

SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

February 17, 2009

Paul Stoelting, Vice President, called the Regular Meeting of the Syracuse Town Council to order at 7:05 p.m. Other council members present were Bill Musser, Larry Siegel, 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.

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

The minutes of the January 20 meeting were presented. It should be noted a correction was made to the minutes before the meeting. Brian moved to approve the minutes as corrected; Paul seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Police Chief Tony Ciriello made a presentation. Chief Ciriello spoke about the robbery at Farmer's State Bank on February 4. He added another robbery from 2007 was still unsolved. Tony recognized Heather Allen, of Farmer's State, for her accurate description when she called 911. The manager of the bank, Kent Cunningham, was thanked for following the suspect. Police Officer Joe Salazar was commended for recognizing the car and apprehending the suspect in four minutes. Chief Ciriello presented all three with plaques in recognition of their outstanding performance. Mr. Cunningham thanked Tony, Joe, and Cal for their help. Officer Salazar stated Mr. Cunningham made apprehension possible.

Claims #134 through #249 and SRF disbursement #77 were presented for payment. Brian moved to approve the claims; Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Town Manager Henry DeJulia presented the contract with Severn Trent for management of public works. Henry advised the insurance is ok; what we asked for we did get. Larry asked Town Attorney Mike Reed for his input. Mike acknowledged the insurance was changed; Severn Trent has provided additional coverage. The limits our insurance company recommended have been met. Brian moved to approve the contract with Severn Trent; Paul and Henry are authorized to sign the contract on behalf of the town. Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Ken Jones, of Wightman Petrie, reported on the high service pump issue at the water plant. He stated during the plant startup, it was determined the high service pumps were oversized for the filters. He explained it is a complicated issue and probably started with the basis of design originally done by the design engineer. The plant has been running using one high service pump and that has worked okay, however, filters need to be taken off line occasionally for service. To correct the problem, we need to reduce the flow by changing the pump size, restricting the flow, or changing how the pump operates. Four options were considered. The options were: 1) remove stages from the pump (this option was removed early on), 2) operate the plant as is using the internal valving to restrict the flow, 3) upgrade the facility and add variable frequency drives to each high service pump, and 4) an option suggested by ST

was to install a manually operated VFD at a cost of \$10,000.00. Option 3 is recommended by Wightman Petrie. If we add three high service pumps to the facility, it will operate as intended. Ken Jones stated he feels it will improve the original design and reduce operating costs, mainly in the cost of power. In their opinion it will add value. Larry asked if the VFD's will work with the scadata system. Mr. Jones advised yes; it will interface with the scadata control system. He stated he considers the manual VFD as a band aid. The cost will be right around \$69,000.00 to do the recommended option. Paul asked if the project is under cost. Mr. Jones advised yes; it is under the approved budget and financing. If the council approves the change, we will need to submit it to SRF for approval. That will take a couple of weeks. Larry asked if we need to bid. Mr. Jones advised no, the contractor they are recommending is a subcontractor to original contractor. He added he believes it is under the threshold. Larry asked if the water project will be complete if this is done. Mr. Jones stated as far as he knows, this is the last open issue. Paul moved to approve \$69,336.00 to install three VFD's at the water plant; Larry seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Ken Jones presented a Certificate of Final Completion for Caldwell Tank, the contractor for the water tower. Brian moved to approve the Certificate of Final Completion; Larry seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline requested council approval to release the retainage still held for Caldwell Tanks; the amount of the retainage held is \$46,845.02. Brian moved to authorize release of the retainage; Larry seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Ken Jones continued with his report. He provided an economic development overview. He and Henry are planning to attend a meeting within the next two weeks with the Elkhart County Redevelopment Commission to obtain approval of the interlocal agreement. The only outstanding issue is the outside storage. If the Elkhart County Redevelopment Commission continues to impose the outside storage restrictions, then we would have to deal with it on a case by case basis. The agreement under consideration right now is basically the same as the one previously approved by the council. Mr. Jones suggested the council may want to authorize legal counsel to review the agreement and authorize a council member to sign the agreement.

Mr. Jones advised a minor revision is needed to the town's comprehensive land use plan; the plan was adopted by the Town of Syracuse, but it was never formally presented to the Elkhart Plan Commission or Elkhart County Commissioners for approval. They are asking the council to take that step; he advised it will trigger Elkhart County to contact the Town of Syracuse during the planning process. A change in land use was presented. Henry showed the area north of U.S. 6 which is presently zoned industrial in our comprehensive plan; Elkhart County would like a mixed use designation for that area. Brian moved to amend our comprehensive land use plan for the area north of U.S. 6 to mixed use. Larry seconded. Mr. Jones advised the comprehensive land use plan will go before the Elkhart County Plan Commission in March. It will then go on to the Elkhart County Commissioners; it will probably be on the agenda for the Commissioner's second meeting in April. He advised final zoning will also have to occur. Depending on the town's timetable, Wightman Petrie is prepared to present the PUD petition on behalf of the town to the Plan Commission in April; that would be a

public hearing for our zoning request. It could then go before the Elkhart County Commissioners in May. This timeline would allow the town to start construction earlier.

Ken Jones advised he is currently working on an hourly rate as a consultant. He forwarded a proposal to Henry to bring the project to shovel ready; it is to come before the council next month. If the council tells him to go forward, he will have the petition ready by the March deadline to submit at the April Plan Commission meeting. Paul returned to consideration of the motion before the floor. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Brian asked if we would do the engineering when all of the steps are complete. Mr. Jones advised we can do the engineering while we go through the land use process. He stated if he is given the go ahead tonight, he would be ready to bid this in May. The only reason he suggested to go for May is to possibly obtain economic stimulus funds.

Mr. Jones was asked to go over the timetable; he advised they would need about 60 days. The agreement with the Elkhart County Redevelopment Commission should be completed this month. We would then go before the Elkhart County Planning Commission; if we file in March, we will be on the April agenda for a Public Hearing. We don't have to wait to do the engineering; we would potentially get a permit in May to start construction in June. Brian would like to see us allow Ken Jones to go ahead with the engineering. Mr. Jones advised if the council gives permission, he will start work tomorrow. It was noted Mr. Jones has presented a proposal for engineering services. Paul asked Mr. Jones what the quote included. Mr. Jones noted it will include all four tasks. Brian feels it would show our commitment to be shovel ready. Brian moved to allow Ken Jones to proceed with the engineering for the north corridor project, to proceed with the master plan assistance, the preliminary PUD process, design engineering, and permits for an amount not to exceed \$101,105.00. Larry seconded. Larry asked if this should be contingent upon Elkhart County approval. Discussion followed. Ken Jones advised if we build the project, we will have to do all the steps at some point. Paul asked if this was budgeted; Julie advised this is the first she has heard about the proposal and asked where the council would like to pay the contract from. Brian stated we earmarked EDIT funds for this. Julie advised we do have money available in EDIT; an additional appropriation would be needed. Bill stated he does not like that he has not been kept in the loop on this proposal; he does not like surprises. Henry noted it was his intention to present the plan at next month's meeting. Discussion ended. Four voted for the project; none against. The motion carried.

Paul announced Pam Kennedy, of Housing Opportunities of Warsaw, would like to speak to the council. Paul would like to amend the agenda. Brian moved to amend the agenda to allow Pam Kennedy to make her presentation at this time; Larry seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Ms. Kennedy distributed several handouts. She went over a couple of pages that illustrated where we are on the first and second grants.

Ms. Kennedy presented several homes to be repaired. She noted there was a big push, and we did find a homeowner at the 30% AMI income level. This would be home #7 on the first grant (Syracuse II) and is for a roof and guttering. The estimated cost is \$8,500.00, and there is no payback by the homeowner. Brian moved to approve house #7 on the Syracuse II grant. Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Ms. Kennedy presented two homes for the second grant, Syracuse III. The first house for this grant includes a new roof, fascia board, guttering, electrical, and furnace. The estimated cost is \$12,500.00 and the payback amount is 10%. Some of the work may have to go on a different grant if it exceeds the \$12,500.00 maximum. The second house will cost \$10,000.00 and there is no payback. Brian moved to approve house 1 and house 2 for the Syracuse III grant. Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager Henry DeJulia presented a map illustrating the TIF allocation area in the Town of Syracuse. The Kosciusko County Plan Commission did adopt this area. The Syracuse Redevelopment Commission held a public hearing and passed a confirmatory resolution to approve the area. Some additional work needs to be done; legal descriptions were missing, and we hired someone to do that. The allocation area may change slightly once that has been completed. All of this needs to be done by March 1 so the revenue can be captured for next year's taxes.

Henry advised he is continuing to work on an economic development grant application for water and sewer for the north industrial corridor. He is working with MACOG and Bob Hickey, of the EDA.

The Kosciusko County Redevelopment Commission had a vacancy recently due to the death of Lowell Owens. Henry announced he was appointed to this vacancy.

Henry thanked the chamber for hosting the meeting on January 31 at the community center discussing the Kernan Shepard report and how it affects local government. He noted State Representative Ruppel and State Senator Mischler were present and both stated changes should be decided locally. Also, at the recent annual chamber dinner, three town departments received awards. They were Chief Ciriello, the Park Department, and the Trails Committee.

Henry presented information on a grant offered by the Kosciusko County Convention and Visitor's Bureau. He suggested we may want to apply, and he asked the council to consider a project to link the trail at Harkless and Pickwick going west to S.R. 13. The trails committee is interested. He asked the council to consider committing up to \$17,000.00 of our sidewalk budget to the project; the grants are a maximum of \$20,000.00. Larry asked if matching funds are required. Henry advised the cost is estimated at \$43,500.00. The trails committee can contribute \$5,000.00 to \$10,000.00. Brian asked why there; Henry advised it would link the trails. Brian asked about funds; Julie advised \$40,000.00 is budgeted in the street budget and \$14,000.00 in riverboat funds this year. Larry moved to allow Henry to apply for the grant and spend up to \$17,000.00 of the sidewalk money for the project; Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

POLICE

Police Chief Tony Ciriello noted the proposed sidewalk will increase the safety for people walking to the village area.

Tony reported the month of January has been the slowest month in a long time. He said the weather may have been a factor and thanked the street department for

their work in keeping the roads clear. He advised criminal arrests were also down. Tony provided an update on the car break-ins that occurred on New Year's Eve. Four arrests will be made; the break-ins were in Ohio, Columbia City, and Syracuse.

The police department is planning to have a bicycle auction in April or May. Brian asked how many bikes we have; Tony advised about 70. Tony announced that tomorrow night Wawasee High School has scheduled a student vs. faculty basketball game. The game is a fundraiser for Riley Children's Hospital.

PARK

Park Superintendent Chad Jonsson highlighted two events that have taken place during January and the first part of February. The Wawasee Kiwanis held their Winter Carnival on January 24. It was a huge event and brought a lot of people into town. The third annual Cabin Fever sale was held on February 7; 33 booths were rented. The sale went well.

Chad announced upcoming events include a Daddy/Daughter Dance on March 7 co-sponsored with the Lakeland Youth Center. On March 8, we will have a display at the Prom and Bridal show sponsored by the chamber. Bill asked about the bridge on Eastshore Dr. Chad advised the bridge is part of the trail through Chinese Gardens.

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Director Jeremy Sponseller introduced discussion on rehabbing the aquatech. He noted \$50,000.00 was budgeted in 2009 for this work; the cost for a new aquatech is between \$250,000.00 and \$300,000.00. Brown Equipment checked out the aquatech; their estimate of repairs was based upon what they could see and it was around \$30,000.00. Jeremy advised once they begin repairs, they may find additional problems. He asked the council to approve any necessary repairs up to an amount not to exceed \$50,000.00. He added he would like to get this done before the weather breaks. Larry made a motion to allow Brown Equipment to make repairs to the aquatech for a cost not to exceed \$50,000.00; Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Jeremy announced we have received all the necessary paperwork from Cripe Excavating for the Forest Park Utilities extension; the work is complete. He asked the council to accept the project. Jeremy advised the original cost was over \$178,000.00; we were able to reduce the cost by about \$14,000.00. The final cost is \$163,382.01. Jeremy added work on the road will begin later this year when weather permits. Brian moved to accept the project and authorize release of the retainage amount of \$16,338.22; Larry seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Jeremy explained he opted to estimate the meter readings for the water and sewer bills in February due to snow and ice. He asked residents to bear with us. He also advised repairs to the polymer machine are on hold for right now. The signs for the "jake" brakes are being made up. Larry asked if there is any way to consolidate the information on signs; Jeremy agreed to check.

CLERK

Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline asked council permission to turn over the balance of \$2,020.00 in the EMS Fund to the Fire Territory. We are only receiving one or two payments a month. Those patients will be asked to send future payments directly to the Fire Territory; the collection agency would also be directed to pay the fire territory. Brian moved to pay the Turkey Creek Fire Territory the \$2,020.00 balance in the EMS Fund and to direct all future collections to the Fire Territory; Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Julie presented a list of checks that are over two years old she would like to void; total amount of the checks is \$798.68. Brian moved to allow Julie to void the checks that are over two years old; Bill seconded. Four 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

Larry asked if we are going to be planting trees this spring. Henry advised yes; NIPSCO will be providing the trees. Larry asked if new sidewalks could be discussed soon; he would like to accept bids so we will be able to utilize the sidewalks by summer. Tony suggested he could get together with Henry and Jeremy and the three of them could prioritize the areas needing sidewalks. Henry added we will also be installing about 15-16 decorative lights; this may take all summer. Henry also added for the interlocal agreement that was discussed earlier for the new industrial park, Elkhart County wants 15% of the TIF revenue from the area. We are still pushing for outside storage.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

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

The Syracuse Town Council adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

ATTEST:

Paul Stoelting, Vice President

Julie Kline, Clerk Treasurer