
SYCAMORE CITY COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF MARCH 1, 2004

ROLL CALL

Mayor John Swedberg called the meeting to order and Clerk Candy Smith called the roll. Those Alderpersons present were: Alan Bauer, Terry Kessler, Andrew Larson, Barbara Leach, Cheryl Maness, Pete Paulsen, Chuck Stowe and Janice Tripp.

INVOCATION

Pastor Dan Stovall of Sycamore Baptist Church gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion

Alderperson Larson moved to approve the agenda and Alderperson Leach seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

Mayor Swedberg called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderpersons present voted aye. Motion carried 8 - 0.

AUDIENCE TO VISITORS

Pastor Dan Stovall of Sycamore Baptist Church said they worship in one of the oldest structures in the City. He commended the Fire and Police Departments for their great response to the fire at St. John's Church. Pastor Stovall asked the Fire Department to inspect all historical buildings in order to preserve the City's heritage.

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 in the amount of \$248,711.75.

Motion

Alderperson Stowe moved to approve the Consent Agenda and Alderperson Maness seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

Mayor Swedberg called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderpersons present voted aye. Motion carried 8 - 0.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND BILLS.

- A. Introduction of Jim Ward, Sycamore's newest Paid-On-Call Firefighter.

Chief Riddle introduced Jim Ward and said he lives in Foxpointe with his wife and three sons. Clerk Smith gave the Oath of Office to POC Firefighter Ward.

- B. Consideration of a Presentation by the Sycamore Economic Development Commission.

Sycamore Economic Development Commission member and Alderperson Pete Paulsen introduced Joe Munro, owner of American Flooring, who purchased and renovated the former Johnson's Men's Wear building. He said Mr. Munro has done business east of here for years and decided to add a second location here in Sycamore.

Mr. Munro thanked the Council for the opportunity to talk about his business and thanked the Chamber of Commerce and other committees responsible for helping promote the downtown. He said he started as a tile installer in 1988 and opened his first location in 1996 in Warrenville. He said his staff has many years of experience in the industry. He said his company deals with flooring and natural stone products for countertops for kitchens and bathrooms. Mr. Munro said they do the fabrication at his shop in Warrenville.

Mr. Munro said he chose Sycamore to open his second location because he loved the area and wanted to locate downtown. He said he purchased an old building and researched old photos to renovate the building in order to restore some history. Mr. Munro said he and his family have lived in the community for the last 12 years and he and his family are active in church, cub scouts, and sports.

Alderperson Bauer said he received a complaint regarding a weekly shopping paper being thrown around town. Manager Nicklas said that the Chronicle puts out that paper and asked their reporter in the audience to carry that message to her paper.

Alderperson Paulsen said that CCI closed on 15 acres in Sycamore Prairie Business Park and the City is looking forward to their coming to town. Mr. Paulsen said he collected stuffed animals for the Fire and Police Departments to give to children using their services.

REPORT OF OFFICERS

Manager – Bill Nicklas reported that the Public Safety Building project contractor Ringling Johnson will be starting work this week and should complete the project in 90 days. He said the City received a letter from ComEd regarding notice of tree trimming. Mr. Nicklas said he would present the budget in a few weeks and it contains the new position of Assistant Chief. He said was bringing this up now because he is proposing to solicit internally and the selection will logically come from the lieutenant rank which may result in some retirements in the Fire Department. He said he needed time for that possible retiree to give notice to the Fire Pension Board to determine it as a pensionable case. He said he would like prior authorization to post for the new position with a commitment by Council to follow through with the position.

Mayor Swedberg asked what the hire date would be and Mr. Nicklas said May 1, 2004, with a decision needed prior to that time. Alderperson Larson asked about the steps for hiring and Mr. Nicklas said he will post for the position, allow 10 days for response, form an interview committee, interview interested employees, then make a recommendation to Council within 30 days.

Motion

Alderperson Larson moved to post the Assistant Fire Chief position and Alderperson Bauer seconded the motion.

Alderperson Bauer offered to sit on the interview committee.

Voice Vote

Mayor Swedberg called for a voice vote to approve the motion. Seven Alderpersons voted aye with Alderperson Kessler abstaining. Motion carried 7 – 0 - 1.

Engineer – John Brady – no report

Building & Zoning –Lyle Doty – no report

Treasurer – Ken Mundy – no report

Fire Chief – Bill Riddle reported that Firefighter Reynolds is home and is riding an exercise bike in physical therapy.

Police Chief – Don Thomas – no report

Public Works Supt. – Fred Busse - no report

Water Supt. – Ebe Smith asked for a Sewer and Water Committee meeting March 15 at 6:30 p.m. to discuss secondary meters.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance – no report

Ordinance – no report

Police & Fire – no report

Sewer & Water Chairperson Janice Tripp scheduled a meeting March 15 at 6:30 p.m.

Streets & Walks – no report

PUBLIC HEARING

None

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.**

Manager Nicklas said this ordinance would change the hours for outdoor restaurant liquor sales on Friday and Saturday to one hour before closing. Alderperson Maness said she thought that also pertained to the weekdays and Mayor Swedberg recommended holding this over so the Ordinance Committee could meet again. Alderperson Maness said they had discussed keeping the outdoor dining open later during the week because of baseball teams getting in late.

Lance Klinger, Ski's Pub, 1001 W. State Street, said they had decided to keep the outdoor garden open until closing Sunday through Thursday and until 1 hour before closing Friday and Saturday.

Alderperson Tripp said they had decided to allow the outdoor garden open until closing during the week days and until 1 hour before closing on weekends because of the late hour.

Motion

Aldersperson Paulsen moved to hear Ordinance 2003.95 on first and second reading and Aldersperson Maness seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

Mayor Swedberg called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderspersons present voted aye. Motion carried 8 - 0.

Motion

Aldersperson Paulsen moved to approve Ordinance 2003.95 and Aldersperson Larson seconded the motion.

Aldersperson Kessler said she has heard from a couple of residents regarding parking and she said the police will do their best to assure that parking in the surrounding neighborhood is legal. She commended Mr. Klinger for his offer to pick up debris in the neighborhood.

Voice Vote

Mayor Swedberg called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderspersons present voted aye. Motion carried 8 - 0.

RESOLUTIONS

None

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

Manager Nicklas said at this time of year for the past four years they have received a preliminary proposal to help fund some of the Chamber activities to attract consumers to the area. He said that 3 years ago the City entered into a 3-year contract granting the Chamber \$45,000 of Hotel/Motel dollars. He said the Chamber Executive Board has directed Director Rose Tremml to ask Council for an extension of that grant with a different focus. Mr. Nicklas said the grant monies would be used to help the City market and develop commercial areas. He said that the Chamber would focus on filling space downtown and expanding their presence on the web.

Rose Tremml, Director of Sycamore Chamber of Commerce, said the Chamber is dedicated to providing economic and community development assistance to the City. She said they would like to continue a partnership with the City to continue enticing businesses to Sycamore that would complement existing businesses. She said they have fielded many prospective business phone calls and in response have created a marketing packet. She said they created a seasonal marketing campaign to place in regional and state tourism guides as well as the kiosk downtown. Ms. Tremml said they mailed 1600 packets this past year. She said this is all made possible through the financial leadership of Council. She said 7 months ago they hired Beth Helton as Discover Sycamore Coordinator and she will take an aggressive approach to economic and community development. Ms. Tremml said they talked with business owners who said they need tourists to support their businesses to produce revenue for the City.

Mayor Swedberg asked about the website. Ms. Tremml said at their Executive Board retreat it was agreed that prospective businesses many times shop the web for locations. She said the Chamber's website needed improvement and should be linked to the City's and to DCEDC's. She said part of the grant would be used to improve the website and they would use some of the money for an ad campaign, kiosk posters, and banners for

downtown. She said they need to track the effectiveness of their advertising to make sure the marketing is working.

Alderson Stowe said he thought the City was phasing out the \$15,000 for the downtown coordinator position. Ms. Trembl said she needs that position because she cannot do all the work herself and the Chamber does not have the money to fund it totally. Alderson Stowe said maybe they should choose between website improvement and the coordinator position and asked the estimate for website improvement. Ms. Trembl said it would be about \$6,500.

Mr. Nicklas said he supports the extension because this is a cheap way to attend to areas the City does not have time or funding to cover. He said this is the commercial equivalent to DE CDC's industrial attraction.

Chamber Director Trembl said very few Chambers participate in Economic Development and Tourism without partnering with a city.

Alderson Leach said she worked on the Chamber's website and it needs to be totally reconstructed. Ms. Leach asked if the \$6,500 would also cover training and Ms. Trembl said it would.

Alderson Stowe said the City does not have the staff for this, but \$45,000 would go towards an economic development director or planner. Director Trembl said most economic development directors make much more than \$45,000 and that would leave nothing for marketing pieces.

Alderson Bauer asked if the \$15,000 for the position would go away, would the position go away and Ms. Trembl said yes it would. Alderson Bauer said the agreement was that the Chamber would absorb this position after the 3-year agreement with the City. Manager Nicklas said the position saves him from cold calls and fiscally speaking it makes sense to fund the Chamber. Mr. Nicklas said he thought the City would always want to help the Chamber promote our town.

Mayor Swedberg said he would like to see a report of zip codes tracking the tourists doing business in Sycamore. Ms. Trembl said most of the businesses couldn't afford electronic tracking, but many track through credit card receipts and even guest books.

Alderson Leach said this seems like a logical use of Hotel/Motel dollars.

Motion

Alderson Leach moved to fund \$45,000 to Sycamore Chamber of Commerce through Hotel/Motel tax and Alderson Paulsen seconded the motion.

Alderson Larson asked Mr. Nicklas if this was budgeted and Mr. Nicklas said he had identified it.

Alderson Kessler asked Director Trembl what percentage \$45,000 was of their budget and she said about 18%.

Tom Carls, Carls Fargo & Stratford Inn said that he thought the Chamber was doing a good job of getting people from out of town to Sycamore and he felt improving their website would be a good electronic resource.

Voice Vote

Mayor Swedberg called for a voice vote to approve the motion. Six Aldersons voted aye with Alderson Stowe voting nay. Motion carried 7 - 1.

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

Engineer Brady said the street maintenance program would consist of \$170,000 resurfacing, \$30,000 crack filling, and an alternate of \$73,000 for microsurfacing some streets in Electric Park.

Manager Nicklas said that \$250,000 of the 2003 general obligation bond has been allocated for sidewalk replacement, repair, and placement where it is nonexistent. He said he needed direction how they could judiciously divide this amount among the 4 wards. Mr. Nicklas said he had heard from some Alderpersons that there is a need for sidewalks in some older neighborhoods where none ever was placed.

Mayor Swedberg asked if placing sidewalks where they had not existed would result in problems such as plantings and mailboxes. Manager Nicklas said they would need to be selective to get the biggest impact for the investment.

Alderperson Larson asked for estimated cost per linear feet and Mayor Swedberg said about \$5.50 per square foot to remove and replace.

Alderperson Maness said there were some well-traveled areas in town like along Somonauk near the Grand Victorian that she thought should take priority. Mayor Swedberg said they could identify where the greatest need is like near schools and places like the Grand Victorian.

Alderperson Maness suggested encouraging homeowners to take advantage of the yearly sidewalk program.

Alderperson Tripp said it would be unfair to divide the money four ways because Turner Addition has no sidewalks.

Alderperson Bauer suggested following Rochelle's program by having Public Works take the initiative to create a master list.

Mr. Nicklas said they could give Council a staff wish list that notates wards, costs, and quantities. He said the program will unfold later in the year because Bethany Road must be started this year.

Alderperson Kessler said she agrees that safety issues of children and seniors should be addressed and should be proportionate based on need and health and safety of the citizens.

Alderperson Paulsen said they could stretch the dollars if they encourage resident participation.

Alderperson Tripp said the City could rework the percentage we share with the resident.

Mayor Swedberg asked if they should recalculate the dangerous sidewalks or all of them.

Building Commissioner/Zoning Officer Lyle Doty said they should consider both because a free program may result in fairness issues. He suggested upping our participation percentage to encourage repairs.

Mr. Nicklas said he would have a list at the next meeting.

C. Consideration of an Administration Request for a Closed Session to Discuss Land Acquisition and Collective Bargaining Matters.

Motion

Aldersperson Larson moved to go into Closed Session at 8:45 p.m. and Aldersperson Leach seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

Mayor Swedberg called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderspersons voted aye. Motion carried 8 -0.

Aldersperson Kessler excused herself from Closed Session.

Motion

Aldersperson Bauer moved to return to Open Session at 9:15 p.m. and Aldersperson Leach seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

Mayor Swedberg called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderspersons voted aye. Motion carried 7 -0.

APPOINTMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Aldersperson Stowe moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. and Aldersperson Tripp seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

Mayor Swedberg called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderspersons present voted aye. Motion carried 7 - 0.

Approve:

Mayor – John L. Swedberg

Attest:

City Clerk – Candy Smith