

CITY OF DECATUR
COMMON COUNCIL MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 1, 2009

The City of Decatur Common Council met on Tuesday, September 1, 2009 at 7:30 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 City Attorney, Tim Baker and Clerk-Treasurer, Phyllis Whitright.

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

The Clerk-Treasurer had emailed the minutes from August 18th Council meeting and the Special meeting on August 25th. There were no corrections or amendments offered, so Dyer made a motion to approve the minutes as emailed, Cook seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Crone made a motion to make the legal notice a matter of record for a public hearing for proposed rates and charges for fire hydrants for the City of Decatur. Engle seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The Mayor opened the public hearing for public comments to adopt Ordinance No. 2009-5; this ordinance was previously passed on First and Second Reading at the July 21st council meeting. This ordinance amends Ordinance No. 2007-3, which rate is different than what is being assessed to the City for fire hydrant rental per annum. There were no comments received, so Crone made a motion to adjourn the public hearing, Dyer seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meyer motioned to Place the Ordinance on Third and Final Reading by short title only. Motion was seconded by Dyer and passed by consent.

Meyer motioned to Adopt Ordinance 2009-5, seconded by Dyer. Roll call for Adoption of Ordinance 2009-5 was Cook, Crone, Dyer, Engle, and Meyer in favor and none opposed.

Jeff Rowe, Steve Carter, and Tom Michalak from Umbaugh & Associates presented a draft report for the City of Decatur 2009 Strategic Plan. Rowe handed out a copy of the report to the council members and went through explaining the report giving Decatur's historical fund balances for the last five (5) years to help the city handle the challenges they will be faced with, such as the downturn in the economy, property tax reform, circuit breaker, and loss in revenues. The General fund and the Water Utility fund is in most need. Rowe gave examples of how the city can help increase these balances, such as increasing fees, adding new fees, charging more for services, payment of lieu of taxes, moving hydrant rental fee to user fees. Umbaugh will continue to update the plan and work with the city administration. Steve Carter commented that this is a lot of information to absorb, would like the city administration to review the report and then make revisions in a month. The Mayor commented he would like each Department Head to have a copy of the drafted report that pertains to their department. The Mayor also remarked that the City of Decatur in past years never went to the maximum levy, and now is being penalized for being frugal. The Mayor asked for any comments or questions. Parks & Recreation Supt., Steve Krull commented he was given the city's financial situation at a department head meeting months ago, but was upset that he was never contacted by Umbaugh before the Strategic Plan was drafted, the Storm Water Manager, Joan Eichhorn and Wastewater Supt., Anne Butcher also chimed in agreeing with Krull. Steve Carter from Umbaugh appreciated their comments and mentioned Umbaugh will continue to work with the city on this Strategic Plan, which the next step is to meet with Department Heads. The Mayor is to meet with Department Heads and review the drafted report and direct any changes or comments to Umbaugh.

The Mayor received a request to close 4th Street from Monroe St. to Madison St. for St. Mary's Fall Fest on September 20th. Engle made a motion to approve the street closing, Dyer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Meyer made a motion to make the legal notice for the City of Decatur 2010 Budget Estimates and Public Hearing a matter of record. Engle seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The Mayor announced the former mayor, Fred Isch will help the Plan/Bldg Supt., Roger Gage gather information for the US Census.

The City Attorney, Tim Baker informed the council members the Golf Cart Ordinance will need to be amended since he was notified that Bunge is using golf carts on 2nd Street, and also Deer Run and Grey Goose subdivisions should also be included in the ordinance, since they use golf carts on city streets to get to and from the Grey Goose golf course. Baker was also informed when requiring seatbelts in a golf cart that it is required to have a roll bar. Baker said it is council's decision to decide whether or not to include seatbelt requirements or not. The Mayor informed the council members to contact Baker with any questions or comments and then council will make their decision at the next council meeting on September 15th.

The Mayor announced Street Commissioner, Jeremy Gilbert supplied the Board of Works and Council members with a list of trash collection fees to be reviewed and then discussed at the September 15th council meeting.

The Mayor mentioned Wastewater Supt., Anne Butcher requested at the August 8th Board of Works meeting to increase the pay rate for three employees in the Wastewater Department. The decision at the meeting was postponed since there will be no pay raises for any employee in 2010 and to see how other departments handled pay increases. Butcher hired these employees at a lower rate so she could increase their pay as they received more experience. Then at the August 18th Board of Works meeting the Board members approved increasing the pay level for all three (3) employees, with final approval to be made by the common council members. Council & Board of Works member, Ken Meyer asked the other Department Heads if they had made any changes in pay. Water Supt., Jim Inskeep commented that he has not made any changes this year, but with a new hire he starts them at base rate until probation period, and then increase the pay. Parks & Recreation Supt., Steve Krull said the only pay raises were for the life guards who receive extra certification did receive a \$.25 raise. Police Chief, Ken Ketzler mentioned Police officers receive longevity pay every three years. Street Commissioner, Jeremy Gilbert commented before he was the Department Head, some employees were hired in at top pay, but for this year, due to the financial situation, he has kept everyone the same. The mayor commented with items like this being handled so differently, this should be put in the city's personnel policy to give the department heads guidance on how to handle pay increases, the mayor also remarked that council approved previously that there would be no pay raises for 2010. Councilman Dyer made a motion to approve the increase, Meyer seconded the motion. Council members Cook, Crone and Engle opposed the increase. The City Attorney remarked that the decision will need to go back to the Board of Works again.

Joan Eichhorn, Storm Water Manager reported to maintain the Storm Water Permit, the city needs to minimize the impact to surface water quality from urban runoff and improve water quality. Eichhorn has been monitoring three (3) streams since 2004, which have been re-examined in July 2009, which has shown drastic improvements.

Street Commissioner, Jeremy Gilbert announced the street paving will be completed soon. Gilbert also announced Heavy Trash will begin the week of September 14th.

Chris Krull, Leisure Services Director for Parks & Recreation reported the countywide soccer program will begin on September 12th with 770 participants this year.

Councilman Dyer commended the Mayor for wanting to update the policy manual to clear up some of the issues that have been brought before council.

City resident, Bob Becker questioned how the Strategic Plan from Umbaugh will affect the citizens. The mayor informed Becker the administration will need to prioritize services, and get the citizens input on what services they want to keep or give up.

Former Fire Chief, Jan Smith thanked the city for paving Mercer Avenue. Smith commented that it has been fourteen years ago since it was done.

City resident, Jim Franze remarked he was glad that the city is starting to talk about cutting services now.

City resident, Bob Adams thanked Building Supt., Roger Gage for sending a letter to his neighbor to cleanup all the trash from his property.

Engle made a motion to allow the claims as presented. Cook seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, Meyer made a motion for adjournment. Dyer seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.