

SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

April 17, 2012

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

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Larry asked for public comment on agenda items; there were no comments.

The minutes of the March 20, 2012 meeting were introduced. Brian moved to approve the minutes as written; Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Claims #363 through #477 were presented for payment. Brian moved to approve the claims; Paul seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

The Arbor Day Proclamation, proclaiming April 27, 2012 as Arbor Day in the Town of Syracuse, was introduced by title. Brian moved to accept the Arbor Day Proclamation and authorize Council President Siegel to sign; Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. Motion carried.

Wightman Petrie was not present to give their monthly update. Henry reported we have resubmitted some documents and hope to have EDA approval soon so we can proceed and go to bid.

The Council was presented with form CF-1's for tax abatement. Henry explained the council has a listing of what the four companies proposed to do and where they are right now. Tax abatement forms for real property abatement were submitted by Precision Automotive d/b/a Technical Services and Syracuse Properties, LLC. Tax abatement forms for personal property abatement were submitted by AIA Countertops d/b/a Patrick Industries, J P Inc., and Technical Services. Brian asked if one company buys another, wouldn't they have to go through the process again. Mike Reed stated he believes that is part of the sale. Henry stated AIA/Patrick Industries has done a very good job. Technical Services is the only one he can truly see that has not done what they said they would do, however, Henry noted the abatement is only on what they have completed. Henry provided estimated and actual numbers from the CF-1's for assessed value, jobs created, and payroll. Henry was asked what they do; Henry stated the company does motor engineering and testing.

Mike Reed explained the council must determine if the businesses substantially complied with what they said they were going to do. If they have not substantially complied with the Statement of Benefits, the council must determine it was not caused by something beyond the property owner's control. If the council determines they have not complied, the property owner would be mailed a notice stating the council does not feel they have complied. A hearing would be held to determine the causes, and the council would determine again if they have substantially complied. If they determine at the hearing that the property owner has not substantially complied, the abatement is taken away.

Brian asked if the new building at Technical Services is included; Henry stated it is included in the assessed value. Brian asked if this is the second or third year of abatement. Julie advised the CF-1's for Technical Services list 10-01-2009 as the start date. Larry asked what qualifies as out of his control.

Mike explained if everything is approved tonight, it is a done deal, and the abatement continues for another year. If the council wants more information, we would send a notice that the property owner is not in substantial compliance, and we must hold a hearing in next 30 days. At the hearing, the property owner would be able to state his case. The statute states out of control is something such as a decline in demand for the property owner's products and services. Bill asked if we would be right in contacting the property owner. Mike advised if more information is needed, we would have to send a written notice stating the designating body's reason for the determination, and the date, time, and place for a hearing to further consider the property owner's compliance with the Statement of Benefits. The hearing must be held not more than 30 days after the notice. At the hearing, the designating body (council) must determine if the property owner has made reasonable efforts to comply with the statement of benefits. If the determination is the property owner has not made a reasonable effort to comply, the council must adopt a resolution terminating the deduction.

Brian made a motion to approve Patrick Industries, Jasper Plastics, Syracuse Properties LLC, and Technical Services for tax abatement. It was noted there are actually five abatements before the council. Discussion followed on who is and who is not in compliance, and what needs to be done. Mike Reed confirmed the council did not feel the abatement for Syracuse Properties, LLC and the two abatements for Precision Automotive/Technical Services were in compliance, and that Patrick Industries and JP Inc were in compliance. Larry asked for a second to Brian's motion; there was no second. The motion died due to lack of a second.

Paul made a motion to find AIA/ Patrick Industries and JP Inc. in substantial compliance with the Statement of Benefits; Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Mike Reed explained the businesses who are not approved must have the opportunity to appear and answer questions. The three abatements that were not approved are Syracuse Properties, LLC, Technical Services Real Estate, and Technical Services Personal Property. Paul moved to give notice to Syracuse Properties, LLC, and to Technical Services, for both real and personal property, and to conduct a hearing within 30 days to determine if the businesses are in compliance; Brian seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried. Larry authorized Henry to sign the CF-1's and Julie to attest.

The council set the date and time of the hearing for May 7, 2012 at 5:00 p.m.

## DEPARTMENT REPORTS

### TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager Henry DeJulia discussed the selection of the inspection services for the EDA and EDI grants. A point system was used for the evaluation process; a possible 400 points could be scored. Wightman Petrie received a score of 347, A & Z received a score of 281, and the score for DHA was 221. He recommended we award the contract for construction engineering inspection services for the EDI grant to Wightman Petrie at a cost of \$17,985.00, Henry noted the selection criteria was quite in depth. Paul made a motion to approve the engineering proposal from Wightman Petrie for a cost not to exceed \$17,985.00; Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Henry also recommended Wightman Petrie for construction engineering inspection services for the EDA grant; the cost is \$125,000.00. Paul moved to award the contract to Wightman Petrie for an amount not to exceed \$125,000.00; Brian seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

#### POLICE

Police Chief Tony Ciriello reported there were 346 calls for service in March; he noted there were only 3 vehicle accidents. There were a total of 11 criminal arrests. Officers have started their mandated annual training; at least 24 hours per year is now required. Officer Ben Hostetler graduated from the academy last Friday; the police department is at full staff now.

#### PARK

Park Superintendent Chad Jonsson reported that the Easter Egg hunts on April 6 and April 7 went well. The egg hunt on Saturday for the younger kids lasted two minutes; 2400 eggs were found.

Chad announced a program brochure for the summer is in the works. He reported on upcoming events. The Arbor Day ceremony will be held on April 27 at 1:30 p.m. at the elementary school. NIPSCO has donated the Arbor Day tree and seedlings. The Farmer's Market will open for the season on May 12. A meeting was held with potential vendors last week; there were 30 in attendance. The annual car shows will be held on May 18 and May 19.

For the Youth Athletic Complex, park representatives met with NIPSCO today; they are working on getting power to the site. Pacemaker has submitted a potential drawing to their architect so it can be submitted for state approval.

Chad stated they would like to work with Polywood on a possible property swap. He showed the council a map of the area he has in mind. He noted the swap would involve 1.5 acres of Polywood property and 1.512 acres of town property. It was the consensus of the council to go ahead and check into this. Larry stated an exchange of property is something that should be handled by the town manager; he instructed Henry to negotiate the exchange.

#### PUBLIC WORKS

Jeremy Sponseller, Public Works Superintendent, reported the pump and mower approved by the council have been purchased and delivered. He announced he did find a truck, but it did not have a dump bed. There will be two checks for the purchase, since the dump bed will be installed separately. Jeremy is waiting on paving numbers so he can present it to the council. For the new sidewalk on Main St, he has one quote and has been waiting on a second quote. Larry suggested in the future, Jeremy should set a deadline for receiving quotes.

Jeremy presented a purchase request. He would like to purchase 21 trees for the spring planting from Blue Grass Farms for \$1,975.00. The trees will be delivered in 30 days. Larry advised he has a request from a resident to plant new trees where trees were removed. Chad explained they are trying to go back and plant new trees where old trees were removed. Brian made a motion to purchase

the trees for \$1,975.00 from Blue Grass Farms; the trees are to be delivered in 30 days. Paul seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Jeremy reported on the camera work that was completed on some of the Oakwood sewer lines. He brought a portion of a sewer pipe to the meeting to show what they have found; the pipe had a large amount of concrete. Larry asked how we are coming with obtaining easements for this type of work. Jeremy advised there is a plan in place to get it done. Larry added there are an incredible amount of problems in the Oakwood system; the in park infrastructure has not been adequately maintained.

#### CLERK

Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline discussed the town's annual contribution to the Lake Area Community Band. She explained the Park Department has cancelled their weekly music concerts. In past years, the band has performed about three times per year at park events. This year they will only be performing on July 4. She asked council members if they wanted to contribute \$2,000.00 this year, or if they would like to contribute less. She noted it is kind of short notice for the band. Discussion followed on the park's decision to cancel concerts; Chad explained they plan to have music events at other locations, such as the Farmer's Market, but they have cancelled the Thursday night concerts due to low attendance and the cost. Brian moved to make a contribution of \$750.00 to the band this year. Bill seconded Brian's motion. Larry noted that isn't enough to pay for their sheet music, which is what our contribution is used for. Larry and Paul asked Chad if the Park Department couldn't use the band three times and we could still contribute \$2,000.00 for all three concerts. Bill asked about attendance; Chad explained it averages 125 people for the band concerts, but that includes the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Henry suggested \$750.00 now, and more if there are additional concerts. A vote was held on the previous motion. Brian and Bill voted for the motion; Paul and Larry voted against. Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline was asked to break the tie; she voted against.

Paul made a motion to contribute \$2,000.00 to the Lake Area Community Band with the understanding this may possibly be the last year for the \$2000.00 amount; Chad is to see if he can have them perform two additional concerts. Larry seconded. Brian stated he feels Henry's idea is more prudent. Three voted for the motion; Brian voted against. The motion carried.

Julie made two announcements. She has contacted London Witte for their assistance in preparing the 2013 budgets and levy appeal due to annexation; the cost is estimated to be less than \$1,000.00. The town received the distribution of surplus COIT and EDIT funds from the State last Friday.

#### TOWN ATTORNEY

Town Attorney Mike Reed had nothing further to report.

#### DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Dick Peletier urged everyone to participate in the Walk-A-Thon for the Youth Athletic Complex on May 12. He distributed posters and brochures.

OLD BUSINESS

Brian commended the EMS for his treatment last Friday; he stated they saved his life.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

Paul made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against.

The Syracuse Town Council adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Larry Siegel, President

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Julie Kline, Clerk Treasurer