

CITY OF DECATUR
COMMON COUNCIL MINUTES
OCTOBER 20, 2009

The City of Decatur Common Council met on Tuesday, October 20, 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 Councilmen Charlie Cook, Bill Crone, Matt Dyer and Ken Meyer was in attendance. Also present was City Attorney, Tim Baker and Clerk-Treasurer, Phyllis Whitright. Councilwoman Barb Engle was absent.

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

The Clerk-Treasurer had emailed the minutes from October 6th meeting. There were no corrections or amendments offered, so Dyer made a motion to approve the minutes as emailed, Crone seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Jeff Rowe and Steve Carter from H.J. Umbaugh & Associates presented the 2009 Strategic Plan which also includes future capital improvements, along with an executive summary report. Rowe explained the executive summary report, which shows the estimated shortfall per fund for the civil city ranges from \$1,114,443 in 2009 to \$2,375,669 by 2013 if no changes are made. As for the utilities a recommendation of 41.2% rate or \$8.03 per month for a 5,000 average usage adjustment for the water utility with payment in lieu of taxes, or 37.3% or \$7.36 per month without payment in lieu of taxes. Cash in the water utility is below minimum reserve requirements. This increase would also include moving hydrant rental fees from the general fund to the utility bill. Sewage and Storm Water utilities cash is strong and is above reserve requirements. Umbaugh is not recommending a rate adjustment for Sewage or Storm Water utilities at this time. The report showed an alternative course of action for the civil city, such as, freezing the operating budgets beyond 2010, implementing a payment in lieu of taxes by the utilities – Water & Sewer, increasing trash fees to \$12.00 (this has been done), transition public hydrant rental from the general fund to utility bill, transition payment of capital costs from general, MVH and Parks & Recreation to CEDIT, CCI, CCD and Riverboat, by making these changes the estimated shortfall for the Civil City funds for 2009 would be \$1,072,200 and \$348,500 for 2013. Other considerations to eliminate the remaining estimated shortfalls within the civil funds could be to eliminate or reduce employee overtime, reduction in the City's share of employee health insurance costs, creation of a fire territory, funding rolling stock (vehicles) and other capital through the issuance of general obligation bonds, creation of a street lighting/public safety user fee, and reduction in departments operating budgets. Councilman Dyer questioned whether or not employers are obligated to fund health insurance. Carter informed Dyer that there is nothing that says employers are obligated to fund health care. The Mayor mentioned the State is now reimbursing the City for Police and Fire Pensions and questioned if the monies left in these funds could be released to the city for other purposes. Carter informed the Mayor not until the city has no liability and the fund becomes dormant. Councilman Cook remarked his property tax bill went down by \$50, but the sales tax was increased and now utility rates will also increase, so actually he is paying more now than before the property tax reform. The Mayor encourages everyone to attend town meetings with our legislators, so they know what effect this has made. Council members will make a decision on changes to be made at the next council meeting on November 3rd.

The Mayor informed the Council members an ordinance will need to be adopted before the end of the year for a two (2) year capital improvement plan for calendar years 2010 and 2011 from the CEDIT fund. This will be discussed at the November 3rd council meeting.

The Mayor reported the temporary fix has been done on the railroad crossing on 13th Street.

The Mayor announced the City will be soliciting bids for Casualty and Liability Insurance for 2010. The Mayor will prepare specifications for Monday, October 26th for any local insurance agents.

The Mayor appointed Andrew Miller as a member of the Board of Zoning Appeals for a four (4) year term beginning January 1, 2010 and terminating December 31, 2013. Cook made a motion to make the appointment a matter of record. Dyer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The Mayor has received numerous complaints about horse manure on City streets. The Mayor doesn't know what could be done to prevent this from happening. Joan Eichhorn, Storm Water manager commented in the Storm Water ordinance if animal waste goes in a storm drain a \$100 fine could be charged. The Mayor will try to address this issue and contact the bishops of the Amish community.

Deputy Chief, Greg Cook presented a Distinguished Honor Award from the Governor's office to Police Chief, Ken Ketzler through the Indiana Chief of Police Conference.

The Mayor announced the Farmer's Market will take place on the north side of Madison this Thursday. The south end of Madison Street will be closed due to construction work being done.

The Mayor will be accepting applications for the Utilities Auditor's position. Applications will be available on Monday, October 26th. The Mayor and the Board of Works members will review applications and then set a date for interviews in approximately three (3) weeks.

The Street Commissioner, Jeremy Gilbert announced leaf collection begins Monday, October 26th. Grass clippings and leaves can be put together along the street curbs. Limbs and brush should be kept separate from the grass clipping and the leaves.

The Mayor wished Councilwoman Engle well, who is absent due to surgery.

Dyer 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 8:20 p.m.