

**CITY OF INDEPENDENCE
SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
NOVEMBER 18, 2008 4:30 P.M.
COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM**

Present: Chairman Dave Grendel
Councilman Tom Narduzzi
Councilman Jim Piteo

Others Present: Mayor Gregory Kurtz
Councilman George Klepacz
Councilman Anthony Togliatti
Fire Chief Pete Nelson
Police Chief John Nicaastro
Service Director Dave Snyderburn
Engineering Coordinator Don Ramm
Economic Development Director Ron White
Former Councilman and CAO Vern Blaze
Resident Kurt Hill

Chairman Grendel called the meeting to order at 4:45 p.m.

Moved by Grendel, seconded by Narduzzi, to approve the minutes of the September 30, 2008 Safety Committee Meeting. Voice Vote: 3 yes/0 no; motion carried.

Chairman Grendel stated, this will probably be our final meeting of the year, unless something comes up.

I wanted to keep the dialogue going on a number of items. The first item is the Hillside/Route 21 Signalization Project that we started early this year. At the last meeting was discussed the right-of-way and whether it would be donated as opposed to appraisals and purchasing the right-of-way. The Mayor said he would contact the property owners.

Chairman Grendel asked Engineering Coordinator Don Ramm to update the Committee.

Engineering Coordinator Don Ramm stated the handouts in front of you are legal descriptions and sketches of the proposed right-of-way takes at three out of the four corners at that intersection. The map on the last sheet is a graphical representation of those takes. The upper right hand corner is Sunoco. The bottom right is the beverage store and the bottom left is the Convenient plaza. The largest takes are on the east side of Hillside due to the existing 40 foot right-of-way there. The long slivers that were on the east and west are to gain an extra ten feet to get it to a 60 foot right-of-way. Superimposed on the drawing in red is the proposed future widening. In blue are the signal poles and pedestrian signal poles that are spotted at that intersection to accommodate future widening.

The issue came up relative to compensation for the right-of-way takes and the impacts. The thought was that the takes are minor in acreage. They are pretty small in terms of corners. The impact, however, is the physical location of the signal poles.

At the Sunoco corner you can see the existing planter and sign which are going to be impacted with the signal and pedestrian pole. He also has a tendency to park cars right next to that sign. So he's going to lose some space for parking cars.

On the beverage store corner there is significant impact to his sign as well. For him to relocate that into the parking area he will most likely lose a couple of spaces. Also, with the rising on the south side of Hillside he'll also lose a couple of parking spaces there adjacent to the building.

Dave Burke of the Law Department also mentioned the potential impact of making a side yard setback, a nonconforming type of situation by purchasing the right-of-way down the south side of Hillside next to the beverage store. So there are some impacts.

If you look at the .0591 acres on the beverage store corner, that parcel to begin with is only .3 some acres. That takes ends up being 18% of this total parcel to begin with. That's a pretty big take there.

With Sunoco its 6.6 percent take relative to the total parcel area.

The smallest impact was to the Convenient, corner on the southwest side. It's very minor.

In short, the Law Department has ordered appraisals for all three corners so that we have them when it comes time to talk to those parcel owners. We'll have the information as backup. Dave Burke feels those will be done in three to four weeks and we'll be in a position to approach those business owners to move the project forward. He was hopeful that he could at least get a temporary right of entry at that point in time when he approaches them so that the project wouldn't be slowed down. If they want to keep negotiating and negotiate settlements that process could continue. If we have the right of entry documents in hand, we could still move forward and bid the project. The process would keep moving along. If they choose not to give us that, it could take going through the appropriation process. Either way, he felt that targeting sometime in February for a bid would be a safe bet to have these right-of-way issues taken care of, whether it's through donations or through appropriations or somewhere in between with some agreed upon settlement.

Chairman Grendel commented, so it looks like the property that is the most impacted by this is the beverage store.

Engineering Coordinator Don Ramm replied yes. Their sign, the planter and that whole strip there. There is going to be some impact.

Chairman Grendel asked, is the goal to have three lanes at the intersections for turn lanes?

Engineering Coordinator Don Ramm replied right. This signal project won't give us that, but the future widening of the intersection would, which is what we're planning for in spotting the signals in such a way that we'll get left turn lanes added to the east and west legs of Hillside at that intersection.

Chairman Grendel asked, when do we have that planned for, 2010?

Councilman Piteo replied 2010.

Finance Director Veres stated 2009 is sight correction.

Chairman Grendel stated, but in 2009 we're doing strictly signalization.

Engineering Coordinator Don Ramm replied right, the signal project.

Also, initially when we scoped it out for the signals there was discussion about video detection we marched down that road and designed it for such. Later on we talked about backing off of that and going with the standard loop detection for vehicles. I think what I'd like to do is ask permission to have the base bid for all signal components except for the detection and then have alternates for standard loops and also the video detection. That way we can have bid comparison and leave it up to you to see which one you like. Video was quite a bit more money, but we've never really had actual costs.

Chairman Grendel replied it wouldn't hurt to have that information.

Engineering Coordinator Don Ramm stated well go down that road. We're trying to get in a position to bid it out in January and February. We're keeping our eye on the process through the Law Department.

Chairman Grendel asked, so in the next week or two we'll have appraisals for this?

Engineering Coordinator Don Ramm replied, Dave Burke said three to four weeks. It has been ordered.

Chairman Grendel stated so in January we'll be able to see what the appraisals are for this. I think the Mayor mentioned that even with donations we still need appraisals.

Mayor Kurtz responded, right, for support.

Chairman Grendel stated we'll move forward with this. When we meet again in January we'll have an update and be that much farther along in the process. Hopefully by February we'll go out for bids. I believe this was in our Five Year Capital Improvement Plan.

Finance Director Veres replied yes.

There were no other questions.

Chairman Grendel stated next is an update on the deer hunting season.

Chief Nicasastro stated so far we've had 301 permits picked and 190 have been brought back and approved. Fifty Nine of that 191 were residents. The rest are people from outside of the City. People are out there hunting. We won't have numbers yet. We won't have numbers until the end of the year.

I am aware of four complaints that we've had. Mr. Hill will probably address some hunting in his neighborhood. There was a hunter that tracked two deer that he hit onto neighboring properties. In one instance he had permission. In the other instance he didn't. We called him to talk about it and he didn't want to aggravate people in the neighborhood so he voluntarily moved his stand and turned in his permit. That problem was resolved.

We had two questionable boundary complaints on lower Hillside Road. Those were mediated and resolved between the parties. The boundaries get a little ambiguous once you get back in the woods. We were able to help mediate that.

Unfortunately, this past Monday we had a hunter hit a deer off of Route 21 near the center of town. It ran out into Route 21 and into the side of a pickup truck.

We also had a complaint in a letter that was sent to City Hall. A resident of Highland was not happy that hunting was permitted on the residents' property behind him on Pleasant Valley. I went out there and walked the site myself and am convinced that it's safe. Unfortunately, the hunters took the deer and were dragging it in an area that is visible to his yard and he was unhappy that we were allowing hunting in the City, but I didn't see any safety factor problems.

Chairman Grendel asked resident Kurt Hill if he would like to speak.

Kurt Hill stated I have some handouts. I made three for the Committee members but I didn't realize this meeting was going to be so well attended. I also have one for the Mayor.

I want to say that I am not trying to stop deer hunting. There is a culling problem and there are a number of ways to approach it. The Committee has looked at various approaches and selected the current one. My concern is the wounded deer, nothing more. I have had five or six cases now of wounded deer on my property or adjacent to it between this year and last.

Hopping on the Internet, you will find that a deer shot in the stomach is going to die in a week. In the lung, it will die in a day or two. There is no reason for these deer to suffer like this if you have hunters that are adept at what they're doing.

Addendum One that I'm proposing is perhaps the most complex. *All hunters occupying an approved tree stand shall have in their possession written permission from property owners within a 500 foot radius of the tree stand, and they have it on hand while they're hunting. Additionally, no hunter will enter property for which he or she does not have signed permission to do so. It is the hunter's sole responsibility to know where the property boundaries are and from whom permission was obtained. After the fact permission is not acceptable.*

In three cases that I am aware of in my area, people came either onto my property looking for a deer with no permission or, they came to the door and wanted permission because they thought the deer might be there. The point is, in that it's a hassle that they have to have signed permission as the second page of that Addendum will show you, that's what the State of Ohio wants from a property owner if you're going to hunt their property. That applies to whether you're tracking a deer, whether you're removing a killed deer or whether you're hunting on it. And if you have a tree stand on a lot that is 200 feet wide and deep enough to meet the minimum acreage, you can still have a deer go across a half dozen properties.

The second case of trespass that I experiences was the guy had to go across six other properties to get to mine, and he had not a shred of paper from any of them. It complicated and they don't want to mess with it. So if they shoot a deer and it runs, it's a lot easier when you have a herd of seven or eight, you'll wait for another one and let that one go off and die somewhere. It's easier than chasing them down. So that's why I think that the hunter who has a stand should have signed authority for a 500 foot radius. If he puts his stand near the property line and the deer goes behind him instead of in front of him, he's already off his area.

Does that make sense to everyone? It's not overly restrictive. But, if you look at the rationale that we have down below there, even a properly shot deer can go a half mile. And one that's been wounded can go miles. Up where I live, a half mile and you're into Seven Hills. I don't know if we have any arrangement with Seven Hills about what we do about wounded deer from our town going up there, or our hunters going into Seven Hills. But they should have permission. Then the residents would know the person was someone who was supposed to be there.

I mentioned about the recent passage of SB184, Ohio's Castle Doctrine Law and it almost looks like it is frivolous to mention that. But I know enough people who can misinterpret the law. My understanding is the law passed in June and was signed into law that you no longer have to prove in your home that you were in fear of your life in order to defend yourself with force. It applies to your vehicle as well. It could be easily misunderstood by a number of people I've run across to be on your property too. You all hear it – if you shoot somebody, drag them into your house. Well, it's the same mentality and you don't need somebody running out in the backyard with a 357 because some guy is walking through there and they have a crossbow. It's a safety issue there, especially when it starts getting out of our town.

Addendum Two merely says, *any hunter who is known to have wounded a deer and not retrieved it will be denied further use of the stand for the season.* That is so people don't take a shot at one and let it go and decide not to chase it.

You can take a look at the rationale. Does this pose any questions to you because I'm not getting your participation in this little program? What do we think? Is this reasonable or unreasonable after consideration? This is merely meant to let someone know that we're serious about the permission.

Mayor Kurtz responded, we took six months to a year to put this together. I don't know if it's really fair to ask them to, other than just review this, to comment in six minutes.

Kurt Hill replied, we've also had the program under our belts for fourteen to sixteen months. I would hope that the Committee has mulled over some of these issues.

Mayor Kurtz responded during the season there is a report every month and also at the end of the season.

Kurt Hill asked does the Service Department report how many carcasses they pick up?

Chief Nicasastro replied we started tracking those ourselves with reports we get of deer carcasses.

Director Snyderburn added, we report that in our Weekly Report.

Kurt Hill asked how many have the arrow sticking out of them?

Director Snyderburn replied I don't think we report injuries. We don't know why they died.

Mayor Kurtz added they're all dead when we get them.

Kurt Hill stated I'm not a tree hugger but I watched one deer walk through the yard. He had an arrow sticking out of the side of him and blood covering his whole side. The deer are around all the time because they're eating all the flowers and everything. I know them. The night that we had that long, hard rain, just a miserable night, I went over to the lake trying to find this guy. Nothing deserves to die like that. A couple of nights ago there was one standing in the backyard and the dog spooked it when it went out. He was wounded. That's when I saw the hunter on the adjacent property crouched down looking at it. I approached him and he was already on someone else's property by the time I got to him. I called the department and John kindly came up and saw the deer on my property then. But these animals don't deserve to die like this. They really don't. With a car, a lot of the times they get wiped right out and there is a safety issue there. But there is a humane issue here too and I do think we ought to consider that. And by keeping unqualified bow hunters out of the trees, I think we can go a long way. For example, I think Randy Wilson is a bow hunter. I doubt if very many animals that Randy hits go very far. I suspect all of you would agree. So if we're going to cull them, let's have people cull them who knows what they're doing. Twinsburg requires a proficiency test be administered before anybody gets a permit.

Addendum Three is an easy one. Mark the arrows. If you hunt in our town, you mark your arrows with the name you have on your permits. That could be done with a return address label that you have to stick on your mail. Wrap it around the shaft. That way, when a deer is found with an arrow sticking out of at least Addendum Two can be covered. Someone let the deer go. They didn't report it. Incidentally, Twinsburg requires that a wounded deer be reported to them.

Addendum Three says hunter orange. I'm not familiar with the law enough to know whether it's required or not. I've never seen anybody wearing it. I heard that it's not necessary for bow hunters to wear hunter orange.

The ODNR website shows a bow hunter in a stand with hunter orange. But that doesn't mean that's the law.

Chairman Grendel asked Chief Nicastro, didn't we discuss that as part of the ordinance?

Chief Nicastro replied yes. The law requires that everyone, including bow hunters, wear hunter orange during gun season only. That's the way our ordinance was left.

Kurt Hill responded my point with the hunter orange is that if Mrs. Jones looks out her back window and sees someone furtively through the backyard wearing hunter orange, and she's already signed a permission slip, she can actually put two and two together. If she's never given permission to anyone and there is someone sneaking back there, pretty soon the police have a prowler report. When she calls in, the police could ask how the person dressed. She would respond orange hat and vest. The police would know we have a hunter up in that area.

So these are four addendums that I dragged out. Again, I'm not trying to find fault with anything we're doing now, but if we could just improve it, even for the balance of the season, so we have time to reconsider the whole thing, and try and give the deer a break. I really think there is that element. I don't have any young children but there a lot of young children around. I'd hate to have them seeing these animals dying this way. They go for water when they're injured is my understanding. I don't know if any of you are hunters. I'm not but my understanding is that a wounded deer will go for water. I have found three carcasses, one with a bow in it over at the lake that I can see from my property.

I just ask that you consider what you might do. If nothing else, if you could give our chief the authority to make modifications of the existing plan to cover some of these areas where problems seem to be materializing. I think the judgment is there to improve the situation.

Thanks for your time.

Chairman Grendel thanked Kurt Hill. The Committee will take a look at these recommendations and get together with you. We haven't had our wildlife officer here for awhile to get his input. These certainly make sense to me but I'm not a hunter either. I'd like to get the input before we do anything.

Chief Nicastro commented I think that the issues that Kurt has spoken to are probably the most common issues that other people have addressed to me. They understand that there is an overpopulation problem. They're not opposed to having something done, but they want it done in the least cruel sporting manner possible. We talked about land area. We discussed various parcel sizes and decided on two acre parcels because we're afraid that if we limited it to that extend we might not be successful with the program at all. But I think as the season goes on and I'm sure by the end of this season these are issues that we'll want to sit down and look at again, and look at the hunters that we have applying for permits.

Chairman Grendel asked in order for someone to get a permit they have to have certain qualifications with the state, don't they?

Chief Nicastro replied the only thing we require is that they have state qualifications, which means if they're not hunting their own property they need a hunting license. We discussed proficiency testing. Some communities do it and some don't. We decided not to change the ordinance because we felt the program was fairly successful last year. But again, maybe that's something that we need to look at. I think part of the issue that some residents have are just seeing strangers out on their neighbors' properties. They're uncomfortable. They don't know who is there. Macedonia has a lottery. They only allow so many permits. That could be another consideration.

Chairman Grendel asked maybe the hunter orange would provide a little comfort as Kurt had mentioned.

Chief Nicastro replied we discussed that at one of the Safety Committee meetings and Jason Hadsell the Wildlife Officer was there. The consensus was that hunters would rather be invisible than be seen by everybody and possibly lead to harassment. If you have an archer up in a tree it's really not a safety issue at that point that he wears orange. That was the reason it wasn't put in our ordinance to begin with. The consensus was to leave it out.

Vice Mayor Riley added hunter orange was put in the law for other hunters during gun season so they don't shoot a human.

Councilman Narduzzi commented for safety in the woods.

Chief Nicastro added as opposed to drawing attention to everybody that's hunting. We determined at this point that we wouldn't do that. I have had that recommendation made by other residents also. Maybe that would give them more of a comfort level or it may bother some even more. I don't know.

Chairman Grendel stated we'll take a look at these. Addendum Four is the hunter orange one. We'll see if we need to revise things, which I prefer at the end of the year to make any changes at that point. Keep us posted. If we need to, we can have a meeting in December just to discuss this issue.

Kurt Hill responded, I appreciate it for next year, but all of the issues still exist. A lot of these wounded deer are all over the neighborhoods. People do not have signed permission. They should not be on property without permission. The State Law requires that they have it. If you're trespassing, then I think its incumbent upon the City to do something about it.

Vice Mayor Riley commented to Chief Nicastro, your department can address that initially when you're issuing permits. We can tell the hunters that if they go on anyone else's property, they need to knock on the door and get permission.

Kurt Hill responded get the permission before you begin hunting. If you start going after a wounded deer, and the resident is at the grocery store and the people don't know where the property line is anyway. They should have signed permission. They figure they'll go for it later.

They don't think they're going to drop the deer on the spot. From what I understand that doesn't happen very often.

Chief Nicastro responded our permits are written to provide for written permission from the property owner that the hunter is allowed to be on. I think it's a fact of life in a suburb like this that you may get permission from your two neighbors but if that deer runs 500 feet and he's five houses away these hunters have to make a decision. Are they going to try to retrieve it or let it go or knock on doors? I think that is an issue that is probably not going to go away. The only thing we can do is encourage people to call us if they see someone on their property and then we'll address it. We can cite them, pull their permit or both. They are trespassing. It seems most of the time we get called after the fact, a day or so later by an angry resident. Then it's too late.

Chairman Grendel stated we'll take a look at these. Chief Nicastro can give it some thought and see what we can do in the interim for this and keep us posted with a memo in the next couple of weeks. The Committee will discuss it. We'll keep Kurt Hill informed also.

Councilman Narduzzi commented I think the fact that this is the second year for this, that by tracking and seeing the number of deer taken every year decreases, one step might be to widen the two acre minimum that we have now. We would give fewer permits but widen that two acre limit to three, four or five acres. That will limit the amount of deer taken because there would be fewer areas where you could actually hunt. That adds to that 500 foot radius. That's what I'm trying to get at.

Chairman Grendel stated to Kurt Hill we will keep you posted on this. Chief Nicastro will continue to look at this and see what we can do as well as review these recommendations.

Chairman Grendel stated the next item is an update on EMS billing. We did receive a memo in our packet this weekend that was provided to us by Chief Nelson in conjunction with John Veres and Maggie Osysko from the Finance Department. I think Chief Nelson's recommendation makes perfect sense.

Chief Nelson replied I just wanted to tell you where we are with this. The successful company that we decided to go with was ACS Firehouse Software. The quoted price of 6.3%, we are going to buy equipment to help us process the claims quicker and to also help us with our procedure to go from a paper reporting system to a paperless reporting system. We were going to do that anyway. That was next in line for our operations procedure in the Fire Department.

The difference between the 6.3% and 8.8%, the 2.5% is the actual cost of the equipment. So, the City of Independence comes up with no upfront money for the equipment. The term of the agreement is three years. Basically, we're taking the three years to pay for the equipment. After three years we have the equipment and we negotiate a different term with ACS for the 6.3%.

Chairman Grendel asked would that go out to bid again once we have the equipment paid for?

Chief Nelson replied yes. Right now we have applied for an NTI number that allows us to do billing that is through Medicare. Once we get that, our application for Medicare will go in and I am currently waiting for the contract from ACS Firehouse. Once I get that, I will forward it over to our Law Department for review. Eventually, it will need the Mayor's signature.

Chairman Grendel asked will Council have to vote on something in December?

Finance Director Veres replied you've already authorized it.

Several people speaking at once.

Vice Mayor Riley asked when do you think billing will begin?

Chief Nelson replied once we get the NTI number and we set up the process, ACS figures six weeks.

Chairman Grendel stated so this won't be January 1st.

Chief Nelson replied it will be close.

Vice Mayor Riley commented that would be great if we hit January 1st.

Councilman Narduzzi added our goal was to begin January 1st.

Finance Director Veres stated we put the date of November 1, 2008, which we can go back to and collect.

Vice Mayor Riley responded so we can back bill.

Chairman Grendel stated from a financial standpoint I can see this being better for the budget. It will just be taken care of out of this arrangement.

Finance Director Veres responded the company that they're comfortable with they're already dealing with currently.

Several people speaking at once.

Mayor Kurtz stated I wanted to have the Chief explain the difference between the cost of the service from what we originally anticipated. He has articulated that. I wanted to make sure we were all on the same page with this. If someone asks about the higher percentage than what we anticipated everyone is aware that it is the cost of the equipment.

Chairman Grendel responded that amount is even better. We'd have to make those expenditures which would take from the income anyway. This makes perfect sense. I think they weren't on our radar screen before because they were just doing large cities, bigger volume and they changed their policy.

Chief Nelson replied yes.

Vice Mayor Riley stated for the record, if we can go back to November 1st I would encourage that.

Chief Nelson replied we'll work with the company once we get everything set. We have all the required documentation.

Chairman Grendel stated I believe Chief Nelson wanted to update us on the fireworks.

Chief Nelson stated there were conversations at our Team Meeting regarding fireworks, regarding budget, regarding overtime and a lot of different issues. The fireworks displayer sent me a memo stating that the cost of the fireworks for next year will probably be going up about 25% - 18% for the product, 3% for transportation and 4% for insurance. With that, the City has an expenditure for the July Celebration of about \$50,000 plus in overtime, supplies and other issues for fireworks. It was discussed if we should either do away with it. A lot of people noticed that there are more nonresidents than residents there. The other was to maybe incorporate it with Home Days.

I don't know if you heard or not, but Saturday we're doing some test shots. Maybe we could identify a different location to show the display for Home Days. We tried where we currently have the display and you can't see anything from Home Days. We tried the Annex parking lot, the one behind the pavilion there. It was not too bad. It was not the best but not too bad. Then we did a test in the City Hall parking lot and that, of course, you could see the best.

Now, with all that said, if we do opt to go with that, we'd still have to address the Codified Ordinance that was put in place regarding trenching if we have fireworks in Elmwood Park. That is going to need definition from the Law Director what constitutes Elmwood Park.

Vice Mayor Riley asked have you thought about moving Home Days to the Park?

Chief Nelson replied there was discussion on that. Logistically, it won't happen in one year because of setup.

Mayor Kurtz added the infrastructure alone – electric, utilities. We have discussed it and then discussed it again. The Chief will tell you. It doesn't get a lot of traction because it's something that needs to be planned out for down the road. But it was put on the table and is still on the table.

Vice Mayor Riley asked what if you shot them off from the football field behind the middle school?

Chief Nelson replied we were thinking about that. One of the problems is that there is a lot of parking there and at Home Days people come and go at all different times and nothing is really scheduled. It would be almost impossible to rope that area off to keep people out of there. Also,

once we start putting the shells in, it's about an hour procedure once the shells go in before we set them off.

Vice Mayor Riley responded the cove near the building. We could put a brick barrier.

Chief Nelson replied yes, we need that 210 feet of distance between any occupied structure or people.

Mayor Kurtz responded it's not occupied. It's a vacant building.

Chief Nelson replied those houses on Stone Road are within that range. Again, with all the parking on both sides of the middle school. . .

Mayor Kurtz asked Chief Nelson what is your point about the fireworks?

Chief Nelson replied my point is the most optimal site.

Mayor Kurtz asked why are you talking about fireworks?

Chairman Grendel replied the cost was brought up.

Mayor Kurtz replied and then the possibility of combining it with Home Days.

Chief Nelson replied right.

Chairman Grendel responded the overtime and all that.

Mayor Kurtz stated instead of having a 4th of July.

Chief Nelson replied many cities do that now. They combine their fireworks – Brecksville, Seven Hills, Broadview Heights.

Mayor Kurtz stated I guess the point is the Administration is very open. We're not going to pay more for the fireworks. We'd get less of a shell. For sure I don't think anyone is in favor of adding more money to the fireworks. The next issue would be then do we have reduced show. So issue three would be do we have a show on the 4th of July or do we see about combining it with Home Days and having additional activity that evening or the nights of Home Days. That's really the question on the table. It's not germane to tonight's decision but pretty quickly because we have a locked in date for the 3rd of July, Friday night in this case. I think the Chief and others have indicated that over the past several years it's mostly occupied by people other than our residents. The question is, we know Home Days is still a lot of our residents. Is it something that Council wants to entertain, combining? Do you will want a 4th of July fireworks display, or do we want to look at options? That's really what we're trying to find out since we have the majority here.

Councilman Narduzzi asked, do any organizations rely on that as a fundraiser for them?

Mayor Kurtz replied most of the organizations that participate at the 3rd of July are also part of Home Days. If that's what it meant, we'd put somebody in at Home Days if they depended on the 3rd for their fundraising efforts.

Chief Nelson stated, again, the only thing that may kibosh the whole thing, at least with those locations, is if the Law Department says that according to the Codified Ordinance we cannot do it because of the trenching. I'll talk to them.

Mayor Kurtz asked could you create trenches in the parking lot with sand rather than digging something up – haul some sand in and create our own bunker and then haul it back out.

Chief Nelson replied you could. That could be done.

Mayor Kurtz stated so if you could consider it. We would like your decision sometime in December because we don't want to hold the fireworks company up. Is it safe to say that the two chiefs feel that merging it with Home Days would be a better venue than having a stand alone event?

Councilman Piteo stated we've been in town all of our lives and it's a great event for residents to go and see. Residents would have a good time. It wasn't a spectacular show. You showed up and brought your own stuff. Do you think by building it up so much that's what drew people from outside of Independence? Did it create more a deficit for residents? Do you think that would happen then with Home Days? You're going to be creating a bigger scenario.

Mayor Kurtz replied at Home Days it would just be one little event on our agenda, our program.

Councilman Narduzzi commented I think it draws because it's the 4th of July.

Councilman Piteo asked would we add another day to Home Days?

Vice Mayor Riley replied go through Sunday and then have the fireworks Sunday night? But then you're defeating the purpose because you'd have another day of overtime.

Chairman Grendel agreed.

Councilman Piteo responded I would think mobilization would cost the most with the 4th of July. We already mobilized for Home Days. I don't know if another day would increase revenue enough to warrant it.

Mayor Kurtz responded I can tell you that based on my conversation with the vendors, people are pretty much spent after two days of Home Days.

Chairman Grendel added it's all volunteers.

Chief Nicastro stated I would like to comment on the current July 3rd. With the crowds that we're getting, it's to the point on the part of the Police Department of almost being

unmanageable. We used to manage the park and the outlying areas. Now, the Technology Center is full and overflowing, the shopping center. We've been fortunate that we haven't had any incidents, but we have the whole department working. You can't cover all those areas.

Mayor Kurtz asked, Council, is there any extreme passion to continue the 3rd of July for fireworks, or should we continue exploring other options?

Councilman Klepacz replied I don't see any reason why we should continue fireworks at all to tell you the truth, if that was one of the options. We're spending what?

Mayor Kurtz replied it's \$25,000 on the fireworks display alone.

Councilman Klepacz stated and we're spending \$50,000 in overtime. I'm not so sure it's worth it. I don't think we're getting the bang for the buck!

Councilman Narduzzi commented I feel the same way. We lived without it for a couple of years. One year we did without it. The second year we had a laser show. I think it's out of hand, especially this year. It would be a good year to nix it.

Chief Nelson commented there was always the liability issue with fireworks.

Chairman Grendel commented I agree with Councilmen Klepacz and Narduzzi. I wouldn't lose any sleep if it were discontinued.

Councilman Narduzzi commented, it's a want, not a need.

Vice Mayor Riley commented I would have to go along with my colleagues.

Councilman Piteo stated if this were to happen in the City, I think this year would be the best year to do it because of the economy. That's where my opinion lies. I would like to see it at Home Days if it's not going to be eliminated.

Mayor Kurtz replied if Home Days was a possibility, it would be at a reduced cost for sure.

Councilman Narduzzi asked are there different size regulations?

Chief Nelson replied you're limited by the safe distance that you can provide to show the fireworks.

Councilman Narduzzi asked, does that distance go down by the size of the shell?

Chief Nelson replied yes, by the size of the shell.

Chief Nicastro added which means you also have reduced height.

Chief Nelson responded that becomes a problem as well.

Councilman Togliatti commented, based on our discussion in the Finance Committee meeting and the need to cut costs, this would be the year to make some changes with that. I would have to agree with everyone here.

Councilman Klepacz commented Seven Hills has fireworks. Their mayor wants to do regionalism. Send our people there.

Mayor Kurtz stated I'll check with Councilman Crooks to get his opinion.

Chairman Grendel asked is there anything else?

Chief Nelson replied I want to thank Councilman George Klepacz on behalf of all of our CERT volunteers for being the Independence coordinator from the inception of our CERT. George is going to step down this year and Walt Ellert graciously accepted that he would be the Independence coordinator.

Councilman Piteo stated I want to ask about some of our street striping. Some of the intersections, especially at Rockside and Route 21, are getting pretty hard to see. Do we have any course of action as far as restriping those or putting actual physical markers in the concrete?

Mayor Kurtz replied Route 21 and Rockside is a little different. We had a contract and used a different type of striping. One, at Rockside and I-77 they're working there so that's a challenge. But Rockside and Route 21 are essentially gone.

Vice Mayor Riley stated I don't know if we have any money left in the contract for street striping.

Director Snyderburn stated those weren't done. We could paint those.

Councilman Piteo asked, can't we imbed markers just in that intersection?

Councilman Narduzzi commented it's a safety issue.

Several people speaking at once.

Vice Mayor Riley stated if there's money left, look into that.

Director Snyderburn replied we can definitely repaint them.

Councilman Klepacz asked, was Highland and Midland ever striped?

Director Snyderburn replied I think part of it, whatever was striped. I think Midland but not Highland.

Several people speaking at once.

Moved by Grendel, seconded by Riley, to adjourn the Safety Committee Meeting. Voice Vote: yes/0 no; motion carried.

There being no further business to discuss, the Safety Committee Meeting was adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

Gayle Rudary, Pro Tem Clerk of Council
