

CITY OF DECATUR
COMMON COUNCIL MINUTES
DECEMBER 1, 2020

The City of Decatur Common Council met on Tuesday, December 1, 2020 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 Matt Dyer, Tyler Fullenkamp, Scott Murray, and Wylie Sirk were in attendance. Craig Coshow was present via telephone. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Phyllis Whitright and City Attorney Timothy Baker.

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

The Clerk-Treasurer had emailed the minutes from the November 17, 2020 meeting. Dyer made a motion to approve the minutes. Seconded by Sirk, the motion was adopted.

The first item on the agenda was Curt Witte, Building and Zoning Superintendent, who gave an update regarding the City's sidewalk 50-50 program. Witte reported that 14 residents had participated with 16 sidewalks completed so far in 2020. 5,020 square feet of concrete had been used. The cost to date was \$19,662.85 with \$30,337.15 remaining in the fund. There are four (4) sidewalks to be completed yet at a cost of \$9,781.50. Thus, \$20,555.55 remains in the fund, which could pay for approximately 600 linear feet. Witte and Tony Lothridge have been driving around the City and had a list of possible areas that could use sidewalks. Witte asked Council members if they had a priority for adding sidewalks. By consensus, it seemed the priority was along E. Monroe Street for safety for students walking to school. Sirk made a motion for Mayor Rickord, Witte, and Operations Manager, Jeremy Gilbert to consider the list and work up a plan. Seconded by Dyer, the motion was adopted.

The Council members seemed to feel that working on E. Monroe Street from Piqua Road toward the City was a priority. Gilbert is also working on getting quotes for sidewalks for 2021. It was noted that quotes needed to be received as soon as possible in order to encumber the funds by the December 15, 2020 council meeting. Witte informed Council that most of the sidewalks that were done this year were done by concrete contractors, Gage and or Hitchcock, who had been contacted by the resident and they in turn contacted Witte or Gilbert who approached the residents to explained the 50-50 sidewalk program. It was noted more education needs to be made regarding the program.

Mayor Rickord complimented Operations Manager, Jeremy Gilbert and the Public Works crews for all their work throughout the year with all the projects and the COVID-19 restrictions.

The next item regarded the result of the County-wide meeting held on Wednesday, November 18, 2020 to come up with a program to use funds provided from the State for awareness, public outreach, and enforcement in order to keep the County schools, businesses, and so forth open. The group that has been meeting is made up of Craig Coshow who has taken the leadership role, Wylie Sirk, Mayor Rickord, Linda Morris of the Decatur Chamber, Susan Sefton of Adams Memorial Hospital, Ron Donovan of the Berne Chamber, and Susan Buckingham of the Geneva Chamber. Projects being planned include shopping locally while wearing a mask and submitting a picture for a chance for one (1) of five (5) \$100 rewards. Projects also include three (3) billboards with pictures of each school's athletes (billboards in Decatur, Monroe, and Berne/Geneva areas), art projects for elementary students, signs to be posted in local businesses requiring masks so shoppers know the business is a safe place to shop, working with WZBD radio and local newspapers, and all the schools will be working with student projects. The emphasis of the students will focus on their sharing that "if we can do it, you can do it." (wearing masks). The emphasis is to come up with an outreach program.

Mayor Rickord noted it was great to have all the groups in the County working together. The funds will only be made available through the County and Municipalities. Decatur could be given \$31,000. Mayor Rickord reported that the hospital has a contract for six (6) billboards, which will be provided if the City picks up the approximate cost of \$500 for the art work for each billboard used. Mayor Rickord emphasized the group's efforts are to keep places open by keeping the spread of COVID-19 down. People feared the November 18, 2020 meeting was to plan on how to close things down, but the reverse was true. Again, it was emphasized the goal is awareness, public outreach, and enforcement. Murray made a motion noting the Council supports the work of the Committee and encouraged to move forward with the funding from the Indiana Finance Authority Safety Awareness grant. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Sirk recognized Debbie Baker who was in the audience as a representative of the Decatur Force Volleyball Club which is interested in leasing the gym at the former Northwest Elementary School building (now MERIT Center) for practices and games. Sirk noted they needed to set a time for the group to tour the facility to see if it would work for them. He noted their use of the facility would provide a revenue stream for the Center and that practices and games would be at times that would not interfere with other activities at the MERIT Center. Dyer made a motion for the group to tour the facility and then Ms. Baker and City Attorney Tim Baker could come to terms regarding a lease agreement which could be brought before the Council at the December 15, 2020 meeting. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Department Heads Input:

Police Chief Lennie Corral shared that the agility tests for officer candidates would be held this Saturday, December 5, 2020.

Fire Chief Les Marckel reported that the fire truck was on schedule and he would be in Wisconsin next week inspecting the new truck. Chief Marckel will work with the Clerk-Treasurer to advertise for bids to liquidate Engine 104 Fire Truck for the second meeting in January. The Chief also reported that the Geneva Fire Department has paid the \$2,000 and picked up the 1991 International Rescue Squad truck.

Jeremy Gilbert, Operations Manager, shared that the leaf pickup season will end this Friday. The Decatur and Adams County Park Boards are asking Adams County residents to participate in a survey regarding the 5-year Parks Plan. Gilbert noted surveys are available through the Parks' website, on Facebook, and at Riverside Center. Surveys are due on December 31, 2020 and contain 21 questions which can be completed in ten (10) minutes. The Plan is important in gaining grants for various projects. The group will meet on January 6, 2021 to go through the results so the information can be forwarded to DNR for adoption in April, 2021.

Council Input:

Murray asked Gilbert for an update regarding street re-paving and Gilbert noted that Dierkes, Central and Washington Streets should be paved tomorrow. He noted that those streets were part of the Community Crossing Matching Grant Program and work had been delayed some because of the weather.

Clerk-Treasurer Phyllis Whitright had received the 1782 Notice from DLGF regarding the 2021 budget. All budgets have been approved as submitted. The current tax rate is \$1.14 and that will become \$1.17 for 2021.

City Attorney Tim Baker noted he wished to compliment Jeremy Gilbert and his group of employees for their great work. He had seen numerous pieces of equipment on his street one day getting all the leaves picked up.

Dyer emphasized the need to shop locally noting he had recently attended a local restaurant that normally was well attended but found only a few people in the restaurant at that time.

Coshow also wanted to recognize and thank all the public works employees working together to make everything happen. Coshow also thanked the Council for its support of the Committee working on the awareness, public outreach, and enforcement project throughout the County.

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

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

Adjournment was at 7:40 P.M.