

SYCAMORE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA

October 7, 2002

City Council Committee Meeting

6:45 P.M. Meeting of the Streets and Walks Committee

The next slated workshop session is with the Plan Commission to discuss comprehensive planning issues at the November 11 Plan Commission meeting. Since the Streets and Walks Committee was not able to attend to one of its agenda items on September 16 because of a lack of time, the workshop slot will be given over to the Committee to discuss the topic of informational signs on our major thoroughfares.

Establishing Guidelines for Informational Signs. Recently, some local organizations have asked if they could erect congratulatory signs in city rights-of-way to highlight the accomplishments of their members. From time to time the City has posted such signs but no policy exists to guide further action. If the Council is interested in some uniform response to such inquiries—and the staff recommend a consistent response—then we might look at what other communities have done. Our brief research has revealed that larger communities tend to borrow from the state (IDOT) guidelines and some smaller communities have a more reactive approach. The state guidelines were established in 1987 and are attached. In 1994 some new recommendations were debated at the District 2 offices, but the 1987 guidelines have apparently prevailed over time. In general, the qualifying signs for placement in the rights-of-way are as follows:

- a) Town name signs with population.
- b) Community Awards Signs
 - aa) *Athletic and Scholastic Awards.* Typically, these honor only first place achievements in sectional and state contests, or first-through-third place finishes in national or international contests. Formal presentations of the signs in some ceremony usually precede any placement, to assure that there is legitimacy to the honor in the eyes of the local school or institutional authorities as well as the local government. Such signs usually remain in place for one year only.
 - bb) *Civic Awards.* These usually denote a state or national designation, such as “Governor’s Home Town,” “Certified City,” etc. They likewise only have a one-year life, and may be placed on or near city entry signs.
 - cc) *Civic Program Signs.* This is a more elastic category that could include “Neighborhood Watch,” “Drug-Free School Zone,” “I-Search” and other public safety messages. These are not typically placed in the rights-of-way, but may be when they are specific to a certain site.

The state guidelines also reference signs that may honor famous local individuals (e.g. “Miss Illinois”), prominent local industries, etc. Such signs are not typically permitted in state rights of way, but can be erected on private property subject to local zoning provisions.

To avoid a profusion of signs—including those that recognize achievements that may seem honorable to some groups but objectionable to others—it may be prudent to adopt the more limited parameters that the State of Illinois’s transportation officials recommend at this point, until some experience is gained.

Committee direction is requested.

Regular City Council Meeting

7:30 P.M.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. INVOCATION**
- 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- 5. AUDIENCE TO VISITORS**
- 6. CONSENT AGENDA**
 - A. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of September 16, 2002;
 - B. Payment of the Bills for October 7, 2002.
- 7. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND BILLS.**
 - A. Proclamation Declaring October 10 and 11 as Lions Candy Days in the City of Sycamore.
 - B. Proclamation Declaring October 6-12 as Fire Prevention Week in the City of Sycamore.
- 8. REPORTS OF OFFICERS**
- 9. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**
- 10. PUBLIC HEARINGS--None**
- 11. ORDINANCES**

A. Ordinance No. 2002.39— An Ordinance Amending Title 6, Motor Vehicles and Traffic,” Chapter 4, “Traffic Schedules,” Section 6-4-12, “No Parking Zones,” to Prohibit Parking on the North Side of Loomis Street; and Section 6-4-18, “Limited Load Streets,” to Establish a 6,000 Pound Weight Limit on Mason Court and Loomis Street in the City of Sycamore, Illinois. First and Second Reading.

At the meeting of the Streets and Walks Committee on September 16, a number of concerns were raised about semi-trailers on Mason Court and Loomis Street. Presumably, such heavy trucks occasionally travel onto Mason Court in search of another way to Crosby Avenue or a shortcut to industrial uses on North Cross Street. Whatever the reason, the trucks are not making local deliveries and their presence creates congestion on the narrow streets, offers some hazard to pedestrians and motorists alike, and adds weight to residential streets that are not built to withstand such wear and tear. It was unanimously agreed that the City Code should be amended to expressly prohibit such truck traffic on Mason Court and Loomis Street. The attached ordinance draft makes such changes.

In addition, the Committee took up the concern of Loomis Street property owners about the difficulty of navigating that very narrow street with permitted parking on both sides. The Committee recommended that on-street parking be permitted on the south side only. The attached ordinance also makes this change.

City Council approval is recommended.

B. Ordinance No. 2002.40—An Ordinance Amending Title 6, Motor Vehicles and Traffic,” Chapter 4, “Traffic Schedules,” Section 6-4-1: “Stop Intersections,” To Install a Stop Sign on Susan Street at Windfield Drive and at Janet Street; and Amending Section 6-4-4, “Yield Streets,” To Install Yield Signs on Susan Street at the Intersections With William, John, and Larson Streets in the City of Sycamore, Illinois. First and Second Reading.

The Streets and Walks Committee also took up a number of related traffic concerns in the Windfield Meadows subdivision on September 16. Their recommendations were as follows:

- a) Install a stop sign on Susan Street at the intersection with Windfield Drive.
- b) Install a stop sign on Susan Street at Janet Street.
- c) Install a stop sign on Larson Street at Janet Street.
- d) Install yield signs at Susan and William, Susan and John, and Susan and Larson Streets.

City Council approval is recommended.

C. Ordinance No. 2002.41—An Ordinance Approving the Execution of an Employment Agreement Between the City of Sycamore, Illinois and the City Administrator of the City of Sycamore, Illinois. First and Second Reading.

In October 2000 the City Council approved a three-year employment agreement with the City Administrator. A base salary was established for the first two years of that contract. For the last year of the contract, from October 12, 2002 through October 11, 2003, no base salary was established in order to give both parties an opportunity to re-negotiate a compensation and benefit package.

The attached ordinance would adopt a revised compensation package for the City Administrator for the next twelve months. The key features of this package are as follows:

- a) the base salary shall be \$91,000 (the present salary is \$83,500);
- b) the car allowance shall be \$350 per month (the present allowance is \$300 per month and has not changed since October 1998);
- c) the City Administrator shall receive three weeks paid vacation (the present allowance is two weeks and has not changed since October 1998).

All other provisions of the employment contract remain essentially the same.

City Council direction is recommended.

12. RESOLUTIONS--None

13. CONSIDERATIONS

A. Consideration of an Administration Recommendation to Hire Two New Firefighters as Planned in the FY03 City Budget.

In the approved FY03 City Budget the hiring of two additional firefighters on or about September 1 was anticipated. The caveat was the availability of general revenues. The City Administrator did not recommend the hiring of these firefighters as September 1 arrived because at that point the key general revenue categories (states sales tax; home rule sales tax; state income tax) were all trailing annualized projections.

General revenues in these categories continue to trail annualized projections by several percentage points, but the pace of accrual is on a par with the same months in previous years. The savings gained by postponing the new hires over the past six weeks should offset the slight lag in overall revenues. An additional factor makes the hiring more advisable now than in early September: the activation of firefighter Sean Penn for one year's active duty that has posed the prospect of unanticipated overtime costs.

Finally, so long as we are close to fund objectives, the hiring of the two firefighters is responsible in terms of the Council's commitment to higher routine shift levels to meet multiple calls within our benchmark response criteria. Before Firefighter Penn's absence, and allowing for some other absences due to illness, injury or vacations, the hiring of the two firefighters was estimated to create a 5-person shift for 75% or more of the shift days each month. With one less firefighter due to active duty, and assuming the hiring of the two firefighters, 5-person shifts would be possible for less than one-half of the shift days.

City Council approval of the staggered hiring of one firefighter in mid-October and one firefighter in mid-November is recommended.

B. Consideration of an Announcement Concerning an Open House at the New Nicor Gas Facility on October 10, 2002 from 8:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M.

The Mayor and Council and staff have been invited to attend the grand opening of Nicor's new Customer Care and Call Center at 1947 Bethany Road on Thursday, October 10, from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. The Center has been open for a period of weeks and is now ready for public viewing. This major corporate presence gives more visibility to Sycamore's interest in promoting the Bethany Road corridor as a home for office and research facilities.

C. Consideration of an Administration Recommendation for a Closed Session to Discuss Personnel Matters and Land Acquisition.

14. APPOINTMENTS

15. ADJOURNMENT