

Eastern Washtenaw County Leaders meeting – The Mayor and I received an invitation to attend this meeting, which was an outgrowth of prior meetings. These focused on engaging EMU and others to cooperate and improve the eastern portion of the County. The agenda included a presentation on economic development efforts by Tony Vanderworp and Mike Finney. The meeting was hosted by Peter Fletcher and included representatives from EMU (President Fallon and Regents Wilbanks & Hawks), Washtenaw County Commissioners Peterson, Lovejoy-Roe, Sizemore and Chair Irwin, County Staff (Assistant County Administrators Behen and Davis, Tony Vanderworp), Mike Finney (SPARK), Diane Keller (Chamber of Commerce), Tom Harrison (Chamber), and Kirk Profit. The purpose of this meeting was to initiate projects to strengthen the eastern portion of the county through cooperative efforts. The projects cited at the meeting included: 1) Ypsilanti Schools working with EMU, 2) Economic Development, particularly locating a SPARK incubator in downtown Ypsilanti and 3) University and City Redevelopment projects. The group is scheduled to meet again in three months for a status report on these initiatives and a presentation on the Aerotropolis project.

Aerotropolis Synopsis – Mayor Schreiber had requested a synopsis of the Aerotropolis initiative and the following memo was prepared by Ms. Hart

**“You recently requested a brief summary of the Aerotropolis project and the City of Ypsilanti's relationship to it.**

**For a number of years, and especially for the past five years, community and business leaders in Wayne and Washtenaw Counties have envisioned a major 21<sup>st</sup> century planned economic center along the 1-94 corridor in and around Detroit Metro and Willow Run airports. In 2002, Wayne County hired a global expert on growth centers around major airports world-wide, Dr. John Kasarda, to investigate the potential of establishing an Aerotropolis, or major logistics, distribution, telecommunication complex of businesses and supporting services, on the 25,000 or so acres in seven communities, including Ypsilanti, near the airports. Dr. Kasarda concluded that this area is well-suited for such a center and recommended that officials from the four cities (Ypsilanti, Belleville, Romulus and Taylor), three townships (Ypsilanti, Van Buren and Huron), the Wayne County Airport Authority, and Washtenaw and Wayne Counties work together as a team to establish an Aerotropolis strategic plan.**

**Members (primarily elected officials and senior staff) began meeting in earnest in 2003, and all parties have signed a non-binding memorandum of understanding (MOU), which identified 12 actions. The University of Michigan has provided support during this time by focusing its 2006 Design Charette (Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning) on the Aerotropolis and its Ford School of Public Policy on potential governance models. Recently SEMCOG has begun to meet with the group and provides mapping, data and other technical support. This spring, Detroit Renaissance identified the Aerotropolis as one of its six focus areas and is prepared to provide substantial public-private support to it. As a result, a reconstituted committee is proposed.**

**Members are working toward a concept in which the entire area is master-planned so that sites may be identified which would be suitable for high-quality, intensive development; sewer, water and transportation infrastructure could be appropriately financed and constructed; communities would use "best practices" development permitting; and tax base from new development potentially would be shared so that communities did not compete with each other and would, in fact, directly benefit from participation.**

**It is important for the City of Ypsilanti to be at the table, because development - planned or unplanned -- will occur in that corridor. We have many assets that add value to the Aerotropolis concept, including our location between Detroit and Ann Arbor, on the expressway and on rail; our historic housing, available downtown commercial buildings and developable industrial sites, and our university, among others. If we can position ourselves to share in the tax revenues that will be generated by such a partnership, we will, in essence, broaden our tax base without expanding our boundaries. The imminent reconstitution of the Aerotropolis committee creates the opportunity for you, as our chief elected official, to signal your support to the effort."**

Lowell Street Improvement Project – curb and gutter has been completed and the sub-base has been fine graded. The contractor will be paving the asphalt base on Monday, July 2, 2007. It is anticipated that the paving will take approximately two weeks. At this point, the project is ahead of schedule by approximately two weeks.

Officer Kulhanek Complaint – Council had asked what the cost was to conduct the investigation related to the complaint filed by officer Kulhanek. The cost of the services provided by Mr. Fifer to interview the parties involved was \$1592.50

City Attorney Opinion Regarding Employee Initiated Investigations – A City employee has hired a private investigator to interview City employees, council and others regarding allegations made about his conduct. Council asked whether he could remain employed while this investigation takes place. Mr. Barr's opinion regarding this matter is as follows:

"You have requested my opinion as to whether there is anything in the law that would prevent a City employee from hiring a private investigator to investigate a sitting City Council Member.

The facts as presented are that the Council Member made negative comments about a police officer on the record during a council meeting. The comments questioned the integrity of the police officer. The City Attorney hired a private investigator to investigate the allegations of the Council Member and found no actionable evidence of misconduct. The police officer has now hired a private investigator to conduct an investigation about the matter and the investigator has contacted the Council Member for additional information concerning the allegations.

Private investigators are licensed by the State of Michigan to conduct private investigations. MCL 338.825.

Private investigators are hired by insurance companies, attorneys, private firms and persons to learn facts about matters of interest. Facts may be obtained from records or persons. Some laws such as the attorney client privilege, doctor patient privilege, school laws, and general privacy laws restrict the acquiring of information. Generally, unless there is a law that restricts the gathering of information, a private investigator may obtain any pertinent information. The disclosure of any information is subject to the laws of libel and slander.

The average person has a right of privacy. The right of privacy is diminished when a person enters the public arena as a public personality such as a model, actress, elected or appointed public official. The Michigan Freedom of Information Act provides that the public has the "right to know." The net effect is that public officials lose much of their private right of privacy because the public has the right to know about them.

The average citizen has the right to know about public officials and to look at public records and talk to public officials and other citizens about government. This includes looking at the background and actions of public officials.

The question then is does a governmental employee lose the right to be an informed citizen? Can a government employee look at public records and talk to citizens about the working of the government, including the government where employed? Does the right include the right to hire someone else to look for the employee?

I have reviewed the matter and not found any law that would restrict a government employee from learning about elected officials or the veracity of their statements. This includes hiring a private investigator. Therefore my opinion is that unless there is a specific clause in a union contract or work policy that the hiring of a private investigator by a police officer to investigate a Council Member that made allegations about the police officer is not illegal or prohibited by law."

Part-time Police Officers - With Sgt. Eldridge's resignation, we are now at 39 sworn officers – one below authorized strength of 40. We'll be at 38 when Officer MacDonald leaves in the middle of July. However, the Chief is working on hiring new officers to replace both Eldridge and MacDonald. Per the contract, we can hire part-time officers whenever we're at full strength. We do not have to reduce part-time officers unless road patrol staffing falls below 24 officers.