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**SYCAMORE CITY COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING**  
**MINUTES OF JANUARY 17, 2005**

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**ROLL CALL**

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

**INVOCATION**

Pastor William Mills of Bethel Assembly of God gave the invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion**

Alderperson Kessler moved to add a Closed Session for the discussion of personnel and Alderperson Bauer seconded the motion.

**Voice Vote**

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

**Motion**

Alderperson Larson moved to approve the agenda with the addition of the Closed Session and Alderperson Leach seconded the motion.

**Voice Vote**

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

**AUDIENCE TO VISITORS**

Todd Hendrey said he has been a member of Chamber's Discover Group for several years and said they do a lot of good things for Sycamore like the Block Party that pulls people downtown and is a family experience. He said he would like to see the partnership between the City and the Chamber continue and asked Council to support the 3-year contract.

Ed Kuhn, Banner-up Signs, 1170 E. State Street, said he is also a Geneva Chamber member and the close working relationship between the City of Geneva and the Chamber of Commerce is what keeps downtown Geneva vibrant. He said the Discover Group and the Chamber help keep the downtown alive in Sycamore, too and asked Council to support the 3-year contract.

Jesus Romero, Taxco Restaurant, said it is important to keep the downtown charming and alive through the work of the Discover Group. Mr. Romero asked Council to support the 3-year contract.

Bob Fleetwood, Sycamore, said he has been retired from the Sycamore Fire Department for 15 years and asked the City to give senior citizens a brake on their water bills.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of the Minutes for the City Council Meeting of January 3, 2005;

- B. Payment of the Bills for January 17, 2005 in the amount of \$329,803.52;
- C. Plan Commission Minutes for the Meeting of December 13, 2004.

### **Motion**

Aldersperson Stowe moved to approve the Consent Agenda and Aldersperson Tripp seconded the motion.

### **Voice Vote**

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

## **PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND BILLS.**

- A. Presentation by the Sycamore Economic Development Commission. Commissioner Jim Huntley will introduce Ron Floit, an owner of Floit Ready Mix Concrete Company, who will give a brief overview of his firm's history in the City of Sycamore.

Ron Floit said his father started the business 50 years ago when he dug gravel on his farm and sold it to the local road commissioners. He said in 1961 his father started a ready mix company and in 1966 bought Sycamore Ready Mix where Floit's remains today. They have 30 ready mix trucks with 40 employees and have a second site in Marengo. Floit's manufactures concrete and truck it to job sites. Concrete is used in the housing, farming and commercial industries. He said their product is unique to other industries because it is delivered in an unfinished state. He said 10 years ago they retooled their business in order to stay competitive. Mr. Floit said that Sycamore is a great town to grow up in, raise a family in and do business in.

## **REPORT OF OFFICERS**

Manager – Bill Nicklas thanked the Public Works Department for their work during last week's 30-hour snow storm. He said there were complaints regarding the snow on the streets, but because of the steady snow Public Works kept up with arterials and emergency routes as best they could. Mr. Nicklas thanked the Water Department for their work with watermain breaks that occurred over the past two weekends. Mr. Nicklas said the staff will invite all candidates on a bus tour of the City Departments at a time and date to be determined.

Engineer – John Brady said he will complete the review of Hickory Terrace Subdivision later this week. He said he will put plans together for bids for the Well #9 project by March. Engineer Brady said he will be looking at engineering standards for the February Plan Commission meeting.

Building & Zoning –Lyle Doty – no report

Fire Chief – Bill Riddle said he will present his report under Consideration items.

Treasurer – Ken Mundy said December financials were at the 67% benchmark and revenue is tracking at 70% and general funds expenses were on track at 67%. He said that water and sewer expenses are up because of debt service but will fall into line by the end of the year. Treasurer Mundy said that Fire and Police pension portfolios are up on the equity side. Mr. Mundy also said that support for the 3-year contract with the Chamber of Commerce is in direct correlation with the sales tax and Home Rule tax.

Public Works Supt. – Fred Busse said he was proud that his employees only worked 14 to 15 hours before resting during the heavy snowfall. He said that 21 mailboxes were knocked down and it is the impact of the snow and not the equipment that knocks them down. Superintendent Busse said they will be changing the holiday banners to new historic banners Tuesday and the Christmas lights will remain on the trees until the end

of February when they are pruned. Mr. Busse said the stoplight at State and Somonauk will be repaired when the new parts arrive.

Mayor Swedberg said the tractor needed to move the Santa House will not be available until the weather is warmer. He said he will hopefully have it moved by Thursday morning.

Water Supt. – Ebe Smith reported there was a watermain break January 7 at 10:30 p.m. on North Cross and they worked until 5:00 a.m. He said 2 hours later there was another break. January 15<sup>th</sup> there was a main break on DeKalb Avenue and again on January 16 on Meadow Lane. Superintendent Smith distributed pictures charting each break that they compile in a reference book. He thanked the Water Department employees and Public Works for their work.

Mayor Swedberg said that repairing watermains is dangerous work and thanked the Water Department for their dedication.

Police Chief – Don Thomas deferred his report to an agenda item.

## **REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

Finance – no report

Ordinance – no report

Police & Fire – no report

Sewer & Water – Chairperson Tripp said they met earlier to discuss water rates and will meet again February 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

Streets & Walks – Chairperson Paulsen asked residents to refrain from blowing snow into the streets.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

None

## **ORDINANCES**

### **A. Ordinance No. 2004.70—An Ordinance Concerning the recommendation of the Plan Commission With Regard to the Petition of Kevin Wynn for a Final Plat for the Prairie Ridge Townhouse Development.**

Manager Nicklas said Mr. Wynn’s preliminary development plan showed the following features:

- Nine, 4-unit buildings for a total of 36 units on a 5.25-acre site, or a gross density of 7.17 units per acre.
- The units are served by privately owned and maintained streets.
- A total of 27 guest parking spaces are provided, or .75 spaces per unit. The minimum expectation has recently been around .75 spaces per unit (e.g. Roncon; Castle, etc.).
- A detention area is located at the northwest corner of the property.
- Sidewalks are provided along the Coltonville Road frontage.
- No open space for organized recreation is shown.
- There is a 25-foot setback from the west and east parcel lines.

Mr. Nicklas said the final plat conforms to the preliminary plat and the easements for public and private utility extensions (other than the large natural gas easement running through the middle of the property) are automatically assured anywhere within the common area, which includes all the land area outside the shaded building lots. Mr. Nicklas said the site is actually within the DeKalb Community Unit School

District No.428 and any impact fees will be paid to the DeKalb School District. He said the final plat must note that the site is within the DeKalb School District.

**Motion**

Aldersperson Larson moved to hear Ordinance 2004.70 on first and second reading and Aldersperson Tripp seconded the motion.

**Voice Vote**

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

**Motion**

Aldersperson Maness moved to approve Ordinance 2004.70 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.

**B. Ordinance No. 2004.71—An Ordinance Approving a Contract Between the City of Sycamore and the Sycamore Chamber of Commerce.**

Manager Nicklas said he recommended Council's approval.

Mayor Swedberg said he also supports this agreement.

**Motion**

Aldersperson Larson moved to hear Ordinance 2004.71 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 voted aye. Motion carried 8 - 0.

**Motion**

Aldersperson Paulsen moved to approve Ordinance 2004.71 and Aldersperson Tripp seconded the motion.

Aldersperson Kessler commended the Chamber for the increased activity downtown and their new website.

Aldersperson Paulsen said that Discover Group put together a nice promotion for his company's holiday party.

**Voice Vote**

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

**RESOLUTIONS**

None

**CONSIDERATIONS**

**A. Consideration of the Fire Chief's Recommendation to Fill a Vacant Fire Lieutenant Position.**

Manager Nicklas said Chief Riddle recommended filling the vacant Fire Lieutenant position through internal promotion and hiring a replacement firefighter before May 1, 2005. Mr. Nicklas said on-the-job injuries resulted

in reduced manpower for much of the year and operating strains had to be offset by fill-ins and acting officers which lead to higher overtime allocations.

Fire Chief Riddle said he tried to get along with 3 lieutenants but because of injuries and the overtime situation they need to get manned back up to a department force of 22.

Mayor Swedberg asked Chief Riddle to explain the duties of the lieutenants.

Chief Riddle said lieutenants act as company officers and are in charge of the station, are scene incident commanders, and have administrative duties. He said 1 lieutenant is in charge of EMS, one is in charge of training, and one is in charge of scheduling.

Manager Nicklas said this is the first year the City has maintained a 5-person shift and this will allow us to maintain that.

Mayor Swedberg asked if they would promote a firefighter from the lieutenant list and go to the Fire and Police Commission to fill the hire.

### **Motion**

Aldersperson Kessler moved to holdover the consideration to fill the position of fire lieutenant until the next Council meeting and Aldersperson Maness seconded the motion.

Aldersperson Bauer asked Aldersperson Kessler why she wanted to hold this over and she said she wanted to review the overtime and the lieutenant list.

### **Voice Vote**

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

## **B. Consideration of the Fire Department's Feasibility Study for a Second Fire Station.**

Manager Nicklas said Council had considered the prospect of a second fire station back in 2001 when the Fire Department's strategic plan was presented and was tacitly assumed when the Council accepted a parcel of land for such a station and other possible public facilities.

Chief Riddle said calls are increasing and a number of multiple calls are occurring. He said the trend of call history is an increase of calls at 3% per year. He said response times are running about 70% under the 6-minute benchmark for EMS and 10-minute benchmark for fires. He said they need to maintain those response standards and should stay within a distance of the optimal call radius of 1.5 miles. He said his department is outgrowing living, storage, and parking space. Chief Riddle said the site given by a developer was given in 1999 with a 10-year window to build a station. He said they are looking at an 8,000 square foot building and firefighters will need to be hired, but no additional fire trucks or ambulances will be required.

Aldersperson Bauer asked how they would utilize 8,000 square feet and Chief Riddle said they would need 3 bays, living quarters, and a utility room.

Aldersperson Kessler asked if this would be the primary station and Chief Riddle said the DeKalb Avenue station would continue to be the primary station.

Mayor Swedberg asked what Chief Riddle would recommend as the next step and he said they needed direction for the conceptual design study.

Manager Nicklas said if the first of the 3 questions of why, what, and when was answered then they need to proceed. He said that his very preliminary speculation of a building of 8,000 square feet with 2 bays and modest living space may run about \$1 to \$1.2 million and site improvements about \$1.3 to \$1.4 million. Mr. Nicklas said there is \$2 million in reserve right now, but the greatest challenge is finding the operating revenue for the employees.

Mayor Swedberg said he has seen a need for this station for years and encouraged Council to take the next step. He said the site given by the developer is a logical place to build the station because we are building out in that direction.

Aldersperson Bauer asked if that is the desired location and Chief Riddle said it is.

Aldersperson Maness said she thought that location was better than the previously considered location near Mt. Hunger Road.

Aldersperson Kessler asked if the Police Department needed a satellite office out there as well.

Police Chief Thomas said they did not need another office; he would prefer another officer.

#### **Motion**

Aldersperson Bauer moved to proceed with the feasibility study 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.

Manager Nicklas said the next step will be to set up a committee to deal with requests for architectural consultants.

### **C. Consideration of a Police Department Report on a Recent Citizen Survey.**

Mayor Swedberg said the results of this survey prove once again why Sycamore is one of the greatest communities to live in the United States. He said the Police Department plays a big role in making people feel safe in their own homes.

Police Chief Thomas said when he first started he noticed that the Department's surveys needed standardization for comparison purposes. He said he and then intern, Brian Gregory, revised the survey to best reflect how the citizens felt about safety, crimes, and the performance of the Police Department. Chief Thomas said this year Intern Ryan Kelly performed the survey and compiled the results. He said he was very proud of the results of the survey. He said paradoxically the citizens feel safe yet worry about crime. Chief Thomas said he was proud that the ratings for response rates, enforcement, and professionalism have gone up. He said that people want to see improvement in patrolling the neighborhoods and traffic enforcement. He said there is an increase of 50% in the total events including traffic stops, traffic tickets, lockouts, taking reports, walk-ins, taking fingerprints and that was accomplished without any increase in personnel. He said that written warnings are now mandated any time a police officer stops anybody in order to measure the amount of possible racial or bias law enforcement. Chief Thomas said the Police Department needs a minimum staffing of 3 officers per shift and currently they are working with 2.5 officers per shift. He asked to increase staffing by 1 over the next 12 months.

#### **D. Consideration of a Preliminary Administration Report on the Proposed FY2005-2006 General Fund Budget.**

Manager Nicklas said he was looking for Council direction on the material in the background to be able to bring this back in a more polished version in February. He gave the principal assumptions on the revenue side as:

1. No new taxes.
2. Water fee increases will be proposed but will be revenue neutral, that is, reductions in household fees will be offset by modest increases in commercial and industrial fees.
3. As in each of the last eight years, the increase in the annual City property tax levy has been constrained to result in a decrease in the City's property tax rate. The general portion of the levy (including debt service) will be \$1,514,008 or \$37,883 more than FY04, but \$10,786 less than the general levy in 2001, owing to substantial increases in pension obligations over recent years.
4. The per capita local share of state income tax proceeds is expected to rise to about \$75.00, an increase of 3% over the FY05 budget level of \$72.80 per capita, and slightly above the FY2003 budget level of \$73 per capita. This assumes that the state legislature does not change the formula for this important revenue-sharing program in the Spring legislative session. It also assumes that the City's gross revenues will increase after a special census sets our official population at about 14,000 or higher. The City has applied for a special census in 2005 that will presumably start generating higher gross monthly allocations after December 31, 2005.
5. The former Kmart building is not expected to generate measurable sales tax revenue in FY06.
6. Based on year-to-date trends and a month-by-month comparison with the past three fiscal years, our overall sales and use tax revenues are projected to rise by about \$232,000 (5.75%) over FY05 levels. This amount represents about 36% of the projected increase in General Fund revenues in FY06.
7. Annexation fees will fall by 35% below the FY05 budget (\$100,000). The projected FY06 annexation fee revenue of \$65,000 will be \$495,509 lower than the actual revenues in FY04. A slowing of new growth may temper the service demands on governmental personnel. However, for the City of Sycamore, a slower pace of growth has the ironic effect of reducing the revenues needed to fund the personnel and small capital items needed to serve a widening geographic area. This short-term negative fiscal impact needs to be offset by substantially greater sales tax revenues or increased revenues from some other local source—neither of which are forecast for FY06.
8. Engineering plan review and inspection fees will increase by about \$35,000 over the projected fiscal-year end total of \$165,000 for FY05. However, this increase is not attributed to new growth. It is assumed that a considerable amount of the time spent by the City Engineer on developments currently underway will not be tallied and billed until after May 1, 2005.
9. The total of all new General Fund dollars is projected to be \$654,018 (+7.28%) over the FY05 General Fund budget of \$8,989,790.

He said that in FY06 the General Fund will spend \$706,287 (7.92%) more than we budgeted in FY05. The principal spending assumptions for the General Fund in FY06 are as follows:

- a) Health insurance costs will increase by \$287,598 (26%) and worker comp costs will increase by \$53,000 or 17.67%.
- b) The \$100,000 incentive payment to Menard's will be paid from the General Fund reserve, and the City will pre-pay the FY07 (and last) installment from the same source.
- c) The street maintenance allocation in the Public Works budget (731-8316) will be reduced from \$150,000 to \$100,000 with the reduction offset by an additional \$50,000 allocation from the Capital Fund (06-8316) to maintain the annual budget of \$200,000 for crack-filling, alley repair, and minor re-surfacing projects.

- d) An additional \$100,000 will be transferred from the General Fund reserve to the Employee Benefit Assistance Fund (Fund 23) in order to fund two large payouts of accrued leave to retirees after May 1. The General Fund Reserve is the appropriate source in that the reserve serves only two essential functions: to provide for accrued leave obligations of the City and to provide for emergency operations or other special, one-time capital outlays that would otherwise bear on local taxpayers.
- e) A new police officer will be hired after May 1. Presently, the department operates with only two patrol officers on duty over 50% of the time. This hire will constitute a net increase in shift strength, but it would take two additional police officers to ensure that three patrol officers would be on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- f) An assistant city engineer will be hired after May 1 to assist John Brady in his myriad duties;
- g) If the Council concurs, the fire lieutenant position left vacant by Cary Niewold's promotion to assistant fire chief last spring will be filled by a promotion from the firefighter ranks in late January 2005. If the resulting firefighter vacancy is filled at the same time, there will theoretically be 22 shift personnel—the level we aimed to achieve with the three new hires in FY05. However, the absence of one firefighter on an extended medical leave will probably make for an effective force level of 21 for much of the 2005 calendar year. This adjustment is necessary. In FY05, firefighters have “acted up” an average of 14 days per month at overtime rates of pay. In addition, injuries of varying duration sidelined nine firefighters in 2004, adding to overtime costs. With the proposed promotion and replacement hiring, the average acting days should fall to about 5 per month (owing to scheduled days off by the fire lieutenants). No additional firefighter hire is funded for FY06 at this writing.
- h) Other FY06 hiring priorities—a laborer, a second police officer, and an additional firefighter—are not supportable by the projected FY06 General Fund revenues at this writing. If grant monies are found to offset a major portion of the cost of the firefighter or the police officer and if revenue trends brighten, we might be able to consider additional hires during the FY06 fiscal year.
- i) wage and salary increases will incorporate union contractual increases and management pay increases;
- j) Commodities and contractual services are generally frozen at FY04 levels, with the exception of upward revisions to meet our insurance requirements (noted in the General Fund Support budget), utility costs, etc.
- k) The City's public safety dispatch costs (710-8344) will be \$505,000 (+1%).

Mr. Nicklas said an adjustment to the tiered water fee schedule is being considered by the Water and Sewer Committee, but should not significantly affect the overall revenues in the Water Fund.

Mr. Nicklas said regarding the Sewer Fund no fee increases or adjustments in the sewer fee schedule are proposed. He said that before the end of FY05, Superintendent Busse and Engineer Brady will have circulated a request for qualifications for a consultancy contract to help the City project future system capacity fees and option for plant expansion.

Mayor Swedberg asked about development fees and Mr. Nicklas said they are due at the time of final platting. Mayor Swedberg suggested reviewing the fees for those annexations requiring the least demand for services.

Aldersperson Stowe said the Police Department certainly needs extra help and he asked if they were pursuing grants. Mr. Nicklas said there is not much available out there, but they are searching.

Police Chief Thomas said the COPS program is over and they have applied for the School Resource Officer grant, but no police department in Illinois got a grant last year. He said that most of the money that used to go to local programs is now going to federal programs.

Aldersperson Stowe asked if they could plug in the cost of development to the Police Department into the financial study being done.

Aldersperson Tripp said they should be bidding for street maintenance now in order to get better prices.

Mayor Swedberg said it looked like the consensus of Council was to proceed as written.

**C. Consideration of a Closed Session to Discuss Personnel.**

**Motion**

Aldersperson Larson moved to go into Closed Session 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 voted aye. Motion carried 8 - 0.

**Motion**

Aldersperson Larson moved to return to Open Session at 9:45 p.m. and Aldersperson Maness seconded the motion.

**Voice Vote**

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

**APPOINTMENTS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion**

Aldersperson Stowe moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 p.m. and Aldersperson Bauer seconded the motion.

**Voice Vote**

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

Approve:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor – John L. Swedberg

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk – Candy Smith