MINUTES OF THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF 26 SEPTEMBER 2022

22C-0362– CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Renner called the regular meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. in the Board Chambers at 101 Green Street on 26 September 2022.

22C-0363 – ROLL CALL

Upon roll call, the following members were present: Bernstein, Hahn, Kieffer, McCoy, Renner.

Westemeier and Wienen were absent.

22C-0364– ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Mayor Renner announced a quorum of Board members present to conduct City business.

22C-0365 – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge was recited.

22C-0366 - REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE

No reports.

22C-0367 – CITIZENS COMMENTS

Ben Richard of 11380 Dandar St (Guy's Towing). Richard explained that his business was on the last Council agenda for an annexation agreement. The agreement was approved, but he was expecting a chance to rebut or negotiate. He wants to enter new information into the record for the possibility of reconsideration. He explained that his family wants to stay in the city and have their buildings together, but they do own 10 acres outside of the city where they could build. He explained that construction costs are high for building the new street, especially for a small family business. Some cities share in this cost. He wants to put in a beautiful building and two new commercial lots with highway frontage. He believes these lots would be very viable it would be lucrative to have these lots available right on Highway 20.

Richard stated that they plan to meet with city staff to continue to negotiate for city assistance with the cost of installing the street.

He stated that his business is a good community asset that does a lot for city, including towing abandoned vehicles and not billing the city. They work to keep families in town by having high schoolers work there and encourage them to go on to school and come back for fulltime employment. He said nearly all their customers are from Jo Daviess County and when they build, they will use 90% local contractors from the county.

He reiterated that he is asking for negotiations to discuss amending the annexation agreement to obtain assistance for the installation of the street.

CONSENT AGENDA CA22-18

22C-0368 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2022

22C-0369 – APPROVAL OF A CONTRACT WITH GEOSTAR MECHANICAL FOR BACKFLOW PREVENTION DEVICE INSPECTION AT $52.50 PER DEVICE

22C-0370 – APPROVAL OF BUDGET AMENDMENT BA23-04 FOR LOCALGOV TAX COLLECTION SOFTWARE SOLUTION

22C-0371 – APPROVAL OF CHANGE ORDER #4 FOR THE WEST SIDE UTILITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Motion: Bernstein moved, seconded by Kieffer, to approve the consent agenda CA22-18.

Discussion: None.

Roll Call: AYES: Hahn, Kieffer, McCoy, Bernstein, Renner.
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Westemeier, Wienen

The motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

22C-0352 – RECONSIDERATION OF DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON A REQUEST BY AMERICAN LEGION POST 193 TO HONOR HENRY H. TAYLOR IN GRANT PARK

Motion: Hahn moved, seconded by McCoy, to open and reconsider the request by American Legion Post 193 to Honor Henry H. Taylor in Grant Park and restrict the height of the complete statue to 6.5 feet, 22C-0352.

Discussion: Mayor Renner briefly described that the original proposal was for 7.5 feet but we have since learned that the Washburn statue in Washburn Park is 6.5 feet. This is the new information causing the reconsideration.

McCoy thinks it makes sense for all the similar statue to be the same height. This would also apply to the previously approved statues of the nine generals. Kieffer agreed.

Roll Call: AYES: Kieffer, McCoy, Bernstein, Hahn, Renner.
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Westemeier, Wienen

The motion carried.

22C-0353- DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON A CONTRACT FOR A COMMUNITY-WIDE SURVEILLANCE CAMERA SYSTEM

Discussion: Mayor Renner asked to postpone this until the next meeting. The mayor stated that he believes the full council should be present to discuss and vote on this ongoing topic.

Motion: Hahn moved, seconded by Kieffer, to postpone discussion on a contract for a Community-Wide Surveillance Camera System, 22C-0353.

Roll Call: AYES: McCoy, Bernstein, Hahn, Kieffer, Renner.
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Westemeier, Wienen

The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

22C-0372 - DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON A LICENSE FOR NATHAN BUSSAN, 201 S. BENCH STREET, FOR ENCROACHMENTS ON THE WASHINGTON STREET RIGHT-OF-WAY

Motion: McCoy moved, seconded by Hahn, to approve a license for Nathan Bussan, 201 S. Bench Street, for encroachments on the Washington Street Right-of-Way as per agenda item 22C-0372.

Discussion: McCoy stated that no one knew whose property it was until the survey was conducted as part of the real estate transaction. This will facilitate the sale and allow the owner to move as he wishes.

Hahn said this is property that we all thought was owned by the property owner anyway.

The mayor said the house and wall were constructed long ago. People back then just built where they wanted. The license will help correct the error.

Roll Call: AYES: Bernstein, Hahn, Kieffer, McCoy, Renner.
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Westemeier, Wienen

The motion carried.

22C-0373- DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON AN APPEAL BY DAVE AND BRAND GERGESCZ, 1000 THIRD STREET, OF A HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RULING TO DENY THE USE OF ALUMINUM SOFFIT AND FACIA

Motion: Kieffer moved, seconded by McCoy, to deny the use of aluminum soffit and facia.

Discussion: Kieffer said it looked like the Historic Preservation Commission did their homework on this. He was not going to go against them when they voted unanimously. He said that according to the minutes of the HPC meeting, the contractor did not even get permits for the work.

Renner agreed and he understood that the complainant presented other homes as evidence of the use of similar materials, but they were installed before our time and they were typically non-distinctive homes.

Roll Call: AYES: Bernstein, Hahn, Kieffer, McCoy, Renner
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Westemeier, Wienen

The motion carried.

22C-0374- DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON A REQUEST BY THE ILLINOIS OFFICE OF TOURISM AND GALENA COUNTRY TOURISM FOR FILMING IN GALENA, OCTOBER 4-6

Motion: Hahn moved, seconded by Bernstein, to approve the Request by the Illinois Office of Tourism and Galena Country Tourism for Filming in Galena, October 4-6 and the reservation/closing of a few parking spaces.

Discussion: The Mayor said the block on Main Street from Hill to Perry would close that day for 4-5 hours. There would be no parking on Perry Street that day to allow the detour to return to north Main Street from Commerce Street.

Hahn said it is a worthwhile project since it promotes Galena.

Roll Call: AYES: Bernstein, Hahn, Kieffer, McCoy, Renner
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Westemeier, Wienen

The motion carried.

22C-0375 – WATER AND SEWER OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE REPORT BY THE US. WATER CORPORATION

U.S. Water manager, Andrew Schuler, appeared to answer questions about his monthly written report. He expressed disappointment about the high water loss figure. He explained he is working with Sue, Matt, and Public Works to identify possible causes. His crew recently found an issue at top of Prospect that could account for some of the loss. They are addressing this leak now. He is also planning to undertake a leak survey soon. At this stage, he does not know if the loss or unbilled water is a metering issue or leak issues.

The Mayor asked if they have the equipment to find the leaks.

Andrew said yes and explained how the equipment works for locating leaks.

The Mayor commented on the Jo Carroll bill and use of electricity although he knows it is a cost of running the business.

Andrew explained how they are using well houses. He explained that will soon complete the installation of variable frequency drives on the well motors. This will allow for gradual ramping of the motors and energy savings. He also stated that we should see improvements and normalization now that the West Side project is nearly complete and fully operational.

The Mayor commented on the photos in the report and stated that they are very helpful. Council members agreed.

Andrew said they are finding a considerable amount of fat and grease and they are causing issues in systems. They cause considerable wear and tear on infrastructure. He said that the City will need to consider regulations for businesses that produce fats and grease.

Bernstein asked why we are not using well houses 5-6. Schuler explained that they are offline because of the final work that needs to be completed on the West Side pressure reducing station valves. The work is planned for completion very soon.

Mayor and Council thanked Andrew and his team for all they do.

22C-0376- DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON RENEWAL OF EMPLOYEE HEALTH, DENTAL, LIFE, DISABILITY AND VISION INSURANCE POLICIES AND HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNT DISTRIBUTIONS

The Mayor asked the council to divide this item into two motions, insurance first then health savings account.

Motion: Hahn moved, seconded by Kieffer, to approve Renewal of Employee Health, Life, Disability (BCBS), Dental (MetLife), and Vision (Argus) Insurance Policies.

Discussion: Mayor Renner said the rate increases are not bad. Vision is paid 100% by the employee.

Roll Call: AYES: Hahn, Kieffer, McCoy, Bernstein, Renner
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Westemeier, Wienen

The motion carried.

Motion: Bernstein moved, seconded by McCoy, to approve the Health Savings Account Distributions to employee accounts on January 1, 2023, in the amount of $70,850.

Discussion: The Mayor said this is in accordance with the health savings account policy and is budgeted.

Roll Call: AYES: Kieffer, McCoy, Bernstein, Hahn, Renner
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Westemeier, Wienen

The motion carried.

22C-0377 – DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN APPLICATION TO THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR WAYFINDING ALONG THE GALENA RIVER TRAIL

Motion: Hahn moved, McCoy seconded, to approve Authorizing an Application to the Illinois Department of Transportation for Wayfinding Along the Galena River Trail.

Discussion: Hahn stated this is an application to fund signs along the trail. He believes the signs will be a nice and needed addition.

The mayor stated that it does not hurt to apply and if we are successful we will be just 20% of the $50,000 project cost.

Roll Call: AYES: McCoy, Bernstein, Hahn, Kieffer, Renner
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Westemeier, Wienen

22C-0378 – DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON FALL OPEN BURN

Motion: McCoy moved, seconded by Bernstein, to approve Galena's final open burn ever for November 3-7, with curbside pickup of yard waste the first three Tuesdays of this and every November and May thereafter as per agenda item 22C-0378.

Discussion: Hahn said he is not ready to ban open burn forever. Westemeier would not be on board either

Bernstein stated that Westemeier is not here—but she knows he would be against it.

Kieffer agreed that the smoke is bad. He has allergies and it bothers him. Other cities have completely banned. He stated that if we receive a lot of complaints, we can reconsider.

McCoy noted that at the outset of COVID, the Illinois Department of Public Health put out a press release about the irritants in the air from open burning causing respiratory problems and making COVID more dangerous. He knows fire pits will still be used for burning leaves. He noted the city has an ordinance on fire pits and that creates controls. He also suggested that a person can move away from fire pit smoke, but open burning effects neighborhoods and large areas of residences. He said that we would offer curbside pickup of yard waste, haul it to our landfill, and burn it when the conditions are right in the winter. This would be a controlled burn in an EPA approved location.

Kieffer said that the free pickup is a good service that should eliminate complaints? He reminded everyone that during the burn last fall, some fire smoldered for days.

The mayor did not want to vote tonight on making the burn ban indefinite. He wanted to wait for the full council to vote. He reminded that each ward of the city would then be represented in the vote. The mayor restated the motion.

Kieffer was ok with postponing.

McCoy, who made the motion, wanted to vote today.

Roll Call: AYES: Bernstein, Kieffer, McCoy
NAYS: Hahn, Renner
ABSENT: Westemeier, Wienen

22C-0379 – DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON LOAN REQUEST #8 FOR IEPA LOAN 17-5811 IN THE AMOUNT OF $71,065.50 INCLUDING INVOICE #6 FROM FISCHER EXCAVATING AND ORIGIN DESIG INVOICE #77565

Motion: Kieffer moved, Hahn seconded, to approve Loan Request #8 for IEPA Loan 17-5811 in the Amount of $71,065.50 including Invoice #6 from Fischer Excavating and Origin Design Invoice #77565.

Discussion: Hahn said this is the final pay request. The project is finally done. He said it is time to pay the bills.

Renner said the EPA will pay the invoice and the city will repay the EPA as part of the grant and loan agreement.

Roll Call: AYES: Bernstein, Hahn, Kieffer, McCoy, Renner
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Westemeier, Wienen

22C-0380- DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF MUNICIPALLY OWNED SURPLUS PROPERTY – HILL STREET PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT AND TURNER HALL CHAIRS

Motion: McCoy moved, seconded by Bernstein, to approve an Ordinance authorizing the sale of municipally owned surplus property—Hill Street Playground Equipment and Turner Hall Chairs

Discussion: None.

Roll Call: AYES: Bernstein, Hahn, Kieffer, McCoy, Renner
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Westemeier, Wienen

The motion carried.

22C-0381– WARRANTS

Motion: Kieffer moved, seconded by McCoy, to approve the Warrants as presented, 22C-0381

Discussion: None.

Roll Call: AYES: Kieffer, McCoy, Bernstein, Renner
NAYS: None
ABSTAINED: Hahn
ABSENT: Westemeier, Wienen

The motion carried.

22C-0382 - ALDERPERSONS' COMMENTS

McCoy- Sorry to see former alderperson Laverne Greene had passed. He was on the Council when I started. Great guy and mentor.

Hahn -Ditto on Laverne Greene. He will be sadly missed.

Kieffer- Ditto again. Sat next to him for several years. He had Galena in his heart.

22C-0383– CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Moran explained that the street paving of Indian Ridge is complete. Brown Street will be completed in the coming days. West, Dodge, and High will be started soon. He also reported the Meeker Street parking lot lights are installed and operating, except one that was broken by the installer. The new lights in Shadow Bluff are also installed and will be operational soon. He went on to explain that the deer archery hunting season will begin October 1 and run through January 31. Moran thanked the Council for approving the employee insurance, he explained that even though there were modest premium increase, the City will save on total costs because of retirements and the associated changes to our employee census. The premium costs are well under the budgeted amount.

22C-0384– MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor said they would all miss Laverne as he was a super guy. He always put family and Galena first. October is going to be a busy month.

Next meeting will be on a Tuesday, October 11 due to Columbus Day on Monday, October 10.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: Hahn moved, seconded by Bernstein to recess to Executive Session to discuss the following:

- Section 2 (c) (5) – Purchase or lease of real estate.

Discussion: None.

Roll Call: AYES: Kieffer, McCoy, Bernstein, Hahn, Renner
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Westemeier, Wienen

The motion carried.

The meeting recessed at 7:14 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 7:32 p.m.

22C-0385 – ADJOURNMENT

Motion: McCoy moved, seconded by Hahn to adjourn.

Discussion: None.

Roll Call: AYES: McCoy, Bernstein, Hahn, Kieffer, Renner
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Westemeier, Wienen

The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Simmons
Deputy City Clerk