
SYCAMORE CITY COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 18, 2006

ROLL CALL

Mayor Ken Mundy called the meeting to order and Clerk Candy Smith called the roll. Those Alderpersons present were: Grace Adee, Alan Bauer, Terry Kessler, Barbara Leach, Cheryl Maness, Pete Paulsen and Chuck Stowe. Alderperson Darren Knuth was absent.

INVOCATION

Mayor Mundy asked for a moment of silent reflection.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion

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

Voice vote

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

AUDIENCE TO VISITORS - None

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of the Minutes for the Regular City Council Meeting of December 4, 2006.
- B. Payment of the Bills for December 18, 2006 in the amount of \$250,087.73.

Motion

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

Voice vote

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

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND BILLS.

Alderperson Bauer said he thought the stoplight at Main & State might be sticking. He said the southbound traffic on Main is getting the left turn arrow for 1.5 minutes and the east bound traffic only gets about 20 seconds of green light.

City Engineer John Brady said he would check into that.

Mayor Mundy said the next meeting would be on Tuesday, January 2, 2006. He distributed a 2006 recap of action the Council has taken.

- A. Introduction of new career firefighter Erik Carlson.

City Clerk swore in Firefighter Carlson. Fire Chief Riddle said that Erik Carlson has been a firefighter in some capacity for the past 10 years. He said he comes to us from Hampshire Fire Department and is a Firefighter II and paramedic.

Public Works Superintendent Fred Busse introduced new laborer Vince Orman who graduated from Sycamore High School and brings 9 years experience with concrete and excavation work. Superintendent Busse also introduced new laborer Andy Siebrasse who graduated from DeKalb High School and worked at Melrose Te-Tops in Cortland for 12 years.

Water Superintendent Ebe Smith introduced new employee Brad Ziegler who graduated from Sycamore High School and brings experience from working for Sycamore Township.

B. Proclamation declaring December 2006 as Drunk and Drugged (3D) Prevention Month in the City of Sycamore.

C. Proclamation honoring Joe Bussone for his outstanding voluntary service to the community of Sycamore, on the occasion of his eightieth birthday.

REPORT OF OFFICERS

Manager – Bill Nicklas reported he is working on revenue projections and the capital wish list. He said he will get some early numbers to Council in January.

Engineer – John Brady said he has started the site engineering for the new fire station on Frantum Drive.

Building & Zoning – Lyle Doty said Ski's State Street Pizza and Mugzzies Pizza opened in December.

Fire Chief – Bill Riddle stated that Wednesday, December 20 a blood drive will be held at the Public Safety Building. He said that Heartland requires 500 pints per day to keep this region running. He also urged the public to send a card or email to someone in the military overseas or to those who are wounded.

Treasurer/Asst. City Manager – Brian Gregory reported the November Treasurer's Report is at the 58.33% benchmark with revenues running at 65.66% and expenses are at 45%. He said that all property taxes have been collected for the year. He also noted that the equities for the Wachovia portfolio for fire and police are reporting good returns over the past two months with fire appreciation at \$150,000 and police appreciation at \$110,000.

Public Works Supt. – Fred Busse said his report was the introduction of the new laborers.

Water Supt. – Ebe Smith reported there was a watermain break early Saturday morning and there was a 2-inch gas main about 2 feet above the watermain and between the gas main and the watermain was a chunk of concrete. He said they had to dig a large hole to get around the concrete and what would have been a 2-hour job turned into a 5-hour job.

Police Chief – Don Thomas thanked Mayor Mundy for the Drink & Drive Proclamation and urged the public not to let friends drive drunk.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance – no report.

Ordinance –no report

Police & Fire – no report

Sewer & Water – no report

Streets & Walks –no report

PUBLIC HEARING - None

ORDINANCES

A. Ordinance No. 2006.51—An Ordinance Levying Taxes for the Corporate Purposes of the City of Sycamore for the Fiscal Year Commencing May 1, 2007 and Ending April 30, 2008. Second Reading.

City Manager Nicklas said the proposed corporate levy of \$3,116,031 includes a City levy of \$2,401,957 and a Sycamore Library levy of \$714,074.

Motion

Aldersperson Maness moved to approve Ordinance 2006.51 and Aldersperson Kessler seconded the motion.

Roll call vote

Mayor Mundy called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderspersons Adee, Bauer, Kessler, Leach, Maness, Paulsen, Stowe, and Mayor Mundy voted aye. Motion carried 8 - 0.

B. Ordinance No. 2006.52—An Ordinance Abating the Debt Service Levy for the 2002 General Obligation Bond Issue for the City of Sycamore, DeKalb County, Illinois for Fiscal Year 2007-2008. Second Reading.

City Manager Nicklas explained that the City abates the debt service on almost all of our bond indebtedness. He said the debt service is paid primarily from sales taxes.

Motion

Aldersperson Stowe moved to approve Ordinance 2006.52 and Aldersperson Maness seconded the motion.

Roll call vote

Mayor Mundy called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderspersons Adee, Bauer, Kessler, Leach, Maness, Paulsen, and Stowe voted aye. Motion carried 7 - 0.

C. Ordinance No. 2006.53—An Ordinance Abating the Debt Service Levy for the 2003 General Obligation Bond Issue for the City of Sycamore, DeKalb County, Illinois for Fiscal Year 2007-2008. Second Reading.

City Manager Nicklas explained the debt service for this bond is also paid through revenue sources other than property tax.

Motion

Aldersperson Leach moved to approve Ordinance 2006.53 and Aldersperson Adee seconded the motion.

Roll call vote

Mayor Mundy called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderspersons Adee, Bauer, Kessler, Leach, Maness, Paulsen, and Stowe voted aye. Motion carried 7 - 0.

D. Ordinance No. 2006.54—An Ordinance Abating the Debt Service Levy for the 2005 Refunding Bond Issue for the City of Sycamore, DeKalb County, Illinois for Fiscal Year 2007-2008. Second Reading.

City Manager Nicklas said that this refunding bond refinanced the outstanding 1999 bond series at a lower interest rate that in turn refinanced a portion of the 1996 bond series. He explained that in 1996 Council

determined that a portion of the debt service would be paid from property taxes and that level of \$155,000 is levied for partial payment of debt service for the 2005 Refunding Bond Issue.

Motion

Aldersperson Kessler moved to approve Ordinance 2006.54 and Aldersperson Leach seconded the motion.

Roll call vote

Mayor Mundy called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderspersons Adee, Bauer, Kessler, Leach, Maness, Paulsen, and Stowe voted aye. Motion carried 7 - 0.

E. Ordinance No. 2006.55—An Ordinance Partially Abating Certain Real Estate Revenue Due to the City of Sycamore for Property Owned by Tate & Lyle in the City of Sycamore, DeKalb County, Illinois for Fiscal Year 2007-2008. Second Reading.

City Manager Nicklas explained that this is the first year of a three-year property tax abatement commitment extended to Tate & Lyle (formerly CCI) located in the Sycamore Prairie Business Park. He said the City Council approved the abatement package in December 2003 which called for the abatement of 80% of the firm's property tax obligation to the City in the first full assessment year, 70% in the second year of full assessment, and 50% in the third year.

Motion

Aldersperson Bauer moved to approve Ordinance 2006.55 and Aldersperson Stowe seconded the motion.

Aldersperson Kessler said she thought this company is a good addition to the City and this is a good investment. She said she hopes the Council will continue to review companies on a case-by-case basis for this type of agreement in order to grow our industrial base.

Roll call vote

Mayor Mundy called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderspersons Adee, Bauer, Kessler, Leach, Maness, Paulsen, and Stowe voted aye. Motion carried 7 - 0.

F. Ordinance No. 2006.56—An Ordinance Partially Abating Certain Real Estate Revenue Due to the City of Sycamore for Property Owned by Fullco Industries in the City of Sycamore, DeKalb County, Illinois for Fiscal Year 2007-2008. Second Reading.

City Manager Nicklas said that Fullco Industries relocated from St. Charles into a spec building in Sycamore Prairie Business Park. He explained that at the time this abatement was being considered an Ad Hoc Committee of local taxing bodies determined that the incentive package needed adjustment. He said the abatement package approved for Fullco Industries in March 2005 called for the abatement of 90% of the firm's property tax obligation to the City of Sycamore in the first full assessment year, 75% in the second year of full assessment, and 50% in the third year.

Motion

Aldersperson Adee moved to approve Ordinance 2006.56 and Aldersperson Maness seconded the motion.

Roll call vote

Mayor Mundy called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderspersons Adee, Bauer, Kessler, Leach, Maness, Paulsen, and Stowe voted aye. Motion carried 7 - 0.

RESOLUTIONS - None

CONSIDERATIONS

A. Consideration of a Three-Dimensional Marketing Video Prepared by Larson & Darby of Rockford, Illinois.

City Manager Nicklas introduced Ged Trias, Joe Winkelmann, and John Saunders of Larson & Darby who have had a long-standing relationship with Ideal Industries and Sycamore Prairie Business Park and have worked collaboratively with City staff on the marketing video. Mr. Nicklas said Council would discuss adding more detail to the video during budget talks in the next 50 days. He suggested detailing the Bethany Corridor, Gateway Drive, and some other sites including Krpan's industrial area.

Ged Trias said they used a program called Google Earth in which to integrate their model and as the software improves the detail will improve. He said eventually the City will also be able to overlay planning maps.

B. Consideration of an Administration Request for Direction Regarding a Proposal by the Alliance for Land, Agriculture, and Water ("A-LAW") to Create a Water Authority Comprising DeKalb, Boone, and McHenry Counties.

City Manager Nicklas said he placed this on the agenda because there will be a hearing on this Thursday, December 21, 2006 for which he needs Council direction. He explained that an ad hoc group of citizens organized in McHenry County earlier this year looking to create a water authority using state statutory guidelines. He said the proposed water authority is comprised of portions of McHenry, Boone, and DeKalb Counties with some portions being exempted. He said only 20% of registered voters in the three counties would be able to vote in the referendum and the public hearing at the DeKalb County Courthouse will allow only those people with standing to speak, so because Sycamore is exempt we will not have a voice. He said the DeKalb County Administrator has asked for letters from mayors and others who will not be allowed to speak to be presented as exhibits. Mr. Nicklas said that Judge Klein will be presiding over the hearing and the purpose of the hearing is to provide an opportunity for persons residing within the proposed water authority's boundaries to comment upon the proposed referendum and make suggestions to amend or dismiss the group, A-LAW's, petition. Mr. Nicklas said that the group, A-LAW, formed because of opposition to a comprehensive planning process in McHenry County and they stated in their own press release that they were emboldened to try to find a tool other than the channels of public hearings, negotiations, and the political system to strategically go around the authority of McHenry County planning process. He said initially conservation of water was not the issue, it was the expansion of certain types of development in McHenry County, but now water conservation has become their focus. Mr. Nicklas talked about some exhibits regarding a McHenry County water study, the major watersheds in Illinois including the Kishwaukee watershed, and the estimated yield of the shallowest aquifer in the watershed. He said from a governance level A-LAW is asking a relatively small number of people to make an important decision on the creation of an authority which in state law has no means of undoing. He said another referendum cannot undo this. He said we do not have the science to show at what pace we will approach the types of water issues facing the people in McHenry County and emphasized that he is not suggesting we should be complacent about this. He said the County Planning Commission has agreed to take this up at their next meeting and if they are intrigued by this then ways and means will need to be found to investigate what our true water levels are. He said that we understand from drilling a well just a year ago, we are in a surplus area and there is an abundance of water. Mr. Nicklas said he would like to approach the hearing with inclusion, where we all get to vote, or take DeKalb County out of the authority boundaries.

Mayor Mundy said there appears to be a sense of emergency, but he is not sure why. He said he felt that a hearing scheduled in December is poor timing for attendance purposes. He said he wrote a letter pointing out that there are already 7000 units of government in Illinois and there are entities in place to address the water

issue such as the Regional Planning Commission, DeKalb County Board, and the Illinois EPA who have expertise. He said he thought that 3 trustees with this kind of authority and responsibility is magnanimous.

Aldersperson Stowe said he agreed with Mayor Mundy and expressed concern that a body could raise taxes with no member being elected.

Mayor Mundy said Sycamore is exempt as it sits today, but not as we grow and we would have no vote. He said we should move forward with caution and agreed that DeKalb County should be dismissed from the action.

Aldersperson Kessler said she thought this was another way to take away the people's right to be represented. She said there would be no due process or investigation and the City would have no voice. She said this was not acceptable for Sycamore or for DeKalb County.

Aldersperson Bauer said the last thing we need is another layer of government. He said this Council works hard to keep taxes down and he thought the proposed Water Authority would have too much power and we should not stand for it.

Aldersperson Adee said we do not have to do anything with this, but we should take care of our water.

Motion

Aldersperson Kessler moved to request the court to modify the proposed water authority boundaries to exclude DeKalb County and if they fail to convince the court that DeKalb County should be excluded from the proposed authority, we petition the court to allow all of our citizens to be given the chance of forming such a district, or not and Aldersperson Bauer seconded the motion.

Voice vote

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

OTHER NEW BUSINESS

APPOINTMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Aldersperson Stowe moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. and Aldersperson Leach seconded the motion.

Voice vote

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

Approve:

Mayor - Ken Mundy

Attest:

City Clerk – Candy Smith