

Bob Mollette

3rd Ward Councilman

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Correspondence#: 09-011

April 23, 2009

Jim Kalb, Mayor
728 Second Street
Portsmouth, Ohio 45662

Re: 2009 Capital Improvement Budget Response

I reviewed the information provided with your cover letter dated April 20, 2009 in response to my correspondence #09-010 dated April 6, 2009 concerning the proposed 2009 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget. I appreciate all comments! I am encouraged and enlightened with the increased information provided this year. I reviewed all information provided and wish to better understand the following items to inform and empower our citizens.

It was stated *"each year department heads submit an updated five (5) year plan to the Mayor so the City can better plan and prioritize projects and funding needs."* I believe the only way to achieve our potential as a community is to inform our citizens with a plan. Please provide a copy of *all five (5) year plans* referenced above.

It was stated there are currently no major investments scheduled for Branch Rickey or Spartan Stadium. *"There is much to be done but not enough money in the City funds to accomplish the tasks needed."* *"What is Council's plan to procure the needed funds to accomplish the needs to this cities recreational facility?"* Planning is essential for long term improvements; it is the first step, then prioritizing and funding will follow. Proper planning will gain public confidence and empower citizens to support these goals.

Each year, the CIP Budget includes investments in new vehicles within various departments for transportation to a variety of functions. The 2009 CIP Budget includes three (3) vehicles for an investment of \$75,000 (Community Development, Finance/Income Tax Department, and Waterworks - Collections Division). Has the City evaluated the advantage of maintaining fewer vehicles with an adequate motor pool?

I expressed concern that our City may not be maintaining our pavement infrastructure including alleys. I have suggested proper evaluation of the CIP Budget priorities to increase the funding for asphalt paving. It was reported April 17, 2009 in *The Tribune* that the City of Ironton was looking into a recent process called micro surfacing that will allow the City to repave three times the number of streets for the price to currently mill and repave one street. It was reported the paving system has a life expectancy that exceeds seven years. The funds used by the City of Ironton repairs come from monies and fees collected by gasoline and license plate taxes. Please consider the advantages of this recent process to increase the paving within our City through potential cost-saving applications.

I requested information on the Police Department request for five (5) new vehicles paid through a proposed five (5) year lease agreement. It was reported the Portsmouth Police Department maintains an *assigned vehicle program*. In an effort to better understand this program I researched studies associated with this program.

The studies support this program citing the benefits, such as increased life of the cars, greater accountability and responsibility for the cars, an improved condition of the fleet, fewer accidents, increased visibility and lower turnover rate. Although, the agencies in the study required the officer to live within the City limits in order to keep the vehicle at their residence. I strongly agree that crime prevention is a benefit within neighborhoods where a police vehicle is parked and the officer has jurisdiction. Please provide a copy of the Police Department's *assigned vehicle program* and any additional information to support the rationale to allow vehicles to be driven to residences outside the City limits.

As in previous years, I again am optimistic that in the near future our City Government will realize the advantages of proper planning. A five (5) year CIP Budget is a necessity with limited or shrinking resources coupled with an aging infrastructure. I equally stress the importance of providing the public an opportunity to become knowledgeable and empowered to be involved by offering suggestions from their perspective on the condition and management of our infrastructure.

Again, rather than concentrating on a snapshot of the CIP Budget for 2009, we should be comparing what was accomplished in 2008 and evaluating where we want to be in five (5) years.

If you need further clarification on the comments contact me.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Mollette", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Bob Mollette, 3rd Ward Advocate and Representative on City Council

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cc: Honorable Council Members
Department Directors
Trent Williams, Auditor
Michael Jones, Solicitor
Jo Ann Aeh, Clerk (Record)