

CITY OF DECATUR  
COMMON COUNCIL MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

The City of Decatur Common Council met on Tuesday, September 1, 2020 at 6:40 p.m. at City Hall in Council Chambers, 172 N. Second Street. The meeting was called to order by Mayor, 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 18, 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 a presentation by representatives from NI Solutions, Inc. regarding broadband installation in the City. The representative noted the big change in the use of social media as the result of COVID-19. It is especially noted there is a need for broadband in the rural area of which Decatur is considered to be. The rural school children were especially impaired when schools had to go to virtual learning last spring as was noted that students need to park in the school parking lots in order to participate. The representative shared that broadband is kind of like water as any new employer wants it for his/her employees. It was noted more people are also now working from home. NI Solutions noted costs include materials, construction, and maintenance. They are seeking permission to do a feasibility study at a cost of \$2,000. The study would include such items as identifying costs involved and identifying potential partners. Following their presentation time was provided for questions from Council members. Questions were asked regarding State and Federal money being used to fund companies to compete with CenturyLink and Mediacom, how far out into the country would the service reach, would the fiber be hung on poles or placed in the ground, what about the capacity, and what about the cost among others. The representatives responded to those questions. Mayor Rickord suggested the possibility of using CARES Act funds for the study. It was shared the study could begin right away and be completed 3 to 4 weeks after all the information is received. It was noted information would first be sought from the City. It was noted that broadband could make for another utility provided by the City. Students already have the devices from the school and just need the ability to connect those devices. The study would include the area outside the City limits but not the entire County. When asked if they would reach out to the schools for the study, it was noted various questionnaires would be used to reach the residents, small businesses, schools, the hospital and so forth. It was noted that municipalities do not add programs to make money but do so to provide a better quality of life for the residents. Coshow made a motion to proceed with NI Solutions doing a feasibility study regarding the addition of broadband in Decatur at a cost of \$2,000 with Clerk-Treasurer, Phyllis Whitright searching to decide which funds should be used. Seconded by Dyer, the motion was adopted.

Discussion was then taken up regarding the amount to budget in 2021 for raises for full-time City employees, a continuation from the previous meeting. Mayor Rickord noted that a flat rate hasn't been done since 2015, and that he checked with other Mayor's and they were more concerned with revenue losses in 2022 than in 2021. Council members looked at the option of a percentage raise increase versus an across the board lump sum. It was noted that the employees have been doing a lot of work rather than hiring contractors. Mayor Rickord shared the possibility of moving some budget amounts and perhaps slowing some projects if needed. Coshow and Sirk both noted they preferred the \$1,000 across the board proposal. Fullenkamp noted he was also in favor of a lump sum which would

give those at the bottom of the pay scale more. Coshow made a motion to change the salary ordinance accordingly to delete the 1% raise and change to \$1,000 across the board for the year 2021. Seconded by Sirk, the motion was adopted. Clerk-Treasurer, Phyllis Whitright noted she would change each Department's 2021 proposed budget to include the \$1,000 pay increase.

The next item on the agenda was the discussion to transfer funds within the Public Arts Commission's budget. Appearing before the Council were Ron Storey, President of the Commission, and Member Brian Clemons. Storey shared that the Commission wanted to begin an annual program to refurbish the City-owned sculptures and Alex Mendez would refurbish all City-owned sculptures at a cost of \$4,000. The Commission has \$1,600 available, but needs to transfer \$2,400 from the projects account of the budget. There are 16 sculptures owned by the City and all can be refurbished by Mendez without having to move them except for one (1) sculpture. Storey noted they were applying for a grant to replenish the transferred funds but the grant would not be received in time if it is granted. Resolution 2020-7 was brought forth to allow for the transfer of \$2,400 from the projects (445) line item of the Public Arts Commission budget to the 436 account (repairs & maintenance). Sirk made a motion to introduce Resolution 2020-7 by short title only. Seconded by Dyer, the motion was adopted and City Attorney Tim Baker read Resolution 2020-7 by short title only. Sirk then made a motion to adopt Resolution 2020-7. Seconded by Dyer, the motion was unanimously adopted.

A discussion was then held regarding the 2021 City Budget for the Public Arts Commission. Ron Storey shared that the ordinance that was adopted to create the Public Arts Commission included language that the Council would provide some funding each year, but it does not stipulate the amount. It was noted the City provided \$10,000 for 2020. Mayor Rickord inquired if the Commission had designated any revenue stream yet. Storey shared they had looked at a few things which they decided were too big for the Commission to tackle. He also noted that due to COVID-19 the group had only met twice this year. Sirk suggested an amount of \$5,000, noting organizations that normally come before the Council for funding should go before the Public Arts Commission. Fullenkamp made a motion to provide the same funding of \$10,000 for 2021 as funded in 2020. Seconded by Murray, the motion was adopted.

The HIVE was the next area for discussion. Mayor Rickord reported work is close to being completed. Ron Storey shared that he had recently toured the HIVE and the Public Arts Commission is excited about it. Storey suggested possible items to be considered would be an art show with commission received from art sold and/or charging an admission. Mayor Rickord shared that a couple of the Loft residents would like to have art classes for children. Once someone is hired to direct the area, then a calendar can be provided. Mayor Rickord also mentioned a part of the Loft agreement included volunteer hours from the tenants. The person hired would also be a member of the Commission. Fullenkamp encouraged that whomever is hired needs to promote the HIVE. Mayor Rickord is wanting someone active in the arts. The Mayor will have the job opening posted next week.

#### Department Heads Input:

Kevin Hackman, Utilities Auditor shared that a ribbon cutting had been held this afternoon at the new east water plant and a ground breaking had been held at the plant on Winchester Street which is being built.

Jeremy Gilbert, Operations Manager announced that with next Monday, September 7, 2020 being Labor Day the trash pickup normally made on Monday would be picked up on Tuesday, and heavy trash will be collected the week of September 14-18, 2020. Gilbert distributed a list of streets to be repaved as a result of the Community Crossing Matching Grant. He noted the City normally does

about \$200,000 worth of repaving each year, but with the grant of \$605,812.26 the City's 75/25 match of \$201,937.42 a total of \$807,749.68 would be spent for repaving this year. The proposed start date for the Community Crossing Matching Grant for repaving is September 28, 2020. Work would be completed in approximately three (3) weeks. Gilbert also reported that three (3) houses in the flood buyout grant have been demolished in the last month.

Les Marckel, Fire Chief inquired regarding the funding for the on-call (volunteer) firemen for their hourly rate in the 2021 budget. It was noted the 1% increase would be used for their hourly wages in 2021.

Curt Witte, Building and Zoning Superintendent shared that earlier this evening the Decatur Plan Commission had met and were recommending that the Council adopt an ordinance to do away with the application for an improvement location permit of a \$50 fee. The application fee has never been used although it is a part of the code. Sirk made a motion for City Attorney, Tim Baker to draft the appropriate ordinance to allow for the Plan Commission's recommendation. Seconded by Dyer, the motion was adopted. Witte also shared that the Plan Commission had given his permission to have all contractors doing business in Decatur to register with the Building and Zoning Department to provide proof of insurance of at least \$500,000.

Wastewater Supt., Karey Fuelling reminded residents not to flush disposable wipes down toilets, it has caused issues with the pumps.

Chief of Police, Lennie Corral announced that Officer Blaze Brooks who resigned from the Department earlier in the year, will be back on the force, and will be sworn in tomorrow as a Police Reserve Officer.

City Attorney, Tim Baker reminded everyone of the Public Hearing scheduled for 7:30 P.M. on Tuesday, September 15, 2020 regarding the Fiscal Plan for the super voluntary annexation of Section 3 of the Meadows of Cross Creek. The Fiscal Plan will be on file in the Clerk-Treasurer's office for public view. The annexation Ordinance will also be presented at the Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.

#### Council Input:

Fullenkamp reminded people that with heavy trash collection coming up, people should bag items that can be bagged to assist the employees.

Murray 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 Coshow, the motion passed.

Adjournment was at 8:29 P.M.