

March 11, 2014

City Council  
City of Cheviot  
3814 Harrison Avenue  
Cheviot, Ohio 45211

**RE: Internal Affairs Committee Meeting**

To All Members of Council:

The Internal Affairs Committee met on March 11, 2014 at 9:00 PM in the meeting room of the Cheviot municipal building. In attendance were committee members Amy Richter, Dennis Dinkelacker and Chairperson Jim Martin. Also in attendance was President of Council Debbie Slaughter, Safety and Service Director for the City of Cheviot Tom Braun, Councilmember Jeff Baker, Councilmember James Sunderhaus, Councilmember Kitty Zech and Chief of Police Joe Lally.

The focus of the meeting was to discuss concerns raised by the business owners of Cheviot in regards to the West Fest street festival held in June. The meeting was called to order and Chairperson Martin asked Mr. Baker to read into minutes the Report on Economic concerns of West Fest. (This is attached). Upon completion of the reading of the report two main issues were addressed. First, inference by the business community of Cheviot that CWCA (Cheviot Westwood Civic Association) is unwilling to discuss possible issues that the business community has with booth placement and with blockage of their said business. Second, the role of the Cheviot City Council in addressing these concerns and seeking a course of action that stresses courtesy but aids the businesses of Cheviot.

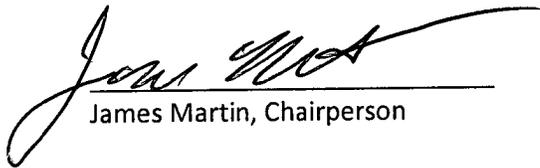
Mrs. Richter stated that she attended the last CWCA meeting and sought to address these concerns with the Board of CWCA and was told that these were issues for Cheviot to decide. That issues brought by businesses of Cheviot were for the council to address. Councilmember Sunderhaus agreed and stated that "we have the right to address set-up". Councilmember Baker added that businesses that wish to remain open on that weekend should have the right not to have their business blocked. After lengthy discussion regarding the size of booths, placement of electricity and the need for cooler space for food it was agreed that questions needed to be asked of CWCA regarding set-up for West Fest and they should be in attendance to address these issues with the committee.

Councilmembers Richter and Baker discussed with the committee problems that existed during last years' West Fest regarding the awning of a business and grease build up on that awning. Councilmember Sunderhaus stated that this was a legitimate concern and actions like this need to be addressed. Chairperson Martin suggested that as "Council we work for the people of Cheviot and should address these concerns ASAP with CWCA". A question was raised if booth placement was addressed by Cheviot. Safety and Service Director Braun stated only so there is room for safety vehicles to get thru and dumpster placement. Councilmember Dinkelacker suggested the possibly of extending west to provide more space but was told by Chief Lally and Mr. Braun that this would interfere with traffic pattern and cause more issues. After some discussion it was agreed that this was not a plausible solution.

Chairperson Martin again stated that the meeting be tabled until representatives from CWCA and West Fest could attend a committee meeting to present their side of debate and to see if there was any room to work together on the issues with Cheviot businesses. It was agreed by the committee that the meeting of Internal Affairs be tabled until March 25, 2014 at 7:00PM in the meeting room of the Cheviot municipal building.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 Pm.

Respectfully submitted,



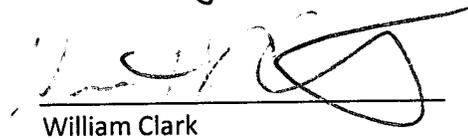
James Martin, Chairperson



Amy Richter



Jeff Baker



William Clark

## Economic Effects of Local Businesses during West Fest

Recently, Amy Richter who is a member of Cheviot City Council and the Council Rep for CWCA was asked to mention some concerns regarding local businesses during West Fest at the monthly CWCA meeting. In particular, the issues were street closures and booths being set up directly in front of businesses that remained open during the event. CWCA representatives were unwilling to consider reaching out to local businesses regarding these concerns and informed Mrs. Richter that they would not be willing to consider moving booths that block open businesses during the event and that the city of Cheviot should be responsible for handling issues or concerns that local businesses have regarding West Fest. The following is a report on a study/survey that Jeff Baker of City Council put together based on the recommendation from CWCA.

Based on the businesses located on Harrison Ave inside the closed off area of Washington Ave and Davis there are 42 business locations. Three of the forty two are currently vacant. Of the forty two businesses, I have personally spoken to eighteen of those businesses with attempts to speak with the majority of the others. The following data is representative of the economic impact of West Fest.

- 9 of the 18 businesses who normally have Saturday and or Sunday business hours close due to the event
- Estimated loss of revenue from these closures exceeds \$10,000
- 4 of the 18 businesses do not have Saturday and or Sunday business hours and thus, are not affected in any way
- The remaining 5 businesses remain open on Saturday and or Sunday
- Of the 5 businesses that remain open, ALL would prefer that no booth is set up directly in front of their location.
- 4 of the 5 businesses that remain open do, however lose revenue on Friday night due to the closing down of Parking lots #1 and #3 as well as street parking after 9:00pm.

Parking lots #1 and #3 as well as street parking is closed off from 9:00pm Friday to 6:00am Monday. This affects Harrison Ave from Washington to Davis and Glenmore from Bank Ct to Mozart. Other than street and parking lot closures, traffic is rerouted in some way on each of the following streets. Carson, Cross Davis, Delmar, Everette, Gamble, Kessen. Lovell, Olivette, Trevor and Weavers Alley. The time and cost of putting up the signage and barricades are not covered by CWCA and are paid for by the citizens of Cheviot.

It has been said that one of the purposes of having the event on the streets of Cheviot is to promote Cheviot. Based on data from the 2013 West Fest Vendor list, there were only two businesses and three non-profits represented from Cheviot of the approximate sixty booths present. Also, with the booths being set up on the outside of the street facing inward, most of the storefronts are either partially or completely covered and non-visible to the patrons attending West Fest.

In an event this large there will always be some mishaps and issues. There's almost no way around that. However, a couple of issues from last year still resonate with some of our residents. 1. CWCA representatives requesting the Police Department to enter a business and remove an invited vendor from the business and 2. Elderly members of the community dressed in square dance clothing doing nothing but handing out info about a free square dance performance that evening occurring in a business on Harrison Ave inside the West Fest area being confronted by CWCA representatives saying they have to pay \$75 for a "Walking Permit". These issues, in my opinion are a very poor reflection of the city of Cheviot.

In speaking with the 18 businesses included in these findings a common concern was brought up. That concern is that any issue that a local business, not participating in West Fest are not only not taken serious, but snubbed at. It is the responsibility of all elected officials in Cheviot to create an environment where all residents and businesses have a forum to voice concerns and be taken seriously.

This report would be remiss without an emphasis on the positive things that are accomplished through the CWCA and their largest, if not only fundraising event located here in Cheviot. Of the estimated yearly gross revenue of \$100,000 and net revenue of \$40,000 much of the proceeds are given back to the city of Cheviot. A portion of the proceeds from West Fest are also given to Westwood. Most recently roughly \$5,000 was given to Cheviot for beautification/playground equipment and \$10,000 was given to MadCap Puppets in Westwood, two great causes. In recent years Cheviot has also received funding for our pool, playground, field house shelter, flower pots and a donation for the fire department via the Cheviot Cultural Development Committee just to name a few. Cheviot needs CWCA. There is, however a need for much better communication and courtesy with regard to local business and local government.

In summary, it was mentioned by a CWCA board member that these responsibilities should fall on the city of Cheviot instead of CWCA because CWCA "Rents" the street for West Fest from Cheviot. The fact is, they pay for the police officers on duty, the necessary CFD staff, the cleanup and street sweeper as well as the permits needed for alcohol and food consumption, but there is no rent paid. The use of the street is given to them. There is no suggestion to stop the event or keep it from existing where it currently does. However, I would move that City Council recommend one of two things: 1. The recommendation from Fire Chief Klein to move the booths to the inner part of the street facing outward, back to back creating two separate walk ways through the event. This would not in any way affect the electrical set up of the event and would create more space utilizing the sidewalks as well as two open street lanes. It was also agreed to by Police Chief Lally that this would be a good idea. 2. If the above change is for some valid reason not possible, then the businesses that remain open or any other business within the affected district have the choice of NOT having a booth directly in front of their business during the event preventing visibility from West

Fest patrons. I would also recommend that a public hearing take place after the event, each year with both members of the CWCA Board and City Council for the public to have a forum in which to raise concerns and address issues. Thank you all for taking the time to consider this.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeffrey Baker  
Cheviot City Council