

SYCAMORE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA

December 16, 2002

City Council Committee Meetings

6:30 Sewer and Water Committee.

The Sewer and Water Committee met on November 4 and November 18 to review the current system of user fees and charges associated with the Water Fund. The key areas of attention were

- a) the rate structure for the Edgebrook mobile home park;
- b) the structure of charges for the replacement of water meters;
- c) the seven-tier system of user fees we presently have, and the fiscal impact and fairness issues associated with it.

At the close of the meeting on November 18, the staff were charged with the task of preparing proposals for each consideration with an eye to the fiscal impact of each proposal on the overall Water Fund balance. The staff recommendations are as follows.

1. **Bring the charges for the individual Edgebrook mobile home units in line with charges for single-family houses over a three-year period.** The park has one meter monitoring 250 units. The charge per billing period (2 months) is \$2,059.20 (for about 3,690 cu. ft.) or approximately \$.56 per 100 cu. ft. By comparison, the cost for the average single-family homeowner per billing period is \$1.82 per \$100 cu. ft.

The proposed system is depicted in the table below:

Present	March 1, 2003	March 1, 2004	March 1, 2005
\$.56/100 cu. ft.	\$.98/100 cu. ft.	\$1.40/100 cu. ft.	\$1.82/100 cu. ft.

The owners and operators of the park currently pay the bi-monthly fee and pass through the cost to their units. The owners would presumably pass through the new costs to the unit owners, who would then be paying fees comparable to other homeowners in town. The net gain for the Water Fund would be about \$21,700 in year one; an additional \$31,000 in year two; and an additional \$40,300 in year three, or about \$93,000 over three years.

2. **Move toward a recovery of 100% of the City's cost for meter replacement over a three-year period.** As we discussed at both November meetings, the amount we charge for the replacement of water meters covers less than the City's cost. Based on the Water department's assumption that the average life of a meter is eight years, the City's return has been less than one-half of its cost. It was the consensus of the Committee that the City should reconsider its assumption about the practical life of its water meters, and provide supporting information. Superintendent Ebe Smith has consulted with the American Waterworks Association. The Association puts the

national average at ten years. If the Committee were to support this assumption, the increased revenue from a fee schedule designed to recover 100% of the City's cost in three years would be about \$18,029 per year. The actual charges would be as follows:

Meter Size	Meter Cost (City's Cost)	Current Annual Fee	2003	2004	2005
5/8"	\$175.00	\$7.08	\$10.50	\$14.00	\$17.50
3/4"	203.00	8.76	12.60	16.45	20.30
1"	238.50	14.10	17.35	20.60	23.85
1-1/2"	405.00	28.32	32.50	36.70	40.90
2"	546.00	49.26	51.05	52.85	54.60
3"	1,505	70.80	97.35	123.90	150.50
4"	2,223	106.20	144.90	183.90	222.30
6"	3,098	212.38	244.80	277.30	309.80

If the Committee assumed that the average life of a meter was about 15 years, the resulting charges would be as follows:

Meter Size	Meter Cost (City's Cost)	Current Annual Fee	2003	2004	2005
5/8"	\$175.00	\$7.08	\$8.60	\$10.15	\$11.70
3/4"	203.00	8.76	10.35	11.95	13.55
1"	238.50	14.10	14.70	15.30	15.90
1-1/2"	405.00	28.32	27.00	27.00	27.00
2"	546.00	49.26	36.40	36.40	36.40
3"	1,505	70.80	80.65	90.50	100.35
4"	2,223	106.20	120.20	134.20	148.20
6"	3,098	212.38	206.55	206.55	206.55

A move over three years to recover the City's actual cost for meters, assuming a working life of 15 years, would generate \$6,667 in new revenue per year.

Over the past three years, the Water department has replaced 402 residential meters (in the 5/8", 3/4" and 1" sizes), or an average of 134 per year. One should not assume that this number exhausts the count of all meters that need to be replaced in any given year. It simply represents the number of replacements that the limited number of department staff have been able to perform.

3. **Defer a decision on user fees until the EPA has approved a plan for the mitigation of radium levels in our water supply.** The realistic threshold for that decision is March 31, 2003 or in about 90 days. At that time, the EPA's authorization for low-interest funding for Well #9 will expire. The City plan for Well #9 addresses the radium problem but the City's plan has not been accepted and it is likely that another approach will have to be presented and approved. Here's our dilemma: We have no choice except to meet the deadline for funding, but we won't know what the cost of the final plan will be until the EPA rules on our mitigation scheme. At that

point, we can reasonably suggest revenue options to meet the financing needs as well as funding requirements for overall system improvements for the next 3-5 years. If we adopt a new user fee plan without more certainty, we may be back before the voting public with additional increases in a year.

Committee direction is recommended.

Regular City Council Meeting

7:30 P.M.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. INVOCATION**
- 3. SWEARING-IN OF NEWLY APPOINTED ALDERMAN FOR THE THIRD WARD**
- 4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- 6. AUDIENCE TO VISITORS**
- 7. CONSENT AGENDA**
 - A. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of December 2, 2002;
 - B. Payment of the Bills for December 16, 2002.
- 8. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND BILLS.**
 - A. Swearing-in of Steven Cook as Sergeant
 - B. Appointment of Don Phelps as a paid-on-call firefighter.
 - C. Recognition of Les Johnson for his 40 years of service as an on-call firefighter.
 - D. Presentation of Service Awards.
Human Resource Director Jean Tritle will join the City Administrator in presenting service awards to City employees.
- 9. REPORTS OF OFFICERS**
- 10. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**
- 11. PUBLIC HEARINGS**
 - A. **Public Hearing on the 2002-2003 Corporate Property Tax Levy.**
On December 2, the City Council held a public hearing regarding a five

percent City levy increase. An ordinance to that effect was heard on first reading only. A breakdown of the proposed levy and the likely impact on the average homeowner is illustrated below:

	1999	2000	2001	2002
Total Levy	1,934,593	1,973,285	2,032,484	2,134,108
Police Pension	73,200	77,600	87,300	152,883
Fire Pension	147,000	130,000	180,390	213,142
FICA/IMRF	189,000	205,000	220,000	247,500
Crossing Guards	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
General Operations	1,505,393	1,540,685	1,524,794	1,500,583
City-Wide EAV	172,022,591	185,519,631	201,706,953	215,000,000
City Tax Rate	1.1246	1.0648	1.0076	.9926

Resulting Impact on Single-Family Homeowner. The “Property EAV” is derived from the average price of all homes sold in Sycamore during the previous year.

	2000	2001	2002
Property EAV	45,150	46,550	47,800
City Tax Rate	1.0648	1.0076	.9926
City Tax Bill	480.76	469.04	474.46

Overall Impact:

- Should result in a City tax rate decrease of 1.5% and a City rate lower than any since 1970!
- Property taxes (minus the portion going directly to the Fire and Police pension funds) would represent 23.2% of all budgeted FY2002-2003 General Fund expenditures (\$7,636,192). They presently represent 23.1%.
- Reduce the monies available for general operations by \$24,211 (1.6%), or to a level below that of 1999. This would be the second straight year that the portion of property taxes allocated for general operations declined. In FY02, the reduction was \$15,891.

The Council also reviewed the Sycamore Library’s proposed levy for 2002 on December 2. The City annually levies property taxes for the Sycamore Library. The combined City and Library levies are considered the *corporate levy*.

The revised FY2002-2003 Library levy recommendation of \$555,758 is \$54,888 (10.96%) higher than the FY2001-2002 Library levy of \$500,870 and should result in a Library rate of .2585, which is 4.1% higher than the Library rate of .2483/\$100 EAV in 2001. The proposed 2002 Library levy represents 82.4% of the Library’s proposed FY2002-2003 operating budget of \$674,218. The Library’s 2001 levy of \$500,870 represented 77% of the FY03 budget of \$651,101. Until the Sycamore Public Library has established a separate taxing authority through referendum, the Council is obliged to “pass through” the Library’s levy request, provided the annual tax does not exceed .60% of the community’s EAV (estimated to be \$1,290,000 in 2002). The likely impact of the Library’s revised levy is shown below:

	1999	2000	2001	2002
Library Levy	449,657	472,162	\$500,870	\$555,758
City-Wide EAV	172,022,591	185,519,631	201,706,953	215,000,000
Library Tax Rate	.2614	.2545	.2483	.2585
EAV of Average Home Sold in Sycamore	43,800	45,150	46,550	47,800
Library Tax Bill	114.49	114.91	115.58	123.56

The corporate levy in 2001 was \$2,533,354. This year, the combined Library levy of \$555,758 and the proposed City levy of \$2,134,108 create a corporate levy of \$2,689,866 or a \$156,512 (6.18%) increase over the corporate levy of 2001.

For the individual or business taxpayer, the impact of the annual levy discussion is felt in the following spring when the tax bills arrive. At that time, what matters most is the property tax rate. If our estimate of the City-wide EAV is correct (\$215,000,000), the corporate tax rate for the corporate levy described above will be \$1.2511 per \$100 EAV, or slightly lower than the 2001 corporate tax rate of \$1.2560 per \$100 EAV.

12. ORDINANCES

A. Ordinance No. 2002.54—An Ordinance Levying Taxes for the Corporate Purposes of the City of Sycamore for the Fiscal Year Commencing May 1, 2002 and Ending April 30, 2003. Second Reading.

As noted in the public hearing portion of this agenda, the corporate levy of \$2,689,866 includes a City levy of \$2,134,108 and a Library levy of \$555,758. This corporate levy would be \$156,512 (6.18%) above the 2001 corporate levy of \$2,533,354 but the resulting corporate tax rate would be slightly lower than last year, assuming our estimate of the City-wide EAV (\$215,000,000) is correct when the final extension is published next spring.

City Council approval is recommended.

B. Ordinance No. 2002.55—An Ordinance Partially Abating Certain Debt Service Levied for a General Obligation Bond Issue for the City of Sycamore, DeKalb County, Illinois for the Fiscal Year 2002-2003. Second Reading.

This ordinance would partially abate the debt service on the 1996 general obligation bond for the 2002 levy year. The debt service obligation for FY2002-2003 is \$423,383. The City will levy \$155,000 and abate \$268,383.

City Council approval is recommended.

C. Ordinance No. 2002.56—An Ordinance Abating Certain Debt Service for a General Obligation Bond Issue for the City of Sycamore, DeKalb County, Illinois for the Fiscal Year 2002-2003. Second Reading.

This ordinance would totally abate the debt service on the 1999 refunding bond that refinanced a portion of the 1996 bond series at a lower interest rate. The debt service obligation for FY2002-2003 is \$156,513. The levy is \$0.00 and the abatement is \$156,513. The debt service will be paid from a transfer from the 1996 Bond Fund, which gets its revenue from transfers from the General Fund, Water Fund, Sewer Fund, Motor Fuel Tax Fund, and Road & Bridge Fund.

City Council approval is recommended.

D. Ordinance No. 2002.57—An Ordinance Abating Certain Debt Service for a General Obligation Bond Issue for the City of Sycamore, DeKalb County, Illinois for the Fiscal Year 2002-2003. Second Reading.

This ordinance totally abates the debt service on the more recent 2002 general obligation bond. The debt service obligation is \$301,153 and the levy is \$0.00.

City Council approval is recommended.

E. Ordinance No. 2002.58—An Ordinance Abating Certain Real Estate Revenue Due for Property Owned by Sycamore Ford/Mazda/Hyundai in the City of Sycamore, DeKalb County, Illinois for the Fiscal Year 2002-2003. Second Reading.

The City Council will also have to abate 70 percent of the City's share of the property tax owed by Sycamore Ford/Mazda/Hyundai. In December of 2001, the Council fulfilled its obligation in the development agreement with Sycamore Ford by abating 80% of the City's share of the firm's local property tax. As the Council will recall, the development agreement called for a three-year abatement with 80 percent of the taxes owed to the City, the County, and the Sycamore Library abated in year one; 70% abated in year two; and 50% abated in year three. By this agreement, two-thirds of the property taxes owed by Sycamore Ford to the City, the County, and the Library would be abated over three years.

The EAV for the Sycamore Ford parcel (#09-06-125-001) \$620,030 (\$182,339 for the land and \$437,691 for the improvements). The site constitutes approximately 5.74 acres. The value of last year's abatement was about \$13,170 (.0212396 x \$620,030).

City Council approval is recommended.

F. Ordinance No. 2002.59--An Ordinance Concerning the Recommendation of the Plan Commission With Regard to the Petition of Jim and Guyla Yagen For a Special Use Permit to Subdivide a Duplex Lot at 1142 and 1144 Penny Lane to Create Two Attached Single Family Dwellings. First and Second Reading.

At the September 16 meeting of the City Council, the Council approved special use requests for the division of a number of duplex lots on Penny Lane into attached, single-family dwellings, to enable them to be sold in fee simple. This request is for the same purpose and is necessary for the same reason. On July 15,

2002 the City Council created authority for the administrative processing of certain limited re-subdivisions of land such as those contemplated in this instance, and at the September meeting. However, such authority did not extend to special use permitting, annexation, rezoning or other actions for which public hearings and Council action is required by state statute.

The lots in question are in Phase One, Unit Two of the Townsend Woods planned unit development. On July 16, 2001 the Council rezoned these lots from “R-1” One Family Residence to “R-2” Two-Family Residence but no special use permits were issued, since at the time the applicable zoning provisions required later action to subdivide when future owners were identified.

The attached ordinance would establish special use permits for the subdivision of the one lot in question. The City Engineer, as designated plat officer, will handle the proper filing and recording of the necessary subdivision plats.

The Plan Commission reviewed this special use request at its regular meeting of December 9, 2002 and recommended its approval by a unanimous vote of 10-0. City Council approval of the Plan Commission recommendation is requested.

G. Ordinance No. 2002.60--An Ordinance Concerning the Recommendation of the Plan Commission With Regard to the Petition of Wiseman-Hughes, Inc. for Approval of a Final Plat for Phase I of the Reston Ponds Planned Unit Development. First and Second Reading.

The annexation, rezoning, and approval of the preliminary plat for the Reston Ponds planned development occurred on May 6, 2002. Since early November, construction crews working for the developer—Wiseman-Hughes Enterprises, Inc.—have been scraping and stockpiling black earth and taking steps to begin the underground utility installations and stormwater retention ponds that are described on the preliminary plan. The developer has forwarded a request for consideration of a final plat for Phase I, which involves about one-quarter of the development site and a total of 100 single-family lots. The approved preliminary plan shows a total of 391 single-family lots. The Phase I lots extend northward from Bethany Road and along the east side of a large retention pond (please see the attached graphic).

The plat submittal satisfies the provisions of the annexation agreement and the City Code. The Plan Commission reviewed the proposal on December 9 and unanimously recommended its approval. City Council approval of the Plan Commission recommendation is requested.

H. Ordinance No. 2002.61--An Ordinance Concerning the Recommendation of the Plan Commission With Regard to the Petition of B&B Development for Approval of an Amendment to the Preliminary Plat and Annexation Agreement for the Heron Creek Planned Unit Development. First and Second Reading.

In the course of the final engineering for the first phase of estate lots south of Peace Road at Frantum Road, B&B Development and their engineering consultant, John Wills of Christopher Burke Engineering, have reconsidered their interest in linking the smaller estate lots to the north with the larger estate lots to the south by a dedicated street. It happens that the 66-foot street right-of-way shown on the approved preliminary plat would result in the clearing of 40 mature hardwood trees of 20 or more inches in diameter. In addition, about 400 hardwood (oak) trees of 12 inches or more diameter would have to be removed for the construction of the retention area shown at the confluence of Heron Creek and Heron Creek Tributary. One of these trees is a 51-inch diameter oak tree that may be the oldest in the area.

The connecting roadway was introduced in the negotiations surrounding the preliminary plat approval in 1998-1999 because of the City concern about one way into the “deepest” lots on Merry Oaks Court, namely the access from IL Rt. 23. At that time, the developer was averse to providing another access road from the rear of the commercially-zoned area. It should also be noted that, notwithstanding a considerable amount of site surveying by the developer’s technical team, the character and breadth of the tree stand in the middle of the southwest quadrant of the Heron Creek development was not sufficiently appreciated until more detailed engineering and survey work was undertaken.

In light of the information provided by Mr. Wills, a series of design meetings involving the City Administrator, City Engineer, and representatives of B&B Development have recently been held to attempt to balance the City’s public safety concerns with the shared concern about the removal of so many natural features that contributed to the appeal of the original development plan. In the attached background information, the City Administrator has attached a copy of the approved preliminary plan for the southwest quadrant of the Heron Creek development, a copy of a proposed revision to that quadrant plan, and a larger plan view of how the revised quadrant plan would look when integrated with the original preliminary plan. As the Council will note, a second access road has been added that connects Whitmore Drive to the commercial access drive at Peace Road. Although the preferred emergency response path for Fire and Police vehicles would be north on IL Rt. 23 to Merry Oaks Drive and then west on Merry Oaks Drive, the introduction of an alternate path provides flexibility in the event that the primary path of emergency travel is blocked for unexpected reasons. Further, the storm water management plan has been revised to replace the larger retention pond with a series of small ponds to protect most of the hardwood trees.

If the Council is inclined to support this proposal, two minor changes in the original annexation agreement are also in order. Where the annexation agreement references the preliminary plan, known as “Exhibit B,” it would hereafter read “Revised Preliminary Plat dated December 16, 2002.” The City Attorney has crafted a document memorializing such a change to alert persons doing future

research in these documents. Additionally, the developer has requested the insertion of some language in Section 9 of the annexation agreement to permit the introduction of wetland plantings to augment the natural wetland development. At the time of the adoption of the original document, the City did not encourage wetland plantings adjacent to single-family lots because of concerns about proper wetland maintenance. Given the non-conventional habitat surrounding this development area along the Heron Creek watershed, the staff believe this development area is peculiarly suited for a managed wetland to augment the storm water storage capacity of the watershed. City Attorney Peter Smith has included such language in the attached ordinance draft.

The Plan Commission took up the suggested revisions to the preliminary plat and annexation agreement at its regular meeting of December 9. By a vote of 10-0, the Commission recommended their approval with the following additional condition:

“the by-laws to the Homeowner’s Association will stipulate that the Association shall establish at least one pedestrian walkway or bike path connection to the North School property, and shall keep this pathway clear of snow and ice and debris year round.”

City Council approval of the Plan Commission recommendation, with the aforementioned condition, is requested.

I. Ordinance No. 2002.62--An Ordinance Concerning the Recommendation of the Plan Commission With Regard to the Petition of B&B Development, Inc. for Approval of a Final Plat for Phase I of the Heron Creek Estate Lots. First and Second Reading.

B&B Development, Inc. has petitioned for the approval of a final plat for the estate lots south of Peace Road and roughly centered on the southward extension of Frantum Road (see the attached plat). A total of 60 single-family lots are involved, as well as several large lots representing retention ponds, wetlands, and park lands. The average size of the single family lots is about 18,625 square feet (.43 acres) and the largest single-family lot is 30,182 square feet (.69 acres).

If the revision to the Heron Creek preliminary plan is approved as recommended (see Ordinance 2002.61, above), this area would be connected to the larger estate lots to the south by a series of paths for bicyclists and pedestrians that are integrated with a unique system of wetlands and more conventional retention areas. The proposed plat conforms with the terms of the annexation agreement and the provisions of the City Code.

The Plan Commission considered this petition at its regular meeting on December 9 and unanimously recommended its approval, provided that the language noted in Item H, above, is added to the plat. City Council approval of the Plan Commission recommendation is requested.

J. Ordinance No. 2002.63—An Ordinance Concerning the Recommendation of the Plan Commission With Regard to the Petition of B&B Development for Approval of a Final Plat for a Three-Lot Subdivision on the Northeast and Northwest Corners of Peace Road and Frantum Road. First and Second Reading.

The attached final plat provides a more orderly configuration of the Heron Creek properties north of Peace Road in the vicinity of Frantum Road. The three-lot re-subdivision creates a Lot 1, which encompasses the Stonegate townhouse development approved by the City Council on October 21, 2002; Lot 2 consists of the 3.324-acre site that is presently dedicated to the City for public purposes such as a new fire station, a new well, or a new water tower (or all three facilities); and Lot 3 is dedicated for retention and open space.

The Plan Commission considered this petition at its regular meeting of December 9 and unanimously recommended its approval by a vote of 10-0. City Council approval of the Plan Commission recommendation is requested.

K. Ordinance No. 2002.64—An Ordinance Amending Title 9, “Building Regulations,” Chapter 2, “Building Codes” Section 1, “Building Code,” of the City Code of the City of Sycamore. First and Second Reading.

Building Commissioner Lyle Doty has completed his review of the 1999 BOCA National Building Code and has recommended its adoption, with amendments, as the City’s official building code. The City has used the BOCA national code series for several generations. Mr. Doty has included the local building industry in his deliberations, and he maintains that the suggested local amendments (attached) represent the consensus view of our staff and the only organized local voice of builders and developers, the DeKalb County Building and Development Association.

City Council adoption is recommended. With the adoption of this code update, there is the possibility that the fire insurance rates of local residents will be favorably adjusted in some degree. Routine code updates that keep a community current with the latest in fire protection technology and practices are considered a sign of good municipal stewardship by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO).

- 13. **RESOLUTIONS--None**
- 14. **CONSIDERATIONS--None**
- 14. **APPOINTMENTS**
- 15. **ADJOURNMENT**

