

City of Springdale Council

January 8

2014

President of Council Tom Vanover called Council to order on January 8, 2013, at 7:00 p.m.

The governmental body and those in attendance recited the pledge of allegiance.

Mrs. McNear took roll call. Present were Council members Diehl, Emerson, Harlow, Hawkins, Knox, Squires and Vanover.

The minutes of December 18, 2013 were approved with seven affirmative votes.

#### COMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. McNear read a letter from John Patrick Carney, State Representative, running for Auditor of State dated December 6, 2013: "Enclosed is a letter I wrote to the municipal elected officials in my district concerning House Bill 5, which recently passed the Ohio House of Representatives. I wanted to share it with you because I know that my district is not the only one hurt by this overreach. Communities across Ohio are hurting and instead of listening to local leaders, my colleagues chose to pass legislation that hurts your ability to serve your community. I am dedicated to working with partners across the aisle and across the state to come up with solutions that help us all.

The 2014 elections will have a significant impact on the relationship between local communities and Columbus. As Auditor of State, I would strive for collaboration, rather than the State imposing unnecessary burdens on local governments.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me about your concerns and how we can work together to build a better future for Ohio. Warmest regards, John Carney

It is a difficult time to be the manager of a municipal budget in Ohio. Our communities are being forced to do more with less because of devastating cuts to local budgets. As I'm sure you are aware, last week the Ohio House passed House Bill 5, a proposal that would mandate how municipal income taxes are collected and further cut funding to local governments. I voted against this measure. While I believe there are opportunities to reform municipal tax collections, this bill does not sufficiently take into account the harmful effects to local communities and the economy.

In recent years, the Legislature and the Governor have touted balancing the state's finances without raising taxes. At the same time, they have rolled back property tax reimbursements, cut local government funds, and repealed the estate tax, much of which was done to provide for the State's spending. The State of Ohio has pushed its budgeting problems onto the shoulders of local governments while eliminating your ability to address those problems. Many local governments have already made cuts to vital basic services, including public safety, and deeper cuts would only jeopardize the safety of our communities. It is beyond time for State government to stop its "pass the buck" legislating. We should be working together to find solutions to our common problems. No single group should be forced to bear the burden in these difficult financial times.

In my discussions with local officials they all indicated their willingness to compromise. Unfortunately, this legislation did not reflect the conversations that took place in countless interested party meetings. For that reason, I voted no.

I am dedicated to working in a bipartisan fashion to find common ground on this legislation. I will continue to communicate my opposition to the current bill unless the Senate revises the bill to reach that common ground. Please do not hesitate to contact my legislative office if you would to discuss this legislation further. Sincerely, John Patrick Carney, State Representative"

Mayor Webster said I probably agree with everything in that letter. However, I don't think that should be in the minutes of the Springdale City Council. I think

that is a political announcement. The guy is running for Attorney General. He's a State Rep. I got that same letter and I filed it in 13. I just don't think it's proper for it to be written into the Springdale City Council minutes.

PRESENTATION – AAA Platinum Level Traffic Safety Award

Mr. Parham said the Police Department has once again received the AAA Platinum Award for their efforts in enforcing traffic safety and other programs. Chief Mathis is here along with Captain Wells and Sergeant Cumbow.

Chief Mathis said we appreciate you having us here. We are very proud and pleased that for the ninth year in a row, the City of Springdale has been awarded the AAA Traffic Safety Platinum Award which is the highest level award that AAA can award a community. This is something that started under Chief Laage and the first person who really spearheaded the initiative was Captain Wells when he was Lieutenant Wells. He passed it on ably to Sergeant Cumbow a couple of years ago.

Sergeant Cumbow stated every year we apply for this award. AAA puts out an application requesting agencies within Hamilton County and Northern Kentucky to apply for this traffic safety award. We highlight various programs that are our efforts in traffic safety. Captain Wells started organizing these into this report and until I took it over I didn't realize how much we really put towards traffic safety. It's not just the patrol that does that, but Officer Bemmes with our DARE program, the bike safety program. Officer Ture does a Law Enforcement Expo. The Fire Department does child safety seat fittings and training. We have traffic engineering in partnership with TEC with new traffic signals. The Police Department purchased portable traffic speed signs. We use those in an effort to improve traffic safety in our neighborhoods and we're going to use those to promote some OVI awareness, drinking and driving awareness. We have the Traffic Reconstruction Unit which started out as the Traffic Safety Unit where members are highly trained. They go through monthly training and ongoing training where they are called in to investigate serious or fatal traffic crashes. This year we added three members to that team. We lost one when Officer Huddleston retired but we added three new members. They do monthly training where they go out and simulate traffic scenes and then work those through to fruition with a quite extensive report. We have Safety Town which the Police Department does in partnership with Tri County Mall and the Girl Scouts. We participate in the Hamilton County OVI Task Force which we participate in along with numerous other Hamilton County agencies to promote OVI awareness and enforcement. We have officers who work patrols on that up to twelve hours a month subsidized by the Hamilton County OVI Task Force. We also started the year before last doing OVI checkpoints which have been quite successful. The first one we did this year we arrested six OVIs. The next one we got three OVIs. All these things go into our effort for traffic safety and I think the reason that we have gotten the platinum award nine years in a row is because we have so many different efforts to promote traffic safety.

Chief Mathis said Elliot does the lion's share of the work. Traffic is a big issue for any city. He's done a lot of work in the last two years and it is deeply appreciated. I did want to emphasize that this force is not just about writing tickets. Enforcement is one aspect of it. It's also about education whether it's Safety Town, the DARE program, child safety seat program, PSAs, etc. It's also about engineering, working with TEC and other partners in the community to identify problems and look at issues. That's the three Es we refer to in traffic safety: enforcement, engineering and education. I'm very proud of the work that Elliot, Tom and the members of the Police Department have done. This is something that many partners share with the Police Department and I want to thank all of you for the support you have given us, the resources you have granted us. This is an award for the entire city.

Mr. Diehl said job well done. No matter where you go in this City and you talk with residents about the City, sooner or later the Police Department comes up. In my seven years here there has been nothing but positive things said about our Police Department so thank you very much.

Mayor Webster said I think we're all extremely proud of our Police Department. It's great to see this you guys get this award for nine years. Just today we got an e-mail

from someone who had a break-in and they were very complimentary to our Police Department, especially Sergeant Davis. Keep up the good work.

Mr. Squires said Officer Huddleston was one of the teaching officers during the time I spent with the Police Academy. The topic he did was the traffic situation and how they could determine speeds, impact. I had a pretty good knowledge of physics and math and I was really intrigued by what they did. That's the part of the academy that I enjoyed the most. Three of us up here went through the academy. It speaks well for the Police Department itself and how well perceived you guys are in the community. I'm very proud of you.

Mr. Hawkins stated this award is representative of the great job that you do and the outstanding police department that we have. We are fortunate as residents to have a department that is as skilled and works with folks as well as we do. A couple of months ago I received a letter from a resident who had gotten in trouble and came in contact with our police officers and wrote a thank you letter. You guys may have gotten one of those too saying what a great job you did. So, even folks who are on the wrong side of contact are complimentary to our department. I think it speaks volumes.

Mr. Knox said it's not only the big things that you folks do quite well but also the little things like helping people when they lock their keys in the car.

Mr. Vanover said I echo everything. Traffic is near and dear to our heart because it's great until goes wrong, then everybody's a critic. We have many overzealous partakers during the holidays. I didn't hear anything great big. Congratulations.

Captain Wells responded we got a few.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE - none

#### ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

##### ORDINANCE NO. 1-2014

ADOPTING THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION / ESTIMATED RECEIPTS  
ORDINANCE FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2014

Mr. Squires made a motion to adopt and Mr. Knox seconded.

Mr. Parham said as I pointed out in the Pending Legislation Report typically when we present this ordinance to you I would say to you that the document you have before you is essentially the budget document that we presented at the first meeting in December. However, there have been a number of adjustments to this appropriations ordinance. We have determined that in 2014 we will have one additional pay period. Typically there are 26 pay periods each year. In 2014, because of how the calendar falls there will be 27. That was not accounted for in the annual budget. We've made the adjustments in this document to reflect the 27<sup>th</sup> pay. The increase is about \$343,726. The good news for us is that at the end of 2013 our revenues came in a little higher with under spending of \$265,000 so the budget difference from the end of 2013 actual year end balance is \$4,387,000 to what we presented in the budget of \$4 million and odd change. It's about \$387,000 difference so it's more than enough to count for that \$343,000 increase we have with the extra pay period. I passed out to each of you a new Exhibit A and want to point out the differences. If you go to Administration Department right across the old document showed Mayor's Office, we are acknowledging the same information that is in the budget but we call it Administrative Office. A little further down, the old document identified the last two as Claims and Contingency and the other as Pooled Insurance. Claims and Contingency is the Health Insurance Trust and the Pooled Insurance is our Insurance Trust.

Ordinance 1-214 passed with seven affirmative votes.

##### RESOLUTION R1-2014

AUTHORIZING THE INVESTMENT OF MUNICIPAL FUNDS

Mrs. Harlow made a motion to adopt and Mr. Squires seconded.

Resolution R1-2014 passed with seven affirmative votes.

RESOLUTION R2-2014  
REQUESTING ADVANCE PAYMENT FROM HAMILTON COUNTY  
AUDITOR

Mr. Knox made a motion to adopt and Mr. Squires seconded.

Resolution R2-2014 passed with seven affirmative votes.

OLD BUSINESS - none

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Knox said in October the Cincinnati Enquirer ran an article about an elementary school in Colerain Township that obtained funds under the Safe Routes to School Program. Members of the Springdale Senior Citizens asked me to look into that program as related to Springdale Elementary School, especially since the City would be having the roadway in that area resurfaced. At first I was opposed to the idea. I knew there was strong opposition from residents along that route when a similar proposal was made in the late 90s. My reasoning was that a person could simply go up Kemper to Harter, across Harter into the ball fields, go through the ball fields and get to the school or any business in that area. Soon after I was traveling westbound on Kemper, just west of the traffic light at Lawnview. It was twilight. It was dark and it was raining. I saw two young people walking west and then I noticed a man in a wheelchair pushing his way up Kemper with his outside tire almost on the white line trying to get a firm surface to progress with. At that time I realized if you go by the ball fields, you run into a large set of steps that no one in a wheel chair, and probably no one with a walker could be able to get through. I took this back to the senior citizens who asked me about this and said I would look into this and I did. I contacted the coordinator of Safe Routes to School in Columbus and she informed me that the labyrinth of regulations you run into means it would be a minimum of three, probably five years before we could get funding under that, plus Springdale Elementary would have to do a study which I don't think they have time or money to do right now. Then I went to other people. I went to Ted Hubbard, County Engineer. He was enthusiastic but didn't know where we could get money but he suggested asking Mark Payne of OKI. Mark came up with Transportation Alternative Funding. We're lucky in the fact that in March of this year they will be looking at applications for that. I am proposing that the City have the City Engineer take a look at this and find out what it would cost. I'm not saying we should commit ourselves to it right now but let's find out what it costs. Then we can discuss it later on if it is a reasonable amount. Let's face it, we don't have a lot of extra money to do things with. To me this is a safety issue and that man in the wheelchair really drove it home to me. I would like to make that proposal. How can we go about that?

Mrs. Harlow said that is in District 3 and I am well aware of the discussions that happened back in the 90s. Eighty percent of the residents who live along Kemper Road decided they didn't want sidewalks there. I don't personally have a feeling one way or the other about it. However, after your phone call today I did call two of our long term residents on Kemper and asked how they felt about that now. I cited the young man in the wheel chair and his inability to get around. They both said they really didn't have any issue with having sidewalks to allow for someone who is disabled to have better access to the community. They were a little bit hesitant because they said that was just one more item of maintenance that they would have to take care of. Previously when this was brought up the residents cited increased foot traffic which they really didn't want. Right now they claim they are always cleaning up their yards from litter. They felt that would be even worse. One of the families I talked to has a child in elementary school. I asked if that would make it easier for that child to walk to school even though they are only a few houses down from the school. They felt like it was a safety issue. They don't trust the drivers to be alert enough to not endanger their child. I'm not in favor of it. I'm not totally

against it but I do think we would want to take into consideration the residents along Kemper Road because they are the ones that have to live with whatever we put there. If we move forward with this ever in the future I'd like to have those residents have their opinions heard with all of Council.

Mr. Knox said I should comment that this would not be easy for the City Engineer because if you look closely at that stretch of road there are telephone poles and trees that we would have to go around.

Mrs. Harlow said I drove up that way tonight and the telephone poles closer to Lawnview are set closer to the road than going west. It would only be sidewalks on one side of the street.

Mr. Knox stated they are only proposing the north side of Kemper Road. There's nothing that says a sidewalk has to be straight as long as we can get the people who own the property to allow us to deviate a little bit.

Mayor Webster said I agree with Mrs. Harlow. If we pursue this I think the direction we should give the Engineer is to do just enough engineering to identify the issues and try to get some preliminary cost estimates involved. I don't think we want to spend the money to do construction engineering at this point in time. Once he's had a chance to get that data, bring it back, then I think we should schedule at least one public hearing and all those residents on Kemper Road should be notified by letter, the time and place of the hearing so they would have their day in court. I see a lot of benefits of the sidewalk, if we had a sidewalk that picked up there at Lawnview and went all the way to Kenn Road. There would be increased foot traffic but a lot of that traffic is people walking in the street, especially the person in the wheelchair. I think there's an accident waiting to happen out there. Now would be a great time if we are going to redo that street. We probably couldn't get the sidewalk at the same time but it would be the icing on the cake if we have a new street and come along with a new sidewalk system. However, if the majority of the residents don't want it, I don't think the City should push it down their throats.

Mr. Diehl said overall I have a favorable opinion of this but I would like to see the Administration come up with some type of action report before we progress further.

Mayor Webster said I'm not sure what kind of action report. I just gave you one. We have the City Engineer do a preliminary cost estimate and then if we want to proceed, we send out letters and set a public hearing.

Mr. Diehl asked Mr. Parham, have you been aware of this? Have you and your staff talked about this?

Mr. Parham replied we've had discussions. I've been here a little over twenty years so I was here during those discussions when everyone was opposed to them. It's something that you see if you drive up and down Kemper Road. Either they are going to walk in the street or they're going to walk in the grass. The sidewalk provides a safe haven for them in my mind. It removes them from the roadway. There is a separation between the road with a grass strip of five feet and then the sidewalk will be another five or six feet. You've already moved the individual away from traffic, so for the parent afraid for the child to walk down the street, I don't think most vehicles are going to come ten feet off the road. At the same time, the residents' maintenance issue may be clearing snow from the sidewalk. We all know repairs of sidewalks are part of our program. Outside of removal of snow, I'm not sure what their maintenance concerns would be. As I understand the program, there is a matching cost for these funds that Mr. Knox spoke of and our share would be 20 percent. There are some things we have to look at. We have not put any hard numbers together to tell you how much it would cost.

Mr. Diehl said Mr. Mayor, I'd like to go back to your comment about what I'd like to see done. If the Administration put together a summary or action plan, I would feel more comfortable to go ahead and do an investigation rather than just have Council vote to go ahead.

Mayor Webster said I think Mr. Knox’s proposal was to have the Engineer do some preliminary work so that we can get some of this data. Derrick and I can sit back in the office and talk all day but we don’t know how many driveways are not going to match up to the sidewalk and what the cost would be to make that transparent. I think we have to involve the Engineer.

Mr. Diehl said I totally agree.

Mr. Hawkins said first I want to thank and commend Mr. Knox for all the legwork you have done to this point. I agree with what the Mayor has indicated and what everyone has basically said. I think it’s a good idea to get the preliminary estimate of what the costs would be, have a public hearing. It does make sense, as we just commended our Police Department on getting a safety award, that we would look at this issue. There’s no question that it would be safer to have the sidewalks there. The input of the residents is important but I don’t think there’s much more argument that it’s safer to have the sidewalks there. There have been residents who have come to BZA meetings that are on Kemper north of SR 4 and talked about the foot traffic that comes through there. People are going to walk that way. The benefit of having a sidewalk is you keep people out of their yards because they have a designated path to walk rather than just walking wherever through people’s yards and the grass. Overall, obviously cost is an issue and we want to see what residents feel, but it’s something that if the numbers match up financially would be a good deal.

Mr. Parham said I would think and hope that as much as possible, if we do move forward to construct this, it is within the City right-of-way. As part of the engineering we’ll make sure that there is enough right-of-way in place. Once you have to acquire right-of-way that delays the project and sometimes it kicks in other studies you have to engage in.

Mr. Vanover said Kemper Road is one of the big, un-sidewalk stretches we have. The other one is on Crescentville Road. You have the same issue where people are walking along the road but we have commercial partners there rather than residential here. I agree we need to allow the residents to have their voices heard. I would have no problem, with Council’s concurrence, that we direct the Engineer to do a preliminary cost analysis.

Council agreed to the cost analysis.

Mrs. Emerson said I think it’s a grand idea. It completes the circle in Springdale. It allows you a walkway from the parks to downtown Springdale. You have the Farmers Market and would have more access for people to walk to that. I just think it would be a good idea if the money is there and we can get the funding.

Mr. Vanover asked about the time to apply for funding.

Mr. Shvegza said they start asking for applications in March. The deadline is the middle of April.

Mr. Parham said I’ll follow up to get the deadlines so we’ll know the schedule if we need to make a decision.

Mayor Webster said I have a brief update on snow removal. Our dome handles 2,700 tons of salt and as of January 6 we had 1,650 tons available. Year to date we have spent about \$68,000 in snow removal, labor and materials. It’s been a costly winter compared to last year.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Board of Health - Jan 9
- Planning Commission - Jan 14
- Council - Jan 15
- Board of Zoning Appeals - Jan 21
- Registration for spring sports - thru 1/31
- AARP income tax help provided Fridays between January 31 and April 11

City of Springdale Council

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(for seniors with simple income tax returns)

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE	-	none
UPDATE ON LEGISLATION STILL IN DEVELOPMENT		
Amending zoning map	-	Jan 15
Fee adjustment for CDS	-	Jan 15
RECAP OF LEGISLATIVE ITEMS REQUESTED	-	none

Council adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy McNear  
Clerk of Council/Finance Director

Minutes Approved:

Tom Vanover, President of Council

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