

**JANUARY 22, 2008**

**5:00 P.M.**

At 5:00 p.m. a **Special Work Session was held by the Sandusky City Commission** in the City Building Commission Chambers, 222 Meigs Street, on the **Strategic Plan, Capital Improvements and to establish 2008 Goals and Objectives** with City Commissioners Dave Waddington, Dan Kaman, Craig Stahl, Dennis Murray, Brett Fuqua, (*Brian Crandall-excused*), and Julie Farrar in attendance; as well as the Charter Officers of the City Manager Matthew D. Kline, Law Director Don Icsman, Finance Director Ed Widman and the Clerk of the City Commission B. Joyce Brown; the Administrative Staff of the Director of Engineering Services Kathy McKillips, Police Chief Kim Nuesse, Fire Chief Mike Meinzer, Administrative Services Director Warrenette Parthemore, Economic Development Specialist Scott Schell, Senior Accountant/Auditor Hank Solowej and Chief Planner Carrie Handy. It was an open meeting with the audience and the news media present.

Mr. Waddington offered the **prayer**, everyone stood for the **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**; and the Clerk called the **roll** with all Commissioners present.

President Murray said we will work through the **Strategic Plan (February 8, 2005) and the various points of the Action Plans for the City that they had existing**. They did not have to stop at each item if there is no interest in modifying it or providing any new feedback to the City Manager. Since Mr. Klein has been with us almost three months, he might have some observations he may want to share. We would not necessarily take any action tonight, but in order to have this discussion it must be in public. So it was very much an open forum where we can exchange ideas. And following this Mr. Kline would be able to respond with a revised Strategic Plan. Also my initial hope is that we would be able to discuss the discretionary budget items in the Capital Projects. The state of the budget is not quite yet at that point, but I think that this is an important thing that we need to provide the administration with our own criteria for capital projects and write them about it.

Mr. Stahl said instead of going through this 15 to 20 page document item by item, would it be simpler if we just did goals and objectives that we want to see accomplished this year and do it on a 8 ½ by 11 sheet of paper? And we could periodically update those very easily instead of having a document that details all of these action plans. It would not be a Strategic Plan update, but more of a goal and objective update. President Murray said I'm not sure how we go about setting up the goals and objectives without tying it to something specific. Discussion ensued.

**A. PAPER DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT** - President Murray said I think we all are 100% behind that project. Mr. Kline said I have gone over documents that were created back in 2005. Before I speak specifically in regards to this, there are a few updates in talking about the Chesapeake and the Tricor Properties. I would like to talk about the broader theme first and then get into the specifics. The broader theme being in looking at the Strategic Plan I'm hoping to get a good sense of where the Commission might see change or delve from it or reprioritize working with them. And I do have some opinions on reprioritizing some of the items. But taking that information from tonight, Carrie Handy, our Community Development Director/City Planner, we have had some dialogue about a Comprehensive Plan that is also on the books. It has now been updated for several years and we have an opportunity to refocus our Strategic Plan and incorporate it into one planning document. More of a road map of where we're at and where we would like to be and how we're going to get there in both the short term and the long term. Carrie will explain the Comprehensive Plan in that we would like to redo that plan as well this year. And Carrie actually met with some County officials that would be able to provide that document or be able to work with us to create that document, quite frankly at not cost.

Mrs. Handy said the **current Comprehensive Plan** is about 12 years old now and needs to be updated. Some of the projects have been completed and are off the books. Some are probably not going to happen, but its time to revisit that and redo where our vision is for the next 10, 15, 20 years down the line. What I would like to see from a Planner's perspective is that we review a Comprehensive Plan. And then you're going to have basically short term, mid term and long term action stuff out of that Comprehensive Plan to get to wherever we decide we want to get to in the next 15 to 20 years. And then the short-term action plan it would be more of what your

Strategic Plan is that we're talking about today. What are we going to do within the next three to five years to make everything happen that we want to see down the road? Then you can also tie that to a Capital Improvements Plan, which would be your three to five years of what your Capital Projects are going to be so you can tie that to the dollars that you have available. And the Comprehensive Plan deals with everything, transportation, land use, housing, downtown, waterfront, whatever you decide you want to incorporate in that. And Erie Regional Planning Commission has agreed to do that for us for free. It's probably going to be a year to year and half-long process by the time we get all of the public input, interview all the people we need to interview to get a good vision for our future. Mr. Kline said any document of that magnitude usually includes about 10 focal points and she just mentioned some, community development, our industrial, economic, commercial, residential, mixed, transportation issues. To me the big core, especially when we're going to talk about capital budgeting, infrastructure improvements, things that will help to facilitate economic development. Which will then help to facilitate maybe commercial development, which will then help facilitate residential development in an overall scheme of developing the City. So this is a document that we would like to proceed with. It will include focus groups and community surveys. It'll include all of the Commissioner's input, along with staff. You're looking at new technologies in being able to incorporate as many people as possible. That's something that is well needed, especially since it hasn't been done in years.

Mr. Kline said there are many projects on the books that I would like to see finished, because there are many that I would like to start. So I'm not going to start any new projects until we get some on the books completed. But there are things that we have started and there are things that will be finished, at least the mothballing of the Keller Building. We approved the ordinance to proceed with that. The bidding of the roof has gone out and should be opened in a week or two. I spoke with the Hagggs, Mr. and Mrs., who have offered to head up any volunteer group of trying to take care of the windows as part of the mothballing process. I have been working with Jeff Rosekelly of Engineering, and there are also structural issues in regard to the chimney that should be taken care of as well. All hopefully under the proposed \$75,000 budget. Gradel has something that we're going to have an answer to in the next 110 days or else. So that's something I know is going to hopefully have a positive result.

**I. Develop a Pedestrian Path Along the Water (Sandusky Bay Pathway)** - Mr. Kline asked for updated information on the pathway around the City. President Murray said you and I had a conversation today about the continuing to work on that. That was something that Mr. Packan had been particularly involved with. So a lesser extent that Scott Schell had been involved and Mr. Lippus is no longer with the City. And we had a lot of activity in applying for grants and looking for various sources of funding. Long term I think that's a very important project for the City. Right now it is five miles of highway that isn't really connected to anything else yet and I think in the long term that could be a very important piece to the kind of life of living in Sandusky. But without having a plan about what we want for either goals and objectives or the Strategic Plan items that we want to focus on, my concern is in it getting lost. Because we do need people to search out grant money without very little of that ourselves to continue that effort. So I wanted to reaffirm that this was something very important to this community. Mr. Kline said okay, very good.

Mr. Kline said **Hayes Avenue Underpass** I believe is very key when it comes to looking at economics when it comes to terms to necessary infrastructure improvements, which I hope will lead to positive economic growth. We will be putting that out to bid. I believe it's around a \$1.5 million project and we should have legislation to you by June of this year. President Murray asked if we had a funding commitment from the state? Mr. Kline said we have a funding commitment for the state starting with fiscal year 2009. Their fiscal year starts July 1<sup>st</sup> of 2008. Mr. Kline asked Mrs. McKillips what was the construction timetable? Mrs. McKillips stated about a year. It will get started this year and completed next year. President Murray said I think the whole Hayes Avenue Corridor is something that we should be adding to the Strategic Plan. As for me that will be a top ten focus because we basically have the Firelands Regional Medical Center. We've got Sandusky YMCA

coming in. Hopefully the YMCA will be in the middle of that and that long term will be a really great place to live. Especially if we get this underpass fixed up so that the people who live, go to school and work in that area can pass through more easily and more safely. Mr. Kline said I actually see it as potential actually of some economic development, as well as residential development there. We're trying to come up with a relationship or synergy between the schools, the Y and the hospital. The hospital being our number one employer. It was actually started under Governor Taft, it's called the Third Frontier, why not try to make that Sandusky's Third Frontier. There are a ton of bio-medical type grants that are out there. The list goes on. There's millions of dollars. I'm not saying that we're eligible or not. Can we put together an idea that allows us to put us in a position to be eligible for these types of grants? I quickly approved Hayes Avenue within my first two or three days of working here. It really needs to be focused on. I'm with you Mayor, it needs to be in the top ten.

Mr. Kline said the **Marina District**, we are in some negotiations, but of course we would want to see that those negotiations would come to fruition to protect the community and move forward in a positive manner. Especially when it comes to on paper of what that is going to look like. So obviously that will be accomplished this year as well and this is a focus on our side.

President Murray said you didn't mention anything about the Transit Marina. Mr. Kline said the **Chesapeake** is around 190 units. There are about 35 or less units now available on the market. They announced they signed a contract with Vacationland Realty, put it on the MLS. There are a couple very nice units still available on the second and third floor, nice views if anyone is interested. I'm not sure what posturing went on, but there are only about 30 to 35 units left of the 190 that were planned. President Murray said we heard different numbers about what has been sold. Mr. Kline said that's how many are sold or under contract he's closed. And that's to say he was properly quoted, but they've closed on 51% of the units. The other units are sold, but are waiting 45 or 60 days with financing or title search, etc. That's really where the other units haven't been closed on, but they have sold.

Mr. Kline said we just received notification from the Army Corps on the **Transit Marina** with probably another 12 questions before they approve the permit. One thing you can say about the Corps is they are very thorough before they issue you a permit. We started to work on answering those questions today, the number of boat slips, breakwall length, etc. It was a simple series of questions, which frankly have become monotonous and frustrating. We've answered them two or three times now. We will answer those and hopefully get their answers to them by the end of this week.

President Murray said do we still have a funding gap with respect to the Transit Marina? Mr. Kline said that I can't answer. Mr. Miers has been the lead negotiator with Mr. Davis. I'm trying to finalize the grant and the granting of the permits and of the funding. President Murray said we had to receive one grant for the Transient Marina and we had another one that we had applied for and did not receive that. And there was a thought that there might be some other funds available at the ODNR, but I take it you can't go any further on that.

Mr. Scott Schell, Economic Development Specialist, said that is correct. We had the one grant in hand, the \$780,000 Cooperative Boating Facility Grant through ODNR. We had a second application with ODNR and they've decided that our project didn't meet their criteria exactly. We've had subsequent meetings with ODNR and they have given us other suggestions that we could potentially look at. One is more of a Revolving Loan Fund that ODNR has where they came and look at financing, certain aspects of a construction project we had and offered a reduced buy-down of interest rates, etc. We've discussed that with MidStates and they are considering it. President Murray said is the shortfall the actual dredging of the facility? Mr. Schell said that's what we initially went to the second grant for, was for dredging. And from an ODNR perspective, our project was more of an excavation and not a dredging. But this other possibility that ODNR proposed to us, can be used for one-time excavation expenses. President Murray said so we are still pursuing that? Mr. Schell said yes.

Mr. Stahl said since Mr. Kaman appointed me Economic Development liaison, Mr. Kline and I have been working on the **Hayes Avenue Underpass** with several different entities on a incubator-type concept for medical. It's confidential and I would be happy to share that with you, but I did want the folks that were here to know. It's a long process. Mr. Kline said Hayes Avenue is an ideal location for that.

**Items A. Paper District or B. Relocation and Development of City Hall** - Mr. Kaman said number one ranking was the Paper District and we strongly need to get that back on track. To start a development and then stumble like this when we knew everything was based on getting these grants, as soon as we dropped one grant we knew we were going to have these problems, but we've got to refocus.

**B. Relocation of City Hall and Development of City Hall Property** - Mr. Kaman said this started out as Relocation of City Hall, but the citizens were going to get what we need first and that morphed into the citizens were going to get what we need last. The developers were proposing that this be last, and the vote went to proceed with that and that's fine, but I think we need to figure out a way to get the citizens a new City Hall that was supposed to first on the list for the phases. We are going to go on for ten years and not put any money into this building. The Police Department is overcrowded, upstairs offices are outdated, and windows and doors need to be replaced. This needs work now and that's why it was rated B on our Action Plan several years ago. Now it's pushed way to the bottom. It needs to be a priority.

Mr. Stahl said I have been saying for two years a lot of the back-end operations of the City, Engineering and computers, you can move so much of this operation out to Cement Avenue right now. You can go buy carpeting and move them out there next week and it's a new building. I think we need to come to a conclusion with what we're going to do, if anything, with Perkins Township. I think that made sense. We need to put this right at the top of our list. If we are not going to do anything with Perkins Township, then maybe we should look into what we can move out there to Cement Avenue. This Police Station we have is willfully inadequate. You can put all of the windows that you want into this thing, but new windows aren't going to change this thing. The bricks and the mortar here just aren't working. But if you wanted a small city hall, in my mind it doesn't need to be that big, that we can work with Perkins Township and we can do a joint facility and it would work. We should move part of our operation out there now into an energy efficient situation. That building has handicap accessible restrooms, there's offices, and I'm not talking on the second floor, but if you move an elevator out there, you could really move almost a whole building out there. But it is kind of a waste of space out there right now. Mr. Kaman said I agree. President Murray said we are meeting with the Township Trustees on February 12<sup>th</sup> to continue that dialogue and see if they feel that that makes sense to have a joint police facility and municipal court. And if we made the moves that you are talking about, Engineering and IT, maybe move other departments out to Cement Avenue, of course a joint police facility and municipal court will take years. Mr. Stahl said it could make more of this building available to expand some of your offices Chief and just make it temporarily available. We have roughly 10,000 square feet. I get in a lot of these offices with my job around town, there is no finer office space available than what we have and we don't use. Mr. Kline asked was that concurrence amongst the City Commission about using more office space out to Cement Avenue? Since I've been here, I've asked questions about why we don't do certain things to this current City Hall and the answer is always because there is going to be a new City Hall, and it doesn't make any sense to spend any money on the current City Hall. When I looked at the plans of how to pay for a new City Hall, it all came out of developments that we're going to be TIF'd and those are several years away. And those TIF monies would be several years away from that as well. My electric and gas bill alone in this building is over \$150,000 a year. If I can do some simple things to reduce that, I could reduce that by 10% and that's fifteen grand a year after a few years. To be honest, my personal preference on my type of management style is more conducive of having everyone under one house. That's easier for me just walking down the hall. We've talked about heating, one side of the building is freezing and the other is hotter than heck. That's because of the way this building has been built.

Mrs. Parthemore said the HVAC System services different sectors. In this room alone there's one on that side of the room and one on this side and you also have heating in the back. One control kicks on another in this room and we have that same situation all throughout the building. The bottomline is that it is a very inefficient system. The HVAC system for this room, up on this roof here, we've had to put some money into this year. If we're here more than a year or two, we're probably going to have to replace them because they were leaky. And we do have alarms throughout the building to make sure there was no leakage of gas. So the system is very hard to regulate and there are very limited things we can do without putting some money into the system.

Mr. Stahl said I think we need to find some answers from you Mr. Kline. Mr. Kline said in my opinion you are spot on when you say ten years. What has been told to me is some areas downtown, I would like to move a new City Hall downtown somewhere. I mean you're talking in the way it's being proposed again, is TIF dollars through development, that development has to start, development has to be finished. TIF dollars will slowly roll in. Once they slowly roll in, you bank them for a while and then we do needs assessments and then we do engineering design work. And if we have to purchase the ground, once we finally are able to have it in place, the construction that's going to take a couple years. Mr. Kaman said I don't know which way is the better way to go. I think we need to come up with a good answer of which way is better, do we spend \$200,000 or \$300,000 now to get us through this next ten years? If this goes through and all of a sudden when its 10 years down the road, this part doesn't get done, somebody better have some answers, because when they say now you have to come up with \$3 million or \$5 million for City Hall. President Murray said I would like to be in a position 90 to 120 days where we know the answers to some of these questions. At that point in time we should have some objectives, having the development agreement for the Marina District worked out. And if we can't come to terms in that period of time, then we need to look at other options, either doing something else down at this corner or working with another developer. I don't think that's an unrealistic objective. We will know soon how Perkins feels in 21 days or so about the police facility. I think Mr. Kaman is right, it's an awfully long time to wait. I don't know if we can afford to wait. Part of this is driven by the fact that the City simply doesn't have any money to rebuild City Hall. We should take a real good hard look at moving folks out to Cement Avenue and we should know that in 120 days. And we should know how we are going to fund that kind of move because there will be construction costs associated with that. If we decide to move and staff's recommendation is to move departments out to Cement Avenue, then we need to know what it is that we can do with this building, if anything, to make it more energy efficient let's say for as long as ten years. I think 2008 really needs to be the year of closing on things. I share Mr. Kaman's frustrations. We need to know where we're going to go, especially with this building. Maybe we should be talking to the developer about the increasing urgency on the State's part to do something with this and we can't wait ten years for this building watching what's happening with increasing costs. I don't know what house bill you could use to fund some of the energy improvements or if there are alternatives for us in terms of funding a much smaller city hall some place else. We could get to the point where we know we're going to have a new police facility someplace else and a municipal court, and we know that we're going to be able to move some offices out to Cement Avenue. We have a very small place here and maybe that's something that we can't afford to bump out, but we need some recommendations from you Mr. Kline.

Mr. Kline said one of the objectives that I have not been able to express, it's not something that is going to happen in 2008 either, but it is city hall being a one-stop shop. Where you have questions, you need an answer you can get it, and quick customer-friendly service. That would be my primary objective of the usage. I've spent many nights here with the lights out trying to pretend that I'm just a resident customer and I've got this issue or this issue, where do I have to go. And this building just isn't conducive to that. That also includes being comprehensive and having everything under one roof. Mr. Stahl said and upon this theory Matt when you are looking at it, I think the Commission Clerk's office needs to stay. If not here, it might go out to Cement Avenue if you're looking at these options. If you have ever spent any time sitting with Joyce, she is the first line of defense of anybody coming in complaining about their speeding ticket, their parking ticket. You know where they all stop, they stop at Joyce Brown's office. And we're so lucky we have someone as friendly as Joyce Brown down there, but she should be City Clerk\Receptionist because we have one of our valuable Charter members that is answering questions of where the bathroom is. This is ridiculous. It's just not right. And we need to thank Joyce number one for her way of handling people that are very much upset and she calms them down, but that shouldn't be Joyce's job. Mrs. Joyce Brown said in the past what really helped was that right under the stairs, there used to be a switchboard/information center. There was a sign, a whole office with the breakroom in back and the center in front. Mr. Stahl said the other problem is that the other offices on the first floor keep their doors closed and Mrs. Brown doesn't, hers is open. And thank you Mrs. Brown for your patience for the job.

**A. Paper District Development** - Mr. Waddington said I want to know how we're going to benchmark this as far as responsibility on the **Keller Building**. In the past when we did this in '05, we had names that we followed up for responsibility to implement the process, the lead person and follow up person. We need to have a contact person given to the City Manager by e-mail maybe every two or three months to update us on the top three or four projects. Like Mr. Kaman said this building was number one and now it's pushed back. A lot of this stuff was talked about four years ago. This would be for those that weren't on the Commission before. Like the solar energy and why we didn't spend money on this building. Maybe a walk through or assessment on the needs of the heating and air conditioning, the front doors out here. I don't know if in ten years we will get our money back if we put a big investment in, so we're going to be piece-mealing and I don't know if that's good or smart with tax dollars. I'm concerned about the neighborhoods two or three or blocks east or west, it might build in a block or two or are we just moving problems around because we have a lot of aging neighborhoods in the City of Sandusky. That's the problem we need to tackle as much as jobs.

President Murray said the aging homes and aging neighborhoods are a concern and a lot of people maintain them very well. But the real dilemma for us is without economic development, we really can't have community development. It would be very difficult to expect people to improve their homes or rebuild them if they don't have the jobs to afford that. And it's very difficult for the City to have the ability to help out with that if we don't have a tax base.

Mr. Waddington said it sounds great, but again point A, let's go back to the Marina District. A perfect example of what we have down there, I think we need to finish a couple of items. We need to get a couple jobs done. We need buy-in from the community. It builds confidence when you get the projects done. Another is the railroad and are they stepping up to the plate, because we can fix our sidewalks and streets. Mrs. McKillips said we have sent them notices. I mean they just won't do it. Mr. Waddington said that's what I'm talking about, it's called benchmarking. We need a monthly update on projects. President Murray said the way those contracts read, they are required to maintain the bridge and abutments and they do that for structural purposes. We certainly should be talking to them about improving. They have indicated in the past that they have no interest in coordinating their work with ours. Mr. Waddington said I don't want to go back and do redos. President Murray said Mr. Kline we ought to speak to the railroad, especially about Hayes Avenue.

**M. Promote Sandusky as a Destination** - Mr. Stahl said Marv Byer called last week and said instead of drab black, why can't we paint it a different color and put the words "Welcome to Sandusky" on the side. Why can't we use what we have out by Margaritaville, "Welcome to Sandusky, the Heart of America's Roller Coaster" and then you haven't stolen the name from anybody else. It describes what we do and we have a great way to advertise our City. Mr. Kline said I like your thought and I can think of at least six other communities in Ohio that used those words.

Mr. Waddington asked could we look into that **Mr. Klein possibly benchmarking?** We look into that and putting this down today and get our top three and four and then follow up quarterly, maybe every other month, here's where it is. Mr. Klein said good, as a follow up. Mr. Waddington said that benefits us with buy-in with the community also and the elected officials. President Murray said I'm starting to think that Mr. Stahl's idea of having a one-page set of goals and objectives was a good idea so we have that right in front of us. These are short-range things on kind of a rolling list as we get them crossed off we can move on to something else. It makes sense.

**C. Exchange Strategies with Other Local Organizations** - Mr. Waddington said it would make sense to have an update from time to time, where are we with the talks, a meeting coming up as far as working with Perkins? Chief Nuesse said the last conversation with Chief McClung I shared with the City Manager through e-mail. That his marching orders were to stop until the Trustees made a decision on whether they wanted to proceed or not to full capability. We did all the right work and got all the information and it's now up to their political body. Mr. Waddington asked could we put that at the top of our list to get that moving? President Murray said we need to, we need to know where City Hall is going to go and what size its going to be. This was then the idea of having in 90 to 120 days an idea of where these parts and pieces

are going to go over the course of the next year. We may well even say to the developer, no we need you to figure out how to give us x-number of dollars now so that we can deal with City Hall or in a year's time or something like that.

**F. Marketing Dollars for Schools to Identify and Promote Strengths/Success Stories**

- President Murray said I don't understand why that would be part of the Strategic Plan. Mr. Fuqua said discussions that we had with prior Commissions, along with the previous City Manager, was that a lot of residents when they're looking at communities they look at schools first. If the school system is not up to par, regardless of what opportunities may be there, they're not going to come to the area. That was partnering with the schools because we have some great school systems here. President Murray said that's important and I wonder if it should make its way into the Comprehensive Plan. I don't have any objections to leaving it in. Fire Chief Meinzer said also it was making sure the School Levies passed at that time.

**G. Develop Two Historic Neighborhoods (Kilbourne & Southside)**

- President Murray said that was something that fell under Department of Housing and I don't know where we are. That was put on before you joined the City and maybe with the changes in that office, this is something that has fallen by the wayside. At the next meeting maybe we should be able to rank them. Mrs. Handy said as far as I can tell, there wasn't a whole lot of work done for this. There were extra points given on applications for our Housing Rehab Program that they were in these two areas, but actually not a whole lot of houses in either of those two areas either applied or that we worked on. If the Commission does feel that this is a priority, we can certainly develop a program that will go a lot more towards redoing these neighborhoods. Mr. Fuqua said that wouldn't be a bad idea because that would address one of Mr. Waddington's concerns about neighborhoods. Mrs. Handy said now's the time to start talking about that because in March we have to do our new program for things on our Block Grant dollars. There are different programs, different priorities. We need to know that and talk about that now so maybe we could program funds for '08. There are certainly other things that we can do other than what's being done right now. President Murray said it is the consensus to leave this in the Strategic Plan.

**H. Increase Code Enforcement and Strictly Enforce Policies**

- Mr. Waddington said I would volunteer to be a part of this because we need to do something different there. We're citing people for paint chips and we've got buildings falling apart. The homes, I think it was a good idea, but we had a lot of disappointments. Mr. Fuqua said specifically we continually hound and fine and enforce these rules with our residents, yet we see businesses and buildings that go virtually untouched. The American Crayon building on Hayes and there were a couple buildings downtown, but I don't see any citations or mandates going to them that they need to get theirs fixed. So if we're going to keep this in there, that needs to go both to residents and businesses. Mr. Kline said the focus has changed from nitpicking and will be changed to be comprehensive not only to residents, but commercial as well. Mr. Waddington said Mr. Kline let us know what their program or philosophy is.

Mr. Kaman said I strongly favor a strong Code Enforcement. Last summer it was nice going around town and seeing all the improvements people were putting in their houses. It's what our City needs. We need to clean up after ourselves and it's not all residents and it's not all landlords. We need to find a way Carrie that we can do this politically correct, but I don't know how. Mrs. Handy said we've changed the way we do things. They were doing zone inspections where they were finding paint chips, etc. and that's really not the focus of the Code. The focus of the Code is to work towards the rental housing, the people who are making money off providing the housing. Our Code is also really a complaint-based Code. So we no longer go out looking for housing violations. We let the complaints come to us. That way we are not singling anybody out. We get a valid complaint from residents or people outside of our department who give us complaints. So it totally changes the way we do inspections. We're no longer do zones. And we want to keep our residents here and not be after them for a paint chip, which is not doing any of us any good as far as goodwill towards the residents that we do have. Mr. Kaman said if we can just come up with a friendly reminder the City Code is this, we notice this, please call us with your plan.

Mr. Stahl said if you are a Section 8 landlord, do you face an annual inspection for electric, water supply, etc.? Mr. Fuqua said yea, I'm on the board and that's a big

stickler for them to make sure houses are kept up to standard. Mr. Stahl said if Metro is checking the electric and the water pressure and making sure that the home is safe for the tenants of Section 8, it's my understanding if it is not, then they don't pay it. Mr. Fuqua said yep, they put it in an escrow account. Mr. Stahl said and they have an out of city firm do that? Mr. Fuqua said that is right. Mr. Stahl asked what's wrong with working with Metro because they are making sure the inside is okay, the landlord should also be making sure the outside is good? Mr. Fuqua said Metro pays their own inspectors, but the money is dealt with by somebody else. Mr. Stahl said so what's wrong Mr. Kline with we collect a \$25 housing fee, and us paying EMHA to do an outside inspection? Mr. Kaman said Metro Housing does currently inspect the outside of rentals also. Chief Nuesse said many cities have found a correlation between active code enforcement and decreasing crime.

Mr. Icsman said I didn't have enough money in my budget for legal support, which enabled me to help Carrie with advice and ultimately prosecution. In August when we cut 10% of the budget, that was where I cut. I hope you will leave it in this year.

Mr. Kaman said on Code Enforcement, I would like the City to come up with a way to speed up the once they are condemned countdown. I know there are a lot of problems with the banks and estates. Mr. Murray asked if the Land Bank Program would be helpful with speeding that up? Mrs. Handy said they are related, but we are working on trying to get that set up as fast as we can. We were able to get the houses down this year within a three-month timeframe. We don't want houses sitting around. That's a liability for the City. They let those houses sit there with our condemnation notices on it. Nothing's being done. It's a crime. People break into them. It's a fire issue, it's an arson is an issue. We've been working very hard, but there are some issues about ownership. A lot of times it's actually hard for us to find who actually is in control of the properties. With the foreclosures it's real tough because it's still in the old owner's name or the old owner is either gone or doesn't want to have anything to do with it, so we have to find who is responsible. There is no reason why it can't become a 60 to 90 day process, provided we could find the owner. We've reactivated the Housing Appeals Board. They've been very active recently. We are starting to issue lots of administrative penalties when people aren't fixing up their properties. So people are starting to get mad because we are actually doing that. They're appealing these penalties to the board. We've also taken quite a few properties to the board this year for demolition.

Mr. Murray said so right now funding is not the primary obstacle? Mrs. Handy said no, we do have money set aside for housing in our Community Development Block Grant Funding. So for right now housing is not the issue, but the commercial structures require a significant amount of money to demolish most of them. I don't think we have the money, unless we want to totally reallocate a whole bunch. Some of these commercial structures you're talking \$30,000, \$50,000. I think right now our budget for the housing we will be able to do quite a few more houses. But those are \$6,000 to \$10,000 a piece. We have been looking at a lot of quotes on demolitions for some of these commercial structures and it's a lot of money. You've also got environmental issues with those too with asbestos and things like that.

Mr. Fuqua asked how many commercial structures need to be demolished? Chief Meinzer said we started that as it was brought up at one of the Commission meetings. We had one inspector that was designated just to go and identify the vacant and abandoned buildings and we are at over 100. Some of the owners have storage in them. We have identified and taken pictures of them all, but we are having the same problem identifying some of the owners with the Auditor's site because they are in transition somewhere. As we proceed, those that do not have a use of the facility, we're trying to gain access to confirm that. We're working with the Law Director to come up with legislation in June where we can charge, but in the long run it is going to depend upon what you want to do with them.

Mr. Waddington asked was there a legal process? And like American Cabinets, and American Crayon somebody bought a portion of, but it's eventually probably going to drop back on us. Some of these buildings are hazardous or condemned and we need to hold someone responsible. Mr. Icsman said I think this would be partially solved. We can get to a point where some of those buildings, we can require if they tell me there is not a use, that they are secured, insured, they register, then they can pay a fee for Mike's peoples time to do that. That's one solution and then you're talking about those that really get into disrepair and that is a problem. You can certify that. When Mr. Edmon was on the Commission, we did the commercial one that had the

partial fire. We got that done pretty quick, Kathy and I, and certified that cost pretty quickly and knew that that owner was in the middle of divorce. But you still have to have the money and we were able to have the money to get that done. That's the practical problem when you get into that \$100,000, \$200,000 even if we could do all of those things to make it happen quickly, where are we going to get the money and then try to recoup the costs. But to answer Mr. Waddington's question, there is a state law for environmental concerns. I think Mr. Walker is actually contacted for that and he makes sure they take care of some of their environmental concerns before they leave to some extent. Discussion ensued.

President Murray said the only other two solutions that I have read about has been the kind of Land Bank Program that Michigan has, which is countywide and brings more resources there so they have some more funding sources. The other thing is a Green Space Tax, which is controversial. But the idea is that they provide a funding mechanism so that we don't end up with these disposal cities, which is what we're doing now. It's cheaper to go build on green land. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Stahl said the Apex Building, my understanding is that they're only going to tear down part of it. Has someone checked on the structural integrity of the rest of that building so it's safe to stand on its own? Mr. Kaman said I think we just condemned the front part that they're tearing down. I don't know if our inspectors went in the back building or not, but that was where the sign was. Mr. Klein said the authority would be our Chief Building Inspector, but Scott and Carry have both been through the building. Mr. Stahl asked were they going to tear up the concrete that is associated with the front part or leave that there? Mr. Schell said I don't know about the pad, but it is the entire front portion where most of the truck bays is slated for removal. Mr. Stahl asked was it structurally sound so our troops wouldn't be in danger? Fire Chief Meinzer said for structural integrity, we count Mr. Poulos. Mrs. McKillips said we have a firm head up an engineering study on the building, who has been in touch with Mr. Poulos. And basically that is why he said go ahead and tear up the front end of it. ***President Murray said we should have a copy of that report and have Mr. Poulos take a look at it.***

Mr. Waddington asked how about the Reiger and how long did we let that sit? Mr. Kline said with Mr. Spatz, that happened right now, there is a funding gap for development. We as inspectors have not been in the building recently, but I did and I can see why there's a funding gap. We've had conversations with Mr. Spatz and also with The Foundations relating to the purchase of the building. My understanding is the contract goes until 2009 for Mr. Spatz to spend \$1 million on the building. Our last conversations with him, there wasn't anything positive. He's still struggling to figure out how to come up with that gap. I don't have anything positive to report on the building, but you are right, it is a dangerous building. It needs a lot of work. So as it goes for the Reiger, Mr. Spatz is still under contract with it until early 2009 or maybe mid 2009 to put this \$1 million into that building.

Mr. Kline said the Apex Building, the front part is being torn down and the current owners have just signed a contract with the new commercial developer. A commercial real estate firm is to market it and the design is currently on the market and would actually be paddled at a conference in California this week. Mr. Schell said it is going to be the next ICSC Convention, wherever that is being held, a large shopping center, a large nationwide invention. The owners have told the new property manager that that needs to be their focus when they go to this convention. Mr. Stahl said at least the old part of that building had a clean façade, but what worries me Mr. Kline is that we're going to have a façade that hasn't seen the outside of daylight in 70 or 80 years. I'm worried that that pad is going to be there and they are not going to chop that up, but that could be a beautiful building.

**I. Develop a Pedestrian Path Along the Water (Sandusky Bay Pathway)** - Mr. Stahl said prior to being elected, that pathway was part of this deal around the Chesapeake and that it would be public access around the Chesapeake Building included in this phase. I would like staff to report back and if that was included, it should be there.

**J. Combine Forces to Ensure High Quality/Low Utilities** - President Murray said we've done an awful lot of that in the last two years with water and sewer.

**K. Establish a Customer-Focused Operating System at All Levels** - Mr. Fuqua said I have all the confidence in the world that staff will continue to take care of that. Mr. Murray said many of these items were unobjectionable, but they certainly are important points that should be included as part of the City's plan.

**L. Promote Safety Service Response Times** - Mr. Fuqua said recently I had an unfortunate occasion where I saw Chief Meinzer's guys in action, over the weekend my father was transported to the hospital and the response time was excellent. They beat me there and I was closer to my parent's house than they were. Unfortunately we had to shut down services at one of our stations, but Chief Meinzer's guys are doing the best that they can with what they have. Chief Meinzer said thanks on behalf of the guys. This was a priority originally because they cut that \$600,000 out of our budget and we had to reduce the ambulances and we went to the new concept of advance life support ambulances. We equipped our fire trucks with advance life support equipment and they could provide initial treatment on the scenes. So that was something that we felt we should keep track of to make sure that our service was not lacking because of budget cuts. Times for initial emergency response vehicles actually improved and our transportation time's improved with less manpower.

**M. Promote Sandusky as a Destination** - Mrs. Farrar asked were we changing that slogan? Mr. Stahl said absolutely. It's on a very expensive sign out by Margaritaville, "Welcome to the City of Sandusky, Heart of America's Roller Coaster." We've got it, let's tell a little bit about Sandusky. Mr. Kline said I want to create that business friendly environment here that is conducive to growth, but that is about promoting Sandusky and creating that sales team, sales attitude of promoting Sandusky. And I like the tag line. I like it a lot. ***Mr. Waddington said I make that a motion that we switch. That we get rid of "...Live, work and play..." and we use "City of Sandusky, Heart of American's Roller Coaster." as Sandusky's new slogan. Mrs. Farrar seconded the motion. President Murray asked for a vote on the motion, and with all Commissioners voting "Aye", the motion carried.***

**N. Brownfields Development** - President Murray said there was a lot of work on this. It seems to be ongoing. This was ranked #2 back in 2005. I don't think we reranked it in 2007. Mr. Fuqua said it remains a priority and we should keep going as we are.

**O. Develop a Beach at Lions Park** - President Murray said a more controversial item. Mr. Stahl said don't anybody take this wrong, but I don't think this makes the list of projects for us to spend anytime on this year. I think Mr. Kline should bring us the short list of what he considers to be the top ten. And like Mr. Waddington said, the list should be attainable things that we can hit them all for this year. Mr. Kaman said four years ago when I first got elected, if we had a \$100,000 million it would make our list, but we don't. It's a nice plan, but it just ain't possible. President Murray said if economic development occurs out in that area that may be a possibility at that point in time. It's a great plan on the drawing board. It is an incredible asset to the City of Sandusky. And the park really needs updating, but we can't afford it because Park & Rec comes out of the most stressed part of the City's budget, which is the General Fund. Mr. Fuqua said it is not a priority. Why don't we just leave it in the Strategic Plan, if and when the money is available.

**P. Cedar Point Drive Signage Changes** - President Murray said accomplished.

**Q. Development of East End Property** - President Murray said back in 2005 I understood this to refer to eventually when Griffing Airport would move out to the NASA Property. Mr. Fuqua said put this in the same category as the beach.

**R. Develop a Sandusky Souvenir Shop** - President Murray said was there anyone in favor of keeping that on the Strategic Plan? Mr. Fuqua said the State Theatre sells Sandusky stuff. Mrs. Joyce Brown said originally that was my idea of promoting Sandusky and selling ourselves. Mr. Murray said it was a great idea, but no funds.

**S. Fund Ferry Service** - President Murray said this was up running well. Their traffic last year was up and we had a meeting with Marcy Kaptur and a

representative of the Jet said their passenger counts were up because the private boat traffic was down. Mr. Stahl said item 2. Steps to Complete Action Plan: was "...operators to provide daily ferry service to Cedar Point and the islands in 2005 season,..." I hope the private enterprise picks up and once again makes it possible to hop a ferry at the foot of Columbus Avenue and take it to Cedar Point. That's Sandusky's history for the last 100 years and I think that is something that's really missing. And what is sad is to ride the former Cedar Point boat's you have to press dial or you have to go to Sawmill Creek to ride it. It's just not practical for them to do it in our current situation. Mr. Hagg said about a year ago I made inquiries, because I was thinking maybe the Mainstreet Association would help promote that and I contacted people at Cedar Point and the Maritime Museum about boats, etc. and every place that I asked, there was interest. I didn't follow through, but I think everyone would be receptive to starting that kind of ferry service. Mr. Stahl said I just don't think it's realistic with the severe economic impact. When the development happens downtown, the private enterprise will take care of it. President Murray said if someone comes along to provide that service, the City would be very supportive.

**T. Surf's Up Redevelopment** - President Murray said over the course of the next year I assume we'll continue to have festivals as we can afford them down there.

President Murray said I would like to see whether this goes on the list of goals and objectives or the Strategic Plan or someplace else. We don't have a **long-term Capital Budget** put together. We have parts and pieces of it for water, sewer, and streets, but it really only addresses about 20% of the street surfaces. We have long-term budgets in a general sense for water and sewer as Mrs. McKillips has put together. But we have not had anybody come in for a comprehensive look by the way of this structure and what's under the ground and what it is that we need to start replacing. Mr. Waddington said I'm worried if it is going to be heavily the City's part as far as financing. Some of those pipes are from 1870. Mrs. McKillips said actually 100 years old. President Murray said the water agreement does address that. Those main transmission lines are ones where we have a shared responsibility based upon the amount of water that goes through them. But obviously as to the residential lines or the smaller lines, that's our responsibility. I think we need to have a long-term look at especially these transmission lines because we have to provide them for the County. I would think this has come up at those meetings. Mr. Kaman said our main projects we have coming up we are bringing up at those meetings. The three entities discuss everybody's big projects, what we're going to do, and if it's really needed. Our lines are basically our responsibility and not the responsibility of the regionalized groups. President Murray said this is not in any way critical of Mrs. McKillips. There's just too much on her plate the way things are structured right now, 60% of the City's budget runs through Mrs. McKillips' office and that's too much responsibility to place on one person. She has to be responsible for both the big picture issues and all things going on on the ground and underground. I'm looking forward to your recommendation to better align responsibility Mr. Kline.

Mr. Kaman said I came in with five things on the list and two didn't get discussed. The **West End Overpass** concerns me. It's an ODOT project. It's not a City of Sandusky project anymore, but the fact remains that we're responsible for 5% of that cost. I think we strongly need to stay on top of both ODOT and the railroad and keep it moving forward. That 5% figure is going to grow. We already paid our 5% once. Once that change order comes in and things change, that figure is going to grow.

Mr. Kaman said **Water Towers** are out for bid right now. I'm seeing prices come in for water towers for other municipalities over budget, you need to keep money aside.

At 7:10 p.m. President Murray returned to the table and entertained motions for adjournment. Mr. Fuqua said so moved, Mr. Stahl seconded, carried unanimously.

ATTEST:

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B. JOYCE BROWN

CLERK OF THE CITY COMMISSION

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DENNIS E. MURRAY, JR., PRESIDENT

SANDUSKY CITY COMMISSION