

**ST. BERNARD CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
NOVEMBER 20, 2008**

The regular meeting of the St. Bernard City council was held Thursday, November 20, 2008 in Council Chambers.

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

Roll call showed that six members were present: Mr. Tobergte, Mr. Peck, Mrs. Bedinghaus, Mrs. Brickweg, Mr. Meier and Mr. Zix.

Safety Director, Mr. Chatman – Once again I am honored to welcome to our City family a new Police Officer. Michael will be our newest Officer, he is joined tonight by his family. His wife Mindy, his dad, David and daughter, Brady.

Mr. Chatman swore the Oath of Office with Mr. Michael Potrafke. Council offered their congratulations.

Mrs. Brickweg made a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Mr. Tobergte seconded the motion. Council agreed 6-0.

**REPORTS OF CITY OFFICIALS**

MAYOR, Mr. Burkhardt – The Mayor's Monthly Court Report Receipts for October 2008: Mayor's court fines were \$3,565.50, and costs of \$288.00. Parking fines of \$621.00. Police Reports \$1.30. Mayor's Court Computerization of \$120.00 and Clerk of Court Computerization was \$400.00. Total to the City was \$4,995.80. State fees: Victims of Crime \$423.00 and General Revenue \$705.00. Indigent Driver's Alcohol Treatment Fund of \$22.50, Indigent Defense Support fund of \$75.00 and the Drug Law Enforcement Fund of \$52.50. Total to State was \$1,278.00. Total Disbursements were \$6,273.80.

Monday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> the Dept. Heads met for their monthly meeting. The meetings continue to be very productive and I am very impressed with how each department compliments each other.

This week the Post Disaster follow-up meeting was held at City Hall. Several good ideas were brought forward and after evaluation we will provide Council with our objectives, so that we are more prepared for any situation in the future.

Walt Moeller and Mike Wiedmann met with FEMA this week to assess our position and what specifically we need to do to receive refunds from the State since Hamilton County was classified as a disaster area. I will keep Council informed.

The final candidate for the police position is in the process of completing the required tests and should be ready to be sworn in at the next Council meeting.

After meeting with a few companies we have decided to have the City website upgraded by our current IT group, S & H Consultants. Since they were the original group that created the current version we wanted to give them the opportunity to bring us up to date. We are very comfortable with them and are confident they will exceed our expectations. Elaine is working to add pages for the Health Department and Mayor's Court. We would also

like to expand information on all the pages that currently exist like the Service Dept's schedules and current projects as well as the Recreation page to provide game schedules, field readiness and online registration. The CIC met last night and I am encouraged to see the amount of opportunity for growth from new business to expanding existing companies. I know that everyone may not be quite ready for the holidays but they will soon be upon us. I just wanted to let everyone know that the City's Christmas Celebration will be held on Saturday, December 20<sup>th</sup>. More details will be available in the next few weeks but I wanted everyone to mark your calendars now because I know how busy the holiday season can be.

AUDITOR, Mr. St. Clair – Before I get into my regular report I would like to mention that in last week's Valley Courier, they showed the end of October expenditures for the City a little over \$13.5 million. Actually, my report was that the City's expenditures at the end of October were \$10.7 million. That was a little correction for the Valley Courier report. The month of October reports for the City's investments and for the balances in our various bank accounts have been given to each Council member and the Treasurer.

Before Council tonight is Ordinance No. 61, 2008. This Ordinance provides for the transfer of \$13,000 from the General Fund Cash Account to the C-9 Trust Fund Cash Account. It also provides for additional appropriations: \$3,500 to temporary employees in the Tax Dept., \$1,000 to Civil Service Medical Exams, \$268 to Radio Equipment & Repair in the Police Dept., and \$15,150 to the C-9 Trust Fund Expense Line Item. This Ordinance also contains appropriation adjustments: \$51,000 from Police Wages with \$50,000 to Police Equipment and \$1,000 to Police Overtime; \$9,000 to Fireman Overtime with \$3,000 from Fire Dept. Furniture & Fixtures and \$6,000 from their Wellness Program; \$1,000 to Service Dept. overtime from Service Dept. Part-Time Employees; \$12,000 from Park Maintenance with \$1,000 to Building Maintenance at City Hall, \$1,000 to Building Maintenance Fire Dept. and \$10,000 to Landfill & Composting; \$3,500 to Foreman & Heavy Equipment Operator Wages from their Overtime Line Item; \$181,842.75 to Streets & Sewers from the Property Purchase Line Item; and \$10,000 to Police Department Health Plan Expenses from the Service Dept. Health Plan Expenses. All these items were discussed at the COW. One additional item on this Ordinance which I failed to mention at the COW is an appropriation adjustment of \$7,600 to the Retiree Premium Reimbursement Benefit from Employee Accumulated Sick Pay.

DIRECTOR OF LAW, Mrs. Kate Bedinghaus – Absent.

TREASURER, Mr. Sipe – No report.

SAFETY DIRECTOR, Mr. Chatman – No report.

SERVICE DIRECTOR, Mr. Schrand – (Read by Mr. Burkhardt) The Service Dept. has taken delivery on two important vehicles in the past three weeks. The packer, which already is in service and the dump truck which I hope we don't need too soon.

TAX COMMISSIONER, Mr. Geiser – (Read by Mr. Burkhardt) I am not able to attend this evening's meeting due to a family medical emergency. Before Council tonight is ordinance No. 63, 2008 as discussed at the COW. This Ordinance authorizes the purchase of the E-Filing module from the Baldwin Group, their Municipal Income Tax Software Division. As thoroughly discussed at the COW, this software will allow the citizens of St. Bernard to utilize an online calculation tool to prepare their taxes for St. Bernard. This system improves the accuracy of the tax returns that are prepared and will reduce the time it takes to input the volume of tax returns. All the communities I contacted who have been utilizing this system have given their recommendation to the system. I also urge passage of Ordinance No. 61, 2008 which will allow us to continue addressing the backlog of work and updating the records of the Tax Dept.

## **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

FINANCE, Mr. Zix – Before Council tonight is Ord. No. 62, 2008. This is the 2009 budget Ordinance. This is a financial plan that serves the City as an estimate of future cost for 2009. I would like to thank my fellow Finance Committee members, Cindi Bedinghaus and Don Tobergte, also the Treasurer Jamie Sipe and Auditor, Walt St. Clair and all the Dept. Heads and the Administration for their hard work to bring this budget ordinance to this point.

The Finance Committee started this process back in April, by preparing recommendations for Council to approve and submit to the Hamilton County Auditor's Office. Again the Committee came back in October and met with all Dept. Heads and Administration to review their proposals. After that we met and discussed every line item of the budget and either kept the Dept. Head's proposal or made changes – either choice was voted and majority ruled. The Finance Committee then came to Council with a balanced budget recommendation. At that time council reviewed and either kept the Finance Committee recommendation or made changes – both choices were voted and majority ruled. The Finance Committee kept to a tight timeline to get the budget to the floor with enough time to pass before the first of the year. Again, thanks to everyone for their cooperation in this process. The Finance Committee would like recommend passage of Ordinance No. 62, 2008.

SAFETY, Ms. Hausfeld – Absent.

SERVICE, Mr. Tobergte – The Service Dept. has asked me to inform our residents that there are a couple piles of logs at the New Maid property that are available to anyone that wants it for firewood. Just go down and pick it up.

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS, Mr. Meier – I would like to touch on a couple of things. As you may have seen in the Enquirer this week, the City of St. Bernard is receiving \$235,000.00 from the Neighborhood Stabilization Program. The exact date when we get that isn't known. It will probably be mid to late Spring sometime. There is a four year time window in which to use this money. Any profits or proceeds that we get from the sale of property or rental of property that was used to acquire with these funds would go back to the program. Monies that do go back to the program can

be reused by the City so it can go back and we can get reallocated that money. Long term what you would want to do is in that last year of the program, you'd want to exhaust those funds so that obviously if they go back you wouldn't get to reuse them. So if there's any use that would be a one time use or you wouldn't be recapturing that money in the short term, that's the year in which you would want to use that. Potentially we could turn that \$235,000.00, turn it over three times and get somewhere, depending on expenses, between \$750,000 to maybe \$900,000 total usage out of it. Over the few months we've been having some discussions about infill of property of new construction and what to do with some of the properties we have in the City. Some of the points that we had talked about, some properties would be best to be purchased and torn down, some can be rehabbed and used as rentals, potentially. Some could be rehabbed to the point where they're useable only until the time comes when we can acquire another lot and combine them into a larger lot for home building. As of right now, there is not enough. The feeling from Council is that Council doesn't want to spend money right now up front in order to build. We discussed it at the CIC meeting last night and again the feeling is, we don't want to spend money or build something on spec. I did talk with Ron Singleton this morning, with Singleton Homes. He called me first thing this morning asking me how the meeting was going and I explained to him that that's kind of where the CIC and Council is that they don't want to put the money out right now. What we did talk about last night was potentially using the property on Vine St. that had been Norm Miller's. It's a vacant store front, potentially using that more or less as a sale center. If a builder, a couple builders, a realtor wanted to have their information in there that they could put on display for people that are interested in building or buying here could be used there. If somebody has a business where they can provide services such as remodeling, that could be put in there as well. When I mentioned that to Ron, he came back to me and said, this is what I'd like you to take back to Council. He was very impressed with the community and the potential here and the reason behind what he wants to do is to more or less keep his crews busy through the winter. The proposal that he told me this morning to bring back to Council is this. On the lot on Tower where the Brickler property had been and torn down, what he'd like for us to consider is that if we were to deed that lot over to him he would build two homes on there at no cost to the City. He would use his own funds for the construction of those homes. He would use his own funds for the marketing and the sale of those homes and he said at the time of sale if there's a profit, all the profit would go back to the City. He's confident enough in the housing market, what he can do is if there's a loss on the property, he'll take 100% of the loss. So there really is not any risk to the City to do this. We wouldn't have to put up any money. The only reason we'd have to deed the lot over is obviously because obviously somebody is not going to want to put several hundred thousand dollars of their own money on to the lot that they don't own. We could take back the lien position as we did on other property so that we know upon the sale we would get our cost back. His thoughts were that if we were to divide that lot into two and the final lot price of \$25,000 to each of the home, upon sale the City would get that \$50,000 back. I told him I'd bring it to Council. I think that there is some thoughts on Council that they would like to open it up for other people. You know if we want to do that, if you want to open it up, if there's another builder or an individual that wants to do the same type of deal and think that they can do it, let's take

a look at what they have but I think it's a pretty good deal for us. It's not taking any money out of our pockets, no downside risk to us. If we make money on it the money comes to us. What he said was, I really want to show the City what I can do. I've been trying to sell him on St. Bernard for over a year and the reason for that is, not too much on new construction but on his potential for Bertus and Vine or potentially Nu Maid. So I've been trying to sell him on the City for over a year but when he actually came out and took a ride around he said it's not what I expected. He said you've got a lot of potential here. The site is good, the location, the price is right for this market coming in. I told him I'd bring it back to Council for consideration so if people would like when we get to Old Business, if we have a discussion on there I think that would probably be the appropriate place.

LAWS, CONTRACTS AND CLAIMS, Mr. Peck – No report.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY, Mrs. Brickweg – At last night's CIC meeting Al Kanters announced that he and Gerry Wiedmann are continuing to work with Graeter's to entice them to build their new factory on the Nu-Maid property. Al is also speaking with other businesses regarding the property in case Graeter's does not work out. They had a meeting today which went very well and we're waiting to hear back from them. I'd also like to announce that the Fischers Fish and Chicken, if everything goes right, will be opening the first of December. They are waiting on some plumbing permits.

At the last COW I reported that I met with ODOT regarding the City's logo for the new noise walls on I-75. We decided at that meeting to use the St. Bernard dog and possibly put the City name in the ribbon, similar to the City's crest. I have distributed a drawing sample I received from ODOT yesterday. I have to let ODOT know as soon as possible if this is approved by us. In the logo they tried to incorporate the City ribbon from the crest under the dog, but I think it makes the dog look like it is floating. I suggest we use the dog from the crest but have the name go straight under the dog and him sitting on top of the name. Please let me know your opinions as soon as you can.

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION, Mrs. Bedinghaus – There will be a meeting of the Highways and Transportation on Tues. Nov. 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 in Council Chambers. That is right before the COW. Next week being Thanksgiving week we're going to be having that on Tues. The topic of discussion will be the redesign of the Dial-A-Ride buses. The current plan is to involve both the St. Bernard and Roger Bacon art dept. There will be more forthcoming after the meeting.

Mrs. Brickweg – The COW report has been submitted to the Clerk.

#### **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE November 13, 2008**

#### **NEW OR REFERRED ITEMS:**

1. Approved the minutes of the November 6<sup>th</sup> council meeting.
2. CIC Executive Director, Al Kanters explained to council the "Ohio Main Street Program". Al stated that he feels this program will enable the city to take action and implement the plans we have. He is looking for people that want to work and not just attend meetings. Al sent in an letter of intent, along with the various

Al also announced that the CIC will be meeting on November 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM in Centennial Hall to go over a Business Plan. After the plan is approved by the CIC Board Al will provide council with the plan to approve so everyone can work together.

#### **REPORTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIALS:**

**Mayor, Bill Burkhardt:** Bill asked council their thoughts on the COW and Council Meeting schedule regarding the upcoming Holidays. After a short discussion the schedule will change for the following dates:

1. The COW for Thanksgiving week will be Tuesday November 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM.
2. The COW for Christmas week will be canceled unless issues are brought up in December that need to be addressed. If that happens this meeting will be re-scheduled.
3. The Council and COW meetings for January, 2009 will start a week late. Since there are five Thursdays in January Council will not meet on January 1<sup>st</sup> but will start the rotation the following Thursday. Council Jan. 8<sup>th</sup>, COW Jan. 15<sup>th</sup>, Council Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup> and COW Jan. 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Auditor, Walt St. Clair:** Walt requested the following appropriations be placed in ordinance:

1. \$13,000.00 from General Fund Cash Account to C9 Trust line item
2. \$1,000.00 from regular Police Dept. salary to Police Dept. Overtime
3. \$1,000.00 from Service Dept. part time employees to Service Dept. overtime
4. \$12,000.00 from Park Maintenance to \$1,000.00 in City Hall Maintenance, \$1,000.00 in Fire Dept. Maintenance and \$10,000.00 in Land Fill and Composting.
5. \$3,500 from Street Employee Overtime to Foreman and Heavy Equipment Operator.
6. \$10,000.00 from Service Dept. Employee Health to Police Dept. Employee Health
7. \$6,000.00 from Fire Dept. Wellness Program and \$3,000.00 from Fire Dept. Furniture and Fixtures to Fire Dept. Overtime
8. \$181,000.00 from Property Purchase to Streets and Sewers
9. \$3,500.00 additional appropriation to Tax Department Part Time Employees
10. \$1,000.00 additional appropriation to Civil Service Medial Exams
11. \$268.00 additional appropriation to Police Dept. Radio Equipment and Repair
12. \$15,150.00 additional appropriation to C-9 Trust Fund Expenses
13. \$50,000.00 from Regular Police Wages to Police Equipment Outlay

Walt informed council that the Valley Courier incorrectly reported the City's expenditures to date in their last newspaper. The City's expenditures were 13.5 million not 10.7 million. Walt will report this at the next Council meeting.

**Law Director, Kate Bedinghaus:** absent

**Safety Director, Rodney Chatman:** Rodney reported that the "Food for Fines Program" will start on Thanksgiving Day and end Christmas. This is the program when minor tickets, such as speeding are given the person can pay the city portion of the ticket in food and the food is then distributed to the needy.

**Service Director, Ray Schrand:** Ray reported that he will be purchasing a second Gator for the Service Department. It will cost around \$8,000.00 and there is money in the budget for it.

**Tax Commissioner, Ed Geiser:**

1. Ed reported that he talked with the Tax Commissioner of Blue Ash to learn the ways their city works on projections. They have a budget committee which looks at the state of the economy, statistical data and what companies declare on their estimates to help determine projects. Ed will continue to work on ways to improve projections.
2. Ed asked council their opinion on purchasing software to allow individual residents to file their income taxes online. The cost of the E-filing software through MITS (the City's Tax Software) would be \$11,500.00 for a one time purchase and \$2,000.00 a year for support. The hope is to draw more young people and to save the Tax Department time from having to input the information. Residents will still be required to provide a hard copy of their return to the city. Council voted 7 -0 to put on ordinance on the table at the next council meeting to purchase the software.
3. Ed requested an additional \$3,500.00 for part time employees so they can continue to input past years tax information. Council voted 6-1 (Cindi, no) to include this in Walt's appropriation ordinance.

**Treasurer, Jamie Sipe:** Jamie thanked the Finance Committee for all their hard work on the 2009 budget. He also reminded everyone that this budget is a suggestion and that everyone needs to work together to come up with the final budget.

**REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:**

**Laws, Contracts and & Claims, Mike Peck:** no report

**Public Improvements, Kevin Meier:** Kevin reported what it would cost for the city to pay Singleton Homes to build two homes on the City's Tower Avenue property. The cost of a ranch home would be \$148,900.00 (for a basement add \$10,000.00 and for a brick front add \$3,000.00). The cost of a two story, with basement and brick front would be \$176,000.00. Peggy stated that when the original idea of working with a home builder was brought up the city was just providing the land and the builder would pay for the price of the home. She is not in favor for the City to foot the bill for the entire project. Cindi, Don and Patty agreed with this. Peggy also stated that if the City is going to provide lots for builders to build on the City should offer those lots to local builders, such as Tim Hackney and Terry Chin. Don agreed with this.

**Business & Industry, Peggy Brickweg:**

1. Peggy reported that she met with ODOT regarding a city logo for new sound walls on I 75 which will be built with the highway expansion project. She provided council with samples and explained how it will need to be a simple rendition. Council decided to use the St. Bernard Dog which sits on top of the City crest with the City name below it. Peggy will check with ODOT to see if the ribbon with the City name, which is located beneath the crest can also be used.
2. Peggy asked Gerry to get with ODOT and set up a future COW so they can attend with their real estate agent and explain the various options the City has with the Fire Department building being listed as lost with the I 75 expansion project.

**Safety, Patty Hausfeld:** Patty and Safety Director, Rodney Chatman, discussed alternatives the City could do for Halloween. Patty was informed by many residents that they were discouraged with the amount of homes not giving out candy and with the amount of adults trick or treating. Rodney suggested that the City have a special program for resident children that would make them feel special. He suggested possibly having a special program the Saturday before Halloween on City Property for City residents. Patty

suggested a possible Halloween Festival. It was agreed that any program would be in addition to the regular Halloween candy distribution on Halloween night, where children go door to door.

**Highways & Transportation, Cindi Bedinghaus:** no report

**Service, Don Tobergte:** no report

**Finance, Greg Zix:** Greg went over the 2009 budget from the Finance Committee. Line items were discussed and some changes were made. Department Heads spoke regarding the Finance Committees recommendations and explained what the expenditures were for. Council voted 7-0 to place the 2009 budget on the table for the next COW meeting.

**Audience Participation:** none

**Ordinances and Resolutions for the next council meeting:**

1. Ordinance for additional appropriations and appropriation transfers
2. Ordinance to purchase tax software to allow E-Filing for residents
3. Ordinance for 2009 City Budget

Next Council Meeting: November 20<sup>th</sup> 7:30 P.M.

Next C.O.W. Meeting: November 25<sup>th</sup> 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Peggy Brickweg,  
President of Council Pro-Tem

**COMMUNICATIONS** – None.

**RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES**

Motion by Mrs. Brickweg, seconded by Mr. Peck to read this evenings' Resolutions and Ordinances by title only. Motion passed 6-0.

**ORDINANCE NO. 61, 2008. AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE AUDITOR TO TRANSFER FUNDS, TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS AND ADJUST CERTAIN APPROPRIATIONS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**

Motion by Mrs. Brickweg, seconded by Mrs. Bedinghaus to suspend with the second and third reading of Ordinance No. 61, 2008.

**REMARKS**

Mrs. Bedinghaus – Most of the dollars that are being funded within this Ordinance are not additional monies, they are transfers, but there is one item in here that is an additional funding which is for the temporary employees in the Tax Dept. and last week when we read it on Council as to whether to agree to have that money allocated for that, I had voted no on that. Since this is incorporated into this total Ordinance and most of these dollars are again not additional appropriations and I will be voting on this Ordinance but I just want the citizens to know that I was not in favor of putting extra dollars back into the temporaries in the Tax Dept.

The motion to suspend passed 6-0.

Motion by Mrs. Brickweg, seconded by Mr. Peck to adopt Ordinance No. 61, 2008 as read. Motion passed 6-0.

ORDINANCE NO. 62, 2008. AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE APPROPRIATION FOR EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF ST. BERNARD, STATE OF OHIO, DURING THE FISCAL YEAR 2009 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Mrs. Brickweg, seconded by Mrs. Bedinghaus to have Ordinance No. 62, 2008 take it's regular course.

## **REMARKS**

Mrs. Bedinghaus – Being a part of the Finance Committee I do want everybody to know that there were many additional appropriations that were put in here that we voted on and by the majority of Council as this was explained. It came back as a proposal to Council and the majority got to vote whether to put that into some of the appropriations that had been recommended by the Dept. Heads. I was not in agreement with most of those. There were a few that I put some additional appropriations but not to the tune of where now it came up to fourteen million dollars. Again, this is not a balanced budget, I am for a balanced budget. I don't think that we can hide the fact of some of the economic crisis that we're all hearing and I don't believe our City is in a bubble. I think that we are very vulnerable to that and I will not be voting on a budget of this size because I really believe that we have to watch what we're doing here in the City.

Mr. Tobergte – This being my first budget, I would like to make a few observations. Since I am a fiscal conservative I was extremely disappointed when the first proposed budget came in at spending well over 2 million dollars what was projected as our income. This would have cut our spendable reserve in half. The Finance committee asked the Dept. Heads to cut at least 5% from their budget.

One Dept. Head told me that we were just on a power trip, and the budget meetings were a joke because he would get what he asked for. After last week's marathon meeting, as we walked out, he told me - See, I told you the budget meetings were a waste of time. I totally disagree with another Dept. Head statement that the reserves are there to spend and I think we should spend them. As the tax levy runs out in about another year and our economy continues to head south, I feel that we need to conserve where possible.

Mr. Meier – Last week at the COW meeting we spent over five hours working on this. I think there's a lot of good effort put into this and because of that and the time people put in and their reasoning I'm going to be voting for this Ordinance tonight.

Mrs. Brickweg – We did have a meeting last week that did go five hours of discussing the budget and yes the vote went up and down, who wanted what, but I am a little disappointed in the whole thing and that's why I sent out an email today that I actually thought we could table this because I don't, even if the vote went 5-2, 4-3 whatever, if it goes 4-3 I don't feel comfortable with that. I think we really need to work together as a Council and come up with a happy medium for all of us. I'm just not comfortable having some

people just feeling like they're not even being listened to. That is why I was going to table it but as Mr. Zix pointed out it was better to put it on the table tonight so it could go its regular course which will still allow people to speak but I would like to suggest that Tuesday night we go back over and look at it again. Granted, things may not change, but I think if some people have a little more time to think that might have felt blind sided at the COW meeting with some of the changes that were made and have had some time to think, and I just think it would be better to work on it some more. I'd rather see us trying to be in a little more agreement than just pushing it through. That's why if its OK with everybody I'd like to put it on the COW agenda to talk about it some more. And on another point where I got a little confused and I think some of the citizens might be a little confused too, I missed some of the budget meetings because I was on vacation and when I came home I was told the budget was two million dollars over and I thought how could it go from where it was to two million over. It just didn't make any sense to me. One thing I think the citizens need to know is that part of the budget is the 1.5 million bond. OK, granted, yes, we owe that money but the way it has to be put in the budget it looks like we're spending 1.5 million dollars. Therefore if we carry that bond over it's going to say 1.5 million dollars next year, the year after, the year after which to then is the ten million dollars. No, it's 1.5. So when you're looking at the expenditures, the expenditures right now compared to projections are \$300,000 over. You're going to have people saying that they're almost 2 million dollars over but it's because of the way it has to be listed but unless that note is called in we will not be spending the 1.5 million dollars next year. In the budget is also the interest which is like \$68,000. Yes, we will be spending that because we have to pay it. I just think that just, I understand that has to be in there, but I think sometimes when people quote things it gets a little misleading just like I was totally misled. I thought how in the heck can a budget go up like that far in that quick a time. I just want the citizens to know that part of that money is a bond similar to what we did with Nu Maid, and similarly as we did with the swimming pool.

Mr. Zix – I would just like to thank Council for bringing this for it's first reading tonight and that's why the Finance committee worked diligently to get to this point so we can discuss it over the next three readings and the COW meetings in between there. I thank you for putting it up there on the table and continue on the right path. As I said before, the budget is a summary of intended expenditures along with proposals on how to meet them and they are just an estimated guess, not a guess, it's an estimated plan of future costs. Right now we're right around \$227,000 over our projected income. Right now the way the City stands today we would meet the income that we're having today, we would meet that budget and exceed that with our income. We're pretty darn close, we see a lot of things, a lot of our services that we provide cost a lot of money and that's what the City is made up of, "services", not as much material things but "services". I think Mrs. Brickweg is right we need to discuss so we're all on the same page and we need to continue it on and now we can work it through the three readings.

Mr. Sipe – As Mrs. Brickweg mentioned, I'm not sure exactly what the vote was on Council for the bond that we did but technically Council put 1.5 million dollars in next year's budget.

Mr. St. Clair – Just to let Council know, there were a couple of minor tweaks to the Ordinance that Mr. Zix transmitted through email to all the Council members. There were a couple of changes that were made at the COW that have been incorporated into the final budget Ordinance. Those corrections were made. Mainly it was in the salary line item for the members of Council and the Mayor’s Clerk and the HIP Inspector. Those were just a couple of minor adjustments. Actually the total comes out a little bit less than what we heard from Mr. Zix.

Phil Stegman, 19 Orchard – I just want to say that I was here last week for that meeting when the budget was being discussed. One thing too, that citizens need to hear, is that there are two sewer projects next year. That’s very important for the infrastructure of our City. That’s putting a strain on the finances. I applaud Council for trying to get that money down and there’s a lot of things that need to be done next year and the money has got to be in the budget for the infrastructure.

Mrs. Brickweg – Two other things that I forgot to say, another thing I’ve been hearing as the discussion of the budget has been going around town is the levy. The levy that will be due in 2010 and people are saying, well, you spend all this money, what are you going to do if the residents don’t pass the levy? The one thing, another thing to add is that a lot of money, well we’re spending money now, finally back on purchasing property, tearing down property, revitalization and turning our City around which hasn’t been done in a long time. Yes, you are right. As a person I am paying more taxes but I’m looking at the additional taxes that I’m paying are going right back into my City to fix it up which will increase the property value of my home which right now is probably the biggest investment I have thanks to the stock market. It’s like I think we need to keep reinvesting in the City and I believe and I could be proven wrong but if we continue to move the City forward and the residents see their money being spent in that way and they see how our city is getting better and their property values going up I think hopefully they would renew it so we can continue the redevelopment of our City. I think it’s very important that people realize that some of the other money in the budget is this, the moving forward and making our City better not just like in the past budgets where we just basically tried to get by and pay our bills. We’re actually starting to reinvest in ourselves.

The motion to have Ordinance take its regular course passed 6-0.

**ORDINANCE NO. 63, 2008. AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, ON BEHALF OF THE TAX DEPARTMENT, TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE BALDWIN GROUP (MUNICIPAL INCOME TAX SOLUTIONS) FOR E-FILING TAX SOLUTION SOFTWARE, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**

Motion by Mrs. Brickweg, seconded by Mr. Zix to suspend with the second and third reading of Ordinance No. 63, 2008.

**REMARKS**

Mrs. Brickweg – Just so the residents know, we did discuss this at length at the COW and this is software that is going to cost \$11,500 for E-Filing.

That's a one time purchase price and then \$2,000 a year support but the hopes of the Tax Commissioner is that this will free up a lot of his work load if residents use this. It will be basically just for individuals, not for Corporations. The information would be inputted and then it would be accurate in the system which would save some of the data entries but just so the residents know at the same time even if you do E-File you still have to mail in a paper copy of your tax return.

The motion to suspend passed 6-0.

Motion by Mrs. Brickweg, seconded by Mrs. Bedinghaus to adopt Ordinance No. 63, 2008 as read. Motion passed 6-0.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Meier – I think at this time I would like to open up the floor for discussion of whether or not the City would be interested in moving forward on getting some new housing built on that lot on Tower. If anybody has any question on the discussion I'd be happy to answer as best that I can.

Mrs. Bedinghaus – I am in agreement that we should move forward on looking for something on the property but I would like to see it opened up to other interested parties. Especially those that are in St. Bernard who want to have an opportunity to maybe go up there and take a look and see what they may want to propose. I'm all for going moving forward but I would like some other individuals if they have interest to get able to purchase too.

Mr. Burkhardt – I too would like to see something done up there but I think our best avenue to go this route is to put this in Gerry Wiedmann's hands and let him do his job. He's done it several other times. He knows the process and he can do it fair, he can put it out for bids. He can let other people bid on it but he'll be able to write up how this should be done. I think it needs to be in his hands at this point or otherwise we're just talking.

Mr. Tobergte – As I said from day one, I'm all in favor of rehabbing houses, rebuilding, whatever but I want to see a program put in place, not just say OK we're going to do this for this guy. We've been talking about this for say seven or eight months now and there's has never been an actual program developed. Originally it was going to be, we're going to get the land, the builder was going to do everything. Then once we're going to give them the land, we're going to pay for everything, now it's back to we're going to give them the land, the builder is going to pay everything. I'd like to see something in writing what the actual program is going to be and to me as I said from day one, I think you need to open it up to everyone, not just one single builder.

Mrs. Brickweg – I'm pretty much in agreement with what they all just said. I just think it should be opened up. Singleton, it looks like, they do have a nice home and that is part of being opened up to them but I would like to open it up to see if other people are interested especially to local people who are living here and build houses here so we make sure we include them too. And as the Mayor said it would be a good idea to have Gerry put together something just like he's done in the past. Maybe something similar to what

we did on Ross. I'm not sure how that would work but I do think we should open to others and include Singleton in it.

Mr. Peck – I think Mr. Meier's idea is a good one. I also think it's a good idea to use Mr. Miller's storefront as a kind of headquarters for local builders to put their ideas or products in place for people to come see what they do and what is available in St. Bernard. I would support that.

Mr. Zix – I think the idea is a good idea. I think some of the investing we have to do is reaching out with our properties and allowing the resources we have available to us to some of the builders and possibly taking those chances to give them that land and hopefully they can get some return on them.

Mr. Burkhardt – In order to keep this process moving, would Council vote to turn this over to Gerry Wiedmann and his office and let him progress on this so that we don't leave it die again.

Mr. Tobergte – Bill, has it been discussed for the CIC to do this too because of zones and stuff like that are we going to just have them.....

Mr. Burkhardt – I think we have more control over it if you want everyone to have a chance to bid on it. I think its better done through Gerry's office rather than the CIC. I think we have control over it.

Mr. Tobergte – Fine with me. I guess we should ask if its fine with Gerry.

Mr. Burkhardt – Gerry needs more work.

Mrs. Brickweg – Will we need a motion to turn this over to Gerry's office?

Mr. Burkhardt – Yes, to move this forward.

Motion by Mrs. Brickweg, seconded by Mrs. Bedinghaus to turn the process of developing empty lots into homes over to Mr. Wiedmann's Building Dept.

## **REMARKS**

Mrs. Brickweg – Gerry, I'm sure you can do this on your own but you might want to get with Kevin so he can at least give you all the information from the Singleton home people.

The motion to turn the process of developing empty lots into homes over to Mr. Wiedmann's Building Dept. passed 6-0.

Mrs. Bedinghaus – Mayor Burkhardt, I still have been having people asking me about the Centennial Hall and if that's going to be reopened for potential hall rental.

Mr. Burkhardt – Not at this time, I'm still looking at avenues to redesign City Hall and when I finally come to a decision I'll let everybody know.

## NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Tobergte – I'd like to be put on the COW agenda this Tuesday to discuss the City Manager position. Also we got a letter in our mail boxes about the Fire Dept. heating system failing and that Steve's already ordered the work to be done but do we have to transfer the money before since you already ordered the work? Do we need to say anything tonight?

Mr. St. Clair – It will be up to Council to do it tonight. I think it was an emergency situation so it's OK to go ahead, I'm sure Council would be open to appropriate the adjustments that he's asking for. I think if you want to slap together an Ordinance, I'm kind of against slapping together an Ordinance on the fly here but that would be Council's call.

Mr. Tobergte – I understand that but how could he be spending the money without the money being in that line item so if he already ordered it then would it incur an expense. I'm not an accountant, I have no.....

Mr. Burkhardt – I think in an emergency situation I think we have the ability to get that work taken care of but if it was extra appropriations I think we could do it emergency but I think if he's transferring funds and we have the money available I don't see why you couldn't wait and do it at the COW.

Mrs. Brickweg – I would like to be placed on the agenda of the COW to discuss changing the two year terms for Council members to four year terms. According to the City's charter the electors of St. Bernard can vote to change the term of council members to four years and, if the terms of office are changed, institute staggered terms of office. I have discussed this with other communities and asked the pros and cons of four year terms. The biggest plus to four year staggered terms is there is never a time when a complete new Council starts. This would break up having a "lame duck" Council and keep the City running, both during campaign season and the two months after elections. It also will help new members from all starting at the same time. The City could run the Ward seats during the Mayor election and the At-Large two years later. The reason I am suggesting this is because when residents vote for their Ward Council seat they are only voting for one person. I believe that some people may not come out to vote if it is just for one position. If they are also voting for the Mayor, Auditor and Law Director it would give them more reason to go out and vote. With At-Large Seats the residents get to vote for three candidates and the City Treasurer at the same time, so again voting for more than one position. I think by changing the terms it would provide the residents with a government that never becomes lame and inexperienced. This is just something I wanted to put out there because after comparing us to other communities, a lot of communities have gone to this. I'm going to be very honest and pretty much the residents know with elections every two years, you pretty much only get a really good year out of your people. During the next year or six months you're starting to think about the campaign already and then during the campaign season it just seems like everybody concentrates on that. I would just like us to consider doing this. There must have been some reason that this was already written in the Charter because it's right there in it so it must have been thought about in the past so I'd just like to put it out there and all we would have to do is basically have an Ordinance and then we wouldn't

be making the decision, the voters would be voting on this if that was the way they would like to do it. But I would just like us to discuss that.

Mr. Zix – I would like to ask Mrs. Brickweg a question. That was very interesting and I was wondering and did you say the voters would, we would put that up as a ballot issue?

Mrs. Brickweg – When I looked at the Charters I didn't get real specific but basically yes, I guess we would make an Ordinance and it would be a ballot issue and the voters would vote to say if we would have four year terms. But in the Charter it does say that if we go to four year terms they would be staggered, that's already in there so yes, the voters would make the decision, not us.

Mr. Sipe – Would that be at election time.

Mrs. Brickweg – That's why I wanted to discuss it at COW because I didn't want to have to spend the money to have a special election. I should have been smart enough to think about this before the Presidential election but I didn't think about that so I guess we can discuss that and see. I'm not sure how that would work. I had heard that there might be a school levy coming up or a renewal and maybe we'll have to go vote for that so if possible we could do it at that time if we wanted but I'd have to look more into that. But yes, it would be a special election or if we could connect it with an election. We could also even say when there is an election next fall you could even put it on there and then it wouldn't start until whenever we decide it would start and then if we didn't want to have a special election we could do it that way also.

## **AUDIENCE WISHING TO ADDRESS COUNCIL**

Mr. Powell's audience participation was inaudible. He was basically questioning Council about the use of Norm Miller's property. Mr. Meier commented the following to his questions.

Mr. Meier – The CIC purchased that property almost a year ago. It's been vacant now for almost a year. This is something that is going to be benefiting the City. I'd be OK, it would be up to the CIC how they do it, Council wouldn't have the call on that but it's been sitting there for a year. It hasn't been collecting any rent, I'd be OK if it continued to not collect any rent as long as we got some good use out of it. If it were to be a place, and we keep talking about marketing the City, there was a really good marketing job down in Over-The-Rhine, down in the Gateway Quarter, at the corner of Twelfth and Vine, you can go there, they have an office and there's a big white Q on it. The Q is for the Quarter. In that area there's about three different developers that are working on various condo projects down there. The marketing group is in that office. All those developers, they have their own office but they also have that joint community office there at the same time. I think the funding for that comes from 3 C – D C. Obviously we don't have access to that but it's really just a matter of making the space available and if we could have, you know maybe there's some builders who would be interested in building here, they could put their information there. If we got realtors who are working in this area who wanted to put their

listings there and have access to it. If we have people who remodel, I know we have several of those here in the City, if they wanted to put their information there, if we have a central place that people can come to. Not only that but if we had information on vacant retail space whether for sale or for rent, we could have one central place where people can go to and as I was saying, it's not Council's call on whether or not you would want to rent it or not but I can see where we can get, if we did it correctly, we could get enough use out of it where we could justify not collecting the rent that we have already not been collecting.

Charlie Powell – Inaudible

Mr. Meier - This was an idea that was thrown out near the end of the meeting last night. Again, it's just an idea, it would have to be flexed out on how it would be done. There was very, very preliminary discussion on it last night. Not into any kind of debt or detail at all. It's more or less just an idea that needs to be worked on but I think it's an idea that has some merit.

Charlie Powell – Inaudible

Mr. Meier – Again, I think that is part of the details that will have to be worked out, but obviously if you have St. Bernard people they're already paying taxes. My own personal opinion is that if you were going to charge anything it would be nominal because I can see where the benefit to the City would be greater than any rent that you would collect from it.

Charlie Powell – Inaudible.

Mr. Meier – Again, that is a question that would be directed to the CIC. The building is ready to go. It's been remodeled, it's ready to go.

Charlie Powell – Inaudible.

Mr. Meier – Very, very preliminary ideas. Good questions and I'd invite you to come to the next CIC meeting and ask those questions because that was really the place that you could get some good answers.

Motion by Mrs. Brickweg, seconded by Mr. Tobergte to excuse our absent member. Motion passed 6-0.

Mrs. Brickweg – The next COW meeting will Tuesday, November 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 due to it being Thanksgiving week.

Motion by Mr. Zix, seconded by Mr. Meier to adjourn. Motion passed 6-0.