
SYCAMORE CITY COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 21, 2005

ROLL CALL

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

INVOCATION

Pastor Steve Persson of the First 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 7 - 0.

AUDIENCE TO VISITORS

Julie Brannon, 832 DeKalb Avenue, Pumpkin Festival President, thanked the City for their help and guidance in another successful Pumpkin Fest. She specifically thanked Council representative Alderperson Barbara Leach and Police Department representative Lieutenant Cary Singer. She said the Pumpkin Festival Committee represents 47 not-for-profit organizations in DeKalb County that make thousands of dollars as well as the local businesses that benefit from all the consumers who come to town to enjoy the activities.

Mayor Swedberg thanked the Pumpkin Fest Committee for their work year-round.

Peter Barick, 433 High Street, spoke against developers swapping cash for land regarding park space. He expressed concern that the recent impending agreement among the Park District and two developers that swapped cash for park land violated City Code 10-3-5-4 in fact and spirit that the Council approved those two developments. He said Mayor Swedberg approved of the shell game. Mr. Barick asked the Council to reexamine the matter of impact fees for development dedicated park space that is being bargained away in an unfair manner.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of the Minutes for the City Council Meeting of February 7, 2005;
- B. Payment of the Bills for February 21, 2005 in the amount of \$897,984.24;
- C. Plan Commission Minutes for January 10, 2005.

Motion

Alderperson Bauer moved to approve the Consent Agenda and Alderperson Larson seconded the motion.

Voice Vote

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

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND BILLS.

- A. Presentation by the Sycamore Economic Development Commission. Commissioner Michelle Schulz will introduce Andy Morreale, owner of Energym at 1715 DeKalb Avenue, who will give a brief overview of the programs and services offered by his establishment.

Andy Morreale said Energym has been in business for 18 and was formerly known as Northern Illinois Academy of Gymnastics. He said they offer activities for all ages of children including gymnastics, swimming, dance, and now tae kwon do. He said the gymnastics starts for 18 month-olds up to high school age. Mr. Morreale said they have prenatal swim classes to help ease labor and the children swim lessons are for learning and not for competition. The dance program is also not competitive, but teaches kids to move and have fun. He said their newest program is tae kwon do. He said there are about 1200 kids in programs each week. Mr. Morreale said they also offer birthday parties and parents night out. He said the City of Sycamore has been great to work with.

- B. Proclamation Declaring February 23, 2005 Rotary International Day in the City of Sycamore.

Mayor Swedberg read the proclamation.

Alderperson Kessler asked about the sidewalk project and Mr. Nicklas said last week he hired a local engineer to establish quantities so he can put together a bid packet. He said the priorities would be to fill voids on school routes and in commercial districts. He said he hoped to have some data for Council the second meeting in March.

Alderperson Kessler asked if in order avoid gaps in future development they might need to create an ordinance.

Mr. Nicklas said in newer subdivisions the policy has been to have the lot purchaser install the sidewalk. He said the gaps are transitory and not necessarily on paths to school. He said the problem with placing a sidewalk before the building is completed is the heavy equipment crosses those sidewalks and can cause damage. He said maybe at a certain point toward the end of a buildout sidewalks must be installed.

Alderperson Kessler asked if 80 – 90% buildout would require all sidewalks installed.

Mr. Nicklas said the first steps of the process would be through the Plan Commission for a zoning provision.

Alderperson Kessler asked about the public notification cable channel.

Mr. Nicklas said we now have access to the government access channel to run a 30-second emergency message on all channels, but do not have the means for the public events and information channel.

Mayor Swedberg said he asked the cable representative to come up with dollar options for that type of channel.

Mr. Nicklas said he spoke with Chris Nelson last week and he just about has those options ready.

Aldersperson Kessler asked about the stop light at the Middle School.

Mr. Nicklas said Engineer Brady is at a conference for continued education, but he said the utilities had more work to do.

REPORT OF OFFICERS

Manager – Bill Nicklas said they will discuss capital improvements tonight and street maintenance at the next meeting.

Engineer – John Brady - no report

Building & Zoning –Lyle Doty reported that the new plumbing inspector was working out well.

Fire Chief – Bill Riddle promoted Shaun Penn to Lieutenant. He said Shaun joined the Fire Department in 1996 and is one of the original seven paramedics, is on the technical rescue team, precepts new paramedics, and is instructor for the KEC classes. He said Shaun is a member of the U.S. Army Reserve and served 8 months in 2002 in Afghanistan. Clerk Smith swore Shaun Penn in and Lieutenant Penn's wife, Carshone, pinned on his lieutenant pin.

Treasurer – Ken Mundy said the January Financials were at the 75% benchmark with revenue at 76% and expenses at 65%. He said the interest income is less than it should be but will approach budget by the end of the year. He said the Police and Fire Pension Funds are growing at 11% for the first nine months of this fiscal year. Treasurer Mundy said the Midwest Natural History Museum is open and Saturday pulled in 125 people in 4 hours. He said they commented that they shopped downtown, were going to the theater, and eating in our restaurants which will help the City. He talked about a new museum the Farm Bureau, DeKalb Ag, and the Roberts family are working on to go on property adjacent to the Farm Bureau.

Public Works Supt. – Fred Busse said the Street Department would be trimming the downtown trees and removing the lights. He said Gary Egler and John Owens completed a class at the Morton Arboretum about tree-trimming.

Water Supt. – Ebe Smith said Well #5 was taken out of service early last fall to remove sand. He said they are doing static testing to determine levels of radium in the water. He said next week they will test pump to determine where the high concentrations of radium are coming in and if that is diagnosed they will be able to seal off the radium by filling in that portion of the well. He said they will also address the sand issue.

Police Chief – Don Thomas said his Department is prepared for the candidate tour Tuesday night.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance – no report

Ordinance – no report

Police & Fire – no report

Sewer & Water –no report

Streets & Walks – Chairperson Paulsen said they had a brief meeting to approve minutes.

PUBLIC HEARING

None

ORDINANCES

A. Ordinance No. 2004.73—An Ordinance Amending Title 10, “Subdivision Regulations”, Chapter 3, “Design Standards,” By Revising Section 5, “Criteria for Cash Contribution In Lieu of Dedication of Park Sites,” of the City Code of the City of Sycamore, Illinois. First and Second Reading.

Manager Nicklas said the Park District Director David Peek and two Park Board members were in the audience.

Larry Steczo, Park Board President, said the Park Board passed its Comprehensive Plan last fall and at the last meeting they passed 4 to 1 the recommendation to move forward with the impact fee increase. He said the last 10 years the Park District has been proactive in acquiring additional space to accommodate the increase in residents. Mr. Steczo said the dissenting vote is not representative of the Park Board and the letter that person submitted was a betrayal and did not serve the residents at large, but served special interest groups.

Aldersperson Bauer asked the make-up of the group that did their Comprehensive Plan and Mr. Steczo said they hired a firm.

Aldersperson Maness asked a question for Aldersperson Stowe in his absence. She asked if these figures would be enough and Mr. Steczo said they would be satisfied with them now.

Ken Andersen, 680 Hopkins Lane, said they all had received his letter and took offense at Mr. Steczo’s word “betrayal.” He said he thought he was a steward of the public trust and felt he was speaking for the public in substantiating that trust when they elected him.

David Peek, Park District Executive Director, said their Comprehensive Plan was a little different flavor in that they did not go out and seek individual citizen’s responses. He said they interfaced with other governmental entities and incorporated input from user groups.

Motion

Aldersperson Maness moved to hear Ordinance 2004.73 on first and second reading and Aldersperson Paulsen seconded the motion.

Aldersperson Maness commented that Townsend Wood & Landahl subdivisions did not give land for parks, but gave cash and newer developments are doing both.

Voice Vote

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

Motion

Aldersperson Larson moved to approve Ordinance 2004.73 and Aldersperson Leach 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.

RESOLUTIONS

None

CONSIDERATIONS

A. Consideration of an Administration Recommendation to Award a Contract for the Demolition of a Portion of the Harvester Square Complex.

Manager Nicklas said this was a time sensitive matter and recommended the City front the money and if we receive help from higher levels of government along the way that would be okay. He recommended awarding the contract to the only bidder, Rockford Blacktop Construction Company in the amount of \$168,250.

Joel Barczak, Blumen Gardens' owner, said his employees start the 15th of March and the business is going full bore April 1st.

Motion

Aldersperson Tripp moved to award the contract to Rockford Blacktop Construction Company in the amount of \$168,250 and Aldersperson Paulsen 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.

Mr. Nicklas said the City is ultimately responsible for this property and has been given treat direction by Tom Mangan and his firm.

B. Consideration of an Administration Recommendation To Abate Property Taxes for Fullco Industries.

Manager Nicklas said Fullco Industries is just the kind of niche firm that we would like to locate in Sycamore. He listed some of their information as follows:

- Fullco Industries, Inc. is solely owned by its president, Tom Fuller.
- The firm was established in 1986.
- The firm distributes production parts (mainly high quality fasteners of many types) to industrial firms involved in final production. Customers in search of special parts rely on Fullco to search the world for such components and ship them in a timely fashion. Such a relationship allows Fullco's customers to limit costly inventory and to turn their inventory at a high velocity.
- Fullco's niche has grown steadily with its success in delivering on its contracts. Net sales exceeded \$10.4 million in 2003 and grew approximately 25% in the period December 31, 2001 through December 31, 2003.
- For a growth company, margins are critical. The firm's operating ratios (especially its ratio of costs to sales) are stable; the ratio of current assets to current liabilities or current ratio is rising and in excess of 2:1; the firm's equity position (creditor equity to assets) is strong.
- Estimated sales are \$11,300,000 for 2004 and are projected to increase by 9%-10% each year for the next three years.
- The firm currently employs 22 persons (5 management; 5 department managers; and 12 warehouse personnel). Fullco plans to add 17 new positions over the next five years, including another dozen warehouse personnel, an IT manager, packaging supervisor, inventory manager, customer service representatives, etc.

- The spec building would yield an estimated market value of \$1.65 million once the office space is added within the structure.
- In addition to property tax abatement, the firm has requested a discount or waiver of the City's permit fees, a waiver of the City's sewer and water connection fees, and a fast track for permit approvals.

The City Manager recommended City Council commitment to a three-year 90%/75%/50% package being considered by the County of DeKalb, the Sycamore Library Board, the Cortland Township Board, and the Sycamore Park District.

Mayor Swedberg said this is another good, clean, productive business.

Roger Hopkins, Executive Director of DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation, said the employment numbers projected may be conservative, but are certainly what Sycamore is looking for. He said this company is ready to expand and cannot do that in their current St. Charles location.

Motion

Aldersperson Paulsen moved to bring back in ordinance form the 3-year 90%/75%/50% abatement and Aldersperson Leach seconded the motion.

Aldersperson Maness asked if his motion included waiving permit fees and Aldersperson Paulsen said he did not think Mr. Nicklas was ready for that.

Voice Vote

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

C. Consideration of a Preliminary Report on the Administration's Capital Spending Priorities for FY06

Manager Nicklas said he had presented a 3-year capital project list and said there are not funds for all the 2nd and 3rd year projects and they might need to go out for bond in a couple of years. He said for now they are not looking for any additional borrowed money. He pointed out the highlights of the proposed FY06 capital program as follows:

- \$1,363,719 to bring Well No. 9 on line by the end of the calendar year (low-interest EPA loan);
- \$3,146,000 to complete the reconstruction of Bethany Road from DeKalb Avenue to Peace Road;
- \$850,000 to complete the extension of Oakland Drive;
- \$206,000 for new vehicles and equipment including two replacement patrol cars (\$52,500), a replacement dump truck with plow and spreader (\$80,000), a used SUV for the Assistant Fire Chief (\$20,000), a used SUV for the Assistant Engineer (\$20,000), a third of the cost of a replacement backhoe (\$18,500), and \$15,000 in computer upgrades;
- \$240,000 for public sidewalk repairs; and
- \$200,000 for annual street maintenance.

Mayor Swedberg said it was a very aggressive list and much of the time staff and Council don't get enough credit for what is being done in the older parts of town and this list has item after item showing the City does take care of the older part of town.

Aldersperson Larson said he recently read in the Chronicle that Bill Lorence said DeKalb County does not have the money to widen Peace Road.

Mr. Nicklas said the project in the Chronicle referred to further south from Bethany and Barber Greene.

Mr. Nicklas said the older parts of town are being addressed and don't get much notice. He said almost \$22 million has been committed by the City since 1999. He said almost all of the projects have been financed, or will be financed, by borrowed monies, only \$155,000 is allocated each year from our property tax proceeds to support capital debt service payments, or about \$26.96 per City household.

Motion

Aldersperson Maness moved to approve the list of projects 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.

Aldersperson Maness said it is important for all Alderspersons to contact County Board members, Hastert's office, and Pritchard's office to express concern that the County continue on Peace Road in 2006.

APPOINTMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Aldersperson Leach moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. and Aldersperson Larson 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