

CITY OF DECATUR
COMMON COUNCIL MINUTES
JULY 14, 2009

The City of Decatur Common Council met on Tuesday, July 14, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall in Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order by Mayor John Schultz. Roll call was taken to show Councilwoman Barb Engle and Councilmen Charlie Cook, Bill Crone, Matt Dyer and Ken Meyer were in attendance. Also present was Board of Works member, Bill Karbach, City Attorney, Tim Baker and Clerk-Treasurer, Phyllis Whitright.

The meeting was properly posted and faxed to the Decatur Daily Democrat and The Journal Gazette. The special meeting was held to discuss budgets and golf cart use in the city.

Cook made a motion to suspend the minutes from the previous meeting, Engle seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The State passed a new law effective July 1, 2009 that golf carts are prohibited on highways unless an ordinance is adopted authorizing the operation of a golf cart on the highway. The Mayor recommended the city needs to establish a local ordinance authorizing golf carts to drive on highways, so Crone made a motion to allow a local ordinance, Dyer seconded the motion. Motion was unanimous. Police Chief, Ken Ketzler and Deputy Police Chief, Greg Cook drafted an ordinance, and the Board of Works and the Council Members, along with comments from residents who attended the meeting went through the ordinance line by line and made any necessary changes. The City Attorney will prepare an ordinance with the changes and present it to the Board of Works members at their next meeting, who will then recommend the ordinance to the council members for their approval for the July 21st council meeting.

The other item on the agenda was budgets, due to property tax reform it was discussed whether to move fire hydrant rental from being paid with property tax revenues, or moving the hydrant rental fee as a user fee on the utility bill. Crone made a motion to move the rental fee to the utility bill, Meyer seconded the motion. Motion was unanimous. Umbaugh will need to do a rate study, and a public hearing will be held before any changes are made.

The Mayor remarked the trash pickup is being subsidized by property taxes; this also could be paid by user fees. Engle suggested increasing the fee gradually. All council members were in favor of increasing the monthly trash fee as soon as possible, so Cook made a motion to increase the monthly fee from \$4 to \$12 a month. A public hearing and an amendment to the ordinance will be done prior to any changes being made. The Mayor commented that these changes need to be done, due to revenue losses from property tax. Recycling was brought up, but the mayor commented that financially, recycling would not be an option right now. Randy Colclasure, a city resident suggested the city cut back on the number of heavy trash pickups per year. Dyer made a motion to cut back to two (2) heavy trash pickups per year, instead of four (4) but then withdrew his motion pending discussion with the Street Commissioner, Jeremy Gilbert at the next council meeting on July 21st.

County Councilman, Randy Colclasure informed council that the County has until November 1st to establish a LOIT tax. An evening meeting will be held prior to November 1st for the public to attend.

The Clerk-Treasurer, Phyllis Whitright reported she met with the DLGF on the 2010 budgets. The growth factor is at 3.8%, DLGF informed her there was no need to cut the budgets any further at this time, until the city receives revenue estimates from the County Auditor. Whitright reported the dates have been changed for publications of the budget from August 2nd and 9th to September 2nd and 9th and final adoption to November 1st. Budgets need to be given to the County Council for review 45 days before the city adopts their budget instead of 15 days. The County will hold a meeting with all taxing units on September 4th to review all 2010 budgets. When working the budgets, if the operating balance in the general fund remains the same as this year, which is 5% over the estimated budget amount, we would still be over the maximum levy amount by \$787,000. Whitright explained the revenues are figured on 95% of the current amount, so once the County Auditor supplies the actual amounts, hopefully by August 1st, she will report back to the council. Whitright will advertise the budget high, so cuts can be made later if needed.

Whitright also informed Council of changes she made to the Common Council budget for 2010. Whitright asked council members whether or not they wanted to change the donation amount to the Council on Aging, by consensus, the amount of \$14,500 should remain in the budget, until the revenue figures from the county are known to see whether or not additional budget reductions are needed. Council also requested for the Clerk-Treasurer to get information from Council on Aging who else funds them and how much. The County Auditor suggested budgeting for the property tax cap loss for 2010, due to the Circuit Breaker which is estimated at \$175,000.00. Other changes were increasing the amount budgeted for utility services for street lights, an additional \$800 a month is being charged to the city for fuel charge by Indiana Michigan Power.

There being no further business, Meyer made a motion for adjournment. Cook seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.