

**Murphysboro City Council Meeting
May 29, 2018**

The Murphysboro, Illinois, City Council met in regular session, pursuant to its ordinances, on the 29th day of May, 2018. Mayor Stephens called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and invited Pastor Jim Frye to lead the council in prayer. Following the invocation, Mayor Stephens led the council in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Mayor Stephens then directed City Clerk Hunziker to call the roll. The roll was called with the following:

Present: Barb Hughes, Jance Curry-Witzman, Russell Brown, Herb Voss, Gary McComb, Dan Bratton, Gloria Campos, W. J. Pittman.

Absent: John Erbes, Mike Bastien

Motion: To approve the minutes of the May 15, 2018 council meeting. All aldermen received a copy of the minutes, for their review, prior to the meeting.

Motion by Alderman McComb

Second by Alderman Bratton

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

Motion Carried

Alderman Hughes inquired as to:

#676 page 2 – Brown Electric – accident or maintenance?

#676 page 2 – Clinton Electric – contract on new plant? Warranty has expired.

#676 page 5 – Jackson Growth Alliance – should be \$2500 not \$5000. Will hold.

#676 page 6 – Speer Gold Dot? Ammunition

#676 page 6 – Re-key Booking Room door – re-key or new? Had to buy new locking system.

Alderman Bratton inquired as to:

#676 page 4 – First Bankcard – Kroger? Pizza? Community meetings.

Nextiva? Service to text residents. White jacks? Wall jacks for computer at Public Works. Convertible Refrigerator? Chairs? Adj Tool/Label? Would like to know what they are for.

Motion: To approve the accounts payable, registers #674 & 676 through May 29, 2018. All aldermen received a copy of the accounts payable for their review, prior to the meeting.

Motion by Alderman McComb

Second by Alderman Brown

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

Motion Carried

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS

Alderman Pittman opened discussion for Budget & Finance related items.

Old Business:

Consideration of Senior Citizens Center Agreement and Financial Commitment: Mayor Stephens handed out a copy of a General Agreement between the City and the Murphysboro Senior Citizens Center. The City would give an additional \$2500 per year to help offset the cost of insurance. If any repairs or maintenance are over \$1000 Joe will contact the City first. Alderman Hughes stated that it doesn't state who to call for repairs, who the City has a contract with.

Motion: To adopt the Senior Citizens Center Agreement and Financial commitment.

Motion by Alderman Bratton

Second by Alderman McComb

Alderman Pittman called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

Review of grant writing job description and advertisements: Mayor Stephens feels someone should be hired part-time in the range of \$15,000 - \$20,000 and work with Cary Minnis. Possibly the Municipal League would have a job description that could be used, with a start date of 2019. Alderman Bratton asked if it would be a flat salary, no benefits? Yes. Attorney Heller stated that if they are an independent contractor, not an employee, can terminate at any time. Mayor Stephens stated will bring a job description and possible salary to the next meeting, will meet with Alderman Pittman concerning this. Alderman Campos stated that Jackson Growth Alliance helped Carbondale obtain a \$1 million grant. Should we reach out to board members to obtain information on this? Alderman Voss stated that the Jackson Growth Alliance would be a resource for a grant writer. Alderman Pittman asked if they would work out of a city office, report to a council meeting per month? Alderman Hughes asked if they would be 20 hours and if that would be at the city office or at home? She would like for that person to have a presence, be seen. Mayor Stephens agrees and will tailor the language accordingly. Alderman Bratton added that they may already be set up at home.

New Business:

Presentation of Audit for Fiscal Year ending 12/31/2017 by Kerber, Eck & Braeckel: Anna Guetersloh made the presentation and covered the highlights: performance highlights are with an unmodified opinion - reasonable assurance statements are substantiated. Received full access, no audit adjustments were made, good financial data and accurate financial statements. Municipalities are now required to do a Full Accrual Basis of Accounting but it looks like the State will Grandfather Municipalities going forward. Covered the Statement of Net Position and Statement of Activities. The General fund currently has an excess of revenues over expenditures. The Water & Sewer fund has water sales in line with last year, an expense increase for water purchase, bond interest and amortization expense. Recommendation is as follows: segregation of duties, one employee is doing too many steps in a process, but the third party Budget Officer is a good compensating control along with the scrutiny of the council. Mayor Stephens thanked Anna and stated he appreciated all their hard work and Sandra and Scott's efforts.

Motion: To accept the Audit for Fiscal Year 2017.

Motion by Alderman Bratton

Second by Alderman Campos

Alderman Pittman called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

Presentation of Budget Related Reports by Budget Officer Scott Evans: Income tax receipts are up from last year. In range on the budget. City-wide Balance Sheet – down slightly from last year. The Schedule of Operating Expenses shows over budget on spending but also over budget for revenues. This is due to police expenditures, 3 payroll month and the final payment on the dispatch console.

Discussion regarding Vergennes billing: Per Scott Evans, there was no agreement at that time. Erroneously overbilled \$23,670.00. Vergennes has voluntarily not paid \$21,736 so far. Alderman Pittman stated it was sent back to them for the difference but they did not accept that. Mayor Stephens suggested we write it off and sever our relationship with them. Alderman Bratton suggested sending an official letter stating we will deduct the amount not paid minus the \$5000 already forgiven. Alderman Hughes inquired as to the contract with the village? Attorney Heller stated would have to declare a major breach. He will look at the contract and see what we are actually doing for them. Alderman Bratton suggested we start charging them for time, machines, etc. Ms. Ripley stated she had talked to District Manager Scott Wilmouth and he stated they would be willing to take over the Vergennes master meter if the city turns over the infrastructure to Kinkaid-Reeds Creek Conservancy District.

No public comment.

Alderman McComb opened discussion for Building & Grounds related items.

Old Business: Alderman Bratton stated that Spears will be starting repairs at the Senior Citizens building on Monday, hoping to be done by Wednesday.

New Business: Nothing at this time.

No public comment.

Mayor Stephens opened discussion for Community Relations Committee related items.

Old Business: Nothing at this time.

New Business:

Consideration of Request for Street Closures for Wounded Warrior Weekend Friday, June 1st and Saturday, June 2nd, 2018.

Motion: To approve the request for Street Closures for the Wounded Warrior Weekend Friday, June 1st and Saturday, June 2nd, 2018.

Motion by Alderman Bratton

Second by Alderman Campos

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

Motion Carried

No public comment.

Mayor Stephens opened discussion for Public Improvement related items.

Old business: Nothing at this time.

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New business: Nothing at this time.

Public comment: Pastor Jim Frye asked about changing the stop signs at 9th and Illinois Streets, it is a safety hazard. Alderman McComb stated that with 9th Street on a hillside it is hard to stop or start when it has snowed or is icy. Mayor Stephens stated will put on the agenda for the next meeting. Pastor Frye added that maybe a traffic counter could be put on the streets to see which has more traffic. Attorney Heller stated that 9th has more traffic than 8th, suggested having a stop sign on 9th Street heading south, have a 3-way stop except for north on 9th Street.

Alderman Bratton opened discussion for Public Works related items.

Old business:

Mayor Stephens has looked at the streets approved for fixing. He also looked at Bridgewood and Valley View and they are in very rough shape. He then looked at 22nd & Hortense and did not see any issues. He then checked out 17th Street, the concrete patch is rough and can be replaced for \$6,000 - \$10,000. So would like to forego 22nd Street, modify repair to 17th Street and re-allocate some of the money to re-doing the north side of Bridgewood. Alderman Campos agrees. Alderman

McComb stated that there is a lot of damage due to the trash trucks picking up 1 large dumpster – which is no longer the case, there are now smaller dumpsters, so agrees it needs to be fixed. Mayor Stephens also stated that he thinks Hanson from 7th to 8th not 8th to 9th needs to be fixed and asked for new figures. This will go on the agenda for the next meeting.

New Business:

Consideration of request to vacate an alley right-of-way off of Kennedy Street: Justin “Pete” Spitler at 1803 Kennedy Street spoke concerning the right-of-way in question. He has maintained it for ten years, the property line staked is off by 6 feet 8 inches therefore the separate garage he put up is on the alley. He has maintained it and will contract out cleaning up the rest of the area. Half the area will be added to his property and the other half will go to Tom Ridings, whom he has spoken to concerning this. Mayor Stephens asked if there are any public utilities the city may need access to – will check into. Alderman McComb suggested holding this until the next meeting. In the meantime he will talk to Tom Ridings to see if he wants ½ of the property in question or if he wants it all to go to Justin “Pete” Spitler.

No public comment.

Alderman Brown opened discussion for Public Safety related items.

Old business: Nothing at this time.

New business:

Discussion regarding Mile & ½ Zoning – Mosquito Abatement: Alderman Bratton thought there was Mile & ½ Zoning behind Suburban Drive but there is not. Where One Hot Cookie is, there is standing water and mosquitos. He has asked Eric to call the Health Department to look into this. Alderman Pittman inquired if Jackson County or Somerset Township do mosquito abatement? Not sure, Alderman Campos will check into. Mayor Stephens stated we could consider tablets that Public Works has that destroys the larvae. He has spoken to Sara Brashear, will set up a meeting to discuss annexation. The 7th Street Project will have retaining ponds which should help. Alderman Bratton stated that the north side of the road across from One Hot cookie has drainage but is sitting still, may be a blockage. Jim suggested speaking to the State and see if they will take a look at it and clean it out. Mayor Stephens will call them concerning this. Alderman Bratton stated he has also noticed that there is standing water by the High School, too. The City has taken care of this once already, when there was a beaver dam.

Consideration of request for a street light between Roberta Drive and Sandra Court: Bonnie Bateman was present to request a street light on Roberta Drive between 14th Street and Sandra Court. There are a lot of elderly residents and it is very dark. Would also like a speed limit sign at the 14th Street entrance to Roberta Drive. Alderman Bratton will do a drive-by to check out a potential location for the light.

Motion: To approve the request for an additional street light on Roberta Drive between 14th Street and Sandra Court.

Motion by Alderman Bratton Second by Alderman Campos

Alderman Brown called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

Mayor Stephens stated the rescue truck has an issue with the water pump and will cost approximately \$2000 to fix. Jim Murphy stated the truck has been taken to Carbondale to be fixed. This is a truck that is needed as it is used daily.

No public comment.

Alderman Hughes opened discussion for Personnel related items.

Old business: Nothing at this time.

New business: Nothing at this time.

Asked that we keep Tim and Jarod in our prayers, surgery scheduled for Thursday.

No public comment.

MAYOR’S REPORT

Cruise Night is Saturday, expecting a larger crowd than normal. Can use any help.

Within the next ten days should have the transaction deal with the Curwood property, may need to call a Special meeting. Per Attorney Heller the title work is in action. He has asked for the title work to be emailed to him.

ALDERMEN ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS

Barb Hughes Nothing

Jance Curry-Witzman Nothing

Russell Brown House next door has water standing in places and the auction has been postponed. Alderman Hughes-we can clean it but cannot charge for it. Attorney Heller-we can send in a crew to clean it up but while in foreclosure proceedings cannot put a lien on it. If it is a safety or health hazard we can alleviate. Alderman Bratton will speak to Darrin and see how many man hours to clean up the property. What do we want to invest? Alderman Campos suggested contacting the Health Department. Per Attorney Heller they can write it up but do not have a crew to clean it up. Mayor asked Alderman Bratton to coordinate a plan of action.

