

**ST. BERNARD VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETING**  
**AUGUST 3, 2017**

The regular meeting of the St. Bernard Village was held Thursday, August 3, 2017 in Council Chambers.

President of Council, Mrs. Valerie VanValkenberg-Walden – The meeting was opened with a prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call showed that five members were present: Mr. Tobergte, Ms. Hausfeld, Mr. Chastain, Mr. Culbertson and Mrs. Bedinghaus. Mr. Asbach and Mr. Kalb were absent.

Mrs. VanValkenberg – Normally at this point we would do the reading of the minutes referencing the last Council Meeting but if you recall this is the week where we, the month where we did the switch over from the first meeting this month when we didn't have a committee meeting that we previously would have Council, so we won't go to that and we will go straight to the reports of Village Officials.

**REPORTS OF VILLAGE OFFICIALS**

MAYOR, Mr. Estep – As you can see I didn't dress for Council meeting. I'm right in the middle of a date with my wife and my daughters celebrating my birthday so I hope to give my report and I thought the report was more important than my birthday so I wanted to come in and give my report and hopefully I'll be excused afterward. I did meet with Denise Driehaus and Nat Simon last week and they are helping me make a contact with a possible grant writer and I will continue with my report. As I already mentioned, I haven't missed a meeting, I would like to be excused here and I don't want to be redundant and I will go with this again. I would like to ask everyone to concentrate on the difference on what's popular and what is right. And also the difference between the person and the position because as I go through what I'm going to read I really want you to focus on that and remember what we're trying to do is not popular but it's what's right. And also think about the position and not the person. And years ago we had 7,100 citizens, 7 to 8 million dollars in reserves. There was a company down the street making soap and sent us millions of dollars. We had carry to the curb, free garbage bags, we had a Street Commissioner, everybody had a personal car. The Fire Chief, the Police Chief, the Street Commissioner, Building Department, we had free life line, I don't know if anybody knows that but when I looked through the budget last time I think there were 27 people on that life line you could rent it at \$27.00 a month and the City covered that for everybody. We had more money than we knew what to do with. We had all kinds of money and we had all kinds of positions and we had all kinds of amenities. That money is not there anymore. I had three separate meetings with three separate people with a lot more experience and a lot more expertise than myself. The one thing I took from every one of those meetings was the same consistent message. If we don't change the structure of our government, our work force, the departments, and the way we do business, and they looked at numbers not at an opinion and not you're doing it this way or we used to do it that way, we can't do it the way we used to, it's the bottom line. They looked at the revenue stream coming in, the cost of running our Village going out and our reserves. And the same message I got from all three of these people, and one was the former City Manager of Reno, Nevada and down in Florida who worked for a company that

helped me a little bit. They said in three to five years we won't have St. Bernard. It's a shock. I'm hearing whispers that ITC might close. I heard this week that Klosterman's was going to build a baking facility in Hebron, Kentucky. It might not be here. That's not good news. We can put our blinders on and say no ITC will be here, Klosterman's is not leaving, we've got all kinds of millions, we can afford this, we can afford free garbage bags. But think about this, in three to five years if we keep doing what we're doing the way we're doing it, we're not going to have St. Bernard and there's a big city out there right on the borders called Cincinnati who would love to have our 10.2 million dollars in revenue every year. We formed a Charter Committee weeks and weeks and weeks ago. My belief is, the larger the Committee the less work you get done. We proved that. We had a small Committee of five people. And then we had to add two. I was against that. That made it seven. Then we had to have this person, we had to have nine, then we had eleven. So, we've got eleven people on that Charter Committee and we haven't made any progress. We talked about some stuff and I'll go over the bullets that we have that the small Committee mentioned but we don't have anything on the ballot to make any difference. Any change in the way we're going to do business in the next three to five years. So, unless we make some changes and we agree to put some things on that ballot in November, we're going to be sitting back here going, boy I wish we'd have worked a little bit harder together and we wouldn't have had such a large Committee, we might have made some progress. The purpose of the Committee

was to start the process, to get some ideas and some bullets that we could talk about in a small group to put on the ballot. What changed is instead this Committee turned into the judge and jury and they're trying to decide what should be on the ballot. That's not the purpose of a committee. The purpose of this Committee was to start the process and it was to be left to the citizens to decide what they want to do in the next election. It shouldn't be up to eleven people in a room and say this is what we're going to do with our Village. The citizens who live here and pay taxes here deserve that right. It's called 'Democracy'. The Village is not being run by eleven people. It could never happen. But unless we get together and go in another direction we're going to be stuck here in November with nothing on the ballot, no changes, and we have an opportunity to change hundreds of thousands of dollars which we vitally need. As you can see, our budget, we're a million in the red right now. And people ask me what's your plan with the budget. Well I'm not going to have a knee jerk reaction and lay people off. The last thing we want to do is lay anybody off. Out of the million I'd like to, I was going to go to the unions, we have a number, and I'm going to expect the unions to work with us and come up with that three hundred thousand. The other seven hundred thousand, six hundred thousand of it is a credit used by a large company and one hundred four thousand is a refund given to a company. So that's seven hundred thousand was not our fault. It wasn't Council's fault, it wasn't the Village's fault, it wasn't the citizen's fault, it wasn't the Administration's fault. So hopefully Council will help us through this and Council will get us through this by adding that seven hundred thousand so we can avoid any layoffs. Our employees deserve that. I'm going to go to the things that we have listed and some of this fluff. You know Council we got these proposed Charter amendments. Reduce to five at large members, it doesn't matter. That's good, if we want to do that. The auditor, eliminate the fulltime position of auditor and combine staff under a CFO as well as the tax commissioner, eliminate that fulltime position and combine the staff. I did a little research and I checked around who has a fulltime auditor, we do. Because we always had one that we could always afford. We can't afford a fulltime auditor. Beaver Creek doesn't have one, Amberly Village doesn't have one, Blue Ash doesn't have one, Cleves,

Evendale. They hire professional, either contracted or they do part time. Dear Park has a part time auditor. Cheviot has a part time auditor. We're not in the position we were in years ago that we could afford full time people to do these part time jobs, no offense to anybody. Remember what I asked you at the beginning, separated the position from the person. It's not a job at a person. It's the way we have to do business in the future. The other thing I asked you to remember, we need to do what's right, not what's popular. It was popular to give free garbage bags and have a guy carry your garbage to the curb and another guy carry it back when we had thirty people in the Service Department. We've got three wonderful departments down here, Police, Fire and Service. The people in city hall do a great job. But we've got to work more efficiently and streamline some of these services. I know people in this room are looking around at people right now going is he crazy. No. We could say something and that's why I came tonight in the middle of my date with my wife and daughter because this is a very important meeting and it means a lot to me or I would have stayed out. Service Director, replace,, him no offense to the person, it's the position. We need a city manager, and I just saw where a small village hired a part time city manager at fifty thousand dollars a year. If we want to make this work, we can make it work, maybe not at fifty thousand, maybe not a part time city manager but what we would save on a Service Director, Safety Director, nothing against Jonathan Stuchell, he does a wonderful job, we disagree on some things but he does a wonderful job. We need to get a city manager in here and have a weaker mayor position and have a guy that has no connections to families, political parties, departments and do what he has to do and negotiate contracts and run this place a lot more efficiently. It's nothing against anybody. And if we can keep those blinders off and look at it more globally, we're going to get through this and we're going to be in a lot better shape in the next year and the following year. Police and Fire, we need one Chief. I'd like to have somebody show me a place that they have a Chief making a hundred thousand dollars and this is not, Steve Moeller does a great job, he's a good friend, a guy that makes a hundred thousand dollars supervising sixteen people. I'm going to put in for that job. I'm not qualified, I wouldn't want it. But we need one person down there running both those departments and after talking with Jonathan Stuchell, who has done a lot of research, he knows more about this than me, I think that person should come from the police side because I think there's more to do and more entanglements you can get involved in on the police side than the fire side. No slam on anybody. Building and planning, you have to look at a fulltime position in the Planning and Development and evaluate those needs after a city manager or village manager is hired. I think the mayor's secretary should be part time. I'm a part time Mayor, I need a part time secretary and I need to take a hit as well as anybody else. Cross train, we talk about it and we go yeah, yeah, well here's an opportunity. Don is going to get upset with me. We got a guy who is fully trained, certified, he may have to do some more certification as a police officer and he's on the fire department. Again, separate the person from the position, don't hold it against Bobby Hausfeld because he's Bobby Hausfeld. Be happy that we have a guy 6'6, 270, and I'm being kind on the weight end, that can get in that cruiser and instead of sitting at the fire house waiting for the tone to drop, he can put that turnout gear in his trunk and when he shows up for work on Monday, patrol the streets for eight to ten hours. And do it again on Thursday or his next day at work for eight to ten hours. So, there we have a twenty hour patrol for free instead of sitting at the fire house and it's not a slam on Bob. He'd do a great job. I think he'd be a great officer. We even looked at that. If we're serious and we're going to put our money where our mouth is about cross training, here's the first step on that journey. I hope we really look at that hard. My final thought is our Village, this

analogy, we're like a ship, our 4,100 residents are the 4,100 passengers on this ship and we have a great ship. We have a lot of amenities that other villages and cities would love to have. And they salivate when you talk to them, when you go to another community and tell them what we have here. So, this ship is going pretty good, it's going in pretty good waters. But if we don't make changes, it's going to hit some rough waters and it's going to start drifting to that island out there called Cincinnati. And they're going to rip the sign off of us and it's going to be called Saintcinnati. But there's some life boats available. It's going to be called economic flight. The who can afford to move will move. Some of them already have. Some of them are our employees that already moved to Batavia and Loveland, Lawrenceburg, where ever they moved to. No slam on them they saw it coming. They could afford it. Some people can't afford to do that. But we don't wait for that moment. We deserve better than that and we owe it to the people who live and who work here to work together and change the way we're doing business. I don't want to lose this place to Cincinnati. I don't know if Home Depot could stay open long enough to sell the lumber to put up all those For Sale signs that are going to go up. I'm not trying to scare anybody, it's reality. I appreciate your attention and everything else. I just want you to think about that. Do what's right not what's popular. It's time for a change and we have to look at these positions not the person and we no longer have that company down there making soaps and boxes of millions of dollars to do what we used to do and if we don't change this is going to be in the wrong direction. I thank you for your attention again. I appreciate that you've allowed me to leave the meeting.

Mrs. Brickweg – Can I ask you to wait. I think you might after giving that long thing maybe you want to see.....

Mayor Estep – I was going to ask to be excused earlier .....thank you, bye, bye.

Mrs. Brickweg – You're not going to stay for a comment.

Mayor Estep – I did forget, my email is [mayorestep@yahoo.com](mailto:mayorestep@yahoo.com), I'd love to hear comments. Please send your comments to [mayorestep@yahoo.com](mailto:mayorestep@yahoo.com). I promised my wife I'd be home by 7:30 and I'm not going to sit here for one and then three and then five, then seven. I deserve one day. I haven't missed a meeting since I've been in this office so I'm going to leave now. Thank you.

Mrs. Brickweg – That's fine. I'm going to go ahead and comment since you're taking the chicken way out and I'll say it to you.

Mayor Estep – I told you where to send it.

Mrs. Brickweg – I don't need to send it, you're running away, you haven't worked one day this week yet. I guess you had too many hours put in. Ok, I don't want to go through that. That's just amazing but I would like to explain something that he already knows because it's been thrown around oh, Madame President may I please have the floor. He is correct, communities, many communities have a part time auditor and just so everybody knows that part time auditor is called the treasurer. So if you look it up it goes Bobby Hausfeld and John and Jonathan have been talking about it I've been doing my research and (inaudible) because they found out that you couldn't get rid of the elected position because that was their original thing to get rid of me to not make it elected and they found out they can't do that. So,

what I looked up and what I've been researching is basically they have part time auditors in all other communities are the treasurer. You may now look if you want to all the communities that he said and ask him if who does the accounts payable, who does the accounts receivable, who does the payroll, who does the (inaudible). They have three to four people doing the one job that I do. So, I just wanted to explain that it was easy for him to do that and muddy water that should have never been muddied. You need to look at the job responsibilities but yet he has never come into my office and ask what I do. So, I just want that out there for the public because I think he did that on purpose and I think he ran out on purpose and I still say that's the coward way to do it. Now can I continue with my report?

Mrs. VanValkenberg-Walden - I'm sure you are going to do your report. Unless somebody else has any comments.

Mrs. Brickweg – They might, I'll wait.

No one had any other comments.

AUDITOR, Mrs. Brickweg – Before I start my other report I'm going to say a couple of other things, sorry. I do want to explain also to the citizens that the Charter Committee never once told John to stop with the dual treatment. What they told him, they didn't even take a vote, there's not even a vote taken. They basically said they were not against it, they were not for it, it was more they're not against it. But John could not say who was going to do it, what the chain of command was going to be, what the flow was of the work. What duties they were going to pass down. He could not tell us how much money we were going to save. He could not tell us how much money he was going to pay the positions. He could not tell us how we were going to test it. So, the committee said, we do not feel like we could put it on a ballot if we couldn't explain to the citizens why they should vote for it. We said we would have another meeting and Jonathan was going to look into some things and we were told mainly another meeting at this point. So, at no point did that Charter Committee tell John that that idea was a bad idea and not to do it. It just needed more research so if we were going to put it on the ballot we could explain to the citizens, which I think they do deserve, how it was going to work. Now for my report.

The Auditor's office provided Council and the Administration with the July revenue, expense, revenue and expense spreadsheet and the cash fund report. The revenues year to date were \$6,277,124.46. The expenditures year to date were \$7,322,010.74. Currently the Village has expenses of \$1,044,886.28 over revenues. At the last Council meeting Councilman Chastain spoke about the bonds and Villages reserve. After reviewing his information, speaking with the banker who helped obtaining the bonds for the Village I would like to explain a few things. The insurance policy covers insures the timely payment of the principle and interest payment to the bond holder. It makes sure that no matter what pretty much that the bank gets paid. It has nothing to do with the amount we hold in reserves nor the Village's bond rating. By continuing lowering the reserves the Village does run the risk of the bond rating being lowered and making borrowing money in the future a little more expensive. At this point with no plan to fix the budget besides continuing to take money out of the reserves it is pretty much a moot point because we will be continuing to take out of it. And I also wanted to add to that that I forgot to say is with the cross training the auditor and the tax department has constantly asked if we can cross train but we're constantly told no. So we're still open to it. we would like to do it but we'll have to wait and see what happens.

DIRECTOR OF LAW, Mr. Peck – No report.

TREASURER, Mr. Ungruhe – This evening the Star Bank balance with the city at the end of July totaled \$1,956,065.99. And we have the Fifth Third inventory holdings they total \$890,000.00. I did not get a statement yet from the First State Bank so I will have that at the next meeting.

SAFETY DIRECTOR, Mr. Stuchell – I have the St. Bernard Fire Department report for June which was missing from last month's meeting. As far as EMS runs report for June 2017; a total of 74 EMS Details with 46 patients transported. Mutual aid given; 5 medical runs to Elmwood, 1 to Golf Manor, 1 to Norwood and 1 to Cincinnati. Mutual aid received; 1 from Golf Manor, 1 from Norwood. Details of interest; 4 non-breathers, 3 psych emergencies, 2 auto accidents, 1 overdose, 1 unconscious patient. The fire run report for June of 2017; a total of 43 fire details. Mutual aid given; 1 to Elmwood, 1 to Golf Manor. Mutual aid received; 2 from Golf Manor, 2 from Norwood and 1 from Elmwood. 1 from Springfield Twp., 1 from Wyoming. Details of interest; 1 trash fire, 2 building fires, 1 hazmat run and 1 electrical hazard. I have the EMS run total for July; we had 75 EMS runs with 37 patients transported. Mutual aid given; 4 times to Elmwood, 2 times to Norwood, 1 to Golf Manor, 1 to Cincinnati. No mutual aid received. Details of interest 7 unconscious, 3 auto accidents, 2 non-breathers. I have the Fire run report for July 2017; 41 fire details, mutual aid given 1 to Golf Manor, mutual aid received 1 to Cincinnati, 1 to Elmwood, 1 to Golf Manor, 1 to Norwood, 1 to Springfield Twp. And 1 to Wyoming. Details of interest 3 building fires and 1 partial building collapse.

Also I wanted to report that the St. Bernard Fire Department will be offering basic CERT training for any resident interested in joining the team, beginning September 7, meeting weekly through November 15 from 6:00 to 9:00pm. Please contact Capt. Mirick at 242-9555 for more information.

I also have a citizen that I would like to acknowledge for coming to the aid of a young child. On 7/23/17 Maria Lanzillotta observed a young boy on E. Ross Ave. walking alone. Maria stopped and spoke with the child and didn't feel comfortable with his answer so she continued to follow him as he walked on E. Ross towards Vine Street. She decided to call the police who then located the child who lives on E. Ross Ave. The father of the child came to the police station about an hour later to report the child missing and because Maria cared, took the time to follow the child, and then notified the police, saved this child from potential danger. I can only imagine the relief that this young boy's father had when he found out that his son was safe and was able to hold him in his arms. It is because of people like Maria that makes this community great and I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for what you did.

Lastly, the owners of St. Bernard Pub asked if I would share this. The St. Bernard Pub will be resurfacing their parking lot on Monday, August 7 and there will be no access to the lot from first thing Monday morning until Tuesday morning when it is determined whether vehicles can drive on it. So on Monday, the 7<sup>th</sup> the Pub will be closed for business while this work is being done.

Mrs. VanValkenberg-Walden – Jonathan what kind of training is it that you were supposed to call.....

Mr. Stuchell – Community Emergency Response Team. The reason I reported the paving was if you were going to Mass Monday morning you won't be able to park there.

SERVICE DIRECTOR, Mr. Paul – I met with the Cincinnati and Railroad officials about the problem of graffiti along the along the I-75 corridor. We are looking for ways to stop this and to clean it up. If you happen to see an act of graffiti in progress, please call the police immediately. The railroad has agreed to allow the engines to keep their cameras rolling in hopes of capturing incriminating video. I also am happy to announce that the railroad has promised me they will repair the tracks at Vine Street and Railroad Ave. and will cooperate with me to allow cleanup of overpass and buildings located in St. Bernard.

Moeller Ave. phase one is complete. Phase two will begin in about a week. Stay focused on the end results.

Just a reminder, sidewalks in front of your homes, are your responsibility but you are not allowed to block them as they are considered right of ways.

Lots of people have been asking about the website. The website, as I told you, as I reported, that we were looking at individual Ordinances, we have now found a way that they created a cloud for us to throw things up there and Heidi was absolutely busy throwing things up there and she can watch as other people are moving things back around. So, where we're at, I would still think it would be another week probably but what they're going to do is get us something so that you can get the current stuff that is happening in the Village and then it will be progressive and keep adding until we have our full site back up and going.

To My Community,

Tonight, I would like to add kindness to the mix. You see if you practice kindness all the other virtues will follow. Kindness rarely causes sadness, so being kind equals happiness which leads to a feeling of peace. If you feel at peace, you have a better chance at love and laughter. Try a little kindness.

TAX COMMISSIONER, Mr. Moore – I'll have all the July figures in your box at the COW meeting in a couple of weeks. To tag along with what Tommy said they are in the process of implementing what the new website and the ability to pay taxes on line. What we're waiting for now is we need to hear from Baldwin who runs our mix program, which is basically our database, how we can hook those and make sure people get credit for them and we receive them and so forth so it's more of an operational thing that we plan to work through. And when that stuff hopefully, you know it will help the citizens and give them another way to pay. In addition to that though, when that is up and active, just so everybody knows, we will no longer take payments over the phone. I've been very uncomfortable with us taking credit card payments over the phone and as soon as the websites' up and the ability to pay on line comes into play we're going to cease doing that.

## **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

FINANCE, Mr. Tobergte – This Saturday, August 5 the 10<sup>th</sup> annual St. Bernard Soapbox Derby will be held on Tower Ave. Hill. I will again pay the overtime cost the Village will incur for this event. Thanks to Greenlee Garage, Jerry Day Auto Service, Service, Police and Fire Departments and Pat and Gerry Wiedman for sponsoring cars for our youth to race.

My next Townhall meeting will be Tuesday August 8 at 7:00pm. in the lower level of City Hall.

To give the Department Heads advanced notice I plan to start working on next years' budget the first of September.

SAFETY, Mr. Culbertson – I'm happy to announce that St. Bernard will be hosting another Shred-It Day on Saturday, October 14 from 9:00am until 11:00am at the Safety Center parking lot. This event is being sponsored by the St. Bernard Block Watch and Councilman Don Tobergte. Bring anything you want to shred up and come on down.

SERVICE, Mr. Asbach – Absent. (report was read by Mr. Paul) In July 26 trucks were placed at residences, 31 dumpsters placed at residences, 238 special pick-ups at residences and 203.79 tons of garbage taken to the landfill. The recycling report is 29.11 tons of recycling material and 1420 pounds of scrap metal.

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS, Ms. Hausfeld – No report.

LAWS, CONTRACTS AND CLAIMS, Mrs. Bedinghaus – No report.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY, Mr. Kalb – Absent.

MARKETING, Mr. Chastain – Little bit of transportation on the highways. The Dial-A-Ride program served 1,138 passengers in the month of July.

The next COW meeting will be August 17.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

## **RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES**

Mrs. VanValkenberg-Walden – We have no Resolutions or Ordinances before us this evening.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Tobergte – We've been discussing a couple of times now and I'd like to make a motion we amend the Council rules so the President of Council runs the COW meeting and the Clerk would be at the COW meetings to record the meeting verbatim like we do the Council meetings. Sorry Sue.

Ms. Hausfeld – Are you wanting that to start this year or in January?

Mr. Tobergte – Start next week or in two weeks.

Mr. Peck – I believe that would also require an Ordinance regarding policy and procedures for running the meetings so, at least as far as Mrs. Kathman is concerned to make that change if Council wants to do that.

Mr. Tobergte – I would, yes. So, we can't do it at.....



Mr. Peck – Your rules are in an Ordinance, in order to make a change you have to change the Ordinance. So, we can put it on COW and I'll be happy to make that change but it has to be voted on and passed through an Ordinance.

Mr. Tobergte – In the past we never done that. We just changed to make the Council meetings to the first and COW to the third, that wasn't an Ordinance.

Mr. Peck – It's in Ordinance 121, it's all right there.

Mr. Tobergte – Ok, I'm just saying we've done this, Ok. I make a motion we put this on COW next week or in two weeks.

Ms. Hausfeld – I'll second that.

Mrs. Kathman – May I say something. Nobody reads anything I type. So, I don't know why you want me to type COW. Are you serious, Don?

Mr. Tobergte – Uh, yes. Mike, you had something you wanted to say about a law suit.

Mr. Peck – That's really a separate issue. I wouldn't worry about that. I would consider that a separate issue. We can discuss it at the COW, I think that's best.

Mr. Tobergte – Let's put it on the agenda for the next COW. I withdrew my motion. So, we had that light duty meeting last week. Anything come of that and what's, did we make any decisions?

Mrs. Brickweg – Basically, just so everybody knows, we had an employee at the Fire Department ask for light duty. It is from, I don't know if it's an injury but it's personal. It's not work related. And since I've been auditor and a lot in the past we don't have light duty for work related injuries, oh I'm sorry, non-work-related injuries and illnesses. So, I expressed that but John wanted to have a meeting about it, so we had a meeting about it. Basically, after the meeting, I don't know what was decided because nobody decided anything, so I did review the contract, all three of the main contracts, the only time that light duty is mentioned is for a work-related injury or maternity leave. The Mayor thought because it was in a maternity leave that we should grant it to everybody but I said I'd be more than happy to grant it to any male if he became pregnant. But in the mean time we'll just give it to female employees. And then it does mention in there that sick leave is to be used for personal injuries or illness. So, it does say that in the contract. So, at the meeting we also discussed what would happen like with some of the newer employees that don't have a lot of sick time, so it was discussed and I think this is where we were leaning, Um it seemed like everybody was in agreement with this is that you could go down to two days and then if you had two days sick time left we could talk and maybe come up with something. You know, have somebody work for you or something. The firefighter that was there said he planned on using most of it so that wouldn't be an issue so pretty much I think that's the way we're leaning. I've been checking around and pretty much most communities do not give light duty for personal things because, just so you know, we have sick time for all the employees and they get to carry it over and accumulate it. And the main reason I have been told is that when they negotiate the contract it was for reasons specific like this. If you get hurt, for example, if a fireman is playing in his back yard with his son and breaks his leg. He knows he can't do his job for multiple months. So

that was one of the reasons they negotiated it so they would be able to use it. So that's where we are that you can get down to two days and then we will look at it.

Mr. Tobergte – Thank you and one last, Mike, I know we talked when you were on vacation and the Mayor brought it up tonight, he said he doesn't need a full-time secretary. Once you're appointed can you be reclassified, re whatever to be part-time or not.

Mr. Peck – I will look at that again but I think you can.

Mr. Culbertson – I have a question for Tommy, (inaudible) the issues on Vine St. I understand that we're in a holding pattern waiting on Duke Energy to replace the poles, the lights but what about the spot where the trees are missing?

Mr. Paul – I agree with them and it's been way too long and when I call I get responses like those are special lights and special ordered. So, I did talk to Paul Myers and he told me that they were actually bought out of North Carolina so there may be some truth to that. As far as the trees go we're having a hard time locating the ones that we have purchased. They're actually specially made so they don't raise the sidewalk. They'll grow so big and that's that. I haven't found them yet. So, once I find them they'll be put in. I think we're missing three trees and I think Duke has to come up with three light poles I believe. So, and I do apologize, I mean I see it too and it's like ugh come on. It makes you want to water the orange cones.

Mr. Tobergte – Tom you have to go out to the nursery tomorrow, I'll check on trees out there. I'm sure they have them.

Ms. Hausfeld – Yeah, I want to send a shout out to Tommy. My mother will be so happy with you to get that railroad tracks taken care of and I'm sure the residents that drive that way all the time will be happy with you as well. Um, I also want to just remind the residents that if there are problem homes that live next to you or properties, please, sorry Tommy, please give Tommy a call here at City Hall. You know, he's more than willing, I called him today, he's more than willing to put it on the list and take care of it as soon as he gets the authority or the power to do so and I know he's cleaned up several homes from what I've given him so far. So, I just urge the residents, don't think you're snitching, don't think you're a tattletale, we all want St. Bernard to look awesome and when you have homes or properties next to you that look like crud it makes the whole city look like crud, so I do, I do want to urge you, Tommy won't bite. He's the most gentle person that I know and he will take care of the issues or the problems next to your home. And if you're out walking, just, you know, give him a call. 242-7770 is the main number here at City Hall. Thanks.

Mr. Paul – May I just add. I do welcome the phone calls but I also like to make the citizens aware that there's a due process. Sometimes it takes a while. But when we do write it they have so much time to respond. Then we have to find the owners and lots of times the properties have been sold or have been whatever, in court. Those take a little longer but basically, I respond to every phone call so you're more than welcome to call me.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Hausfeld – It's really, I don't know what the right word is, when I was listening to Mayor give his little speech and he wouldn't, cause I had a couple things for him too, and I would rather ask him here because I was at all the meetings except for the last um Charter Commission meeting when I guess they discussed the new police, fire chief and what they were going to do. And um I was under the impression that they voted on that that night but he said to do what's popular and what's right or what's not popular and what's right and you know what, on that I can agree with him but he also said that the Commission has met five times they say, roughly, about that and so I've attended four meetings and I can remember sitting at one of those meetings and one of the people on the Commission said well we don't have no guide lines. We don't have no structure. We don't know how many people it takes to vote or to get something passed or anything. And so I'm sitting up here kind of appalled that he would bring that up because, sorry Donnie, I just realized you were part of this but he is the main person that's in charge of the Charter Commission. And if he wanted a Charter Commission and he wanted to get things on the ballot for this year, you have your homework done and you get your ducks in a row and you come to that meeting and you know what's going to be said, what's going to be discussed. And he didn't even know, I bet you there's only one person in here that knows the ins and outs of a Charter Commission and how many people it takes to vote and that's Margie Niesen. Because she does her homework, she's been involved in the past and she knows what's going on. And I sat at those meetings and they didn't know how many people it took to vote to get something on a ballot or even how to get it on the ballot or what date that they needed to have it on the ballot. So, he can be upset all he wants that nothing got done, but he's as much to blame as everybody else because he didn't do his homework either. It's just a (inaudible) and yeah they did talk about a lot of different things and actually the one meeting that I missed I thought they were going to vote that night on putting it on the ballot for the police and fire chief and I just found out that they didn't even do that. So, I really wish he would have stuck around because Peggy had comments, I wanted to ask him a couple of things and I'm sure people up there in the audience would maybe have a question. And, and if anything he should have stuck around for that and then left.

Mrs. Brickweg – I don't know if this is new or old. I would like to apologize publicly for calling the Mayor, if I called him a coward or something. I really don't remember. But I will apologize for that but it is very frustrating, and you can ask anybody that works at City Hall, we are here from 9:00 to 5:00. I don't even take a lunch. He doesn't work. I haven't seen him. I think he came in this week one time at 8:30 and left by 9:00. We don't even see him. So, to give a report like that and run out the door, as the leader of this Village, and the leader of City Hall is beyond frustration. I know it's a part-time job but I do believe it requires you to show up at City Hall. Maybe one day a week. I don't think I'm asking a whole lot but he doesn't even do that. So, I will publicly apologize. That was very unprofessional and immature of me and I will say I am sorry but I just wanted you to know where the frustration comes and why when you hear me say there's a lack of leadership, that's why we have a lack of leadership, we don't have a leader at City Hall. And I do believe maybe a city manager is the way to go, but I really believe if we had a Mayor that would put in the hours and work, we might not even need a city manager. You could have a leader to run the City. So, I just wanted to apologize.

#### **AUDIENCE WISHING TO ADDRESS COUNCIL**

Marge Niesen, 4705 Chalet - I was on the original Charter Commission and I gave all the paper work to the Mayor's office from what we did previously in order that the information would be available in case there were any questions but I assumed that the people on the Commission would be looking at those lists of things we were supposed to do and how we were supposed to do them. The original Charter Commission had a calendar from the beginning of what we were going to discuss and from there we went on to cover at each meeting certain items. At each meeting we had done our homework before we got there and we voted and the idea was that I don't remember a time when we weren't all not in complete unity. Other people can challenge me on that but I was Secretary of the Charter Commission and we talked to people and they either agreed with or agreed to live with our decisions and the way we wrote it because at that time our objective was to protect the community in the event that our population went down and to maintain city services and safety to the best of our ability. That doesn't mean it's the only Charter that should ever be here. But what came up at the last Charter meeting which we really should have a report from one of you about that, primarily was that nobody had really questioned the Chiefs upon how they felt a combined job would go because they're the ones in the job. They know what it takes to be a fireman, to be a policeman and it's not that we're against it but if you take one Chief and put him in charge what happens to the other jobs he's doing while he's doing the other teams work. You see there's trickle down work that causes the design. And so, it's necessary to actually meet with the departments, sit down with them and go over how they could operate in a functional way that would not jeopardize safety but at the same time would take care of maybe saving money in the budget which was a very good motivation when you're trying to save money. But at the same time if the place is in chaos, it's something to save money but it could cost lives. So, the homework had not been appropriately done. Now I did go down to the police and fire department, I told both of them, I asked questions and I got more answers from the police and firemen that came to that meeting because they talked about how they weren't against it but they just weren't sure how the teamwork was going to work because you have to be sure that you're fully cross trained in order to carry out the job. They didn't talk money, they just talked about doing the job. As far as a vote, we weren't ready to vote because there was no plan on how to make that work. Not that we're against it, it's just you have to have plan in place. Who's the Chief, who's the Indian and who reports to who. How does that work? It's going to take a little more homework. I have one comment with regard to combining the Tax Department and the Auditor's job. The tax job is defined by law and I find it interesting the communities that were cited, because many of them have a Finance Director, they don't have an Auditor but they have a Finance Director and they have staff. I worked part time in Blue Ash for example after I retired from here because they needed somebody right away. So, I have seen how another community operates. They don't operate the same way you do. It doesn't make them wrong and it doesn't make us wrong. We're just different. The point is the tax job is defined by law and you have to comply with the law regarding making sure that people pay their taxes. It is a more than full time job. Particularly with the State constantly trying to take our local tax dollars. But we do need to find ways to get more money in and we do need to find ways to do the job better and faster. Does anybody have a question of me?

Mrs. VanValkenberg-Walden – Actually I have a question. When is anything actually come out of that committee? It's my understanding, we have an existing Charter, if we want to do it by, is it referendum, is that how you go about it?

Marge Niesen – We have to approve it in Charter. And correct me if I'm wrong, then we bring it to Council. Council agrees on the format and the way it's written up and they agree it should be put on the ballot. After Council agrees to put it on the ballot, then we go to the folks and we put it on the ballot so it's actually three levels. You don't just snap your fingers and it changes.

Mrs. VanValkenberg-Walden – But you come out with specific recommended language, correct?

Marge Niesen – Yes, you do.

Mrs. VanValkenberg-Walden – And Council can change that but basically somebody has to come out with something that they want to citizens to vote on and you can't just have an amorphous idea that, oh yeah, we should combine the Chiefs. We really have to have specific language to put in front of the voters, correct?

Marge Niesen – Exactly, exactly. Which is what we did in the first place. It doesn't mean it's the only way but it means that in order to change it we've got to go through the steps. And, unfortunately, we should have gone through the steps before we had our first meeting so that we were already on the way. And I don't think it was done in ill will but having people come into talk which was helpful. But it didn't solve any problems and it didn't put any legislation on the table because it wasn't always apples to oranges.

Mr. Tobergte – The idea was to get a committee together and look at ideas. One Chief, combine a chief financial officer, five Council members, we would get all the ideas together. We have public meetings with the public once we get everything ironed out, that's what I said one Chief, we need to know all the specifics what happens down the road or stuff running down hill. What happens (inaudible) and we have public meetings, get the public's input, then we go back, make sure it's what we want to do. Then we would have to come to Council, there's a window, if memory serves me, sixty to ninety days window. You can't, Council can't vote to put them on the ballot more than a hundred days before the election or sixty days. It has to be before sixty days before election. There's a window there that anything going on the ballot for amending the Charter would have to be. That's what we were working on.

Marge Niesen – We're still willing to work. We just need more information.

Doug Roll, 512 Scenic now – Most guys are like that. I'm going to disagree a little bit with what Marge just said. I hate to disagree with her because she's been around here for such a long time. The Charter Committee is basically a Committee that was set up to change wording in the Charter that we currently have. It's not to define what the job's going to do. It's not to give a description as to how it's going to work. It's just a mechanism to allow the Administration of this town to do some different things. All the Charter Committee is set up to do is change wording. I believe even in the Chief's situation it says each Chief of each department. So, it implies that there will be one Chief for each department. All the change that we were trying to make as far as that was concerned was to allow Administration, if they decide that that's the best thing, just allow them to venture into it and come up with job description at that time. We don't need to come up with a job description right now. It's not even our job to do that. It's the Administration's job. It doesn't

come up with a job description in the current Charter, what the Chief's going to do. Doesn't come up with a job description in what the Fire Chief's going to do. It just says that there will be one of each. And all we're trying to do is just change the, I'm not even sitting here saying that if we change the wording that the Administration even has to do it. It's just giving him a tool that if he decides to go that way and if he decides to come up with a job description for that new position, then he can do it. He can venture into it. Right now he can't even look at it. That's all the Committee is said to do is to change the wording of the Charter. Not to come up with job descriptions, not to say how it's going to work and John's right, we have had several meetings, I happen to not be at the last one because of some typing errors but our job is to change the wording. It's not to decide what the job description is. He's right, in that Committee we ask questions how it's going to work, how it's going to work, how, that's not our job. Our job is to change the wording to allow for this Mayor or any other Administration to do things differently. And I think we all agree that things need to be done differently in this town or it's not going to be here for very much longer. So, that's my feelings with the Charter Committee. I think we're looking way past what we're trying to do with it and I believe that we do need to make wording changes. And that's a good one. So, the last thing I do want to thank Maria also. I was involved in that little boy that was lost and basically it was not the first time that that had happened but he is now in safe hands. I just wanted to let everybody know.

Mrs. Brickweg – I just want to comment on something Doug said. As a resident, I have to be honest, if there's something on a ballot that says I'm going to be voting to have a joint Chief or just to change the wording, as a resident, I'm going to want to know how that's going to work. I don't vote on something without being educated. So, even if it is just the word, I get that, but I want to know what it is and I'm sure when the original Charter was voted on, there was one Fire Chief, there was one Police Chief and we knew there'd be, and I'm sure I could go and ask the Fire Chief and the Police Chief their duties, when we asked John what their duties were going to be he didn't know. When he said we were going to sell it or try to get people to vote for on it based on a cost savings we didn't know the cost savings. So, that's as a resident. But as elected official there's a lot of times people will ask my opinion, with a lot of times I'm not comfortable with but how to vote on something, I'm not going to tell somebody how to vote, but they're going to ask questions on what it's about. I, I, I, would not be comfortable just saying oh that's changing a couple words. I, I, I, would want to be able to explain to them what the (inaudible) should be. That's just my opinion.

Doug Roll – Okay, and that's fair and we can always disagree on what the opinions are. Here's what I say to that statement because I've heard that too. Let's say the Mayor comes up with a job description that explains exactly how it's going to work. And then six months down the road that didn't work out the way it intended to work out so he had to make adjustments to it. So, now it's different. It's different in six months because he had to make adjustments to make it work the right way. So, you can't really, you can't really make a job description right now. The current Chiefs jobs descriptions, they change from time to time too. You can't give a definitive job description to that position because it could change at any time. So, six months down the road when it's not working and the Administration whoever it might be at the time decides he's going to make a change, make that job description change then everybody in the Committee says well that's not the way you said it was going to work. It's his job, it's the Administration's job description, not the

Charter Committee's job to decide and determine what that description is going to be because it could change at any time just like it does now.

Mrs. Brickweg – Ok, well then we'll disagree on that but how do you, the Mayor told us he wanted to sell it to the voters that we were going to save money. How do you do that if you have no idea what the position is going to pay and then they started talking about Assistant Chief and we're like what's that going to be. How do you get people to vote on something that you don't have any facts on.

Doug Roll – It doesn't need them. To me there doesn't need to be any facts right now. It's just allowing the Administration to do things differently. That's it. If John makes that decision as the Mayor, the Administration, to go to one Chief or any of the other ones, then that is going to be on him. It's not going to be on the Charter Committee's backs. It's not going to be on City Council's back. It's going to be on the direction the Administration wants to take the town. That's it!

Mr. Tobergte – Just an early reminder, September 15<sup>th</sup> is the Police and Fire steak fry.

Ms. Hausfeld – Just to let the residents know, in our mail boxes we got something from the St. Bernard/Ludlow Grove Historical Society and their next program is August 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00pm downstairs in the Centennial Hall and it looks like it's going to be the history of the St. Bernard Fire Department. Sorry, anyway I miss read that, I don't have my glasses on, actually they're right here. Um just to let you guys know.

Motion by Mrs. Bedinghaus, seconded by Mr. Culbertson to excuse the absent members. Motion passed 5-0.

Mrs. VanValkenberg-Walden – I usually ask Mr. Asbach when the next COW meeting is.

Mrs. Bedinghaus – I have that. The next COW is August 17 at 7:00pm and I have for the agenda items to discuss the ICRC representative and then to discuss having the President of Council, Clerk of Council at the COW meeting. Does anybody have anything else? Ok.

Motion by Mr. Culbertson, seconded by Ms. Hausfeld to adjourn. Motion passed 5-0.