

SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

September 15, 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.

Brian moved to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2009 meeting; Bill seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Claims #987-#1086 were presented for payment. Brian moved to approve the claims; Larry seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Steve Snyder, representing Technical Services, presented a tax abatement request. He noted he is revisiting discussion from before; Technical Services is requesting a ten year abatement on both the real estate and personal property. Attorney Snyder pointed out that the abatement would only apply to items that are installed between approval of the abatement and six years following. The economy has affected the abatement documentation; the purchase of equipment has stretched from four years to six years. Also, last year Technical Services projected 12 new employees; that has been decreased to 8. The cost of the real estate and equipment remains the same as one year ago.

Brian asked Attorney Snyder about various purchase scenarios; Attorney Snyder explained how each scenario would work. Attorney Snyder advised the CF-1 must be submitted every year; the abatement is for ten years from the date of the first purchase of personal property. He added there is no way to stretch the abatement past ten years. Additional examples of purchase dates and abatement periods were discussed. If the council grants abatement on all the real estate improvements, and goes through the waiver process since the first building was already built before the abatement was granted, then whatever the assessed value is on that building as of March 1 is what it is going to be, and it will go on for ten years. As of year one, the taxes will be abated on the existing building; as soon as the new building is done, the taxes will hit on that. We have a unique situation with the existing building and the abatement for it, and the new building that is being proposed. They will have to work with the county assessor on that. The first year for the real estate abatement will be 2010, because the first building already exists.

Al Tehan, owner of Technical Services, spoke to the council. He distributed a rendering of the buildings that will be constructed. He advised his company primarily does engineering research and electronic control systems; many of the current projects are energy related. Cassie asked if they do research and development for other people; Mr. Tehan advised yes. Mr. Tehan listed previous customers of Technical Services. He explained most of the engineers he will

employ will live within 30 miles, many in Turkey Creek Township. Mike Reed asked what the square footage will be; Mr. Tehan advised 38,000 square feet for both buildings. Larry noted the property is located in a TIF area; he asked how that will affect the economic revitalization area. Steve Snyder advised in the first year of abatement, there will not be any TIF revenue. As the abatement goes down, the TIF revenues go up.

Mike Reed advised under our current town code, we could grant abatement on the buildings for ten years, however, the taxes on personal property could only be abated for five years. If we are going to approve the ten years on personal property, we would have to amend our code. Discussion followed. Cassie asked if we amend the ordinance, can it be worded so that when Indiana Codes changes, we change. Mike Reed advised we can do that.

Brian moved to have Mike Reed prepare an ordinance to amend our ordinance that was adopted in 1996. Language in the new ordinance is to follow state code. Paul seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Brian moved to adopt Declaratory Resolution 09-02, Approving an Economic Revitalization Area and Approving a Request for Waiver; Paul seconded. Cassie clarified that all were in agreement with the ten year tax abatement on real and personal property. Cassie confirmed with Mr. Tehan that all engineers will do their work from the premises here. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Cassie announced that Wightman Petrie has requested their appearance tonight be tabled. Paul moved to table the discussion with Wightman Petrie; Bill seconded. Five voted for the motion; one against. The motion carried.

The council conducted the First Reading and Public Hearing on the proposed 2010 budget. Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline read the budget and levy amounts for 2010. Paul made a motion to approve the 2010 budget as read; Bill seconded. Cassie asked for public comment; there were no comments. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried. The 2010 advertised budget is attached.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager Henry DeJulia discussed a newsletter he prepared; he requested council feedback on the newsletter. Cassie asked if Henry was planning to include it on our website; Henry stated he wasn't planning to. He would like to leave copies of the newsletter at various businesses and the library. Brian suggested he include less complicated verbiage so more people can understand it. Bill asked how the website is coming; Henry advised they are working on the homepage. Henry is working to get pictures to include on the site; he can include the newsletter on the new website.

Henry updated the council on the "no left turn" ordinance from Medusa St. The ordinance was adopted in 2001, however, we could not find it in the code book since it was missed when the ordinances were codified. Tony advised he has discussed this with Henry and Jeremy; Tony pointed out we have the same

situation on Railroad St. In his opinion, we should rescind the ordinance. If people want to sit there and wait to make a left turn, they can.

Brian moved to have Mike Reed prepare an ordinance to rescind Ordinance 01-27; Bill seconded. Paul and Larry questioned if we could look into creating a left turn lane; we may be able to do three lanes at the intersection. Cassie pointed out Booze Barn may not be able to landscape in our right of way if three lanes are done. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried. Henry, Tony, and Tom Miller will meet tomorrow to see if three lanes can be done, and report back next month.

Henry announced he would like to apply for two energy grants. The first grant would be used toward more efficient lighting in the building, and the second grant would be to upgrade the heating and air system in the town hall. No match is required. Brian read the grant documentation and questioned if we qualify; Henry advised we do. Henry explained we already conducted an energy audit of the town hall lighting; he estimates it will cost \$22,000.00 to upgrade the lighting. Cassie asked if Henry is going to ask to do the community center at the same time; Henry advised no. The maximum amount allowed for the lighting grant is \$50,000.00; Henry stated Chad is looking more at the heating and cooling aspects of the community center. Brian stated he would like to look into upgrading the HVAC system; he pointed out we are paying over \$10,000.00 per year for maintenance. Discussion followed on whether Henry should apply for the grants. Cassie asked if the park department can apply separately; Henry stated no. Henry added energy audits must be done before the grant application can be submitted. He has completed the audit on the lighting; one of our employees is qualified to do that. Henry has asked Havel Brothers to put something together for us on the heating and air conditioning. Cassie directed Henry apply for the grant for the lighting right away; the heating and air conditioning application should be submitted as soon as possible.

POLICE

Police Chief Tony Ciriello advised there were 378 calls for service in August; the number of calls is still up each month. There were 15 criminal cases; 9 of them were felonies. Tony announced the Syracuse Police Department just cleared up ten burglaries in the surrounding area.

Tony presented two purchase requests. The first request involves the computers in the officer's vehicles; those computers were installed in 2005 and have worked out very well. County dispatch is going to be changing from an RF system to an air card system; the air card system is more reliable. Discussion followed on the vendor for the air card system; Tony advised Centennial has promised they will boost the power to make the system work. Tony advised Centennial has made a lot of improvements in this area. He noted Centennial is charging \$30.00 per month for the air cards; they checked with Verizon, and they want \$42.00 per month. Tom Brindle, Director of the Kosciusko County 911 Center, told Tony they have been testing the new system for a few months. Kosciusko County has already gone live with it last week. Tony detailed the additional features with the new system. Larry questioned if we go with Centennial, can we drop it without a penalty and go with another carrier. Tony stated he talked to

Centennial about this; they said that would not be a problem. Tony went on to explain he needs a total of seven licenses for the new system. We will receive two licenses from the county, which they purchased but will not use. We will need to purchase five more licenses @ \$900.00 each; total cost for licenses is \$4,500.00, plus the \$1,260 annual fee. Total startup costs will be \$5,760.00. The cost for the air cards will be about \$252.00 per month; the ongoing annual cost will be about \$4,284.00. Tony stated the police department does have money in the telephone account to pay for this. He explained when the police department switched to New Paris telephone it saved a lot. No additional money will need to be budgeted for this. Tony added if we don't go with this new system, we won't be able to use the computers in the cars. Tony described more features of the in car computers. Larry questioned the internet policy; Tony advised that is in the SOP's. Brian moved to approve the purchase of the license from Cisco for \$5,760.00; Bill seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Tony presented a request to purchase bullet proof vests. The vests the officers currently have are in their fifth year; there is a new law that requires us to replace the vests per manufacturer's recommendations. He noted we might be able to apply for a federal grant, however, it is a reimbursable grant. We can apply for the grant after October 1st, but we would have to spend the money first. If awarded, the grant would reimburse us 50%. Tony would like to purchase 10 level II vests with dual weave; total cost is \$5,970.00 and that includes fitting. Larry asked how he would pay for the vests; Tony advised he has funds available in new equipment. Brian moved to allow the purchase of 10 level II ballastic vests for \$5,970.00 from Ray O'Herron Company. Paul seconded. Larry asked when they will be delivered. Tony advised in 6-8 weeks from the date everyone is measured. Brian agreed to amend his motion to include delivery in 6 to 8 weeks. Paul amended his second. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

PARK

Chad Jonsson, Park Superintendent was not present.

PUBLIC WORKS

Tom Miller, Area Director for Severn Trent, presented a purchase request on behalf of Jeremy Sponseller, Public Works Director. Jeremy would like to replace a large meter (4") located at the Syracuse Elementary School. The meter is 15 years old; the cost to replace it would be \$2,600.00. Paul moved to allow the purchase of a 4" Neptune meter from Utilities Supply for \$2,600.00 for the elementary school. Brian seconded. Larry asked when the meter is to be delivered; Tom advised 30 days. Paul agreed to amend his motion to include delivery in 30 days. Brian stated his second still stands. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Tom advised the wastewater plant has again been awarded the Excellence in Laboratory award and a Safety award.

Larry asked Tom to comment on the recent flooding we had. Tom explained some of the flooding problems were due to manholes in low spots,

sump pumps still illegally hooked up, and an older collection system. There was also 7" of rain in four hours. Discussion followed on odd weather occurrences; Larry noted it has happened twice this year. Henry would like to consider a device to seal manholes that costs \$40.00 to \$50.00 each; this would seal them so stormwater would not get into the sanitary sewer. Henry would like to spend about \$1,000.00 on that. Tom would like to be more aggressive on cross connections, and conduct more smoke testing to check for illegal connections. Larry asked how we would do that; Tom explained we would contract it out. Cassie questioned the cost; Tom advised a section that was done recently was \$6,000.00.

The flow from Turkey Creek was discussed. Tom recommended we reopen the contract since they are in violation. Tom suggested he could work with Henry and Mike Reed on the contract. Larry mentioned there were problems on Northshore Dr. Larry asked what was done on Medusa St. Tom stated we installed three or four gate valves on Medusa St. Larry asked about the cost and at whose expense; Henry advised roughly \$1,300.00 each that was paid at town expense.

Brian would like to reopen the contract. Henry and Tom were directed to work with Mike Reed on the contract and report back to the council.

Councilman Musser left the meeting.

CLERK

Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline advised she will be presenting an ordinance with the 2010 salaries next month.

TOWN ATTORNEY

Town Attorney Mike Reed had nothing further to report.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Tammy Cotton brought a banner to show the council.

OLD & NEW BUSINESS

None.

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

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

ATTEST:

Cassandra Cowan, President

Julie Kline, Clerk Treasurer