

**Murphysboro City Council Meeting  
June 13, 2017**

The Murphysboro, Illinois, City Council met in regular session, pursuant to its ordinances, on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2017. Mayor Stephens called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Stephens led the council in prayer and then the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Mayor Stephens then directed Deputy City Clerk Ripley to call the roll. The roll was called with the following

**Present:** Barb Hughes, Jance Curry-Witzman, Herb Voss, John Erbes, Mike Bastien, Dan Bratton, Gloria Campos, WJ Pittman

**Absent:** Russell Brown, Gary McComb

**Motion: To approve the minutes of the May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017 council meeting. All aldermen received a copy of the minutes, for their review, prior to the meeting.**

Motion by Alderman Hughes Second by Alderman Campos

Mayor called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

**Motion Carried**

**Motion: To approve the accounts payable registers through June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017, accounts receivable through May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017 and payroll through May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017 with holding the payment to Midwest Petroleum and Murphysboro Lawn & Garden. All aldermen received a copy of the accounts payable, accounts receivable and payroll reports for their review, prior to the meeting.**

Motion by Alderman Bastien Second by Alderman Campos

Mayor called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

**Motion Carried**

Mayor Stephens indicated that he would be moving up the Mayor's report due to the press being at the meeting tonight.

<b>MAYOR'S REPORT</b>
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Mayor Stephens recommended the appointment of Madeline Steimle to the Sallie Logan Public Library Board.

**Motion: To approve the appointment of Madeline Steimle to the Sallie Logan Public Library Board.**

Motion by Alderman Bratton

Second by Alderman Erbes

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

**Motion carried.**

Mayor Stephens also presented a resolution in support of an intergovernmental agreement between Jackson County, Monroe County, Perry County and Randolph County supporting a four-lane highway connecting to the St. Louis Area. He gave a brief background on meetings being held with representatives from the four counties and the progress being made.

**Motion: To approve the Resolution in Support of an Intergovernmental Agreement between Jackson County, Monroe County, Perry County, and Randolph County supporting a four-lane highway connection to the St. Louis Area.**

Motion by Alderman Bratton

Second by Alderman Bastien

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

**Motion carried.**

<b>COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS</b>
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Chairman WJ Pittman opened discussion for Budget & Finance related items. There was discussion regarding the operation of the Senior Citizens Van and the need for a new van. A meeting was held with Mayor Stephens, Alderman Pittman and Ted Guterrez, Director of the Jackson County Mass Transit District earlier in the day. Mr. Guterrez was present at the meeting to discuss the operations of JCMTD further. He understands our concern with the expense of operating our own van and is happy to help us. He further advised the Council of the various contracts that JCMTD has with other agencies and the routes involved as well as the invoicing process. It was agreed that our next step is for Mayor Stephens and Alderman Pittman to schedule a meeting with Senior Citizens Director Joe Balsano.

Anna Guetersloh presented the audit for Fiscal Year ending December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016. A brief overview was given and then a review of the performance highlights as well as the advisory comments were covered. No comments or concerns were voiced by the City Council.

Attorney Blake advised the council that the annual prevailing wage ordinance covering public works projects has been prepared and needs to be considered. .

**Motion: To approve the annual prevailing wage ordinance for public works projects.**

Motion by Alderman Bratton

Second by Alderman Pittman

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

**Motion carried.**

Mike Jones, Chairman of the Tourism Commission, was present to update the council on the commissions' current projects and expenditures. Mike stated that to date approximately \$3,000 has been received from the Hotel/Motel tax and approximately \$5,000 has been received from the County Bed & Breakfast tax. Projects that they are currently working on include a new webpage (southernillinoistourism.com), marketing videos that can be used as commercials, purchase of banners (and brackets) for the downtown area and eclipse viewing glasses. The update was appreciated and Mr. Jones was encouraged to return to give quarterly updates.

Public Comment – Faye Lee requested that a pothole in front of her business, Muglee Brew, be filled. She also requested two (2) thirty-minute parking signs for patrons of her establishment. It was also suggested that diagonal parking be considered around the Courthouse to accommodate additional parking. Ms. Lee further complained about speeders along North 7<sup>th</sup> Street. She suggested that speed bumps be installed until the new roadway is constructed.

Mayor Stephens opened discussion for Building and Grounds related items. Old Business considered of the maintenance proposal from Murphysboro Lawn & Garden. Mayor Stephens indicated that he has had conversation with Bert Ozburn who believes that funding will be approved at their next meeting.

Attorney Blake updated the council on the TULIP Program that was mentioned in a recent Illinois Municipal League magazine (article was distributed in packets). This program is exclusive to members of the Illinois Municipal League Risk Management Association, however, similar special event coverage could be purchased from other insurance agencies. Rates would vary depending on the number of participants, type of event, and other variables including if alcohol was being served. Mayor Stephens expressed his concern that we should want more patrons of our parks and not discourage them with additional insurance costs.

It was advised that we have had an issue with the maintenance of Mt. Carbon Cemetery located on Rt. 127 South. Administrative Assistant, Sandra Ripley, took a call indicating that there is a tree that fell on the headstones and would like to have the tree cleaned up. Attorney Blake gave the City Council background on this topic stating that the Assessors' office has the City of Murphysboro listed as the property owner, however, that property is located outside the City limits and has never been maintained by the City of Murphysboro, but rather the Murphysboro Township. Additional research efforts were discussed and the Council was advised that the only way to find the actual owner of the property was to conduct a title search. It was agreed that we would hold off on conducting a title search at this time, but rather request Alderman McComb to speak with Mike Jones, the local funeral homes and Mt. Carbon Church to see if they know who the actual owner of the cemetery is.

Chairman John Erbes opened discussion for Community Relations items. There was no old business on the agenda. The council then considered a complaint presented by Beulah Harrouff for the reimbursement of a hot water heater. The complaint stated that her hot water heater went out as a result of the water main

break that occurred on the Kinkaid Main Transmission line. Several questions were posed such as how old was the water heater, was it gas or electric, and who was the licensed plumber that installed the heater.

**Motion: To approve sending a letter to Beulah Harrouff informing her that this was a Kinkaid issue rather than the City of Murphysboro.**

Motion by Alderman Hughes

Second by Alderman Pittman

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

**Motion carried.**

Public Comment – Alderman Hughes stated that the owner of the new business Southern Illinois Sports Resale, Trudy Thompson, had requested placement of trash receptacles on the East end of Walnut Street. Pricing for new receptacles will be gathered and brought back to the next meeting for further consideration.

Chairman Mike Bastien opened discussion for Public Improvement related items. The Council discussed allowing property owners to construct various improvements on the City right-of-way. Attorney Blake advised that he has reviewed Carbondale's ordinance which requires a permit to be approved. Alderman Pittman suggested that we should approve projects where homeowners are trying to make beautification improvements to their properties. It was agreed that the city code currently prohibiting improvements to City right-of-ways would be reviewed. A proposal would be written to amend the code as well as an application form would be developed and presented at the next meeting.

The Council discussed the city code regarding billboards. Mayor Stephens advised that business owner, Chris Grither, had requested to construct a billboard that displayed 4 advertisements with one being for his business. Current city code prohibits billboards only allowing signs that advertise the existing business. The general consensus is to leave the ordinance as it stands with no changes at this time.

Mayor Stephens updated the City Council on the application for a Brownfield Grant. We have received a letter stating that our application was not awarded. A conference call is being scheduled with the grant selection committee where they will give us pointers for the next submission. The grant writer will submit on our behalf at no additional charge.

Alderman Bratton stated that he does not like the eyesore at 17<sup>th</sup> & Walnut Street. The sale is basically a yard sale and something needs to be done. There was much discussion regarding the definition of a yard sale and the condition of his building. Discussion was tabled until the next meeting until a better definition of a yard sale could be proposed.

Mayor Stephens stated that BLIP Networks, LLC would like to present a new proposal. Ian Ellison indicated that they have continued discussion with the school district and Brian Manwaring on issues that were previously discussed. Billy

distributed copies of the new proposal and stated that basically it was for placement of antennas on three (3) water towers and monthly compensation of \$500. Alderman Bratton voiced his concern with liability and does not think it's a good idea. Alderman Voss spoke in support of the proposal stating that other communities (Cutler, Ava, Gorham) have had no issues with BLIP and that the equipment on the towers do not pose an eyesore. Murphysboro resident, Linda Akin, spoke in support stating that she needs the high speed internet for their security system and that it is a matter of safety to her and she encourages the council to consider the proposal. IT Director Brian Manwaring added comments on the benefits to the City and school district and that there were many added services to the proposal. Attorney Blake advised that under the communications act that we could not offer them exclusivity. After further discussion, Mayor Stephens stated that he would like our Information Technology Director, City Attorney and Council members to review the proposal presented and bring it back for discussion at our next meeting.

Alderman Bratton opened discussion for Public Works related items. Old Business items began with an update on the extension of Osburn Street. Alderman Bratton indicated that he spoke with City Engineer Harold Sheffer. Harold stated that the Bishop & Elwell plans were still being modified and would need to go to IDOT for approval. No action will be needed on our part until IDOT approval is received. A copy of the estimate for repairs to Hanson Street was included in packets. It was agreed that there are many other streets that are in the same or worse condition and that we should hold off at this time.

Alderman Bratton requested that someone speak with the school district about possible solutions to the drainage issues surrounding their property. Alderman Pittman will speak with Kevin Beavers, School Board Vice President.

Alderman Bratton requested that Jim Stewart give the council an update on the Bootcamp Lift Station and 7<sup>th</sup> Street Lift Station. Jim stated that the bid to upgrade the Bootcamp Lift Station was approximately \$8,000. He is still waiting on additional information on the upgrade of the 7<sup>th</sup> Street Lift Station and should have everything by the June 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Motion: To approve the un-budgeted upgrade of the Bootcamp Lift Station at approximately \$8,000.**

Motion by Alderman Campos

Second by Alderman Erbes

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

**Motion carried.**

Alderman Bratton discussed the infiltration in sewer lines on Steven Lane. He stated that he recently walked the sewer line. Water Distribution and Sewer Maintenance Foreman, Tim Lee, indicated that it is very difficult to make repairs to the sewer lines due to the homes and accessory structures nearby. Tim made the suggestion of getting quotes to install a sleeve on the sewer main. He was instructed to obtain quotes from a couple of different companies.

Alderman Bratton stated that the Street Department is in need of additional manpower. Street Foreman, Darrin Mills, advised that he has anywhere from 40 to 70 lawns to mow, plus the right-of-ways to maintain and all of the additional duties. Mayor Stephens indicated that he would like to hire two laborers up to 1,000 hours to assist the Street Department. Alderman Campos suggested that we look at the Federal on the Job Training Program for possible manpower solutions.

**Motion: To approve hiring two laborers for the Street Department for up to 1,000 hours.**

Motion by Alderman Voss

Second by Alderman Erbes

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

**Motion carried.**

Alderman Bratton advised that he and Darrin are suggesting that we bid out the repair of the storm drain located at 22<sup>nd</sup> & Potter Lane. It is a much bigger project than the Street Department can handle due to the location and size of equipment needed.

**Motion: To approve bidding out the repair of the storm drain at 22<sup>nd</sup> & Potter Lane.**

Motion by Alderman Hughes

Second by Alderman Campos

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

**Motion carried.**

Alderman Bratton advised that since the weather is warmer and the ground has dried up, he and Alderman McComb would be getting bids on the Roberta Drive issue and bring back to the Council for consideration.

There were no public comments on Public Works related items.

In Alderman Browns' absence, Mayor Stephens opened discussion for Public Safety related items. Old business items included an update on securing the fencing around the Old Logan School property. Code Enforcement Officer Eric Kennedy was asked to send a letter to the owner of the property requesting that he secure the premises, but the letter was not sent. It was discussed that our ordinances do not allow for us to compel the property owner to install fencing, but it could be requested. Mayor Stephens stated that he will get a letter sent out.

Public Comment – Alderman Pittman asked for an update on securing the old Washington School property. Alderman Hughes indicated that she and Darrin Mills would be visiting the property on Wednesday, June 14<sup>th</sup> at 10am to see what could be done.

Alderman Hughes opened discussion for Personnel related items. There were no items, old or new, on the agenda for discussion.

There was no public comments on Personnel related items.

<b>ALDERMEN ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS</b>
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Barb Hughes	Nothing
Jance Curry-Witzman	Nothing
Russell Brown	Absent
Herb Voss	Nothing
Gary McComb	Absent
John Erbes	Asked if the new sign at the MYRC property was working. Mayor Stephens indicated that he saw it on as he drove by today.
Dan Bratton	Nothing
Mike Bastien	Requested that Darrin check the culvert on Logan Street
Gloria Campos	Gave praise to the Fire Department regarding the recent fire on Walnut Street. Also requested that we look into the regulations for Air B & B during the eclipse
WJ Pittman	Nothing

<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS</b>
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Richard Blake	Updated the Council on the replacement of the railroad overpass going West on Rt. 149. IDOT contact, Greg McLaughlin, is keeping Richard informed. He has indicated that completion of the project is expected by August 18 <sup>th</sup> . Richard also advised that the small claims case with Eugene Cain went to court today. The Judge put the case under advisement and a decision would be made once the additional evidence could be reviewed. Richard indicated that he thought we would receive a good outcome.
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Sandra Ripley	Advised that we will be taking pictures for the website and Apple Festival Booklet at our next meeting on June 27 <sup>th</sup> . We will have a photographer here by 5:40 ready to
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