
SYCAMORE CITY COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF July 15, 2019

ROLL CALL

Mayor Lang called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and City Clerk Mary Kalk called the roll. Those Alderpersons present were: Chuck Stowe, Steve Braser, Nancy Copple, Josh Huseman, Rick Kramer, Pete Paulsen, and Virginia Sherrod. Alan Bauer was absent. City Attorney Keith Foster was also present.

INVOCATION - Ray Tilstra, (Retired) Reformed Church, gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Led by visitor, Kevin Strohm, Peace Corps

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION

Alderperson Kramer moved to approve the agenda and Alderperson Sherrod seconded the motion.

VOICE VOTE

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

AUDIENCE TO VISITORS – Kevin Strohm, Peace Corps, Sycamore, is on a break from a two-year deployment with the Peace Corps in Africa. His parents, Jeff and Mary, and his sister Cara, were also present.

Kevin Strohm, 1305 William St., spoke about his time teaching at a secondary school in Cameroon. He explained that the goals of the Peace Corps are to help the community you work in and have a cross-cultural exchange with them. He spoke about the languages, religions, and the hospitality. He thanked Rod Swartzendruber for setting this up and invited anyone with questions to look him up on Facebook.

Alderwoman Virginia Sherrod asked Kevin Strohm if he knew Pastor Eric Ngum Mangek, formerly of Victory Baptist Church, who is also from Cameroon and said she would get them in contact with each other.

Don Paulsen, 245 W. State Street, Sycamore, asked why his Façade Grant Application is only for \$5,000 for multiple storefronts when PJ's received \$10,000 for two addresses in one building.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of the Minutes for the Regular City Council Meeting of July 1, 2019.
- B. Payment of the Bills for July 15, 2019 in the amount of \$713,452.35.

MOTION

Alderperson Stowe moved to approve the Consent Agenda and Alderperson Paulsen seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Mayor Lang called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderpersons Stowe, Braser, Copple, Huseman, Kramer, Paulsen and Sherrod voted aye. Motion carried 7-0.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND BILLS

REPORT OF OFFICERS

City Manager – Brian Gregory said the Council will see quite impressive work in the Fire Department Annual Report. There has been a lot of progress in the Downtown area. They appreciate the Public Works department, who painted the crosswalks over the weekend. Public Works and Maggie Peck worked on Johnson's Junction, which has been refaced and branded to match the Downtown area. Special Events, which are in full force, go off very easy in Sycamore for those that are putting them on. He said it really is a collaborative effort with all the departments, from applying in the Clerk's office to inspections by the Building and Engineering and Fire Departments to barricades from the Public Works Department and security from the Police Department, ensuring the events go off safely. He said the special events are part of what makes Sycamore special. Although they come off as an easy process, there is a lot of work that happens behind the scenes. He also welcomed back Scott Zak.

Police Chief – Jim Winters gave a mid-year update on crime statistics. Last year at this point there were 107 of the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) offenses, which are classified as the most serious offenses by the (FBI). This year, there are 113. Although, it is a bit ahead of last year, Sycamore still has a relatively low crime rate. Officers are working to make it as low as possible. The Police Department will partner with Special Olympics and other local law enforcement agencies to serve lunch on Friday, July 26th, at Texas Roadhouse from 11am-1:30pm. The Police Department will partner with the Fire Department Friday, August 2nd for a golf outing in Sycamore where proceeds will help benefit scholarship funds and help with other activities such as the Easter Egg Hunt.

Fire Chief – Pete Polarek said he put a press release out last Friday for cooling centers located at the City Center during business hours and the Police side of the Public Safety Building. He said to always keep an eye on and check on our elderly folks.

Director of Public Works – Fred Busse said the drop box at the 202 W. Page Street location will close permanently on Friday, July 19th. The new drop box, at 475 North Cross Street, is open and blacktop drive completed. They will be flowing a series of hydrants around the city next week on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, to collect data for the water master plan.

Treasurer/Asst. to the City Manager – Adam Orton said the benchmark for the June Treasurer's Report, on a cash-basis, is 17%. The second of six property taxes installments have been received for a total of \$935,000. The City and State Sales Tax are at 14% and 15% respectively and the Restaurant & Bar Tax is at 16%. Overall Revenues are at 22% but drop to 18% when weighted with the property tax. The General Fund Expenditures are at 17% and both pension funds saw decent growth in June. The auditors have finished the field work and are on to report writing. They are pleased so far.

Building & Engineering Director – John Sauter said the State of Illinois recently adopted the 2018 Illinois Energy Conservation Code, which is an update to the current 2015 Energy Code. They reviewed the new code and highlighted what they consider to be the major changes and emailed it to all the local tradespeople and architects. They also sent it to the DeKalb County Building & Development Association so they could send it out to their membership as well. The code became effective July 1st, but they're going to work with everyone to give them time to familiarize themselves with everything. He said it is a State-wide code, so everyone must follow it, but Sycamore will also adopt it locally when they do the building code updates so that it's reflected in the Municipal Code and on the City website.

Director of Human and Administrative Resources – Maggie Peck – no report tonight.

City Engineer – Mark Bushnell said the drier weather has allowed work to ramp up at the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) including pouring the bottom of the large sequencing batch reactor tanks. They have had a drone flying over the site periodically and hope to post them for viewing on YouTube, with a link on the website/Facebook page.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance – Alan Bauer - no report

Public Safety – Pete Paulsen - no report.

Public Works – Chuck Stowe - no report

PUBLIC HEARINGS - None

ORDINANCES

A. Ordinance 2019.14—An Ordinance Authorizing the Re-Zoning of Certain Properties in Phase I of the Northwest Sub Area From R-1 Residential to R-4 Rural Residential, Including a Portion of Motel Corner Estates (Michael Schelkopf Properties: Part of PIN 06-19-100-002) in the City of Sycamore, Illinois. First and Second Reading.

City Manager Brian Gregory said the Council considered the same action for all of the other parcels in Phase I of the Northwest Sub Area as they were annexed and default rezoned from R-1 Residential to R-4 Rural Residential. This PIN number was the only one not included and comes from the Planning & Zoning Commission with a favorable recommendation by a vote of 9-0 after a public hearing was held.

MOTION

Aldersperson Braser moved to waive First Reading for Ordinance 2019.14 and Aldersperson Kramer seconded the motion.

VOICE VOTE

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

MOTION

Alderperson Braser moved to approve Ordinance 2019.14 and Alderperson Kramer seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Mayor Lang called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderpersons Stowe, Braser, Copple, Huseman, Kramer, Paulsen and Sherrod voted aye. Motion carried 7-0.

B. Ordinance No. 2019.15—An Ordinance Approving a Special Use Planned Unit Development, Preliminary Plat, Final Plat, and Development Plans for the Fowler Farm Estates Subdivision (PIN number 05-24-200-026), in the City of Sycamore, Illinois. First and Second Reading.

City Manager Brian Gregory said this also comes from the Planning & Zoning Commission with a favorable recommendation by a vote of 9-0, after a public hearing. He said there was a lot of work that went into this and he reviewed the background as noted in the agenda. This 41.57 acres is zoned R-4 and consists of nine lots of which eight are developable, as one of the lots is a drainage easement. The lots are from 3.08 to 7.28 acres and comes as a Special Use Planned Unit Development because the lots are irregular size. The Final Plat also includes the language between the petitioners and the Sportsman's Club that would appear on each and every final plat. There is an easement for a future improved pathway that the Park District requested. The petitioner's attorney informed him that there is already interest in three of the lots. The intent that was to start on the project this year. In addition to the Final Plat, there is a Preliminary Plat, Development Plan, Covenants, and Declarations.

Alderman Kramer asked how concrete the agreement with the Sportsman's Club is, as far as protecting them down the road from any noise complaints from neighbors.

City Manager Brian Gregory said that has come up at every step of the way and said a significant effort was made crafting that language satisfactory to the Sportsman's Club. It was asked at the Planning & Zoning meeting what defines "normal use". He said the city does not regulate the Sportsman's Club and what defines "normal use" is up to those regulating bodies. This is actually a private easement between the private owners and the Sportsman's Club. The City supports this by facilitating that they are recorded.

Mayor Lang said it's interesting that there was a roomful of people at the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting and now there is no one here. That is a good sign that residents are pleased with how this development is going.

Alderperson Copple asked Chief Winters if he has had any complaints for the club.

Chief Winters said he thinks that most of the residents are accustomed to it. He knows they have weekend hours and do shoot one week night, but said this is not Sycamore's jurisdiction so those complaints would go to the County.

City Manager Brian Gregory added that in 2015 and 2016, the room was packed. There were several changes to the R-4 zoning classification based on that public input. This is what Mayor Lang was referring to.

MOTION

Alderperson Braser moved to waive First Reading for Ordinance 2019.15 and Alderperson Copple seconded the motion.

VOICE VOTE

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

MOTION

Alderperson Stowe moved to adopt Ordinance 2019.15 and Alderperson Paulsen seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Mayor Lang called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderpersons Stowe, Braser, Copple, Huseman, Kramer, Paulsen and Sherrod voted aye. Motion carried 7-0.

C. Ordinance No. 2019.16—An Ordinance Approving a Final Plat of the Airport Road South Subdivision (Commonly Known as the Sycamore Park District Soccer Complex, PIN 09-04-400-007 and 09-04-251-001) in the City of Sycamore, Illinois. First and Second Reading.

City Manager Brian Gregory said this property was annexed to the City in 2016. The Park District has prepared a Final Plat that includes one lot totaling 92.24 acres west of Airport Road and south of the current Sports Complex. The Planning & Zoning Commission forwarded a favorable recommendation by a vote of 8-0-1 last Monday with the abstention being from the Park District Representative.

MOTION

Aldersperson Kramer moved to waive First Reading for Ordinance 2019.16 and Aldersperson Sherrod seconded the motion.

VOICE VOTE

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

MOTION

Aldersperson Kramer moved to approve Ordinance 2019.16 and Aldersperson Sherrod seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Mayor Lang called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderspersons Stowe, Braser, Copple, Huseman, Kramer, Paulsen and Sherrod voted aye. Motion carried 7-0.

RESOLUTIONS

A. Resolution No. 800—A Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Legal Services Agreement Between the City of Sycamore and the Foster, Buick, Conklin and Lundgren, LLC.

City Manager Brian Gregory said this would authorize a two year extension for legal services with Foster, Buick, Conklin, and Lundgren Law Group. They have significant history as they have represented the City of Sycamore for 16 years and thanked him and the firm for their partnership. He reviewed the following:

- *The term of the agreement is for two years (September 1, 2019 through August 31, 2021; with two additional one-year extension options through 2023).*
- *The firm's monthly retainer will be \$6,000 in year one and increase by 2% each year thereafter. Foster, Buick, Conklin and Lundgren will regularly schedule two hours per week on the City premises to meet with staff.*
- *Work which does not fall under the retainer (e.g. bond work, litigation, labor negotiations, and annexations) would continue to be billed at \$150 per hour during the first two years of the agreement. Work for any services where the City will be passing the cost of such services on to 3rd parties will be billed at the firm's normal rates. The hourly billable rate will be increased by 2% each year the renewal options are exercised.*
- *The essential duties and responsibilities of the firm would remain unchanged.*

Alderman Braser asked if it was a mutual agreement for the two year term or just the City's. .

City Manager Brian Gregory said it was the City's option.

MOTION

Aldersperson Braser moved to approve Resolution 800 and Aldersperson Kramer seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Mayor Lang called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderspersons Stowe, Braser, Copple, Huseman, Kramer, Paulsen, and Sherrod voted aye. Motion carried 7-0.

Attorney Keith Foster said the office hours will be from 9am to 11am on Wednesdays. He thanked everyone for supporting them. It's been 16 years and they still completely enjoy representing the City of Sycamore. It is a pleasure to work with Brian, Curt, the department heads, staff, and the Council. It has been both an honor and pleasure.

CONSIDERATIONS

A. Consideration of an Administration Recommendation to Enter Into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the County of DeKalb Regarding the Sale of Certain Properties, Peace Road Improvements Compensatory Storage and Relocation of Material at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

City Manager Brian Gregory said this is for direction with no action tonight. He highlighted the framework of an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) that has been discussed with the County, with whom the City has a positive working relationship. The IGA starts with the sale of property from the City to the County, which includes the former water buildings at 202 E. Page Street and the storage building on the Engh Farm at 1730 N. Main Street. MAI Certified Appraisals were performed with fair market values totaling \$475,000. The framework of the IGA between the City and County uses the fair market value as the sale price. The proceeds of the sale should give the City the ability to replicate the storage space (the building may be enlarged with additional capital funds) on the Public Works campus at 475 N. Cross Street. The County will acquire the space it needs near its main campus and within available resources. He said this helps meet the needs of both the City and the County. The IGA framework also includes allowing the City to make its compensatory storage bigger in providing compensatory storage to satisfy the needs of the County's Peace Road project while creating the required compensatory storage for City's Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) project. This will meet both needs and in return, the County will haul the dirt from its current location on the Public Works Campus to an off-site location and use a significant portion of this dirt for grading along the Peace Road project. He reiterated that the communication helps as they serve the same people. He is looking for direction and said that plats of both properties being sold need to be completed before the IGA can be brought forward for action. It is anticipated that the plats will come before the Planning and Zoning Commission on August 12th with action on the plats and IGA scheduled for the City Council on August 19th. The County Board is set to consider the IGA at the regular meeting on August 21st.

Alderman Stowe said it is a great way to get two governments cooperating, save the taxpayers money, and said to definitely "go ahead".

Alderman Kramer said to move forward.

Alderman Paulsen said the compensatory storage at the WWTP is phenomenal and having them move the dirt out of there is a good thing. This will save the County a lot of money not having to acquire land for the storage and said this is great work by all parties involved.

Consensus of the Council was to move forward.

Mayor Lang said a lot has been learned between the County and City with the jail and growth of the Exchange Street campus and with other things. It's great to work together.

B. Consideration of an Architectural Review Committee Recommendation to Award a Downtown Façade Improvement Grant to Don Paulsen of Paulsen Appliances Located at 245 W. State Street.

City Manager Brian Gregory said this comes from the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) with a recommendation by a vote of 3-0. Mr. Paulsen has brought forward a few iterations of the façade for the ARC to review over the last four-five months. The plan is to remove the awnings and install LP siding across the front to create a unified façade. A new awning will be installed over the main entrance, along with a new glass entry door, a replacement entry door for the upstairs apartment, and seven gooseneck light fixtures. The project is estimated at over \$34,000 and is eligible for a 50% match up to \$5,000. He said the program was changed through Council action three-four years ago where language was added to the program that states, "In the case of one building owner with multiple tenants or storefronts, a determination as to the eligibility of any or all tenancies will be made on the merits of the proposal". This language was added to limit grants by the storefront and not by address, yet still allowing for two unique storefronts in one building to qualify. He said the question of PJ's façade grant is that it is a corner building with two stand-alone facades that would be eligible because it fronts two streets; State and Maple Streets.

Alderman Huseman asked how long Paulsen's has been downtown.

Don Paulsen said they have been there for 41 years and said he could really use the financial help, as Paulsen's is the centerpiece of town and he's trying to make it look good. He said he knows what the rules are but found out tonight that it's only \$5,000 and wasn't privy to that before. He's not happy about that and said he feels like it has been a year and a half battle to get this done. He said he doesn't understand it and said there are other options.

Alderman Huseman asked if the City has provided grants to Mr. Paulsen before.

City Manager Brian Gregory said the City actually replaced all the upper windows 10-15 years ago at 100% cost in the area of \$30,000 to \$40,000.

Don Paulsen said that was not his idea and he did not ask for that. He wanted to do the front of the building then, but it was the City that decided that that second story windows were to be replaced.

Alderman Kramer asked if there is any way to adjust the grant amounts, legally.

City Manager Brian Gregory said, legally, they could, but said the Council would have to think about the message it sends.

Alderman Cople asked if it could be done by addresses.

City Manager Brian Gregory said that is how it was and the program was modified away from that.

Alderman Cople asked how many other businesses are there in Sycamore that do that.

City Manager Brian Gregory said there are quite a few. He said there is about a \$25,000 allocation per year for the program. If a business had three addresses, it would eat up three grant amounts or \$15,000 out of the \$25,000. Some years the applications were minimal but other years, they were pretty significant and some years were exceeding our allocation. That's where the discussion started to bring back language that would eliminate that. He said it's the practice and the principal of how the program is implemented.

Alderman Cople asked if Mr. Paulsen could apply for a grant for each address each year.

City Manager Brian Gregory said it is limited to one grant every three years and each would go through the ARC committee process.

Alderman Huseman asked if there are any longer standing tenants downtown.

City Manager Brian Gregory said a few including the Clock Shop and Mr. G's

Alderman Huseman said, as a newcomer, without the history of the addresses and changes, he would generally support more than \$5,000 for a long-standing retailer, but also recognizes the work from previous councils to get here and that there are also limited funds.

Alderman Stowe asked if there were façade grants for the windows previously and also for the original awnings.

Don Paulsen said when this program first started, there was some repair across the four buildings and encompassed a joint project with Cooper's Jewelry.

Alderman Braser asked if the applicant was on a timeline or if the Council should wait and, would it affect the business if it was put on hold and didn't get done this year.

Don Paulsen said he wanted to do it last year and said it won't affect the business other than that the awing [doesn't look good]. He said he would like to get it done and now he is also contending with the timeline of the contractor.

Alderman Braser said if they can't adjust it, they can't adjust and he can take the \$5,000.

MOTION

Alderman Kramer moved to approve a Façade Grant for \$5,000 to Paulsen Appliance. He said if they can't approve more, they can't approve more, but it would still be an extra \$5,000 and said he would take it in a heartbeat. Alderman Stowe seconded the motion so the Council could discuss the motion.

Alderman Stowe said the problem he has is they could at least do the \$5,000 and maybe make a motion to reconsider if they find a way to do something else. It makes the most sense to get things started rather than holding everything up.

City Manager Brian Gregory said that's a good point because the program states that work cannot start until Council takes action. If this is approved, then work can start.

Alderman Huseman asked if \$10,000 or \$15,000 of the \$25,000 has been used so far.

City Manager Brian Gregory said he would have to look, but the money, which is not spent but allocated, has so far been allocated for Morningstar Media, California Coffee, and PJ's.

Alderman Huseman said, as a reinvestment in our downtown, that maybe the \$25,000 just isn't enough and that it might be worth reconsidering for the next fiscal year.

City Manager Brian Gregory said it can be amended as long as there are enough reserves.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Mayor Lang called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Alderpersons Stowe, Braser, Copple, Huseman, Kramer, and Sherrod voted aye. Alderman Paulsen abstained. Motion carried 6-0-1.

Mayor Lang asked how they are leaving this.

City Manager Brian Gregory said he would waive direction as to what staff would like to do. He said if anyone hasn't reviewed the program, he will send the program with the pertinent areas highlighted, to provide a background.

C. Consideration of a Presentation of the 2018 Fire Department Annual Report.

Chief Polarek presented the FY19 Fire Department Annual Report which is dedicated to Matt Listy, who was a big part of the community and of the Fire Department. He covered highlights on the following pages:

- Page 21, Request for Emergency Service – shows calls increased from FY10-FY19 and a graph on Multiple Call clusters.
- Page 24, Emergency Medical Services activity – increased 315 patients seen and 100 additional patients transferred to the hospital from last year.
- Page 25, Emergency Medical Services – Lift Assists/Medical Alarms
- Page 23, Fire/Non-Fire Response history
- Page 30, Comparison Chart Sycamore Fire Department versus Illinois and national averages.

In reference to the Residential Knox Box Program that was started three years ago with 25 Knox boxes purchased with grant money, he said they are all occupied. The City Manager has authorized the Fire Department to purchase four more to help while they are applying for more grant money to purchase additional ones. He acknowledged and thanked the men and women who provide great service. He thanked Becky Hepker, Fire Department Secretary, for helping compile the statistics.

City Manager Brian Gregory said this is a tremendous amount of information and tells a story. Kudos to our Fire Personnel and recognized the Chief and Deputy Chiefs for the work and leadership they provide. They do a great job, providing a high quality level of service. He said he gets a lot of compliments on them and appreciates how they all come together within their department, other departments, and surrounding area departments.

Alderman Kramer said it was great to see the tribute to Matt Listy as he really was special.

Chief Polarek said that Matt was a special part of all of us and thanked the Council for the confidence and support they continue to give the department.

Alderman Braser asked Chief Polarek if there is any staff that can be recognized for 100% attendance.

Chief Polarek said he couldn't say just off the top of his head.

APPOINTMENTS

OTHER NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

Alderson Stowe moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m. and Alderson Paulsen seconded the motion.

VOICE VOTE

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

Approve:

Mayor - Curt Lang

Attest:

City Clerk – Mary Kalk