

CITY OF DECATUR  
COMMON COUNCIL MINUTES  
AUGUST 16, 2022

The City of Decatur Common Council met on Tuesday, August 16 at 6:45 P.M. at City Hall in Council Chambers, 172 N. Second Street, Decatur. 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 Anne Razo.

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

The Clerk-Treasurer had emailed the minutes from the August 2, 2022 meeting. Dyer made a motion to accept the minutes as emailed. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

The first item on the agenda was a review of Form 1 of the proposed 2023 Budget.

First to address the budget was Police Chief Lennie Corral. The main portion of his presentation centered around his longevity proposal. Noting there has been numerous changes in police work over the years and with the profession not being seen as prestigious as it once was, Chief Corral shared that he has talked with several other Police Chief's and found that all departments seem to have a problem keeping and finding good candidates. Chief Corral feels the common element to help keep officers is longevity. Other departments are offering more benefit packages. Mayor Rickord commented that he had attended a meeting in Indianapolis and the topic of how to keep officers was the same in one of the classes he had attended. An in-depth discussion was held regarding the longevity pay concept and it was decided to have Clerk-Treasurer Phyllis Whitright run some figures and by consensus it was decided to hold a Special Council Meeting at 4:45 P.M. on Wednesday, August 24, 2022. Ending this evening comments, Chief Corral had included two (2) increases for fuel and overtime, in the general police budget. The Local Law Enforcement Continuing Education budget was decreased from \$25,000 to \$20,000. The LIT-Public Safety budget was reduced for vehicles, and only budgeted \$60,000 of a squad car in 2023. Also added \$3,000 for Cellbrite program and licensing fees that will be cost-shared between the County Sheriff's department, and the Berne and Geneva PD's, Decatur PD will pay the cost in 2023.

Clerk-Treasurer Phyllis Whitright noted that all the department budgets includes the raise of \$1.50 per hour for all full-time employees that Council had previously requested. As for the Clerk-Treasurer's budget the increases were for additional part-time wages, and increase to the financial software contract.

Legal research subscription was added to the Department of Law's budget.

The Fire Department's proposed budget was next to be reviewed. Fire Chief, Jeff Sheets shared that ladder fire trucks are increasing by 21% by the end of the year, and it would be 2025 before delivery. Chief Sheets informed Council that there's a possibility of 2 firemen who would retire, so he added retirement payouts, he also added 12 hire-back days for full-time's to come in and cover shifts. Chief Sheets also added \$500 for clothing allowance for the Fire Marshal. Other increases were for fuel and vehicle maintenance, and operating cost. For the LIT-Public Safety budget, the personal protection gear is up \$2,000 for replacements.

For City Hall budget, the janitor submitted a request for an increase, and the utilities were increased for inflation.

Curt Witte, Building and Zoning Superintendent, noted that the proposed budget for Building and Zoning Dept. included increases of \$2,000 for operating expenses and \$5,000 for code enforcement right-of-way issues.

For the Sanitation budget, Operations Manager, Jeremy Gilbert increased part-time/overtime, and increase supplies due to inflation, and increased trash disposal fees to Adams County Solid Waste District, and also added the lease/purchase payments for two garbage trucks, dump trailer and recycle bins. Regarding the MVH Street budget, Gilbert noted he did not budget for a dump truck but noted there will be a need for a new one before too long. Gilbert emphasized the need to hire another mechanic as the vehicles and equipment have increased considerably over the years and he does not want to lose the current mechanic. Gilbert shared that he is waiting for an estimate on a new building to store the City's equipment. Council members supported the hiring of a second mechanic, and directed the Clerk-Treasurer to add the cost of the wage and benefits for another mechanic to the MVH-Street budget. The Clerk-Treasurer informed Council the cost for a full-time employee is approximately \$80,000.00. Also discussed was that the construction for the 5 Points Improvements Project is to begin in 2023. The plan is to transfer funds from the General fund to the Rainy Day fund to pay the City's cost share, which is estimated at \$585,000.00.

Jeremy Gilbert, Operations Manager spoke regarding the Parks & Recreation budget noting there may be an employee retiring from the Parks Department, so additional money was added for the retirement payout, and increased the part-time seasonal wages due to having a harder time getting workers to work at the pool. Also increased the equipment account for mowers and there are several other pieces of equipment that will need to be replaced. Gilbert informed Council that the City swimming pool is almost 100 years old, which will need to be looked at long term. Gilbert requested additional \$50,000 from LIT-Economic Development (formerly CEDIT) fund to go towards Parks. By consensus, the Clerk-Treasurer was to budget an additional \$50,000 towards Parks within the LIT-Economic Development budget.

Regarding the Council Budget, Clerk-Treasurer Whitright shared that the increases were in wages, benefits and insurance for City employees. Also increased supplies for Madison Street Plaza, the MERIT Center, and the HIVE due to more activities. Council on Aging has submitted a request for an additional \$1,000 for financial support, janitors also submitted a request for an increase to clean the MERIT Center. Other increases were for legal advertising, property and liability insurance for additional equipment and vehicles, utilities, phone and internet, and WebEx fees. Also included in the budget was \$30,000 for the City Election in 2023.

Clerk-Treasurer Whitright informed Council that for the Police and Fire Pension funds, State legislation increased the police officers and firefighter's retirement rate from 17.5% to 18%, which is the City's cost.

The CCI fund was increased \$5,500 for website updates and IT services.

\$10,000 was added to the Decatur Redevelopment Commission's budget for accounting services due to the County hiring a consulting firm to calculate the TIF revenues, but the Mayor received updated cost for this service, which will be \$3,000-\$3,500, so Council decreased the

accounting services from \$10,000 to \$4,000. The Redevelopment Commission members also increased in their budget \$25,000 for CTE and workforce development, and increased capital outlays for construction of the 13<sup>th</sup> St. and Bollman St. improvements and other capital projects.

For the Public Arts budget there was an increase of \$1,500 for artist commissions, due to more activity at the HIVE, and maintenance for City owned sculptures. A letter had been submitted by Ron Storey as President of the Decatur Arts Commission requesting \$5,000 from the City for financial support. By consensus, the \$5,000 was approved.

Mayor Rickord thanked Clerk-Treasurer Phyllis Whitright for all her work in pulling the proposed budget together.

Jamie Gephart, Community Coordinator presented two (2) event forms. The first request was for the Historical Society to close 5<sup>th</sup> Street from Monroe to Jackson Street on Sunday, September 11, 2022 for an Antique Car Show. The request was to close the street from 11 A.M. to 5 P.M. with the show taking place from 1-4 P.M. Dyer made a motion to accept the request to close 5<sup>th</sup> Street from Monroe to Jackson Street on September 11, 2022. Seconded by Coshow, the motion was adopted.

The second event is a downtown event for kids on Madison Street Plaza on September 24, 2022 from 2-6 P.M. The event is sponsored by Andy's and 2 Pour Guys. Coshow made a motion to approve the September 24, 2022 event sponsored by Andy's and 2 Pour Guys. Seconded by Murray, the motion was adopted.

Dyer made a motion to make the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement a matter of record for Justin Weil, an on-call firefighter who does custom engraving for the Decatur Fire Department. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Ordinance 2022-13, an ordinance which amends Chapter 78, Schedule 1 of the Decatur Code of Ordinances of 2015 to allow parking on the north side of Adams Street between 10<sup>th</sup> Street and 11<sup>th</sup> Street, and to have a no parking zone on the South side of Adams Street from 10<sup>th</sup> Street to 11<sup>th</sup> Street, was brought forward. Sirk made a motion to place Ordinance 2022-13 on its third reading by short title only. Seconded by Dyer, the motion passed and City Attorney Anne Razo read Ordinance 2022-13 by short title only. Sirk made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2022-13 on its third and final reading. Seconded by Dyer, a roll call vote was held and Ordinance 2022-13 was adopted by a 5-0 vote.

Regarding Ordinance 2022-14, an ordinance to increase sanitation rates to help pay for the debt service on the two new garbage trucks, dump trailer, and recycle bins was postponed due to the public hearing was overlooked to have publication 10 days prior to the meeting. Thus, the Public Hearing and final reading of Ordinance 2022-14 will be held at the next Council meeting on September 6, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Councilman Sirk shared that a request had been made to place a sign on the MERIT Center building at the entrance for the King's Kingdom Childcare. The sign would be attached to the building and include the logo for the MERIT Center as well as the logo for the King's Kingdom Childcare. Fullenkamp made a motion to approve the placement of a sign on the building and that King's Kingdom Childcare is responsible for its maintenance. Seconded by Dyer, the motion was adopted.

Operations Manager, Jeremy Gilbert shared that Arnold Lumber is working on the River Greenway Bridge and there is a need for more railroad ties. They are about 25 short, the ties could be received by next Tuesday, but there was no cost estimate. Dyer made a motion to approve any additional cost if needed beyond what is budgeted from the LIT-Economic Development (formerly CEDIT) fund. Seconded by Murray, the motion was adopted.

The Chamber of Commerce submitted a request for support for the Kekionga Festival. Dyer made a motion to support the Kekionga Festival at the rate of \$250.00 from the Common Council's promotional account. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted with Coshow abstaining.

Department Heads Input:

Kevin Hackman, Utilities Auditor shared that the water tower on Piqua Road has been painted and looks great.

Jeremy Gilbert, Operations Manager reported that the street paving for the Community Crossing Matching Grant will begin on Wednesday, August 24, 2022. Gilbert also shared that there has been a return of 72.6% of the surveys for the garbage totes and they will have to decide what to do with the non-responders.

Jamie Gephart, Community Coordinator announced that the City's website has been updated and includes community events. She noted Germanfest is this Saturday and the Third Thursday Concert event is including a Job Fair this week.

Curt Witte, Building and Zoning Superintendent reported that Fort Wayne Roofing will start work on the roof at 138 N. Second Street next week. He noted the street would need to be closed for 3 days and he will let the media know as soon as he learns the dates. Pedestrians were urged to not use the alley south of 138 N. Second Street. Mayor Rickord added some structural changes had to be made and the City was lucky no problems had occurred earlier.

Bill Carpenter, Assistant Water Superintendent shared that with the Piqua water tower painted, two samples were taken today and hopefully they pass and the tower can be reopened.

Council Input:

Coshow announced that Sweetwater All-Star Band will be performing on Thursday evening and that Germanfest is on Saturday on the Madison Street Plaza. He encouraged people to join in and have fun.

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

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

Adjournment was at 8:42 P.M.