

**MINUTES OF RAVENNA CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

June 11, 2012

The Meeting of the Ravenna City Community & Economic Development Committee came to order at 5:00 P.M. Present were: Bruce Ribelin, Sharon Spencer, Jack Ferguson, Fred Berry, Amy Michael, Scott Rainone and Fran Ricciardi. Also attending the meeting were Mayor Bica; Finance Director, Kim Cecora; City Engineer, Bob Finney and Economic Development Director, Kerry Macomber. Also in attendance were Marc Resnik of 1102 East Riddle Avenue, Ravenna; Nick Dudek of 328 North Prospect Street, Ravenna; Donna Swigart of 528 East Riddle Avenue, Ravenna; Keith Jones of 611 South Diamond Street, Ravenna; Terry Montz representing the Downtown Ravenna Farmers' Market; Nelson Burns, Susan Switzer, Kristen Swigar and Jeff Meyers representing Coleman Professional Services.

Ms. Macomber said that she wanted to share with the committee that the Ohio Department of Development has revised the study area for the Brownfield Action Plan Pilot Program. It really is focusing on the Main Street right now. They were recognized in the U. S. HUD announcement for the Ohio Brownfield Action Plan Pilot Program, listing Ravenna as a recipient. One of the reasons they were chosen is they demonstrated a commitment to forging partnerships among multiple stakeholders, economic development groups, utilities and housing organizations, all the different components of a developable site. She just wanted to bring to their attention that this does include the Phoenix building in our downtown as they strive to make it more livable and walkable.

Mr. Seman asked what that means directly with the Phoenix Project.

Ms. Macomber said Coleman Professional Services has purchased the building on Main Street. She believes they are going to be asking for a resolution of support of the application they are presenting for a loan from the Ohio Department of Development. She wanted them to know that it is in the plan.

Mr. Seman asked how far did they redraw the district.

Ms. Macomber said that they had Cleveland Road coming in and Chestnut coming in. Because they were so different, they had a hard time really focusing in and they thought it would be much easier as a controlled study area, to just really focus on the Main Street from Diamond to, she thinks, Plum Way. The big thing that really caught their eye is the former Smith & Cowan.

Mr. Seman said that it's catching a lot of peoples' eyes lately. There has been a lot of activity there. He thought it was closed.

Ms. Macomber said that it was purchased. The people who purchased it have a plant in Kent. The reason they purchased this one was so that a competitor would not. The owner has promised he would clean it up. So far he has not. She doesn't think they are planning on opening the building. Bob Finney boarded it up because there were vandals in there.

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Mr. Seman noted he saw a semi-truck in there as well as another remodeling type of truck. He doesn't want it to become a parking lot for semi's either.

Mr. Finney said that it has evolved into what it is. They haven't committed to doing anything, to his knowledge. They were supposed to put a plan together as to how they want to attack it. He told them he wanted them to remove all the concrete. It's a safety hazard and is definitely an insurance issue on their end, or at least it should be.

Ms. Macomber said she loves the idea that they looked at the Main Street as a focus area to create a walkable, friendly, clean environment for redevelopment. It makes sense to her. It captures a couple of those abandoned gas stations.

Mr. Burns said they thought it would be important to give an update on the Phoenix Project. All the information and updates still are not available but they thought it would be a good time for the committee members to ask questions. When they purchased the building, they looked, as an overall project and attempting to do four phases. The first phase is to evaluate the whole property, try to be up and running to rent the apartments on the second and third floor but generally, if they could, the second floor. Then they would look at retail units and be up and ready for being competitive in the retail units and then finally in combination with the rental on the third floor and the façade, whichever comes first with the funding, or priorities in working with the city, of course. The first phase was going into a contract with the architect to give them a window of about two months of which they were hired to do the whole design phase and provide support and cost estimates of the entire project and those phases as well as start earnestly going out for grant funding and looking for funds available. Coleman is committed to the contract with the architect. They have previously identified the asbestos removal. They have identified a roof replacement that is going to be needed for a section of the building.

Ms. Switzer said they are requesting to apply for the Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund for remediation of the asbestos in the building. The Environmental Phase 1 was done that did show asbestos and the roof was tested which also showed there was asbestos in the roof. A preliminary request was made to the Ohio Department of Development asking to apply for this Brownfield loan. They did get approval to move forward. That will cover the remediation of the asbestos but they said it could also cover mold if they see there is mold in there as well as old fluorescent light fixtures; anything that falls within hazardous materials. That all needs to be done before tenants are moved into the building. Part of the Brownfield loan application is that they need a resolution from the City Council in the area they are sending the loan from. They need a support resolution stating that they approve of Coleman to apply for a loan. Ravenna does not have any responsibility in the loan other than just saying that they do support the fact that remediation needs to be done. She has a copy of the proposed resolution which will need approval by Ravenna City Council for them to go ahead and move forward with that. They do have the Brownfield specialist from the Ohio Department of Development coming to visit the Phoenix Building tomorrow to walk through so in addition to the environmental report they had done and the asbestos information, she is going to look at what other things they can have that loan take care of.

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Mr. Meyers gave a presentation on the design of the building, noting the building is listed in the National Registry and falls under some very specific guidelines as to what needs to be done. They have developed what they think is a good solution that takes all parties' best interest into mind. They are hoping to end up with two or three office/retail tenant spaces depending on how it develops, they can combine two units into one. There is one ADA compliant unit on the ground level. There are nine other units in the upper floors. These are type B apartments. Those are capable of being ADA compliant but don't necessarily have all the fixtures with them quite yet. They are putting an elevator into the building and a fully compliant stairwell that allows ingress and egress. Once they get the Fire Chief and the Building Department on board, this will be the master plan.

Mr. Seman asked how many rental units were in the original plan.

Mr. Burns said they wanted to stretch as much as they could for getting points on the grant and they had ten. When they talked about the really small one that was probably not appropriate. Since the architects have taken a look at this, they have cut those numbers down. All ten of the units are over 400 square feet.

Mr. Myers said that it is a very old building and they want to start in the basement to take care of any water issues, there is foundation block that needs repairing. They did a full assessment as to what repairs need to be made.

Mr. Seman noted that what they are asking for is a resolution of support for the application for a ODOB Brownfield loan to abate the asbestos and other hazardous materials from the building. He asked if the July meeting will be soon enough.

Ms. Switzer responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Seman said he would be negligent to remind them that not everyone is thrilled about this. What they are asking to do is all legitimate under the present building code. This is a way to get rid of hazardous waste in the middle of town.

There being no further questions or comments, it was decided by those present that a tracking sheet be submitted for Finance Committee approval.

Mr. Seman said the next item for discussion is the update for the Downtown Ravenna Farmers' Market.

Ms. Macomber said the farmers' market has been a huge success on both venues, bringing healthy foods into Ravenna and supporting economic development for the growers, vendors and farmers. To date, they have had three markets. Each of them have been visited by approximately 400 people, each time and the vendors have recorded over \$2,000.00 in income. There are only ten or 12 vendors. They are doing very well. That is a very, good, positive for the market. She is

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proposing to split the duties of the market manager because this has been evolving for the last several months and it has been clear that there is a whole lot more to running a market than one person can do on 15 hours a week; from the recruitment to the regulations to making sure everything at the market is going well, to advertising to promoting, social media to ensure the sustainability of the market. She asked the USDA if she could take the monies set aside for one market manager and split that to two. She talked to Sally Kelly about this and she has agreed to the revised contract which would focus her efforts on the daily activities of the market, scheduling farmer participation, processing the supplemental nutrition assistance program and following the procedures of that program and all other duties assigned for the successful delivery of the program by the USDA.

Ms. Macomber said that when they first applied for the program, it was going to be every other week so the market manager was only going to work twice a month. At the very first meeting, the farmers said they have to have it every week because they have a circuit and want to go to the same place every week and build their clientele that way as well. They revised it to include that. Then the group said they have to have the electronics benefits transfer for the supplemental nutrition assistance program (food stamps) so now have that process. This has continued to evolve and she thinks they are responding to the needs of the community as well as to the farmers so she's not saying it's a bad thing. She is saying that it has been a learning curve on this. She would ask that the committee consider a revised contract with Sally Kelly as market manager and institute a new contract with Pavlick Consulting Group to handle the marketing and public outreach using traditional and social media techniques with an emphasis on maintaining the website. They hired Communications Factory to create the website. It is on facebook and is a fabulous site. There are a lot of people visiting the site and in the past month, they have gotten over 250 "likes".

Mr. Ricciardi asked if Communications Factory has offered to maintain the site.

Ms. Macomber said that they. There is a contract with maintenance clause in it but she isn't exactly sure of the wording.

Mr. Ricciardi asked what the cost was of that maintenance cost.

Ms. Macomber said she can get back to them on that. It is coming from USDA grant money. This facebook page is very dynamic and has great healthful hints. It has featured farmers of the week. It has featured fruits or vegetables and how to prepare them. It's vibrant and that's because it has a professional working on it.

Ms. Michael asked if this position they're talking about creating is doing promoting because Sally Kelly is not able to perform that task.

Ms. Macomber responded that Sally Kelly does not have the skill set, nor does she, herself have that ability.

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Ms. Michael asked if they considered that when they hired Sally Kelly for that position.

Ms. Macomber responded in the negative. This was another thing that kind of evolved. What she really saw, and still does see, in Sally Kelly, she brings a lot of community support. She has a community based background. What they need is business background. They need someone who can help with the promotion; to help secure sponsorship; someone who can market it so they can continue. They have to be self-sustaining at the end of 2013.

Mr. Ricciardi asked how long has Pavlick Consulting Group been in business and what, specifically, do they do?

Ms. Macomber said that she has been in business since March, 2009. They facilitate, moderate planning processes for strategic planning, emergency planning; develop programs and processes for clients; market product for to appropriate participants. She has also been a very active member of the advisory group, which is a volunteer board for the farmers' market.

Mr. Ricciardi asked how many farmers' market has this company represented in the past.

Ms. Macomber said there is nothing in her resume' that tells her that. She is going from the fact that she has been an active participant in the advisory group.

Mr. Ricciardi asked if it had been advertised in any way, opening it up to folks who may be more familiar with these farmers' markets.

Ms. Macomber responded in the negative explaining when the USDA asked her that, she explained to them that she thought Ms. Petranic was uniquely qualified because of her involvement with this community and this market. There is another option if they would like to entertain that which would be to contract with Communications Factory to continue providing services. She's not talking just about website maintenance. She would love for that to continue. Ms. Petranic had some ideas about how they can further that through t-shirt competitions, etc.

Ms. Michael asked what the end result is that they're looking for by hiring the consulting firm. Are they going to waste the grant money that they have.

Ms. Macomber responded she does not foresee the money being wasted. There is a pot of money for market management so it's split in half; for 2012 and 2013. Most of the heavy lifting has been done. They've got the vendors; they've got the site; they've got the tent and everything they need to be going. She doesn't anticipate as much money being spent next year because there won't be any startup costs.

Mr. Berry asked how the monies would be split; assuming Sally Kelly's compensation is being reduced because of having less responsibility.

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Ms. Macomber said that it's going from \$36 to \$25 hourly. She is proposing Ms. Kelly work 15 hours per week. They estimated she would be in the office doing market work from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM on Tuesdays and then from 12:00 to 7:00 she would be at the market on Thursdays. Then it will be another five hours for the electronics benefits transfers and reporting.

Mr. Ricciardi asked how many hours per week is she doing now.

Ms. Macomber said she was working about 20 a week during the startup.

Mr. Berry asked what Ms. Petranic's compensation would be.

Ms. Macomber said she is going to propose \$15.00 an hour for 15 hours a week.

Mr. Ricciardi asked what happens if the number of participants increases in the market, are they going to require yet another person.

Ms. Macomber responded in the negative. They are going to stay within the budget guidelines that were accepted and awarded by the USDA.

Mr. Ricciardi said that he would like to see how much Communications Factory would charge vs. Pavlick Consulting Group.

Ms. Macomber said to remember that it's not just maintaining the website. The duties she has for Pavlick, which she has reviewed, is to meet with the advisory board to determine business planning, promotional sponsorship efforts, development of a long term sustainability plan for the Downtown Ravenna Farmers' Market; enlist the support from community partners as identified in the FMPP application and establish supporting activities that would further the mission of the Downtown Ravenna Farmers' Market; coordinate the marketing, public outreach and communications using traditional and social media, techniques to promote the community activities and the Farmers' Market with an emphasis on updating and maintaining the website.

Mr. Ricciardi asked what Sally Kelly's duties are.

Ms. Macomber responded provides backup support for the Market Manager, for daily operations and assistance with support of the vendors at the market; process vouchers and prepare necessary reports for the supplemental nutrition assistance program, conduct program evaluations of the market and community activities and determine programmatic improvements for subsequent market sessions.

Ms. Michael asked if Ms. Macomber has spoken with the Farmers' Market Board and gotten their input on it.

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Ms. Macomber said she has talked with several members but this is really a programmatic and administrative change that she feels is necessary as the primary project manager for the USDA grant. Remember, the board is advisory. Market manager services for Sally Kelly are to meet monthly with the advisory board and provide market statistics, schedule farmer participation and oversee daily operations at the market. That includes recruiting farmers; process supplemental nutrition assistance program in accordance with all the rules and procedures of that program and all other duties as assigned. The advisory board members have volunteered. They have also volunteered to learn how to process the supplemental nutrition assistance program by electronic transfer so that they can process that work down there, too. This endeavor has taken a lot of her time because the coordination of the marketing; the coordination of the processing of the payments of invoices; the reporting that needed to be done to the USDA was not being done by the market manager.

Mr. Seman noted that communicating with the vendors is a part that Sally Kelly does well which will grow as they move into the summer months.

Ms. Macomber noted that the end of the market will be in about 17 weeks. It goes to the end of October. She has done the math for the market and has talked to the USDA about splitting it. The money is there. She thinks they give this a try, hopefully it frees up some of her own time. She has already proven herself in the community as able to obtain sponsorships, working with the Fit Chix, with the boosters. If there is something there that the committee is not comfortable with because of the individual, please let her know.

Mr. Ricciardi said that he's just not sure that is a unique skill set. People sitting on council have done well with sponsors in the community as well.

Ms. Macomber said obviously. They are all elected. But what they're looking at right now is that they are in the heat of the market and she doesn't really think that this is the time to shift gears and try to find a different individual while they have one that is committed to the market; has proven, through volunteerism and other efforts that she can do this job and wants to do it and will do a lot of it for very little money. They're not really looking for her to work with the vendors or sell produce. She is looking for her to sell the market.

Mr. Ribelin said that as a member of this committee, he would support this revision simply because it appears there is a need for that. Since it is a USDA grant and it's not coming out of the city's pocket, he doesn't think it's rocket science. He doesn't think personalities should get involved. He wants to see this market work. The money isn't coming out of the city's pocket. It's coming out of the USDA grant. He hates to see them get into micromanagement in this situation.

Mr. Seman asked if Mr. Ribelin thinks that really is the issue.

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Mr. Ribelin said he doesn't think that is the issue. He thinks they spend a lot of time trying to micromanage things.

Mr. Seman said then Mr. Ribelin is not reading between the lines.

Mr. Ribelin said that may be the case but they don't want to get into personalities here either. He is getting fired up, which he hasn't done since he's been on council but he's getting a little bit upset with the micromanagement. If you want to be the mayor, run for mayor.

Mr. Ricciardi said that he doesn't think these folks, asking legitimate questions, including himself, is an attempt to micromanage. He thinks it is an attempt to gather information before making decisions. That's all he thinks is happening here.

Mr. Ribelin said that in all honesty, the money is not coming out of the city's pocket.

Mr. Ricciardi said that doesn't mean that they just spend it willy-nilly. It's still somebody's money. They still have the responsibility to spend a grant in an appropriate fashion.

Mayor Bica said he agrees. They do need to spend this grant money in an appropriate fashion because it's for two years. He is not directly involved with this day to day, but several people have expressed their concern about long term sustainability. The reason Ms. Macomber is trying to make a change is that they want to go out for more long term strategic planning on the farmers' market. They are going out there for sponsorships and really beating the bush to get large sums of money to sustain it beyond a two year period. When the USDA money does run out from the grant, they are positioned well to continue on after that two years. He thinks that is where they are very nervous. He shares Ms. Macomber's concern that after that two year period, they need to be planning now for after that period to continue on and have the strength and the monetary backing to make sure the market continues in perpetuity. He thinks that's what they all want. They see the value. They see the people up there. They see the commerce it's generating. They just want it to continue. Whether it's Pavlick Group or whoever, they need an individual or company that is familiar with this city and the demographics of the city and also is very connected so that person can go out and solicit for the farmers' market.

Mr. Ricciardi asked if the sole reason they are looking at Pavlick Group is because Ms. Petranic was involved in this market.

Ms. Macomber responded in the affirmative noting she did go to the advisory board first. She thinks there are some qualified individuals on that board and they have been with it since the beginning. She thinks they would be the best to sell it. She talked with Sally Kelly about sponsorship and the need to build them. She has told her, and she has it in writing, that is not a priority for her. It's a mandated part of this money that they search to continue it. She still feels that Sally Kelly brings to the table the skill set necessary for the day to day operations, talking with the vendors and being a part of this community. She believes this job is a lot more than one person can do in 15 hours a week.

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Mr. Ricciardi asked, in terms of other farmers' markets, how do they handle those duties that would now be handled by Pavlick Consulting.

Ms. Macomber responded that Haymaker Market in Kent, as an example, has finally, after 25 years, hired their first market manager last year. She is paid only by the proceeds received from the vendors renting the spaces. Ravenna rents its space for \$10 a week. If you rent it for a whole season, you get a cut rate. That gives them an idea as to how much they pay the market manager. If they have 25 vendors. All of their expenses have to come out of those proceeds. That's the other reason that she thinks it is critical to get somebody that isn't afraid to go out and ask for big money and to do it in a professional manner with a Power Point presentation.

Mr. Ricciardi asked who do those folks use to do that, if they do it at all.

Ms. Macomber said that they don't do it. That's why they struggled for 25 years. This is a growing field. She thinks this is really hot right now. Everybody wants a farmers' market but they are struggling. Brimfield is waning. It's a Wednesday night market. She thinks that is put together by their Parks & Recreation Department. Sometimes it's Chambers of Commerce that run them.

Mr. Ricciardi noted, the question is, are they going to hire a market manager on the cheap based upon what she is telling him their income is to do all of the duties they're asking Sally Kelly and now, Pavlick Consulting Group, to do. They get one person to do all of that?

Ms. Macomber said she has talked with the Haymaker Market manager and she has talked with the Randolph Market Manager. His market folded because of in-fighting. He is now volunteering for us. He's been very helpful. So has Haymaker. Everybody kind of struggles. When you start with a volunteer group, it starts with a lot of enthusiasm. Everybody thinks it's great. Then it dwindles. They've all worked with volunteers. If you don't have a paid position she doesn't think they're going to have a successful market. They're not going to have a paid position, if they don't get some sponsorships. Agree or disagree with her. If they don't want to pass this on to another person she thinks is qualified, they can table it and advertise for next year. She doesn't think they have time to recruit somebody.

Mr. Montz said as a representative of the board, he has been to several markets. When he looks at Ravenna's, it is really growing by leaps and bounds every week. There is so much energy going into this. He doesn't know where they are with Sally Kelly. He's on the fence with that. He doesn't know. He's looking at sustainability down the road. As a representative and as a volunteer, he knows for himself, he has put many hours into this with the small opening, getting ready for the grand opening in July. They are adding so many features to this. He thinks the goal is to separate themselves from other farmers' markets as far as adding art; adding music. They're having festivals. He wants to make sure if they do hire a consultant to come in, whether it be Pavlick or whoever, that they have the long term vision. Once that two years is up, they are literally on their own. He knows, as a vested board member, he wants to see the long term of this market flourish. He thinks it's not only good for the people, but he thinks it's going to be good for the city. If they don't look at this as a positive venture, whether it be him or city council, he thinks they should all work together and look at the long term. If they need to table this, that's fine. He thinks this is a great venture and would be great for the city.

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Mr. Seman said he doesn't think there's any question about that. He's talked to people who are getting pretty enthusiastic about it. He attends the church across the street from it and there are people there trying to figure out how to come together with something to be a part of it. He thinks that's not just happening with them. He thinks it's happening with other people. This could be a year away for some people because if they're going to grow food to sell, there is some planning involved and some of that stuff had to be in the ground by now to be able to bring it in during the fall. He doesn't think there is any question about it and he thinks they are blessed that they have the grant. If not, you're lifting yourself up by your bootstraps to get things going. He has a better understanding of this because they've had this conversation because he didn't realize they were going to have to sustain this with additional donations. He thought it might become self-supporting but it doesn't sound like they'll be taking enough money in to do that. That's another road that he's got to open his eyes to, to keep this going. The question is, if it gets going and they get the participation, he thinks they will recognize how valuable it is to the community. Not just to have it, but to their health. He doesn't think there is any question about the project at all. Unfortunately, it degenerated to personalities. Let's keep that aside from the project. The project is off to a good start and there is some enthusiasm about it and they need to build on that.

Rev. Jones asked why they didn't look out for other companies who have experience. Why are they pushing someone that doesn't have any experience with this type of farmers' market. Are there not experienced people out there? Experience goes a long way. He's sitting here looking at it from the top. Sally Kelly didn't drop the ball, it was dropped at the top. He heard two people say they felt she was qualified. They did not look at her credentials as fine as they should have. Now, he believes Sally Kelly is getting a bum rap. She's being made the scapegoat to bring something else in but do they really need it?

Ms. Macomber said they really do need it and Sally Kelly is not getting a bum rap.

Rev. Jones interjected stating they are doing it so fast with only six or seven months left when they can sit back and start interviewing other marketing companies to see who is more qualified? That's just him as a citizen. He's just a citizen.

Ms. Macomber said she is just trying to manage the grant as best that she can. Sally Kelly is not getting a bum rap. She apologizes for not going into executive session. She wants them to take away from this that Sally Kelly has very valuable skills and community ties.

Rev. Jones asked if with the help of the staff above, couldn't they finish out this year with Sally. It's her and the mayor. The three together can't make it get through this year and then they, as an organization can literally sit down and invite people in to see who is qualified instead of throwing somebody in there. He thinks the quote is "does not have the qualifications or never done this before". He's confused as to why they are going with someone who has never done this before.

Mr. Seman said he thinks one of the problems with that, about the experience, is that this is a new thing for many places; very much so and he doesn't know of many marketing people that are out looking to promote farmers' markets. Quite honestly, he is amazed they can get a marketing group to do anything for \$15.00 an hour. Because if they go to a different marketing level, they are probably looking at \$50.00 to \$100.00, he would think.

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Ms. Macomber said what they are being offered in assistance is more tech savvy skills that she just doesn't have. She would love to take the time to learn how to post on facebook and do all the bells and whistles of marketing but she is not a marketer. That's why she hired a marketing firm. That's not the only thing that needs to be done. There are a number of other things that have not been addressed as far as a manager.

Rev. Jones said he thinks it's great to hire someone. He just doesn't think they need to jump in and say that's it. Have they checked her qualifications to see what she brings to the table?

Ms. Macomber said she has worked for the city; has volunteered for the city.

Rev. Jones interjected stating so has he but that doesn't tell them anything about him.

Ms. Macomber said that he sat on Charter Review for six months. He didn't sit with her on a Saturday and label about 1400 post cards so that she could get them out to the food desert, but she did.

Rev. Jones said if he wanted to go somewhere and get further, yes, he would come in and volunteer if he wants to move ahead.

Mayor Bica said he thinks this meeting has gotten out of hand. First of all, Ms. Macomber is making a recommendation to the committee. It's based on the committee's decision.

Mr. Seman said where he is at with it right now is that he would like to table this for one month so they can hash this out. They can get together and hash this part of the whole thing out. Secondly, he is not going to be at the July meeting and it would be very unfair to not get this settled and him not be here to present it. He is sorry to do this because he knows Ms. Macomber needs to get the help right away. If that is acceptable to every one, that's what he would like to do.

Mr. Berry said that's fine with him. They know where they are coming from. He thinks there are some personalities that have gotten involved in this and he thinks that's where they are right now. He thinks they can resolve this.

Mr. Seman said he thinks they can resolve it. He does not want to take away the good work that has been done getting this going and not get lost in this and forget what has been accomplished.

Ms. Macomber said that one more section of the agreement regarding electronic benefits transfer program. It is not necessary for the CED to look at this. The CIC is the actual fiscal agent so the W-9 and certificate of existence is going to be signing the contract for this electronic benefits transfer, not the city of Ravenna. Basically what it's going to do is verify that there is an authorized registered, Secretary of State body that can take responsibility for the financial for the voucher program.

Ms. Macomber went on to say that they will continue to operate. They've done well so far and will continue.

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Ms. Macomber said that they are really close to having a decision by the Ohio Department of Development on a company that would like to locate in Ravenna. She talked with the committee about it last month. The city council can't take action until the approval comes through. What this would mean for the city is approximately 50 jobs and they are looking for an enterprise zone agreement, which would be a tax abatement for ten years.

Mr. Cecora said that if it happens, it will happen quickly and they may show up at Finance just to move forward with the legislation. This is really a heads up.

Ms. Macomber said she thought the decision was going to be the 18th.

Ms. Macomber said that when they were negotiating with Parker-Hannifin to stay in Ravenna, they were trying to figure out what they could bring to the table, as a city. What they did was suggest that they be granted a block rate for water usage, similar to what Paris receives. This would equate to about \$200.00 a month. There is an ordinance and she sent a request to Mr. Cimino for help on it.

Mayor Bica said that it is a substantial savings for Paris. For Parker, it was one of the only things they could come up with. It's inconsequential for the city. But it's something that is unique to Ravenna that other cities can't do. They have a very large water supply and they can control those costs as an economic development driver. Parker-Hannifin was one of the first ones to stay and create more jobs.

Mr. Seman said that it's a very small amount and they'll probably see more of this as they entice other companies to expand or stay.

Mayor Bica said it's going to be a little bit tricky on how to write the legislation and they are waiting on Mr. Cimino's help.

Mr. Seman said the next item for discussion is the administrative agreement with Portage Regional Planning regarding the roll they play with the NSP funds (Neighborhood Stabilization Program). They are addressing the original NSP monies received. Because the money flowed through the county, the county chose Regional Planning as their fiscal representative on this. Whatever recaptured money they end up with from those NSP funds, Regional Planning must administer them in terms of the reporting requirements of the Ohio Department of Development. They are the ones in perpetuity. As long as they have monies in the coffers, they are being spent and there are grant dollars out there, either on a recaptured basis or for new grant money, Regional Planning reports all of the activity to Columbus. They will continue to do that if a property is sold, the money is reworked, just like any other revolver. Todd Peetz approached him and said that right now, they are doing this for free and can Regional Planning be compensated for carrying the back end of the paperwork. They put together a boiler plate administrative agreement. It's a not to exceed situation. From all indications it will come to about \$1,200.00 a year. This is very minimal considering the hours it takes to reconcile a Ravenna account.

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Mr. Finney noted that the fee is being paid out of the recaptured funds, not monies directly from the city. It's still the original \$330,000.00 NSP grant. They have just less than \$1,600.00 left of the original grant so they are now operating on recaptured funds.

Mr. Seman noted that they are certainly entitled to the money.

There being no further questions or comments, it was decided by those present that a tracking sheet would be submitted for Finance Committee approval.

Mr. Seman said he would like to remind every one that if the Formula grant drops below \$50,000.00 next year then it will be administered by the same group. They have to go with the county if the allocation drops below \$50,000.00. It's been dropping about \$4,000.00 a year and it was \$53,000.00 this year.

Mr. Finney said the county has come up with a grant. They are looking at \$500,000.00. They've discussed a couple of different scenarios. One was that they take the grant, split it up between Kent, Ravenna and Portage County and use it to demolish homes. There is some criteria to it, similar to NSP but slightly different. There will be another meeting in a couple of weeks to find exactly what they are looking at. Originally they talked about a match and he said there was no way the city can match. They're not allowed to use NSP recaptured funds and there are certain other funds they are not able to use. He thinks the commissioners are listening. Neighborhood Development Services will administer this for the county as the recipient. This is informational and he wanted to let them know that's the direction they are going.

Mr. Seman said that Mr. Finney is in the process of submitting a list of houses that need to be demolished. They are going to move ahead with two of those fairly soon. They are recapturing \$64,000.00 due to the sale of the house on Chestnut Street. Then those funds will be available for demolishing homes.

Mr. Seman went on to say that the match for the \$500,000.00 does not set in until they ask for the first dollar over \$500,000.00. The county is eligible to apply for more in May after they spend the \$500,000.00. But then they'll be talking about a match.

Mr. Rainone said that realizing all things are not equal, if there is a ballpark figure to demolish a house on an average lot.

Mr. Finney said that if they are using federal dollars or state dollars where the environmental concerns must be remediated, it's approximately \$10,000.00 a house.

Mr. Ribelin asked what the percentage would be on the match.

Mr. Finney said they have no idea. Right now, he told them the city just can't match. They need 100% or take nothing.

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Mr. Seman said the city is trying to get its money out of the \$500,000.00. Then if there are monies in the RLFs, it might behoove them to come up with a match. Then they'll take a look at it at that point in time.

Mr. Dudek asked if the city usually ends up owning those lots.

Mr. Seman said sometimes they recapture the funds by selling them.

Mr. Finney said that they have and some they haven't. It's easier just to have the judge authorize the demolition rights rather than acquiring the property and then sell it through auction.

Mr. Seman said that some owners want the structure torn down and keep the lot.

Mayor Bica said that it's preferable not to own a lot because it gives the city additional liability.

Mr. Seman said the advantage with that is that it can be done quickly. It sometimes takes two years to get an order.

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 6:20 P.M.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

Frank Seman, Chairman
Community & Economic Development Committee