

**CITY OF INDEPENDENCE
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
DECEMBER 11, 2019 AT 4:30 P.M.
COUNCIL CAUCUS ROOM**

Present: Chairperson Kathleen Kapusta
Councilperson Dr. Carl Asseff
Councilperson Jim Trakas

Also Present: Councilperson Dale Veverka
Finance Director Vern Blaze
Councilperson Elect Chris Walchanowicz
Recreation Director Tom Walchanowicz
Community Services Director Marilyn Senick
Community Services Office Coordinator Amber Veverka
Finance Assistant Maggie Osysko

Chairperson Kapusta called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

Chairperson Kapusta said I would like to ask for an approval of the Minutes from the September 5, 2019 meeting.

Moved by Asseff, seconded by Trakas, to approve the Community Services Committee Minutes from September 5, 2019. Voice Vote: 3 yes/0 no; motion carried.

Chairperson Kapusta said we were trying to keep the meeting on a timely basis as we might have not had a quorum at one point; so I have asked Angie Zidanic to submit a report, and that's what she has done. So, I just would ask you to all take a copy of this. She just did some bullet points to update us on several of the drug prevention initiatives that are going on. We have what is going on at the high school there. The Drug Free Clubs of America, you may remember was a voluntary group; and she said that they are currently 200 members, which I think is phenomenal considering the size of our high school. So, that's good. There were incentives, you might remember, to join that.

Councilperson Asseff asked do we know what percentage that is of the high school?

Chairperson Kapusta said well I am trying to think, do you guys know how many we have in our high school? I am thinking around 300, maybe a little bit more than 300. It's not like into the 400's, I don't believe. That was really pretty good.

Then she was just talking about a couple of the other things. They have a Prescription Drug Awareness and Vaping Program which is obviously very timely, and that was offered to the fifth and sixth graders as well. So, it's good to get to the kids early; and then you know McKeon

Education Group, that is the group that we have employed to work with our kids. They are talking about that they did some teen camp programming there. They continue to promote the parent pledge; and you might remember the parent pledge is the literature that goes home to the parents, explaining what their role could be in trying to help keep our school and our community drug free. Parents can choose to sign it, it's totally voluntary; and when they do that, I know in the past they always then had a directory of parent names. So, if your kid was going to Ms. Beal's home for a party, and if she is there as a parent pledge person, you can always call and say my kids are coming this day, do you have anything here that they shouldn't have for their age, alcohol, drugs or anything like that. It's kind of a nice thing.

Child abuse prevention training, and this was for our after school staff. It is a mandate for anyone who was working with children needs to report all suspected situations of abuse, so we could better educate our staff about what that might be, and the reporting process. That is great.

So, that's it in a nutshell. If we have any questions, Angie would be happy to have you direct them to her. If not, when we have our next quarterly meeting we can certainly bring them up at that time if it's not more imminent that you would like to hear from her. So, we thank Angie for preparing that for us.

Tom, would it be okay with you; Amber just suggested that Marilyn may still want to make the meeting. Community Services Director Marilyn Senick was in attendance. Maybe we will keep you guys first so then you are free to leave. We will let Community Services go first, if that's alright.

Finance Director Blaze said Marilyn asked if Tom could go first.

Chairperson Kapusta said I missed that. Alright Tom, now that we are all straight.

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said I just wanted to bring this up at the meeting here. We have been lately having some issues with people not telling us the truth as far as whether they are a resident in the City and getting a Civic Center pass. It is so easy nowadays, it seems like to change your driver's license to a different address or get your telephone bill, instead of the bill to where you are at, another location. We have been having some issues with that. I wouldn't want to say it's out of control, but it's more noticeable.

Councilperson Asseff asked what percentage do you think you are seeing?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said I am sure it's 5% or less; so it is down. Without spending a lot of money and doing a lot of stuff, I just wanted to maybe just try and give us a little bit more leverage with some wording and with some laws. So, at first I had thought that we would have to re-word the current ordinance which actually is Ordinance 2016-49, it's not 2012-40. It is a superseding ordinance; and everybody has a copy of that now.

Councilperson Asseff asked do we have under the (inaudible)?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said what I also passed out to you is our form, and on the form, I worked with Greg O'Brien on this. This is the way he said we should word it. Just so everyone knows, this is the old form that we are currently using, and that's the right side. The new form is what Greg O'Brien proposes, and it gives us a little bit more leverage and a little bit more strength as far as if we do find people who are lying and being deceitful to us; that we could go after them.

Councilperson Asseff asked what are we going after them for? There's no monetary amount there. There should be a fine, and you make it a \$500 fine. It tells people don't lie to us. Then if they want to lie to us, then there should be a fine.

Finance Director Blaze asked do you think it might be included in the ORC provisions?

Councilperson Asseff said but we have to mention it. You have to put it in there.

Councilperson Trakas said I'm going to look it up right now and see if there's fine.

Councilperson Asseff said and we hope that it gives them a wake up saying oh well I don't want to take the risk for that amount of money; with \$5 or \$10, they are going to take the risk.

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said I thought Greg O'Brien was talking about that it was a misdemeanor or said a second degree something.

Councilperson Asseff said then you have a court process and all these other things. If it is straight out you got them, it's a \$500 fine, or whatever number you want to put in there. The purpose of the fine is to discourage them from lying.

Councilperson Trakas said theft and fraud.

Chairperson Kapusta asked does it say theft of services?

Councilperson Trakas said if you put that fine in there, then it would put the fear of God in some of these humans.

Councilperson Asseff said well that's the purpose of it. For people who are honest, they will sign it.

Councilperson Trakas said whoever violates this section is guilty of theft. So, it's substantial fines actually. I will send this to you. There are a number of fines.

Chairperson Kapusta said I think that would be a good idea. People will be a little bit more cautious.

Councilperson Trakas said it depends on the value of the theft, how much they charge you for it; so you could be charged with felonies, and the fines would be at the discretion of the Prosecutor.

Chairperson Kapusta said the value of our Civic Center is immeasurable, so it will be the highest.

Finance Director Blaze said the fine's going to be more than the \$20 pass.

Councilperson Asseff said well that's what you want. The last thing we want to do is have to deal with people who are dishonest and then say okay now you are guilty of theft. Now we turn them in and go through a legal process which is going to cost a lot more than what the fine will cost. Whereas, if you have the fine spelled out what it is, this is what it is.

Councilperson Trakas said it's basically prison time.

Community Services Director Senick asked do you find Tommy that you have issues with the pool?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz asked the outdoor pool?

Community Services Director Senick said yeah, the outdoor pool.

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said the outdoor pool.

Community Services Director Senick said I hear that, but I don't know how bad it is.

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said again the big thing with the outdoor pool is we have non-residents who want to come into the pool; and they have to come in with a resident. So, they are out in the parking lot trying to find a resident who will bring them in. That was the biggest issue we had at the outdoor pool.

Councilperson Elect Walchanowicz said with my wife working at the Clinic building now; she said people ask her are we still able to get a pass since we work here. Are we still able to get a pass to the Civic Center like we used to?

Several people said they never got those.

Councilperson Elect Walchanowicz said that's what I thought, but she has people asking her.

Councilperson Asseff said the only way they can get into that is if they come as a guest with somebody who has a pass.

Chairperson Kapusta said okay, that's good. It sounds like we are in agreement though with coming with a little bit more teeth in this form here Tom is a good way to try to approach it. Tom and I have discussed this too, it's not only a matter of thinking you want to punish the person who is doing it; but it's not fair to the people who are being honest. The people who are, we have had people who would come and tell us, okay we are moving now. We know they couldn't use the service any more, and then there's other people who try to cheat and never tell you.

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said so that's what we would like to do, and I will talk to Greg O'Brien about this more. Jim sent me the exact ordinance, and I will look into that. We will get this going for next year.

Councilperson Trakas said I think we should do this on all of our types of, anything the people sign up for.

Chairperson Kapusta said that's a good idea.

Alright then, we thank you for getting us the legislation. It's good to have that as backup.

Tom, you are concluded?

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said yes.

Chairperson Kapusta said thank you very much.

Community Services, it's such a busy time of year; I just wanted us to have a meeting for the end of the year.

Community Services Director Senick said well this is going to be short too, is everybody happy?

We are just going to go over briefly summer camp and summer playground. We are making a lot of money here. If you want to take a quick look at that for 2019 and the comparisons; it's the first page at the top. That's a recap for summer camp and compared to the three years, the revenue we collected of course and what our actual expenses are, our school bus expenses. We are using, just so you know, we only use the school bus when they go on trips. We don't use our buses any more. Our bus is our bus, basically it would have been the mini bus.

Office Coordinator Veverka said the asterisk on wages, it must have gotten cut off; that one does not include full-time wages. It's part-time and seasonal only.

Councilperson Asseff said these are variable wages then.

Community Services Director Senick said right.

Any questions on any of that? There were no questions.

I talked about with the staff, and they have approached me just to bring it to your attention about the possibility of raising the fees for summer camp and/or summer playground; but we are tabling it. We talked to the Mayor-Elect, and he doesn't want to do anything right now on raising any fees of course.

Councilperson Trakas said he's traditionally not wanted to raise fees.

Community Services Director Senick said that was going to be on the table here today.

Chairperson Kapusta asked can you tell us when the last time these fees were raised? Do you have that?

Community Service Director Senick said that it was four years ago. Remember we did it \$5.00. Nothing has been recent since. People were quite upset about the \$5.00 increase if you do remember. We do bring it to your attention if that's something anybody wants to consider down the road. That's up to the Mayor-Elect what direction we take.

That's summer playground there, and it's rather consistent.

Chairperson Kapusta asked is that program usually filled?

Community Services Director Senick said oh yeah, she has like 186 kids, and she fills up right away.

Councilperson Trakas asked how many people participate in the program? Do you have those numbers?

Community Services Director Senick said 186. That's 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. That's summer playground, and then summer camp averages about 136 to 138.

Finance Director Blaze said if enrollment has stayed steady, and the fee hasn't changed, how is the revenue for summer camp going down every year?

Community Services Director Senick said the revenue for summer camp went down because we are not, the Teen/Tween camp is going down. We are not getting as many children in that age group.

Finance Director Blaze asked so the 180 was for the playground?

Community Services Director Senick said well, right. That has gone up as you can see. WE took about 14 more children this year; but we are at capacity in the rooms. We can't fit any more kids, and to get the 14 more additional children I had to bring the Fire Department over, and ask them if we could rearrange the room in order to accommodate the children. We are at capacity. We really couldn't take any more children in summer camp because we don't have the capacity in the rooms. Any other questions? There were none.

We always have a quick review on the bus. To give you an idea, this is just a recap of what we did for the year up until the current time for the chartered bus. Once again, we are using Brecksville Transit and J&F. For the year, until the end of the year, we spent close to \$26,000 for the buses; and as you know we are not putting any money away for a big bus anymore. They have taken my money away Vern. I want you to know that Maggie took my money away. This cannot continue. It is in for the Civic Center, we are looking for the remodeling. I mean for \$26,000 we had some really great trips. Lori does our trips, and she does a really good job. We have had a good relationship with both BRT and J&F, and no problems with the buses whatsoever.

Chairperson Kapusta said I have had very positive comments from a number of residents about the quality of the trips and the follow through; and Lori's responsiveness when people come to her with ideas and things too. That is nice.

Councilperson Trakas said it's the nice diverse things that you are doing. You have very good participation.

Community Services Director Senick said I will tell you, our lunches are increasing, our trips are increasing. I think that, and as I am going to say it here as it's our final meeting for the quarter, the staff is phenomenal. I think the staff at the Civic Center, they work very, very hard; and they are very creative. They work behind the scenes because we do the events and that; and you don't realize that we really don't have a lot of staff, and the staff we have, I think they do a phenomenal job.

Chairperson Kapusta said I also think you correlate nicely with the Recreation side too; it wasn't always the case.

Community Services Director Senick said Tommy and I get along, don't we Tommy? He listens really well.

Chairperson Kapusta said we notice here, obviously with J&F the rates are a little bit lower; does that reflect their base rate being lower or the distance of the trips?

Community Services Director Senick said no, I think it's the buses. BRT is a more of a luxury bus. I would say J&F, sometimes the residents ask why can't we have BRT; but the issue is if we have less, J&F takes 29 passengers. If I have 22 passengers, I am not going to take a 47 passenger bus. Right now it has been working out.

Several people began speaking at once.

Community Services Director Senick said I do want to make mention on the buses too, Amber got me some numbers here. The mini bus, I don't know if you saw that at the top, was used only 15 times this year. So, we are talking about how we are not really using the mini bus like we used to; and the baby bus, the 14 passenger, we have already used 180 times this year. So, again, and I'm not going to go into this right now; but probably as you see I have not purchased a new vehicle. We went over it the last time this year, I used a vehicle that was used for another department; saving money Vern, just so you know.

Finance Director Blaze said that's a good lead in because I know one of your items was capital here; and there is on the Five-Year Capital Plan that Council approved last night, you call the 14 passenger the baby bus. So, there's \$30,000 allocated for the next five years there.

Community Services Director Senick said what we are looking for is a possible replacement. Also, instead of getting another car or we were talking about a van; I am looking to possibly

getting a second 14 passenger. We would utilize that more than another mini bus or probably a vehicle.

Finance Director Blaze said the Five-Year Capital Plan is always fluid, and even though obviously it's here in ink; I like to say that figuratively speaking it's always done in the pencil. As soon as it's done, the needs change, something changes; and so we are constantly revising that.

Community Services Director Senick said that's something that I would like to talk to about when we do meet, what direction we want to take in the next few years on this. We have been working with, I didn't purchase a vehicle this year, even though the money was available. Like I said, I used a vehicle from the Police Department.

Most of you, I think you all have been over to see the remodeling. That did finally get done. There are a couple of issues that haven't been taken care of yet on the remodeling. We have had some issues with the paint and with the chairs in the Willow room that were cracked when they removed the seats. So, they have to repair that yet.

Chairperson Kapusta said the round table in the atrium is nice too.

Community Services Director Senick said that's Tommy's table.

Chairperson Kapusta said oh Tom, I like it. I was over there the other day, and I was looking at that. It's a nice size because that's a big group that always sits there in the morning.

Community Services Director Senick said they really like it.

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said it was on our side, and then they were requesting a bigger table; and we had a Wednesday morning bridge group that would use that table, but unfortunately some of the ladies passed away, so they are a smaller group now. We took it over there to the other side.

Community Services Director Senick said they are very happy with it.

So, the next improvement, our plan is the atrium. We are working on that now. The chairs are breaking. You see how some of the chairs are pretty old. So, we really want to make it, that's our plan for 2020 Vern. I need money.

Finance Director Blaze said I could see through prior purchase orders that we encumbered money, \$373,000 has been encumbered already; and it's been left fairly generic so that it's up to the Mayor, Community Services Director and Recreation Director to determine how that money gets allocated under that Civic Center umbrella.

Community Services Director Senick said and you haven't been a part of it yet, but I had brought a plan in for a possible renovation to the Civic Center for an addition and did have a plan for that

which everything is on hold right now. Jim, you might be able to get us a grant, but that's on hold because you had to do it in December, correct?

Councilperson Trakas said no, it's due by January 8th. You need to write it up.

Community Services Director Senick said okay because I talked to Dennis about it, did he talk to you about it?

Councilperson Trakas said no.

Community Services Director Senick said because he said he would talk to you about it.

Councilperson Trakas said we have time. So, Senator Dolan and Representative Robinson both have requested and put in for capital improvements. A couple of hundred thousand dollars is the norm for these types of things.

Community Services Director Senick said he said he got \$300,000 for Solon.

Councilperson Trakas said \$600,000 for Solon. We built the entire senior center there with State money; and then there was another addition in the Veterans' Plaza, and it was all State money. You just have to ask.

Community Services Director Senick asked Vern what do you think? Do you think that's something we could meet on right away to get you on board to see what you and the Mayor-Elect thinks? He saying it is due by January 8th. Is that something you want to think about?

Finance Director Blaze said the good part about my position now is I'm not legislator, I don't make decisions. I just take the orders from the legislative body.

Councilperson Trakas asked do you like free money?

Finance Director Blaze said I think you should pursue that no matter what.

Several people began speaking at once.

Councilperson Asseff said you never leave money on the table.

Councilperson Trakas said we might not get everything we ask for, but we might something. So, if you get \$200,000.

Community Services Director Senick said but what I was looking for was a remodel of the kitchen.

Councilperson Trakas said you need what the purpose of the project is. It has to be a public project. So, that's the Civic Center. What we are doing, just a summary of what we are attempting to accomplish. How many residents it would serve; and obviously what it is. It

doesn't have to be dramatic. We can put together a schematic, and the schematic that you showed is probably appropriate. It would nice to have a little bit more of a sophisticated one, but that was okay. What it is going to do, and why it benefits the State? Do we have young people coming there? Do we have senior citizens coming there? They love senior citizens. Those are two good things to do. Now if we could help people with drug problems, that would be even better.

Community Services Director Senick said we could give them a room.

Chairperson Kapusta said I think if they understood too, but the regularity with which you have people. It's just not once a week or once a month; it's almost every day.

Community Services Director Senick said I mean they are there every day, and we have lunches three times a week, our special events, our special projects.

Councilperson Asseff said the other thing we can point out is the amount of money we have put in already in remodeling. It's not the only thing. We put in some City money, but we need some help with the rest of it.

Finance Director Blaze said Councilperson if you could get our department the exact program you are referencing so we can follow up in between Dennis, Maggie and myself and our team, I am sure it can get done.

Councilperson Trakas said no problem. I think it would be something we should get before the end of the year if we can and just phrase it properly. I know we could talk to Senator Dolan and Representative Robinson about how we think they should proceed on it. I think they would be willing to help us out.

Community Services Director Senick said if you could come over, you have seen the plan though correct?

Councilperson Trakas said I have. Do you want me to come over?

Community Services Director Senick asked Vern were you over?

Several people began speaking at once again.

Community Services Director Senick said Vice Mayor Grendel was over.

Okay, that's my plan.

Recreation Walchanowicz said Eric Sarley has done grants too. He could put together that information.

Councilperson Trakas said we have to work it a little bit. Council should pass a resolution asking for it.

Chairperson Kapusta asked should we try to have that ready for our meeting next week?

Councilperson Trakas said if we can that would be good. Just again, I think you need one for the House and the Senate to be squared away there. We should invite them up to the facility so they could see what is going on. They like pictures of people hanging out with them, right? I think that would be an appropriate thing to do. I know Mr. Dolan has been there. I have been with him in the Civic Center a couple of times for meetings. He knows where we are talking about. So, I think if we get the Mayor on the horn with him and talk a little bit about why it's important for the community. I think we would have a fighting chance to get something out of that grant.

Community Services Director Senick said and when I got the plan I didn't think it was as much money as I thought it would be, we are talking on the back of the building. We would extend it to where the library was, and we were getting quite a bit of space. We were just adding three walls, but that would also extend my kitchen and things like that.

Councilperson Trakas said so we are feeding seniors, right in the kitchen?

Community Services Director Senick said yes, definitely. We are feeding them.

Councilperson Trakas said keep using that term, feeding hungry seniors.

Community Services Director Senick said socialization.

Councilperson Trakas said this is a life and death thing Marilyn. It's up to you.

Chairperson Kapusta said perhaps it is something we could send to Greg O'Brien so he could draft that resolution for us so we could have it for December 17th.

Councilperson Trakas said that's a good idea. We just need a number. What's your number? How much money do you need?

Community Services Director Senick asked how much do I need or how much do I want?

Councilperson Trakas asked how much builds this thing? What does it cost?

Community Services Director Senick said for the addition, I think it was \$350,000 if I remember; but that was almost two years ago I think we are talking. The kitchen he said would be over \$100,000.

Councilperson Trakas said let's go with the kitchen. I think that's a better ask to be honest with you.

Community Services Director Senick said if we could get the money for the kitchen. In order to get the kitchen, I can't expand the kitchen if I don't get an expansion.

Councilperson Trakas said understood.

Community Services Director Senick said I am going to expand the kitchen to get the storage that I need.

Councilperson Trakas said the other thing that the State does is they partner with people, in this budget you can get the kitchen, and in the next budget you can get the expansion.

Finance Director Blaze asked is this a capital request or is it a grant?

Councilperson Trakas said it's a capital request.

Finance Director Blaze said to go in their capital budget.

Councilperson Trakas said so they have a \$50,000,000 capital budget; and a lot of that is State universities and prisons. They are going to be building some psychiatric hospitals from what I understand.

Chairperson Kapusta said really. The pendulum swinging back?

Councilperson Trakas said yeah I know. We had one in Broadview.

There's a ton of stuff that they put money into. So, like the Cleveland Museum of Art is asking for \$5,000,000; and all that kind of stuff. So, arts organizations, not-for-profits, but some of the municipalities are asking also. What I was told was that everybody is asking for millions of bucks and don't expect that; but a couple of hundred thousand dollars is worth asking for.

Finance Director Blaze said \$50,000,000 spread around the whole State is not a whole lot, between the 88 counties, that's less than a million dollars per County; and then you have "x" number of municipalities in each County. If you don't ask, you don't get.

Councilperson Trakas said I think that they would want to help us.

Councilperson Asseff said we could have this as a three phase project; the kitchen with the expansion and the expansion.

Councilperson Trakas asked so what goes first? I guess we would have to figure that out.

Councilperson Asseff said well no one says they need storage space, and that's for the kitchen expansion. You are going to lose your storage space you have now, and you need new storage space.

Community Services Director Senick said well I would be losing the craft room. In order to expand the kitchen and get storage, so then I would look to expand in the back, the addition to get some additional offices and craft room.

Several people began speaking at once again.

Councilperson Trakas said I think the kitchen would be a nicer ask.

Community Services Director Senick said that's fine.

Councilperson Asseff said getting some of the monies for the other things, well we are doing it under the kitchen umbrella.

Councilperson Trakas said I like that idea.

Chairperson Kapusta said and the timing is perfect because we do have that meeting December 17th, which is going to be an actual meeting so we can vote on that.

Community Services Director Senick asked which meeting is that?

Chairperson Kapusta said we have a Council meeting. We normally would not have had another one this year, and we would have not made the deadline for our part of it. That's good if we can get that done. That's great. I am glad you mentioned it again. Thank you.

Finance Director Blaze said I like the idea of hitting the next Tuesday deadline; but if for some reason we wouldn't, we still have the organizational meeting on January 2nd. We still have a little bit of room; but I would still rather do it sooner.

Councilperson Trakas said all we would do is e-mail that in. We do have to have our act together. We do have to send in the form, and then we do the resolution afterwards. I think we should invite those guys up here; and they should meet up with you guys and the elected officials and everybody who is sponsoring it. Have some seniors there talking about how important this thing is for them. Do a good dog and pony show.

Community Services Director Senick said and you know, it is a great place for the seniors. You wouldn't believe it. You do know how many people we get there. I think, as I said, our lunches are increasing; even from last year. You had 60 or 70 people, and we are getting sometimes 70 or 80 residents coming in for lunch.

Councilperson Trakas said veterans, put that in there.

Councilperson Asseff said I will be there.

Several people began speaking at once again.

Chairperson Kapusta said thank you for bringing that up Jim.
Chairperson Kapusta asked anything else on this?

Community Services Director Senick said no, that's it.

Chairperson Kapusta asked any questions of either Tom or Marilyn?

Councilperson Trakas said in terms of new residents, some of the new houses that we are building and everything; are we getting information out to them on an individual basis or just kind of through the newsletter? Do we do anything special for like the new homes that are coming because we have a couple of hundred houses now?

Office Coordinator Veverka said actually they kind of seek us out. They typically will come to the Civic Center to get their pass, and then the Rec staff is really good about communicating with us; and they walk them right over to sign up for their new resident bags. I think I have everybody from Hawthorn Trace coming in and getting a bag.

So, as for actually sending out; we don't really know that they moved in unless they contact us first. We have thought about contacting like local realtors and stuff, but you would still miss people.

Chairperson Kapusta asked when we give our residents their recycling trash cans, don't we take names of who we are giving those to?

Office Coordinator Veverka said Marie sometimes e-mails me, but it's few and far between.

Chairperson Kapusta said but I am wondering if we could set up something that if they are in fact getting names, why can't they send it out consistently?

Several people began speaking at once again.

Chairperson Kapusta said when people move in, to give you the names.

Community Services Director Senick said new homes, we aren't talking about what if you just buy somebody else's house. We don't know that.

Chairperson Kapusta said we don't always have that information.

Office Coordinator Veverka said the Building Department sends me, every time a new dwelling goes up, they send me the occupancy permit; and generally within a couple of days they are in the building.

Chairperson Kapusta said what Amber was saying was they do get for all the new homes, they get the information from Building Department on occupancy permits. So, that would give the names and things. Where it's harder to grasp is the move into the existing homes people. We don't always get those. They try. They have that welcome basket thing in the newsletter and everything encouraging people.

Community Services Director Senick said we have posters that we put up at the facilities saying if you know someone who just moved in or you have a friend.

Office Coordinator Veverka said the Rec Department is certainly helpful because every time there is a pass; we try to keep the addresses updated in the system, and usually Rec gets to it first.

If someone new comes in, they immediately clear out the old address so you can't have people asking for passes that have moved out.

Chairperson Kapusta said or when you try to do the snow removal.

Office Coordinator Veverka said exactly.

Several people began speaking at once again.

Office Coordinator Veverka said I use the County website every time I have someone come in. Unfortunately, it doesn't work for rentals; however, since the last time we talked about rentals; I have made a habit of e-mailing the Building Department whenever someone checks off that they are a renter. We did put that on the form as of last year. You check if you rent or own. I go to the County website just to verify who the owner is; and if it's a rental or someone who is leasing to a family member, I forward that on to the Building Department so they can keep their records accurate.

Chairperson Kapusta said and someday I have confidence that our new Finance Director and Mayor-Elect will work the City towards getting a composite of all of the homes. I still think it's unusual that we have all these separate entities working out there with data that we somehow can't share it all.

Finance Director Blaze said that's actually what the County has been trying to do for the last eight years or so. The CRV system that's \$30,000,000 over budget; so each one of the County departments can talk each other, and ours would not be as complex, but it would accomplish the same thing hopefully. I think we need help in IT for that because we are down to one person. He is doing a lot of the day-to-day stuff.

Chairperson Kapusta asked are there any other items for the agenda today?

Councilperson Trakas said I have one other thing, in terms of new programming for 2020. When do you usually come up with new ideas as well as subtractions of things that you don't think were working. Is that a yearly thing?

Community Services Director Senick said no, we do it all the time. We have monthly programmer meetings; and actually we just scheduled one for next week. We are kind of always trying to brainstorm. We are bringing in some new programming for children, and that's kind of where we are at.

Chairperson Kapusta said I was going to say, do you still do as you used to in the past, your debriefings after all of your activities and events? I thought that was really helpful because it's when it is fresh in their staff's mind; they will sit down and say here's the pros and cons and maybe what we need to change.

Community Services Director Senick said we have probably tried at least seven or eight new programs this year; and some of them don't fly because you just can't attract the people in for

some of the programming. We have done the same thing, we have a great idea, this is going to really bring in the residents; and then you get three people. Our pool isn't that big either when you look to another city. You are trying to draw, and there are a lot of other things going on; but we try really hard to bring in some new programming.

Chairperson Kapusta said one of the things that I noticed that Community Services did in November was when the Dorothy Fuldheim, the joint program. That was the Cuyahoga County library, and it was a joint program; and it was a great crowd. There were over a hundred of our residents, and what they did was they made it a really nice combination because it was a Friday lunch for our residents, and that was at noon. Then at 1:00 p.m. they had the rest of the room set up for people who couldn't come in, the regular public, they didn't have to be a resident. They came in through the library, and then we all got to listen to this phenomenal program that I am assuming was paid for by the library.

Community Services Director Senick said the library paid for it.

Chairperson Kapusta said that was a great thing, and know there is another one coming up on January 3rd that is a joint program also about downtown Cleveland history and shopping at Christmas and stuff. It will be the same kind of scenario. We have our people who can have their lunch and then get to enjoy that program. I think if we, I was quite impressed with the size of the group that day, and that's why it is coming to my mind. I am imagining that it will be pretty big on January 3rd as well. So, if we can continue to do those. I am sure the library loves us giving them the space.

Community Services Director Senick said when I approached them it was to do something like that which they could get more people into the rooms. They wanted to do it at least quarterly.

Chairperson Kapusta said I think it was a very positive idea to do.

I have to say this Jim, I am also very pleased to say that our Civic Center and our City have opened up a facility for our Kiwanis of Independence. This is a very gracious gesture on behalf of the City. I can't speak for Kiwanis since I am not even a member; but I am a wife of a Kiwanian. So, I know that our group is very appreciative. That's a group that has been in existence since 1952, tries to serve the City in as many ways as possible; and so now that things have somewhat changed with the Concordia situation; so the Civic Center came forward, Marilyn and her staff, and the group will be meeting. We already had the Christmas party, but then regularly meeting as of January. So, thank you very much for that. I know that it takes up some time for your staff; and I would probably use that as an opportunity to remind you too that if the City needs things for programs, approach the Kiwanis. They have funds available. They have a foundation that they work very hard on with some of their activities; and I know they are receptive to trying to do things for our community. So, don't be remiss in asking them too.

Councilperson Veverka said as a Kiwanian Board member, I would mention the fact that we are pleased that we did get seven new members; and one of the reasons moving to the Civic Center will be a big plus is because the opportunity of being more exposed to the community. When we are back at Concordia, we are kind of back there on our own. So, now people have an

opportunity when they come for a meal or come for an event, hopefully we are going to find a place to put up some of our plaques and other things possibly along that hallway so that people will be exposed to our group and pick up some additional members.

Councilperson Trakas said Kiwanis is now meeting at the Civic Center and not the church anymore.

Chairperson Kapusta said officially as of January.

Councilperson Veverka said Concordia was serving meals for a number of years there, and then the people who were serving the meals, their (inaudible) passed on, and then it became a caterer. Then the issue we ran into was having to do with the alarm system. The caterer would get there early, and somebody would leave the alarm system on. Then they would get a call from the alarm system. We had issues there, and just the opportunity presented itself that we could use the Civic Center. We took that opportunity and ran with it.

Chairperson Kapusta said they are very grateful for that.

Office Coordinator Veverka said I am not sure what time your meetings are, but if you are looking for younger members, I know that now being at the Civic Center, we have a tot room facility. That might be helpful.

Councilperson Veverka said our meal typically is at 6:30 p.m., but a number of the members show up at 6:00 p.m. or before.

Councilperson Trakas said the reason I asked that question was I have seen several communities that have Recreation and Community Advisory Boards that are formal boards that meet on a quarterly basis, and they help you evaluate programs. Would anything like that be helpful for you to have residents from the community come in and give an outside perspective and provide some opinions to you?

Community Services Director Senick said I think that's a good idea. Actually I will tell you, it's something to look into; but even after a special event, to be perfectly honest somebody came up and said I have some ideas, one of our residents. They said I think you could add some things next year to this event. They wanted to share them with you. So, people do have ideas. I have had people come in and say how about doing this bus trip, or about doing this program. We have had a request for more programs for children. So, even though we do a great job with the staff; that doesn't mean that we certainly can get more or better ideas. Does anybody have any comment on that, or how do you feel about that?

Councilperson Asseff said that's a good planning tool. You may have an idea, and then you put it out to this group; and this group will bring up things that you haven't thought about. Therefore, you will come up with a better plan than what you initially started out with. The goal is to try to get rid of the bumps in the road as new things go because that holds you back and gives you a bad perspective on that.

Chairperson Kapusta said and when I had the Senior Advisory Committee, you remember that, it not only engendered ideas but then we put something into effect, they were big supporters of it. They would go and tell other seniors.

Councilperson Asseff said because it's their program.

Councilperson Veverka said and the other piece is when we have a conversation about adding new events, the idea also is to take a realistic look at any other events because obviously certain events might not work as well; and you are definitely limited with your number of staff people that you have. You can only stretch people so far, and so thin. You have to realistically look at jeez, we are going add two or three events. What events are ones that are not being utilized?

Community Services Director Senick said you are absolutely right because that's part of the issue; and we have experienced it this year Tommy because we wanted to add a couple more things. This summer I thought I had this great idea, let's do this; and we didn't have the staff. We can't get the volunteers. We just don't have the staff. We just come off of an event, and it takes so many; and you are doing other programming. There are other issues than just let's do an event.

Councilperson Veverka said and as far as Community Services, I know you don't have an Assistant Director. We don't have a social worker yet.

Chairperson Kapusta said Resource Coordinator.

Councilperson Veverka said and so we lost those hours for that particular person to be involved in the program; and I am not sure at the desk if you are currently up to staff or not. I know it's got to be really tough if you are stretched.

Community Services Director Senick said you know the other thing you will find too, even if we have the staff; you know we were really short on this last event. We did this with Yuletide and Adopt a Family because we are working with Brecksville; we can't get volunteers. People don't want to volunteer anymore.

Councilperson Trakas said that's where Kiwanis comes in.

Community Services Director Senick said we went for volunteers for Yuletide and for Adopt a Family because we had to go and sort food. We went to CERT, VIP's, Kiwanis, Native Sons and Daughters, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts; we reached out to everybody for volunteers and got a handful.

Chairperson Kapusta said when I was involved in the Lend a Hand Program, I remember we had a lot of, not Independence, but from other communities, they had students there. Did you ever think maybe whether it be the end of the school year or the beginning of the next school year, sitting down with middle to high school level staff because they are going to be planning their year ahead with different projects. We have some teachers, particularly in the middle school, who do the cleanup for seniors and stuff. Did you ever think about sitting down with them at

that point in the year, not three weeks before you need them or a month before you need them; and saying hey these are some of our events that we are going to need help for. See if they can incorporate that. Don't wait until the event. Try it. It may work.

Councilperson Asseff said that's a good idea. When I was in high school we had a Service Club; and that Service Club would do those kinds of things. You would call over to the Service Club and say I need five or six volunteers to do this, and they would send them.

Several people began speaking at once again.

Chairperson Kapusta asked do you see what I am saying, the difference what you are doing at the beginning of the year; they are putting their calendar all together, not four weeks before. See if they could get that on their calendar. I am not saying you are going to get kids, I know their schedules. They are in a million different things. They are working on their colleges and everything in high school now; which they didn't do before either. I understand. You might give it a try.

Community Services Director Senick said we were talking about putting on another special event or doing it; and like you are saying, you have so many staff that you could work with and how many weekends do they want to work?

Office Coordinator Veverka said the kids in Independence are highly involved as well; so maybe you are looking for volunteers for Fall Fest, but they working three booths, they are in the band, they are performing in the choir. We could grab the stragglers.

Councilperson Veverka said depending also, the Builders Club, middle school age, depending on what you are doing; they could be very appropriate helpers for a number of things.

Office Coordinator Veverka said as long as they are 13, we take them.

Councilperson Trakas asked what about service hours for the high school kids?

Chairperson Kapusta said they tap into that; I know they have in the past.

Several people began speaking at once again.

Councilperson Veverka said there is a reasonably small group who are struggling to get enough hours, but most of the kids are very involved.

Several people began speaking at once again.

Recreation Director Walchanowicz said we took three truckloads of food.

Community Services Director Senick said it was from the schools and a combination. It was for Yuletide.

Chairperson Kapusta asked are there any other matters before the committee? There were none.

I would like to take a moment then since it's our last meeting of the year to thank everyone sitting at this table, all the members. Certainly, I would like to say a special thank you to our exiting Councilperson Asseff, and thank you for all the years. Just so you know, there will always be a seat for you at this table, even if you are not officially on Council. So, we would welcome you, and we would encourage anybody. We thank the other Council people and Councilperson Elect Walchanowicz for attending. I can only tell you that it has been my pleasure to serve as Chair these six years. You are stuck with me for the next two because Vice Mayor Grendel took my request into consideration; and I will be here with you again. It is a pleasure to work with you. You always come so well prepared, and you enlighten us to an extent that I am very appreciative of; and it helps us so much when we have issues coming forth from your departments or this committee that we know how to help explain things and vote on it.

Thank you for all your time and effort, and I know Tom you have staff who always help as well; please extend to them our appreciation because they work very hard on those things.

I wish that you all have a Merry Christmas and a healthy and Happy New Year as well.

Moved by Asseff, seconded by Trakas, to adjourn the Community Services Committee Meeting of December 11, 2019. Voice Vote: 3 yes/0 no; motion carried.

There being no further business to discuss, the Community Services Committee Meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Debra J. Beal, Clerk of Council
Minutes Unapproved at Time of Release 12/13/19
