## Ravenna City Council Public Health and Safety Committee Meeting Minutes August 13, 2012

The Public Health and Safety Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:25 P.M. by Chairman, Bruce Ribelin. Present were: Amy Michael, Frank Seman, Jack Ferguson, Fred Berry, Sharon Spencer and Fran Ricciardi. Also attending the meeting were Mayor Joseph Bica; Finance Director, Kim Cecora; Service Director, Kelly Engelhart; City Engineer, Bob Finney; Safety Compliance Officer, Larry Shafer; Utility Billing Supervisor, Mike Reynolds; Water Treatment Plant Supervisor, Tim Stephens; Police Chief Tim Adkins; Police Captain Jeff Wallis. Also attending was Hanna Wallis and Donna Swigart of 528 East Riddle Avenue, Ravenna.

Mr. Ribelin said the first item on the agenda is to discuss the liquor licenses. The figures have come in from the Police Department. The number of responses from January 1, 2012 to through the first of the month. The been made to the following establishments: Spano's zero calls; English Pub, one call; East Main Saloon 20 calls. It is his understanding there was a major scuffle over the weekend; Cimarron 7 calls; Town Tavern 16 calls; The Den, 6 calls; Big Dog Saloon 6 calls. Those are the figures he has available. That's where they are right now. They have to determine if they are going to approve the reissuance of the State liquor licenses to these establishments. He asked if these are just fights or if there have been some assaults, stabbings, etc.

Chief Adkins said there has been a little bit of everything. East Main Saloon, in particular, disorderly conduct, fight, intoxicated, fight, fight, assault, fight, noise complaints, suspicious person, etc. The Town Tavern is much the same. These are fairly typical calls for bars. It's just the number of calls. Town Tavern and East Main Saloon seem to be the two that are well above the norm. Everybody else they have similar calls but on a much less frequent level.

Mr. Ribelin asked if they've been fined for nuisance violations.

Mayor Bica said they have not. He's asked the Chief to pull these last week. They have done the letters for the police and fire. He asked Chief Adkins to pull these based on some issues they had at the Town Tavern and someone going through the window.

Mr. Ribelin said there was a stabbing in that incident.

Mayor Bica said he wanted to bring this to Council's attention because it is timely.

Ms. Michael asked when they are going to start enforcing the chronic nuisance.

Mayor Bica said they are. They were planning on issuing these bars chronic nuisance letters but it was very timely that the liquor license renewal came up because he thinks it was a good plant to discuss this in committee with the Chief being here before they issue these letters, if the City wants to send a letter to the Liquor Control Board with regard to these issues. Twenty calls to a bar within a seven month period is a lot.

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Chief Adkins said that he tried to pull out some things that would not be bar calls, such as an accident. On East Main Saloon between January 1 to present there were 32 calls. Town Tavern had 22 calls. He said the Den had 12. Spano's had one in late July so now they do have one. For bars in the City they are looking at about 81 calls.

Mayor Bica said that 81 calls in a seven month period is a huge drain on resources.

Ms. Michael said like the ordeal on Page Street.

Ms. Engelhart said that a letter did go to the property owner on Page Street.

Chief Adkins said that sixty percent of the bar calls made are between those two bars. To him, the others do not appear to be a nuisance, per se. They get calls there but nothing above the norm. Six calls in six months is pretty good for a bar. These two need to be addressed.

Mr. Ricciardi asked what kind of notice, if any, have they been put on. He understands the nuisance notice but in terms of taking the next step now.

Mayor Bica said what they've done in the past is actually put the bar on notice that they are reporting these statistics to the State Liquor Control Board, FYI.

Mr. Ricciardi said that, if he understands it correctly, the purpose of contacting the State Liquor Control Board is to let them know whether or not there are any objections to the renewal of the licenses. He worries that if they stay silent to the two biggest offenders, it sort of speaks volumes for some of these other bars. His feeling is that they ought to object.

The clerk noted that the last time there was an objection to a liquor license renewal, legislation was required.

Mr. Seman said then the State will set up a hearing.

Ms. Engelhart said she thinks they also need to institute the chronic nuisance ordinance because those two statistics, in her opinion, it doesn't show that the liquor licenses are not necessarily the problem. All of the bars have liquor licenses. It's the property owner who apparently isn't doing anything about the fights or whatever is happening in their establishment. She thinks if they send a letter to the property owners with the chronic nuisance notice stating they are going to be fined if they don't abate the problem, along with objecting, that sends a pretty strong message.

Mr. Ribelin said as chairman of the committee, he would like to see them send a letter to the State that the City objects to the renewal of the liquor licenses.

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Ms. Michael said she wants to be fair about it and make sure the owners are notified. Just give them a heads up and tell them how many calls were made, just so they aren't surprised by reading it in the paper. She also feels that they passed the chronic nuisance legislation for a reason and she thinks that definitely needs to be enforced.

Mayor Bica said they were going to push the chronic nuisance anyway. But he can say that the property owners are different people than who is holding the liquor licenses. They are two different people on both of those.

Mr. Ricciardi said either way, both parties should be put on notice. At least the license holders have a right to due process. The objections have to be postmarked no later than September 4, 2012 which means they will need a special meeting to pass the legislation that is needed.

There being no further questions or comments, it was decided by those present that a Special Meeting would be held August 20, 2012 at 6:30 PM.

Mr. Ribelin said the next item for discussion is the EMS grant application. He believes they have applied for this in the past. He doesn't think there are any matching funds on it.

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

Ms. Michael asked to bring up an issue regarding a property owner where the neighbors on the side of her backyard have a barn. In that barn, they rescue feral cats. They are up to about 27 cats right now. She is having the roof on her garage done and the workers can smell it coming out from that barn. The cats are multiplying more and more. Is there anything they can do. How are they going to handle this with cats when people are taking them in, not spaying them or getting them neutered.

Ms. Engelhart said right now the only thing they can do is if someone calls in to complain, they can enforce the chronic nuisance. Unless they do something with the number of animals, they really can't enforce it.

Ms. Michael said she knows someone who has a lot of cats but she takes care of them, takes them to the vet on a regular basis, etc. This lady who called her today said she's going to start trapping the cats herself. She just doesn't know what to do. If they know where these cats are coming from, can't these neighbors be liable.

Mr. Ribelin said that there is something on the books about dog feces and odors. He doesn't think there is anything in the ordinance about cats.

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Mr. Finney said that it's his understanding the Portage County Dog Warden only deals with dogs. He could be wrong.

Mayor Bica said people with those complaints should start calling the Service Director.

Ms. Engelhart said then they will start documenting it as a nuisance.

It was decided by those present that the clerk would research the odor and feces ordinances as well as section 618.095 of the Codified Ordinances and submit a tracking sheet to amend the appropriate sections.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 5:40 P.M.

| ATTEST:          |                                    |
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|                  |                                    |
| Clerk of Council | Bruce Ribelin, Chairman            |
|                  | Public Health and Safety Committee |