

SYCAMORE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA

March 1, 2004

**Tour of Midwest Museum of Natural History
(the former Sycamore Community Center)**

6:00 P.M. The City Council and Park Board have been invited to attend an informal tour of the newly remodeled City building at 425 West State Street that will be the future home of the Midwest Museum of Natural History. Museum board members will also be on hand to explain the exhibit plan and related uses for the building. All media representatives and interested citizens are invited to attend.

**Regular City Council Meeting
At the Sycamore Center
7:00 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 for the City Council Meeting of February 16, 2004;
 - B. Payment of the Bills for March 1, 2004.
- 7. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND BILLS.**
 - A. Introduction of Jim Ward, Sycamore's newest Paid-On-Call Firefighter.
 - B. Consideration of a Presentation by the Sycamore Economic Development Commission.

Sycamore Economic Development Commission member and Alderman Pete Paulsen will introduce Joe Munro, owner of American Flooring, who will give a brief overview of his firm's products and services.

8. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

9. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

10. PUBLIC HEARINGS--None

11. ORDINANCES

A. Ordinance No. 2003.95--An Ordinance Amending Title 3, "Business and License Regulations," Chapter 2, "Liquor Control," Section 3-2-6, "Classification of Licenses; Fees; Hours and Days," Subsection F, "Outdoor Restaurant Liquor Sales," of the City Code of the City of Sycamore, Illinois. First and Second Reading.

The City Council Ordinance Committee met on Monday, February 16, to address a number of possible changes to the liquor codes. The Committee took action on one matter: a change in the hours of operation for outdoor liquor sales. Such sales are presently restricted to 9:00 p.m. on weekdays and 11:00 p.m. on weekends. After hearing testimony from restaurant owners in attendance, the Ordinance Committee voted to recommend a change in these hours to allow outdoor liquor sales up to one hour before the restaurant's closing. The attached ordinance makes this change.

City Council approval is recommended.

12. RESOLUTIONS--None

13. CONSIDERATIONS

A. Consideration of a Report from the Discover Sycamore Group of the Greater Sycamore Chamber of Commerce Concerning Recent Tourism-Related Activities.

The City's three-year contract with the Sycamore Chamber for tourism-related services is nearing an end. Rose Treml, Executive Director, will be present to summarize the Chamber's accomplishments with the assistance of its FY04 grant of \$45,000 from the Hotel/Motel Tax Fund (Fund 9). Ms. Treml will also present a proposal for a contract extension that more specifically addresses the City's interest in local business development.

The Chamber Board of Directors held a half-day retreat in the Sycamore Center on February 24 to bring a clearer focus to the services it wants to bring its members and the City of Sycamore. An independent facilitator was hired to lead the discussion. The City is an ex officio member of the Board, and the City Manager was present to represent the City organization. As a result of the Board's discussion, the principal purpose for 2004 was identified as the promotion of business development. A number of methods were defined.

First, whether in the interest of attracting new business or retaining existing business, it was agreed that the Chamber needed to substantially upgrade its presence on the world wide web. Increasingly, businesses and consumers explore the internet for products and services before venturing from their homes or places of business. Presently, the Chamber presence on the internet offers minimal information to the visitor, let alone a potential business. A variety of upgrades were discussed, including links to the City site and DCEDC site for business prospects, and links to featured local businesses (changing periodically) to more vividly portray the range of products and services available in Sycamore. Digital images of existing businesses as well as available properties would aid such a portrayal. In addition, School, Park and other local public websites can also be linked. However, the development and maintenance of an expanded internet presence will require more technical expertise and financial resources than the Chamber can presently provide.

Second, the Board recognized that a successful tourism program depends as much on the range of services and goods that will greet visitors, as it does on how well we market them. Accordingly, the Chamber will review its conventional investment in print materials, retaining a commitment to visitor guides that set Sycamore apart, while directing other resources to the promotion of a better business climate.

In the past year, the Chamber's director and the coordinator of the Chamber's Discover Sycamore Group have expanded their efforts to market vacant commercial space, both in the downtown and elsewhere. The Chamber Board hopes to continue this cooperative effort with City officials and local property owners.

Ms. Trembl will describe the Chamber's proposition in more detail during her presentation. The Council will have an opportunity to take action on this proposal during the budget hearings on special funds during the latter part of the week of March 15. Provisional drafts of the Hotel/Motel Tax Fund narrative and numerical budget as they might appear in terms of the Chamber proposal are attached.

B. Consideration of a Report from the City Engineer Regarding the FY05 Street and Sidewalk Maintenance Program.

The annual street maintenance program consists of crack-filling, microsurfacing, and minor re-surfacing operations. The program typically receives its financial support in the General Fund's Street Division budget (\$150,000; #731-8316) and the Capital Fund (\$50,000; #8316). The total of \$200,000 does not stretch very far in terms of street improvements, so a periodic borrowing fuels a broader program, as with the \$3.97 million general obligation bond floated in 2002 that dedicated about \$2 million to extensive maintenance and reconstruction of neighborhood and downtown streets. Another borrowing of this size may be fiscally prudent in several years.

The proposed FY05 program consists of the following:

A. Street Maintenance Program--\$200,000.

- \$20,000. Overlay of Page Street near the IDOT garage including the Water department's driveway approach. This area was partially prepped in FY04 but was not taken to completion.
- \$25,000. Overlay of Somonauk Street from Becker Place to south of Georgjean Court. The developer of the adjacent Reston Ponds subdivision, Wiseman-Hughes, will complete the two east legs of this intersection improvement.
- \$125,000. Overlay of Somonauk Street from Turner Place to Lincoln Street.
- \$30,000. Crack filling (about 20,000 lbs.).
- Alternate: An estimated \$73,000 for about 30,000 square yards of microsurfacing including some portions of Electric Park and concrete streets in older neighborhoods. This would be bid as an alternate. If some savings are achieved with the base bid some of the unallocated Fund 6 reserve can be used to make up any shortfall.

The crack-filling would involve the following streets:

- ✓ Eastgate Drive
- ✓ Oak Lane
- ✓ Pine Street
- ✓ East and West Stonehenge Drive
- ✓ Waterman Street
- ✓ California Street from Waterman Street to High Street
- ✓ Walnut Street from Home Street to State Street
- ✓ Home Street from Terrace Drive to Kishwaukee Drive
- ✓ Municipal Parking Lot at 535 DeKalb Avenue

City Council direction is recommended.

B. Sidewalk Program--\$250,000.

With the approval of the 2003 general obligation bond in April 2003, the City Council allocated \$250,000 for sidewalk replacement and repair. With the aggressive schedule we will be keeping in terms of downtown street repair, the Oakland Drive design and bidding, the street maintenance program, and private development inspections, the City Engineer will not be able to prepare a bid packet for the sidewalk program until the late summer or early fall. However, it is our hope to begin the program this fall, with completion in FY06. As with the annual street maintenance program, the allocation for sidewalk repairs will not stretch very far.

To insure that every ward sees some improvement, the Council might consider a four-way split of the \$250,000 allocation, leaving \$62,500 for each ward. If this option is pursued, the two Aldermen from each ward could collaborate on a short list of priority areas within their ward. The City Engineer or Public Works Superintendent could sift the aldermanic lists into a detailed, city-wide master list of actual square footages that could be repaired within each ward's budget and at the per-square-foot price then current. Then, the City staff could proceed to bid.

The Council may wish to discuss if they would also like to use the bond proceeds to install sidewalk where none has existed in older neighborhoods, in addition to the repair and replacement of existing sidewalk sections. Direction on this issue is also welcome.

C. Consideration of a Closed Session to Discuss Collective Bargaining Matters.

14. APPOINTMENTS

15. ADJOURNMENT