next COW. Also, we will be discussing the pay ordinance at the Finance Meeting.

Tonight on the table is an Amendment of the budget that was passed two weeks ago. Some Department Heads needed more than 1/12 of their budget, so this is an amendment to add to their line items. The Finance Committee urges passage tonight of Ordinance No. 3. 2005.

SAFETY, Mr. Burkhardt – No report.

SERVICE, Mr. Wilson – I would like to formally like to request a copy of the current phone bill.

Mr. St. Clair – There are many different phone companies used.

Mr. Wilson – I would like to have copies of all the different companies then.

Mr. St. Clair – OK

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS, Mr. Mike Schildmeyer – No report.

LAWS, CONTRACTS AND CLAIMS, Mrs. Barb Kalb – The Laws, Contracts and Claims Committee met this evening to discuss the parking lot easement at St. Bernard Square. I would like this topic to be put on the agenda for COW on Thursday.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY, Mrs. Peggy Brickweg – I will be attending two committee board meetings next week, Cognis and PNC, they have invited me to be on their Board. I have also been speaking with an individual who would like to move a printing company into town, trying to help him find some land. Another company that is currently located here and would like to expand, I have been talking to them.

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION, Mr. Greg Zix – No report.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Committee of the Whole
Jan. 13, 2005

1. All members of Council were present, and approved the minutes of the Jan. 6th Council Meeting, 7-0.
2. JMA Consultants explained the Beech St. sewer project to Council and that the biggest portion of the funds that the city would have to come up with would not be needed until 2006.
3. May, John Estep
 - A. John informed Council that he is working on a car policy for city officials and asked for input from the Police and Fire Chiefs.
 - B. John & Joe Kempe went over the procedures that they must follow before any layoffs can take place. This process will probably take several weeks.
 - C. John called the State Auditor's office and is asking for the State to come and perform an audit of the city.
4. Auditor, Walt St. Clair
 - A. Walt brought Council up to date on the No Litigation Certificate, which is needed to renew the notes for the Nu-Maid property.
 - B. Walt asked for an Ord. for more money for the partial 2005 budget that was passed. Council agreed to put the Ord. on the table 7-0.
 - C. Council was informed that the city payroll is now being done in house.
5. Law Director, Ed Geiser
 - A. Ed informed Council on the law governing the Ord. that covers the salaries of the elected and appointed officials.
6. Safety Director, Beth Luken
 - A. The Police Chief informed Beth that the Union Representative wants to meet with the Administration on the contract.
7. Service Director, Joe Kempe, no report.
8. Business & Industry, Peggy Brickweg, not report.
9. Public Improvements, Mike Schildmeyer, no report.
10. Service, Glenn Wilson, no report.
11. Safety, Bill Burkhardt
 - A. Brought some concerns of a resident to Council and the Administration concerning crossing guards, a no turn on red sign at Church St. and Vine St. during school hours, and the Dial-a-Ride service, which is facing cuts.

12. Finance, Phil Stegman

A. Introduced a zero balanced budget for the Administration to look over and it will be discussed at the next Finance meeting.

13. Laws, Contracts, & Claims, Barb Kalb

A. The committee will meet next Thursday at 7:00pm to discuss the contract on the shopping center parking lot.

14. Highways & Transportation, Greg Zix, no report.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Burkhardt
President of Council, Pro-Tem

COMMUNICATIONS

None

ORDINANCES

Motion by Mr. Burkhardt, seconded by Mr. Stegman to read Ordinances by title only. Motion passed 7-0.

ORDINANCE NO. 3, 2005 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING
ORDINANCE NO. 1, 2005 TO MAKE APPROPRIATION FOR
CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY
OF ST. BERNARD, STATE OF OHIO, DURING THE FISCAL YEAR
2005 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Mr. Stegman, seconded by Mr. Burkhardt to suspend with the second and third reading. Motion passed 7-0.

Motion by Mr. Stegman, seconded by Mr. Burkhardt to adopt Ord. No. 3, 2005 as read. Motion passed 6-1. Mrs. Brickweg voting no.

REMARKS

Mrs. Brickweg – I voted no for the budget because after sitting at the Finance Committee meeting I realized we are no closer to a budget that we were last year. To hear the Administration say they have not even looked at the Finance Committee budget ideas on Monday night, which were presented to them on Thursday night amazed me. I have decided until someone makes some decisions in this City and gets a budget that works, I will not be voting on amended budgets or fake budgets.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Burkhardt – At the last Council meeting I made a comment about being political on the voting of the budget and I would just like to apologize to the Council members for that remark.

Mrs. Kalb – I hope all members of Council and the Administration received the email that I received from the ICRC explaining how they handle meetings that run longer than the 2 ½ hours we are currently allotted in the time bloc. I did pose a question in that email as to whether or not we wanted to request an expanded time frame. I would like to discuss this at the next COW so if that could be put on the agenda, I would appreciate it.

Mrs. Brickweg – I would like to put on the agenda for the COW that we look into how we could change the Charter. I've been getting many requests on City Manager and other recommendations and I keep hearing that it takes a while to open up the Charter so I thought maybe we could discuss it at the COW and see what the process is.

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Brickweg – I spent the last few days dealing with Hamilton County Auditors office, they were trying to help me decipher how to read the tax bills and how they affect our City and how the millage works and how a millage increase would work. The one thing that the lady I was talking to said she has not received our paperwork for our seven mils increase and she recommended that we get that in there very soon because she said they have to certify it before we can even send it to the Board of Elections and they need that seventy five days ahead of time and she said, that was as of yesterday morning and she said she had not seen or heard of it. I'm not sure who handles that but we might want to look into that.

Mr. Burkhardt – It was delivered to them and I gave Walt's name and phone number as our contact. If we don't hear anything in the next couple of days we will look into it. The secretary wasn't in, it was given to another lady, but the secretary was called to make sure she could accept it and they said yes, so we are hoping it gets in the right hands.

Mrs. Brickweg – The lady that said she handles it, Walt, so that you know, her name is Robin Sinclair.

AUDIENCE

Butch Baur, 150 Delmar Ave., - John, I would like to ask you, you say the two Chief's cars cost about \$5,000.00 a year to operate. Did you by chance look into the actual cost, the actual expenses that were made on those cars at all?

Mr. Estep – No, I wasn't asked to do that, we were just looking at way to save some money. Things we felt that we could have done without, Butch.

Mr. Baur – I would like to say that it sounds like you're making a guess in the dark at something that you don't know about because I believe that, at least the Fire Chief's car in particular, only cost about \$1,100.00 to maintain last year, that's fuel and wear and tear and maintenance. The other side of that, your suggestion that the Police Chief take a cruiser that we just spent \$35,000.00 on and take it home. If we don't need a cruiser, let's sell the cruiser, let's get \$35,000.00 out of a cruiser instead of \$6,000.00 out of a

Dodge Intrepid. We're not putting thought into what we're doing. I appreciate the idea that you are trying to save every little bit, but without knowing what you're actually saving, why are you doing it?

Mr. Estep – On the cost, I contacted a guy from UPS, he said \$.51 a mile, if we drove it 10,000 miles a year and I think that's a low estimate, that would run us about \$5,000.00 to operate that.

Mr. Baur – Those cars are not UPS trucks. They are not UPS vehicles and they are not used like they do. We have accurate records of everything we spend in this City down to the very last penny. Walt can tell you that, all you have to do is ask him, what did we spend to maintain that car last year. I bet he could tell you. You can calculate the fuel, how many miles it went last year and what the fuel usage was. It's not that hard. I think it's being done without any forethought. Giving the Police Chief a \$35,000.00 cruiser when he had a car that was perfectly fine. It doesn't make sense. It's a good idea, but it's not making sense. It wasn't thought out.

Joe Lengerich, 662 E. Ross – Good evening, I would just like to talk to the residents for a few minutes. First I would like to ask you, honestly why you live here? Whether it be 40 years, 25 years, 5 years, or 5 months. What brought you to St. Bernard and what keeps you here? I bet it's the services you receive. Well, I'm here to tell you that if you, the silent majority, do not start speaking up you are soon to lose them all. First garbage bags, next carry-out, then crossing guards, then Dial-a-Ride, shortly you will be charged for dumpsters, trucks and any and all special pick-ups. Eventually they will bring Rumpke in here and you'll get 4 or 5 trucks running thru town once a week leaving a trail of garbage and thrown cans behind them. Is this what you want? As a resident myself, I sure don't.

I would also like to tell you that concessions have been offered that could have saved most of these free services but they have fell on deaf ears. I will share a few with you now; charging businesses a small fee for garbage pick-up which could generate up to \$58,000.00 annually, but when letters were sent out to the businesses some 50 were missed and are currently not being charged while only those with dumpsters are. A wage freeze which could have started Jan.1, 2005 which would have saved around \$35,000.00 just out of the Service Dept. It was the Service Dept. who begged the Mayor not to replace the Street Commissioner and he listened, and we have proved it was a useless position, which has saved at least \$80,000.00. We have also had one employee let go and have 4 more retiring by April of this year, which will save the city over \$300,000.00 in just salaries alone. We've brought a lot of maintenance items in house, saving around \$25,000.00. We have Nextel radios we've tried to give up that would save \$12,000.00. We've offered to give up all overtime pay for Comp Time. And the Comp Time cannot generate overtime or be cashed out.

These are just a few, there are many more and what do we get as a response, 3 layoffs. Well folks, if they lay 3 off with the 5 we will be down by April, the Service Dept will not be physically able to provide half of the things we provide to you. Some will say, outsource, well ask Cincinnati about that. They tried it about 4 or 5 years ago and found out it didn't work. Service

was terrible and it started costing more than it had. So they brought it back in house.

I would also like to address something I heard through the grapevine. I apologize if it's not true to the Police Dept. It was mentioned that 21 men are garbage men in this town and we only have 19 Police. Of the 21 men left in my Dept., only 8 men deal with garbage. I think most of you had to deal with the snow today. Well, without the Service Dept. no Police, Fire or Dial-a-Ride could run safely or at all. I wonder how long we would wait or how many accidents would occur waiting for a contractor to salt and plow our streets.

In closing I am begging you, the residents of St. Bernard, to call, write or talk to your Mayor, Service Director or Council person and tell them, don't cut the Service Dept. any more, don't cut or charge for my services and please stop this ridiculous political game that is going on, because it's not a game to me or my co-workers. It's our lives and lively hood and we are sick and tired of being treated like trash.

Mrs. Brickweg – The one question I have is for the Mayor, I actually got a phone call today from the Enquirer, asking me about the 11 layoffs, full time and one part time. I did ask them to call City Hall and to call you because I had no idea I just heard it mentioned at the Finance Committee. I was wondering if that is the numbers? She was quoting different numbers for me and I'm not sure where she got them from, so I was just wondering if you could tell me what the real numbers were and what the date were? The other thing, I had heard that we are setting meetings but at the meetings, we're actually hiring an attorney to sit in on the meetings? No concessions are even being discussed, so I'm just curious, what we're paying this attorney to sit on these meetings for if we're not even willing to do anything?

Mr. Estep – Of the two questions you asked, the first one was about the number, the number that was mentioned was 11. That is the number that we're looking at to reduce this next million dollar deficit that has to be reduced. As far as the lawyer, he was in part of one meeting to discuss, to teach us how to walk through this Civil Service and the other reductions properly and legally so we don't end up in litigation a year from now. I think it's money well spent and I'm not a big fan of any lawyer, but I think we're going to have to pay a little bit to do this properly. Joe doesn't have the expertise, he felt uncomfortable, I surely don't, we felt it would be better to have him walk us through this than pay for it a year from now like we have in other situations.

Mrs. Brickweg – Were you at the meeting? What I heard was just Joe and the Attorney at the one meeting yesterday. I would think the Mayor would be in on that meeting.

Mr. Estep – Actually there were two meetings. The first meeting was with Joe and Paul Berninger and the Fire Dept. They were doing contract negotiations.

They were discussing some concessions. I was asked to not be in those meetings. The other meeting was with the head of the Service, Police and Fire and myself. The beginning of that meeting, that's when the lawyer was

present, we asked him to stay for part of that meeting to explain the procedure, then he left and we continued our meeting for another hour or so.

Mrs. Brickweg – I have two questions, first of all, why you were asked not to be there and the second, the question the Enquirer had, she wanted to know how the 11 go across the board? That's the answer I didn't have. Do we have an answer to that? Is it so many in one Dept. , so many in another?

Mr. Estep – It looks like 11. We're not sure. There's nothing in stone as to what number from which Dept. and I was told again, the more you discuss in an open meeting the more likely you are to get yourself in something you shouldn't.

Mr. Wilson – You mentioned 11. Is that including the 4 that are going to be retiring in April, the Service Dept. workers?

Mr. Estep – No.

Harvey Baur, 150 Delmar, - I'd like to shed some light on the meeting that was being discussed just a few minutes ago, yesterday. On Thursday of last week, our Dept. received a letter from the Mayor stating that this City was going ahead with layoffs. In the bottom of that letter he had requested if we had any possible solutions or insights to this problem that we contact him and get together with him and discuss it. I sent him a letter saying that we had several questions about how layoffs were going to be done and what was going to be done and that we'd like to get together at his earliest possible convenience. I received a call from Joe Kempe who told me that he would like to meet with us on Wed. at 2:00pm. which we agreed to do. When we got to the meeting, John was not there. We were told that Mr. Berninger told John not to be there because he shouldn't open himself up to any liabilities that could be brought out in these meetings. This meeting was for us to discuss, how things were going to be done, for us to offer some possible solutions that we had and that was the attitude that we were met with. Then to come here tonight and have John say that he doesn't know anything about it that it was a negotiation meeting is a bunch of malarkey. It's got to stop, people. We've all got to start telling the truth and do what we need to do and get it done.

Mr. Estep – Butch, I gave that letter to Joe and I asked him to give Mr. Berninger a call, which he did. They told me that I should not be at that meeting, it would just muddy the waters and I didn't know if it was going to be another negotiation. I wasn't sure what that meeting was going to be about, I gave the letter to Joe and Berninger. I was giving an honest answer. I wasn't trying to elude anybody down any road.

Mr. Baur – John, you called me Wed. morning and talked to me on the phone. You knew exactly what that meeting was about. You told me Wed. morning you were not going to be at that meeting. You knew what we were there for. If you had any reservations, why didn't you just say, I don't feel comfortable because this is negotiations and I would have told you, it wasn't a negotiations meeting. That is not in anyway shape of form what it was. It was some solutions that we had to offer. I had to give them to Paul

Berninger, a man who doesn't sit up here on this floor, who has no impact on this City's budget, except for to bleed it dry.

Angela Chatman, 4265 Redwood Ter. – I hear about layoffs for Police, Fire and Service workers, what about City Hall workers?

Mr. Estep – We're trying to do something with City Hall with the 5 people and we're trying to work out possibly two different options. In City Hall it's a little bit different because if we take somebody out of the Tax Dept. ...

Mr. Walden – If the people in the audience wish to be here to participate in the meeting they have to abide by the procedure of the meeting. If you are going to speak you need to come to the podium and be recognized. If you are shouting out things from the audience it interrupts the proceeding and interrupts the people who are talking with permission of the chair. Please refrain from that behavior.

Mr. Estep – Thank you. In City Hall we don't have a line for overtime. There are fewer things to look at. It's less money than we have to cut. We don't have some of the options, if we took somebody out of the Tax Dept. we wouldn't have that person to collect the revenue. If we take somebody out of Walt's Department, it's going to be more difficult for him to get the payroll in on time. We're trying to try to rotate them where they would be off one day without pay and we're looking at another one where there could be a possible retirement and we're not sure where we're going with that. We're also looking a lot more closely at the Health Dept. Whether we outsource that? How we could go about reducing or running it more efficiently.

Mrs. Chatman – I understand that, however, you have an Auditor and you also have Clerk, can they not collect the taxes?

Mr. Estep – Our Auditor is also the accountant, the Auditor, records retention person. He serves a lot of roles. He is burdened down sometimes with all the requests that he gets at Council Meetings and COW. I don't know his whole schedule, I see his van in here on Saturdays and Sundays. Maybe you can answer that question better than I could.

Mrs. Chatman – Since we just received the revised Ord., I just have a couple questions regarding Ord. No. 3, if I may? It appears as if the last Council Meeting you had several items that seemed extremely high. The general accounting principles that you had at \$18,000.00. Now you have it a \$6,000.00 and you said it was outsourced. If you're saving \$12,000.00 there, you're professional fees for Law Director went down from \$40,000.00 to \$8,300.00 you're professional fees on line item 2-P went from \$50,041.56. What are you going to do with the extra money if you're not going to keep our people?

Mr. St. Clair – The items that are amended, this is just for the month of January, this is not the annual appropriation. The first thing was the general accepted accounting principles out of line item 2-C-4, that is being amended to \$6,000.00 and the original appropriation was \$18,000.00. The \$18,000.00 should be in the budget that is passed in February. The reason we amended

it to \$6,000.00 is because we received our first bill, we've already started getting documentation together and the firm that we deal with has already done some preliminary work for us and submitted their first invoice for \$6,000.00.

Mrs. Chatman – So what I'm looking at is actually not the true 2005 budget as labeled.

Mr. St. Clair – No.

Mrs. Brickweg – What this Ord. is is the one month Ord. because there seems to be a lot of difficulty to come up with the correct numbers and make the numbers work for a yearly budget. This is a compromise and we came up with the month budget but then that budget wasn't correct so it had to be changed to put the right amount.

Mrs. Chatman – My question to the Mayor; in your opening remarks you stated that Ms. Luken will be meeting with the FOP and their reps regarding the Police Dept., why won't you be in attendance? You're the Mayor. You were the one on TV talking about cutting the Police Dept. now you're not going to be in the meeting. Why not?

Mr. Estep – No. 1, I wasn't asked to be in the meeting. Beth Luken is the Safety Director, she is the direct person over those Depts. and I don't feel I have to be at every meeting on every committee, every minute of the day.

Mrs. Chatman – But do you make a decision on who gets laid off in terms of numbers?

Mr. Estep – Yes, but I don't think you have to be at every meeting to make some of these decisions.

Mrs. Chatman – Sir, I beg to differ, I beg to differ, big time.

Bob Hausfeld, 4608 Vine – I was just curious, who is the actual appointing authority for the City employees? Is that Safety Director?

Mr. Estep – Yes, for Fire and Police it's the Safety Director. For the Service Dept. it would be Joe Kempe, the Service Director. The Mayor is the one over them.

Mr. Hausfeld – Are you the ultimate one for appointing and for termination?

Mr. Estep – I believe so.

Mr. Hausfeld – You are talking about 11 layoffs, on the average, how much is one layoff going to save the City?

Mr. Estep – I think it varies from each Dept. The savings will be greater for a Fireman, since I'm talking to a Fireman. I want to say it was around \$90,000.00. In the Service Dept. and other people that make less money would be a little bit less.

Mr. Hausfeld – So, \$90,000.00 for the Fire and was Police pretty close, maybe a little lower?

Mr. Estep – I think it's a little bit lower.

Mr. Hausfeld – As an average, would you say \$70,000.00 maybe, between all three Depts.?

Mr. Estep – I think, Bob, that's a ballpark figure. I don't have the figures in front of me.

Mr. Hausfeld – I think \$70,000.00 might be a pretty close average, Maybe Walt would know, maybe a little low. What I'm getting at is 70 x 11 is \$777,000.00? The other night at the Finance Committee meeting, Phil, I remember at the end of the meeting, I thought you said we have actually saved some money here and there, and actually now we're only at \$690 something thousand. Is that correct?

Mr. Stegman – There were three budget lines. One that was proposed last year, then there was a revised one, 12/7 there was another revised budget with those numbers and there was one with layoffs included in the final budget so there were three line items. The one was \$10.3, so when you subtract the million dollars out we're still in that middle column \$637,000.00 short with out the layoffs figured in.

Mr. Hausfeld – So we're going to layoff \$777,000.00. We're going above and beyond what we need then? Is that right?

Mr. Estep – One thing we learned in the procedure that you go through, there has to be a window of 30 days notification. It's better to notify more and hopefully if we get some more revenue between now and then, just as we did at the Finance Meetings, the number of 11 is not in stone, that could drop to 10, it could drop to 9. For safety sake we want to make sure that we notify everybody that could be on that list.

Mr. Stegman – Let me make one more comment, you are using an average of \$70,000.00. There are some added dollars in there that you could probably figure a little bit higher. Your savings per person might be a little bit higher. With benefits and everything out of the budget it might be a little low.

Mr. Hausfeld – OK, thanks.

Joe Lengerich, 622 E. Ross – I apologize for the outbreak, I said let's get rid of the Service Director. Bob, in answer to your question, first of all, they told us 3 layoffs originally, months back, it was the high fifties what a Service Dept. employee was worth, we came up with that number in concessions. Then the Service Dept. worker was worth \$73,000.00. We came up with those concessions, now a Service Dept. worker is worth \$80,000.00.

Greg Lipp, 4411 Tower – I'm going to agree with Mr. Lengerich, believe it or not on some of the things he said, he is absolutely correct.

Correct me if I'm wrong, we've got \$4 million in reserves, is that close?

Mr. Stegman – The last numbers I saw were \$3.5.

Mr. Bollmer – Right now in the Treasury notes we have \$3,486,279.19.

Mr. Lipp – So we've got almost \$3.5 million dollars in reserves and we're broke. As far as I'm concerned we can't have any layoffs, no layoffs until we got a dollar left in there because these aren't just workers, these are citizens, they're volunteers in our community, their kids go to school here, they go to our churches here, they shop in our stores, you guys are treating us like we're assets and now we're liabilities. We're citizens. We voted you up here. We'll vote you out. This is bogus. It's just wrong. As distasteful as it sounds for me to say this, I think that if you guys can hold off on the layoffs until the long term at the fire house we're going to have four people leaving in five years. I hate the word understaffed, but there would be no layoffs in that way. In five years, we'd have four people leaving. We would be working understaffed at that time, as distasteful as that sounds to me, but there would be no layoffs. In ten years, there is going to be five more people leaving, including myself. We could curb spending, more than we're doing now. I notice a lot of stuff we're doing around the City that we could curb. We're charging for squad runs now. I hate charging for squad runs. You know how hard that is to ask a little old lady for her medicare card so I can write it down so the City can bill her? In the long run, and insurance is a slow pay, we're going to make \$200,000.00 a year off that, projected. That's a pretty good projection. The City of Harrison makes well over \$100,000.00 charging on their squad runs. That is a pretty good projection. Employee pay reductions, we've offered to reduce our pay for the same jobs and every time we offer, just like Mr. Lengerich said, there is no number that is concrete. Well you know what I'm going to leave my pockets open, you guys just pick me blind but save the jobs, OK? Save the jobs. Insurance and benefits reanalysis, we offered to do that, we're currently doing that to save the City money. Resolving this debt is a long term solution but it's the best solution to do it long term. To layoff 11 people, to cut them loose like that is just wrong. We're not liabilities all of a sudden, we're citizens too. If you reduce staffing, let's call it what it is. A layoff means, like at P&G at another time, you'll be back. They'll hire you back. Is there any plan to hire these people back? This is a release, it's not a layoff. You're cutting loose, you're not going to hire them back. Let's call it what it is. That's going to be 11 less families in town. Fifteen more houses for sale because a couple of those guys like Bob owns two houses. At the firehouse, because I know more about that than the other Depts., it would be less people to make the runs at the fire house. Some of those runs will be passed on to mutual aid because they don't have the personnel available or there's going to be overtime to cover squad runs to get more people in there, the guys that just worked the day before to come back and cover those runs. Nobody wants that. Less people in shopping in our stores, we're going to lose a lot of young talented people too. People that we've already spent the money to train. Workers and volunteers in our community, these people are also their coaches, their wives are Girl Scout Leaders their kids are students in our schools, there are people working cooperatively, we've gotten on ladders, cleaned gutters for people around town, not just here but communities that

surround St. Bernard. These people attend our churches. Releasing these people is just a band-aid. If you're going to try to save the budget like this you might as well put a tax on for sale signs too. At least you could make a little money on that. Then you're going to try and pass a levy after this. So what are we doing to help as employees? The Service Dept. is digging into recycling bins and they are recycling tin cans to help with the budget. They also were given numbers like Joe said to me to save jobs. Then they met those numbers and then found out that they weren't enough. If you don't set a bar and let us achieve it. The police department volunteered to reopen their contract, all they wanted was residency. They were turned down. Like I said we charge for squad runs now at the fire department. We're negotiating new insurance to save the city money. We offered pay cuts to save jobs at the fire department at that meeting the other day that Mr. Estep couldn't attend. In my opinion you're not putting a big enough levy on the ballot for the voters to give them a choice if they want these services or not. You're telling them they're not going to have them and we want you to pay more for what you've got, what we're going to give you. We as employees and citizens, and I know this because I talk to these guys and I don't fault them when we don't agree and I don't turn them off when we don't agree, I listen to what they have to say, but we as employees will do whatever it takes to save jobs here. Just get your facts straight and let us know. If that takes the state coming in, by God do it. Let's have them. Bring them in. I'll drive them down here. And last, I wanted to say that the independent party had it in writing before the election that there'd be no lay offs. And that turned out to be a lie, it's going to be a lie soon if you guys don't do something. So as far as I'm concerned, you guys were elected and you lied to us. Anybody care to address that? I'll give up the rest of my time here to hear that one.

Mr. St. Clair - Yeah I think I can respond to that a little bit. Sometimes things can be said and you really aren't in the situation to know exactly what's going on. When a person is not in an office and he says that a lay off would be very distasteful or he's not going to do that. He can't really say that because he doesn't know the situation. To hold somebody to, that type of political promise probably should not have been made, but to hold to somebody to that and to accuse them of being a liar because they did say that I think is wrong. Circumstances do change, situations change, people get married, they say "I do" and that means for life and things happen there as well. Things change and you don't always know what the situation is. When I took this job I thought I knew what I was getting into but there's a lot more to it than I even thought. Now should I say "It's more than I really wanted to do so I should just quit because it wasn't fulfilling what was promised to me when I took the job. Things change, circumstances change, when we make decisions or say things, we may not always have the best information but we go with how we feel sometimes and maybe that's not always the right thing to say or do but it happens.

Mr. Estep- I need to add something to that too, and thanks Walt, I think you were directing that toward me. I was told I said that and if it's in writing and I said it and I wrote it, and I'll apologize, and I'll say the same thing I said going in, if there was one thing I didn't do a very good job with when I was in Curtis' seat as president of council, I didn't attend the finance committee meetings. My job at that time was to run the meetings. I had no inspiration to run for mayor. I did my best to try to talk Barb Kalb into running. I thought

she'd be a better candidate, she's got more experience. Thank you, that's fine I agree, too, and she didn't feel she would have the time. At the time I was told "There's no big deal John, you're service director runs the city one meeting a week. Stop in, the mayor should kiss the babies and start parades." Sounded like a lot of fun to me. Sounded like quite an honor, but I didn't know we were in this bad financially. Had I looked back at the records and seen that we overspent our budget year after year and our reserves were dwindling and people were added the last couple of years that maybe we shouldn't have done that. I can't change some of that. I said it, I admit it, I apologize, but to come down here I think week in and week out and beat somebody because they ran for an office and unfortunately maybe they were elected. I don't know if that's the best thing and it's a fair thing. I think I've been pretty kind and I've taken a lot of abuse in this abuse in this chair and I deserve some of it. I've worked hard at this job and it's easy to sit up there in the peanut gallery and holler little comments. It doesn't show much class. I think one thing I'll say about myself since I've been in this position, I've done my best to show some class and bite my tongue and swallow some things that maybe wasn't all my fault, but I've been a big enough person to sit here and admit when I was wrong. And having a family, three children, coaching on the side, and a full time commitment to a job other than this does limit your time. And I've put a lot of faith in the people around me and if I can do better I surely work at it. I can't say that I haven't put as much time as I thought I would. I put a lot more time than I ever imagined. Am I the best person? Evidently, maybe there's someone better. And that's fine also, but it's easy to sit and criticize and make small comments. It takes a little bit more character to keep your head up. If there's anything that's been tough on me it's to look someone in the eye and know that I might have to be the person to tell them that they are laid off. Don't think that's easy for one minute.

Mr. Lipp- I'm just going to leave this alone, but since you said that, I think the way you treated Mrs. Brickweg at the last council meeting of Jan. 6th was just downright rude. She asked you for something and you just blew her off. I thought that was rude. I mean you gave her a answer first thing today which I appreciate seeing but in the future like you said rather than me yelling from the peanut gallery I'll be right here to tell you I thought that was rude.

Mr. Estep- Peggy and I, we've had some strained relationship lately. I felt that I had taken a few shots from her. Maybe they are deserving, maybe they aren't. And you get to a point when you finally got to say how long is this going to go on and you take so much and you fire something back. Then as soon as the words come out of your mouth you probably regret it. I think earlier on in this thought I had a similar situation with Mr. Burkhardt. As soon as I said something to him, the best thing that happened, a week later, we both shook hands. I think I've apologized to people since then and I think until you sit in this seat and you're under the fire of everybody I don't know if you realize that every once and a while you may slip. You're human and sometimes you say things you shouldn't say. Maybe you've never done that, but I have and I've apologized for it.

Amy Doddy 220 McClelland- I have a letter that I wanted to read to council.

Dear Council,

I have elected to send this letter to council but read it aloud because I do not want to pass the buck. I want my voice to be heard as mine. I am not afraid and I will not hide behind a piece of paper read by someone else. I realize this budget crisis is stressful for all of you. I hope you will understand that this situation is very serious for me and my husband, and our friends, so if this letter gets angry, it is justified. There are many citizens are QUITE unhappy with what you are doing to our city. Yes, I realize some of you were elected into this situation. But the way you are dealing with it is far from the way your citizens would like it.

There are many suggestions for temporary cuts and revenue boosts that have been made, often by people who do know what they are talking about, despite your opinions otherwise. I wonder if you realize that your citizens are not stupid. We see you roll your eyes. We hear you sigh and see you cross your arms and bow your heads when we get up to make comments. We hear you saying, in not so many words, that 'we don't understand the situation. It's always been done like this.' You have deliberately and obstinately ignored your citizens and employees. I am writing to suggest that you cease immediately with this attitude. The cuts you have suggested making in order to meet budget have divided you from the citizens. Continuing to act holier-than-thou towards us only serves to widen the gap. I may not have a degree in city management or the business world, but you forget that we know you. You are our neighbors. We know what you do for a living. And that no more qualifies you to do this job than it does anybody else here.

Don't you know that these are real people you want to get rid of? You must realize how very many families will be affected by your decisions. People who will not buy the garbage bags from you. People who won't ride the Dial-A-Ride, go to the gym or the pool anymore, and eventually, if able, will move out of St. Bernard. People who will vote against your tax levy, and your school levy. The levy will not pass if the layoffs take place. After all, you've already made a multitude of cuts to meet budget. What do you need that money for then? I'm not giving you my tax dollars to make profit from, or to pad the city bank account. I will personally campaign against it. There is one small thing that I disagree with Peggy Brickweg about: you can't run this city quite like a business. You run a business for profit. But you run a city for its citizens. You might notice the root of citizen is 'city.' Your decisions to ignore most of the cost-cutting suggestions are not only affecting the budget. They are affecting property value, income, taxes, and by far the most important, the safety of your citizens. You can feign ignorance to the suggestions, but I'm sure if you would open up to us, you'd be able to find budget cuts that made sense and that made the citizens happy. It is astounding how many people found line items that could be cut, and other cost-saving areas for the city. Even more astounding is how many of those options you have not taken.

There are those of you who are the opinion that St. Bernard is smaller than it once was, and therefore needs less personnel to maintain it. Yet it is painfully obvious that the city is but a shade of its former glory. You must remember being children here, playing in these streets. Your doors were never locked. Hide and seek was played on entire blocks and every yard was fair game. St. Bernard was, if you'll excuse the cliché, like a story book. I

am from Columbus and certainly never lived in a neighborhood like St. Bernard. I never knew as many neighbors as I do now. Today is obviously a different world, and I don't know what could possibly possess you to believe that we need less police officers and less service people. And what is it that could possibly convince you that we need less fireman or EMTs? Are fires suddenly now smaller than they used to be? Are heart attacks less serious now? You lay off 12 people and who's going to keep the trash away from the pool? Who's going to run it? Who's going to show up when your children inhale the water? You think Cincinnati PD is going to show up to respond to a noise complaint or a stolen bike? They've got a LOT of more urgent calls to respond to. Just last week a man was shot on the sidewalk directly in front of my best friend's house. I offer this example not to illustrate crime in Cincinnati, but to indicate how much we may take our services for granted. It's bad enough that there are plenty of calls when our police respond to our citizens. Domestic violence, drunk driving, the list goes on. And these aren't just the newer residents that are renting. These are your children and your family friends. And let's not forget the crime spillover that drifts into St. Bernard from surrounding neighborhoods.

You have been told time and time again about the response need for fire calls, and why it is absolutely necessary to keep our fire department fully staffed. An entire house can burn down in less time than it could take for mutual aid to show up. You've obviously never had someone peeping in your window at night. Never looked out your window and saw your car being broken into. Your children's bikes have never been stolen. You may be lucky enough to have never needed the fire department. Never had a life threatening condition in which every second spent waiting counted. It's even possible you had no problem with the snow last month and have never needed bulk pick-up and you don't realize that it is the service department that keeps your heaters running at city hall. Otherwise you would know we need every employee at the three departments.

People love living in St. Bernard. The benefits we enjoy here are unheard of, which is why we would support the tax levy. If you took a more accurate survey, I'm sure you'd find there would be plenty of people willing to put more tax money into the city to keep it this way and potentially restore this city to its former beauty. You've already discovered that people do want the levy, more than not. Please stop being (explicative deleted) on getting rid of employees to solve our problems. We like this city for what it was, and what it could return to, if given the proper attention. Those of you that are misguided as to what this city needs, please stop plugging your ears and humming, pretending you don't hear us. You will be forced to open your eyes quickly if you continue with layoffs.

Our trash bags say "Keep St. Bernard Clean." Let's keep it clean by not throwing away the wrong things, and the wrong people. Continue to allow the real trash into our city and your schools houses property and family will be less and less safe. This budget crisis isn't the only thing wrong with the city, but the empty store fronts, the increase in poorly kept rental properties and the lack of action taken to rehabilitate and save our city are making St. Bernard follow a nasty trend set by other municipals in the greater Cincinnati area. Cincinnati is a laughingstock to much of the country. Work together with your citizens, not divided with them, and maybe the citizens

won't regret living in or moving back to St. Bernard. Other neighborhoods have revitalized and continue to enjoy a renaissance. Council members, Mayor Estep, and other city hall employees; you need to open your eyes before it's too late. It should be obvious by now that the citizens want to help as much as they can. When are you going to let us?

Rodney Chapman 4260 Redwood Terrace – I also have prepared comments, but I wanted to address one thing that came up verbally. When Mayor stated earlier that he was not asked to attend the FOP meeting that was scheduled for tomorrow. As a Union Rep. I am asking you to attend so that's the invitation. Is that possible?

Mr. Estep – What time is it Rodney?

Mr. Chatman – I believe 5:00pm. It's either 4:00 or 5:00pm.

Mr. Estep – If you let me know if it's 5:00 I can come for part of the meeting. I have basketball practice with my fourth graders right after that. If it is 4:00, I will surely be there. I can make some arrangements.

Mr. Chatman – OK, we'd appreciate it because if we are meeting with Beth Luken, no offense to her or her position, but I don't believe that she can enter into meaningful negotiations with us and that would be a waste of our time. We have things that we want to do with our children as well.

My prepared comments are as follows:

I have asked Council in this forum before for an explanation of what millage actually means? I understand some people might vote for some millage and some may not vote at all. But I can't help but believe that it is not in the city's best interest that all of the voters are informed of what millage is and I hope we get that addressed soon.

Some of the information that I have been trying to gather for myself is as follows: First of all, I work in the schools and have the highest respect for what those men and women do, and have always felt teachers don't get their proper respect. I certainly don't want to see any of them lose their jobs either, BUT, as I understand it, the overwhelming majority of the millage we currently pay goes to the school (at least 80% of it). As a voter, I didn't know that. I'm not saying it's right or wrong, I just didn't know.

I am also hearing that the budget for the three schools, including the building in Elmwood Place, is 11 million dollars. That happens to be a few million dollars more than the budget for the entire city, including Police, Fire and Service. I'm not saying that's right or wrong, I just didn't know that either.

I am also hearing that teachers or administrators might lose their jobs due to budget cuts next year. Our kids don't need that, but the voters need to know of the possibility. Again I just didn't know that and wanted to inform the voters that that is correct.

I am also hearing that the Superintendent has announced that this is his last year and the Mayor wants to be considered for his job. I don't know about anyone else but does anyone else perceive a conflict of interest here?

Just speaking for the Police Department, we have been compared to Cheviot, as an attempt to show that we can do better with our finances. I have documentation here with me tonight that I am prepared to produce, that compares the salaries of our school personnel with similar sized school districts and it indicates that the Mayor makes more than \$9,000.00 more than the assistant principals of similar sized schools. If he seeks the superintendent job, it would amount to a \$20,000.00 raise, right at \$100,000.00 a year salary. Yet, when it comes to the City's budget that we all contribute to with our tax dollars, we're being told that it's the City employees who must make cuts and lose jobs. I don't think that's fair. Is it OK to infer that we are overpaid, but not shine the light on yourself? I just didn't realize this either and didn't think the voters realized that also.

Regarding a possible conflict of interest, does this fall under Section 2921.42 of the Ohio Revised Code, in particular, enumerated subsection 4? I don't know, maybe some of the money we're spending for attorney fees can address this issue and give John some protection. I'm not after his job either, addressing this issue now should help him. Again I don't know and guess a lot of voters don't know either.

I, as a Union Representative for the Police Department have yet to hear from Council, the Mayor or anyone, that this is the dollar figure that we need in order for you to cut to keep jobs. I have yet to hear that. It makes me hard to believe therefore that job reduction isn't a goal of the Administration. The concessions that we have been willing to offer are not a waste of time. If layoffs are indeed the intended remedy, we should have stated this all along, so that our youngest and brightest employees that are on the bubble could have an opportunity to seek employment elsewhere. Then we could reduce those jobs through attrition as opposed to pink slips.

Mr. Estep – I thought there was a letter sent by the superintendent and signed by the Board President that they asked to be read at tonight's meeting.

Mr. Walden – I was informed that there was a letter, the problem was it did not have a chance to go through COW that has to review it, but it will be presented at the next meeting.

Mrs. Brickweg – I don't know if everybody had a chance to read it, it pretty much concerns what I said. I do not have a problem with reading it tonight since we are on the subject, but it is up to everybody else if that would be OK. If it is OK, I have talked to the superintendent, I have a lot of information here to support what I said, it is up to the people what they want to believe but it's up to you if you want to read it. It does concern me but it is OK with me.

Motion by Mr. Burkhardt, seconded by Mrs. Kalb to read the letter submitted by St. Bernard - Elmwood Place School District. Motion passed. 7-0.

January 18, 3005

St. Bernard City council
110 Washington Ave.
St. Bernard, OH 45217

Dear Members of Council:

For the second time in two months, we are writing to address misstatements regarding the St. Bernard-Elmwood Place School District. Our first letter was sent to City Council on November 18, 2004. That letter's primary purpose was to correct comments made about the amount of millage collected by the school district.

At the City Council meeting on Thursday, January 6, 2005, a council member stated that the school district intends to place an eight-mill operating levy on the ballot. That is not correct. The Board of Education, the elected body empowered to make such decisions, has no intention of placing an issue before the voters in 2005 or 2006. The Board is addressing revenue shortfalls by making budget reductions for those years. We are trying to demonstrate to the citizens that we are fiscally responsible, reducing spending as much as possible before going to the voters. Another reason for not going to the voters for as long as possible is out of respect for the current financial crises in the City of St. Bernard and the Village of Elmwood Place.

At this same meeting, the same council member commented that the citizens of St. Bernard pay 44 mils in taxes to the schools. This is similar to the misstatement that we corrected in November. The schools collect 34.18 mils; this amount can be verified with the Hamilton County Auditor. Confusion occurs when voted millage is tallied, because as property values rise, schools do not get to increase the dollars they collect. Instead, the rate of collection decreases so the schools normally do not collect more dollars than the original amount a levy generates.

In the future, if any questions arise about the school district, please feel free to contact us. We are eager to provide accurate information and maintain effective communication with City Council.

We will close this letter the same way we did in November. The City of St. Bernard and its public school district are interdependent. It is important to the City to have good schools, and it is important to the schools for the City of St. Bernard, as well as the Village of Elmwood Place, to remain viable. We hope to continue to work together with our municipal partners to maintain a high quality of life in our communities. We believe you have the same goal.

Sincerely,

Linda Radtke
President, Board of Education

Carroll E. Roberts
Superintendent

Mike Mays
Treasurer

Mrs. Brickweg – The Mayor and I knew about that letter. Apparently the same letter was sent to the Cincinnati Enquirer, and that's why the Cincinnati Enquirer contacted me to ask my opinion on the letter. I had it

faxed over to me since they were just putting it in the mail boxes today and I was at work all day. I did write this. The Superintendent did call me at work the Friday afterwards. He did not give me any straight answers, yes or no, I did try to get a hold of him again today but my phone call was not returned.

Regarding the letter from the Dr Roberts, the Superintendent of the St. Bernard/Elmwood Place School. I would like to present the information that I used for my Council report two weeks ago. I have copies here, I'll pass them out and I made extras if anybody in the audience wants one.

The forecasted budget that I was discussing came from the Ohio Department of Education's website for the St. Bernard/Elmwood Place Schools. I've also attached a letter from Dr. Roberts which is on the schools' website which stated: "It is my wish to continue without going to the voters for additional funds UNTIL 2006". Dr. Roberts wrote that letter. A letter from Mrs. Radke that was sent to Council dated November 18, 2004 stating the school would not go for millage NEXT year, with no mention of the following year, which would be 2006. I contacted the Hamilton County Auditor's office and I have a report stating that the millage for the school is 43.07. I did talk to Walt today and we were trying to go over the problems. I did not have my income tax bill at work so I was not able to come up with my exact amount because I have an escrow, so I don't get it.

If there is any question on my facts it would have been nice of Dr. Roberts to discuss them when he called me two weeks ago. He basically only wanted to know where I saw the forecasted budget, which I told him. I am sorry if there is any confusion, I was just following through with some concerns that I had received from citizens of St. Bernard who were getting mixed answers if there was going to be a millage or not. I thought the proper thing to do is to research it and give that when they ask me a question I do my best to give them the proper answer. Maybe it would be helpful if the Superintendent could come to the next COW meeting to speak to us and to clear up any misunderstanding.

Mr. Stegman – Since that was a communication I would like to go ahead and make a motion to receive and file the communication.

Mr. Burkhardt – I'll second that Mr. President.

Motion by Mr. Stegman, seconded by Mr. Burkhardt to receive and file the communication. Motion passed 7-0.

Bob Hausfeld, 4608 Vine – I thought I was told that P&G and all the big businesses around here overpaid their taxes the last couple years. I thought the tax credit from over paying is over and starting next year there will be more taxes coming in from those big businesses around town. Is that accurate or not?

Mr. St. Clair – I've heard similar things, but the Tax Commissioner would be the best person to talk to in that area.

Mr. Hausfeld – Why does she not come to these meetings, especially with times so tough and everything so important right now. It would be nice to have her here. If P&G has overpaid their taxes where they didn't have to pay much this year and next year it's going to jump right up a little bit, I think that's a big play. My last question is, a couple meetings in a row now, I thought I heard Mrs. Kalb talk about maybe possibly seeing putting an extra additional \$400,000.00 in until we find out if this tax levy passes. I think that's a great idea and I know you can't keep throwing the money in the hole. Until we get through this tax levy if everybody maintains their job and the service stay the same, I think you're going to have a lot more people campaigning for it, which is going to increase the chances for a tax which is going to help the City. I also I talked to one of the Police Officers, they made the comment to me after one of the meetings, if you hold off and let's try and get this tax through and also we work together to try to take some cuts across the board to help the City because we all know we are in a bad position. You might not even have to do layoffs by the end of the year. A Police officer said to me, if by the end of the year things aren't better, I guarantee you a lot of these guys are out looking for jobs, and I'm not talking about bottom 3 or 4. I'm talking about some of the higher ups people with experience, they are out there looking for jobs because, I'm sure they feel like me, I grew here, I love this community, I'd do everything I can for anybody here. On my off days I would do anything for anybody. I'm sorry but my loyalty, I don't feel any loyalty to this City anymore and I feel like any loyalty to the City is gone too. If we could get through these tough times I think these people behind me could help get the tax increase passed and help the City grow again.

Bill Ungruhe, 211 E. Ross Ave. – It's been a while since I've been up here but I've been taking a lot in for months, I would just continue to say that before you layoff any personnel you should listen to your Union Reps that you've heard. These are the employees that you're dealing with. They have ideas on how to fix things. We've got no problems with being fiscally responsible, we've done that. As a group I think this has been a learning experience. However, we keep saying, meet with us, yet, we don't meet. We keep saying, listen to us, yet, we don't listen. That's what's frustrating, that's where the hard feelings come in. Small thing, Chief's car, we're going to take an expensive piece of equipment and put it outside his house so that his family can be targeted, so they can break in, steal an automatic rifle and kill somebody in the community, that is not a wise choice. Let the people run their Depts. they know how to do it, they've been doing it for years, they do it well and involve us in these decision rather than just making decisions that in vacuum. That's what's frustrating.

Mrs. Brickweg – One thing that I would like to add, and I hear everybody talking, the morale in this City and with the City workers is at an all time low. It is beyond anything I have ever seen. I'm saying that from a personal point of view. I'm married to a firefighter. I have never seen him so unhappy and miserable to work and live in this City in my life. It saddens me and I know we need to work together, but then I come to Monday night meeting where people are not even doing what they are supposed to be doing. If we could just make a decision these people could take a decision and live with it, but we tell them week after week after week, and the wives and the children and my husband has been a firefighter for almost 21 years

so he is not in the bottom ones, but he is just as miserable as his brothers that are. I see what is going on in this City and I just beg myself I beg all of us to do something for this because it's not getting better.

Mike Simos, 4331 Greenlee – I question how we are only to this point when we've talked about this (expletive deleted) since April. We've yet to have a meeting and now this meeting tomorrow, we need to call it what it really is, it's a façade, it's a farce. We've been asking you, every Dept. has been giving up and giving up and giving up and then you change the numbers. The written statement about the no layoff promise was in response to rumors of your intention to lay people off. You can't help but think that it was an agenda all along. Every time somebody meets a number, the number changes. Then you throw out now that since we didn't get it done by the beginning of the year the layoffs, of course are worth less money, so we gotta lay more people off so we gotta come up with bigger numbers. I do not understand how you can drag your feet and now you're into Feb. with no progress at all, still no number, a magical number that's written in snow, I guess, because it keeps disappearing. What is it that you want? Why don't you just come out and say, you've been after jobs all along and say it and then get rid of the people you want to get rid of. Everybody is going to give you and give you and give you and you're going to take people away on top of that. I don't hear any cuts about a \$70,000.00 tax director. Nobody is getting cuts, I don't hear the Auditor giving up 10%. I have heard Council giving up 3%. Well 3% is not a whole lot of money because they don't make a whole lot of money, I appreciate the gesture but you can't equate that. I'm sorry if I feel like you can't be trusted, but you can't be trusted. Nobody knows what you want. You're jacking around good people. People are looking for other jobs. Can you blame them? It's a shame that you're even willing to take them away from here. What is it that you want and when are you going to, or get off the pot. I don't get it.

Mrs. Brickweg – I'll be honest, Council has not taken a cut, so I don't want people to think we have. I just don't want people to think we have, when we haven't.

Mr. Simos – I'm well aware it hasn't been done yet.

Mr. Stegman – I do want to say something about the Administration. They did not take a 3% last year and they did not take a 3% this year. They have been frozen this year and last year on any increases at all. We haven't take a raise either. City Hall people have not taken a raise at all for two years.

Mr. Simos – You can't help but question then when we do these negotiations in this good faith. How can you vote for the 3% knowing you are going to ask for it back? It doesn't make any sense. You just did all these negotiations this year in the middle of this crisis. I am not going to pretend that there is not one but none of this was brought up during our negotiation. I don't get it, and then we come with concessions and now forgive me if we're hesitant to give you because the feeling is you're going to, we're going to vote on these and you're going to welcome the concessions and then whack 3 people anyway and then expect us to pass a levy.

Mr. Estep – As far as the Police negotiations, I wasn't in on any of that Mike. As far as a number, I think the last number for the Police in our Finance Meeting that we needed to get out of the Police Dept. was 233,000 or something like that. Is that around there Phil?

Mr. Stegman – That's pretty close. I think it was like \$400,000.00 for Fire, \$300,000.00 for Police.

Mr. Estep – So there has been a number given. Maybe we'll make some progress tomorrow, we'll see. There is your numbers, there is your date tomorrow, we'll see what happens.

Mr. Simos – My point is, how long is long enough and how long do we have to come up with this and if we don't come up with this quick enough then the number is going to change to 280. because the layoffs aren't going to have the full effect because they have been paid for two, three, four months.

Mr. Estep – We formed that budget committee in August. We have met for a long time. It's not a secret that we've been in financial straights for quite a while. I think there has been some time and I'm not going to blame anybody, it just hasn't come to fruition. Maybe something good will happen tomorrow. The only thing that we've officially done is sent the notices out so we could follow the procedure correctly. It's not in stone, maybe the numbers will lower.

Mr. Simos – Every time we offer concessions and ask for a no layoff guarantee, how do you expect us to give you \$300,000.00 and you not tell us you're not going to lay anybody off in return.

Mr. Estep – I wouldn't expect a whole lot Mike, but maybe I see it from your point but I don't know if you see it from mine. I can't sit there and make a no layoff guarantee and put the City at risk, not knowing what the future is going to bring. There's litigation that's just about finished with the C-9. That could cost us a lot of money. There's other litigation out there, there's other things that I have no control over, that I don't want to put the City in that bind to be responsible for.

Mr. Simos – What exactly do you have control over? Do you know? What is it you can definitely say or act on?

Mr. Estep – That is the question, we don't know what's going to happen. We don't know how the C-9 is going to come out. We don't know some of those things. I can't put the City in a bind and go out on a limb and guarantee no layoffs without knowing for sure what is going to happen. We don't know if the levy is going to pass.

Mr. Simos – Well how much sense does it make to whack 11 full-timers and keep all the part-timers?

Mr. Estep - I've been told that I should not discuss that I should not discuss that on Council floor when you go into this layoff procedure.

Mr. Simos – Well, I don't really want to go to Meiners and talk about it.

Mr. Estep – Well you're welcome.

Mr. Wilson – I've been penciling this in and penciling this in. I don't see, if we pass the 1/10 of 1% plus we recall the 2mils which is going to bring in another \$300,000.00, after doing all the math, after we lose 4 Service Dept. workers by attrition, I'm coming up with a figure of about \$400,000.00. We have soft billing, we have reduced hours for the Dial-a-Ride, halls, parks we're charging for, garbage bags, we're talking about possibly charging for those, charging for trucks, and garbage pick up for businesses, the sale of Police vehicles and possibly extra cars, by the time we do a lot of these cuts, I don't have all of these numbers in front of me but, I think that would well exceed that amount, plus the possibility of additional income coming in. I really think we need to reconsider about these layoffs, I don't want to see anybody laid off. Until I see in writing where we are going under I see no reason to lay anybody off right now. I'm looking through all these cuts we're making right now, I think we need to step to the plate and really spend some time crunching these numbers and coming up with a number that we can say, hey, this is what we're short and if we're short \$468,000.00 like I'm showing here then we need to divide that out take that out of everybody's pay that works for the City and let's end this and move on.

Mr. Estep – No offense Glenn, it's easy to do the math up there and the bottom line is we're 1 million dollars away. I will say this, if Council wants to give the other 1 million, there will be no layoffs. I'm not for layoffs. I'm trying to find a way to make a budget that we're 1 million dollars short of. I'm trying to find a way to figure out if we're 2 million dollars over budget next year, that's less than we have been in the past, this 7 mils and 1 tenth of 1 percent generates 1.4 million, the two mils have already been included in there, we're still \$600,000.00 short. Bottom line is, if nobody wants layoffs, that would make me happy, we could end the meeting now, give another 1 million right now and there'll be no layoffs. That's where I stand.

Mrs. Brickweg – I'm kind of getting tired of saying it, I don't want to blame anybody, I'm sorry, people are to blame. We can brag that we have a daggone committee going since August and we've accomplished nothing. Well somebody needs to be blamed. It might have been a hard decision, it might have been a bad decision, but let's make some darn decision. That is what is frustrating me beyond anything, and I know it's frustrating to the people. I sit meeting after meeting, maybe we'll charge this, maybe we won't do that. Mr. Stegman, on Monday night, I felt so sorry for you when all you were doing was asking for somebody to look at a budget that you gave on Thursday night, and for them to turn around and say I didn't even look at it. I was flabbergasted. It was like, some people are trying so hard and then I sat in there on that meeting and every number that was thrown around at that meeting was the same number that was thrown around in August, November and December. That's all that happens at those meetings. You sit around and throw the same numbers around and then we say OK goodbye, we'll meet again next Monday. That is not how you can run this City and that is my biggest pet peeve right now. If it comes to blaming somebody, then take the blame and move on. With the million, that sounds great, but the 7 mils isn't going to cut it. It's real easy to take the million, but if would have done the budget correctly, Gabe suggested that in

the very beginning. You need to come up with a budget, come up with the correct number and figure it out instead of guessing. We already know the 7 mils doesn't cut it, so if we take the million and put it in there we know the 7 mils isn't going to cut it. I don't see what we're accomplishing. I think we totally went around this the wrong way, I wish we could figure it all out but I guess from what I hear there is not enough time, that's why we're talking to the Auditor's office. When I was talking to them, Mr. Wilson, the last budget we received, the 2 mils was already in there. We already counted that as revenue. I for one am willing to take money out of the reserves to make it meet because I personally that's the only way you're going to get the 7 mils to pass. If you start laying people off and charging for everything under the sun, they're not going to vote for it and then we're going to be in a tougher situation.

Mr. Stegman – That was one of the things Monday night, I still don't have a really good handle. I asked Walt to give me those numbers. A lot of things have gone into the calculation of what we're going to bring in this year. I still don't have a good handle on the soft billing, I know the 2 mils, Glenn the numbers you have already figure in on that piece of paper has already been figured in to Walt's numbers. We're still a million short. That's on top of what Council has already given as a million and next year you're going to incur another \$500,000.00 of cost because we'll have to start paying on the Nu-Maid property. It's about \$1.5 million that we're going to be short in next years' budget. We definitely have to change the operations of the City. Until we find out the exact numbers of what we're bringing in, this year we spent 10.5 million and we still only brought in 8.2. It's not our spending, it's what's coming into this City and what we're trying to keep for services and employees. Something has got to give. We could sit here and throw the whole 3.5 million at it and take care of it next year and we're going to be totally broke. Then I have to let go 15 firemen, I have to layoff 10 police officers. No, that is going to be tragedy, that's going to be tragedy. I don't understand the last few months I asked John and the Administration to sit down with employees, we've given them numbers where we're going to be a million short, a windfall of about a million, if Council has to throw a couple hundred thousand dollars at it, that's fine too. They've been given numbers, we've asked them to open up their contracts, I keep on hearing that they have opened up their contracts and have given numbers to John and he hasn't taken them. I wish I would know what these numbers were, I know the Service Dept. was at several of the Finance Committee meetings and told us all we needed was something from the Union so we could pass it on through John so they could take a 3% freeze, their overtime, and it didn't happen. I brought it up several times, what happened to this? I don't know if it is still on the table. These guys are up there saying tonight, and have been saying that they opened up their contracts, but every time I ask I they're willing to give up this and I'm not hearing that. We need to get tight numbers. Give it to them. What is a fireman's worth? What is a policeman's worth? What is a service worker's worth? This is what it is going to take to save one man's job. If you can come up with that dollar figure, that saves one man's job. Give them that number, ask them to open up their contracts if they can or if they will and let's sit down. Negotiate with these folks and ask them to help provide this offset. We'll try to do whatever we can up here too. I keep hearing them say it and I hear nothing coming back from the negotiations.

Mrs. Kalb – I understand how difficult the position is that the Mayor is in. I have been involved in the budget committee and running numbers. When I first went into this I kept thinking, you trim overtime here and you cut this back there, we got 4 retirements here, you add all that stuff together and we were still 2 million dollars short. You start going, OK \$4,000.00 for aerobics, \$18,000.00 for trash bags and you're still 1.9 million short after you tap all those items. Until you sit down and run the numbers and look at it and I keep hearing how all the budgets have been slashed to the bare minimum, the only thing no one has talked about that has been slashed to the bare minimum, is the salaries and benefits line items. That means people. I've been saying that all along, when payroll is as high as it is, people keep talking about cutting services, unless you cut the people that provide those services, you're not saving any money for the City at that point. I don't know what the correct numbers are, we've got a million dollars and if that's 11 employees, if that's what the Administration has decided that equals a million dollars then that's good. I haven't seen the specific break down for depts., x number of dollars for firefighter, x number of dollars for a police officer and all that but obviously these numbers came from somewhere and I think it's easy to sit back there and say no layoffs, no layoffs, no layoffs, let's keep throwing money at the problem, the money is not going to put us past next year. As Mr. Stegman said, then we really have to make major cuts. If that seven mils passes, with the tenth of a percent we are still a million dollars short. It's not easy, it's not fun, none of us like this up here. Unfortunately, time has come when cuts are going to have to be made unless we can get this money through opening up these contract negotiations.

Mr. Zix – One thing we haven't been realizing is the 4.2 million dollars we have in debt. We currently have 3.4 million in reserves. We are going to use a million of that for this up coming budget. That puts us at 2.4 million. We'll use a little bit of that for the labor and some of the things we're doing, through January, and we'll be at 2.1 million. That 2.1 million has to go on this budget. There is nothing there. We're 4.2 in the hole.

Jerry Louis Shipp, Sr., 211 Church St. – Barb I would like to correct you on something, you said nobody mentioned payroll, personnel cuts, that sort of thing. Yes we have. I sat in on two votes when we've offered to cut our pay. It wasn't accepted. We offered to freeze. It wasn't accepted. Back in August, we said there was going to be snow this winter. We offered to do the snow calls for free. It wasn't accepted. Then we get told, it wasn't in writing, it wasn't presented right, how many time do you have to say it before somebody says, good idea, let's jump on that. There's trucks out right now running your bills up. It didn't have to be that way. Joe Kempe sat at a meeting and complained about \$200.00 of overtime the last snow. It ought to come out of his salary because we offered to give it to him for nothing. Glenn asked earlier about the phone bill. I assume you're fishing for those lines that can be done away with. We took a cursory look at the phone bill, there is 7 lines we know that can be shut down right now. We told them, nothing happened. We can't just turn them off on our own, somebody has to say it's OK. We asked for the same bill, we haven't gotten it. An energy audit by CG&E, free, couldn't get anybody to jump on that. Ed Kallmeyer and I went around turning off furnaces, nobody noticed, but we're doing it because nobody will tell us, do these things. I'll give you a

real number, John, \$671,534.08. Those were real things, guys in the service dept. came up with to save you money. We gave this to Joe, it went nowhere. We didn't involve the police or fire, we don't work with them, we don't know how their depts. operate. These are things we knew we could cut. We had heard 22 items we couldn't put a dollar figure on but we knew they would save the City money and we did them. We keep offering it and nothing keeps happening. We were literally locked out of your meeting. I'm not talking about you can't come, we were not allowed in there, period. We had to point out to you, the rules of the State of Ohio says you cannot do that when you are discussing public finances, you had to let us in. We went in, you ask for our suggestions, we gave them, it was thank you very much, now go away. You trumped us out of the rest of the meeting, you didn't want us to hear what was going on. I still believe you're first plan where there were 8 people involved, now it's kind of grown to 11 because you didn't do anything fast enough. The numbers have stacked up, now you have to lay off more to make the budget come out right. This has been going on all summer, we knew what was going on from day one. When you first came into office, our support was, take this City by the throat and make some cuts, we're going to help, we're going to show you where they are. We started with the Street Commissioner's job. You said you'd give us 6 months. What have we lost by not having a Street Commissioner? Not a thing. It worked, didn't it? If the same people that gave you that suggestion were smart enough to come up with that, what's wrong with the \$671,000.00 worth of cuts?

Mr. Estep – If that was given to Joe, I didn't see all those, Jerry.

Mr. Shipp– You guys work together. Where is Joe right now, by the way?

Mr. Estep – Joe had another commitment that he went to tonight for a friend.

Mr. Shipp– My job is more important than whatever his friend's commitment must be. That's the way I feel about it. We've been saying this stuff all along, just to have the game played on us. The numbers moving, that was really fascinating, we checked our numbers every inch of the way with Walt. Walt, will you verify that?

Mr. St. Clair – Jerry, you gave me some numbers

Mr. Shipp– No, no, no, I asked you for numbers, not numbers I gave you. I checked my numbers with you.

Mr. St. Clair – Right, you got the Auditor's report and the appropriations budgets which show the figures that you worked from to come up with your numbers.

Mr. Shipp– We can watch them move. Back in the middle of the Mayor's presentation, the Service Dept. workers were at \$54,000.00. That was one (expletive deleted) of a raise we got because now we're worth \$80,000.00. I didn't get it, I don't know who got it, but somebody got it. We had these things figured out and then you came back and said, Oh well, you know what, the numbers we got don't really include all the Service Dept. They include the Council people too, they include all the City Hall workers. How

are we supposed to work with these numbers? We weren't told everything at one time. We had to ask very specific questions to get the right answer back. When we come back with a number, we didn't tell you the other part. It's getting a little frustrating. Joe has this list, he's had several times. Phil Stegman has a list and ran it down there item by item the other night and you didn't have an answer. The simple one, why haven't the cars been sold yet? I ran into a guy at the heating and air place that wanted to buy the whole fleet. I went right to Joe, said here, call this guy, set it up, you can put them in the paper and sell them in a week. They are still sitting down there. Simple things. If we don't see these cuts going on but you're going to lay somebody off, when were you going to do them? How much more money were you going to spend on this stupid stuff. The Nextel phones, \$12,000.00 a year. That's kind of crazy, we didn't have them before, now we've got them and we don't need them.

Mr. Estep – I would like to comment on those two, Jerry. Number one the cars, I think Walt is in the process of getting the mileage and getting them all together for a sealed bid. The phones, I don't where you're saying they just got here, I think they've been here for quite awhile.

Mr. Schipp – Not as long as I have.

Mr. Estep – I don't know every phone you have, I don't know every phone in this City but the contract was here longer than I've been in this chair.

Mr. Schipp– Yea, it has been here longer than you have but it's one of the things we could have done away with. Joe, tried to turn these in and they wouldn't accept it. We have a box full of radios I understand sitting at the firehouse, sure we can use those, the City's already bought and paid for them, you're paying for the license.

Mr. Wilson – Does Nextel require a contract?

Mr. Schipp– Yes it does, I've see the bill.

Mr. Wilson – How long are we obligated? Does anybody know?

Mr. Schipp – Don't know? Nobody wants to look into it.

Mr. Wilson – I will look into it.

Mr. Schipp – I got a whole bunch more for you, Glenn, if you want to take this by the horns and work with it, I'd be happy to give it to you. We can't seem to get it through our Service Director.

Mrs. Brickweg – Mr. Zix's figures, does that include the 2.1million we still owe on Nu – Maid?

Mr. Zix – Correct.

Mrs. Brickweg – OK, I know, Walt, you said you were looking into hopefully that when this came due that we could maybe spread it out maybe 5 or 10 years and at one point it was said that we couldn't because of

litigation and I know you were trying to explain that Monday night maybe that won't come into play. Are we going to have a way of refinancing that so that would help us with some of our debt and the second thing is I keep hearing about the C-9 lawsuit, I thought we were told that the City has an insurance policy, I haven't got an answer on what it will cover or not, we keep holding that over everybody's head and maybe it really shouldn't be.

Mr. St. Clair – The first issue would be the 2.1 million note that's outstanding. I mentioned the non-litigation certificate that has to be signed and I've talked with bond counsel as well as the underwriter for that note if it would be reissued. The non-litigation certificate can be worded such that we would get full disclosure to any type of lawsuit, then it becomes not a financing issue but a marketing issue in the sense that investors look at these types of things before they bid on those notes and for that reason you may have to pay a little bit of a higher interest rate which of course also happens when you lengthen terms you also usually get a higher interest rate. Once again, that allows you to have cash available for daily operations if you're financing over a longer period.

The issue with the insurance and the litigation, I just talked to our counsel that is representing and actually works for the insurance company on the lawsuit representing us is writing a letter to the insurance company to see how they want to proceed. I talked to the insurance company also, and they indicated that their liability is probably under an employee benefit liability which is limited to 1 million dollars, I think with a \$1,000.00 deductible. That is being looked into right now with legal counsel that's involved in that case and they will get instructions from probably the insurer, how they want to proceed, because obviously they may want to avoid further litigation by making a settlement. Those things are in the process right now.

Mrs. Brickweg – It looks like we have a chance to refinance Nu – Maid but because of our money in the bank and our history we might be paying more in interest rate. I first of all recommend that we do that because we need the money to operate the City. I have an interest rate on my home because I can't pay it all off tomorrow and that's OK with me because at least I have a warm place to go stay at. The second thing with the C-9 lawsuit, if anything ever does happen, hopefully our insurance company, there is a possibility they would do a million and who knows from there on.

Mr. St. Clair – There might be some type of shared responsibility between us and them.

Amy Doddy, 220 McClelland – I just wanted to quickly comment on what Jerry had come up with. He and I spoke on the phone the other day and he shared with me a whole slew of numbers that they had come up with. It seemed to me a total of a lot more than the \$600,000.00 that he just threw up here. That's close to the 1 million, I know it's not going to cut it, but that's close to the 1 million, why is that 1 million seem to have to come from the 3 depts.? I haven't seen the whole budget so I don't know. We can't see the whole budget if it doesn't exist but why does the 1 million have to come from the three depts.? Are there not even other areas it can temporarily come from until maybe even we could possibly even pass some more millage? A lot of the things he said could be put into effect right now, why

can't that money be used to offset the 1 million dollars that we're still looking at?

Mr. Stegman – That list has been going since October. Until we start implementing it, we're never going to make the savings of it. It needs to take place, and worked with to make that savings. I can't say OK click all those things that Jerry's been working with the Administration with, now we just saved \$600,000.00 because we've started working on it.

Mrs. Doddy – I know that, but it's been around for six to eight months now. We could be using that money right now.

Mr. Stegman – I realize that, but the Administration has to put them in gear. They have to be put into operation.

Mrs. Doddy – Why isn't it being put in gear?

Mr. Estep – I don't know if all those were things that we thought we could do right away. We have done some of them. I don't think we can turn everything around just like that. We did start to implement some of the fees and different ways we're trying to do things in the City. Sounds like I need to get with Joe and do a better job of some of the other ones.

Mrs. Kalb – I would like to see that list. Can I get a copy of it, too?

Mrs. Doddy – I realize it can't be implemented today. I know there's other suggestions like, for example, I suggested we charge for the gym. That's money that we could start using now. Any gym that you join or belong to is almost going to require you to have a contract. The less contract you have, the more you're going to pay. I don't even think we need to have a contract for even three months. Make people pay one month at a time. Even if it's \$10 or \$15, it's still dirt cheap compared to any, I think I looked up Revolution Fitness which is a new gym that's over in Oakley, I think it's \$50. a month. That's without any classes, that's just to use the equipment. If it was only \$10. a month, my husband, he sitting over there, he can verify it, he goes down there. We'd pay it. I have gone down there, I've kind of slacked off since the holidays, that could be revenue we could be bringing in right now. I know that's not a lot, maybe there's only 5 people in there a day, but it still could be some money. It's going to add up. I just don't understand why we can't even look at the little things, every little bit counts.

Mr. Estep – That was in a letter that was going to go out this week. One reason the letter was held up, after talking to some people in the Service Dept. , and I reconsidered having fees for the special pick ups and for the dumpster spotting and dropping the truck off, we felt if we're going to go to the residents and ask them to pay for millage, putting these other fees on top of that, we'd only be shooting ourselves in the foot. We decided to keep the fees out of there for truck spotting and special pick ups. The gym rental, the fee to belong to the fitness center, that is in there and hopefully will go out this weekend.

Jerry Louis Shipp, Sr., 211 Church – To clarify that a little bit, the list actually numbers out at \$3,330,681.28. The \$671,000.00 plus was just ideas

out of the Service Dept. We weren't trying to take credit for anything John came up with in his committee. Part of the top this, remember the plans A,B,C,D,E& F and all those, lot of which they're planning on implementing. They haven't happened yet, like Phil said, you aren't going to save a dime until you do these things. This list started in July and August. That's the day I have on my computer, so I know exactly when it started typing this. Every time somebody came up with something new I added it to the list. The real savings at the bottom for 33,000, Barb if you're looking at that, you'll see that 22 of the items have no numbers behind them, we have no idea what they could save or even if they are practical. There is an idea there that somebody threw in that looks like it can generate some money. Or save some money which is the same thing when you talk about the budget. It was \$3 million plus. The Service Dept. portion of it was \$671,000.00, the rest came out of the Mayor's committee.

Mr. Stegman – There are some things out there and I think that is one of the things that the question was asked of Walt, Monday. There are some things that were on this list that we don't know if they are in the actual numbers of revenue, like the soft billing, we figured the soft billing for the highway, I know the soft billing for the ambulance run, rental fees, trash pick up, the numbers for the shelter rental, the sports, pay as you play type sports, dumpster and trucks, special pick up, Dial-a-Ride fees have gone up, the life lines are already out of this number but this is part of their number so there are some other things that haven't been touched on. The Bertus St. pool, the wages, the freeze has not been done. Health, based on Nov. 23rd plan, Ross Ave. is in the motion, it's been awarded, now it just has to be bought. Part of that \$3million was his 7 mils, the 1 tenth of 1 percent tax was figured in that \$3 million, a slash to the Civil Service \$10,000.00, that's been done in the budget, summer help, I don't if that's all \$15,000.00 that's on here was taken out, yard waste, the tire changing, the Service Dept. went out and got the tire things so they could do it on their own which is \$7,000.00. The clippings that we were taking to Mt. Airy and they were charging us, that was \$5,000.00, that will start this year. Phone lines, the energy audit, Nextel, uniforms, these are all things that are on this list. Some of these numbers have been implemented and I don't know if they've been generated, and if they've been put into your number, Walt. That's why I'd like to get an itemized list of where you based your 2.3 million that you are going to have come in this year. That might escalate that a little more and we can have a better feel of how much money will be coming in. I'd like to have Sheri evaluate her numbers, make sure what she had proposed back in December if that is still true of what she feels is coming in.

Mr. Zix – With that I'd like to see if Sheri's estimates on refunds hold pretty true to what she is projecting.

Mrs. Brickweg – There was a suggestion I made months ago and I haven't got an answer. I tried to set up a meeting with the owner of my company who is a CPA and paid \$200.00 an hour to help people get money and he has offered his services for free, to meet with Sheri or to meet with you to show you different ways to bring in or increase our tax dollars. He did ask me the other day and I said I assume nobody was interested. I just think that is a shame because the few ideas he gave me could bring in a lot of money and maybe it could help if we could just be, and I know these things are

confidential, he understands that too he owns the company, but I really think that's something we might want to think about even if you don't want to use him. He's free. But getting consulting on how we can bring in better tax dollars. If you could maybe, Walt, if you could talk to her, I just think it's a blessing in disguise that we're just turning down.

Mr. St. Clair – Mrs. Brickweg, if you could give me his name and number I would be glad to give him a call. Is this a busy time, though, it's a busy time for accountants.

Mrs. Brickweg – You might want to wait till May. He is extremely busy but I know he can help us bring in money. I have no doubt.

Mr. St. Clair – Maybe we'll put that off for a little while then.

Rodney Chatman – It was implied when we spoke about when we spoke about Police negotiations that the Mayor was not present for any of the things, or at least that was implied, I didn't know what the exact words were, I have documentation here that refutes that. If anybody is interested in that, we did meet and we did talk about concessions, we did talk about things we were willing to do. In regards to that, the last quick item was in negotiations it is a two way process and I understand that you don't want to put the City at risk, all we're asking, I don't see anything wrong with this, or please tell me what is wrong with this, if we're asking for no layoffs and we're willing to make major concessions, I understand your fear, could you possibly then say, if we get this done and we get this done and we meet this number and we do this and we do that, no layoffs. That's part of negotiations, when we offer and open everything up we're just told, nope, don't want to put the City in jeopardy. Layoffs.

Mr. Estep – Mr. Chatman, you're right, we did meet, the Police and the City agreed, I think we adjusted some hours on the Mayor's Court, which saved us some money, we were going to meet again and I don't think we communicated, we communicated somewhat verbally but nothing in writing. The issue was residency and I did bring it up to Council and they were not in favor of that, therefore, I didn't set up another meeting but if the number that we have from Phil, if you want to put that number in writing and show how you'll meet that and you'll guarantee that, and if that doesn't come to fruition, then I'll sign off no layoffs. We have to have something firm. It has to be something that Walt and the money people see and know more about than I do. Make sure it's going to be there and it's solid.

Mr. Chatman – Will you be there?

Mr. Estep – Yes, call me tomorrow, if I see you at school, just tell me the time and I'll surely be there.

Norman Miller, 219 Washington Ave. – I didn't think I'd ever do this again, but here I am. I'm not going to comment on the cut ups or what but we're talking about revenue for the City and I look around the City, it seems like we tear down buildings in this town, which takes residents away and most cases businesses on top of that, we have a parking lot on Vine St. and Bertus St. We tore buildings down to develop that parking lot. We tore down a

building next to the Building and Loan, we got a parking lot, we tore City Hill down, we got a parking lot. Meiners, I don't know if that's City property or not, but we got another parking lot and we come down the hill and we got all the parking here at the end of the street. Bertus St. park, we're closing swimming pools, that's developable, we got a city of parks and parking lots right now so we could develop that piece of property for tax revenue. Maybe two houses, I don't know you could squeeze three in it. We've got the property over at Tennis Ln. there's tennis courts that you seldom see anyone on it. Again, we're a city of parks. We don't need them all. Let's sacrifice and develop the City into financial assets. Across at Tennis Ln. we have a swimming pool, probably enough room for one or two homes. We have the property across from the Catholic Church that's sitting there for five years. We've got the property at Vine St. and McClelland that was supposed to be a Library. It could be developed for tax dollars. We don't get nothing off a Library for tax dollars. The Library bought the property there from the Eagles, it could be developed into a piece of tax dollars for us. It seems like we got all of these parking lots and if you look at the City, these pictures around in the hallways here, Vine St. at one time was all businesses, residents above them, most of them two and three story buildings. We didn't need all that parking now, but we tear all these buildings down, lose revenue from tax dollars, and we build a parking lot, brings absolutely no tax dollars. Why can't, if we're interested in developing the City and raising tax dollars, use this property, do away with all these parking lots. I don't know why we need so many parking lots within a 3square blocks of this City. Develop them, get rid of the parks and we don't need all of these parks. We go a beautiful park up here, we got Bertus St. park, we got Tennis Lane park, what do we need them for? Put some property in there and get some revenue off of it. I think we need to look at what we got and develop it, not just cut, cut, cut. Raise the buildings and get some tax dollars. We can get tax dollars off of property, we can get tax dollars off the earned income tax, we don't get a nickel of tax dollars off of a property just sitting there in parks and parking lots.

Mr. Zix – I think that Mr. Miller has some good ideas, I know the Library property and the property across from Church we don't own. The other properties I would like to put on the COW next week and maybe further discuss this.

Angela Chatman, 4265 Redwood Ter. – I have a question, is it, I am trying to make sure I speak correctly, do we give non working St. Bernard people a 2% credit towards St. Bernard taxes?

Mr. Burkhardt – Yes we do.

Mrs. Chatman – Silverton does not give a credit. If you live in Silverton, regardless to where you work, you pay a tax. Has that been entertained to bring some money?

Mrs. Kalb – Yes, we have discussed it at length, we have yet to be able to put a dollar figure on it because there is not mandatory filing in St. Bernard so we don't know how much revenue, the Tax Commissioner is not sure how much additional revenue it would generate. Yes, not giving a full credit to those residents has been discussed. One of the things that will help is we

put the mandatory filing to this new tax ordinance, this year we are having mandatory filing so maybe in the future, down the road we should be able to do something with the credit in order to raise money once we can figure out what it's going to generate.

Mrs. Chatman – I understand that most people who rent, obviously rent because they're not homeowners but if you pass the millage on the tax levy you're hitting the homeowners, but if you go some a route like this you're going to get more money in because then you're going to get the renters as well who use the same service as homeowners use too. It's just food for thought as you're pondering in how to bring in money, things like this can and should be implemented.

Mrs. Kalb – One of the things the Mayor had discussed early in the year was that if for instance the levy failed, that is something that Council can do without a vote of the people sort of a potential Plan B.

Mrs. Chatman – Can we implement Plan B before do anything else?

Mrs. Kalb – That would be up to Council here, it was discussed. At this point we have no idea how much revenue it was going to generate. I'll be real honest with you, the people that I floated the idea by looked at me and shook their heads and they wouldn't be very happy if I did it.

Mrs. Chatman – What's the difference between that and the millage? There's no difference. It's still money coming out of my check book drawn on US Bank. Whether I pay it on April 15 or I pay it on Feb 7th with my taxes. It's still money to the City. You're going to get renters paying it as well who utilizes the same services that I do as a homeowner. How come that can't be explored now and put on the ballot now as opposed to a levy even though you're saying, and I understand, we don't know how much revenue it's going to bring because there is not mandatory filing. It's a lot of I don't know, and I don't understand a lot of the I don't know, I really don't because you're paid to know.

Mr. Estep – We did discuss some of those, we felt that the millage was a little bit more even way to produce and generate some revenue. It not only hit the people that own homes here, there is some ownership by industry as well. With the one tenth of one percent we would keep some of the money here and it wouldn't bang again all the homeowners all the people who live and work here and especially we tried to take into consideration some of the elderly on a fixed income who may own property and instead we would even it out a little bit by taxing the people who live in Sharonville or Evendale and yet they work here. The Tax Commissioner did bring up the no refund of the tax refund. She said that when she called and did a little research on that, that's not a very popular thing in other communities so we tried to stay away from that as the A Plan. That could be a back up plan if the one tenth of one percent doesn't come through.

Mrs. Chatman – I understand that that's not popular but neither is laying off all these people. We're not going for popularity here, we're going for what's right. Silverton doesn't have it and who says that you can't do 2.1 but only give 1% tax credit. I work in the City of Cincinnati, I'll be happy to

pay the additional 1.1% to keep my firemen, my servicemen, my policemen. I would pay it in a heart beat.

Mrs. Brickweg – I think some people don't understand what they're talking about and I'll do my best. I work in the City of Cincinnati, they take 2.1% out of my pay check and it goes to the City of Cincinnati. When I file my St. Bernard income tax return I get a full credit. What Mrs. Chatman is saying is if we only gave a 1% or just half the credit then instead of saying I don't owe any money to St. Bernard I would owe them half of what I sent to Cincinnati, so I would pay Cincinnati and then I would pay the other half or what it was agreed on, to the City of St. Bernard. How that helps is, it helps with the renters that are working. With the elderly, I don't think a lot of them are out there making a lot of money where it's really going to affect them. I personally think it's very good, especially to somebody like me. All my tax dollars out of my pay check go to the City of Cincinnati, none of them go to the City of St. Bernard. That is what she is saying and it is something that we should really look into because there are quite a few communities that do that. If we don't want to get the full credit, a partial credit. I don't think the 7mils is enough anyway, maybe that is something that we can look into also to help balance that out.

Mrs. Chatman – One more comment, it was said that OK if we take the money out of reserves for this year, where is that going to put us next year. That gives you people a year to make this right. That gives you a year to give these cities or at least something going on, something developed. This is a prime community for a Nursing Home or a Retirement Center, we need that. If people are born and they die in St. Bernard, there needs to be some visionaries here, somebody that's going to do something and do it now and not have the same conversation in 2010.

Mr. Estep – I think there was a movement to get a Retirement Home built a few years ago and it fell apart. I tried to get it going again with a different company out of a Church and Ms. Wickersham has been down twice to do two site visits with Gerry Wiedmann and I. We looked at about three different locations. That is a great idea, there is a couple of places that she was very impressed with and she still thinks that that could happen. Gerry Wiedmann has tried to get back in touch with her a couple of times since then. We're still trying to get her down here to see if we can get a Retirement Home in our town.

Mrs. Brickweg – Out of curiosity, since everybody seems to be in agreement we're not going to get a Library, is that one of the possible properties for Senior Housing. It is right there in the middle of town and I don't know if it's big enough, I have heard some people that have some great plans out there, but he'll have to speak up for himself on how to build it. I just remember when I was sitting in the audience all the different criteria that had to be met and it seems like that would be a good area especially if you did on a two story. I just wondered if that was one of the properties that's even being considered.

Mr. Estep – That was one of three or four that we showed her and that was one lower on her list for a couple of reasons. She didn't feel it was good to mix residential with business. We were trying to get more of a consistent

residential area which would be nice. She wasn't real happy with that, she wasn't sure about the parking for that location for some reason, she doesn't want to go more than two stories high because of safety and sprinklers and everything else. I don't know all the answers on that. There was one we did look at and she thought it was OK. She thought we had a better spot in the City if we can get her down here again.

Mr. Zix – We do have some information about the full credit taxing. The Tax Commissioner did get, as Mrs. Kalb said it was another option. We opted against it. She had some stats here. Also, we don't own the Library property, do we? We don't have the right to give it away, do we?

Mr. Estep – The City gave that away the year 2000. They own it, we don't. We gave it away and in addition they paid \$25,000.00 for the parking lot at the Eagles in conjunction with that, they gave the Eagles a lifetime easement to use that property. No, we don't own that.

Mr. Zix – It would not be an option. It's come up several times, but it wouldn't be an option unless they would sell back to us.

Mr. Estep – If Council, and if you want to discuss this at COW, is in agreement that they want to pursue that we can start the process to try to get that property back.

Mr. Zix – I don't have any desire to do that. It just keeps coming up.

Mr. Schildmeyer – Although the property is owned by the Library, their plans have already been presented to the planning and development directory in the City and the operational question on that property and the building is through the State. The State development office needs the money to operate the buildings that the Library would build down there. I'm all for still waiting still just where this will go. I understand that possibly that the Library, Hamilton County Library is revisiting all the libraries and looking again at possibly some decision making down the road here into 2005, 2006. We're hoping that some development money might be coming from that. It's still hard to turn a 2.3 million project that's stated for that lot. I know it's been a long time, I know it's been five years and we've been waiting and waiting and waiting, patiently. I'd like to see it through. It's scheduled. We have the contractors already setting up offices and the ground layouts and the footprints for the building when all this came down from the State and things were held up. We're further along than people really realize on this. It's an operational decision for the money for the operating of this type of buildings that the Hamilton County Library would build.

Amy Doddy, 220 McClelland – I had a suggestion also for that property, I don't know what it would take for the City to get back the Library but one of my neighbors actually used to work for the Library and she still is talking to people that work there and they have indicated to her that they have no plans to build that, they just don't have it in their budget anymore. I understand everybody's hurting with budgets but I would like to see that, I don't understand why there is disagreement but I think it would be good for the City.

Mr. Schildmeyer – I talked to Kim Fender last month and it's still in the process.

Mrs. Doddy – They are still thinking about it?

Mr. Schildmeyer - Yes.

Mrs. Doddy – I also have some other comments. I know a lot of times I get up here and I'm a little upset. I actually, I even know in my letter I said, I mean we get up and you guys don't listen to us anymore. I'd like to commend you guys, I feel like tonight has been a lot more productive, at least it feels that way, than other nights have been. I feel like it's at least working and you're considering some of our comments, I don't know, time will show if that happens. This is of course pending on the layoffs, but Mr. Estep, actually you called me the other day to ask me about, I had volunteered to assist with the minutes free of charge. I actually believe that ORC regulations or title or something, I can't remember where I found it, I don't have it in front of me, unfortunately, that the minutes be distributed so the people and I'm all for getting them out as soon as possible and I feel that there is more people and I know especially the Senior Citizens that can't make it, they don't have the internet, I don't see how that's, and maybe they don't have even cable to watch the minutes or the meetings, I'm sorry. So I did offer my time to the City and I would be willing to assist in other ventures of the City. I want to be at more meetings, I want to be involved in the budget meetings, and unfortunately I can't be at the finance meeting on Monday, I have a class that I take. I would be, provided like I said the layoffs. I would be more than willing to assist in the campaign for the levy or like I said before, I know more of my neighbors now than I used to and I feel like I could go out and I'm really interested in helping the City. I don't want to get up here and sound like I'm just moaning and complaining and whining that you guys are going to lay off my husband, obviously that's first and foremost on my mind. I do want to help with the City, I do want to see the City get back to the way it was before. When I met my husband 8 years ago and he told me about St. Bernard and I'd been down here a couple of times I thought, this is so cool, I'm from all over Columbus, I've never seen a suburb like this where people play in the streets. How many cities you know that have a skate board park. I understand that's kind of ruffian crowd maybe but I've never even heard of a place like St. Bernard. I would really be interested in helping the City as much as I could, even if it was cold calling businesses to get them in and actually my suggestion for the Library property if we could get it back, would be to bring a restaurant in. I know you guys all live here and you want to go to a nice restaurant and even like Applebee's, Fridays, Olive Garden. You would drive all the way over to Fields Ertel, everybody does and I know you guys probably have lunch here. Mr. Burkhardt you have lunch at Chili Time all the time you know how many people are in there. They're in Skyline, they're in Subway, everywhere, these places are packed at lunch time. If we had other restaurants like that I know they'd be making tons of lunch time money and dinner money. This is like a prime location, like I said, you guys drive all over the City to get to all those restaurants, if they were here, I'm not saying it's like definitely possible because again the parking thing comes up, it should be something else to think about. I think it would bring in a lot of revenue for the City. I wanted to let you know it's not like I'm ready to just

walk out on the City. I do want to help and I do think you guys are better today. I think the whole situation is a really is, it seems a lot, my husband just stopped by, he's on duty tonight, he said, "How's it going?" I said it's a lot calmer that has been. I realize this is a tense situation, I was shaking in my boots before when I got up here and I really don't want to yell at anybody but I do but I can't help it, it's very special situation and we understand that and you understand that and I just thought I'd get up and make a positive comment, tonight. I thought I end it on a good note.

Norm Miller, Washington Ave. – I'm going to bring something up and I guess Mr. Schildmeyer brought it up and this is why I bowed out 6 months or 8 months ago. The Library, and if you remember the night that you brought this lady in, she was going to tell us all about the Library, I got up and made a comment and I was more or less told that I'm insulting her that my comments weren't going to be heard. My point is, in her address to us that night, they had a piece of property over in Bond Hill that they were going to put a Library in. They decided that St. Bernard was so generous and just give us the property that this would be a nice place to put it. My take on that was, and it went through my mind a million times, rather than build a place in Bond Hill the Hamilton County Public Library would like to build it in St. Bernard. First the property is cheap, they got this protection here through the Police. So now St. Bernard is not going to have a St. Bernard Library, St. Bernard is, and this is my take on it and I might be dead wrong, St. Bernard is not going to have a St. Bernard Library is going to be the address of a regional Library. The regional Library will be St. Bernard, Bond Hill, Avondale, Winton Terrace, Elmwood will be closed down, so now we're the location of a regional Library, not a St. Bernard Library. My point is that St. Bernard people would be hard pressed to even get in that Library. The Library jumped on the band wagon, they're using St. Bernard, we're giving them property and it won't be our Library it will be full of Bond Hill, it will be full of Avondale, it will be full of Winton Terrace, it will be full of Elmwood and you'll have a hard time finding a seat in there.

Mr. Schildmeyer – For a building that size and what the plans are if that's what the plan, that would bring those people into St. Bernard to visit the Library and visit other stores and operations that we have in the City, I'll be open to it. I'll be fine with it.

Mrs. Brickweg – If we ever do get around to discussing this, I know it was said that we purchased the property back. Absolutely no, we gave it away free, we need to go after it and get it back for the same price we paid for it.

Harvey Baur, 150 Delmar – That particular piece of property down there, yes, Mike it is a business piece of property but it would be an excellent place for a nursing home. You could put a whole concept into it. My concept is this. Let's offer the Library to take over the Hall the Senior Citizens use for their meeting. Allow the Library to expand, Let's make our Library greater and better. Let them move into there. Let's build a Retirement Center on the corner of McClelland and Vine St. that will have the Hall in it for them to have their meetings right there. The people that can't get out of the building can ride an elevator down to the first floor where the meeting hall would be, take me there. That does a lot of things for you. It keeps them in the building when the weather's bad like it's going to be tomorrow. It gives

them the ability to be right here in the community where they want to be instead of having to move to the Carthaginian on Vine St. out in Carthage, right on the main busy thoroughfare, business address. They're still in the same place, they're close to the grocery store, they're close to the restaurants we have, they're close to the bank, and I hate to say this but they're close to the funeral home to go visit their friends when they pass away. It's an opportunity that we've got and it's a way that even could be sold to the Library. Look, give us the land back, we'll allow you to expand into this space in the city building. Give them the room. It's a great way to look at it. There may be a lot of things that I'm not seeing about the whole project that you could just blow it out of the water and make it not work. I think there's a lot of good to make it look into and see if it's a viable way to do it because those are the kind of projects we need to move on and we need to move now. I know the CIC is working very hard on Nu – Maid and I understand there is some time delays and getting paper work done and all that. It's slow. There are some other projects that can be done and need to get started now. We can't wait for the one project on Nu – Maid and then move on to another. We need to have multiple projects going to bring revenue into the town, not just one. We can't wait on that one. The other thing I comment on, Barb, you had made a comment before and about the fact that the budgets that the only place to cut them is salaries but what I've seen and the discussion comes back that the City spends around 10 to 10.5 every year, and the last few years our income has only been about 8.6 or give or take a little bit. The funny thing is that the Fire Dept. budget for 2004 was 2.4 million. The last time it was that low was in 2000. It was higher than that in between, there's been cuts made, yet the revenue is staying about the same. Why are our expenditures staying the same? And I don't want that to make it sound like I'm blaming the other depts.. because they've made their cuts as well. The Police have made their cuts, the Service Dept. have made their cuts, they're there. We're making cuts, the numbers a moving target. Phil, I know I've watched you sit there and crunch the numbers and rip your hair out on Monday night. If we're spending 10 and we're bringing in 8 we're short. There's 2 million short. If we can show you that our budgets are lower, how can that be and we're bringing in, that's not even considering the \$225,000.00 that we're bringing in on soft billing that ups our revenue. That's where we see the moving target. Every time we think we got it dialed in, oops, nope that's not it. Try again. I know you're working hard but cuts are not the only answer, looking at other ways to bring money in and other possibilities for projects is a better way to go.

Angela Chatman, 4265 Redwood Ter. – I mentioned this at the COW meeting, but there was slated in the anticipated budget approximately \$380,000.00 in capital improvements and I mentioned why is there not a capital campaign to run those funds? If that \$380,000.00 that is slated for capital improvement is not, if we don't make those capital improvements and the City doesn't suffer, why do it? Why make those capital improvements if the City can go another year without making them? Take that money, put it back into the budget.

Mrs. Brickweg – Which line item is that? Then I'll answer that, Walt, where is that?

Mr. Stegman – We don't know where you're looking.

Mrs. Chatman – It was on the last, not the budget that you gave tonight, it was on the last Council meeting, I believe you had capital. You had \$381,000.00 under master plan capital improvements. Is that money that is spent for those improvements from the City tax dollars or is that money that comes in from grants and other sources?

Mr. Zix – I'm not looking at it right now, but some of that has to be in this budget, some of it has to go in last year we did spend \$521,000.00 on Washington Ave. I think it was like \$800,000.00. So that whole \$800,000.00 was put in there. We have to put it in the budget and then it comes back in the General Fund. The Beech St. sewer project is in there at \$200,000.00 so that would be down to \$180,000.00. Some salaries are in there, some engineering fees and that's where mainly this year, and it's my understanding that Beech St. will be just engineering fees, so that will lower that quite a bit to \$45,000.00. Some of the things that are in there will come back. In this case, since it's really not going to happen to 2006, the Beech St., just engineering, it's a little different, but last year was different where we had to put the funds in and some of them came back into the General Fund.

Mrs. Chatman – If it's not going to happen till 2006 why would it be on the 2005 budget? Are we paying for something that we're not going to do until 2006?

Mr. Stegman – You're looking at \$381,000.00, that was back in December 20th. As it's been revised that \$200,000. has been taken out of both the 1/17/05 budget and also the one if we have to have layoffs. The proposal for 1/17/05 without layoffs, that total line item now is \$181,000.00. That \$200,000.00 has been pulled out of there because the sewer project is not going to start until next year. The only thing that will be incurred on that project would be professional services of which would be the engineering fees, a different line item.

Mrs. Chatman – That's my question, if the repair is not dire straights, why are we doing it and not putting that money towards getting this budget balanced?

Mr. Stegman – We did, it's been revised.

Mrs. Chatman – You're saying the engineering fees. Why do we even need to do this? Can this be something that can wait?

Mr. Stegman – No. The engineering fees, the \$40,000.00 has to be used so that we show the plans for the project because we're getting Federal Grant money towards the other portion. We're paying \$200,000.00 they're paying \$200,000.00 in grant money and we have to come up with the engineering fees to get the grant.

Mrs. Chatman – I'm going to read you something that was mentioned at the last COW meeting; The engineering firm that you all have used, you've used the same one for 16 years, has anyone done any comparison shopping

to get that lowered? Put some bids out there. If you do what you've always done you'll get what you always got.

Mr. Stegman – Council doesn't go out and advertise and go to the engineering firm, that would be the Administration that would go out and get the bids. Over the course of the years that we've been dealing with this company, I have seen good plans, good ideas and very good cost savings. Gerry can vouch for them. With the monies, the grant monies we have received, the work that they have done for us, I don't know that any other engineering firm or company that we've dealt with before would be any better.

Mrs. Chatman – When you say by the Administration of the City, you're saying exactly whom?

Mr. Stegman – That would be your Mayor, your City Hall personnel. The Administration runs the City, Council projects the laws, and tries to hold the purse strings of what they spend.

Mrs. Chatman – If that is the case, did they, or did they not have to come to you first to ask you to pass this to do something for JMA, with this engineering company? They would have had to come to you and say this is the dollar amount that this engineering company is saying that we need. Then as Council, don't you as Council have the right to say, Did we shop around?

Mr. Zix – Yes, we do. I wasn't here for 10 years but I know JMA was here in my previous terms. It's always been a recommendation of the Administration and the Mayor and we trust the fact they'll do a good job. I think JMA has done a good job for the City over the years. I've always just trusted that fact, they are going to do good. I think they have done good. Just to add a little bit to that Capital Improvement, there's also three employees salaries in that \$181,000.00.

Mrs. Chatman – Are those three employees part of the 11?

Mr. Zix – I don't know that.

Mrs. Brickweg – Did we vote on that? I don't remember voting on the improvement to go with the grant. I remember it being discussed last week but did we vote on that and I missed it. The vote to do that project, I know the citizens asked us individually what we thought of it but did we vote to approve that? I don't think we did.

Mr. Stegman – I know Butch asked each individual to give our comments. I know the Administration had brought it to Council but I don't think we've ever voted on it.

Gerry Wiedmann, Park Place – I believe there was an Ord. passed last year to apply for SCIP fund grants.

Mrs. Brickweg – We never approved to go ahead with the work, did we? When you apply for the grant, does that automatically say you're going to go with it?

Mr. Wiedmann – No, you guys have the right to

Mrs. Brickweg – So, we haven't done that, we have not voted on that. The other question Mrs. Chatman was asking was under the streets and sewers and I'm looking at today's budget, which is supposed to be a twelfth, there is \$16,666.00, if this is a twelfth, twelve times that is a lot more than that for engineering fees. Even if we voted for this, why do we have \$200,000.00 there when all it's supposed to be is \$45,000.00?

Mr. Wilson – I had a note on that, what I was told is that's going to be revised before we pass this budget, is that correct, Walt? On the Master Plan Capital Improvement Fund, she was referring to in MP9. We have \$16,666.00, which is a twelfth of the \$200,000.00.

Mr. St. Clair - I assume that's because the \$200,000.00 was going to be budgeted, and that was before JMA came said that the project would not need to be funded until 2006. This is already one of those moving targets, it's been outdated already.

Mrs. Brickweg – Fine example of why we need a budget. This is embarrassing.

Mr. Stegman – That was discussed at the last COW meeting, that's when all these bids came in saying that the project was due \$200,000.00 in next year's budget. The actual engineering fees for the Beech St. property was \$40,000.00 and the Woodside Hgts. would be \$55,000.00 if we wanted to pursue that. I'm not speaking for everyone, my consensus would be to not do the Woodside Hgts. but to go ahead, since we've already been granted the grant for Beech, to go ahead with the engineering fee out of this budget of \$40,000.00 and 2006 for the \$200,000.00. Yes, we would have to put an ordinance on the table to accept doing the project and doing the engineering fees for this year.

Mrs. Brickweg – Here's is a number that is wrong, and this is the Ordinance the majority voted for, I didn't, and the number is wrong. That's scary.

Mr. Stegman – The budget was passed on Jan. 1, and the \$200,000.00 was in there. It was just discussed last week and it was taken out.

Mr. St. Clair – Ordinance No. 3 was just to add some monies to Ordinance No. 1 for the month of Jan. I don't think the budget is final yet. All that was put in Ordinance No. 3 was just the changes to Ordinance 1, so that could have been changed, but it wasn't.

Mr. Wilson – This is not the final budget, what we need to do is revise this before we pass the budget so everybody is aware of that and we need to make sure that is done before we pass the correct budget.

Bill Gierhardt, 4232 Tower Ave. – Peggy, I do believe, if we're talking about the same thing, everybody voted 7-0 on supporting that thing. I believe it was done on August 29 somewhere around there, I don't know if it's Ordinance #29 but going back on the internet and looking at the minutes I found that out. That's topic #1. Topic #2, we're talking about cutting some jobs here, and Barb, you seem to be one of those that wants to see us cut some jobs. Mr. Mayor are we operating the pool this year?

Mr. Estep – To my knowledge we are.

Mrs. Gierhardt – Are we heating that pool? Do we need to heat that pool? That's some money that could possibly be saved. I see we have \$20,000.00 in the budget for it. There's some money right.

Mr. Estep – We won't heat it, I guess, I'll talk with Joe and see what we have to do.

Mrs. Brickweg – Mr. Wiedmann I am putting you on the spot. If you don't know that answer, that's fine. When he saying we voted on that, was that vote to go ahead and spend the money or was that to go out for bids for a grant?

Mr. Wiedmann – Without seeing the Ordinance, Peggy, I don't know what it was.

Mrs. Brickweg – Does anybody here remember?

Mr. Burkhardt – I think it was just to go out for bids. To apply for State Grants.

Mrs. Brickweg – We have not approved that yet, officially. One more thing I would throw in there before we even do that, I did have a couple questions that I was wondering from the Business and Industry standpoint. Is there, and I did want to get an answer, maybe you can check with JMA, is there something wrong with the pipes down there, are we having a problem that we have to upgrade them? I understand that we got the Grant and where the Grant money goes, I guess I'm trying to make my decision based on our finances, is there something wrong with those, how many businesses it would affect down there by upgrading? Do we foresee a lot of businesses coming in that we will have to make them bigger to help the industry?

Mr. Wiedmann – CWW and their portion of the project would be to upgrade the size of the lines and the upgrading of those lines would positively impact whatever else is going to be done on Spring Grove.

Mrs. Brickweg – So that would affect if we had any new industry down there for St. Bernard that will help us get more industry.

Mr. Wiedmann – It would upgrade one of those, one or possibly two or three because when we get down to Spring Grove then they will be talking putting in new storm and sanitary sewers on Spring Grove at a later date that will be an MSD project, the sizing of the water units down there would be an asset to the City's industry.

Bob Hausfeld, Vine St. – I'm a little confused on all that stuff about the \$200,000.00 there, I know there's \$45,000.00 for JMA, does that mean we're \$150,000.00 better off now that, we'll go back toward the \$700,000.00? I wasn't sure where it was coming from. Every little bit counts, when you figure in that and possibly going to Elmwood for a \$150,000.00, selling the rescue truck and everything else. It looks like we could slowly build that \$700,000.00. That was just the question.

Secondly, Mr. Zix, you made some comment about JMA has been a good boy or whatever, I don't have no doubt they do a good job for the City, somebody said they brought a million dollars in Grants in for us. Have we over the last 16 years maybe spent a million dollars on them, I don't know. It's fifty thousand for a little project down here, a million dollars would be easy to spend. My reason for bringing that up is, even if they are doing a good job for you, \$45,000.00 to engineer that project, shouldn't we, even if by law we don't have to get a second bid because it's for professional services, shouldn't we?

Mr. Schildmeyer, the Library down there, prime spot, I'm all for a Senior Citizen Home for these elderly people. I love taking care of them. That's a prime spot on Vine St. You take the street next to it, there's no reason why we can't close that off and include that in and that goes all the way back to Tower Ave. We could put a nice little office tower in there, three, four stories or whatever. I'm sure that if you found a developer and say hey, we'll give you the land. I can't believe the Library would have a problem giving us that property back. It's been five years, I'm sure they don't want bad publicity, they got Elmwood and Mr. Healthy and everybody else their taking their Libraries from. It might give them an out to give us our property back.

Last thing is, it really scares the (expletive deleted) out of me to think we're making progress on the Library, is that the kind of progress we're going to make on Nu – Maid down there? That's the future of our City and if the Library is making progress, I'm scared.

Mr. Zix – When you said something about Elmwood, what do you mean by that, that you're going to Elmwood?

Mr. Hausfeld – We talked about this at the Finance Committee. Elmwood need someone to provide their EMS services, they're shopping around for somebody. I was told that it is roughly around \$100,000.00, about \$40,000.00 to \$50,000.00 for payment from them and another \$100,000.00 for EMS billing. We're going out there anyway, let's take the money, let's try it for a year and see how it works. We talked about on Monday night selling the rescue truck. We spent \$250,000.00 I'm guessing around for that, by the time we loaded it up it was \$300,000.00. We should be able to get a little bit of money out of that. I hate to see anybody lose their job but dispatching, that was brought up. From what I understand the City of St. Bernard pays the County so much money a year for radios and this stuff. We're already paying something and correct me if I'm wrong, but I was told we already paying a fee to the County dispatching service but we don't use them. We could get up to 1800 calls a year for free cause we're already

paying for them and we could work out something for the difference. We spent \$112,000.00 on dispatchers last year. That's not counting when a Police officer had to sit behind the counter. It's just all these little things, \$150,000.00 there, \$50 - \$75,000.000 for the rescue truck, \$150,000.00 for Elmwood, \$100,000.00 for dispatchers, this stuff adds up and I've been to so many meetings where we're talking about this. It wouldn't take nothing to get this stuff in place. What are we waiting on? People are losing their jobs. We all talk about, don't want to see any of us cut, you know what, I don't want to lose my job, nobody here wants to lose their job, but this isn't about us, it's about the citizens of St. Bernard. Everybody I talked to lives here because of the services. You know what, you talk about the Library, 2.something million, that's a great project, but there is no income coming in from that and I'm sorry but some of the people you mentioned that are going to be using the Library is just why we can't afford to lose no Police officers in this town. You're going to bring them to town. My point is, it isn't about us the employees, it's about the citizens. It upsets me that we don't go to the citizens, and 14 mils is a lot and it may never go, but once we ask the citizens and they say no I don't want to pay 14 mils then we know we don't have a choice, we have to cut drastically, that's what the citizens have spoken. But there might be a chance they might say, yea, I'll pay the 14 mils, I love this place, it's a great place where you don't have to lock your doors all the time, your kids can walk around the streets. If we don't ask we won't know, and when we start cutting the services, I don't see property values raising, I see them going down, I see good people leaving this town, getting out as fast a possible because I had a kid, walking up Vine St. where I own my properties up there, crying, and I asked him, what's wrong. He had his shirt over his face. He pulled his shirt down, his face was covered in blood, he points down the street and there's two kids walking down the street, not even running away, they're walking down the street, I said what's wrong? He said they tried to steal my bike and when I wouldn't give it to them they punched me in my face as hard as they could. These kids didn't even run away, they walked, they were 3 doors away from the Police Station and they just moseyed down the street. They're not afraid. The good people of St. Bernard are going to leave this community.

Mr. Burkhardt – The next COW will be Jan. 27, 2005, 7:30p.m.

Motion by Mr. Zix, seconded by Mr. Burkhardt to adjourn. Motion carried. 7-0.