

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF 12 JULY 2021**

**21C-0280 – CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Renner called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Chambers at 101 Green Street on 12 July 2021.

**21C-0281 – ROLL CALL**

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

**21C-0282 – ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM**

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

**21C-0283 – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge was recited.

**21C-0284 - REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

No reports.

**21C-0285 – CITIZENS COMMENTS**

**Ilisa Farrell-Ericsson, 505 S. Bench Street** – Ericsson voiced concern with downtown parking and the fact that the current city budget doesn't include any expense line item for parking. Ericsson questions how the city can continue to ignore the needs of the residents.

**Tom Kramer, 517 S. Bench** – Kramer shared the following:

What the City needs to do immediately:

- Permanently declare a moratorium on Air B & B's until the city parking issue has been resolved.
- Reopen Main Street and the side streets that have been closed off giving back desperately need parking spaces.
- Shuttle tourists from the three school parking lots using the Jo Daviess County Transit or our 11 idle school busses. Once school begins shuttle tourists from Rec Park again using Jo Daviess County Transit.
- Do not allow commercial vehicles and trailers to park on Bench Street overnight on weekdays or any time on weekends.
- Establish a time limit for parked dumpsters on the street.
- Post signs along Bench and Magazine Streets for resident parking only Friday 10 a.m. to Monday 10 a.m. and issue permits for residents to be placed on driver side dashboard. Also provide churches with permits for church attendees that drive to church on Sunday morning and enforce through ticketing.
- Construct a permanent row of parking by the Train Depot that has been talked about for a few years.
- Move the Galena Farmers Market back to the Commerce Street and allocate city hall parking spaces for disabled parking on weekends instead of charging for public parking.
- Contract with the local trolley company for day passes for getting on and off at 4 stops: Train Depot, City Hall disabled parking lot, Hill and Main and Franklin and Main.
- Monitor the number of allotted guests to car ratio spaces for Air B & B's required to provide off street parking and establish fines for those that don't abide by the allotment.

Long term:

- Reinstating the annual City of Galena parking permit for those that live and work in Galena.
- Direct annual parking permit revenue and some of the amusement, food and beverage, hotel/motel tax revenue, video gaming and recreational marijuana tax revenue to construct a permanent parking structure or structures on Commerce Street with access from Commerce and Water Streets and charge daily parking fees.
- The property where Stair's grocery store was located has no historic significance. Declare eminent domain if necessary.

**Alana Turner, 402 S. Main Street** – Turner stated she was speaking from the standpoint of lodging and retail on the lower end of Main Street. Customers love the closed Main Street. She agrees there is a parking issue, and it is something that needs to be hammered out. Turner suggested adding stairs from the walking trail up to the walk bridge so people can utilize Depot Park more and get to the walking bridges. As far as the outdoor dining this year, she doesn't feel the city can pull it back this year as everything is set but next year there are definitely things that could be tweaked. She suggested hunkering it down to just restaurants which would open up a number of additional spaces. Turner feels there are things that could be tweaked to allow us to enjoy both sides of it and have extra happy customers. She urged the council to put some dollars and thinking behind it.

**Monique Bonnetain, 217 S. Main Street** – Bonnetain stated her guests speak very positively about the outdoor dining. There has been a wonderful financial impact by having the outdoor dining. Bonnetain stated they have hired 10 additional employees because of the outdoor dining. Bonnetain recommended continuing with the option of outdoor dining. While they were appreciative of only having to pay \$150 for the space, Bonnetain feels it would be fair for the city to have a "pay to play" type program where you would pay \$1,000 for each spot you have. This money could be earmarked for some of the new parking initiatives that others are bringing up to improve the parking situation. Customers are looking for places to dine outside. Bonnetain urged the Council to consider a way to work out this parking situation and continue to have outdoor dining as an option.

**Janelle Crowley, Retiree, Woodstock, Illinois** – Crowley advised Woodstock, Illinois faced very similar challenges that Galena is facing. Tourism began in Galena in the early 60's and parking has continuously been a problem. She feels Galena has done a great job with parking. Crowley stated she has never seen this type of energy in the city of Galena. Crowley urged the Council to explore options with the village of St. Charles Illinois, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, and Woodstock Illinois who have faced similar situations. We have an opportunity to turn this into an opportunity for some revenues. She recommended putting together a committee to make this a positive outcome.

**Kimberly Thompson, 204 N. Main** – Thompson feels outdoor dining has been very positive. She feels banning it is not a solution. Thompson stated she has never seen the town so alive. Knowing this was a topic, Thompson advised she talked to customers all weekend long. She has not received any negative comments from customers. Some did say parking was a problem, but they weren't going to turn around and go back home. Thompson stated Galena needs this. We just came off of a hard year. She urged the council to continue with outdoor dining. Given the number of visitors, it is obvious it is working. She feels if any business owner on Main Street says they are having problems because of outdoor dining, there is much more going on than outdoor dining.

**Emma Jane Mayer, 420 Elk Street** - As the General Manager at Country Inn and Suites, Mayer stated she has a unique perspective on seeing guests come in on a weekly basis and knowing how full everything is every single weekend. She has been getting the feedback from guests on what they are experiencing in trying to park downtown. Mayer stated her partial solution to this parking problem would be private enterprise called Main Street Trolley's that would shuttle people from the campground and hotels to downtown Main Street. This would allow visitors to leave

their cars behind and go downtown and enjoy Galena. Mayer stated she would propose to provide a shuttle once per hour on the busy days, Thursday-Sunday to get people downtown at a nominal fee to the guest. It would take approximately a 15-minute journey to get them downtown. Any one journey would take at least 30 cars off the road and off the parking spaces. In a day, Mayer estimates that that could be as many as 330 parking spots not utilized by guests but does not stop them from coming into town. Less cars could certainly help with parking on Bench Street. Mayer stated by potentially pushing the schedule up to 11 p.m., it could potentially reduce the number of drunk drivers. Mayer stated she would like feedback on the proposal.

**Egon Wolf, 202 N. Bench Street** – Wolf urged the council not to use this city as a warehouse. Use every square inch to make money. Make it nice for those who come here and those who do business here. Wolff advised he has looked at other communities globally. Other communities have taken parking and moved it outside of the city. Wolff recommended looking at the lower part of Gateway Park and the old power plant area for parking. They are easily accessible to downtown.

**Paul Pendola, 201 Hill Street** – Pendola, Galena Spoon Company, stated he has seen sales increasing on a monthly basis since January. In May the sales increase was so significant, he had to hire two additional employees. It has been nothing but positive and customers have shared the same sentiments. Outdoor dining brings energy to the community and retail is alive and well.

Pendola advised, prior to carving spoons, he worked for Walt Disney Co. His job there was planning events and learning how to move people. Pendola was also an organizer for the Salt Lake City Olympics and was on the team for the opening of Navy Pier. He stated he has tremendous experience in this area, and he would be happy to join a committee.

**Patrick Murphy, 204 Hill Street** – Murphy stated there are two issues: parking and outdoor dining. Outdoor dining has done nothing but positive things. The improvements we have seen this year from last year are leaps and bounds. Murphy stated he has been here for 8 years, and parking has always been an issue. He urged the council to keep the two challenges separate. Outdoor dining has been successful and has been handled well. Parking still needs to be worked on. The residents should be factored in first and then build upon the customer experience.

**Rose Noble, Galena Country Tourism** - Noble felt there were some great ideas thrown out. Noble wanted to make sure the city recognizes some of the things they advocate for which is pedestrian initiatives. She stated if things move forward in terms of a committee, she hopes the city takes them up on their offer to provide research and surveying as well as consider pedestrian focused initiatives. Noble liked the idea of moving parking outside and focusing on the inner circle for pedestrian gatherings. Noble recommended looking at the research and implementing in Galena. Some ideas are concentrating on connectivity, make sure there is proper lighting and making sure we have options like a shuttle service for transportation.

**Brianne Van Hemert, owner, Scent Workshop, 307 S. Main Street** – As a new business owner, she is here to provide an experience for customers on how to create French perfuming and techniques for candles, colognes, and perfumes. Van Hemert stated she would prefer to see outdoor dining outside her business vs. cars parked all day. She prefers to see outdoor dining because it provides an experience for her customers. She noted people love it and enjoy it. She is proud to be a business owner in Galena and would push outdoor dining. She also supports moving parking outside and making Main Street a pedestrian mall.

**Eric Hilton, 220 N. Bench Street** – Hilton advised he has lived here for 3 years. He closed a business that was moved here from the Wisconsin Dells after 8 successful years. They moved the business to Galena because they thought it would be a good fit. It turned out COVID hit, and the decision was made to close the business when the city made the decision to allow restaurants to be open and retail had to be closed. Hilton stated what he is seeing is this

wasteland of downtown that sits every day with nobody in the seats for hours and hours. Hilton stated summer is half over and he looks every day and sees nobody downtown. The real situation is there is no parking. Right now, it doesn't look like anybody is here. Where are all of the people? Where is all that traffic? The foot traffic is gone.

**Amelia Wilson, Ryan Mansion** - Wilson stated she loves the outdoor dining; however, she feels it went too far. She thinks the restaurants on one end of Main Street have way too many tables. She feels there is a way to do it and still have traffic going through. That is the biggest complaint. It changed the whole dynamic having half closed and half not. The people most upset are the people on the open side because it is affecting some of them. Wilson feels there are too many tables on one section of town and not the other. Wilson loves the idea of the trolley.

**Lenny Hosie, 117 S. Bench Street** – Hosie feels he is hearing two discussions here being put into one discussion. Clearly there are a lot of varying opinions about the street being closed for dining. Parking is a whole different situation. We are talking about thousands of cars and the loss of only 100 parking spaces. Outdoor dining or no outdoor dining should be separate from that topic. Hosie also finds it baffling with all of the talk about parking that no one is talking about who will pay for this as none of this is free. He feels if people want to park, they should have to pay.

### **LIQUOR COMMISSION**

**Motion:** Hahn moved, seconded by Kieffer, to adjourn as the City Council and reconvene as the Liquor Commission.

**Discussion:** None.

**Roll Call:** AYES: Hahn, Kieffer, McCoy, Westemeier, Wiene, Bernstein, Renner  
NAYS: None

The motion carried.

### **21C-0286 – DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON AN APPLICATION FOR A CORPORATION MANAGER LIQUOR LICENSE FOR TREVOR T. HARRIS AT STONEY CREEK INN OF GALENA, 940 GALENA SQUARE DRIVE**

**Motion:** McCoy moved, seconded by Bernstein, to approve the application for a Corporation Manager Liquor License for Trevor T. Harris at Stoney Creek Inn of Galena, 940 Galena Square Drive, 21C-0286.

**Discussion:** None.

**Roll Call:** AYES: Kieffer, McCoy, Westemeier, Bernstein, Hahn, Renner  
NAYS: None  
ABSTAIN: Wiene

The motion carried.

**Motion:** Hahn moved, seconded by Kieffer, to adjourn as the Liquor Commission and reconvene as the City Council.

**Discussion:** None.

**Roll Call:** AYES: McCoy, Westemeier, Wiene, Bernstein, Hahn, Kieffer, Renner  
NAYS: None

The motion carried.

**CONSENT AGENDA CA21-13**

**21C-0287 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF JUNE 28, 2021**

**Motion:** Kieffer moved, seconded by Westemeier, to approve Consent Agenda, CA21-13.

**Discussion:** None.

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

The motion carried.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**21C-0271 – DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON BENCH STREET PARKING**

**Motion:** Bernstein moved, seconded by McCoy, to direct city staff to research parking alternatives including a downtown shuttle service and the installation of smart kiosks which would benefit the residents Bench Street and the city as a whole.

**Discussion:** Bernstein feels the city would be well advised to find some solutions that are global and will have the greatest impact on the parking problem. McCoy agreed adding that parking has been an issue and has been talked about forever.

Mayor Renner agreed stating this isn't something that the city has been ignoring. There isn't a quick fix. The city needs to work on this as efficiently and effectively as we can to find answers.

Westemeier stated that there have been numerous parking committees over the years. It is difficult to come up with a good plan when we sit between a hill and the river. The city can't start tearing down buildings to create parking. He added the city has been working on a shuttle. Westemeier advised the Depot Lot will hold 400 cars. The city needs to find a way to get people to park on the grass. The city also added 54 new parking spaces on Meeker Street. Westemeier noted the money for the new lot came from the shuttle fund and not taxpayer dollars. The new lot has been filled every weekend. Westemeier agrees people should pay to park. The city isn't ignoring the problem. It has been a problem for 50 years.

Kieffer recommended installing better signage leading to the remote lots.

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

The motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**21C-0288 – POSSIBLE RECONSIDERATION OF OUTDOOR SEATING PLAN FOR 2021**

No action was taken.

**21C-0289 – WARRANTS**

**Motion:** Wienen moved, seconded by Hahn, to approve the Warrants as presented, 21C-0289.

**Discussion:** None.

**Roll Call:** AYES: Kieffer, McCoy, Westemeier, Wiene, Bernstein, Hahn, Renner  
NAYS: None

The motion carried.

### **21C-0290 – ALDERPERSONS' COMMENTS**

**Thank you** – Kieffer thanked everyone for coming out and sharing some great ideas. We will continue working on it. Hahn agreed stating parking has been an issue for a long time.

**Thank you** – McCoy thanked everyone for coming and added it is important for the council to hear their input.

**Thank you** – McCoy thanked the Public Works Department for doing a great job after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. McCoy stated he was a little disappointed to see how the levy looked the morning after the 4<sup>th</sup>, but it was cleaned up within hours.

**Parking** – Westemeier agreed it was great to see everyone here. He hopes to have a solution sooner rather than later.

**Comments** – Bernstein stated she appreciates the fact that people are coming to the council telling them what they want before things are acted upon. Many times, people don't say anything until after the fact. She thanked everyone for coming and urged them to continue to let the council know what they want.

### **21C-0291 – CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS**

**Grant** – Moran reported in April the City applied for a 2-million-dollar grant through the Federal Surface Transportation Act. This would represent 80 percent of the \$2.5 million dollar turn lane project at the hospital. The city has been notified that the bill has passed the House and is moving on to the Senate before going on to the President. Hopefully this will continue to move forward. The had to be the applicant for those funds and will receive them. The hospital will be responsible for the \$500,000 match.

**Thank you** – Moran thanked the Galena Gazette for the recent article on the lead service line replacement. They did a good job covering the issue. The City will be sending letters out this week to properties constructed before 1987. The city is going for a grant that will help homeowners replace their service lines.

### **21C-0292 – MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Renner thanked everyone for coming and expressing their views. Renner urged everyone to come any time whether it is good, bad, or ugly. Let the council know their concerns. Renner added we will continue to work on parking and added the work on Park Avenue is going well.

### **21C-0293 – ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** Hahn moved, seconded by Kieffer to adjourn.

**Discussion:** None.

**Roll Call:** AYES: McCoy, Westemeier, Wiene, Bernstein, Hahn, Kieffer, Renner  
NAYS: None

The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Beth Hyde". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Beth Hyde  
City Clerk