

SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

July 19, 2011

Paul Stoelting, President, called the Regular Meeting of the Syracuse Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Other council members present were Jeff Morgan, 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 public comment on agenda items; there were no comments.

The minutes of the June 14th Public Hearing were presented. Brian moved to approve the minutes; Bill seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried. The minutes of the June 21st Regular Meeting were presented. Bill moved to approve the minutes; Jeff seconded. Four voted for the motion; Brian abstained. The motion carried.

Claims #711 through #817 were presented for payment. Brian made a motion to approve the claims; Larry seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Additional Appropriation Ordinance 11-03 was introduced. The ordinance appropriates \$12,200.00 in the clerk's budget and \$5,000.00 in the street budget. Brian moved to approve the ordinance; Larry seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Ken Jones, of Wightman Petrie, gave a report on the design for the onsite improvements for the Industrial Park. He reported he expects the design to be completed this week. He asked the council to appoint a committee to review the design plans for the entire park and make recommendations before Wightman Petrie creates their final construction cost estimates. He would also like the committee to go over project alternates to see if they agree with the alternates. Larry and Paul agreed to be on the committee. Mr. Jones reported they are continuing to find ways to reduce cost of the project. An example is to offer an alternate bid for a different type of pipe for the water main; instead of using ductile iron pipe, PVC C900 pipe could be used. That would reduce labor and cost of materials. He also recommended directional drilling through the side slopes instead of using trenches as an alternate bid. Mr. Jones reported they are reducing the depth of gravity sewer on the east side of S.R. 13 because of the second lift station. Also, the sewer south on S.R. 13 doesn't need to be as deep. He reminded everyone the second lift station was always contemplated in the design of the Industrial Park. Mr. Jones stated Henry expressed a concern that curb and gutter was eliminated from the project design; that change was done last year to reduce cost. This was done to provide a more sustainable design; it was submitted and approved by Elkhart County. Curb and gutter can be added back in if the council wants.

Ken Jones discussed the Traffic Impact Study; he apologized for the misunderstanding. He should have made the council aware of that; it was not discussed in detail in the RFP. He reported they are working with INDOT to reduce the cost of the TIS; INDOT will be doing the traffic counts. He believes the design will be under budget; the cost estimates will be updated after the committee approves the final plans. Ken added he will be here every meeting. Paul asked if it will be a problem to meet the March EDA deadline. Ken replied it will be done way before that.

Approval of the Fiscal Plan for the Oakwood Annexation was discussed. Paul turned discussion over to Mike Reed. Mike noted Tom Niezer and Ian Rolland were present. Mike explained the fiscal plan was prepared by London Witte; the fiscal plan must be adopted before the annexation ordinance is adopted. The fiscal plan must be tweaked a little bit. Under the Fiscal plan, the property owners were going to pay some monies for the infrastructure as well as the receiver. Two letters were received, one dated July 15 and a second letter dated July 19, where the receiver proposed the methodology to pay those monies. Mike noted the receiver has a purchase agreement with Buckingham. The Receiver has proposed that in the event the property does close, that the \$287,500.00 that represents the receiver's share of the payment for the town's infrastructure be placed in escrow. The receiver was given the authority by the court to enter into such an agreement. This would be final upon the court's approval. The July 15 letter stated if the property doesn't close, 1/5 of the \$287,500.00 would be placed in escrow and made available to the town, the remaining would be available over a 4 year period. Mike asked council to approve the fiscal plan if they are on board with those modifications. Larry moved to adopt the Oakwood Park Annexation Fiscal Plan with modifications as stated in the 7-15 and 7-19 letters. Brian seconded. Five voted to adopt the fiscal plan; none against. The motion carried.

Annexation Ordinance 11-04 was presented. Larry moved to adopt Ordinance 11-04 to annex the Oakwood Park area; Jeff seconded. Paul noted the area would be assigned to council district #5. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Ian Rolland thanked the council; he stated this is the culmination of a lot of work. He thinks the annexation is a great thing for Syracuse and for Oakwood. Mr. Rolland added property owners voted by a substantial majority in favor of annexation.

Mike Reed advised he will be publishing the annexation ordinance next Wednesday (July 27); there is a 90 day remonstrance period following the legal advertisement. Tom Niezer stated that next month Buckingham will be appearing before the BZA for a special exception to the master plan. He asked the town to consider supporting Buckingham's request before the county BZA. Mike stated it is already in the works. Tom Niezer added they are trying to push to have the closing as soon as possible; if they wait for the annexation to be complete so it goes before Syracuse BZA, it won't be until 2012.

Larry added this is probably the largest economic development project since Weatherhead came in the 60's. It also has cultural benefits. Paul thanked Larry for all the time and work he has put in.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager Henry DeJulia reported the closing on the Schacht property has been completed. We are working on the two easements Ken Jones mentioned. For the bridge over the McConnell Ditch, we will be doing concrete work on the sidewalk to the high school.

POLICE

Police Chief Tony Ciriello reported the police department had 393 calls for service in June. There were 18 adult arrests and 4 juvenile arrests. The 4th of July and Summerfest events went well.

PARK

Chad Jonsson, Park Superintendent, announced a couple of upcoming park events. On August 13th, the Kiwanis Club will hold their triathlon. On July 29, 30, and 31, there will be a Civil War Re-enactment at Lakeside Park. Chad distributed the newest Vega Field plan. The Kiwanis and football league agreed this is a workable plan. Brian announced he talked to the property owner to the west of the field about the possibility of a property swap. Some engineering will be needed to determine what type of pipe is needed in the ditch. Last Saturday the fences were removed, and the holes were filled in. Brian added there is a 90 foot piece of property that the town owns. He pointed out the location of the ditch and Turkey Creek. He stated he suggested to the property owner that the owner could move the fence; this would add parking spaces. We need to get engineering done before we go further. We can potentially get two fields built this year. After discussion, Chad agreed to get quotes on engineering.

PUBLIC WORKS

Jeremy Sponseller, Public Works Director, advised the sidewalk on Main St is proceeding; town crews are also building a retaining wall at that location. The "thumb" for the backhoe is in Fort Wayne; he hopes to pick it up in the next few days.

Jeremy discussed the 2011 paving. He reminded the council that last year during budget time, we added \$50,000.00 to the \$75,000.00 amount we normally budget for paving. The bids we received were lower than we expected. Jeremy suggested we could add additional areas to this year's paving project. He summarized in round numbers where we are on the cost. The original bid was for \$76,000.00. We could pave Main St and Long Dr from Lake St around Long Dr to the intersection with Northshore Dr for \$28,150.00. We could pave Branch Street for \$10,863.00. The access roads could be striped and we could restripe Long Dr for \$6,337.00. Beech St paving would cost \$3,101.00. The total cost of the areas Jeremy is recommending would be \$124,451.00.

Jeremy continued and stated if the council is agreeable to the suggested additional areas, he will work with Phend & Brown to proceed for a total cost not to exceed \$125,000.00. Larry would like Jeremy to look into the area where a road cut was done by Hiawatha Dr.; it keeps settling. There are also holes by the BMP. Paul suggested we work on the highest traffic areas and noted the high volume on Northshore Dr. Paul pointed out Front St is used a lot. Jeremy explained there has been some talk about replacing the infrastructure on Front St. He would hate to pave it without doing some work on the infrastructure, particularly the storm sewer and water lines. Top coating will make the drainage situation with the multiple driveways worse. Larry suggested prioritizing the water lines and looking at Front St. Jeremy noted Beech and Branch are down to dirt in some spots.

Paul moved to allow Jeremy to spend up to \$125,000.00 on paving; Larry seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried. Jeremy advised they can do the areas on Northshore with the paving dollars.

Jeremy opened discussion on our Wellhead Protection Plan. The original Phase I of the WellHead protection was approved in 2004. Since then we have added three new wells; the original plan from 2004 was to add two new wells. The three old wells from the 2004 plan are no longer in production. We need to redo the wellhead protection plan for the state. Jeremy would like to use

Ortman to do this. They conducted all of the geological and survey work for the three wells we currently have; additional geological work will be required. He asked the council to approve the quote from Ortman for \$14,500.00. He added he chose Ortman since they have a lot of the background information needed; a new company would have to start from scratch. Bill moved to approve Ortman's quote for a cost not to exceed \$14,500.00; Jeff seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

CLERK

Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline announced the new boiler has been installed. She also announced the State Board of Accounts was here for their bi-annual audit.

TOWN ATTORNEY

Town Attorney Mike Reed had nothing further to report.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Dr. Hartman, Medical Director for the Fire Territory EMS, addressed the council. He reported Kosciusko County has the highest out of hospital save rate in the state for cardiac patients. He stated he heard someone contacted the Department of Labor and now our full time can't respond. He stated the council has been entrusted by the citizens to look after their best interests. He asked the council to support fire department for equipment and personnel. Larry questioned why the full time wouldn't be able to respond; Dr. Hartman answered because they would have to be paid time and one half. Larry answered there are labor laws that must be followed.

Quinn Hunter, employee of Fire Territory and Syracuse resident, stated the town taxpayer's cost of the ambulance is less than \$25,000.00. He stated he was astonished at last month's vote; he added the council knows right thing to do. Dave Heckaman stated if the Fire and EMS equipment is junk, they can't perform their duties.

OLD BUSINESS

Brian stated we need to appoint Jeff to the Fire Territory Board. Paul advised Larry has resigned from the Fire Territory Board; he understands Jeff will accept appointment to the board. Brian moved to appoint Jeff Morgan to the Fire Territory Board; Larry seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Brian stated last month the council got hung up on paying \$8,000.00 for an eleven year old ambulance instead of buying a new ambulance for \$155,000.00. Based on what Burnsworth Zollars said that would give us three to five more years. Brian added the \$8,000.00 fixed a few things and some body work, but didn't promise us any more longevity. He added Chris Gillespie of Burnsworth Zollars was told this ambulance is almost never used when in all reality it is used 80-90 times per year, more if our nine year old ambulance dies. He feels we got hung up on data issues. We are holding up the purchase of a new ambulance to replace an 11 year old ambulance; the town taxpayer's share would be \$21,700.00.

Paul stated he went to the Fire Territory Board meeting to see what Mr. Gillespie would say.

Paul explained he is not saying it should not be revisited in the future, maybe next year, but he does not feel Mr. Gillespie said there is anything major wrong. Brian noted the wiring needs to be repaired; the estimated cost for that is \$25,000.00. Jeff stated he hasn't seen anything that says there is so much to repair. A lengthy discussion followed. Bill stated it is obvious we are not going to agree on buying an ambulance tonight. He recommended we send it back to the Fire Territory with a recommendation that they get the ambulance fully scoped out and get a price to repair the whole thing. Then they can then make a decision based on that. Bill added they can see if they can live with that until such time that we need to replace it, which is generally been said as sometime next year. We could then go back to Mickey's schedule of replacing an ambulance every four to five years. After more discussion, Paul agreed with Bill's suggestion; Brian stated he will bring it up again next month.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

2012 BUDGETS

Town Manager Henry DeJulia presented the 2012 budgets. He asked the council if there were any questions on the Town Manager's budget. Brian questioned if the amount in the 2011 budget for building inspector was the amount the building inspector actually made; he was told it was not. Henry explained there may be some additional work due to Oakwood; the building inspector now works 14 hours per week. For the Police budget, health insurance costs are over 43% of the increase. For the street budgets, the biggest increases are the various expenses for Oakwood. Paul questioned if the new vehicle included in the street budget is due to Oakwood; Jeremy answered we would have needed a new truck anyway. Larry asked what kind of truck; Jeremy replied a 1 ton dump truck with a plow. For the Park budget, there is an increase in health. The new staff member will need health insurance; the staff member who retired was not on the town plan. Contract mowing will be terminated, and a new mower will be purchased. The Park Department will do the mowing themselves. Chad explained they obtained a quote from the mowing contractor to add the mowing of Vega Field; the cost would almost double. The Park Department plans to purchase a mower every four or five years and do the mowing in house to save money long term. The line item for part time employees increased to cover that.

Paul asked if the Vega costs are going to be totally Park, or will the Kiwanis and football league contribute. Chad believes there will be some contributions from Kiwanis and football throughout the year, perhaps they may be able to pay for the gas. The details haven't been worked out. Brian noted Vega Field can potentially bring 1000 people to town for tournaments; this is good for commerce. Henry continued; the Clerk's budget increases were for street lights and trash pickup for Oakwood. He proposed we budget \$75,000 from Cumulative Storm; \$70,000.00 for the Post office storm drain and \$5,000.00 that we normally budget for storm sewer maintenance. The Cumulative Park budget increased by \$4,000.00 for the 2012 bond payment. Henry proposed we continue to budget \$5,000.00 for the Law Enforcement Continuing Education Fund; that money is generated from tickets and accident reports. CCD is \$42,000.00 for the Community Center bond payment, and Local Road and Street is \$25,000.00 for paving. The Riverboat Revenue Fund budget is \$19,000.00; \$14,000.00 for sidewalks and \$5,000.00 for trees. Henry also proposed a budget of \$200,000.00 for the EDIT fund for possible costs for projects and overruns.

Henry summarized. The total budget is \$3,220,832.00; the estimated levy is \$1,584,066.00. He recommended the council approve this budget.

Larry asked Julie to explain the process. She explained this is the initial discussion on the budgets; the budget will be advertised on August 24 and August 31. The first reading of the budget is proposed for the September meeting and final reading and adoption at the October meeting. She added once the budget is advertised, the council can lower the amounts, but can not increase the budgeted amounts. Larry noted he feels Henry needs some additional office help. There is an opportunity for summer interns; that is something to consider. Henry stated part time help could be taken from the building inspector. Brian disagreed; he said that was explained to Henry when he was hired. Bill agreed with Brian; to hire someone would add to the cost of that position. Brian asked if the professional services amounts are enough; Henry advised he thinks they are. Paul read each budget amount and asked the council to present any comments or objections. The budgets were:

Town manager \$164,089.00 No council objections

Police \$906,433.00 Brian asked if the fuel amount is enough; Tony feels a 2% increase should cover it.

Street \$855,168.00 Jeff asked for clarification on the 1 ton truck and the amount allocated for Oakwood. Jeremy explained that is for the portion of the truck that will be used in Oakwood.

Park \$360,906.00 Brian feels it is hard to understand why we spend \$424,900.00 for parks and \$224,000.00 for fire. He finds it alarming we fight tooth and nail for every fire department purchase. He asked if there is a chance the Park Foundation would buy the new equipment. Chad stated it is possible. Brian stated he votes no on the park budget. Paul asked where Brian would reduce it; Brian answered the \$15,000.00 for new equipment. Paul stated we need to give direction to Chad. Discussion followed. Bill agreed we should tell them where they should cut. Bill stated the Park Department is an important part of the community. Brian again compared the Park Budget to the town taxpayer's part of Fire. Larry and Jeff had no problems with the Park Budget. Paul told Chad to go ahead as presented.

Clerk \$546,236.00 Julie was asked to break down the increase for street lights and garbage. She explained \$5,000.00 of the street light increase is due to Oakwood; the balance is due to the higher cost for the decorative lights and snowflakes. For Trash pickup, there will be 100 new residents from Oakwood. Larry asked Julie to check with Borden's to see if we can get a break on trash pickup in Oakwood since most residents are only there in the summer. Julie agreed to check.

Paul asked if there any problems with the budgeted amounts proposed for the Cum Funds; there were no objections.

Larry asked about the bond payments for Wastewater that will be paid in 2013. Julie explained the process for the final bond payments in 2012 and 2013.

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

The Syracuse Town Council adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

ATTEST:

Paul Stoelting, President

Julie Kline, Clerk Treasurer