

**MINUTES
PIQUA CITY COMMISSION
Tuesday November 1, 2011
7:30 P.M.**

Piqua City Commission met at 7:30 P.M. in the Municipal Government Complex Commission Chambers located at 201 W. Water Street. Mayor Fess called the meeting to order. Also present were Commissioners Vogt, Martin, Terry, and Wilson. Absent: None.

Mayor Fess introduced and welcomed new City Manager Gary Huff, stating he has been on board for a about week now and we have been keeping him very busy with lots of meetings. City Manager Huff thanked the Mayor stating he is very happy to be here.

Approval of the minutes from the October 18, 2011 Regular Piqua City Commission Meeting. Moved by Commissioner Wilson, seconded by Commissioner Martin, that the minutes of the Regular Piqua City Commission Meeting of October 18, 2011 be approved. Voice vote, Aye: Fess, Wilson, Martin, Terry, and Vogt. Nay: None. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

RES. NO. R-125-11

A Resolution amending the programmatic agreement with the Ohio Historic Preservation Office for the Administration programs funded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development

City Manager Gary Huff stated Resolution No. R-125-11 is a resolution approving the adoption of amendments to the Programmatic Agreement between the Ohio Historic Preservation Office and the City of Piqua.

The City has received federal funds through the Community Development Block Grant program and other federal funds administered by the Ohio Department of Development. These federal funds have specific requirements that local governments must meet through the National Environmental Policy Act. Recently, the Ohio Historic Preservation Office, offered amendments which now allow certain site improvements to be exempt from Ohio Historic Preservation Office review.

Public Comment

No one came forward to speak for or against Resolution No. R-125-11.

Moved by Commissioner Terry, seconded by Commissioner Wilson, to adopt Resolution No. R-125-11. Roll call, Aye: Wilson, Fess, Martin, Vogt, and Terry. Nay: None. Motion carried unanimously. Mayor Fess then declared Resolution No. R-125-11 adopted.

RES. NO. R-126-11

A Resolution of Appreciation for the Public Service of William O. Wheelock as a City Employee

City Manager Huff stated Resolution No. R-125-11 is a resolution of appreciation for William O. Wheelock. Mr. Wheelock is retiring as Power Plant Manager after 26 years of service to the City of Piqua.

Mayor Fess read the proclamation and presented it to Power Systems Director Ed Krieger, as Mr. Wheelock was unable to attend the meeting.

Public Comment

No one came forward to speak for or against Resolution No. R-126-11.

Moved by Commissioner Vogt, seconded by Commissioner Martin, that Resolution No. R-126-11 be adopted. Roll call, Aye: Terry, Martin, Vogt, Fess, and Wilson. Nay: None. Motion carried unanimously. Mayor Fess then declared Resolution No. R-126-11 adopted.

RES. NO. R-127-11

A Resolution appointing one member to the Energy Board

City Manager Huff stated Resolution No. R-127-11 appoints David Zimmerman to fill the unexpired term of Joe Drapp as a member of the Energy Board for a term to expire on March 1, 2012.

Public Comment

No one came forward to speak for or against Resolution No. R-127-11.

Moved by Commissioner Terry, seconded by Commissioner Wilson, that Resolution No. R-127-11 be adopted. Voice vote, Aye: Terry, Vogt, Wilson, Martin, and Fess. Nay: None. Motion carried unanimously. Mayor Fess then declared Resolution No. R-127-11 adopted.

OTHER

Monthly Reports – September 2011

Monthly Reports for September 2011 were accepted.

Mayor Fess stated she was so glad to see so many people in the audience to welcome City Manager Huff.

Brad Boehringer, 126 Mound Street came forward stating his apartment building also has the address of 701 N. Wayne Street and giving a little bit of the history of the building. Mr. Boehringer inquired if the Downtown Design Review Board covered any historical houses not located in the Downtown area, such as homes in the Piqua Caldwell Historic District. Mr. Boehringer also asked if it would be possible for the City to look into establishing a Historic Commission to oversee the historic district and historic homes in the City of Piqua.

Mayor Fess advised Mr. Boehringer to contact Jim Oda, the City Historian for information on historical recognition regarding his apartment building and the area he resides in.

Frank Barhorst, Wayne Street, stated while working on the new Shelter House at Mote Park he had the pleasure of speaking with two young girls Taylor and Katlyn playing on the playground equipment. Mr. Barhorst stated he asked them both what kind of playground equipment they would like to have in the Park in the future. Both girls agreed they wanted to have new swings and a merry-go-round, said Mr. Barhorst. Mayor Fess stated both of the items Taylor & Katlyn asked for are in the plans for the new playground at Mote Park next year.

Mr. Barhorst gave a brief update on the new Shelter House being built at Mote Park. The Shelter is close to be finished with a lot of help and support from the community by coming together for a common cause. Without the help and leadership of Russ Fashner, Chris Schmiesing, Jim Veters, Jim Cruse, Al Cooper, Commissioner Martin, and the other countless number of volunteers this project would not have been possible, said Mr. Barhorst.

Mayor Fess encouraged citizens to go up to Mote Park and see the beautiful shelter.

Tom Buecker, Hopewood Drive, representing the Water Committee Council stated they have been working very hard to acquire funds for improvements to the City of Piqua water sources. A grant was received to do some work at the Echo Hills Golf Course to clean out the water sources.

Several of the committee members were also present at the meeting. Mr. Buecker stated the Water Committee Council has a brief power point presentation they would like to present to the City Commission, and would like to be included on the November 15th agenda if possible.

Mayor Fess stated she wanted to recognize the work the committee has done, and would be happy to put them on the November 15th City Commission agenda. Mayor Fess inquired about a weed cutter they had planned to purchase for use in the waterways, and if they were able to get it. Mr. Buecker stated they were not able to get that particular weed cutter at this time due to a price difference, and further explained the reason and their future plans.

Jeff Lange, State Route 66, came forward and welcomed City Manager Gary Huff. Mr. Lange gave a brief history of POWW (Protecting Our WaterWays) citing some of their accomplishments. Mr. Lange voiced his concern over the water quality now and in the future of many of our local water sources. Mr. Lange stated the CAC (Citizens Advisory Council) is bound by the city limits of Piqua, and is now a part of the Middle Great Miami River Watershed Alliance. Mr. Lange encouraged citizens to attend the Citizens Advisory Council Meeting when they see them posted if they are concerned about protecting Piqua's water and natural waterways in the future.

Mr. Lange stated he personally supports the City of Piqua building a new water plant with existing well water sources. Mr. Lange is concerned about other sources of water stating they are ground water sources, and encouraged citizens to look at the Superfund Sites in Miami County for further information regarding the ground water.

Scott Phillips, Piqua Lockington Road, Vice President of POWW, and Vice President of the Middle Great Miami River Watershed Alliance came forward. Mr. Phillips stated on November 10, 2011 at 7:00 P.M. an open forum is scheduled at Edison Community College concerning the water issues, and encouraged citizens to attend. Mr. Phillips also passed out an informational brochure on Protecting and Preserving our Water produced by the Piqua Community Advisory Committee (CAC), and The Middle Great Miami River Watershed Alliance, LLC, (MGMRW).

Ruth Koon, Park Avenue, representing MainStreet Piqua, came forward and welcomed City Manager Gary Huff to Piqua. Mrs. Koon stated she would like to introduce the MainStreet organization to Mr. Huff and gave a brief update on the various activities of MainStreet Piqua in the community. Mrs. Koon thanked the City of Piqua for their support in the past and asked that the City consider their support in the future. Fundraising is a very important part of MainStreet Piqua, and listed several of the many events held each year to raise funds. MainStreet Piqua has only one paid employee Lorna Swisher, Executive Director and has the help of many volunteers, stated Mrs. Koon.

Mayor Fess stated they are looking at many items in the 2012 Budget, and complimented MainStreet Piqua on the all of the good things they do for the community.

Bob Bloom, Union -Shelby Road, came forward to encourage citizens to support the 2011 Marine Corps Reserve Toys-for-Tots program in our area. New toys and monetary donations will be accepted. Last year 2,745 toys were delivered to area children, and this year a "fill the truck" event is scheduled for December 10th from 12:00 – 4:00 P.M. in front of the Piqua Big Lots store located in Piqua on East Ash Street for anyone wishing to donate toys. All of the toys collected remain in the community where they are collected, all money is used locally, and donations are tax deductible, stated Mr. Bloom.

Commissioner Wilson commented that all of the events sponsored by MainStreet Piqua are great and are well attended. The MainStreet Piqua group seems to have a lot of energy, said Commissioner Wilson. Commissioner Wilson mentioned this is Mr. Huff's first night on television, and stated the Commissioners went through over a 100 resumes, with one of the most important requirements being they wanted the City Manager to have good people skills. Commissioner Wilson stated Mr. Huff has those people skills we were looking for, and encouraged citizens to get to know City Manager Huff.

Commissioner Wilson congratulated Theresa Anderson on her recognition as Principle of the Year in Ohio. Commissioner Wilson reminded and encouraged citizens to get out and vote on November 8, 2011.

Commissioner Terry stated on Wednesday, November 2, at 7:30 P.M. the Piqua YWCA is sponsoring "Meet the Candidate Night" and encouraged citizens to attend. The candidates for the 5th Ward Commission Seat, the Mayor's Seat, and information on the Piqua City Charter Amendments along with State and County Issues will be presented.

Commissioner Terry welcomed City Manager Huff to Piqua, stating she is very happy to have him here.

Commissioner Terry noted according to the Monthly Reports recycling numbers are up in September and encouraged citizens to continue recycling.

Commissioner Terry asked if it would be possible to coordinate with Shelby County next year on Trick or Treat night, citing she seemed to have a lot of children from out of the area. The City of Piqua currently coordinates with Miami County on scheduling the evening and would like to see Shelby County included next year if possible.

Commissioner Terry thanked the many volunteers who volunteer their time to the organizations and committees in the City of Piqua. It is nice to see cooperation from different groups working together for the good of the community, and it is a good time to be a volunteer, said Commissioner Terry.

Commissioner Vogt stated we have great volunteers in our town, including MainStreet Piqua, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Watershed Committee along with all of the other Boards and Committees who all deserve our support. Commissioner Vogt noted it is quite an undertaking to complete the removal of the silt from the waterways, stating he plans to get more involved with the organizations to help keep our waterways clean in the future.

Commissioner Vogt also reminded citizens to get out and exercise their right to vote on Tuesday, November 8, 2011.

Commissioner Martin stated he has had the pleasure of working with a very great diverse group of volunteers the past four weekends building the Mote Park Shelter, and thanked all of them for their help. This shelter will be something the citizens of Piqua can be proud of, stated Commissioner Martin. Commissioner Martin also thanked all the volunteers on the Boards and Committees for helping to make Piqua a better place to work and live.

City Manager Huff stated he is very excited to be here and thanked the Commission for the opportunity to work for the City of Piqua. Mr. Huff further stated he appreciates the warm welcome and reception he has received and especially wanted to thank the staff for their patience and helpfulness on getting him up to speed.

City Manager Huff stated on November 9, 2011 the Federal Government would be conducting an Emergency Alert System Test. This is the first nationally scheduled test conducted, and will be simulating a message from the President of the United States. This will be conducted like the monthly emergency test we currently have each month. More information regarding this test is available on the City website.

City Manager Huff announced the City of Piqua will be sponsoring a new program on the website entitled "Piqua Alert" where citizens can go to the website and sign up for any alerts the city might post. The purpose is for citizens to receive emails automatically if they are signed up with the program regarding any information the city puts out including road closings, Neighborhood information, power outages, press releases, and etc.

City Manager Huff announced several Board openings including the Board of Zoning Appeals (1), Community Diversity Committee (2), Civil Service Board (1), Income Tax Review Board (1) and the Stormwater Utility Board (2) and urged citizens to apply. Applications are available online and in the City Manager's Office.

City Manager Huff stated the Piqua Daily Call published recognition of the City of Piqua Finance Department and the Piqua Municipal Power Systems on their recent awards. City Manager Huff congratulated both departments on their recent achievements.

Mayor Fess congratulated both departments on their awards, further stating both departments continue to bring many national awards and recognition to the City of Piqua, and she appreciates what they do.

Mayor Fess stated in the 1990's the City of Piqua went to the finals of the "All American Cities" several times. One of the things we were most proud of was the large number of volunteer hours the City of Piqua had. There were cities much larger than Piqua who had less volunteer hours and that was something to be proud of for the City of Piqua. I think we are more volunteer minded today than back in the 1990's. That is what makes a community strong, being able to work together as volunteers to help make our community the best it can be stated Mayor Fess, and added her thanks to all the volunteers in the community.

Mayor Fess stated City Manager Huff is bringing a lot of new ideas to the City of Piqua and she is very excited to be working with him. Beginning the first of the year City Manager Huff will be starting a "Citizens Government Academy" and asked City Manager Huff to explain.

Mr. Huff explained that local government can be complex and the academy will explain how local government works, especially here in the City of Piqua as it relates to the operations. This academy will be an eight or nine week program that will take citizens through the various departments to see how they work and see the overall day-to-day operations of the city. At the end of the program there may be a mock City Commission Meeting where the citizens will participate in making decisions and see how the whole local government process works together. City Manager Huff encouraged citizens to participate and sign up for the academy, stating it will be a very rewarding program.

Mayor Fess stated this is an opportunity for citizens to understand how local government works, especially in the finance area, which is pretty complex. There is no fee for this program and City Manager Huff will be teaching the academy. We are very excited about the "Citizens Government Academy" and we are encouraging citizens to sign up, stated Mayor Fess.

Mayor Fess noticed there are only two empty seats in the City Commission Chambers this evening, stating she is glad to see so many people in attendance. Mayor Fess encouraged citizens to continue attending the Commission Meetings in the future.

Adjournment

Moved by Commissioner Vogt, seconded by Commissioner Martin, to adjourn from the Regular Piqua City Commission Meeting at 8:25 P.M. Voice vote, Aye: Martin, Wilson, Vogt, and Terry. Nay: None. Motion carried unanimously.

Lucinda L. Fess, Mayor

PASSED: _____

ATTEST: _____
REBECCA J. COOL
CLERK OF COMMISSION