

CITY OF DECATUR  
COMMON COUNCIL MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 16, 2021

The City of Decatur Common Council met on Tuesday, November 16, 2021 at 6:45 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 November 2, 2021 meeting. Dyer made a motion to approve the minutes. Seconded by Sirk, the motion was adopted.

County Commissioner Stan Stoppenhagen presented information pertaining to a new animal shelter for Adams County. Over the past six (6) months, representatives of the County and the Cities and Towns met to discuss the options for continuing animal shelter services. Stoppenhagen represented the committee and shared that with the July 1, 2021 retirement of Charlie and Carol Bowers who had provided the animal shelter for years, a task force had been formed which included Decatur Mayor Dan Rickord, Berne Mayor Gregg Sprunger, Monroe Town Council President Deb Geissler, Geneva Councilman Arlen Mitchel, and Cathy Mitchel from the County Council. Stoppenhagen had informed City Council members that the Adams County Board of Commissioners have contracted with Mike and Cindy Heiser who have agreed to construct and operate a new Adams County Animal Shelter. The facility will be located next to their residence at 1250 N US Hwy 27 just north of Monroe on the west side of the highway. Stoppenhagen reported that the Heiser's had submitted the low bid for providing the shelter at \$45,000 and the collection services are expected to be \$15,000 for a total cost of \$60,000 on an annual basis. The Adams County Commissioners had reviewed the animal control reports over the last several years and the breakdown for the average usage of the animal shelter and collection services were approximately 35% from the County, 34% from the City of Decatur, 23% from the City of Berne, and 7% from the Town of Geneva, and 2% from the Town of Monroe. The proposal for cost sharing with the County paying for the first half of \$30,000 then the other \$30,000 would be shared using the percentage figures. Stoppenhagen informed the Council members that members of PAWS would continue to assist and they had also attended the task force meetings. Mayor Rickord remarked that people do not realize the number of animals that need shelter, especially in incidents involving the Fire and Police departments who need help in finding shelter for animals. The County will be signing a 5-year contract the Heiser's, but would like to have a cost share agreement in place in order to continue providing shelter and collection services for the cities and towns beginning January 1, 2022. A city or town may choose to provide a shelter for needs of their own municipal jurisdiction, but with this arrangement provides a means to share in the care of these animals and provide services for the citizens at a lower cost than each city or town would incur on their own. Stoppenhagen shared that they have been working on this project since April and met with some items which slowed the process as the location for the building had originally been in the flood plain and work had to be approved through the State regarding the septic system, but they are now ready to construct the facility and hope to have it operational in January. Stoppenhagen commented that the priority is the safety of the residents, as stray animals can become a hazard. City Attorney Tim Baker noted that a Memorandum of Agreement needs to be drawn up by the County Attorney. Coshow made a motion to proceed with the project and pay from Common Council's budget, professional services account for the City's share of the costs, estimated to be \$10,200. Seconded by Dyer, the motion was adopted.

Curt Witte, Building and Zoning Superintendent gave an update regarding the building at 138 N. Second Street. Witte had received a demolition and removal quote of \$81,550 from Advanced Demolition Services. That quote does not include the survey and removal of asbestos nor any brick work needed for the adjacent building (Vinnie's). Also there could be work needed on the basement wall of the adjoining building. Witte shared that last week Josh Pranger looked at fixing the building and will do drawings and do the work needed with the State but that does not include additional costs associated with engineering fees, state fees and disconnecting electricity, which is estimated at \$1,500. Also cabling and banners will need to be removed that are ran from the building, and the tenant in the apartment in the adjoining building would need to be relocated to a hotel until completion of the work. This cost does not include any needed structural damage to Vinnie's wall that would need to be repaired in the event of demolition. To repair the building, Limberlost Construction quoted a price of \$137,500. SC Construction quoted \$105,000 to secure the building but that does not include the cost of dumpsters nor any repairs to the wall of Vinnie's. Witte commented that the costs for the extra work needed cannot be calculated prior to demolition. Witte informed the Council members that the building is condemned and the City must do something for safety reasons. Witte noted the situation is at the point now that a decision must be made. Witte is to contact Attorney Bob Eherenman regarding possible actions. Sirk made a motion to table any action this evening and for Witte to contact Attorney Bob Eherenman and if he recommends, Witte is to contact the building's owner, Paul Faurote and then schedule a special meeting as soon as possible in regards to this property. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Operations Manager, Jeremy Gilbert appeared before the Council to announce that the City was awarded a Community Crossing Matching Grant for \$905,709.31 which covers 75% of the work while the City's match is \$301,903.19. A total of 19 streets are included in the Grant to be resurfaced. Gilbert noted this is the third grant the City has been awarded and he feel this has been a great program for the City. Thus far the City has received \$2.2-\$2.4 million. He thanked the Council members, Governor Holcomb, and INDOT for their help in providing and securing the grant, and USI who had assisted the City in writing the grant. Gilbert informed Council that the City has until March 4, 2022 to get the project under contract. The contract agreement with INDOT will need to be signed electronically by the Mayor on behalf of the City. It is anticipated that the work will be completed by the end of summer of 2022.

Jeremy Gilbert also mentioned that in the future he will share with the Council members where the City is regarding the paving of 55.05 miles of city streets. Gilbert also reported that 2<sup>nd</sup> Street will likely be repaved from Madison Street to the alley at State Farm Insurance with money in the budget for 2022.

Mayor Rickord announce that a public meeting will be held in City Hall in Council Chambers at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 9, 2021 regarding the 5-Points Improvement Project.

Sirk made a motion to place Ordinance 2021-18, an ordinance to provide for a two (2) year capital improvement plan for the City of Decatur for calendar years 2022 and 2023, on its third reading by short title only. Seconded Murray, the motion passed and City Attorney Tim Baker read Ordinance 2021-18 by short title only. Sirk mad a motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-18 on its third and final reading. Seconded by Murray a roll call vote was held and passed 5-0. The projects include \$150,000 for FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Program, \$170,000 for up to 17% per year to the Adams County Economic Development Corporation for planning and implementation of Economic Development Projects, \$525,000 for Capital Improvements and Economic Development Projects, \$100,000 for City Sidewalk Program, and \$200,000 for Parks Improvement Projects.

Several event forms were presented from the Decatur Chamber of Commerce for year 2022 as follows: Summer Concert Series, 14 Thursdays, June 1, 2022-September 1, 2022 from 6 p.m.-10 p.m. on Madison Street Plaza, request to close a portion of 1<sup>st</sup> St. for food vendors, will need restrooms, electricity and the sound system. Motor Sports event on Thursday, August 11, 2022 from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. request to close a portion of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Madison & Court Street. Kekionga Festival on August 18-21, 2022 at Riverside field, request to close a portion of Jackson Street on Friday & Saturday, will need electricity and trash pickup. Dekatur Germanfest, August 20, 2022 from 5-11 P.M. on Madison Street Plaza, request to close 1<sup>st</sup> Street for food vendors, and will need restrooms, electricity and sound system. Decatur Highland Games, Saturday, October 1, 2022 from 12 noon-7 p.m. at Riverside field, requesting a portion of Jackson Street closed, and will need electricity and trash pickup. Callithumpian Festival the month of October 2022, same street closures as in past years. Dyer made a motion to approved the events and street closures and to waive any fees since these are community events. Seconded by Murray. The motion was adopted with Coshow abstaining.

The City employees were thanked for all their help in making the various events successful.

Due to a miscommunication during the application process for the Façade program, the Clerk-Treasurer requested an additional \$942.00 for this year for the Adams County Historical Society whose application was withdrawn in error. Dyer made a motion to approve the additional \$942.00. Seconded by Sirk, the motion was adopted.

Clerk-Treasurer Phyllis Whitright announced that the State Board of Accounts will be starting a regular audit for the years 2018 and 2019 estimated to be in December this year, and due to the City receiving over \$750,000 in federal assistance, a federal audit will be done for the year 2020.

Mayor Rickord then read a letter of resignation effective December 31, 2021 from City Attorney Tim Baker. Attorney Baker shared that he had thoroughly enjoyed working with all of the City employees, especially the Department Heads and the three (3) mayors he had served. Baker praised Clerk-Treasurer Phyllis Whitright for the dedication she brings to the City. Attorney Baker shared that he felt it was time to slow down and be able to spend more time with his wife Kathy and do some of the things he wants to do.

Mayor Rickord shared he appreciated Attorney Baker staying to assist him for two (2) years. He noted Tim pays so much attention to details and has helped him through various items. Mayor Rickord expressed a special “Thank you” to Attorney Tim Baker for his support and help. Attorney Baker commented that Mayor Rickord was thrown into the fire with COVID and he commended Mayor Rickord for a job well done. Mayor Rickord will be announcing in the future who he will be appointing as City Attorney.

Sirk made a motion to accept the letter of resignation from City Attorney Tim Baker effective December 31, 2021. Seconded by Dyer, the motion was adopted.

#### Council Input:

Coshow reported that new lights had been purchased and installed for the outlining of the downtown buildings since the new light poles do not have the capability for the angels or snowflake ornaments used on other light poles. Coshow also mentioned that the large pots downtown would be filled with the winter decorations soon.

Department Heads:

Assistant Fire Chief, Jim Hitchcock shared that the Fire Department had a bad fire run this morning and reminded everyone to check the batteries in their smoke detectors.

Curt Witte, Building and Zoning Superintendent reported that his office has received several calls seeking information of when leaves will be picked up. Witte reminded everyone that the City does not allow leaf burning in city limits.

Police Chief Lennie Corral announced that he had received information from the new K-9 Officer Blaze Brooks that the high school building and trades class will be building the kennel for the new K-9 dog.

Jamie Gephart, Community Coordinator announced the Decatur Main Street Christmas Open House event will be held on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, with 28 businesses participating. Gephart was recognized for coordinating various videos to be updated on the website and plans on updating the Decatur website and is being more active with social media. Councilman Dyer thanked Gephart for her recent presentation for the Rotary Club.

Sirk made a motion to pay the claims. Seconded by Murray, the motion was adopted.

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

Adjournment was at 8:04 P.M.