

SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

January 20, 2009

Cassie Cowan, President, called the Regular Meeting of the Syracuse Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Other council members present were Bill Musser, Larry Siegel, Paul Stoelting, and Brian Woody. Town Manager Henry DeJulia, Town Attorney Mike Reed, and Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline were also present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Cassie asked for comments from the public on agenda items. There were no comments.

The minutes of the December 16 meeting were presented. Brian moved to approve the minutes as written; Paul seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Claims # 1 through #133 were presented for payment. Brian moved to approve the claims; Paul seconded. There was no discussion. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

The contract with Severn Trent for management of our public works was introduced. Mike Reed suggested we postpone discussion until next month. Mike and Henry have been in touch with our insurance carrier, EMC, about the contract. We expect to receive their written recommendation later this week. Brian moved to table discussion on the Severn Trent contract and to pay 1/12 of the proposed contract amount for one person this month. Larry seconded. There was no discussion. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

The bid award for the bond to finance the Forest Park water and sewer project was announced. Julie advised Lake City Bank was the only bidder; their bid for the \$265,000.00 bond was for 20 years at 4.82%. Paul moved to award the bid to Lake City Bank according to the terms and conditions of their bid received on January 13; Larry seconded. Mike Reed suggested authorizing Julie Kline and Henry DeJulia to sign the documents for the bond closing. Paul amended his motion to authorize Julie Kline and Henry DeJulia to sign the bond documents. Larry seconded the amendment. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager Henry DeJulia presented a proposal from Kosciusko County to payoff the lease on the assessor's office. The county is proposing a payment of \$17,000.00. In addition, their proposal includes leaving the phone equipment in the town hall. Brian stated he feels we should not require anything from them, however, he pointed out they did require the fire department to pay \$2,000.00 for a computer card to contact county dispatch.

Discussion began on whether the \$2,000.00 cost would be included in our 1/3 share of fire expenses. Larry noted the Tax Control Board included \$50,000.00 in the Fire

Territory budget for the changeover to county dispatch. He is not in favor of the town paying the Fire Territory 1/3 of the \$2,000.00 cost.

Discussion returned to the county proposal. Brian would like to have a more reciprocating arrangement than just monetary with the county. Tony advised the county paid \$5,000.00 a couple years ago for the phone system they are proposing to leave in place. When the police department switched to the county phone system, we paid \$4,000.00 to buy the phones and have the equipment installed. Tony was told it would have cost \$11,000.00 if we would have had to buy the whole thing.

Larry asked Henry how county came up with the \$17,000.00 amount. Henry advised he suggested between \$15,000.00 and \$20,000.00; they countered with \$17,000.00. Bill asked if the basis for the amount was fair play. Henry advised yes. Paul stated he is in a position to accept their proposal of a one time payoff and phone system; Bill and Larry agreed. Paul moved to accept the proposal from the county for a one time payoff of \$17,000.00, plus keeping the phone system in place for the police department. Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; Brian voted against. The motion carried.

Henry announced we received three grants from the Harkless Foundation. A grant of \$6,000.00 was received toward the cost of an engineering study for the dam, \$1,000.00 was received for beautification, and another \$1,000.00 for snowflakes. Brian moved to accept the grants from the Harkless Foundation; Paul seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried. Cassie asked Henry to send a thank you letter.

Henry provided an update on economic development. The Kosciusko County Area Plan Commission approved the economic development area and the economic development plan. He is now working to get a legal description; Wightman Petrie has been asked to come up a proposal for providing the legal description. Mike Reed advised we have to have a description in some sort of legal form; some of the area crosses lot lines. We may need to adjust some boundaries in the area. Henry requested permission to spend up to \$2,500.00 to establish the boundaries as required. It was the consensus of the council to go ahead.

Henry reported a meeting has been scheduled with the Elkhart County Redevelopment Commission on Thursday to iron out the inter-local agreement. He hopes to have it done by next month. He announced he would like to apply for an economic development administration grant for the industrial park. The grant would cover 40% to 50% of the cost. Henry advised he needs council approval to apply for the grant since there are public funds required for the match. Brian moved to approve Henry's request to apply for the grant; Larry seconded. Bill clarified what the grant is for; Henry advised it is for water and sewer to the industrial park. Five voted for the motion; none against. Motion carried.

Henry advised the chamber is sponsoring a meeting on the Kernan Shepard report. It will be held at the Community Center on January 31 at 10:00 a.m. Henry also distributed a draft copy of a newsletter he has prepared and asked for council input. He hopes to do a newsletter on a quarterly or semi-annual basis.

POLICE

Police Chief Tony Ciriello advised it has been kind of slow. There were only thirteen wrecks last month, which is not bad with the snow we have had. Tony went

over the various types of arrests. For the annual police report, there were 4,715 calls for service in 2008, which is an increase of 252 calls over 2007. There have already been 172 calls this month. Tony was asked why; he stated some of it may be due to us being more proactive rather than reactive. The economic downturn also has an effect.

Tony reported on upcoming events. On Friday, about 1600 third graders from the county will be attending the Shrine Circus; the Syracuse police will be assisting with the escort to the circus. Syracuse Police and the Kosciusko County Sheriff's Department will be having joint training with a driver simulator and firearms simulator. Martin Luther King Day was yesterday; because of our participation in Day of Caring, Tony was asked to speak about it at an event in Warsaw. On Saturday, the Kiwanis will be sponsoring snowmobile races on Syracuse Lake. They will start at 9:00 a.m., and Long Dr. will be shut down from Washington St to Northshore Dr.

Tony noted it was not a town truck that fell into the lake; it was a local landscaping company.

Bill asked about the break ins over New Years. Tony advised they are working with Columbia City, where similar break-ins occurred. The suspects were caught in Hicksville, Ohio.

PARK

Henry advised Chad is attending an IPRA meeting. Henry noted Jerry Riffle, former town forester, has advised we will not get a Tree City Growth award this year. Although we have steadily spent funds every year for trees, our spending did not increase, so we will not be eligible for a reward.

PUBLIC WORKS

Jeremy Sponseller, Public Works Superintendent, advised the council he has some numbers for the polymer machine discussed last month. He is checking the numbers and will provide more information at the February meeting. The 2009 budget included redoing the Aquatech; Brown Equipment did a run through on what needs to be done. Jeremy will provide information at the February meeting on the cost of this work.

Larry asked for a progress report on the water plant. Jeremy advised the high service pump has been fixed and changed; a time and date will be set up to reinstall the pump. We met with Wightman Petrie on their recommendations; he expects them to present it next month.

CLERK TREASURER

Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline presented the 2008 encumbrances in the amount of \$345,928.00. Brian moved to approve the 2008 encumbrances; Bill seconded. Larry asked if the \$2,000.00 for the computer card was included in the encumbrance amount for Turkey Creek Township. Julie advised she does not have the detail for the fourth quarter expenses yet. It was the consensus of the council that we do not pay for the equipment to change to county dispatch. Julie assured the council that would not be included in the payment. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

TOWN ATTORNEY

Town Attorney Mike Reed had nothing further to report.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Brian encouraged everyone to attend the meeting with the legislators on January 31.

Larry moved to adjourn the meeting; Brian seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

The Syracuse Town Council adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

ATTEST:

Cassie Cowan, President

Julie Kline, Clerk Treasurer