
**SYCAMORE CITY COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 16, 2009**

ROLL CALL

Mayor Ken Mundy called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and City Clerk Candy Smith called the roll. Those Alderpersons present were: Alan Bauer, Steven Braser, Terry Kessler, Richard Neubauer, Pete Paulsen, Chuck Stowe, Gregory Taylor, and Janice Tripp.

INVOCATION

Father Timar of St. Mary's Catholic Church gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion

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

Voice vote

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

AUDIENCE TO VISITORS

Lori Grant, 1002 Foxpointe, expressed concern and dismay over the City's handling of the legal allegations against firefighter Kurt Mathey. She said she thought this could have been handled internally to save taxpayer dollars and community relations.

Lois Anderson, 469 W. Exchange St., said that she was in the audience as Library Board President to answer questions regarding the Library levy.

Mike Fogelsanger, 845 Sunset Ln., said he disagreed with spending tax dollars to renovate private buildings downtown. He said he felt the Mathey case got out of hand and should have been handled differently.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of the Minutes for the Regular City Council Meeting of November 2, 2009.
- B. Payment of the Bills for November 16, 2009 in the amount of \$2,594,993.45.
- C. Architectural Review Committee Minutes for the Meeting of July 16, 2009.

Motion

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

Voice vote

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

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND BILLS.

Aldersperson Paulsen commended Sycamore High School athletics and thought it would be appropriate to recognize those teams at a Council meeting. He noted that Larson Park is nearly completed. He acknowledged the cooperation between a neighbor and the Police Department to arrest house burglars.

Mayor Mundy said he had received a letter from the bar owners requesting to extend closing hours to 1:00 a.m. the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and he granted them permission. He said along with kudos for the sports teams, the High School put on an excellent production of Oklahoma! He said the Salvation Army has a new Captain Cho and his wife and in 2008 there were 12,000 hours of volunteerism and in 2009 by July they have reached 12,000 hours.

REPORT OF OFFICERS

Manager – Bill Nicklas said he was not in a position to address the baseless allegations made earlier and said the City is party to an agreement which obligates us to move forward and not rehash events real and imagined. He said at a press conference held a couple of weeks ago there was a reference to the retirement of Chief Riddle May 1, 2010. He said he felt it was unfortunate that it became a story without an opportunity to fill in the meritorious and exemplary career Chief Riddle has had under the employ of Sycamore. He said there will be time to do that in more detail in the spring and there will be a transition with some formal announcement in late December to advertise for an opening.

Engineer – John Brady, Sycamore Municipal Engineering, reported that the first week of November the paving on the Peace Road bikepath was completed and there is still a little shoulder work to do.

Building & Zoning – Lyle Doty said he has received four applications for single-family home permits.

Fire Chief – Bill Riddle asked everyone to keep POC Firefighter Les Johnson's family in mind upon his death after serving as POC for 42 years. Chief Riddle distributed a spreadsheet demonstrating a savings of about \$2,600 of overtime in the new callback system for the two-week trial period. He said that calls were down about 11% and accidents were down 11% throughout the state.

Treasurer/Asst. City Manager – Brian Gregory said the Treasurer's report was at the 50% benchmark and, including transfers and weighted revenues, the revenues are trailing below budget and, because of cautious spending, expenditures are right in line with the budget. He said that two years ago there was ethics reform for downstate pension plans stating that each year before voting on the pension levy there must be an annual report. He said that report was included in the packet with the Treasurer's report. He noted that last year the funds lost 12.15% (police) and 13.26% (fire) respectively and a state law from the early 1990's requires pension funds to be fully funded by 2033. Currently the police is funded 70.4% and fire 61.3%.

Police Chief – Don Thomas said because of neighbors calling police a burglary in progress was stopped. He noted that next Wednesday through Sunday will be the busiest travel time of the year and Wednesday night has become the biggest bar night of the year.

Public Works Director – Fred Busse reported that by the next meeting the circumference of the sphere on the water tower should be visible, the leaf pickup program has worked well with three machines, the base for the small pre-fabricating lift station was poured today for the wastewater treatment plant project, and the sludge haulers have started work.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

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

PUBLIC HEARING - None

ORDINANCES - None

RESOLUTIONS

A. Resolution No. 530—A Resolution Authorizing the Execution of the IMLRMA Minimum/Maximum Contribution Agreement with the City of Sycamore, Illinois for Worker’s Compensation and Liability Coverage for City Employees.

City Manager Nicklas said the City has not received any bid other than the IML bid which is not a bad thing because they have the largest risk pool which generally passes along better pricing. He said we have made some progress this current year in our loss ratio and feel it is in the City’s best interest to participate in the Min/Max program.

Aldersperson Taylor asked if the table represented a calendar year and said it looked like we were tracking well.

Mr. Nicklas said we were hoping to come in under 2006 numbers. He said that our safety program and the participating employee groups have made a difference.

Aldersperson Paulsen thanked the safety committee, staff, and employees for working to reduce costs.

Motion

Aldersperson Paulsen moved to approve Resolution 530 and Aldersperson Taylor seconded the motion.

Roll call vote

Mayor Mundy called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderspersons Bauer, Braser, Kessler, Neubauer, Paulsen, Stowe, Taylor, and Tripp voted aye. Motion carried 8 – 0.

CONSIDERATIONS

A. Consideration of a Biannual Report from the Sycamore Chamber of Commerce Regarding Tourism in the City of Sycamore.

Rose Treml, Executive Director, and Megan Yockey, Discover Director, presented their report.

B. Consideration of a Recommendation from the Sycamore Liquor Commissioner to Discount the License Fee for a Class “H” License for the Balance of the Fiscal Year.

Mayor Mundy said there was a potential buyer for the winery and the intent here is to reduce the application fee to \$500 plus the annual license fee. He said he wanted Council input in order to be consistent and yet help a business remain open downtown.

Alderson Neubauer said he was fine with this and would also consider prorating the annual license fee.

Mayor Mundy said we do prorate the liquor license fee.

Alderson Bauer said he thought they should be consistent and if they no longer want to charge \$2500 then the code should be changed.

Mr. Nicklas said there would be occasions where there is a new location to charge the \$2500.

Mayor Mundy said he was not seeking to alter the code.

Motion

Alderson Neubauer moved to accept the recommendation to reduce the application fee to \$500 and Alderson Taylor seconded the motion.

Roll call vote

Mayor Mundy called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Aldersons Braser, Kessler, Neubauer, Paulsen, Stowe, Taylor, and Tripp voted aye with Alderson Bauer voting nay. Motion carried 7 – 1.

C. Consideration of a Recommendation from the Architectural Review Committee Regarding a Façade Grant Application for 320 West State Street.

City Manager Nicklas said that Jim and Ann Tucker are going to open an Antique Store in the building formerly the Sycamore Coin Gallery. He said the Tucker's are asking for \$5,000 to help with exterior remodeling that will total about \$20,000. He said the Architectural Review Committee recommended the total grant of \$5,000.

Alderson Neubauer said the thought this money was well spent and is a direct benefit to the City because it beautifies the downtown and also brings people downtown to spend money.

Motion

Alderson Neubauer moved to grant \$5,000 to Tucker Antiques at 320 W. State Street and Alderson Bauer seconded the motion.

Alderson Kessler said to look at what is being done structurally and said that one of the criteria for the program is the improvement of the structure. She said she thought this was what was needed downtown and said we are investing in ourselves.

Roll call vote

Mayor Mundy called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Aldersons Bauer, Braser, Kessler, Neubauer, Paulsen, Stowe, Taylor, and Tripp voted aye. Motion carried 8 – 0.

D. Consideration of a Fire Department Recommendation Regarding the Purchase of a Replacement Command Vehicle.

City Manager Nicklas said this purchase was included in the 2010 Capital budget.

Aldersperson Braser asked if the bid included trade-in value.

City Manager Nicklas said there was a trade for the Cherokee and that would go into the light bar.

Fire Chief Riddle said another dealer gave them \$1300 for the Cherokee and they would discount that for the light bar. He said they looked for used Yukons and Tahoes and could not find anything under \$27,000 and then found the Ford Expedition program and decided to go with the new vehicle.

Motion

Aldersperson Paulsen moved to award the bid to Brad Manning Ford for \$22,997 and Aldersperson Braser seconded the motion.

Roll call vote

Mayor Mundy called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderspersons Bauer, Braser, Kessler, Neubauer, Paulsen, Stowe, Taylor, and Tripp voted aye. Motion carried 8 – 0.

E. Consideration of the Annual City Property Tax Levy.

City Manager Nicklas said he was looking for direction on the City's proposed levy. He noted that Council is obligated to pass through the Library levy and said the Library Board would be meeting again to discuss their levy. Mr. Nicklas said the rate this year is much affected by the community's wealth and the strains on that wealth in the current economic conditions. He said that none of the six options proposed will achieve less out of pocket dollars for Sycamore residents because of the township multipliers. He recommended Option #4, a 3% increase. Mr. Nicklas said the Library Board's tentative proposition is 4.9% which would result in a slight increase in the library rate and when combined with Option #4 would result in an up tick in the corporate rate which would be the first time in 10 years. He said if they accept the library proposal and go with Option #3 there would be a slight decrease in the corporate rate or the City might go with Option #4 and give a one-time grant of \$15,000 to the Library to close the gap. Mr. Nicklas said he would not recommend under any circumstances increasing the aggregate rate.

Aldersperson Braser said with our fixed expenditures, it would be hard to go less than 3%.

Aldersperson Neubauer said the difference between Option #1 and Option #4 is only about \$13 annually, but considering how revenues are down, he said he was not comfortable going less than 3%.

Aldersperson Bauer said out of respect for rate decreases over the years, he would like to hold the record the best we can. He asked the Library Board to sharpen their pencils one more time.

Aldersperson Taylor said this is a small portion of the total tax bill and thought Option #3 might be a prudent option in an effort to keep tax bills from going up.

Aldersperson Stowe said they have held the line for every other taxing body in the area and felt that a 3% increase would keep them from cutting more than they really needed to cut.

Motion

Alderson Bauer moved to proceed with Option #4 a 3% increase and Alderson Kessler seconded the motion.

Roll call vote

Mayor Mundy called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Aldersons Bauer, Braser, Kessler, Neubauer, Paulsen, Stowe, and Tripp voted aye with Alderson Taylor voting nay. Motion carried 7 – 1.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS

APPOINTMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Alderson Stowe moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 p.m. and Alderson Paulsen seconded the motion.

Voice vote

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

Approve:

Mayor – Ken Mundy

Attest:

City Clerk – Candy Smith