

SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

MARCH 19, 2013

Council member Larry Siegel called the Regular Meeting of the Syracuse Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Other council members present were Jeff Morgan and Paul Stoelting. Town Manager Henry DeJulia, Town Attorney Vern Landis, and Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline were also present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Council President Bill Musser and council member Brian Woody arrived during the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

The minutes of the February 19 meeting were introduced. Paul made a motion to approve the minutes; Brian seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Claims # 258 through #384 were presented for payment. Larry made a motion to approve payment of the claims; Paul seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

The Public Hearing on the petition to vacate an alley, continued from the February meeting, was opened. Attorney Stephen Snyder, representing the petitioners Treco, LLC, and James and Karen Tranter, was present. Bill asked if there was a motion or any discussion by the council. Bill asked Attorney Snyder for comments. Attorney Snyder replied he thought there was going to be a review of the comprehensive plan to determine if the alley was a necessary element to future development. Brian asked if an easement could be granted for both sides of the property. Attorney Snyder asked if this would be for utilities. If that is the case, there is already a 25 foot set back that could be used for utilities. Bill called for a motion to accept or deny the petition; no motion was made. A question was raised if the matter dies due to lack of a motion. Attorney Snyder advised, and Attorney Landis agreed, the council needs to take a vote or the petition stays out there. Larry advised there has been discussion about using the alley if we upgrade the water lines in that area; it doesn't make sense to abandon an important corridor for development. Larry made a motion to deny the petition; Paul seconded. Brian noted he would consider vacating if we had easements in hand. Five voted for the motion to deny the petition; none against. The motion carried.

Additional Appropriation Ordinance #2013-02 was introduced. The ordinance appropriates an additional \$50,000.00 from the EDIT Fund. Brian moved to adopt the ordinance; Larry seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Brett Konarski, of Jones Petrie Rafinsky, gave the monthly update on the industrial park. Brett stated Cripe has been offsite during the winter; they are expected to be back onsite in late March, earlier if weather permits. Nipsco is prepared to install the gas and electric within a week or two after Cripe has completed the site grading and the asphalt base. AT & T will be completing their work next Tuesday, weather permitting. Their work will be completed in two days and is not expected to be a conflict with Cripe. H & G is progressing well. The main utility lines are in place; everything is in from the water tower to the park. All H & G has left to do is to install the lift station pumps, the water booster, and the scadata system upgrade. Brett added there was an issue with INDOT; H & G did not have the proper traffic controls in place. That has been corrected; no further problems are expected.

Larry asked about water and sewer in the industrial park. Brett stated the water and sewer are in, but they have not been tested. Larry asked if it is out to Hwy 6; Brett advised yes.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager Henry DeJulia reported on several items. He is continuing to work with Elkhart County Economic Development to have the industrial park site designated as shovel ready. Henry feels that designation is important to have. He is also working on getting a bridge across Harkless; he met with Richard Haddad, the Executive Director of K-21. Henry advised he also met with representatives of the Oakwood property owners and discussed traffic issues. He announced the Parents are meeting with the Kosciusko Area Plan Commission on the Oakwood DPUD and zoning issues. Henry is also working with Digital Hill and JPR on the website for the industrial park.

Larry stated he received a call from J.R. Parent about the status of the sewer upgrade in Oakwood Park. Jeremy advised he will discuss this in his report.

POLICE

Police Chief Tony Ciriello reported there were 252 calls for service, 7 property damage crashes, and 4 criminal arrests in February. He has been working with MACOG on the ADA transition plan. The plan has been completed, and it has been posted as required. He will bring the plan to the council for adoption next month. Larry suggested we add it to our comprehensive plan. Tony added ADA must be added to our agenda each month after the plan has been adopted.

Tony discussed the ordinance for pier use adopted in 2009. He explained he has been working with Chad, Vern, and Henry on amending the ordinance; right now, there are some enforcement issues with the ordinance as it is written. Tony distributed a draft copy of the ordinance for council input.

Larry asked if the police department has the new car. Tony stated yes; it has 91,000 miles on it. They should be able to use it for five or six years as a reserve car.

PARK

Park Superintendent Chad Jonsson was not present.

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Superintendent Jeremy Sponseller announced the work on the Oakwood lift station was scheduled for yesterday; since there was boring to do, it was delayed due to the weather. They hope to start work next Monday. Jeremy reported he is working with Paul on the 2013 list of streets and sidewalks; he asked the council for input on areas they would like to be looked at.

Jeremy stated they recently completed a water report required by the IURC. The report showed the water department is pumping much more than we are billing for. He would like to bring in M.E. Simpson to do a leak detection. M.E. Simpson estimates they can do the whole town in 5 days. The cost for five days is \$7,875.00, and each additional day is \$1,575.00. Jeremy feels this would be beneficial over the years. If leaks are not found; then we may need to calibrate meters. Larry asked how much water we lost; Jeremy advised 36 million gallons. Bill asked about water used for fire fighting. Jeremy stated the fire department has been asked to inform us when they are doing training. Jeremy stated that could be some of it, but he doesn't believe they are using that much. Discussion followed. Paul moved to contract with M.E. Simpson for an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00; work is to be completed in 90 days. Larry seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Jeremy requested permission to purchase a new truck for the wastewater department. He explained the wastewater department has two trucks; one was replaced two years ago. The second truck is eleven years old, and it needs a lot of work. He would also like to upgrade the bed in the new truck to a flat bed and add a small service crane to lift pumps. The price of a ¾ ton truck from Sorg Dodge is just under \$25,000. The bed and service crane can be purchased from W.A. Jones for \$8,000.00. In addition, he can sell the original bed from the new truck for \$1,000.00, and the trade in amount will be \$4,000.00. The total net cost with the trade and sale of the bed will not be more than \$28,000.00. Jeremy added if the council approves the purchase, he would ask that they also approve Julie writing a check to Sorg Dodge. Bill asked if this purchase was in the budget; Jeremy explained \$50,000.00 was budgeted for depreciation items. Larry asked what happens if we need a new bar screen. Jeremy answered the bar screen was \$180,000.00; we knew it would be needed and included it in the budget. Jeremy added we will need to upgrade the plant. Larry asked if the upgrades are in the budget; Jeremy answered those expenses are more than we have right now. Brian asked if this was a need. Jeremy answered yes; he doesn't want to put \$5,000.00 to \$7,000.00 into a vehicle that is 11 years old. Paul moved to approve up to \$28,000.00 for the purchase of the new truck and upgrades; the \$28,000.00 includes the \$1,000.00 credit for the original bed and \$4,000.00 trade in allowance. The truck and upgrades are to be purchased and installed in 60 days. Larry seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Jeremy asked the council if they would consider the purchase of a trailer mounted vac from the Cumulative Storm Sewer Fund; the cost would be about \$80,000.00. Jeremy stated he wanted to get council input before he asked for quotes. Larry asked how often they would use this piece of equipment; Jeremy answered every other day. Jeremy reminded council members that to replace the aquatech will cost \$250,000.00. A trailer mounted vac will keep us from having cross contamination issues. The vac can be used to dig up service valves with very little property damage. Jeremy added our catch basins are full of sand; he described other uses for the trailer mounted vac. He was asked about the life of the equipment; Jeremy answered 15 years. The council agreed to allow Jeremy to proceed.

CLERK

Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline was present, but had no report.

TOWN ATTORNEY

Town Attorney Vern Landis was present, but had no report.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Dick Peletier reminded council members he was here in November to request \$40,000.00 for the Youth Athletic Complex. The council agreed to contribute \$20,000.00 at that time and told him to come back in the spring. He stated he is here to request additional funds.

Mr. Peletier provided an update on the complex. He announced the Harold Schrock Youth Athletic Complex will be dedicated on May 4. A work day has been scheduled for April 13 to get the fields ready. Mr. Peletier advised additional funds are still needed; a large donation was promised and will be used for field lights. Matching funds are required for this donation. Larry asked how many kids participate in the baseball program. Mr. Peletier stated there are 375 to 450 kids in baseball, plus the kids for peewee football. Larry suggested he approach the township for funds since a lot of the kids live there. Mr. Peletier will approach the township.

Sharon Fowler questioned having a company come in for leak detection; she stated we used to have a machine to check residential. She added the clay tile piping needs to be addressed. She stated she also feels we're spending a lot of money. Jeremy explained the procedure for residential leaks.

OLD BUSINESS

Brian Woody reported the Fire Territory is still looking at PERF retirement for the firemen, and they are proceeding with the expansion of the Fire Department. Larry noted many household with homestead exemptions are now maxed out on the 1% property tax rate, and the circuit breaker credit has kicked in. He added additional costs will cause all the governing bodies in the township to lose tax dollars.

Council President Bill Musser appointed Brian Woody as Town Council Vice President for 2013.

NEW BUSINESS

None

Larry moved to adjourn the meeting; Brian seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The Syracuse Town Council adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

ATTEST:

William Musser, President

Julie Kline, Clerk Treasurer