
**SYCAMORE CITY COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF JULY 7, 2008**

ROLL CALL

Mayor Ken Mundy called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and Clerk Candy Smith called the roll. Those Alderpersons present were: Grace Adee, Alan Bauer, Rich Neubauer, Pete Paulsen, Chuck Stowe and Gregory Taylor. Alderpersons Terry Kessler and Darren Knuth were absent.

INVOCATION

Pastor Brad Reardon of Evangelical Free Church gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion

Alderperson Taylor moved to approve the agenda and Alderperson Neubauer seconded the motion.

Voice vote

Mayor Mundy called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderpersons voted aye. Motion carried 6 - 0.

AUDIENCE TO VISITORS

Ed Kuhn, 1001 Freed Road, said the Lions Clubs work together to answer the needs that challenge communities. He said the Sycamore Lions Club is a working club who works to improve the environment, build homes for the disabled, support diabetes education, conduct sight and hearing programs, and provide disaster relief throughout the world. He said that locally they have provided many pairs of glasses and hearing aids to local residents in need, built shelters at the Sycamore Park, put picnic tables on the Great Western Trail, and have sponsored the pumpkin decorating contest since 1962. He said they, along with sister club the Sycamore Lioness Club, would like to provide themselves and other clubs and organizations an additional method of publicizing events to commemorate their 60 years of service by installing a community bulletin board. He asked Council to look favorably in their deliberations of that request.

Julie Brannon, 832 DeKalb Ave., President of the Sycamore Lioness Club, said they are celebrating their 25th year. She said they have provided fund raising and services for Hope Haven, DeKalb County Nursing Home, Opportunity House, Meals on Wheels, American Diabetes Association, Lions of IL Foundation, and Sycamore High School Scholarships. She said they are co-sponsor of the community sign.

Michelle Donahoe, 620 E. State St., said she was gathering background material for the Engh Farm discussion that would be on the July 21 agenda. She said she could not make that meeting, but said she has appointments with some alderpersons and would be happy to speak individually with each one to answer any questions.

Patrick Balentyne, 444 W. Exchange, said he was here to speak on Ordinance 2008.15.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of the Minutes for the Regular City Council Meeting of June 16, 2008.
- B. Payment of the Bills for July 7, 2008 in the amount of \$2,818,411.73.

Motion

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

Voice vote

Mayor Mundy called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderspersons voted aye. Motion carried 6 - 0.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND BILLS.

Aldersperson Paulsen asking how many ice cream vending permits were issued for the year.

City Clerk Smith said there were two permits.

Aldersperson Bauer said he thought some residents were taking advantage of the City picking up downed branches after storms by placing trimmed branches out and asked if we had any policy to stop that.

Mr. Nicklas said the honor system is used and he hoped that for anything outside of weather events, people would find private means for removal. He said if that is noticed, a phone call from the Police Department usually puts an end to it.

Mayor Mundy noted that this was the 5th anniversary for Council meetings in the Sycamore Center. He said the July 15 DeKalb Municipal Band Concert at Hopkins Park would be dedicated to Sycamore's Sesquicentennial. He said there would be a tobacco hearing and a liquor hearing Wednesday, July 9 starting at 2:00 p.m.

- A. Presentation by the Sycamore High School Rugby Football Club to the Sycamore Fire Department.

Rick Turner and Mark Lancaster, coaches for the Rugby Team, presented a grill to the Fire Department in appreciation for the firefighters that volunteer their services as EMT's at the games.

- B. Swearing-In of Marc Doty as Fire Lieutenant.
- C. Introduction of KEC Fire Science student Joe Jacober who has competed for Sycamore in the National Skills USA competition in Kansas City.

Mayor Mundy noted that Joe Jacober could not make the meeting, but would be recognized at a future date.

REPORT OF OFFICERS

Manager – Bill Nicklas reported that Plan Commission would see the first formal submittal copy of the proposed 2008 Comprehensive Plan at the July 14 meeting. He said that pending their direction, Council will take it up at the next regular meeting in July or the first meeting in August.

Engineer – John Brady, Sycamore Municipal Engineering, reported that work has started on the State and Main Downtown project and will continue for the next 3 months.

Building & Zoning – Lyle Doty distributed a building activity report for the first half of 2008. He said that residential activity is low, but commercial activity is strong.

Fire Chief – Bill Riddle said that since the last meeting 2 Sycamore firefighters were deployed to Quincy to operate the MABAS 6 decontamination vehicle. He said that Secretary Becky Hepker who is on an incident management team went to Quincy for 36 hours to help at the Quincy Command Post.

Treasurer/Asst. City Manager – Brian Gregory said the field work for the annual audit was completed and first thing this fall the financial statements should be available. He reported \$135,576 of Transfer Tax for the June quarter was submitted to the School District.

Police Chief – Don Thomas reserved his comment for the consideration of the Police Station design.

Public Works Director – Fred Busse – no report.

Assistant Public Works Director – Ebe Smith said Public Works would receive the new street sweeper Tuesday and once training was completed they would have two sweepers on the street.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance – no report
Public Safety – no report
Public Works – no report

PUBLIC HEARING - None

ORDINANCES

A. Ordinance No. 2008.15—An Ordinance Concerning the Recommendation of the Zoning Board of Appeals With Regard to the Petition of Patrick and Cynthia Balentyne for a Variance from Article 6.2.D.4.a of the Unified Development Ordinance of the City of Sycamore, Illinois. First and Second Reading.

City Manager Nicklas explained that the Balentyne’s variance request was considered and approved unanimously by the Zoning Board of Appeals June 24, 2008. He said they propose to enlarge their existing detached garage which would exceed the 8% rule which limits the area of a detached garage to 8% of the gross lot area. He said the addition would not encroach on the required rear yard or sideyard setbacks.

Motion

Aldersperson Paulsen moved to hear Ordinance 2008.15 on first and second reading and Aldersperson Stowe seconded the motion.

Voice vote

Mayor Mundy called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderspersons voted aye. Motion carried 6 - 0.

Motion

Aldersperson Paulsen moved to approve Ordinance 2008.15 and Aldersperson Stowe seconded the motion.

Roll call vote

Mayor Mundy called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderspersons Adey, Bauer, Neubauer, Paulsen, Stowe, and Taylor voted aye. Motion carried 6 - 0.

B. Ordinance No. 2008.16—An Ordinance Extending the Refuse Contract Between the City of Sycamore, Illinois and Waste Management West. First and Second Reading.

City Manager Nicklas said that in anticipation of the contract renewal, Waste Management West proposed the following terms for a three-year extension:

- Freeze the Year One (2009) charge per unit per month at the 2008 fee of \$16.00.
- Cap price increases in Year Two (2010) and Year Three (2011) at the CPI or 3%, whichever is less.
- More aggressively promote the 35-gallon and 64-gallon toter options for seniors with no cost for the conversion from a 96-gallon size.
- Maintain the same level of service as we presently enjoy in terms of recycling, yard waste, etc.
- WMX will assume the cost of a new informational mailer to be sent to all residents participating in the residential refuse program to give them a guide to the services provided locally.

Mr. Nicklas said that for a \$2 per month fee residents can order a small toter for recyclables.

Aldersperson Bauer said he noticed there would be a \$25 charge to change toter size and asked if that would be waived for new homeowners.

Mr. Nicklas said he assumed the fee would be waived.

Motion

Aldersperson Bauer moved to hear Ordinance 2008.16 on first and second reading and Aldersperson Neubauer seconded the motion.

Voice vote

Mayor Mundy called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderspersons voted aye. Motion carried 6 - 0.

Motion

Aldersperson Bauer moved to approve Ordinance 2008.16 and Aldersperson Taylor seconded the motion.

Loras Schuster, 973 Constance Lane, said he puts out very little garbage and felt he should not pay as much as those with higher usage. He suggested using a tag system because it would also encourage recycling.

Mr. Nicklas said the monthly charge is \$16 which is \$4 per week. He said the bag system is still held onto by parts of the City of Chicago, but that is about the only metropolitan area in Illinois to use it. He said the bag system does not provide for recycling in a cost effective manor.

Mr. Schuster said every town he has lived in or that he knows of uses a tag you pay for each bag placed out. He said that St. Charles, Geneva, Lombard, and Wheaton use the bag system and he felt that was a fair way of doing it.

Mr. Nicklas said they look at a unit cost and asked Waste Management representative Matt Hernandez to explain.

Mr. Hernandez said he thought that Wheaton's stickers were going up to nearly \$3 each next year.

Aldersperson Neubauer said that if each bag costs \$3 and a resident puts out 2 bags per week they would be paying 150% more than what we are paying.

Mr. Hernandez said that does not include any bags for yard waste.

Mayor Mundy said this contract is an economical plan for the City.

Mr. Schuster said he did not think it was fair for him to pay the same as those putting out several containers of garbage.

Aldersperson Bauer correlated this to the life cycle idea. He said this was similar to paying School District taxes. He said that families with school-aged children most likely cannot afford to pay what it really costs to send their kids to school. He said as your kids get out of school you continue to pay school district taxes so it balances out because those that can least afford it are the ones that need it. He said it is the same way with refuse that people that generate the most cannot afford it. He said he was afraid that people would put their refuse on somebody else's property or simply not dispose of it so it would become a nuisance.

Mr. Schuster said he raised 5 kids in Wheaton and paid \$1 each for five bags per week. He said this system is not encouraging recycling.

Aldersperson Bauer said he thought that was honorable but he did not think all people would do that.

Mayor Mundy said he remembers before the City had an effective collection system, there were piles of garbage and yard waste in people's backyards.

Roll call vote

Mayor Mundy called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderspersons Adey, Bauer, Neubauer, Paulsen, Stowe, and Taylor voted aye. Motion carried 6 - 0.

RESOLUTIONS

CONSIDERATIONS

A. Consideration of a Request from the Sycamore Lions Club for the Installation of a Community Information Sign at 448 DeKalb Avenue.

City Manager Nicklas said the proposal is before Council because the UDO does not allow signs that are remote from businesses or services so Council permission is needed.

Mayor Mundy said this was a great idea and thanked Ray Puentes for his generosity for the use of his property.

Aldersperson Bauer asked if any not-for-profit would be able to post there.

Ed Kuhn said they would have rules set up for what the citizenry might need to know.

Mr. Nicklas said the sign would be internally illuminated but would have changeable type rather than electronic lettering.

Motion

Aldersperson Paulsen moved to approve the sign installation and Aldersperson Adeed seconded the motion.

Voice vote

Mayor Mundy called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderspersons voted aye. Motion carried 6 - 0.

B. Consideration of a Conceptual Design for an Addition to the Public Safety Building at 535 DeKalb Avenue.

City Manager Nicklas noted the details of the need for a conceptual expansion plan as presented in the background as follows:

- Lack of a vehicle sally port;
- Lack of secure detention rooms;
- Inadequate interview rooms;
- Inadequate locker room and shower facilities;
- Lack of a dedicated training room;
- Lack of a secure emergency operations center (EOC);
- Inadequate equipment and records storage;
- Cramped office areas for report-writing;
- Lack of any dedicated space for sergeants to work on assignments during off-hours.
- Inadequate receptions areas for the general public.

Mr. Nicklas said the Gilfillan Callahan Nelson Architects firm worked with a Police Department committee made up of Chief Don Thomas, Lt. Darrell Johnson, Sgt. Michael Anderson, Sgt. Steve Cook, CXO George Davis, Officer Rudi Ziegler, Officer Mike Domenighini, and Secretary Colleen Ziegler.

Steve Nelson of Gilfillan Callahan Nelson Architects presented the firm's conceptual design for an addition to the Public Safety Building.

Mr. Nicklas explained that this \$3.2 million plan would require \$320,000 new money and he said he could not say he could see that right now. He said the first plan was a \$7.5 million plan and the committee has pulled this down to a size and cost that would possibly be in reach. He said the Sycamore Center and Fire Station 2 were done through reserve dollars. He said the longer we wait the more expensive this will get.

Mayor Mundy said this is roughly \$167/square foot for the four different areas presented this evening. He said the key thing is to get what is needed within our ability to afford it with an eye on the future. He said he felt this was affordable.

Aldersperson Paulsen commended the team for their effort and asked if we go ahead with this plan, how it would affect the operation of the Police Department during construction.

Mr. Nelson said because the existing building would not change much, then he would suggest phasing the project with building the new main building first and building the sally port during the second phase after operations are moved into the new main building.

Mr. Nicklas said the Council included an appropriation for up to \$175,000 for actual construction plans and specs in the budget and noted that the commitment to plans was not a commitment to brick and mortar. He said if Council felt the plans were heading in the right direction in terms of economy and cost per square foot, then he would urge them to proceed with construction plans and specifications. He said if the City should receive assistance from the Federal Government or wherever we would have the ability to proceed.

Mr. Nelson said if the plans were approved tonight, then they would be prepared to go to bid within 3 months.

Mr. Nicklas said that plans are required to qualify for grant dollars and he felt it was important to have that approval.

Aldersperson Bauer asked if Mr. Nelson would compare the current need with the actual square footage they are working in right now.

Mr. Nelson said the real need square footage is 21,450 and the actual is 3200.

Aldersperson Bauer said that is a miracle and he felt the needs assessment made it clear that we need to move forward.

Motion

Aldersperson Bauer moved to proceed with the plans and Aldersperson Neubauer seconded the motion.

Aldersperson Taylor said he thought this was a great plan, but it comes down to finances. He said he thought Sycamore was an attractive place to businesses and people in general partly because of the way the City is maintaining its infrastructure and services. He said he thought we have shown that we are able to manage the money and we should move forward with the plans and then it will be a matter of when do we actually break ground.

Roll Call vote

Mayor Mundy called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderspersons Bauer, Neubauer, Paulsen, Stowe, and Taylor voted aye with Aldersperson Adee voting nay. Motion carried 5 - 1.

C. Consideration of a Request from the Owner of The Palette American Bistro for a Revision of the Minimum Occupancy Requirements for a Restaurant Serving Alcoholic Beverages in the City of Sycamore.

Mayor Mundy said the minimum occupancy requirement in the City Code is currently 50 persons and he said he asked Building Commissioner Doty and the Fire Chief Riddle if that particular number of 50 persons related to anything they said it did not relate to any zoning issues or fire code issues. He said owner Alicia McDermott has asked for an exception because she strongly felt that beer and wine would be a necessary part of the business.

City Manager Nicklas said when he was writing the background he understood that what was being sought was a threshold of 40 persons, but he said now that he understands that based on building requirements the maximum occupancy will be 23 or 25. He said he thought Council needed to consider a threshold lower than 40.

Alicia McDermott, 124 Cotton Ave., DeKalb, IL, said they have 40 seats in the restaurants which is a home that has been renovated. She said they sought out Sycamore to start their small, family business. She said originally they had 50 seats as part of the plan, but as they began renovating plans changed.

Aldersperson Taylor asked where people would park.

Ms. McDermott said they were required to have on sight parking for the amount of square footage. They are commercially zoned and found they could not use their porch for serving because they could not accommodate enough parking spaces. She said the parking is in the rear.

Melissa Kinsley, 519 W. State, said she is a partner with Ms. McDermott and said there are seven parking spaces in the back.

Mr. Nicklas said this is a national trend toward smaller boutique style restaurants and suggested Council might want to create an allowance that would accommodate smaller restaurants.

Ms. McDermott said they are looking to create a unique experience.

Mayor Mundy said as the Liquor Commissioner he does not see why there is a minimum number at all.

Aldersperson Neubauer said he supports the petitioners, but if there were no minimum, then what would stop somebody from getting a liquor license for three people.

Aldersperson Taylor asked if it was reservation only and what type of food they would be serving and wondered if a family of 5 would take up too much space.

Mr. McDermott said they have parking spaces and there is a free parking lot less than a block away. She said they want to feel like they are part of the downtown. She said they have the ability to seat 8 people together and are a family friendly and couple friendly restaurant.

Aldersperson Neubauer said if they were located a few feet to the east they would not have parking issues and asked if there was framework to offer them a variance in case they want to expand.

Mr. Nicklas said it would be difficult to prove hardship because they have perhaps created their own hardship.

Ms. Kinsley said they took into consideration the property was landlocked when they purchased the property and they could take down the garage to add a few more parking spaces in the future.

Mayor Mundy said he felt that 20 was a suitable number.

Motion

Aldersperson Stowe moved to bring back an ordinance to revise the minimum occupancy requirements to 20 and Aldersperson Paulsen seconded the motion.

Voice vote

Mayor Mundy called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderspersons voted aye. Motion carried 6 - 0.

D. Consideration of an Administration Recommendation Regarding the City's Retiree Health Insurance Coverage.

City Manager Nicklas said Human Resource Director Jean Tritle has done a lot of work trying to explore ways to diminish the cost of our retiree health insurance without diminishing the range of benefits. He said that Ms. Tritle has discovered a product offered by Hartford Insurance which compares very well with our current health insurance. He said the reason for putting this on the agenda was to inform Council of the ground gained here in not only finding the product, but gaining approval from the employees and retirees

who have been presented with the proposal with no objections. He said the next step would be to proceed with a creation of a package for Council to vote on at a future meeting.

Human Resource Director Jean Tritle said this was the first time the City has had a viable option that actually gives the retirees the same or better plan than the current Blue Cross Blue Shield plan.

Mr. Nicklas said that today Ms. Tritle met with our broker and the numbers in the agenda regarding savings are conservative and could be almost double.

Aldersperson Paulsen said he thought this looked like a plan that provides as good or better coverage to that participant pool.

Ms. Tritle said that she would like to talk with the retirees again and will bring this back after she does that.

Consensus of Council was to move forward.

E. Consideration of a Public Works Department Recommendation Regarding Equipment for the New International Truck Chassis.

City Manager Nicklas said this year they found that the price of equipment has spiked. He said the funding would come from the Capital Assistance Fund (\$18,720), Sewer Fund (\$17,720) and the Water Fund (\$11,560). He said the lowest responsible bidder was Monroe Truck Equipment of Monroe, WI, but because Mark's Machine Shop bid was 2% higher they fell within the local preference ordinance and agreed to match the bid of \$48,000.

Motion

Aldersperson Paulsen moved to award the bid to Mark's Machine Shop for the amount of \$48,000 and Aldersperson Adee seconded the motion.

Roll call vote

Mayor Mundy called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderspersons Adee, Bauer, Neubauer, Paulsen, Stowe, and Taylor voted aye. Motion carried 6 - 0.

F. Consideration of an Administration Request for a Closed Session to Discuss Collective Bargaining.

Motion

Aldersperson Stowe moved to go into Closed Session at 9:15 p.m. and Aldersperson Taylor seconded the motion.

Voice vote

Mayor Mundy called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderspersons voted aye. Motion carried 6 - 0.

Motion

Aldersperson Paulsen moved to return to Open Session at 9:25 p.m. and Aldersperson Taylor seconded the motion.

Voice vote

Mayor Mundy called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderspersons voted aye. Motion carried 6 - 0.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS

APPOINTMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Aldersperson Stowe moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m. and Aldersperson Paulsen seconded the motion.

Voice vote

Mayor Mundy called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Alderspersons voted aye. Motion carried 6 - 0.

Approve:

Mayor - Ken Mundy

Attest:

City Clerk – Candy Smith