

Present: Council President Downey; President Pro-Tem Woodrow; Members: Domzal, McCleary, Mooney, Pfeifer, Schmitt

Absent: None

Also Present: Village Manager, Murphy

President Pro-Tem Woodrow called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m. in the Village municipal building at 18500 W. 13 Mile Road.

**REVIEW AND CONSIDER RESOLUTION REGARDING BALLOT LANGUAGE FOR MARCH 2004**

Council is in receipt of a proposed resolution listing three Charter amendments, each one to be voted upon individually by the electors at the regular Village election to be held on March 3, 2004. Council chose to consider each Charter amendment separately.

Motion by Pfeifer, seconded by McCleary.

Resolved that the following Charter amendment be voted upon by the qualified electors of the Village of Beverly Hills at the regular Village election to be held on Monday, March 8, 2004, to-wit:

1. Shall Section 3.5, Elective Officers and Terms of Office, Section 6.1, Regular Meetings, and Section 8.5, Adoption of Budget, Tax Limit, of the Charter of the Village of Beverly Hills be amended to change the meeting day of Monday to read:

“the next regular meeting day of Village Council”?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Roll Call Vote:

Motion carried (6 – 0).

Downey entered the meeting at 5:15 p.m.

Motion by Pfeifer, seconded by Mooney.

Resolved that the following Charter amendment be voted upon by the qualified electors of the Village of Beverly Hills at the regular Village election to be held on Monday, March 8, 2004, to-wit:

2. Shall Section 9.16, Collection Fees, of the Charter of the Village of Beverly Hills be amended to read as follows:

“All taxes paid on or before September fourteenth of each year shall be collected by the Treasurer without collection fees. On September fifteenth, the Treasurer shall add to all taxes paid thereafter a collection fee of one percent (1%) of the amount of said taxes, plus one percent (1%) interest per month thereafter.” (Remainder of Section stays the same).

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Council discussed this Charter Amendment. Questions from Council and the public were addressed by Murphy.

Roll Call Vote:

Motion carried (7 – 0).

Motion by Pfeifer, seconded by Domzal.

Resolved that the following Charter amendment be voted upon by the qualified electors of the Village of Beverly Hills at the regular Village election to be held on Monday, March 8, 2004, to-wit:

3. Shall Chapter 12, Purchasing – Contracts – Leases, of the Charter of the Village of Beverly Hills be amended to read as follows:

“The Village Council shall have the power to determine by ordinance the policy of the Village of Beverly Hills as it relates to purchase and sale of property; contracts; and restriction on power to lease property.” ?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

These Resolutions must be published in the Eccentric newspaper and laid on the table for 30 days in accordance with statute. The Charter Amendments will come to Council for consideration again at the second Council meeting in December.

The suggestion was made to prepare a draft ordinance that would establish what would take effect should the third Charter Amendment be approved by the voters. Murphy proposed establishing a Council committee to prepare and recommend an ordinance to the full Council.

Roll Call Vote:

Motion carried (7 – 0).

## **WORK SESSION TO DISCUSS COUNCIL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Presentation from J. H. Hart Urban Forestry**

Judd Hart from J.H. Hart Urban Forestry was present with staff arborist Kevin Lary. J.H. Hart has been doing work for the Village of Beverly Hills for about seven years in connection with tree removal, storm related damage, and on-call tree trimming. J.H. Hart was the low bidder and was awarded a contract by Council for removal of dead and diseased Ash trees in Beverly Park this winter.

Murphy stated that there have been conversations at previous study sessions about a Village tree management plan that would include trees in the public rights-of-way and private property. Judd Hart was asked to conduct a tree inventory survey in Section One of the Village to identify the existing tree stock in public rights-of-way.

Hart displayed a chart showing the results of the Section One tree inventory and outlined how a block trimming program would benefit the Village from a tree hazard and an aesthetic standpoint. He noted that Section One is the worst hit area in the Village for storm damage due to the Silver Maple population of about 754 trees. It is a soft wood that is particularly susceptible to wind shear. Removing rotted cavities and hazardous limbs from those trees will create stability that enables the wind to blow through the trees without creating wind shear. Trimming trees will lessen the effects of storm damage to Silver Maples as well as other trees.

Hart commented that a high proportion of a specific species within a geographic area is not in the Village's best interest. It is devastating to the tree population when an epidemic like Dutch Elm disease or the emerald ash borer comes through the community. Using a wide variety of trees in an urban forest would be desirable.

Hart commented on the green and yellow Ash tree population in the Village and the number of trees that will have to be removed within the next couple of years in the public rights-of-way. There are 116 Ash trees in Section One alone.

Lary referred to the tree inventory and discussed the species of trees in terms of tree trimming. A block trimming program would involve trimming larger trees and removing limbs that present hazards to the public. Those trees will require minimum maintenance after they have been trimmed once. Trees that have been trimmed are easier to maintain, and the community has less storm damage and wind shear.

J. H. Hart conducted a pilot tree trimming program on Kirkshire this summer to provide Council with a visual of what Village street trees could look like. Photographs were circulated showing sections of Kirkshire before and after the tree trimming program. The urban forest within Beverly Hills is currently maintained only upon demand with no preventative tree trimming.

Domzal stated that Stan Pasioka reviewed Village ordinances about a year ago and offered the following recommendations on a tree maintenance program:

- Establish a Village inventory and develop a tree maintenance program
- Address a storm and brush clean up policy
- Consider assisting residents in establishing a cooperative tree planting program.

Hart was asked to comment on these recommendations. He stated that that J.H. Hart currently does storm and brush clean up for the Village. A block trimming program would be handled by his crews through an hourly cost. Hart would quantify and estimate the overall volume of work that the municipality wants to accomplish. He noted that a Village-wide project may take longer than anticipated to complete in the specified time if there are epidemics such as emerald ash borer or other projects that his crew is directed to do.

Hart related that, when his crew removes a tree within the right-of-way in the City of Birmingham, a new tree is planted within a 12 month period. The resident has the option to spend approximately \$350 additional for a more mature tree.

Questions and comments from Council on tree trimming on public and private property and eradication and disposal of emerald ash borer wood were addressed by Hart.

Downey questioned Council's interest in conducting a tree inventory of the entire Village as a first step in developing a tree maintenance and replacement program. The majority of Council members were in support of a tree inventory. Council members were interested in exploring the idea of maintaining and replacing the Village's tree stock in a thoughtful manner over a period of time as the budget permits.

Domzal offered to work with the Village Manager, Jack Harmon from the Parks and Recreation Board, and Judd Hart to develop a tree maintenance, removal, and replacement proposal for Council consideration during budget deliberations.

A recess was called at 6:20 p.m. Council reconvened at 6:30 p.m.

### **Dispatch Consolidation Update**

Director of Public Safety Woodard has been working together with 18 communities in Oakland County to explore consolidation of dispatch personnel by means of a central Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) remote from the Village. He updated Council on the status of the consolidated PSAP discussion.

By creating a central dispatch, communities would be relieved of concerns relative to keeping their dispatch operation fully staffed as well as associated payroll and salary issues. The communities involved in this study have attempted to estimate the comprehensive costs of consolidating into a single agency. It is estimated that the general cost to the 18 interested communities to staff and payroll their current dispatch operations is \$81,000,000. It was approximated that those communities could provide that service in a central location with \$67,000,000. The estimated 5-year cost to the Village including start-up costs would be about \$250,000 per year to participate in this large consolidated dispatch center compared to its current \$300,000 per year expense for this service.

Woodard outlined several issues to consider. Based upon the best estimate to date, a move to a consolidated dispatch could save the Beverly Hills public safety department budget approximately \$50,000. These projected savings must be considered in light of other factors. Some of the clerical duties currently performed by dispatchers would have to be picked up by other clerical staff. Currently, there are 1.5 clerical positions other than dispatch. Woodard would propose converting the part-time position to a full-time position in order to operate the seven digit line between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. This will impact the estimated savings in using a central dispatch.

Another economic factor that can impact the \$50,000 savings is the necessity for overtime payment to officers to monitor prisoners in instances where monitoring cannot be done by on-duty officer staff due to a fire incident response.

From a labor standpoint, it is anticipated that the current staff of 4.5 dispatchers could be transitioned to the new consolidated dispatch organization if they successfully complete the

employment process. Woodard stated that the new collective bargaining agreement with the dispatchers does allow for contracting of the service.

Woodard commented that the movement off site of dispatch and call-taking services could have an effect on perceived level of service. Department staff could be most impacted by the loss of local control over the dispatcher operation. The other client that could be impacted is the public itself in that some people may be used to name and neighborhood recognition and may take issue with the anonymity of a consolidated dispatch.

Woodard answered questions from Council including how fees would be established by the central dispatch service, costs of bringing a part-time person to full-time, overtime costs, and transferring calls made to Beverly Hills PSD to the central dispatch. Data from the study indicates that most of the economic advantages are realized by larger departments

Council discussed the issues involved with joining a consolidated PSAP and examined how the move would effect Beverly Hills. Based on the report provided by Woodard, it appears that the Village would basically break even economically and could experience a lessening of local control from the standpoint of employee staff and from the perception of some of the public. There was a consensus of Council not to pursue participation in a consolidated PSAP. Council members expressed interest in keeping dispatch costs to a minimum and continuing to consider other alternatives as they arise such as consolidation within some of the small communities.

Motion by Mooney, seconded by Schmitt, to receive and file the Dispatch Consolidation Update from Director Woodard dated October 30, 2003.

Motion carried.

### **Council Goals and Objectives**

In preparation for tonight's study session, Council members engaged in a written exercise whereby they answered a number of questions provided by the Manager to determine what they view as top issues facing the Village today and what they think is going right or wrong. Murphy compiled and categorized the responses into the following categories: infrastructure, budget/finance, council/community relations, quality of life, services, charter/ordinances, and staffing. Council viewed council/community relations and budget/finance as the highest priority categories. Murphy suggested that Council discuss these areas to determine priority issues and how Council should proceed in the short term.

Council/Community Relations - Members acknowledged that they have had problems communicating with each other. Council discussed how to work together as a unit. There was agreement to make a concerted effort to listen to each other and respect differences of opinions.

McCleary thinks that Council members should be elected to four-year terms on the basis that it takes over a year to become knowledgeable on Village matters. This will be a future topic of discussion.

Budget/Finances - Murphy informed Council that the Village is looking at the possibility of a hit in state funding of as much as \$250,000. The Governor of Michigan is considering reductions in statutory funding for school fund balances, prisons, universities, and cities. Council agreed that this is its number one priority to address in a timely manner.

Murphy has met with staff to discuss how to proceed with next year's budget in light of possible further reductions in statutory funding. Staff has discussed reducing the transfer of money from the general fund to the local road fund on the basis that the Village has been actively improving local roads and has repaired some of the worst asphalt and concrete streets in the community.

Murphy urged Council to begin considering budget scenarios if the Village loses \$250,000 in state funding. Questions and comments from Council on programs including ditching and library service were addressed. Murphy related that the Village is currently at a minimum staffing level. In answer to an inquiry, Murphy indicated that a management audit has not been authorized because the Village is currently in the process of conducting a community wide strategic plan. The Village's fund balance is currently at about 22% of budgeted expenditures, which is slightly higher than the 20% level set as Council policy.

There was agreement to establish a subcommittee of Council to meet with staff and explore various options to offset reductions in state shared revenue and bring back ideas for discussion at the Council table.

Motion by Pfeifer, seconded by Mooney, to form a Council subcommittee of Woodrow as chair, Domzal and Schmitt to work with administration on the budget shortfall.

Motion carried.

Infrastructure – It was agreed that this topic relates to budget and finances.

Quality of life – Developing a comprehensive approach to the revitalization of the east side of the Village includes issues such as the 14 Mile Road corridor study, code enforcement, landlord/tenant ordinance, and small town flavor. Murphy questioned whether Council is interested in moving forward in this area.

Council members discussed their views on how to proceed with east side revitalization. There were members who believe that revitalization is occurring on 14 Mile Road following recent road improvements. A suggestion was made to dedicate a study session to discussing where Council thinks the east side of Beverly Hills should be in the future from a housing development standpoint. It was mentioned that Council may obtain insight on what the residents want through the strategic planning process. The general sense of Council was to hold off considering east side revitalization at this time.

Services – The library question will be explored by the Council subcommittee on budget shortfalls.

Staffing – Murphy commented that Council seems pleased with the direction of administration. This item may receive further attention depending on the outcome of the strategic plan and the management audit.

Charter/Ordinances – There are members of Council who consider the village versus city issue a priority. Proposals were suggested in terms of gathering information on this topic. It was noted that converting from a village to a city is an 8-12 year process. After further discussion, there was agreement to defer activity on the city status issue until the strategic planning team has some time to develop its visions, goals, and key strategic initiatives and defines its core values.

Murphy stated that Council will begin to see trends coming out of the strategic planning group quickly as it proceeds. Council will not have to wait until the committee publishes its report to start moving on an issue.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

**Doyle Downey**  
**Council President**

**Ellen E. Marshall**  
**Village Clerk**

**Susan Bernard**  
**Recording Secretary**