MEMBERS PRESENT: Aldermen Bernstein, Holmes, Jean-Baptiste, and Moran

STAFF PRESENT: Judy Aiello, Sheila Mc Corkle, Paula Haynes, Cam Heth, Carla Bush, Evonda Thomas, Doug Gaynor, Bob Dornecker, Vince Jones, Dennis Nilsson, Jay Terry, Audrey Trotsky

OTHERS PRESENT: Alderman Hansen, Alderman Rainey, Alderman Wollin, Pat Vance, Rosemary Jean-Paul, (Evanston Township); Sharon Eckersall, (Township Assessor); Irwin Lyons, (Township Auditor); Sue Cantor, Mental Health Board;
(Attached List of Attendees)

PRESIDING: Alderman Tisdahl

I. CALL TO ORDER
Alderman Tisdahl called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. APROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 5, 2006, MEETING
The minutes of the September 5, 2006 meeting were called and unanimously approved (5-0).

III. CONSIDERATION OF OCTOBER 2006 TOWNSHIP MONTHLY BILLS AND REPORTS
Alderman Tisdahl called for approval of October 2006 Township monthly bills. Alderman Moran motioned for approval, seconded by Alderman Holmes.

Alderman Jean-Baptiste questioned whether the legal bills were reviewed by the Legal Department before voting to pass the bills list. Mr. Terry said his understanding was Mr. Hill has been in contact with Mr. Hoover’s office and is still in the process of reviewing the bills, therefore he does not have a final opinion one way or another regarding the bills. Mr. Terry’s also noted the case is still pending because the Judge in the case switched offices and some of the records were lost; therefore the Judge isn’t in a position to make a final ruling on the appeal. Alderman Jean-Baptiste asked if the current bills include the actual bills of the last four months which were previously outstanding, and wondered if the Legal Department is still reviewing those bills. Mr. Terry responded the Legal Department is still reviewing the bills and based on their conversation thus far with Mr. Hoover they have no reason not to approve the bills.

Ms. Eckersall added Ms. Purze, Attorney for the City of Evanston, called her this afternoon to let her know she was sorry she could not attend tonight’s meeting and she had a long discussion with Mr. Hoover today. The opposing counsel is trying to appeal this but does not have a complete file and is going back to reconstruct the file. It will then be up to the Appellate Court to make a final decision. The attorneys have been moving for dismissal of the case because of deadlines not made on time by the opposing counsel.

Alderman Jean-Baptiste said it seems totally unclear as to what the direction is and asked if Ms. Purze sent anything in writing to let us know what to do. Mr. Terry responded, no, these conversations just took place this afternoon. Alderman Jean-Baptiste thought we should at least pay the prior bills because the Legal Department has had these bills for 3 or 4 months and not done anything with them. We can hold the current bills for review by our Legal Department.

Alderman Homes asked when this process is going to end. Ms. Eckersall said it should have been over by now but because of loss of the complete folder and the deadlines not being made by the opposing counsel it has been delayed. She also knows that Ms. Purze has asked Hoover and Associates for copies of all the documents that are being submitted to the court so the City could have a complete file of all the documents.

Alderman Moran had some serious problems with the billing practices of this lawyer. We’re paying $200 an hour for a lot of ministerial things that can be done by kids in high school. To cite one example, to file a motion to dismiss to the Appellate Court, 2.20 hours at $200 an hour, we paid $440 for somebody to presumably walk into the Daley Center and go to the 29th floor and put a piece of paper on the clerk’s counter to be stamped. It’s prevalent throughout the billing that we’re being charged $200 an hour for any number of tasks that are clerk’s duties. If the lawyer is doing that he shouldn’t bill us at a lawyer’s rate but at a clerk’s rate. He would like Ms. Purze to look into that, it only took him about a minute and a half to see that we’re being charged too much and somebody should talk to Mr. Hoover about this.
Alderman Bernstein agreed with Alderman Moran as there have previously been conversations with this lawyer when we tried to indicate to him that he had not found the pot at the end of the rainbow. These billed items are ludicrous and we’re well beyond the cap that was set on what we would pay for the defense of this case. He understands it’s our responsibility to defend the Assessor but this is not necessary legal work and he does not want to pay for that. On one occasion Mr. Hoover came here to justify his existence and if he wants to come again and tell us why he chooses to charge us lawyer’s time to do law clerks work maybe we’ll reconsider, but right now does not think we should pay him.

Alderman Jean-Baptiste’s only concern was we have asked the Legal Department to be our eyes and ears and give us a report, but they have sat on this for an extended period of time. He would therefore suggest that we hold the bills this time and make a decision at the next meeting as we cannot keep holding this man’s money.

Mr. Terry said it was not clear to him that the Law Department has had these bills for any extended period of time. He transmitted this request to the staff in the Law Department when he got the packet material and it was his impression the Legal Department had not seen these bills before.

Motion to approve the Township bills were recalled. Alderman Jean-Baptiste made a motion to hold the Hoover bills in committee until the next meeting, motion seconded by Alderman Bernstein. Motion to accept the Township bills but hold the Hoover bills unanimously passed, 5-0.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF TOWNSHIP ANNUAL AUDIT FOR YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2006
Alderman moved to accept the Township Annual Audit for the year ended March 31, 2006, seconded by Alderman Holmes.

Alderman Moran inquired regarding the paragraph in the auditor’s report letter entitled, “Uncorrected Misstatements”, and wondered about the detail in that paragraph. Mr. Lyons, the Township auditor, said the wording is more onerous. When doing the audit the item before it mentions the audit adjustments to keep up with and these are some of the items related to property tax revenue accounts payable where there were small differences between the audited numbers we get. We didn’t bother making adjustments but let the staff know that there were some small differences.

Hearing no further questions Alderman Tisdahl recalled the motion to accept the Township Annual Audit, motion unanimously accepted (5-0).

V. CONSIDERATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT TEAM FOR FUTURE CITY YOUTH PROGRAMMING

Judy Aiello thanked the members of the Human Services Committee for the opportunity to provide this presentation regarding the Youth Engagement Program that our staff is recommending. Sheila McCorkle who has done the bulk of the work on this will walk the committee through the recommendations. We will then go through the priorities because it’s a very comprehensive report and one in which there are more things we want to do than funding we currently have available.

We will go through priorities and then any member of our team will be available to answer any questions. Most of the members of the team are present this evening; Doug Gaynor, Director of Parks and Recreation; Lyn Stones; Cynthia Harris, Director Police Social Services; Paula Haynes, Director of Human Relations; Cam Herth also Human Relations Department; Lloyd Sheppard, the City’s Minority and Women’s Business Coordinator; Jay Terry, Director of Health and Human Services; and Sheila McCorkle. The group has been meeting twice a month as a formal group and in between that time Ms. McCorkle has been meeting with people in the community and meeting with each member of the team individually. Tonight we are presenting our recommendations of what we believe to be the beginning of a comprehensive approach to dealing with some of the issues with our youth.

Alderman Bernstein noted there were 2 statements in this report that blew his mind. The first on page 4, says, “Though many of these feelings can be associated with the persistent racial divide that exists in Evanston.” Then there is a statement on page 14, “There needs to be a paradigm shift in the way Evanston approached youth development in that the youth should not be considered a burden to the community, but an asset that is worth investment.” Those two statements scared him to death. Alderman Bernstein asked if that is what the research found. There were a lot of issues raised that many of us were saddened and somewhat surprised by, but not entirely. This is an issue that we really need to put our arms around and hopefully we have at least begun to set the framework for our program.

Ms. McCorkle opened her presentation noting the background for the Youth Engagement Team developed a vision for the Youth Engagement initiative based on 2 goals of the City’s Strategic Plan which state: 1) Generating marketable job skills for Evanston residents and, 2) provide opportunities for and engage Evanston youth and young adults to become active and productive citizens of the Evanston community. Their vision statement states, provide opportunities for all Evanston youth and young adults to become active and productive citizens of the community through strengthening existing youth services, establishing a network of service partnerships, increasing participation within the available opportunities, creating marketable job training and placement and increasing the opportunities for social and recreational outlets for disengaged
They didn’t feel they had a way to express if they had issues, if there were things directly or indirectly that affected them. Ms. McCorkle thought it important to point out. A very important point is youth did not feel they had a youth voice in this community. Evanston, it’s not just a black and white thing or just a Hispanic thing, it happens from neighborhood to neighborhood which kids, and the Hispanic kids. It’s there in the community and the kids want to talk about it. Learning about the gang issues in information, findings and data compiled on the background for; youth. Ms. McCorkle proceeded to narrate a power point presentation on the Youth Engagement Initiative describing the information, findings and data compiled on the background for;

- An Asset Based Model for Community Development;
- Agencies, Organizations and Groups Included in the Asset Map are listed and a detailed list of the programs offered from these organizations are listed in the full report;
- A new approach on Youth Considered As Assets;
- Developmental Assets used to assess whether a young person is going to have positive youth development (a detailed list of these assets can be found on line or in the detailed report);
- Target Population, recommendations are designed to support and develop youth and young adults that are in at risk environments and who may not be connected or have access to the resources and opportunities that exist in Evanston;
- Obtaining Youth Perspective, Ms. McCorkle met with over 100 youths at the parks, the schools, after school and at lunchtime and rode around with our Police Youth Outreach Unit to informally get the youth perspective.

The first question she asked the youth of Evanston was if they are part of this community. Overwhelmingly they said no. There was a widespread sense of disconnect as members of this community. They don’t go walking around individual blocks, especially in a downtown area because there is a perception of being stereotyped, a feeling of being comfortable when there is more than 2 or 3 youths together. Though these feelings can be associated with the persistent racial divide in Evanston, these feelings also are used as territorial. That statement came from two things, firstly, they are currently trying to plan a Youth Summit going out and talking to youths. She has 2 Northwestern students and 5 High School students working with her. They’re asking what would they like to talk about at a youth summit and what comes up very, very often is the segregation even in the high school. All the kids in the community have said this, the black kids, the white kids, and the Hispanic kids. Its there in the community and the kids want to talk about it. Learning about the gang issues in Evanston, it’s not just a black and white thing or just a Hispanic thing, it happens from neighborhood to neighborhood which she thought is important to point out. A very important point is youth did not feel they had a youth voice in this community. They didn’t feel they had a way to express if they had issues, if there were things directly or indirectly that affected them and did not feel they had a mechanism to come to City Council or whoever the powers may be and communicate their issues. Some comments/opinions expressed by the youth were when they were younger and went to grade school and Junior High there was positive involvement for them. There were things to do after school, there were programs designed for them but once they got into the teen years it severely dropped off. Another comment, shocking as it may be to some people, it’s cheaper to get high at Evanston than it is to go to the movies. A lot of the young people said there are not enough affordable things to do in this community for their age group. Career development, job readiness and employment, an overwhelming number of youth from all economic levels and all races said, yes, they do want jobs. A lot of the youth were reluctant to invest in the job training programs available because they said there is no guarantee they would get a job or get placed and did not want to waste their time. That was the sentiment expressed to her. In general there is a lack of knowledge and understanding of what kind of jobs are out there to pursue and what it takes to get to those kinds of jobs.

Based on the data Ms. McCorkle collected and the perspective given by youth and youth service providers, and the expert advise given by a youth service provider consultant, the attached report lists in detail the recommendations given as a means to develop a youth oriented infrastructure that will better address the needs of the Evanston community. These recommendations are:

1) Establish a Youth Division;
2) Reestablish a Youth Commission;
3) Create a Youth Council;
4) Create Additional Opportunities and Strengthen Existing Assets,
   a. Recreation. b. Employment Vocational;
5) Connect to Hard to Reach Populations,
   a. Expand Youth Street Outreach;
6) Establish Measurement Goals and Standards to Track Impacts;
7) Community Action / Youth Summit;
8) Agency Collaboration;
9) Add State Funding for Youth Initiatives to Council Agenda.

(Attached Power Point Presentation notes in detail each of the above recommendations.)

The idea for the Youth Division is a mechanism for the collaboration, the supplementation, the planning, the monitoring, and the correlation of all the individual pieces that are happening in Evanston. Right now there are a lot of assets in Evanston, internally in the City and externally with the community, but there is a lack of mechanism to coordinate all of that to work together and partner. Many of the agencies said, yes, they want to collaborate, but from her perspective there was a lack of form to do that which is what the Youth Division could create.

The recommendations the Youth Team devised as the initial steps for building a youth development infrastructure is to support the Goals of the Strategic Plan as well as the vision of the Youth Engagement Initiative. Additionally, these
recommendations are designed not only to fulfill the support gaps that exist for youth and young adults but also seek to provide a more efficient means to partner, collaborate and condense assets already available in the community. We will continue to implore the perspective of the youth as we go through this process, as it evolves and builds, and once again we call on the community and the Aldermen to bring leadership to support the youth and the Youth Engagement Initiative. Ms. McCorkle thanked the committee for their time and helping them achieve this goal.

Alderman Tisdahl thanked Ms. McCorkle for her excellent presentation.

Ms. Aiello noted they have come up with a lot of interesting recommendations. If our resources were unlimited we would be buying a building to have a teen center and hiring a lot more staff, but we understand the restrictions of our resources and what we have developed for you to discuss is just the first year priority. We will be presenting about $150,000 of new money in the proposed budget as it relates to funding for youth programs. This is certainly not all the money that is currently available for youth programming; there is also the money for the Summer Youth Employment Program in the General Fund and some funding from CDBG for some programs. This is our first step of additional new money. Looking at all the recommendations that we set forth we are recommending that the Youth Coordinator and the support services for that division be our top priority. We think it is important to begin to pull together and develop that infrastructure that we need and start all of us working together to create the framework for a youth program. The second step is we feel very strongly about is the female unit for the Police Outreach, as Ms. McCorkle indicated when going out and talking to the youth there seemed to be a need for the young women to have someone to relate to. Adding to the female unit for the Police Outreach Program at this point would be a very critical element. We've begun a pilot Work Study Program with the high school that has an established curriculum. We have identified a pilot this semester with the Health and Human Services Department and are working towards next semester with the Fleet Services Division. Police and Fire Departments are also developing a curriculum. We are recommending that we work on this Work Study Program with the high school for several reasons. They have an identified curriculum that we can utilize where we don't have to reinvent the wheel so we can spend time evaluating their program to see if it is based upon something that we can use. If not then we can develop our own program. We think this futhers the City's goals of partnership for the Strategic Plan. Our overall goal is finding another agency doing something that we could partner with that we wanted to do first, and then do our evaluation to make sure that program was a good program and then move on to creating something as a last resort. We believe the High School Work Study is a good program and the Summer Youth Employment Program should continue to be funded and are also recommending adding the Arts Program that had been a component many years ago and then got eliminated. There have been several studies that show the blossoming of young people once they get involved in the arts. We also would hope the young people who participated in our Work Study Program would have a priority to join us for a summer job.

Teens in Technology is the new program the Human Relations staff has been working on which we believe we can develop at no new cost to the City. This will require a lot of work with the Human Relations staff and the Chamber but think it will allow us to have a coordinated approach. The coordination of job training is something we strongly believe needs to start with the City and hope to develop a job training network that will allow the coordination of all these agencies and become a focal point such as the LAN (Local Area Network). The LAN group for many years has dealt with some of the social service agencies. Our focus would be on the job training which would have a great asset for us. We are just beginning the planning of the apprenticeship program as we currently do not have any funds for it. Everyone had the understanding a lot of the government apprenticeship programs are union but there are a number of apprenticeship programs that don't have a union connection. The One Stop provides some information, but there isn't a solid follow up something that Lloyd Sheppard can do. With some creative use of our time and resources we can begin to see some additional use of the apprenticeship programs that are available.

Our Youth Summit and Youth Council is something we want to explore further with the help of the Northwestern and E.T.H.S. students. We don't have money left for that in our $150,000, but this is something that State legislators could provide since they recently provided some funding for the Rogers Park Youth Summit. We can also get some foundation money because of the great interest in this.

Finally, we would love to have a teen center which is our dream down the road. Some of the things the Recreation Department did this summer with a few drop in opportunities are the kinds of things we think we should be able to do, with minimal increases in resources by reshuffling existing resources. That is a summary of what we hope to do. All of the members of the team and the Northwestern students are in attendance and are available to answer questions. Ms. Aiello noted copies of the report and the power point presentation will be available on line. Ms. Aiello remarked how pleased she was to have so many people joining us for tonight's meeting.

Alderman Tisdahl called on those in the audience who had any comments or wished to speak.

Lester Blair, member of the Board of the Evanston Foundation, said we are excited about the youth and would like help but need to get some type of reporting to tell us how we can help you. He also sits on the Board of CEDA/Neighbors at Work who also want to help. His questions come out of the issues of race and the negative scenario where a lot of the kids are feeling maybe they're being undermined because of the economic barrier that their families face. He also sits on the
Advisory Board for the Evanston Police Department and knows that we have some issues there. We just want to find out exactly how we can create this model because this has been going on for a long time. We have a model where we have Northwestern University that’s available to help and have a lot of smart, bright, and very wealthy people in this community we don’t have to have problems like this exist. We know we have a youth population that is looking for someone to help. All we’re saying is thanks for the report; we need to get some answers and put it on the table and maybe this could at least give us the answer to start to create a solution to the problem. Thank you.

Reverend Curry, was pleased with the information that has been given. Most of it is redundant to a number of us who have been in this City for quite some time and the same old questions come out of the finding that you have which he believes that knowledge is power. Our problem is getting it off of the page into action which has always been the case here. It’s not just the dollars but the participation of all these different levels you have suggested to us. He would like see more minority participation in the structural design and the participation of the students at Northwestern even the E.T.H.S. students that have been working with you. It is important for us to reflect the diversity of our community. One of the things he appreciates, at this point in his life and his involvement in Evanston, is working with the former retired Chief of Police, Frank Kaminski, who is now the Safety Director at E.T.H.S. We’re trying to develop a program between the clergy community and E.T.H.S., Positive Presence. He would like to encourage the City Council, as well as the continued study you put together, which he thinks is excellent, to engage and involve more of our minorities because that is the target you might be referring that feels disconnected and disengaged and would encourage that from the depths of his heart. Also, before the budget is passed he would like to see if the various agencies out here working so hard with young people could be given an opportunity to sit down with the City committee working on the budget to help in the development of the budget allocations as we move forward. He assumes the first year is already locked in but as we move forward we need to look at how we can generate more dollars and come up with more opportunities to have dollars filtered into our community. He would also like to encourage you to continue to engage the religious community and not just the African American Churches. A special effort should be made to contact the churches that should be represented here because he knows there are a number of churches who have a large endowment programs that might be willing to participate at that level. Thank you very much,

Carolyn Murray, Evanston Youth Initiative, being a resident of Evanston she is very familiar with a lot of the recommendations. However, the City has been doing a large development in the downtown area with businesses and she strongly recommends that as the development increases we look to those businesses to provide some type of opportunity through internships and through the development of that targeted area as well as the other areas. There used to be more private company or vendor opportunity for the kids that you don’t see anymore. As we increase in the development of the construction and businesses she does not see a connection on getting the kids down there. At the 5th Ward meeting there were representatives from 5 local banks going on and on about the programs they have. They said they would sponsor things for the youth at which time Ms. Murray said she asked how about internships. Consider that in the development because we are building downtown and there should be some type of requirement for those businesses to reinvest in our youth. Thank you.

Wanda Reed, with Partnership Police, would like to say all that you’re doing is great but what she’d like to see is more parental participation here in our community. We’re losing our young people. We need help. She understands when you talk about the money and other things, but we have to get the kids focused where they can get involved. She is looking for the parents, parents, we need you, the church can’t do it all by themselves. She’s upset because she’s never seen the school in the situation she sees it in today. She’s there from 3:00 until school is out, and she’s not on the payroll. What she wants to say is, parents give us some time, come over there, if you’re not working give us an hour and even it you are take an hour off and come over to the school. She’s not going to give up on the kids, and tells them she’ll be there every day to see that they’re in their classes. We have to come together and work to see if we can get some help for our children. This is our problem and it’s been a problem for a long time. People were more involved, we’re not involved like we should be, and we need to get involved. The buck doesn’t stop here, it stops in the home and parents need to step up, come over there and see what’s going on. She hopes you continue, if we need her, she’ll help you, but she wants to see parents come to E.T.H.S. and see what their kids are doing. Thank you very much.

Alderman Moran wanted to thank everybody on the team, particularly Ms. McCorkle who has taken a leadership position and made such a strong effort. Her report is great and just over the past two days made him think quite a bit about this and feels very strongly that we need to go forward with this initiative. He would also like to thank the Northwestern and high school students who are helping out and all of our staff who are working on this. We have a lot of reports that we do not always pursue with ardor but this is something that we have to pursue to get off the page and on the street, and he looks forward to supporting your recommendations.

Alderman Holmes also wished to commend the team which shows leadership and guidance in terms of the report. She spent a lot the weekend reading the report and highlighting items she had to go back and read again and again and said to herself this is something that has been going on for a long, long time. Alderman Holmes recalled these were things talked about many, many times, now we have to have the conversation in Evanston about race, and not only with youth. She’s glad we’re saying in public that this conversation has to happen. She does not think the kids like it all but they sometimes
take the leadership from the adults and we have to move forward with this because as stated the youth is our future and we must invest now, something we should have been doing a long time ago. We have to realize it is going to take all of us to make this change and she certainly wants to be part of helping to make that happen. In terms of the recommendations, you are absolutely right about a female unit and asked if we have looked at our current social service division of the Police Department in terms of that staff, because as always she’s looking at money. As she recalls there is an outreach component and wonders if we can utilize that division as a part of that recommendation.

Ms. Aiello said this would most definitely be in coordination with the Police Outreach Department’s that Cynthia Harris heads up and would also work closely with Ron and Thomas who are not full time employees. Our first recommendation was to create two new units, one new male unit and one new female unit. Given our resources we felt at this point one female unit was more critical, but as we go forward continually looking at resources and grants that we can do. Some of Ron’s and Thomas’s salaries are funded from a grant and we would continue to see if there is the opportunity to increase the grant funding to extend their hours and if possible their entire program. When putting together the full budget it looked about $700,000, some of which is already in the General Fund, primarily the Summer Youth Employment Program $355,000, also $11,000 in a police grant. Recognizing that, we felt what we could afford to put $150,000 in the budget this year. These were the priorities that we have for this year and going forward will be able to begin to look at more grants, some foundations and opportunities for state funding.

Alderman Holmes inquired about the coordination of job training at no cost and asked if that came under the division of Human Relations where they are already doing the Summer Youth Job Program. Ms. Aiello said that would be the place because they are doing the summer youth and have the contacts. Last year we had about 80 private funders. The job training component is a natural because knowing what the employers have been looking for we can then target back to a network of the job training providers and hopefully make that connection. We have had discussions with a number of agencies specifically about the evaluation piece with the community foundation. As we continue to have a diminishment of resources we have to set some common goals of what we want to achieve, then hold all the agencies that get City funding to those goals and have some real measurable metrics to be able to say whether we met those goals, in three years that funding isn’t going to be available. We obviously will not cut anyone off in a year’s time but will try to set up some quantifiable and measurable goals of what we want to see in a five year period.

Alderman Holmes asked if this new Youth Division will stand alone or come under the Human Relations Department. Ms. Aiello said at this point we are recommending the Division stays in the City Manager’s Office for a variety of reasons, primarily because it touches so many departments. In the future we may want to spin it off to another department, something we’ve done in a variety of areas. We get them on their feet and then launch them where it’s appropriate after we see the emphasis over the first year or so. Alderman Homes inquired about the status of the job coordinator’s position to which Ms. Aiello responded that is not a new position and we’re not going to be funding it because Mr. Herth in the Human Relations Department will be able to pick that up as part of his work load. Everyone is going to have to stretch the first year since we don’t have unlimited resources. Ms. McCorkle’s enthusiasm made us realize some of the surprises also felt by Alderman Bernstein. This has been a wonderful experience for us sitting around the table on a regular basis and talking about this issue which we all have a passion for but have never had that focus. Our next step is for the committee to recommend our concept; you are not approving a budget tonight because that will be done in the normal budget process. We will then be able to move forward in our planning of these activities and begin to go back and create action plans for each of these recommendations. If this is approved for March 1st we will be able to hit the ground running and have already begun planning the Youth Summit, the website, and the work study programs, they are all unofficially underway. Tonight we would like to get feedback if there are other areas we should be looking at.

Alderman Jean-Baptiste thanked the team that worked so hard in trying to bring out the comprehensive perspective on how we fight to win. The team came out of the kind of pressure and initiative and advocacy from the community. He would like to recognize the work of the Evanston Youth Initiative over the last year and a half, when Pastor Curry summoned a number of us together to reflect and try to figure out how to move forward when a young man was killed at the Keg and another was facing a significant amount of time in jail. At that time Pastor Curry said we have to reach those hard to reach youth. What is it about our community that allows for our youth to be engaged in such activities? We see the manifestation of those activities in our police blotters all the time. There is a lot crime going on at the high school, about 45 students drop out every year. We don’t know what happens to them after that but see a lot of those who have dropped out interacting with our police force that go to jail and come back to our community. We have not had a way to reach the hard to reach youth. Alderman Jean-Baptiste wanted to recognize the Evanston Youth Initiative members present this evening and asked those in the audience to stand up and be acknowledged. The community has to continue to raise the pressure on the City, which he is part of. Last year as a result of the pressure of those who wanted to save the trees we allocated a lot of money to save the trees. Before that there were other causes and issues. We have to make the youth of this community a priority and have to sustain that. The work the City has done in response to the demand from the community is to be commended. Ms. McCorkle came on board and was able to bring us a perspective that the committee didn’t have before as Ms. McCorkle is a young person and was able to engage directly with the youth community. We have to reflect on the fact that the City committee has presented to us what they feel should be the first step and people have to ask themselves if that will begin to correct some of the problems that we see. We talk about a teen center, when he grew up in this
community we had a youth center, the priorities shifted and that was transformed into a senior citizen center. We had a youth commission that disbanded for whatever reasons. We have had this pattern of throwing the baby away with the bath water and have to ask ourselves whether or not we are meeting the challenges. The Aldermen are getting ready to organize a community summit on crime in this community. He knows the Youth Initiative is looking at parenting as a main focus of their work. Winning that fight is a direct product of engagement to the extent we are not engaged in the process, if we don’t make the recommendations presented here then the City will not sharply respond to the concerns that we are presented with. He sees the motion going forward with the organizing of a youth division, because it will just go away without some manager over the agencies demanding of them that they be responsive. You can be in an agency with a youth clientele that is safe and you can do your reports and statistics and everything seems to be okay. What about the youth on Church and Dodge, we need to have that study impact in a way that shows that we are making some progress. Government has to take charge of this problem and work with all the other agencies that we fund who claim to be doing work in the community to make sure that they are accountable. He’s happy to see us moving in this direction and thinks we are trying to recover what we have lost and hopefully we can move forward and make more progress.

Ms. Aiello thought if anyone had sat in their meetings every other Friday, they would have heard the same thing. We really need the agencies and the community to work with us. The Youth Initiative has been a group we have spoken with and now it is our hope to take this on the road. We will go to anybody that will listen to us talk about what we want to do to begin to generate that excitement and enthusiasm that we all feel to get their involvement.

Alderman Bernstein reflected back 25 years ago to meetings he attended at E.T.H.S. about the gang problem and the fact that we don’t provide for our youth. His children are teachers and tell him that kids today won’t do homework because they don’t want to do it. There is a societal problem that we have to address and have to stop it now. We always walk away from it because we can’t afford it, now we can’t afford to walk away from it. We have in this room tonight wonderful people who have devoted their lives to youth. This will have to start with some coordination which hopefully we can provide. He recalled as a young man in this community sitting in an organizational meeting discussing who was going to get funding for an outreach worker. At the time there were a couple of rival agencies both of whom wanted the funding to which Alderman Bernstein said he did not want to get into a contest over who would better serve, just so long as somebody serves. We can interact as agencies if we have somebody coordinating at the top, we can get far better bang for our buck and do not necessarily have to duplicate services, nor do we have to reinvent the wheel. The good people here tonight in this room have been spinning that wheel for 25 years and its time for decide that we will not be here 30 years from today saying the same things. It’s frustrating because it’s always about money, but children are something around which people can rally. We had a lot of donations for a dog, for our Canine Unit, where people came forward with food, training, etc. The youth need us and we need them, its time. He does not think there will be any hesitance from this committee. We had better be resolved to the fact that we have to come up with the money and initially see there is a good coordinator put into place to begin the process with an understanding that it is only the beginning and we’re not going to stop. The youth in this community have untold potential and we have to start marshalling TIF funds at the high school. We have some resources available that we can use for job creation and have to start with a frontal assault on the problems that confront us. Alderman Bernstein thanked Ms. McCorkle for an incredible report. Some phrases in the report scared him to death but he can’t say that they surprised him. We pride ourselves on our diversity but it always occurred to him that integration doesn’t necessarily mean that you move in next to somebody who is a different color or different ethnicity but rather you move in and come to know those persons for their differences and learn to love them for those differences, then you move forward. He does not know that we live in an integrated community because when he goes to the high school and the grade schools, over here he sees the kids of one color and over there the kids of another color. He does not know why that is, whether it’s a nature, which he chooses not to believe, but we have to change the culture, something we’ve talked about before, forever, and now its time to do something about it.

Alderman Holmes wanted to elaborate on something Alderman Jean-Baptiste said, that we have to look at the youth at Church and Dodge. She wants us to be very conscious of not using Church and Dodge anymore, let’s look at the youth at Greenleaf and Sherman, at Custer and Brummel, at Main and Dodge and at Maple and Church. She wants us to look at youth all over because whenever we say Church and Dodge we know what people are thinking which is part of what we all feed into. If you look at the police daily blotter it’s not just Church and Dodge and she wants to be on record as saying that because we have to. The 5th Ward, Church and Dodge, in terms of crime is even with the rest of the wards. Alderman Jean-Baptiste made a self criticism that we are all in this together.

Alderman Tisdahl thanked Ms. McCorkle and everyone else for telling her things that she did not want to hear but knows are true. A note of some hope to bring to all of this since referring to Mothers Against Gangs several times. She spent a lot of time with Ron Strong, Sandra Hill at drop in nights. The Mothers Against Gangs drop in nights did not stop as a result of any misbehavior on the part of any students. For 3 years, every Saturday night in the summer, students were a well behaved terrific bunch kids that responded not only to her but Ms. Hill and Mr. Strong. The community was so incredibly supportive and funded that volunteers poured in to spend their Saturday nights in the high school gym. Ms. McCorkle, this community is more behind you and your report than you may realize. Once again, she would like to say, the kids were terrific.
Alderman Jean-Baptiste moved to accept the report and recommend at least the initial first year proposal with the reservation that we may need to add some more components to it to make it as strong as possible. Alderman Bernstein seconded the motion, motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Alderman Tisdahl thanked everyone for their excellent report and a job well done.

VI. CONSIDERATION OF THE REFERENCE TO AMEND THE CITY’S ORDINANCE REGARDING NOISE

Alderman Hansen said she made this reference because of the many phone calls she received about the booming loud music of car radios and people sitting outside in front of homes or on their blocks late into the night blaring radios from their car stereos by people who do not live in the neighborhood or even live on the block. She knows the State of Illinois has a statute and is proposing something that has a little bit of bite to it. Certainly our police officers can go out and enforce the state statute under the Illinois Vehicle Code and issue a citation. She is asking the committee to consider something more and similar to the Chicago ordinance. There are other communities that have similar ordinances that allow for the 75 feet of noise from the vehicle, Chicago and Addison, Park Forest has 150 feet. If someone was pulled over for this violation the fine would not be minimal but something a little bit more substantial. Alderman Hansen is asking the committee to also start considering, as Chicago does, towing the vehicle at the very first violation of a loud music ordinance. An ordinance such as she is proposing needs bite in order to be effective. Alderman Hansen said she worked as a law clerk when the City of Chicago’s ordinance first came out and can tell you it was very effective in the way of a substantial fine at the onset and towing of a vehicle. We need to do something about this as there are many people in the 9th Ward continually subjected to this, not only during the day but all hours of the night. It would be good for this community, in terms of a nuisance, to put a little more bite into this ordinance which is why she’s asking you to consider it.

Alderman Bernstein noted if we’re starting to talk about towing we are looking to impact the owners of the vehicles, who customarily are parents if the children are there. When somebody permits the operation of a noisy vehicle does the Chicago ordinance relate back to the owner/parents of the car? Ms. Hansen said it allows for the towing of the vehicle and would relate back to the owner of the vehicle because the person who will to get the car out of the pound will be the parent/owner. Alderman Bernstein thought he may also have received a number of calls about this.

Alderman Jean-Baptiste remarked in his 5 years on the Council he has only received about 4 or 5 complaints on this issue. He knows a number of adults in the community are concerned about this but just after discussing the issue of youth empowerment this will impact the youth first. He is moving to hold this in committee to ask Ms. McCorkle if she can generate some youth response to this ordinance and see if we can find some middle ground to try to resolve this particular conflict. At this particular point in time the issue of towing the cars, giving the police the additional ability to stop and impact ownership is a major issue. We should have further discussion to see if we can bring in some youth responses.

Reverend Kristen Doll, has lived at 140 Custer on the corner of Custer and Brummel for a little over a year. The reason she moved to Evanston from Minnesota was to go to graduate school at Northwestern University. She essentially works at home and lives on the entire first floor of a 3 flat building which means she has all four exposures going on. There is no where in her apartment that she can go to escape the noise of these cars. They go down Custer so loud her windows shake, the mirror over her fireplace mantel shakes. All of her work is done in her home and she works from the moment she gets up until the moment she goes to bed. She is so disturbed she can’t study and actually resorted to wearing ear plugs in her own home just to escape this very constant noise. Alderman Jean-Baptiste said he has gotten 4 or 5 calls in his tenure as an Alderman but she wants to emphasize that this problem is not equal throughout Evanston. Certain areas have this problem more than others and not hearing this from your constituents in no way means this is not a very severe and very grave problem for other individuals. She implores you to take this into very serious consideration before you write it off. Thank you.

Alderman Hansen explained why she said start with the impoundment, because that is the big bite of the ordinance. The state statute says it’s a petty offense, $50 fine, our ordinance says a minimum fine of $10 which is not going to get someone who is fined to turn down the radio or be a little bit more respectful when driving in the community. If some members of the committee are worried about a hardship on the owners who aren’t driving the vehicle at the time, she would argue in terms of what Ms. Reed talked about parents being on top and taking responsibility for their kids. If you didn’t want to go with the impoundment issue then she would ask that you look at making it a substantial fine then that driver is held responsible. She is not saying loud music in a vehicle leads to a fatal car accident but is sure many of have seen the Tribune, on a daily basis, writing about teen drivers. Inevitably it is going to be young drivers that turn up their radios and drive throughout the community. This is a problem in our community or at least parts of the community and she is asking the committee to consider doing something other than just leaving it as is. If some members of the committee do not feel that the impoundment is something they want to consider then she is asking you talk about an increased fine, $50
and that you incorporate it into our ordinance. As the ordinance is now written it’s a little vague, instead of talking about vehicular car radios she’s proposing a 75 feet distance.

Alderman Holmes did not think Alderman Hansen is talking about car radios but about those speakers that are installed. When people pass her street her house shakes and she understands exactly what this refers to. Alderman Holmes believed this is in reference to these large speakers installed in the cars not just turning up normal radio music, which does not cause that kind of vibration, the amplified radio is different than just normal radios.

Alderman Moran thinks noise pollution is a serious problem in our world and certainly the speaker’s statement was a very eloquent testament that something can be a real detractor to a neighborhood. If Alderman Jean-Baptiste wants to get youth input on this that’s fine, but if people are acting badly he’s not anxious to hear them tell they can’t turn their speaker or radio down. We’re all expected to have consideration for our neighbors. Whenever the committee is ready he’s ready to go along with what Alderman Hansen is saying in some shape or form. He would ask that the Legal Department bring back a beefed up ordinance with some options on this whether its increase enhancement or impoundment, we can then consider it and decide what’s best for the community.

Alderman Bernstein did not have any problem with beefing up the statute, his concern is enforcement. The vagaries of this statute of 75 feet in terms of prosecution after enforcement is always the question of the ability to enforce. He would ask the Police Chief how often we stop people for loud music or the pounding. Chief Nilsson said he did not have that exact number. He knew this was going to be on the agenda today but it takes time to find that number. He did talk to some of the traffic officers that make the arrests. These loud radios are an insult and an assault on our senses not to mention an invasion of our privacy, which is what makes us very aware of this. The challenge of doing the enforcement is young people do know the law and when they see that marked squad car the 400 amps automatically gets turned down to 25 amps and the woofers and speakers are not vibrating anymore. He also found out from the officers issuing the fines that the Judges are not issuing maximum fines on these they’re almost like nuisance complaints and are just being given minimal fines. We are and do write tickets but they’re not that easy to find. When a car goes by somebody’s home by the time they call us and we get there where do we begin to look for that car. The end of last summer we did an enforcement action in the 5th Ward and wrote about 4 or 5 tickets in the area over the course of a couple weeks. It’s difficult to catch them.

Alderman Jean-Baptiste said he is not ignorant of the fact that the problem exists but thinks the Chief himself indicated that at an intersection with multiple cars and one of them bouncing all over the place, which one do you stop. He thinks the ambiguity of all of that is the police will stop the black youth. He’s suggesting we ask Ms. McCorkle to take that to the high school to ask for some participation or interaction and circulate that as a flyer in the community saying there is an ordinance on the books and there are some consequences. He’s not suggesting we let people go who committed a violation, once you have a policy in place with police officers tracing and tracking down people you will not have a limit to what they do or do not do. If we do some advance work of educating people then everybody is on notice. If we pass this now and City Council approves it 2 weeks from now we then have enforcement starting and he does not think we have given people enough notice. He’s not suggesting your experience is invalid as even ordinary traffic noises can be disruptive when trying to sleep at night. We will get the maximum that we could get out of this by just unleashing some kind of ordinance and having major enforcements when no one is on notice as to just what is going on with it. He is suggesting we hold this in committee and give some notice to the youth population as we have just talked about the youth population and we need to give them some consideration. He’s not talking about giving them a buy but giving them some consideration.

Alderman Holmes asked if we could develop some guidelines along the lines of the amplifiers which would give the police some reasons for towing or large fines not just having the radio turned up. We have to look at this in terms of the real offenders because they are not using plain radios but using amplifiers. Developing some guidelines would help with the enforcement.

Judith Treadway, 226 Callan, is the Education Chair of the NAACP of Evanston, said she came here tonight from a school board meeting because she wanted to listen to the presentation regarding the youth engagement. She was a little late getting here and would like to request a copy of the report. The issue of youth engagement is a very vital and important issue in the Evanston community. Many people who have been working with youth, like herself, have been working in different avenues of engagement of youth, recreationally, spiritually on the streets, in schools, at our after school programs and our community centers. We are very concerned about what is going on with our youth today because Evanston is just a microcosm of the United States of America. In terms of the engagement of our youth there are many issues she knows you wish to move forward and address with some real action steps. She will withhold any of her comments until she had read the report so she may adequately share her comments with the committee. She wishes to ask if you considered a population in our community who have the responsibility of our youth who are our relative caregivers, our grandparents. They represent more than 35% of the adults who are caring for many of these youth that we are trying to engage. She did not know if that was included in the report if not that there would be some outreach to some of our adult population who are raising these children. In terms of nuisances in Evanston and the safety and quality of life
she too is concerned about the boom boxes and speakers in the cars that you want to holler in the middle of the night when that wakes you. We should use education as an initial step to educate the public if there is going to be any changes in any ordinances or the development of ordinances we need to advise our citizens that they should either not be able to play a radio that has a speaker that’s over a certain decibel. She does not know if you want to restrict people purchasing this in the City of Evanston as that is a way of dealing with that issue. The other issue she would like to bring before the committee is the issue of cell phones. It is time for our City to start addressing hands free cell phones because everyone has one and you have people just wantonly talking on the phone holding up traffic and causing accidents. Hand held cell phones create hazards driving and puts the driver as well as anyone walking in the street at risk. She is not an advocate for a lot of ordinances and would like to see some of the ordinances enforced. She realizes we do not have all the manpower we need to enforce all the ordinances but would like to see one of the ordinances we have been struggling with for a long time be enforced which is Trucks on Ridge Avenue. She is constantly jockeying with trucks from morning, noon until night on Ridge Avenue. This is an ordinance we have had for a long time and needs to be enforced. She attended community meetings talking about our youth as many of the issues related to our youth are negative. We need to start thinking about all of the positive things that we could do to change not only our behavior and perception of youth but also to engage the youth in a more positive way. She is supportive of that and our NAACP Branch would like to be involved in any support, dialogue, or outreach to our youth in Evanston.

Alderman Hansen noted Chief Nilsson stated the police are already doing this so people on the street are on notice. She does not know how productive it would be going to the high school and asking the students what they think about such an ordinance or stepped up penalties or fines. She suspects 99% of them would say they did not like that kind of ordinance. Alderman Hansen cited an example of a neighbor of hers that continued to blare loud music no matter how many times or how nicely they were asked to turn it down. As a person who dabbles in criminal law Alderman Hansen wanted to say one of the goals of a penalty type ordinance is deterrence. If you put such an ordinance or stepped up fine on the books the police officers won’t be going out saying they have a new ordinance or fining these people and writing tickets all day long, all year long. Deterrence, you put it on the books, you step up the fine, if they do it once they will learn from it and they’re already on notice. She is asking you not to put this by the wayside but really consider it and test it. Thank you.

Alderman Wollin wanted to briefly refer to the question regarding Judges. We have raised the fine for under aged drinking and it has had a dramatic effect, at least in her ward. She has been to some of the adjudication hearings. A young man had a very, very loud party that disturbed a number of neighbors including people in his own building. The Judge gave him a $25 fine, that is not enough to be a deterrence. For students having a large party that is comparable to a permit fee. One of the ordinances she would like looked into is raising the fine for loud parties because that is similar to what Alderman Hansen is saying; it has to be a significant fine. The landlord was ready to prosecute and charged his tenants $250 for disturbing the peace in his building which is the type of fine the Judge should have given.

Alderman Jean-Baptiste made a motion to hold this in committee until we circulate this information to give notice to more people particularly some of the young people who might be impacted. Alderman Holmes seconded the motion.

Alderman Bernstein noted this reference is here for consideration and why don’t we refer it back to ourselves. To him the ordinance is so vague it probably is unenforceable. We can’t mandate what the Judges are going to do when we get to court and some of the young people playing these loud radios don’t really understand they are violating another’s rights, as this is the way music is played. The circumstances Alderman Hansen related about somebody sitting in front of the house constantly disturbing the peace, in that instance the police should be called as you have a witness to testify about the noise. From the other side of the criminal justice process he does not want to pass ordinances that we can’t convict on and thinks this is a very, very difficult ordinance to enforce and successfully prosecute. Alderman Bernstein said he would be happy to raise the fines but does not think it is going to help the enforcement methods of the police. He does not want profiling to become part of this and does not disagree with Alderman Jean-Baptiste that sometimes it may come to that, although he does not think it’s the function of color but the function that maybe these kids’ ears are gone which may also be a part of this, they need the vibration because they can no longer hear the sound. He’d like to do some work with this ordinance and does not think it’s ready to send to Council and without formally holding it would like an opportunity to go over this ordinance. There is a lot of strange and very vague language that to him is an unenforceable. Alderman Bernstein addressed Reverend Doll and said if somebody is consistently violating your space call the police. The problem is enforcement and his suggestion to people is when they call tell the police the direction the car is going in. It’s not a bad idea to send a notification to the high school reminding people that loud music is offensive and a violation of other people’s space, but does not know how much that will work.

Alderman Tisdahl said she would support increasing the fine as she thinks the current fine is too low. She also supports Alderman Jean-Baptiste’s theory if we’re going to try to involve youth we should start taking them seriously and at lease let them know that this is on the agenda, then if they want to they can come to a meeting. She is not going to be persuaded that just because they say no a fine isn’t a good idea. She would vote no to it, but would like to hear what the youth have to say and start engaging them in City government. She does support that proposal. The most we can do tonight is tell staff to draft an ordinance. We seem to have some unanimity and interest in increasing the fine and could have staff come
back with a proposed ordinance that increases the fine and discuss that at the next meeting, at which point youth would be involved.

Alderman Jean-Baptiste agreed with Alderman Tisdahl’s proposal and thought Alderman Holmes’ suggestion that those who reconfigure their whole automobile to add a major speaker are the ones vibrating the whole block. If we can redraft the ordinance to include that section you can impose a higher penalty so people get a clear message about that. It is such a thin line if it’s your radio that’s loud as opposed to that speaker system that offends others.

Alderman Bernstein said it occurred to him in light of our conversation earlier tonight, that loud music in part may be that untouched youth crying out for engagement.

Mr. Terry wanted to clarify that there is no ordinance on the agenda tonight; this is purely a discussion item to try to get some ideas. Also, regarding the comment about sending it back to the Law Department, representatives of the Law Department were very clear with him that they would be happy to draft whatever the committee’s policy direction was but they were not in a position to offer recommendations. At this point Mr. Terry said he noted the committee’s direction is to have a raised fine amount, an amount which is not yet clear, and to explore the possibility of having language involving enhanced stereo systems. Alderman Bernstein added an analogy to the dark covering over the windows that’s a question of degrees and it’s always difficult to enforce the question of degrees.

Alderman Holmes had a question in terms of the different sections of the noise ordinance because Alderman Wollin referred to parties and asked if that would be another whole section. Mr. Terry said that raises another question as to whether or not the committee is interested in a comprehensive review of the noise ordinance because our office did get some inquiries from citizens who had other noise issues. We did not direct them to this meeting feeling the meeting was about automobiles and stereos and that type of issue. If, in fact, the committee wishes to expand this inquiry into all noise aspects we can certainly do that, but until now that was not his sense. Alderman Tisdahl asked if we could do loud parties without doing everything.

A lady from the audience asked if we can consider putting some signs in key places and entrances to the City in some problematic areas stating that you will be fined for loud noises at “X” amount. Something that people will understand and realize and also be aware of. Members of the committee agreed that this was a fine idea.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Audrey Trotsky, Department of Health and Human Services