

METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: September 30, 2009

CALLED TO ORDER: 5:34 p.m.

ADJOURNED: 5:43 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Attending Members

Kent Smith, Chair
Virginia Cain
Jeff Cardwell
Jose Evans
Brian Mahern
Dane Mahern
Janice McHenry
Jackie Nytes
Lincoln Plowman

Absent Members

AGENDA

PROPOSAL NO. 356, 2009 - approves an additional appropriation of \$600,000 in the 2009 Budget of the Department of Metropolitan Development, Office of Code Enforcement (Consolidated County Fund) to finance the continued operations of the High Weeds and Grass program
"Do Pass" Vote: 9-0

METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Metropolitan Development Committee of the City-County Council met on Wednesday, September 30, 2009. Chair Kent Smith called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. with the following members present: Virginia Cain, Jeff Cardwell, Jose Evans, Brian Mahern, Dane Mahern, Janice McHenry, Jackie Nytes and Lincoln Plowman.

PROPOSAL NO. 356, 2009 - approves an additional appropriation of \$600,000 in the 2009 Budget of the Department of Metropolitan Development, Office of Code Enforcement (Consolidated County Fund) to finance the continued operations of the High Weeds and Grass program

Nicole Randall, Deputy Director, Office of Code Enforcement (OCE), gave a presentation which is attached as exhibit A. Some key points are:

- The High Weeds and Grass (HWG) program has mowed 8,957 properties and re-mowed 2,740 properties.
- OCE used \$136,000 to pay vendors along with \$248,000 of outstanding invoices making HWG's total obligation \$384,000.
- OCE has filed \$1.2 million in tax liens year-to-date and are now recording tax liens on a monthly basis.
- OCE has started a collection pilot project that utilizes a vendor to research property owner phone numbers and make reminder calls for payment.

Councillor Dane Mahern asked how aggressive OCE is in collecting the fees that are owed by the citizens. Ms. Randall said that, per the Indiana State Code, OCE's method for collections is to put a lien on a property for an environmental instance. She said that they are trying to be creative within the Code, which is defined in the collection pilot project. She said that the key to generating more money is to increase the collection rate.

Councillor Evans asked what the season is for cutting grass. Ms. Randall said that there is not a defined season, it depends on the weather. Councillor Evans asked what will happen with the money left from the grass cutting fund. Ms. Randall said that they will work with the Office of Finance and Management (OFM) to figure that out. Councillor Evans asked if there are any incentives for vendors if they collect fees that are owed to OCE. Ms. Randall said that this is the beginning of this program, but they could be something to look at during the project to fuel collections.

Councillor Brian Mahern asked if the increased enforcement efforts of OCE have created additional expenditures. Ms. Randall answered in the affirmative. Councillor Brian Mahern asked for the amount that was approved for HWG in 2010. Ms. Randall said that it is \$500,000, with the hope of the collection program generating more funds. She said that, by the end of the year, OCE will have placed a total of \$2.8 million in tax liens.

Chairman Smith asked if OCE has looked as wage garnishment for habitual violators. Ms. Randall said that the habitual violators will be addressed in the nuisance abatement group, and they are working with the city prosecutor to collect more information and look at things as a whole.

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Councillor Nytes asked why this appropriation is being treated as a loan. Jason Dudich, Deputy Controller, OFM said that there are sub-funds within the Consolidated County Fund, one is the Consolidated County General Fund and the other is the Permit Fund, which is used by OCE. He said they did not want to use the fund balance that is in the Permit Fund. Therefore, they are offering a loan from the Consolidated County General Fund to get OCE through the rest of the year. Then OCE will generate revenue from the liens and use those payments to repay the Consolidated County General Fund.

Councillor Nytes moved, seconded by Councillor Dane Mahern, to send Proposal No. 356, 2009 to the full Council with a "Do Pass" recommendation. The motion carried by a vote of 9-0,

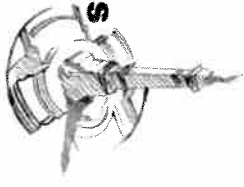
Conclusion

With no further business pending, and upon motion duly made, the Metropolitan Development Committee of the City-County Council was adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lincoln Plowman, Acting Chair
Metropolitan Development Committee

KS/rjp



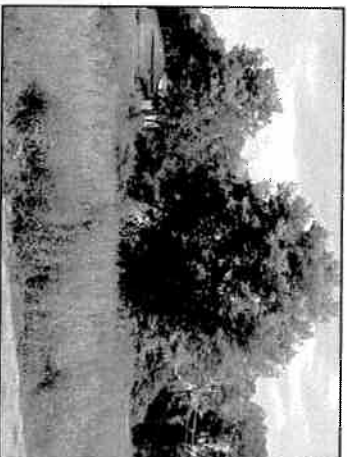
Office of Code Enforcement

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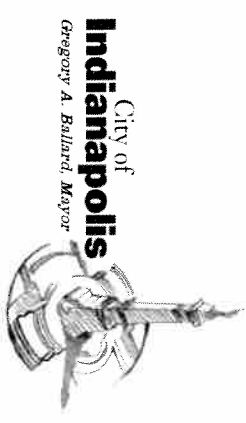
PROPOSAL NO. 356, 2009 - approves an additional appropriation of \$600,000 in the 2009 Budget of the Department of Metropolitan Development, Office of Code Enforcement (Consolidated County Fund) to finance the continued operations of the High Weeds & Grass program

Before

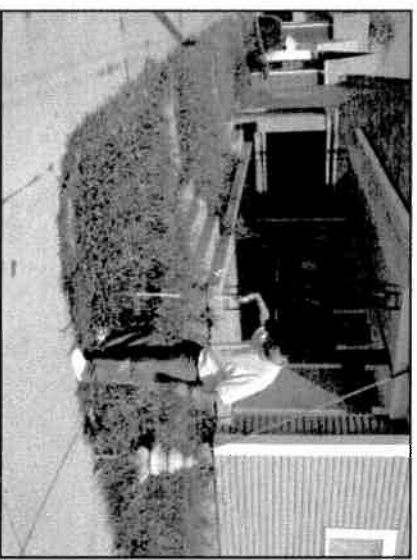


After



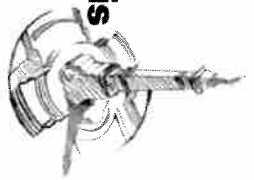
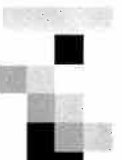


High Weeds & Grass



- 13,681 Investigations
- 10,580 HWG Cases (5,431 in 2008)
- 8,957 Properties mowed (2,144 in 2008)
- 2,740 Property re-mows (337 in 2008)

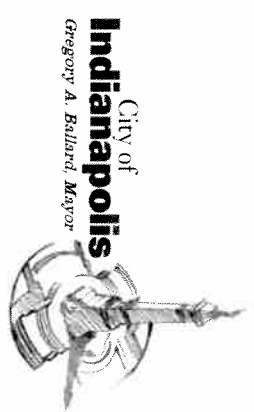
(2009 number as of 9/29/09; 2009 numbers per Six Sigma Project)



HWG Budget

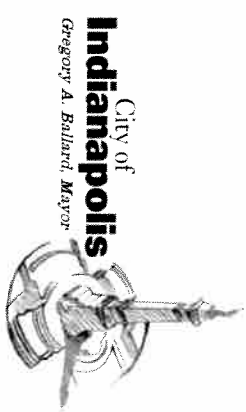
- 2009 DPW HWG Budget
 - \$ 307,000 Total 2009 HWG Budget
 - \$ 307,000 Less: Vendor Payments
 - \$ 0 Total DPW Available Funds

- 2009 OCE Additional HWG Expenditures September 2009
 - \$ 136,000 OCE Expenditures YTD
 - \$ 248,000 Outstanding Invoices (thru 9/21/09)
 - \$ (384,000) Total Obligations



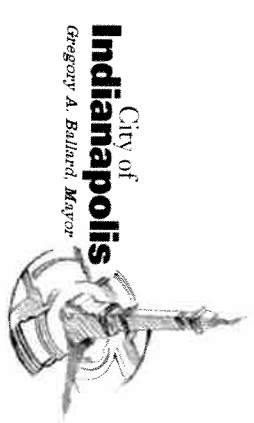
Fiscal Ordinance

- Going Forward
 - \$ 600,000 Loan from Consolidated County General Fund
 - \$ 136,000 Less: OCE HWG Expenditures YTD
 - \$ 248,000 Less: Outstanding Invoices
 - \$ 216,000 Available funds for remainder of 2009



Collections

- Property Tax Liens
 - Filed \$1.2 M in tax liens YTD
 - Recording liens on a monthly basis
- Collection Pilot Project
 - Utilize vendor to research property owner phone numbers and make reminder calls for payment
- Nuisance Abatement
 - Identify habitual violators who are expending significant City resources for multiple properties



Questions?

Thank You!

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