

**MINUTES  
PIQUA CITY COMMISSION  
WORK SESSION  
Thursday, May 10, 2012  
7:30 P.M.**

Piqua City Commission met in a Work Session at 7:30 P.M. in the Municipal Government Complex Administrative Conference Room located at 201 W. Water Street. Mayor Fess called the meeting to order. Also present were Commissioners Vogt, Martin, Terry, and Wilson. Absent: Terry.

Moved by Commissioner Wilson, seconded by Commissioner Vogt to excuse Commissioner Terry from the May 10, 2012 City Commission Work Session. Voice vote, Aye; Martin, Wilson, Fess, and Vogt. Nay. None.

**Organization Development & Strategic Planning Retreat Introduction**

City Manager Huff stated the City of Piqua would be having a Strategic Planning Retreat on May 12 in the Piqua City Commission Chambers. City Manager Huff introduced Mike Herline of Mike Herline and Associates out of Dayton, Ohio who will be the facilitator for the Strategic Planning Retreat.

Commissioner Terry arrived at 7:40 P.M.

Mr. Herline gave a brief background on his qualifications, citing several projects he has worked on in and around the area over the years.

City Manager Huff stated he believes it is important that the Commission participate in this type of session so that everyone is on the same page, and they all understand the priorities that the Commission and staff want to accomplish in the future. It is important that we work together as a team to accomplish these goals, stated City Manager Huff.

Mr. Herline stated it is important that the elected officials and management are on the same page as they move forward.

Mayor Fess stated she is looking forward to working with Mr. Herline, stating the strategic plan is very important to the Commission.

**National Citizens Survey Results Review (Survey is located on city web site at: [www.piquaoh.org](http://www.piquaoh.org))**

City Manager Huff gave a brief overview of the results from the National Citizens Survey.

**Survey Overview**

The survey was conducted by the National Research Center out of Boulder, Colorado with about 1200 citizens sampled randomly selected in the 45356 area selected the research center. We had about a 33% return on the survey with about a 5% margin of error, stated City Manager Huff.

City Manager Huff explained the rating scale from Excellent to Poor giving several examples of how the City was rated. Some of the areas that were included were: Overall Community Quality; Community Transportation Services, Housing Characteristics; Built Environment; Population Growth; Nuisance & Problems; Planning & Community Code Enforcement Services; Economic Sustainability & Opportunities; Economic Development Services; Public Safety Services; Utility Services; Public Transit; Overall Services provided by Government; and City of Piqua Employees of which we are very proud of stated City Manager Huff.

Mr. Huff explained how the survey would be used in the future to provide better services to the Citizens of the Piqua. Mayor Fess presented Mr. Herline with a copy of the survey for his information.

Commissioner Martin asked how often would a survey like this need to be done. City Manager Huff stated a survey should be done about every three years.

Brad Boehringer, Mound Street came forward stating he attended the Piqua Citizens Government Academy and has seen the passion the city employees have for their jobs, further stating they should be commended.

Mayor Fess stated the Citizens Government Academy would be offered again in the fall if anyone is interested, further stating she appreciates everything the staff is doing.

Commissioner Wilson stated he is looking forward to the Strategic Planning Retreat on Saturday.

City Manager stated this study provided a lot of very helpful information, and is a comparison to other communities in our area. We have several responses in the study that we would like to work on and could do better on in the future.

**Joint Water Feasibility Study Review (Study is located on city web site at: [www.piquaoh.org](http://www.piquaoh.org))**

Mayor Fess stated the City Commissioner's toured the Troy Water Plant on May 5, 2012, stating this is not an easy decision that we are faced with citing the impact on the water rates. Mayor Fess stated there would not be any discussion at this meeting as it was an informational meeting only.

City Manager Huff gave a brief background on the study stating the City Commission approved Resolution No. 117-11 for the professional services agreement with RA Consultants, and Resolution No. R-151-11 amending the contract and total payment to RA Consultants for professional services to continue with the study.

City Manager Huff went over the objectives of the study and the infrastructure requirements. A lengthy discussion proceeded with many questions from both the Commissioners and residents in attendance regarding the quality of the Troy water, including the contamination of some of the wells, the number of years of debt service, and the amount the City of Piqua would have to pay to buy into the Troy Water Plant, and numerous other questions. Bob Yoxthimer of RA Consultants gave a brief explanation on what would be required if the City should chose to join with Troy. Questions were raised concerning the size of the water lines that would be needed, and where they would be located.

Mayor Fess asked Economic Development Director Bill Murphy if he felt it would be better for the City of Piqua to build their own water plant verses going in with the City of Troy economically. Mr. Murphy provided a brief explanation on the pros and cons of both of the options. Mayor Fess continued by stating the contamination of the wells is still a major concern at this time.

Several citizens voiced their concerns and opinions on the joint venture, the increase in water rates, and the cost to build or join with Troy at this time. Mayor Fess stated the Commission needs all the help they can get while they are weighing the pros and cons of the joint venture with the City of Troy. Several of the residents noted they were concerned about who would have control over the water and the water rates, and felt the City of Piqua should have the control over their own destiny.

Scott Phillips, a member of the Miami River Watershed and the CAS, voiced his opinion stating the City should go after grant money and build a water plant in the City of Piqua as the water rates are going up everywhere. It makes more sense to have our own water plant, as it would be a very valuable asset to the community, stated Mr. Phillips.

Mayor Fess stated the community needs to have a better understanding on what the Commission is faced with, and what they are trying to accomplish. Law Director Stacy Wall explained what the process would be for the city if they choose to build their own water plant.

Jim Cruse, Co Rd 25-A voiced his concern over the age of the Wastewater Treatment Plant also, as this would be a major concern in the near future possibly.

Mr. Yoxthimer stated there were other ways to cut back on costs and explained.

City Manager Huff stated he wanted to give the projections on the Joint Venture so the Commission would be better informed to make a decision on what direction they would like to proceed so they can move forward. Mayor Fess stated she felt there were not enough pros to going with the City of Troy at this time, and would like to move forward and have our own water plant and the asset it would provide to the City of Piqua.

Commissioner Wilson stated he was concerned about the price comparison with Troy at this time. Finance Director Cynthia Holtzapple explained the debt service, stating these are all estimates at this time.

City Manager Huff stated no matter which way we go there will be changes to deal with, and water rates would go up regardless.

Commissioner Terry stated it makes more sense to have our own water plant if the numbers stated are correct. Commissioner Martin agreed with Commissioner Terry. Commissioner Wilson stated if Troy is not going to be cheaper than he feels there is no reason to consider the joint venture. It was noted there was concern about the lines and reversal. Mr. Yoxthimer explained.

Bob Dougherty, voiced his concern over the deadline for the EPA mandate. Don Freisthler Water Plant Superintendent stated October 2013 is the current deadline at this time under the EPA Mandate, but believes as long as we are moving forward with a plan the EPA will work with us.

Law Director Stacy Wall explained the City needs to move forward with some type of plan as the City has been given plenty of notice concerning this issue by the EPA. The Commissioners asked for additional information, and City Manager Huff stated he would provide the information to them by Tuesday.

City Manager Huff stated we need to have some direction from the Commission on how they would like to proceed.

Brad Boehringer came forward stating if the City of Piqua were to build their own water plant could we ask Troy to come in with us?

Mayor Fess stated we trust Mr. Yoxthimer and the information he has provided the Commission.

Commissioner Vogt thanked all the citizens in attendance for coming and offering their input and sharing their concerns over this difficult decision.

Stu Shear, Piqua resident commented he believes the City of Piqua would be better off to build their own water plant, and have control over the water and the rates in the future.

Moved by Commissioner Vogt, seconded by Commissioner Martin, to adjourn from the Work Session at 9:35 P.M. Voice vote, Aye. Martin, Fess, Wilson, Vogt, and Terry. Nay: None.

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LUCINDA L. FESS, MAYOR

PASSED: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
REBECCA J. COOL  
CLERK OF COMMISSION