

CITY OF DECATUR  
COMMON COUNCIL MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 6, 2022

The City of Decatur Common Council members met on Tuesday, September 6 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 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 16, 2022 meeting and Dyer made a motion to accept the minutes as emailed. Seconded by Coshow, the motion was adopted.

Sirk made a motion to approved the minutes of the Special meeting held on August 24, 2022 as emailed. Seconded by Murray, the motion was adopted.

First on the agenda was Jamie Gephart, Community Coordinator regarding a request from Bob Beer of Bell Farms addition to close Hickory Court on Saturday, October 8, 2022 for a block party. Dyer made a motion to approve the street closing request. Seconded by Sirk, the motion was adopted.

Curt Witte, Building and Zoning Superintendent appeared before Council regarding 710 Schirmeyer Street. It was noted that the City owns the property now, and Witte has been receiving inquiries about what the plans are for the property. The home has been demolished and the yard needs mowed. It was shared that Council decides what to do with the property. If Council decides to sell the property, two (2) appraisals are needed. Dyer made a motion to make the determination to sell the property and hire two (2) appraisers to provide an average of the appraisals. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Building & Zoning Superintendent Witte next brought up 928 Schirmeyer Street, which his department has been dealing with for 3½ years. The house has been condemned. The property has gone through a tax sale twice with no bids and a certificate sale for \$100 and the person did not follow through. Thus, the property went back to the County. A tax sale is scheduled for October 31, 2022 and a minimum bid of approximately \$3,500 is needed compared to \$100 for a certificate of sale. City Attorney Anne Razo noted she had talked with County Attorney Mark Burry and that it is up to the City to decide if they want to forgive the weed liens before the sale, this could shorten the redemption period, and petition a deed in 180 days. This would need to be done prior to October 31 for tax sale. Superintendent Witte estimates that demolition of the home would be \$3,000-\$3,500 and to dispose of the materials. A contractor who is building across the street has shown some interest in the property. It was noted no decision is needed this evening as Witte wanted to inform Council and possibly decide at the next meeting what to do with the property.

A Public Hearing had been advertised to begin at 7:00 P.M. regarding an ordinance to increase sanitation rates to help pay for the debt service on the two new garbage trucks, dump trailer, and recycle bins. Coshow made a motion to suspend the Council meeting. Seconded by Sirk, the motion was adopted.

Coshow then made a motion to open the Public Hearing. Seconded by Sirk, the motion was adopted.

City Attorney Anne Razo summarized the reason for the Public Hearing, which is to amend Chapter 51 regarding Sanitation services, required receptacles and user fees to be collected by the City. There was no one from the public to speak in favor or against the rate increase. Thus, Sirk made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Seconded by Coshow, the motion was adopted.

Coshow made a motion to reconvene the Council meeting. Seconded by Sirk, the motion was adopted.

Coshow made a motion to make a matter of record the notice of publication regarding the Public Hearing. Seconded by Sirk, the motion was adopted.

Ordinance 2022-14 was brought forward for its Third Reading, and amended to go into effective upon its passage. The Ordinance 2022-14 amends Chapter 51 of the Decatur Code of Ordinances of 2015 for Sanitation Services and Section 51.06 required receptacles and Section 51.14 to increase collection user fees provided by the City and Section 51.16 curbside containers for recycling was brought forward. Sirk made a motion to place Ordinance 2022-14 as amended on its third reading by short title only. Seconded by Dyer, the motion passed and City Attorney Anne Razo read Ordinance 2022-14 as amended by short title only. Sirk made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2022-14 as amend on its third and final reading. Seconded by Dyer, a roll call vote was held and Ordinance 2022-14 as amended and passed by a 5-0 vote.

Next on the agenda was Operations Manager Jeremy Gilbert to give an update of the new trash/recycling collection project. He reported that one of the new garbage trucks arrived last week. Gilbert shared that the number of people deciding to recycle has increased. The Public Works employees are working on distributing the carts to residents on the Monday and Tuesday routes. Gilbert is hoping those carts can all be delivered by early next week. Gilbert gave statistics for each route regarding the requests for the 48-gallon and the 64-gallon carts. Regarding the recycling status, there are around 600 people who are currently participating with 1,601 carts spoken for as per the return surveys. Thus, recycling is exploding, which is great, but also creates a problem, since more carts will need to be ordered, which isn't in the budget. Since the first order of carts were paid from the ARP Grant, it was recommended for Gilbert work with the Clerk-Treasurer to see how many carts are needed. Sirk then made a motion to use funds from the ARP Grant for the number of carts needed. Seconded by Coshow, the motion was adopted. The Clerk-Treasurer informed Council that the ARP Plan will need to be amended, and will prepare the necessary paperwork once the number of carts are determined.

Mike Brown, the County IT Director, and Police Chief Lennie Corral appeared before the Council regarding security of the servers located in the attic of the Police Station. Chief Corral had brought the issue before the Council at a previous meeting, and it was decided to have Mr. Brown appear before Council to help answer some of the questions. Earlier costs had been estimated to be over \$31,000 and included moving wiring, equipment and building a cabinet, and labor. Mr. Brown shared that the insurance companies are pushing for more security so other vendors do not have the ability to get into the system. After a lengthy discussion it was decided that Mr. Brown would seek an estimate of the cost to use a wire mesh enclosure rather than a cabinet.

Police Chief Lennie Corral sought permission since Council had approved a total of \$145,000 for police equipment from the ARP Grant, and after making his purchases of the radios, there is about \$11,000 unused, which Corral requested to purchase 2 more years of warranties for the new computer tablets. Sirk made a motion to allow Chief Corral to use the unused ARP funds to purchase the extended year warranties for each of the new tablets. Seconded by Coshow, the motion was adopted.

The School Resource Officer, Trent Busse appeared before Council sharing he had been approached by Tiffany Heine, the Director of Learning at North Adams Community Schools, regarding the SRO Canine Program. Busse shared that Ms. Heine had been approached by Master Trainer Sgt. Harris of the Allen County Sheriff's Department, as he is in charge of the program which provides a dog for SRO Officers. The dog would be trained in drugs and firearms. The school would donate the dog, and the school will apply for a grant to pay for the cost of training while the City's cost would be for food and \$6,000 to \$8,000 to outfit Officer Busse's police car for the dog. Officer Busse mentioned that people in the community have shown an interest in donating to the project. The dog would be used as a therapy dog and studies have shown that students do better with a dog around. The dog would be a Golden Retriever as non-aggressive dogs are used in the program. The dog would stay with Officer Busse as the handler for five years, if Busse leaves before the five years, then the dog stays with the Decatur Police Department. Sirk made a motion to allow the use of the SRO Canine Program. Seconded by Coshow, the motion was adopted. It was announced that Ms. Heine will attend the September 20, 2022 Council meeting to discuss funding of the program.

Officer Blaze Brooks appeared before the Council regarding firearms for the Officers. Officer Brooks shared that the concept of fight or flight as a person only has one response available when approached in a dangerous situation. Officer Brooks outlined the miniature red dot sights which allows for officers' safety when forced to use a firearm. The current Glock 17 pistols cannot add the miniature red dots sights, so new weapons are being requested to purchase. Officer Brooks shared that officers would receive 4 hours of class training and 16 hours at the range for 800-1000 rounds. The accuracy of the red dots sights has been shown to improve going from 75%-90% to 98% accuracy. The cost of new Glock 17 MOS pistols are \$429.00, with the miniature red dot sights are \$466.90 each for a total cost of \$10,271.80 for 22 of them. However, the Department is wanting to trade-in their current guns, which Kiesler's has priced the trade-ins at a value of \$305. The difference between purchasing the new Glock 17 MOS with trade-in is an additional cost of \$2,728.00, plus shipping totals \$2,798.00, which Chief Corral noted that the funds are already in this year's LIT-Public Safety budget. Dyer made a motion to proceed with trading in the current guns for new guns totaling \$2,798.00. Seconded by Sirk, the motion was adopted.

Police Chief Lennie Corral requested permission to use Betty Walters Fund money to buy back the guns being traded-in to Kiesler, and then give the guns to 22-full-time officers and 2-police reserve officers as a gift. Chief Corral shared that he could buy back the guns from Kiesler for \$395 each, plus the return cost totaling \$8,760 and felt it would be a morale booster as well as a gift for a job well done. Chief Corral noted that the Officers guns have a special meaning. Chief Corral also requested that he would also like to recognize the two (2) office staff at the same rate from the Betty Walters Fund and he would work with Clerk-Treasurer Phyllis Whitright to see

how that could be accomplished. Dyer made a motion to allow the use of the Betty Walters Fund to buy back the guns being traded in. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

The next item on the agenda was the inclusion of a Haunted Trail in the activities for Callithumpian Week with profits going to the Parks Department. It was shared that the persons who had earlier held a Haunted Barn event had been contacted to see if they would sell their equipment. However, they did not want to sell, but wanted to be involved in the Haunted Trail event. Mayor Rickord noted some funds could be used for purchasing needed generators and props. Coshow made a motion to use up to \$4,000 for needed generators and props and authorized Mayor Rickord to sign for them. Seconded by Sirk, the motion was adopted. Jamie Gephart, Community Coordinator, announced the Haunted Trail would be held from 7-10 P.M. on October 14, 19, 20, and 21, 2022. Parking will be in the lot at REV Sports Complex and the Concession Stand will be used for selling the tickets for the event. Mayor Rickord noted that the insurance company recommended waivers be signed for this event, which he is working on this. Operations Manager, Jeremy Gilbert commented that the Decatur Park Board is in favor of this fundraising event.

A discussion took place whether to use ARP funds or Council's promotional funds towards the Haunted Trail event, so Coshow made a motion for the Mayor and the Clerk-Treasurer to decide which funds would be best to purchase the generators and props. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Clerk-Treasurer Phyllis Whitright shared that she went over the budget figures and went back and talked to some of the Department Heads and made some changes to Common Council's, Fire Department and the Building & Zoning Department budgets. The City's cost for the 5 Points Project will be paid from several funds, rather than the General fund. She noted that she still needs approval from the Redevelopment Commission to help pay for the 5 Points project, which she will address at their meeting tomorrow evening. Whitright announced that the Public Hearing for the 2023 budget will be held at 7 P.M. at the September 20, 2022 Council meeting, with Adoption being on October 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### Department Heads Input:

Operations Manager Jeremy Gilbert noted heavy trash will be held next week and that the normal rules apply. He also asked residents to be considerate of the employees. The new garbage truck is in and carts for the Monday and Tuesday routes are being delivered with the plans to begin using them on September 19, 2022. Gilbert also reported that Phase 1 work for the Community Crossing Matching Grant has been completed, with stripping to be done soon. The project should be completed by the middle of October. The next application for next year's Community Crossing Matching Grant has been sent in. Gilbert also shared that he is working with the Redevelopment Commission's Project in cooperation with INDOT to improve pedestrian safety and signalization at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Bollman Street, a project that has been in the works for the last 1½ years. This project is to begin early October, and be completed at the end of October.

Fire Chief Jeff Sheets reminded people to try not to block fire hydrants with the new trash containers.

Josh Zimmerman, Civil Infrastructure Manager noted the new piping has been installed at the former General Electric property, which will make the CSO flow better.

Council Input:

Coshow noted the practice and try-outs for the Highland Games will be held next Wednesday at 6 P.M.

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

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

Adjournment was at 8:55 P.M.