

The December 13, 2005 meeting of the Newtown Village Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor John Hammon, who led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**Councilmembers Present:** Doug Evans                      Debbie McCarthy  
   Tracy Hueber                      Ken Pulskamp  
   Mark Kobasuk                      Greg Thomas

**Mayor:** John Hammon

**Assistant to the Mayor:** David Krings

**Solicitor:** Doug Miller

**Fiscal Officer:** Keri Everett

**Hamilton County Development Company:**

- **CRA (Community Reinvestment Area):** Catherine Fitzgerald and Drew Barnhorst presented a draft on a CRA agreement and discussed tentative boundaries for the Village of Newtown. Guidelines and current legislation were discussed for the Community Reinvestment Area. The purpose of a CRA is to encourage re-hab and new construction or try to finance infrastructure associated perhaps with new residential.
- **TIF's (Tax Increment Financing):** New legislation was enacted in June 2005, Ms. Fitzgerald presented a copy of guidelines for Tax Increment Financing Incentive Districts. This program covers less than 300 acres or less. The village engineer has to certify that the existing infrastructure is not adequate to meet the development. The level of incremental increase in tax has to be less than 75% or up to ten years without schoolboard approval. The issue with "Tax Increment Financing Incentive Districts" is the incremental increase going to be large enough for debt service coverage and for the cost of issuing the bonds. It's really a matter of are you trying to pay for public infrastructure or are you trying to encourage new residential and re-hab of existing residential properties, as well as investment in commercial properties which is included in the CRA.

**Ms. Fitzgerald:** Where you're entering into an agreement to grant a CRA tax abatement, the State of Ohio requires an application fee of \$750.00 for a commercial CRA. Drew just worked on drafting a CRA for Columbia Township and they're assessing \$1,500 in agreement for commercial to cover their cost and obviously to remit the \$750.00 to the State of Ohio. Generally, your own guidelines would list what the local fee would be.

**Mr. Pulskamp:** So you're saying Columbia is doing \$750.00 for commercial on top of the \$750.00? What are they doing for residential?

**Ms. Fitzgerald:** That is correct. There is no fee for residential because that is not a separate agreement that has to be filed with the State of Ohio.

**Mayor Hammon:** The document is for you to review, these are some of the things we have talked about. Catherine, Drew, Doug and I had a meeting and discussed some issues Council had expressed and asked them to come back with some additional changes. I think it's pretty much what talked about a month or so ago. Read it over, if you want any changes I would ask that come through me so I can sit down and talk.

**Randy Smith:** Pinehurst Drive, Newtown. I am also the Vice President for the Forest Hills School District; although I don't represent them tonight. A few meetings ago, Doug had asked me a few questions about the Enterprise Zone.

- **Enterprise Zone/CRA:** I did a little research and found out that you all are already a participant. I don't want to confuse the issue because this is something different. If you'll review the handout, they list Active Projects within the Enterprise Zone and Newtown has six existing. The map shows what those areas are and there is a description of the program. Doug had asked if the school board supported that and in general yes, if the school board does support these type of programs. I believe if the CRA is a 50% or less abatement, the school board doesn't have any involvement anyway, it's just done. In general, I would expect the school board would support these, especially the residential. I don't think there is a big issue there; quite frankly there is not a lot of money. I have talked to our Treasurer, Rick Toepfer and he mentioned if it is a large commercial situation that represents a lot more dollars, then there is the opportunity for the school board to negotiate. Like I said, I would expect that Forest Hills would certainly cooperate. I do need to find out, we took 2.4 million dollars worth of cuts this year in our budget. Rick Toepfer is looking for every dollar he can find at this point. That's a summary on this, if you have any questions, I am not an expert, but I did want to follow-up from an earlier meeting.
- **Forest Hills School Board Levy:** I did want to report back to Council that as suspected, the school board will have a Levy on the ballot May, 2006. Assuming it passes, we'll start collecting in January 2007. We don't know what the millage will be yet, we're still waiting to get data back from the state. Although, we expect to back at our next meeting a recommendation and I would expect a decision on that probably this month. Nobody looks forward to a tax levy, but we're in a situation where it is needed.
- **Forest Hills School District:** We just received some more data on the efficiency of the Forest Hills School District. When it comes to administration, we just moved into dead last place in the county; meaning we spend the least amount of money as a percent of our budget on administration and that's where you want to be. We just moved into first place on the percent of money we spend on students on education. I bring this up just to assure this group and quite frankly, the community that Forest Hills is doing an outstanding job of managing the money. For five years in a row now, we have received an excellent rating from the State of Ohio. I think there are only forty-six school districts in the State of Ohio, out of seven hundred and some odd that have done that. I'm proud of what the school district is doing, the administration; quite frankly, the job the kids are doing. At some point, I will come back to go over a presentation a little bit more in depth on what the school district is doing and the budget.

**Mr. Evans:** Randy, with the evaluation of our property constantly going up, don't you guys benefit from that?

**Mr. Smith:** No! Matter of fact, I have an article coming out in the Journal here in a few weeks to try and answer that. Thanks to Housebill 920, enacted in 1976, when inflation was rampant and school districts were getting windfalls; which they probably didn't deserve. An amendment to the constitution was passed, such that when a Levy is passed, now we're talking about the public school districts get money from the state and local. But now we're only talking about local percentages. I think it's about two-thirds or one-third state, when I come back for the presentation, I'll correct that if those amounts are wrong. Because of this law 920, the way it works is the public school districts, I believe are the only entity that this applies to. When a Levy is passed, I can't remember whether it is when it takes effect or when it's voted in, but it's at the very beginning. The amount of money a school district receives is fixed, such that even if property values go up, what they will do is turn the millage down. You'll see "voted millage" and then you'll see "effective millage." As reappraisals occur, we still get the same amount of money that we do as time goes on. Whatever amount was passed, that money is fixed. Matter of fact, we actually get a little less, something called phantom revenue. There is a fluke in the formula, the way the state figures it up and as appraisals go up, it has something to do with the inside millage and the way it's calculated. The money actually declines ever so slightly, three or four percent. Unlike most government entities, let's say sales tax for example, as people spend more the state gets more. As property values here, I think you get the benefit of increased property value. You don't get the benefit of increased property value?

**Mayor Hammon:** We do not, the fire district doesn't either. We get new building, we don't get the increased value of the Levy. That's the reason it was important, they tell you how much you're going get and that's what you're going to get no matter where it goes, what the values are. That's what you're locked to.

**Mr. Smith:** For example, Income Tax, as salaries go up with inflation and you have a percent, your income increases. Unfortunately, there is no inflation component for school districts and that's why you hear about school districts coming back time after time after time. We had one four years ago, and why are we coming back? It's not because we're adding programs. Matter of fact, the plan right now for this Levy doesn't add anything additional. No additional programs, no additional anything. All it does is keep us where we were.

#### **Retirement of Sergeant Martin "Marty" J. Stewart:**

Police Chief Daryl Zornes recognized Sergeant Martin J. Stewart for his twenty-six years of faithful and dedicated service to the Village of Newtown Police Division and to the citizens of the Village of Newtown. Colonel Zornes congratulated Sgt. Stewart on his retirement, effective December 16, 2005. Sergeant Stewart was presented him with a commemorative plaque.

Mayor Hammon congratulated Sgt. Stewart and presented him with a gift from the Village and Council. Mayor Hammon thanked Sgt. Stewart for his many years of service and wished him well in his retirement.

Sergeant Stewart thanked everyone and a special thanks to the Police Department. He also acknowledged his family for their support over the years.

#### **Assistant to the Mayor David Krings:**

- **Police Clerk and Receptionist-Secretary Position:** Keri, Tracy, Daryl and I make up this committee. Upon review a few changes have been made. Tracy has talked to Fairfax and a few other communities regarding the use of credit cards. This would be a convenient service to our residents and in general make the whole operation more efficient. Keri has made the arrangements with the bank and this process is now in effect. In observing the need for these positions, it is clear that the Fiscal Officer has many conflicts are preventing her from performing her own duties. It's important that somebody greets and assists the public when they visit Town Hall to conduct business with their local government. Having Becky here has been a good thing, but the need for a permanent position and providing these services is very important for the Village.
- We also observed our professional police officers and are proud of the quality of the police force serving this village. Village council and the mayor deserve a lot of credit for supporting the development of the police force. There are a few concerns and one is that police officers are entering data into the police data system and then that same data is then manually re-entered into the county system and much of these data ultimately transfer to state and federal systems. We have considered systems from Fairfax, Lockland and Hamilton County, as well as other jurisdictions; each of those systems while differing, have strong emotional support from the people that are using them. There are systems that relate to the courts and we've done some subsequent review and there is a reason why it's called "Mayor's Court," the Mayor manages that court. There are systems out there now that will eliminate this duplicate data entry. Regardless of what system is used, it should be one that a police officer could write a ticket and with the possible exception of a testimony in a court situation never see that ticket again. We suggest that there would be a system where data entry is done once, not multiple times and carried through with the whole system. The county is now working on a system that should be available shortly where the data is actually entered in the police car and then picked up through the police records, courts and whatever. That should be strongly considered. Again, it's the Mayor's purgative to implement that system or some other system. The level of compensation for any proposed systems would require a review of both the internal compensation practices and comparable positions in the area. Keri has done some of that and I have no reason to believe that her review is anything but accurate. As I understand, Keri has put money in the budget proposal for these positions that you are about to vote on and I would strongly recommend that you do so. The committee did recommend a professional review be done of the compensation practices in general for the village. I know a few years ago some work was done and every few years you should have somebody take a good look at that anyway to make sure you have both internal and external equity.

- **Recommendations:**

- 1) Initiate a system, which relieves police officers of clerical duties associated with issuance of citations. The goals should be made clear that the expected system not only serve the police and clerk functions, but it integrates seamlessly with the financial systems of the village.
- 2) Regardless whether you call the position a Village Clerk, Mayor's Court Clerk/Police Clerk, you need a position to serve that function and we recommend you create such a position. Keri and Daryl have presented a list of duties that show there is much work to be done. There is plenty of work for that position.
- 3) We recommend the Receptionist/Secretary position be a full-time position, be developed and approved. This person is a very good investment for the village, greeting visitors and assisting those with business needs, answering the phones; regardless whether they are busy every second of the day. I recommend it be full-time, that is the face of this village and I strongly recommend that you create both positions.
- 4) Contract for a professional review of the employee compensation practices for the village. We are not suggesting that you hold up your action on these positions pending this study; but is something you should get in the habit of doing every four or five years.
- 5) The cost of these positions should at least in part, if not totally be offset by the amount collected in Mayor's Court for court costs and the local share of fines and penalties. Doug Miller has already initiated the work to review that, Doug do you want to take a minute and update them on this?

**Mr. Miller:** Actually, the court sets the payout. We received suggestions from the police officers and reviewed them with the magistrate. He doesn't have he problem with them, so we expect to institute those as of the first of the year.

**Mr. Evans:** So, are you going to be raising what you currently have?

**Mr. Miller:** Raising the payout. For instance, payout on a speeding ticket is one-dollar per mile per hour over the speed limit; which is ridiculously low compared to everyone else. Payout fines will be increasing. We've never looked at Mayor's Court for revenue, strictly for fines.

**Mr. Evans:** Adding two positions with our budget is not so good, are you saying raising these fines will offset the cost for these positions?

**Ms. Hueber:** He's just merely saying by us now bringing up our court costs will compensate for some of the income for the positions. Both of these positions will benefit the village. One will allow the police officers more time to do their job and allows Keri more time do her job.

**Mayor Hammon:** Our officers are tied up too much in paper work and we can get a lower paid individual to do the paperwork aspect. We talked about receptionist out here, Doug (Evans), you have talked about tax collection, that's the one thing Keri has not been able to focus on. We need to get these duties distributed out away from Keri to allow her to do her job. It's not really to raise money, but I think the payback will benefit us.

**Mrs. McCarthy:** Well how long is this going to drag out before we hire for those positions?

**Mayor Hammon:** This is holiday season, not much is going to go for a couple of weeks. I think we can act quickly but we have to set the level of compensation we want before we actually talk to people about the positions.

**Mr. Pulskamp:** Are we putting the cart before the horse by hiring before we study our efficiency? Do we really need this second person or should it be a part-time position?

**Mr. Krings:** The Village Clerk position needs to be filled right now. Right now where everybody else is having their health insurance go up, this village is going to enjoy about a \$30,000 annual savings from health insurance. This would be do to the Assistant to the Mayor having time to work on it and your Fiscal Officer didn't. I can't tell you what opportunities you are missing because you have her doing non-Fiscal Officer duties.

**Mr. Pulskamp:** In the past, we had a full-time Clerk/Secretary handle all collections, Mayor's Court and all that, all in one position. Why are we now looking at two positions

**Mr. Krings:** I think you have to question whether they really were being handled? You have to question whether or not there is a backlog and whether or not things are getting done efficiently and effectively with the current staffing. I seriously question that and I don't mean it as any kind of a slam at any of the people currently involved. I think it's just the overall workload.

**Mayor Hammon:** Some tasks have been shifted to the Financial Officer and no one has ever been an aggressive tax administrator since Dennis Elliot and that's a void that we need to fill. What you have to understand we're actually expanding what we're telling these two people to do and do business a little differently.

**Mr. Evans:** I agree someone needs to be here to help Keri and greet people, my biggest thing is who will be the boss and job description. I think that needs to be in place first, personally I'd vote yes tonight because I think we need some help here.

**Ms. Hueber:** I'd rather two people in here because they will find the work. I know the police department can utilize a clerk exactly what they have in Fairfax to free up the police so they can do their job. If these positions start out at 30-35 hours a week, they can move up if needed. I know there is work to be done and it would help Keri do her work efficiently. I think it wouldn't be too much for this village to have three administrative people.

**Mayor Hammon:** Keri has basically had to act as an office manager, taking care of Dick's P.C., phone line, etc.

**Mr. Pulskamp:** I have no problem right now hiring this position as a full-time position. I just can't see hiring two full-time people right away.

**Ms. Hueber:** We've been looking into it, we do need it. You haven't sat in that police department, you don't know what all Keri does, you haven't sat and seen what Becky's done. You don't know everything that comes out of there.

**Mayor Hammon:** Fact is thirty-two hours each equals one and a half people. I really believe there's forty hours for each position.

**Mr. Evans:** Whose system are we going to use for the police to enter their data?

**Mayor Hammon:** We've not addressed that entirely, there are some other issues to resolve. If this is what we're going to do, we need to get the ball rolling and focusing on that.

**Mr. Krings:** I think that's fair and I'll also say that I think the choice of the data processing systems you do use is the Mayor's choice. I know the Mayor has done a lot of review of this. I think the system here has not been fully implemented but I believe you're aware of what it has done and what it hasn't. I think at this point we need to trust the Mayor's judgment on exactly how that's going to be done I believe on the law that is his responsibility. The committee and I will be happy to work with him to the extent he wants us to work with him.

**Mr. Kobasuk:** Seems to me, we had a committee look at this and we have the money. Why don't we just move on?

**Mrs. McCarthy:** I don't understand why it's taking so long. Why does everything always take so long?

**Ms. Hueber:** Now the complete study has taken place, now we know we have the facts. Before we didn't have the facts and now we have a recommendation from David and the committee to hire two people.

**Mr. Krings:** We would expect all three positions train in each others job so people can take vacations and such so if somebody isn't here the whole village doesn't come to a stop.

**Ms. Hueber:** Everybody should be cross-trained, to the legal point that they can, as long as the day to day process. We need to get the go ahead to act on looking into these positions.

**Mayor Hammon:** We'll have to change the salary ordinance and create the positions.

**Mr. Pulskamp:** Maybe we need to have this efficiency study done before we hire two people.

**Mayor Hammon:** Do what you want, no one else does it that way. This role has changed in three years, we can stay status quo or we can push forward. I think it is time to push forward. We've looked at it and respect the recommendation. There is so much not being done. I'll write out descriptions for the positions during the holidays and we'll come back and hatch it out at that point in time.

#### **Assistant to the Mayor David Krings:**

- Under the Mayor's direction, we invested the provision of the 125 plan for the employees. David Rinderle, Center from Local Government brought this up when he was here. This plan gives an opportunity for the employees to pay on a pre-tax basis, i.e. 1) anything that is medically deductible, which means you'll save whatever your tax rate is and 2) employees that have childcare expenses can save by participating in a program like this. Employees were enthusiastic about this benefit. There is a \$500 initial set-up and the Mayor suggested that the Village Council would consider picking up the \$500 one-time set-up fee. That's for both the childcare and the health savings plan. I strongly recommend you do this, it's a great benefit to the employees at a minimal cost to the Village. I suggest you go one step further and open it up to the part-time employees as well. There is no additional cost to the Village. The incremental cost would be picked up by the actual employees. Again, it's a retention mechanism for both the full-time and the part-timers, it's a great benefit.

**Ms. Hueber:** Is this something we have to act on tonight since it's getting so late?

**Mr. Krings:** I think you should act on it.

**Mr. Miller:** You have to have a plan to adopt.

**Mr. Krings:** It's an option to the plan they already adopted Doug.

**Mr. Miller:** You mean the health insurance? There's got to be something to adopt.

**Mr. Krings:** This would start in January, the way it works on the medical side, the employees would have to estimate what their expenses would be for the full year and some paperwork would need to be done in order to get that set up on the medical side. On the childcare side, it's the weekly amount. There is really no risk on the childcare side to the village. The risk on the medical side is if somebody were to come in the first of January and put in a bill for whatever the maximum might be, say \$5,000, the village would have to pay that. Then if that employee were to leave, there would be no way to recover. The likelihood of that happening is little, but I need to make clear to you that there is that possibility. The village council would need to decide what level you would want the maximum risk to be. It could be any number, the Mayor and I talked about \$5,000. \$3,000 was the most common.

**Mr. Miller:** The employee's contribution to the health insurance will automatically be deducted pre-tax. There has to be something that says you agree to abide whatever the rules are. You can go ahead and say "yes, we agree to get in." There may be a specific Resolution to pass and you can come back and do that. You have to tell them some time in December how much you want withheld from your paycheck each pay period for the following year. You can only change that under certain circumstances. If you say to withhold \$1,000 by withholding \$50 every pay period, then that will happen whether you spend the \$1,000 or not. If you don't spend it then you lose the money.

**Mr. Krings:** You have thirty days to submit the bills, but the bills still have to be from the current year.

**Mr. Miller:** They did extend the types of expenses you could use as a medical expense. Now, you can deduct aspirin, cough medicine, etc, so if at the end of the year you have \$100 you haven't spent, you can go buy Nyquil, etc. Typically to do this, the employees would have to have their forms in by now, before the end of the year.

**Mayor Hammon:** I'd make the maximum \$3,000 and let's go with it.

#### **Councilmember Tracy Hueber:**

- I have not received any information from anyone at this table for the Newsletter. I need it by the end of December.
- I will not be in town January 1<sup>st</sup> for the swearing-in, I will return January 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Ms. Hueber made a motion to lift Spencer Bischoff's probation retroactive to November 12, 2005. He has gone beyond his probation. He is now considered a full-time Newtown employee. Mr. Thomas seconded the motion. All Aye. Motion Carried.**

**Ms. Hueber made a motion to hire Jeff Braun as a full-time employee, effective 12/16/2005, upon the retirement of Marty Stewart. Mrs. McCarthy seconded the motion. All Aye. Motion Carried.**

**Ms. Hueber made a motion to give Marty Stewart his badge upon his retirement. Mr. Pulskamp seconded the motion. All Aye. Motion Carried.**

- I would like for Council to approve three extra vacation days that Chief Zornes has left over which exceed his carryover for 2006.

**Mayor Hammon:** Personnel practices say "five," he wants to carry eight.

**Ms. Hueber:** Is this something you guys mind approving?

**Mrs. McCarthy:** Why do we have to approve them?

**Mr. Pulskamp:** John, if the personnel practices say five days?

**Mayor Hammon:** Ken, normally I would kind of be against this, but with Daryl's surgery, I think we need to do it this time.

**Ms. Hueber made a motion to approve Daryl Zornes three days extended carryover vacation into the 2006 year. Mr. Kobasuk seconded the motion. All Aye. Motion Carried.**

Ms. Hueber read a letter from the LMFD stating that their Board of Trustees can find no solution in relaxing the financial obligation of the Village of Newtown for the 2006 Budget Year. The LMFD will run a district-wide Fire Levy at the earliest time in 2006. This will be in one-year advance of the originally agreed upon timetable. They have about as much carryover as we do so they are going to put it in the budget.

**Mayor Hammon:** Mark, you represented us at the Board Meeting, do you have any comments?

**Mr. Kobasuk:** No, I expected that to be the result. They indicated they didn't seem to have any money when they were here before. I'm disappointed obviously, we had a big shortfall. I hope they are going to put the Levy on in May. Do you think we can do anything Mayor? I don't see any alternative but to go on and have the district-wide Levy.

**Ms. Hueber:** They are putting the Levy on in May.

**Mayor Hammon:** They did honor our request and looked at appropriations and found out what poor shape the district is in financially. It is really tight for them because their anticipated revenue is way down this year. They have to do something across the district, not just the Newtown's \$116,000, it's \$30,000-40,000 they are short from the contract. They are running in the red. The district is in a tough situation because in 2006, they're going to go against Forest Hills and in 2007, they'll go against Mariemont. We have two major school districts and the fire district is going to go for the Levy the next two years. It's going to take a good sales pitch for the residents of the district to get it passed.

**Ms. Hueber:** We can help work the polls and we can help push it individually.

**Mr. Kobasuk:** Set up a committee outside of council to coordinate those efforts.

Council thanked Greg Thomas for his twelve years of service to the Village of Newtown.

**Mr. Pulskamp made a motion for the Village to pay up to \$1,000 to join in the 125 Plan for Healthcare/Childcare program, as an additional benefit with our health insurance. With a \$3,000 maximum contribution payout for full-time employees authorizing the Mayor and Fiscal Officer Everett. Ms. Hueber seconded the motion. All Aye. Motion Carried.**

**Mr. Pulskamp made a motion to suspend the rules. Ms. Hueber seconded the motion.**

**Mr. Pulskamp made a motion to adopt RESOLUTION 27-2005 A RESOLUTION ADOPTING TEMPORARY APPROPRIATIONS FOR 2006, with noted changes as the Capital Improvement Park Fund being taken to zero and Property Purchase taken down to \$300,000. Ms. Hueber seconded the motion. Ms. Hueber-Yes, Mr. Pulskamp-Yes, Mr. Evans-Yes, Mr. Kobasuk-Yes, Mr. Thomas-Yes, Mrs. McCarthy-Yes. Motion Carried.**

**Mayor Hammon:** We will have the swearing-in ceremony, January 1, 2006 at 12:00 Noon at our first Council Meeting. I'll have to swear-in Tracy at our first meeting because she'll be out of town.

**Mayor Hammon:** In 2004 we agreed to pay Hamilton County Storm District for a few items and we recently received an invoice for \$16,125.00.

**Councilmember Doug Evans:**

**Mr. Evans made a motion to accept the Checklist, dated 12/13/2005 with the addition of a check to Hamilton County Storm District in the amount of \$16,125.00. Ms. Hueber seconded the motion. All Aye. Motion Carried.**

**Mr. Evans made a motion to suspend the rules. Ms. Hueber seconded the motion.**

**Mr. Evans made a motion to adopt RESOLUTION 28-2005 A RESOLUTION APPROVING A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION AND RECONCILING THE BUDGET AND AMENDING APPROPRIATIONS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2005 RETROACTIVE TO OCTOBER 1, 2005 DISPENSING WITH THE SECOND AND THIRD READING AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Mr. Pulskamp seconded the motion. Ms. Hueber-Yes, Mr. Pulskamp-Yes, Mr. Evans-Yes, Mr. Kobasuk-Yes, Mr. Thomas-Yes, Mrs. McCarthy-Yes. Motion Carried.**

**Mayor Hammon:**

- 1) **Building Commissioner Contract:** Mike Cornette, Building Commissioner has asked for the hours to go from ten to eight, guaranteed minimum hours per week. He has asked for a four percent increase which would be \$26,760.00. This expires at the end of year so I'd like to have someone approve it.

**Mr. Evans made a motion to enter into a contract agreement with Michael L. Cornette from January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006 and devote no less than an average of eight hours per week. The annual salary is \$26,760.00. Mr. Kobasuk seconded the motion.**

**Discussion:**

**Ms. Hueber:** I don't have a problem with the contract, I have a problem that we give everybody else in the Village three percent, so why are we giving him four percent?

**Mayor Hammon:** I can go back and ask him, but that's what he asked for. Most people say he is professional underpaid now, we get him at a bargain.

**Mr. Miller:** With it being an independent contractor, you can look at it as it's a whole percent raise. It's a dollar amount you're agreeing to compensate this person for their services. I think Mike always applied some percentage to come up with what he thought was a fair number for his services.

**All Aye. Motion Carried.**

**Councilmember Hueber left meeting at 9:35 p.m.**

**Councilmember Mark Kobasuk:**

- For the record, I want to commend the Civic League for the Hayride. I thought it was a great event, Tom and Carolyn Busse and Marty Stewart and others. My family certainly enjoyed it, very nice activity.
- Debbie and I talked about parks and we propose we remove the volleyball posts and horseshoe pits at Short Park, they are not being used.
- Debbie and I thought the best use of the field would be to rent it out to Anderson Township Little League, get some Newtown kids involved and it would bring in some revenue.

**Mayor Hammon:** What happened to Miami Valley Christian?

**Mr. Kobasuk:** Debbie and I thought we'd get more money and ATLL will maintain the field more or less.

**Mayor Hammon:** If we haven't talked to try to negotiate with them, how do we know we're making more money?

**Mr. Kobasuk:** I got the impression from Miami Valley that they didn't have a lot of money to spend on the field and ATLL would keep up the field. I'll talk to both of them and see, but I suspect ATLL would give Newtown kids more of an opportunity to participate. That was our recommendation.

**Mr. Pulskamp:** So we're going to rent out both of our baseball fields, so nothing would be available to our residents. They would have sole right to them with the contracts.

**Mr. Kobasuk:** We could draft the contract and keep the time limited to when they need it and leave it open for other residents. Hopefully a lot of Newtown kids would benefit too. I don't think they'll be using the fields all of the time.

**Mr. Pulskamp:** We've already got the one rented out to them, that was one of the discussions at this table. Do we want to commit both fields so there is nothing open if residents want to go down there and do anything?

**Mr. Kobasuk:** We could draft something in their contract to when they have use of it and when they would need it for their games. There will be times on other days when it's not going to be used by them and the residents could use the field.

**Mayor Hammon:** There are some problems with that Mark. Miami Valley is an employer who pays income tax to us and they are going to need a field. If we give it to ATLL and put a fence up, that would restricts use of that field to the Little League. I do kind of agree with Ken to leave that field open for play for whoever comes in, but I am concerned with the school part of it is that's going to restrict their use of the field too. I think we really ought to talk to them.

**Mr. Kobasuk:** I did talk to them and they have certain times they wanted to use and I think it's going to conflict with the ATLL. They both have these games on the weekends, they both have practices and I don't know how they can both work it in. You're going to have to pick one or the other. Do you want me to go back and talk to both of them?

**Mayor Hammon:** If we're going to do it, we could restrict them to one or two days, but we can't let them put a fence up and restrict the use to only their rules. If we allow them to put a fence up, it will really restrict who can play there. That's the problem I see. There are ways to work it all out but the issue is putting the fence in the outfield. That does say that Little League would have exclusive use of it. I know the fence in the outfield is a key part of their plan so I would go back and I think we need to be clear on that. Mark, I haven't done this, but we do need to go back to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, I don't believe Little League is going to be allowed to use that field. You can't give exclusive use to any part of the field long-term without their approval. They told me if it is during school time, then you can reserve part of the play area, but when June 1<sup>st</sup> comes they can't reserve the field.

**Mrs. McCarthy:** John, I thought you were going to check into that. I would think that would have to be done first.

**Mayor Hammon:** I have not done that, but we need to do it. If we ever want to get funds from the state, we have to abide by the rules.

**Mrs. McCarthy:** I would think that would have to be done first.

**Mr. Kobasuk:** Can you help me with that then?

**Mayor Hammon:** I will try to take my notes out and sit down and let you write the letter. You offered before and I didn't get it done. I will turn over my notes and you can write to the main contact.

**Mr. Kobasuk:** I'll go back to the drawing board and get this letter out and go back and talk to them both in more detail.

- The last thing I have, I hope maybe after the first of the year the new Council can meet for a Strategic Planning Session. I think all the candidates at the Candidate Forum advocated meeting. I'm talking about where Newtown is going over the next year. I'd like to see us set objectives so the residents can hold us accountable. I haven't heard any talk about the E-Check building lately. I would like to pursue that as a Community Center if we can. You know just prioritizing. If we can't do it here, I'll be happy to host it, provide breakfast at my house, whatever. I think we all agree, the candidates at the forum, I think Mayor you talked about you wanted to do it. I would just hope that in January we could pick a time to meet and brainstorm. We've got tough issues facing us with the budget shortfall and some opportunities on E-Check that's not going to be around forever. Somebody is going to buy that building.

**Mayor Hammon:** The owner hasn't responded back to Mr. Miller.

**Mr. Miller:** I'll call them again.

**Councilmember Greg Thomas:**

- This is my last meeting of the past twelve years, I've watched the village grow and prosper. I guess my advice would be to be cautious about spending. I do worry about purchasing a building for a recreation center, I'm not too sure if the money is there or will be there. In the past, I've suggested renting space from somewhere in the village first for a trial period and offer programs and see what type of participation you get first. That would be a big expense and there are a lot of expenses going out. Just be careful with the budget.
- Good luck and do a good job.

**Mayor Hammon and Councilmembers thanked Mr. Thomas for his time and service to the Village of Newtown.**

**Councilmember Debbie McCarthy:**

- We need to get the minutes from September 27, 2005 approved.

**Mrs. McCarthy made a motion to approve the Council minutes dated September 27, 2005. Mr. Thomas seconded the motion. All Aye. Motion Carried.**

- John, you were going to give me some information on Dick Weber in regards to Property Maintenance so I can get it on the website.
- I'm suppose to get something from Daryl for the website about Marty.

**Mr. Pulskamp:** I remember the same conversation where Dick was going to get you some information.

**Mayor Hammon:** Actually, at the holiday party I asked him to write something up.

**Solicitor Doug Miller:**

- I want to wish everyone a happy and safe holiday and thank Greg for his service.
- I won't be able to make your January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006 meeting, I have to go out of town.

**Mayor Hammon:** Happy Holidays everyone, personally, "Merry Christmas."

**Mr. Pulskamp made a motion to adjourn meeting at 9:50 p.m. Mrs. McCarthy seconded the motion.**