



**Minutes of the Oberlin City Council Work Session**  
Held on Monday, December 21, 2009  
6:00 P.M.

Purpose: to discuss and consider the City of Oberlin's participation in the Clinton Positive Program, a request for assistance from the Cable Program Fund for Oberlin City Schools Access Channel 20 Programming, and alternatives to meet Oberlin's public transportation needs.

President Sonner called the Work Session to order at 6:07 PM, all members of council being present.

**CLINTON POSITIVE PROGRAM.**

City Manager Norenberg provided a general overview of the purpose of the work session. Beginning with the Clinton Positive Program he explained that several weeks ago, City administration along with the College had been approached by representatives of the Clinton Foundation and Representatives of the U. S. Green Buildings Council. As a result of that discussion both (the college and the City) were invited to become a part of the Clinton Climate Initiative (CCI) Climate Positive Program. A revised memorandum of understanding would be forthcoming. Norenberg advised that David Orr was there to provide further insight to what is expected from the City's participation.

David Orr, Oberlin College Professor advised that this was an unusual opportunity for the College and the City. The Clinton climate project was a very loose consortium of 17 cities including London, Beijing, Chicago, and Oberlin.

This group of people would be committed to accelerated and cooperative efforts to reach Climate positive status. He remarked that in climate positive no one knew exactly all of the metrics and a good bit of this would be exploratory to see where we go and how we get there. The goal is to use common metrics, with standardized procedures and reporting methods. There is an advisory group and a technical group which would be working with some of the more scientific details.

One of the more interesting aspects of this program is the unique collaboration between the City and the College. The concept is to develop a systematic and transparent method to: track and record CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, maximize efficiency in demand side management and to deploy renewable energy technology including: landfill gas, biomass, wind and solar.

The positive aspects of participating in the program include: increase in visibility at no cost and access to the Clinton foundation's resources. Publicity is a second benefit to participating in this program as well as access to expertise and cooperation on a global scale.

The downside to this cooperation would be that it puts the spotlight on Oberlin (there will be reporters present to check on the progression of the project), complications of Town Gown cooperation and it requires creativity, stamina, performance, & organizational learning.

The bottom line is that this is a very unique opportunity for the Clinton Climate Initiative program and a huge plus for the City and College giving them access to money and influence that they otherwise would not be able to tap into.

In response to questions raised by Councilor's Soucy and Peterson. Orr advised that though the program was not project specific the intent was to collaborate with the City to develop Climate positive initiatives. Both entities would have access to the consultation services offered through the CCI program.

Ashenhurst advised that he was disappointed that Council did not have a draft MOU before them, he felt that the MOU would answer a lot of questions that Council may have. In addition he asked if the foundation had any idea of whether there would be scholarship monies available that will allow struggling cities to travel to various conferences that are going on around the world.

Orr, advised that this program will give them the visibility that Oberlin otherwise would never have. It will put them in a place to receive endowments, scholarships and other grant monies. In addition he sees this as a huge education opportunity that will equip Oberlin's youth with the skills that they will need in this renewed economy. This is an excellent opportunity for Oberlin since they will be entering in at ground zero.

#### **ALTERNATIVES TO MEET OBERLIN'S PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION NEEDS.**

Norenberg advised that after a 0.5 percent permanent sales tax increase ballot issue failed at the November elections many people knew that this could result in the elimination of services provided by Lorain County Transit for public transportation. After having further discussions with Ted Kalo and Rich Enty it appeared that some of the services would be preserved while others will be discontinued. The total impact is unknown at this time. Given that the fate of public transportation is unknown in Oberlin, he has proposed two programs used in Mesa, Arizona. They would include Coupons for Cabs and the Mesa Mileage Reimbursement program (these program details are on file in the Clerk's office).

Soucy asked if any collaboration efforts have been proposed between the City and College with regards to preserving Route 21 and if so what sources would be used to help to facilitate this initiative. Norenberg advised that at this point they were in the process of reviewing what would be the most cost effective way to provide a similar service based on how often the service is used. He could not anticipate where the funds would come from at this time.

Peterson proposed that Council develop a transportation subcommittee during its upcoming retreat that would keep it abreast of issues related to transportation. Baumann advised that he would like to see a subcommittee of the citizens not of Council.

Ashenhurst asked if anyone was looking at a policy apparatus that could be initiated rapidly when Lorain County transit system settles down. In other words were they looking into what could be done to prepare for LCT's impending decision, in case the terms were unfavorable for local users?

Linda Arbogast, Oberlin Community Services advised that they were interested in being a part of the solution. They were looking into starting up a dial a ride program again, and they have checked with local churches to see what the possibility of using their church vans would be. Currently they offer gas cards for low income individuals to help them get to doctor appointments and they also offer bus tickets.

Going forward they would be looking to set up a subcommittee as well that could develop steps to mitigate the effects of losing additional services.

Rimbert advised that a survey was completed and numbers revealed that the ridership just wasn't there. He said in order to have an effective public transportation program you have to have the users.

Broadwell advised that it comes down to whether or not the current method of public transportation is cost effective, if the numbers aren't there it might be the time to consider alternative options.

Norenberg encouraged the need to support transit programs throughout the County that were funded by federal monies. He proposed that this allowed them to maximize federal dollars as oppose to tapping into the City's general fund which would be difficult to sustain overtime.

Sonner stepped out at this time.  
The Gavel was handed over to VP Baumann

#### **A REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE FROM THE CABLE PROGRAM FUND FOR OBERLIN CITY SCHOOLS ACCESS CHANNEL 20 PROGRAMMING**

Norenberg advised that Cable Co-op had expressed interest in partnering with the City and the School District to increase the programming that was videotaped by students and then broadcast on Channels 9 and 20. Over the years that the Cable Programming Fund has been in existence, the City has periodically contracted with Cable Co-op to lease the equipment purchased from the fund to Cable Co-op for the purposes of improved or expanded community programming. In addition to the equipment, it is likely that a small amount will be requested for staff to mentor, train and oversee the students. It is expected that the necessary ordinance and associated exhibits can be prepared in time to place on the January 4, 2010 agenda.

Ashenhurst asked how much was currently in the fund? Talarico advised that currently there was about \$130,000 in the fund and approximately \$15,000 goes into that fund on an annual basis. He further advised that he was willing to support assisting with the equipment, but it seemed to him that Cable Co-op should be responsible for paying for its own personnel. In addition, since this request seemed to benefit the school he was curious to know if they would offer any financial support. Norenberg advised that at this time the school board would not be offering financial assistance.

Mr. Rimbert asked if this would be a one-time purchase. City Manager Norenberg advised that it was a one-time purchase and the only thing that would have any ongoing commitment would be if there were some staffing involved. Mr. Rimbert advised that he supported collaborative efforts, but felt that it was important for the Schools to provide some financial assistance as well.

Peterson asked what the lifespan of the equipment would be and how much the equipment would lease for? Norenberg advised that the he didn't know what the lifespan of the equipment would be but the lease would be for one dollar a year.

Soucy asked the Law Director if this seemed like a public purpose, and if so could it be used as a platform for promotional events like Juneteenth, the Big Parade, and Doggie Doo. In addition, would they be able to get the students trained so that they could be called on to assist the broader purpose, of broadcasting these events.

Severs advised that historically the City has passed an ordinance authorizing a lease agreement with Cable Co-op which would allow Cable Co-op to lease equipment for \$1 dollar a year for the useable life over a 5-year period. In order to ensure that the equipment is being used for a proper municipal public purpose, they will continue to lease the equipment with Cable Co-op - not the school – using the same practice as before. The language in the ordinance will approve the lease and restrict the use of those funds. In addition, the ordinance will also speak to community wide activities. Monies being used for personnel would be utilized by Cable Co-op to provide an incentive for youths to get involved in the video broadcasting for the various promotional activities going on in the community, which he felt was a proper municipal public purpose.

Being that there was no further business to come before Council the Work Session adjourned at 7:30:11 p.m.

**Attest:**

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**BELINDA B. ANDERSON**  
**CLERK OF COUNCIL**

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**KENNETH SLOANE**  
**PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL**

Approved: 01/19/2010

Posted: 01/20/20109

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