A Regular meeting of the Oxford City Council was called to order by Mayor Richard Keebler on Tuesday, July 20, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. Those members present were Ken Bogard, Greig Rutherford, Bob Blackburn, John Harman and Kevin McKeehan. Kate Currie was excused.

Staff members present: Mr. Doug Elliott, City Manager; Mr. Mike Dreisbach, Service Director; Mr. Steve Schwein, Police Chief; Mr Joe Newlin, Finance Director; Mr. Jung-Han Chen, Community Development Director; Mr. Alan Kyger, Economic Development Director; Mr. John Detherage, Fire Chief; Mr. Steve McHugh, Law Director and Ms. Mary Ann Eaton, Clerk of Council.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Keebler called for the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. McKeehan moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Bogard seconded. The motion passed 6-0-0.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

PROCLAMATION
'PHI DELTA THETA WEEK'

Mayor Keebler read the Proclamation and presented it to Jacob Ternes and Jon Collier of Phi Delta Theta. Mayor Keebler wished them success with their annual Emerging Leaders Institute.

PRESENTATION
BUTLER COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE

Mr. David Brown, Deputy Auditor, Updated Council with regard to recent initiatives in the Butler County Auditor's Office. Mr. Brown provided the Mayor, the City Manager and Finance Director with a copy of the County's Popular Annual Fiscal Report for the year ended December 31, 2009. Mr. Brown advised the report along with the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report were available on line at www.butlercounty.com. Mr. Brown noted the Auditor's Office tried to serve the public as best they could and encouraged citizens to call him 887-3159 if they needed assistance.

PRESENTATION
OXFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Officer John Buchholz, updated Council with regard to the Alcohol Education Program that went into effect last October. Officer Buchholz advised the program provided an opportunity for first time minor alcohol offenders to take an alcohol education class and perform 20 hours of community service to have their offense dismissed. Officer Buchholz advised since October 281 offenders applied for the program and out of 5620 possible hours of community service 3992 hours had been worked.

Officer Buchholz noted the City was the principal recipient of community service with the offenders performing work at the Municipal Building and various City departments and the Senior Citizens Center. Officer Buchholz advised community service opportunities were also available at the Community Arts Center, Lane Library, Oxford Visitors Bureau, Chamber of Commerce, Community Foundation and during community events. Officer Buchholz noted his feeling the program was doing what the City had intended it to do. Officer Buchholz advised the offender had an opportunity to purchase community service hours and the average amount purchased was 25% of the 20 hours.

Mr. Tom Kelechi, CEO, of the Alcohol and Chemical Abuse Council and Access Ohio, advised their primary service was prevention and early intervention to the school systems throughout Butler County. Mr. Kelechi advised they were pleased to serve the City of Oxford by providing an 8 hour alcohol education program on Saturdays to the first time offenders who qualified for the program. Mr. Kelechi advised the participants learned about alcohol and the body, low risk drinking guidelines, binge drinking, risky drinking decisions, decision making, integrating drinking guidelines into life and media literacy. Mr. Kelechi noted to successfully complete the program the participants must be on time, awake, attentive and respectful and since the program began that had been the case. Mr. Kelechi advised they were pleased to provide their service to the City of Oxford and looked forward to a long relationship.

**NOTICE TO
LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

Transfer permit from Church Street Station LLC DBA Church Street Station 107 E. Church Street & Patio Oxford, Ohio 45056 to Topshelf Shots Inc. 17 N. Poplar Street Oxford, Ohio 45056.

Chief Schwein advised the applicant; Ted Wood and his wife Paige Wood were the applicants and were present permit holders for another establishment. Chief Schwein noted he did not anticipate any problems with the permit transfer.

Mr. Bogard moved to accept the notice without comment. Mr. Blackburn seconded. The motion passed 6-0-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Ray Arlinghaus, advised he was a local farmer and a vender at the Farmers Market Uptown. Mr. Arlinghaus thanked Council for their continued support of the market and noted they averaged 700 visitors on Saturdays. Mr. Arlinghaus read a comment from the Community Voice section of the Hamilton Journal newspaper which appeared on July 16, 2010 as follows: 'I got a $10.00 fine for parking at a meter in Oxford while shopping at the farmers' market on a Saturday. For those of you who have never been to the market, there is no parking that is not guarded by the almighty parking meter. The farmers' market has shoppers from Fairfield, Lebanon, Germantown and all over.

Oxford should be ecstatic to be pulling in people from outside who just might be attracted to the shops and restaurants after their visit to the market. Oxford should put its hand out in friendship – not payout – on Saturdays.' Mr. Arlinghaus proposed the issuance of a parking permit for "Friends of the Market" on Saturdays from 7:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. during market season which would be specific to an individual and a vehicle and the Market would pay the City $15.00 for each permit. Mr. Arlinghaus noted this solution would allow visitors to park at a meter and not have to worry about overstaying at the meter while they shopped and visited businesses in Oxford. Mr. Arlinghaus advised the Farmers Market would like to work with the City to find a solution that would be amicable to visitors as well as to the City. Mr. Arlinghaus advised the Market wished to continue to grow Oxford as a destination for people in the broader southwest Ohio and northeast Indiana area.

Mr. Bogard advised he had read the comment in the Hamilton Journal Newspaper regarding the parking citation. Mr. Bogard advised Larry Slocum had proposed the idea of a parking permit to Council previously and it had been referred to the Oxford Parking and Transportation Advisory Board. Mr. Bogard suggested offering free parking on Saturday mornings in certain areas such as Church Street, North Main Street and Poplar Street until 12:00 noon.

Mr. Rutherford advised he was a member of the Oxford Parking and Transportation Advisory Board. Mr. Rutherford noted parking was expensive and the City needed to be diligent in its use of parking meters and turnover at the meters was needed. Mr. Rutherford advised perhaps the City should not meter for a certain amount of hours on Saturday mornings and noted statistics from the Police Department were needed. Mr. Rutherford advised the Oxford Parking and Transportation Advisory Board had taken the issue under advisement and would be proposing updates and upgrades to the entire Uptown parking strategy.

Mr. Clay Depew, Oxford Township, advised the City was defoliating 27 South to install a temporary sidewalk and suggested while the new high school was being built hiking/biking trails be installed noting there was green space behind the cemetery. Mr. Depew noted concern that there was only one point of access to the new high school and advised he would like the issue looked at closely.

CONSENT AGENDA

MINUTES

Minutes of the June 29, 2010 City Council Special Meeting. (Mary Ann Eaton, Clerk of Council)

MINUTES

Minutes of the July 6, 2010 City Council Meeting. (Mary Ann Eaton, Clerk of Council)

REPORTS

Report regarding the July 7, 2010 Historic and Architectural Preservation Commission Meeting. (Jung-Han Chen, Community Development Director)

Mr. Blackburn moved to approve the consent agenda. Mr. McKeehan seconded. The motion passed 6-0-0.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION
CONTRACT WITH
RE/MAX ALPHA COMMERCIAL

A Resolution No. 4551 authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract with RE/Max Alpha Commercial Group to list for sale and market the City owned real estate known as "Western Knolls". (Alan Kyger, Economic Development Director)

Mr. Elliott advised the City requested proposals for the sale and marketing of this piece of City owned property which was 47 ½ acres. Mr. Elliott noted RE/Max Alpha Commercial Group was the only firm that submitted a proposal and he recommended passage of the proposed Resolution.

Mr. McKeehan moved to adopt Resolution No. 4551. Mr. Harman seconded. The Resolution was adopted by a vote of 6-0-0.

RESOLUTION
TAX INCREASE

A Resolution requesting and authorizing the Butler County Board of Elections to place upon the City of Oxford, Ohio Ballot at the General Election on November 2, 2010, the question of whether Ordinance No. 3121 increasing by one quarter of one percent (.25%) the City of Oxford income tax rate to a total rate of two percent (2%) shall be approved in accordance with Section 718.01 of the Ohio Revised Code, the increase to provide for maintaining and improving current Fire and Emergency Medical Services, general operation, equipment and facilities. (Doug Elliott, City Manager)

Mr. McHugh advised the Board of Elections reviewed the proposed Resolution and suggested the City add a heading to the ballot language.

Mr. Blackburn moved to substitute the proposed Resolution with a new proposed Resolution. Mr. Bogard seconded. The motion passed 5-1-0 with Mr. Harman voting nay.

Mr. Bogard moved to table the proposed Resolution until the vote transpired on the corresponding Ordinance. Mr. Blackburn seconded. The motion passed 5-1-0 with Mr. Harman voting nay.

ORDINANCES
FIRST READING

ORDINANCE
NEW SECTION 353.99

An Ordinance Repealing Traffic Code Section 353.99 Of The Codified Ordinances Of The City Of Oxford, Entitled "Penalty" And Adopting New Section 353.99, Entitled "Penalty". (Steve Schwein, Police Chief)

Chief Schwein discussed the staff report as presented on page 35 of the agenda noting the proposed Ordinance would allow 7 days to pay a parking citation instead of 48 hours.

Mr. Rutherford advised 7 days seemed much more reasonable in which to pay a parking citation especially for out of town visitors to the City. Mr. Rutherford noted the Oxford Parking and Transportation Advisory Board was working on the customer friendly side of parking control.

Mr. Bogard inquired what the percentage of uncollectable citation fines was and Chief Schwein advised he would obtain that information.

ORDINANCE
SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET

Ordinance Amending Ordinance No. 3089 Supplemental Budget Ordinance Number 6 To Make Supplemental Appropriations For Fiscal Year 2010. (Joe Newlin, Finance Director)

Mr. Newlin discussed his staff report as presented on page 39 and 40 of the agenda.

ORDINANCES
SECOND READING

ORDINANCE
NEW SECTION 507.01

An Ordinance No. 3120 Repealing Oxford Code Of Ordinances Section 507.01, Entitled "Police Civil Citations", And Adopting New Section 507.01 Entitled "Police Civil Citations". (Richard Keebler, Mayor)

Mr. Elliott advised he had no new information and the proposed Ordinance was discussed at length at the last meeting. Mr. Elliott noted the proposed Ordinance would eliminate the ability to write a civil citation for not having a front license plate. Mr. Elliott advised Mayor Keebler had requested the proposed Ordinance.

Mr. Rutherford noted offenses such as U-turns, littering from motor vehicle, wearing earplugs or earphones, loads dropping or leaking loads were being left in the Police Civil Citation Ordinance even though they could cause hazards to citizens.

Mr. Rutherford noted he found it ridiculous that 'Display of license plates' would be removed from the Ordinance while offenses that could cause harm to someone would remain. Mr. Rutherford advised he felt 'Display of license plates' should remain in the Ordinance and again suggested there should be no fine until a second offense and the third offense would escalate to the State level fine.

Mr. Harman advised the fine for a Civil Citation was $60.00 and if the proposed Ordinance was adopted the fine would escalate to $165.00 and he did not understand the benefit of doing that. Mr. Harman noted three years ago he received a citation for not having a front license plate and went to court along with 50 other people. Mr. Harman noted the vast majority of the people were not fighting the fine they were there because they did not have the money to pay the fine. Mr. Harman advised Council would not be doing the citizens any service by making this more punitive and it would not fix the problem.

Mayor Keebler advised it was against the law to drive an Ohio registered vehicle without a front license plate. Mayor Keebler noted Council was getting bombarded by out of town people who felt they were unfairly targeted by local law.

Mayor Keebler advised this appeared to be a local law and it was too easy for officers to write a civil citation for no front license plate for $60.00 and he had personally heard that from the officers who were reluctant to write the $165.00 citation. Mayor Keebler noted he did not want Oxford to be known as the license plate trap of the State of Ohio.

Mr. Bogard moved to adopt Ordinance No. 3120. Mr. McKeehan seconded. The Ordinance was adopted by the following roll call:

AYE: Mr. Bogard, Mr. McKeehan, Mr. Blackburn, Mr. Keebler (5)

NAY: Mr. Harman, Mr. Rutherford (2)

ABS: None (0)

ORDINANCE
INCOME TAX RATE INCREASE

An Ordinance Authorizing The City Of Oxford, Ohio, Pursuant To Ohio Revised Code Section 718.01(C) To Place On The Ballot At The General Election On November 2, 2010, A Proposed Ordinance Repealing Section 181.01, "Purpose", Section 181.03, "Imposition Of Tax", And Section 181.04, "Effective Period", Of The Oxford Codified Ordinances, And Adopting New Section 181.01, "Purpose", Section 181.03, "Imposition Of Tax", And Section 181.04, "Effective Period", Of The Oxford Codified Ordinances To Increase The Income Tax Rate By One Quarter Of One Percent (0.25%) For The Purpose Of Maintaining And Improving Current Fire And Emergency Medical Services General Operation, Equipment And Facilities And Declaring An Emergency. (Doug Elliott, City Manager)

Mr. Elliott advised if Council wanted the proposed income tax increase on the November ballot the Resolution and Ordinance would need to be adopted and delivered to the Board of Elections by August 4, 2010.

Mr. John Witt, Fire Captain, advised he had a deep passion for the Oxford Fire Department and had served as a volunteer since 1986 and as a part-time employee since January as well as a volunteer. Mr. Witt asked Council to increase their request for money from the public because it was essential for the Fire Department to have 5 Firefighter/EMTs on station at all times. Mr. Witt described several circumstances where having only 3 Firefighter/EMTs could put them and the public in danger until volunteers or mutual aid arrived on a scene. Mr. Witt advised he served on the Ad-Hoc Fire/EMS Committee for two years and it was his understanding Council would ask for a tax increase large enough to provide 5 Firefighter/EMTs on station at all times. Mr. Witt advised he was looking out for the safety of the Firefighters.

Ms. Diana Spillman, advised she was a professor at Miami University and a volunteer EMT for the Oxford Fire Department. Ms. Spillman noted for the past 2 ½ hours she had been working at a fire scene and at a car accident. Ms. Spillman noted as an EMT she performed backup tasks such as bringing water and doing accountability at fire scenes. Ms. Spillman advised she wanted all of the Oxford Fire Department personnel to be safe, she wanted money for equipment and training. Ms. Spillman advised she did not want anything to happen to her second family or to the community and asked Council to make their jobs possible.

Mayor Keebler advised Council heard and understood the concerns and Council wanted to do the best they could to provide adequate Fire and EMS for the citizens. Mayor Keebler noted over the years the Fire Department had a high level of service from a group of volunteers but the run volume increased while the availability of volunteers had decreased. Mayor Keebler advised Council bolstered the volunteer force with a 3 person on duty crew primarily to handle EMS response, alarm calls and service calls, not to fight fires. Mayor Keebler noted last year the City went into deficit spending to provide the coverage around the clock and begin paramedic service. Mayor Keebler advised while Council realized this wasn't enough they could not fund a fulltime Fire Department with a budget the size of Oxford's without significantly reducing the scope of services in every other City department. Mayor Keebler noted the problem was made worse by the national and local economic situation and except where required by contract no Miami University, Talawanda School District or City of Oxford employee received a wage increase last year and likely would not next year. Mayor Keebler advised Miami University had reduced their work force and the City was falling short on anticipated tax collections and investment income was almost non-existent. Mayor Keebler noted Council felt .25% was all they could possibly afford to ask of the citizens and as economic conditions improved and tax collections increased Council hoped to move forward with increased Fire Department staffing. Mayor Keebler advised Council was not done with the budgeting process and he hoped to be able to add 1 or 2 staff members to the Fire Department this year. Mayor Keebler cautioned Fire Department staff to be as safe as possible even if it meant fighting a fire from the outside until additional help arrived.

Mr. Rutherford advised Council was giving the citizens the opportunity to voice their opinion about whether or not the City maintained and possibly improved its Fire/EMS service in the City. Mr. Rutherford agreed with Mayor Keebler about only asking for a .25% increase noting there was a heated debate in his home in these difficult economic times about whether or not they could afford to pay more taxes. Mr. Rutherford advised the citizens needed to recognize the reason for the proposed increase was because the City did not have the volunteer staff it used to have. Mr. Rutherford noted there was a substantial increase in call volume over the years and more calls required more money. Mr. Rutherford advised if the City was going to maintain the current level of service the citizens would have to make the decision to pass the tax increase. Mr. Rutherford noted regardless of what happened in November Council had some very difficult budget issues to resolve. Mr. Rutherford thanked the Firefighters and EMTs for their dedicated service to the City.

Mr. McKeehan thanked the Firefighters and EMTs noting their service to the City was very important. Mr. McKeehan advised this had been a topic since Council passed the deficit budget last year and he would have liked to have heard more from the Firefighters earlier in the process as Council struggled with this very difficult decision. Mr. McKeehan noted the majority of Council felt a 25% tax increase was the best they could offer at this time and noted his hope it would pass so Council could offer the Fire Department something rather than nothing.

Mr. Bogard advised Council had to look at the standpoint of building the Fire Department over a period of time. Mr. Bogard noted Chief Detherage put together a Master Plan for the Fire Department that still had to be considered by Council and staff and Council would look at that as they added staff and equipment for the future. Mr. Bogard advised Council needed to take an incremental approach in what the public would be able to purchase for their safety and their lives. Mr. Bogard suggested building the Fire Department together and also showing patience during the process.

Mr. Harman thanked Mr. Witt and Ms. Spillman for attending the meeting this evening and letting Council know how they felt. Mr. Harman advised one way or another Council would get the money for the Fire Department even if the levy failed. Mr. Harman noted the support was there to find the money in one way, shape or form. Mr. Harman noted his concerns were that citizens in Oxford had wage freezes going on two years and others had wage reductions and some had lost their jobs. Mr. Harman advised the City had done an excellent job of cutting costs and it was time for Council to step up and consider user fees. Mr. Harman noted it was easy to place something on the ballot and it was a lot tougher to find the money in other places and he felt Council could find the money in other places. Mr. Harman advised he thought Council was prepared to vote on the issue this evening but there was going to be a motion to move the legislation to a Special Meeting because there were not enough votes to assure its passage tonight with one Council member not present. Mr. Harman advised he felt it was pretty bad when everyone was ready to vote yet the legislation was being moved to another night to make sure the right number of votes were received.

Mr. Blackburn noted in a perfect world Oxford would have a full-time Fire Department, two Fire Stations and more vehicles. Mr. Blackburn advised these were really tough economic times and Council believed the .25% tax increase was the best option right now and all of it would go into the fire fund. Mr. Blackburn thanked the Fire Department members for attending the meeting and noted he wished Council had received more input from them earlier in the process.

Mayor Keebler advised because of the timing of this and having to get it to the Board of Elections in an approved form by a date certain and because it took 6 votes of Council to pass the Ordinance he would ask for a motion to postpone the vote to a Special Meeting on Tuesday, July 27, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. where the full Council was expected to be present. Mayor Keebler noted on an important vote like this he felt it was important to have the full Council present.

Mr. Bogard moved to postpone the vote to a Special Meeting on Tuesday, July 27, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. when the full Council was expected to be present. Mr. McKeehan seconded. The motion passed 5-1-0 with Mr. Harman voting nay.

Mr. Rutherford noted his comments were directed to Dr. Hodge and upper administration at Miami University and the Board of Regents. Mr. Rutherford advised Oxford had a significant population who were provided emergency services and who did not contribute to or help support and sustain emergency services for personnel and equipment that was provided. Mr. Rutherford noted the City gladly provided emergency services to everyone in this community. Mr. Rutherford requested that the Board of Regents and university administration gave serious consideration to incorporating a type of public safety fee as part of the general fees at the university so the City could continue to fund the level of emergency services the City currently provided.

ANNOUNCMENTS

Mr. Elliott noted the men and women who served in the Fire/EMS Division do an outstanding job for the City of Oxford. Mr. Elliott advised Oxford's costs per run were very comparable to area departments because it is a combined department of part-time employees and volunteers. Mr. Elliott advised the Ad-Hoc Committee did discuss the idea of forming a 5 person crew on each shift but the decision on what the tax rate would be was City Council's. Mr. Elliott noted these were very trying times and the City's investment income alone had dropped $500,000 in two years and just about every revenue source was down. Mr. Elliott advised part of his job as City Manager was to propose a budget to Council and the limited tax dollars had to be balanced among all safety services and other City needs which was a difficult task. Mr. Elliott noted Council had to pass a responsible budget and the City could not continue to spend more than it brought in and something was going to have to suffer. Mr. Elliott advised open positions within the City were not being filled and other cost saving measures had been implemented. Mr. Elliott noted his hope that Council would adopt the legislation to put the tax increase on the ballot and the voters would decide if the tax increase would pass.

Mr. Elliott updated Council with regard to various construction projects within the City and surrounding area.

Mr. Elliott updated Council and the public with regard to the Butler County 911 Planning Committee's recent initiatives.

Mr. Bogard advised he provided Council with information and slides from the Butler County Development Department regarding the 3C project and the regional rail projects. Mr. Bogard noted he and Mr. Chen attended a meeting last week and the City of Sharonville gave a presentation regarding its Master Plan for redevelopment of their City including a station for the 3C line (Columbus, Cincinnati, and Cleveland). Mr. Bogard noted 25 million dollars had been allocated at the state level for planning the 3C project.

Mr. Bogard thanked Mr. Dreisbach and Mr. Elliott for the project update.

Mr. Harman thanked Mr. Bogard for being on the OKI Board and noted he appreciated all of Mr. Bogard's hard work.

Mr. Blackburn advised he attended the dedication of the Bicentennial sculpture and it looked good. Mr. Blackburn noted the walking paths at the Community Park were half way complete.

Mr. Rutherford encouraged everyone to visit the Farmers Markets.

Mr. Rutherford noted for the public that a lot of discussion took place tonight with regard to funding and monies allocated to the City by the State or Federal Government came with strings attached. Mr. Rutherford noted those funds had to be utilized for infrastructure improvements.

Mr. Rutherford encouraged Council to vote unanimously to give the citizens of Oxford the opportunity to vote yes or no with regard to the income tax increase.

Mr. Rutherford asked Mr. Depew to look at the Oxford Area Trails section of the Comprehensive Plan which contained information regarding the plan for walking and cycling trails including access to the new high school.

Mr. McKeehan advised on Friday, July 30th the Lions Club was hosting a meet and greet for the Porsches2Oxford participants in the Uptown Park which was open to the public. Mr. McKeehan noted the Kiwanis would host breakfast the next morning in the Uptown Park which was also open to the public. Mr. McKeehan noted his feeling this was a very positive event for Oxford.

Mr. McKeehan asked staff to look at Codified Ordinance Section 509.10 regarding noise restrictions related to construction. Mr. McKeehan noted clarifications may need to be made.

Mayor Keebler advised the dedication of the Bicentennial sculpture was a very nice event and encouraged members of the public to visit the Community Park. Mayor Keebler encouraged everyone to attend the Porsches2Oxford event and the Thursday night Music Festival.

Mr. Elliott noted a Fire Division fund raising event would take place at Bob Evans restaurant tomorrow from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Blackburn moved to adjourn at 9:15 p.m. Mr. Rutherford seconded. The motion passed 6-0-0.

A Special Meeting of the Oxford City Council was called to order by Mayor Richard Keebler on Tuesday, July 27, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. Those members present were Ken Bogard, Kate Currie, Bob Blackburn, John Harman, Kevin McKeehan and Greig Rutherford.

Staff members present: Mr. Doug Elliott, City Manager; Mike Dreisbach, Service Director; Joe Newlin, Finance Director; Alan Kyger, Economic Development Director; Jung-Han Chen, Community Development Director; Gail Brahier, Parks and Recreation Director; John Detherage, Fire Chief; Steve McHugh, Law Director and Mary Ann Eaton, Clerk of Council.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Keebler called for the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Blackburn moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Bogard seconded. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Mayor Keebler advised there was a correction to the agenda and noted the Ordinance for second reading was postponed not tabled and a motion to remove it from the table was not necessary.

ORDINANCES
SECOND READING

An Ordinance No. 3121 Authorizing The City Of Oxford, Ohio, Pursuant To Ohio Revised Code Section 718.01(C) To Place On The Ballot At The General Election On November 2, 2010, A Proposed Ordinance Repealing Section 181.01, "Purpose", Section 181.03, "Imposition Of Tax", And Section 181.04, "Effective Period", Of The Oxford Codified Ordinances, And Adopting New Section 181.01, "Purpose", Section 181.03, "Imposition Of Tax", And Section 181.04, "Effective Period", Of The Oxford Codified Ordinances To Increase The Income Tax Rate By One Quarter Of One Percent (0.25%) For The Purpose Of Maintaining And Improving Current Fire And Emergency Medical Services General Operation, Equipment And Facilities And Declaring An Emergency. (Doug Elliott, City Manager) **(Postponed)**

Mr. Elliott advised the proposed Ordinance and accompanying Resolution would allow the voters of Oxford the opportunity to decide whether or not the City increased the earnings tax from 1 ¾% to 2%. Mr. Elliott noted if the voters approved the increase it would enable the City to fund the improvements made to the Fire and EMS Division including the first and second shift and the Assistant Fire Chief position. Mr. Elliott advised it would also restore the financial condition of the General Fund which was projected to have a deficit of $500,000 this year. Mr. Elliott recommended that Council pass the legislation to give the citizens of Oxford the opportunity to decide whether or not the City would increase the earnings tax and do the things he just outlined.

Mayor Keebler advised Council understood this was one step in an attempt to take care of funding what had been accomplished in the Fire/EMS Division. Mayor Keebler noted Council needed to improve upon what had already been accomplished.

Mayor Keebler advised Council would continue to look at other avenues to enhance the income and revenues to be able to fund the Fire Department at a level they felt was badly needed. Mayor Keebler noted most of Council felt this was the best way and a necessary thing to do and they needed to do more.

Mr. Rutherford advised it was Council's obligation to give the voters the opportunity to have their voice heard. Mr. Rutherford noted his feeling the City did not have the recruitment effort it needed for volunteers. Mr. Rutherford advised taxes could be increased to fund the Fire Department or City services could be reduced. Mr. Rutherford noted the other way to help fund the Fire Department was to step up and volunteer and he applied to volunteer for the City of Oxford's Fire Department and encouraged others to do the same. Mr. Rutherford advised it was incumbent upon the citizens of Oxford, the students and residents of the township to figure out how to contribute and how the City would pay for Fire and emergency services. Mr. Rutherford noted he believed in giving citizens the opportunity to vote on a tax increase and a no vote meant the voters were saying to find another way and a yes vote meant the voters were willing to pay for it and did not necessarily want to volunteer. Mr. Rutherford advised the City was going to have fiscal difficulty whether the proposed tax increase passed or not and between now and election day Council had to work diligently to find ways to save money, cut spending and find other revenue sources. Mr. Rutherford asked each Council member individually if they would pledge to make this their number one task as they moved forward. Mr. Rutherford noted he prayed that Council would vote unanimously to give the citizens of Oxford the opportunity to vote on the proposed measure and to speak their voice.

Mayor Keebler advised it was important to volunteer and he was a volunteer for 34 years. Mayor Keebler noted things had changed and the City still needed a good cadre of volunteers to help off-set costs but that did not negate the need to propose an income tax increase to keep the staff of 3 or possibly 5 on duty at all times.

Mr. Blackburn moved to adopt Ordinance No. 3121 as an emergency. Mr. McKeehan seconded. The Ordinance was adopted by the following roll call:

AYE: Mr. McKeehan, Mr. Rutherford, Mr. Blackburn, Mr. Bogard, Ms. Currie, Mr. Keebler (6)

NAY: Mr. Harman (1)

ABS: None (0)

RESOLUTIONS

A Resolution No. 4552 requesting and authorizing the Butler County Board of Elections to place upon the City of Oxford, Ohio Ballot at the General Election on November 2, 2010, the question of whether Ordinance No. 3121 increasing by one quarter of one percent (.25%) the City of Oxford income tax rate to a total rate of two percent (2%) shall be approved in accordance with Section 718.01 of the Ohio Revised Code, the increase to provide for maintaining and improving current Fire and Emergency Medical Services, general operation, equipment and facilities. (Doug Elliott, City Manager) **(Tabled)**

Ms. Currie moved to remove the proposed Resolution from the table. Mr. Blackburn seconded. The motion passed 6-1-0 with Mr. Harman voting nay.

Mr. Elliott advised staff would continue to look for ways to improve operations and cut costs. Mr. Elliott reiterated some cost saving measures the City had already undertaken and noted the City's Human Resource Director position was changed to a part time position with a savings of $54,000, a Billing and Collections position was eliminated with a savings of $41,000, a Service Worker II position was not filled with a savings of $56,000, the City refunded Park Improvement Bonds for a savings of $200,000 over the next 10 years, costs for general liability insurance were decreased $32,500 from last year. Mr. Elliott advised the City had saved an estimated $58,000 based on its contract with Duke Energy for an Electric Power Sales Agreement, an agreement was signed with the Oxford Township Trustees for $54,000 to help off-set Fire and emergency services and a new contract for telephone and internet service saved $12,000. Mr. Elliott advised staff would continue to do those things and even with those savings the City had an operating deficit of $500,000. Mr. Elliott noted in order to restore the financial condition it was important to do those things and hopefully bring the capital spending back to a level it was several years ago. Mr. Elliott advised over the past two years the City had increased costs in the Fire/EMS Division by approximately 1,000,000 and the City had seen revenues decline significantly. Mr. Elliott reiterated that staff would make a continued commitment to look for ways to improve operations and look at some of the other revenue generating ideas that had come forward.

Mr. Blackburn moved to adopt Resolution No. 4552. Mr. McKeehan seconded. The Resolution was adopted by a vote of 6-1-0 with Mr. Harman voting nay.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Currie moved to adjourn at 7:20 p.m. Mr. Bogard seconded. The motion passed 7-0-0.