

CITY OF DECATUR
COMMON COUNCIL MINUTES
AUGUST 18, 2020

The City of Decatur Common Council met on Tuesday, August 18, 2020 at 6:35 p.m. at City Hall in Council Chambers, 172 N. Second Street. The meeting was called to order by Dan Rickord. Roll call was taken to show Councilmen Craig Coshow, Matt Dyer, Tyler Fullenkamp, Scott Murray, and Wylie Sirk were in attendance. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer, Phyllis Whitright and City Attorney, Tim Baker.

The Mayor invited everyone to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Clerk-Treasurer had emailed the minutes from the August 4, 2020 meeting. Dyer made a motion to approve the minutes as emailed. Seconded by Sirk, the motion was adopted.

The first item on the agenda was the petition filed by Steve Kreigh, Fairway Lakes, LLC for the annexation of Section 3 of the Meadows of Cross Creek, which is located at the northwest end of the subdivision, west of Winchester Road and south of County Road 750 N, containing approximately 15.018 acres, 35 lots platted to finish the subdivision. City Attorney, Tim Baker explained the process for the super voluntary annexation. Baker noted that following the filing of the petition and it becoming a matter of record, a Public Hearing needs to be held within 30 days. Sirk made a motion to make the petition for the annexation filed by Steve Kreigh, Fairway Lakes, LLC for Section 3 of the Meadows of Cross Creek a matter of record. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted. Sirk then made a motion to hold a Public Hearing regarding the super voluntary annexation on Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. Seconded by Dyer, the motion was adopted.

The main item on the agenda for the evening was the proposed budget for 2021. Nine employees of the Public Works Department were in attendance at the meeting regarding their concern about rumors of a 1% increase in salary for 2021. City Crew Leader, Marty Martin opened the discussion stating that many were unhappy with a 1% increase, since the employees are doing extra work they did not do earlier and they are saving the City a lot of money as outside contractors are not being hired for various projects. He noted they felt they should go a flat increase rather than a percentage, so the employees at the bottom of the pay scale would get the same amount of raise. Martin shared that the employees felt they needed to appear before the Council so they would know how they felt. Labor/Machine Operator, Derrick Cannon mentioned the turnover in their department and that there are several new employees just learning the ropes and we do not want to lose them because of wages. Labor/Machine Operator, Matt Wilder commented that a 1% raise would barely pay the increased insurance costs or the cost of living.

Mayor Rickord informed them that tax dollars coming in are likely to be lower with the COVID-19 pandemic, especially with so many out of work. Mayor Rickord had previously contacted other Mayors and found that they were not giving any raises. He shared his desire to provide a 1% to at least help with insurance increases, with no changes in insurance benefits.

Clerk-Treasurer, Phyllis Whitright noted revenues are likely to come in at a lower level or the same as this year. The budget presented does not include tax caps, which the tax cap loss for this year is \$216,000, and the DLGF is estimated \$321,700 for 2021. Whitright also noted that the interest earned on City accounts has decrease since the pandemic, stating that the City is earning \$35,000 less a month. The City's additional cost for a 1% raise is approximately \$60,000.

Marty Martin commented that various employees have to take over when someone is out. He noted that the Clerk-Treasurer Whitright and Mayor Rickord know the numbers and if a larger increase is not available for 2021 maybe it can be in the next budget. He noted the employees will keep doing their jobs but they felt everyone just needed to know where they were coming from.

Appreciation was given to the employees. Mayor Rickord noted that what the employees said about saving the City is on target if the City would have to hire outside contractors to do the work. Councilman Fullenkamp would like to have a chance to look at the budget to see if there could be any changes. Councilman Sirk noted it may take another year or two (2) to see what things look like with tax income down because of so many people being out of work as a result of COVID-19. Mayor Rickord shared that another month is available to see what the projections might be. Dyer noted that Council has given a certain amount across the board in the past, rather than a percentage. The Clerk-Treasurer noted that the last flat amount given to the employees was in 2015. By consensus, Council will look over the budget and see if something can be done if not this year, possibly next year.

The Proposed Budget for 2021 was considered with each Department Head appearing before the Council explaining additions or deductions in their budgets and to answer any questions. The proposed General Fund for 2021 is \$5,390,665 compared to \$5,453,212 for 2020 for a decrease of \$62,547. The total funds with tax rates are proposed at \$9,274,572 for 2021 as compared to \$8,999,704 for 2020 for an increase of \$274,868. Other funds including LOIT-Public Safety, Local Road and Street, Local Law Enforcement Continuing Education, Riverboat Revenue Sharing, Rainy Day, CCI, CEDIT, and Redevelopment Commission total \$1,991,286 for 2021 compared to \$2,028,772 for 2020 for a decrease of \$37,486. The total 2021 budget without tax caps is \$11,265,858 compared to \$11,028,476 for 2020 for an increase of \$237,382. The only change to the proposed budget was in the CEDIT fund to possibly not do all the sidewalk improvements on East Monroe Street, may consider budgeting this project in Phases.

It was noted the Redevelopment Commission is looking into costs regarding improvements to be done at US 27/13th Street and Bollman with a meeting with INDOT to be held in hopes of the State to assist with costs.

Clerk-Treasurer, Phyllis Whitright inquired about funding for the newly formed Arts Commission and it was suggested funding it at a level of \$4,000-\$5,000 for projects that normally came before the Council. Sirk noted it had been discussed at the time the Commission was established that there would be some yearly funds provided and he asked Clerk-Treasurer Whitright to check the minutes regarding that establishment.

Mayor Rickord announced that the HIVE will soon be completed and would like for Council members to have a discussion at the next Council meeting of how to use and manage this facility.

The owner of the Matador Inn appeared before Council regarding an incident that had happened at the Matador Inn that he felt was reported falsely. Mayor Rickord told him that he, Chief Corral, and the City Attorney would meet with him at another time to discuss the situation, and that seemed to suffice. Chief Corral spoke up stating that he wanted to defend his Officers and noted they do not go to the Matador Inn unless calls are made for help.

Department Heads Input:

Mayor Rickord thanked Assistant Fire Chief, Jim Hitchcock for his work with the new Safe Haven Baby Box and also Adams Memorial Hospital for funding a couple of billboards in support of the Baby Box.

Jeremy Gilbert, Operations Manager reported that work is being done on the basketball court at Hanna Nuttman and the pickle ball court will be started next week or so. Both courts are being paid for by donations. Mayor Rickord has received compliments from people for adding these courts so the Park can be used year round.

Don Bergdall, Civil Infrastructure and Stormwater Manager, noted they are working on some emergency repairs in areas such as near West End Restaurant and the Homestead Addition.

Bill Carpenter, Water Department Assistant Superintendent, noted the new generator at the new plant had kicked on during the storm Monday evening and had worked well.

Council Input:

Coshow reported that last Thursday's concert had been held at Riverside Center in theater style and it had worked out fairly well.

Mayor Rickord shared that the Health Department is being pressed by the State because of the recent increase in the number of positive COVID-19 cases. He asked for everyone to do their part and see if we can't get the numbers reduced and continue to wear our mask.

Sirk made a motion to pay the claims against the City. Seconded by Dyer, the motion was adopted.

There being no other business to be brought before the Council, Dyer made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Murray, the motion passed.

Adjournment was at 8:45 P.M.