

SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

August 19, 2014

Town Council President Brian Woody called the Regular Meeting of the Syracuse Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Other council members present were Kathy Beer, Bill Musser, Larry Siegel, 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.

Brian noted no members of the public were present for comments on agenda items.

The minutes of the July 15, 2014 meeting were introduced. Paul moved to approve the minutes; Larry seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Claims #796 to #940 were presented for payment. Paul made a motion to approve the claims. Larry seconded. Brian asked about the claim for the park and Polywood. Jeremy advised it is an annual inspection as part of our permit. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Ordinance 2014-12, An Additional Appropriation Ordinance, was introduced. The ordinance appropriates additional funds in the Oakwood TIF Fund and South Benton TIF fund. Paul moved to adopt Ordinance 2014-2; Larry seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Brett Konarski, of Jones, Petrie, Rafinski, gave his monthly report on the Industrial Park. The signs are moving well and the foundations are in place. General Crafts will complete the installation of the sign faces on August 25 or August 26 depending on the weather. Solar Energy can begin their work on August 27; all work should be complete by the end of the month. Larry asked if there is anything else that needs to be done. Brett stated as soon as the sign is in place, we are done with EDA. The as built drawings must be completed once the signs are in place so we can turn it over to Elkhart County. Kline Excavating ran into an unexpected condition on the Long Dr culvert. There was a concrete poured in place structure rather than the standard pipe installation; the change order for \$900.00 is for the additional time involved. Paul moved to approve Change Order #2 for the Kline Excavating contract and to authorize the Council President to sign the document; Bill seconded. Larry asked why the concrete pipe could not be jetted instead. Brett answered the elevation was not properly installed on the other side. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager Henry DeJulia reported about ten or eleven of the point repairs in Oakwood have been completed.

Henry advised he received a message from the state that the Industrial Park has been designated as a Certified Shovel Ready Site. A photo opportunity will be scheduled in the future, and we are authorized to use the shovel ready logo.

Henry advised we still have vacancies to fill on the County BZA and Syracuse BZA. Bill asked if they have to live in town. Henry stated we are looking for a town person first.

Henry continued with his report. The ditch on Brooklyn St was cleaned out. There was a washout of some of the grass seed; some areas will have to be reseeded. A NIPSCO gas line needs to be relocated; they will come back in two to three weeks after that has been done. Henry stated he received a request from a couple of citizens for a street light on the southern part of Parkway Dr. Henry

will contact NIPSCO if the council agrees. Tony added there is currently a light there, but a tree blocks out all light. We will ask NIPSCO to relocate that light. Henry stated the Harkless Bridge is done; the wood will be sealed next spring. Larry asked if there will be a dedication; council members agreed a dedication should be scheduled.

Henry stated he has been approached by a producer of a program called Communities of Distinction. The producer would like to include the Town of Syracuse in the television production. This is a program on Fox and ABC. The cost is \$25,000.00 for the five minute segment; there will be one national and 34 regional broadcasts. Henry played the five minute segment that was recorded for Valparaiso. He advised he will be receiving a phone call tomorrow morning; he invited council members to participate in the phone call. Henry added once the program has aired on television, we will get the license to the program. Larry asked if we could use EDIT dollars for this; Henry stated we do have promotional money appropriated in EDIT. Brian asked if we have control of the content. Henry said yes; it will take 60 to 90 days to complete it. Larry stated they would have to come soon; we are a summer time community. Henry agreed if they don't come by the end of September, it would have to be next year. Bill asked how many people actually watch Discover America. Tony said he has watched it several times since Henry mentioned it to him; Tony thinks it is really cool. Bill asked about the regional broadcasts; Henry stated we will choose the regional markets where it would be shown. Larry stated he feels the biggest benefit is our use of it. Discussion followed about Syracuse as a summer destination. Paul asked if this would be only the Industrial park; Henry replied the whole town. Paul and Kathy would like more information about the timing; they questioned whether they are scheduling for this year or next. Larry stated most council members feel if it can't be done by the end of September, it would have to be next year. Discussion followed. Bill stated we can hire a company to do this for us for a lot less; we have to decide if the television exposure is worth it. There are a lot of people that do this. Larry asked Bill if he would like to look into this; Bill asked if the Chamber should be involved. Kathy feels we need more information. Henry invited the council to stop by tomorrow for the phone call at 9:30 a.m. Bill asked Henry if he has talked to anyone who has done this; Henry said Valparaiso is still evaluating it since there have only been seven showings. After discussion, it was agreed Henry will get more information. Bill will check with other groups for pricing on producing a similar production.

POLICE

Police Chief Tony Ciriello reported there were 381 calls for service in July with 8 property damage crashes and 12 criminal arrests. The police department was able to keep overtime to a minimum for the month of July even though they are short one officer; the reserves really stepped up. Larry asked about the reserves; Tony will introduce them next month. Tony advised Day of Caring was last Wednesday. Forty four projects were done countywide; there were sixty five volunteers working in the township.

Tony stated he talked to Larry Lane, President of the Oakwood Property Owners Association, about the stop sign at Palm Dr, Lakeside, and Lake. Mr. Lane mentioned several residents have complained it is hard to see. They would like us to consider making it a three way stop sign. Tony thinks it is something we should look at it. Bill and Larry agreed a three way stop is needed. Tony added crosswalks will be added after the paving is completed. Vern will draft an ordinance for a three way stop.

Tony discussed an issue that we have off Harrison St. where there is a pier space that we rent out. There has been a pier and a quonset hut there for many years; it was there long before we established the ordinance. The fees were not paid and the quonset hut was crooked. Last year, a couple of letters were placed there since we did not know who owned it; there was no response. This year, we arranged to have it removed and the pier owner showed up immediately. The owner allowed the

quonset hut to be aligned; but he still did not register or pay the fees. Tony sent another letter and assessed fines; the owner paid the fines and registration fees. Another issue has occurred where the owner has let someone else also tie to the pier. The pier owner was notified of this issue, and the other boat is now tied to a post in the channel, which interferes with the neighbor's access. Based on the issues, Tony would like to have Vern send a letter stating that next year we will not rent pier space to him. The guy will not cooperate with getting the other boat off there. Larry asked how this is different; Tony responded it is due to the narrow easement. The owner has registered; that is okay, however, he has given permission to someone else to also tie on. Larry feels he is encroaching on our space; we need to focus on the stray boat. Tony stated he is unable to contact that person. A lengthy discussion followed. It was agreed we can refuse to rent in the future due to past violations. Tony pointed out only residents can rent these spaces; the owner of the second boat is not a resident. The quonset hut is also in violation. Towing the stray boat was discussed; Tony pointed out we have no way to tow or store the stray boat. Brian suggested removing the pier since it is in violation. Larry asked what would happen if someone ties to his (Larry's) pier; Larry discussed different scenarios. Tony stated if we don't enforce this; we have no authority on any piers. Vern stated we need to look at the ordinance. The DNR says it is our issue because it is off our easement. Council members agreed with Tony that we that we will not rent pier space to him next year.

Tony presented a request to upgrade the security in the Police Department. He explained people often come in angry and upset; the issue is the secretary is often alone. Other police departments have security upgrades so you can't have contact with the office personnel. He requested quotes, and one contractor Brad Jackson, of T.L. Jackson Construction, responded. The quote is just under \$15,000.00. Card swipes could be used for access after hours. A panic button will be installed in the clerk's office if an officer is needed. Larry asked if this has just come up; Tony answered he has been looking at this since last fall. Larry asked Tony if he budgeted for this; Tony answered no. He said Rainy Day funds have been suggested or other funds. Tony added he will use money in his budget for security cameras. Discussion followed about the system Tony is considering. Brian suggested using CCI-Cigarette Tax. Brian moved to approve an amount not to exceed \$15,000.00 for security upgrades to the Police Department; Julie is authorized to advertise for an additional appropriation from CCI-Cigarette Tax. Bill seconded. Tony advised work will be completed by year end. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

PARK

Park Superintendent Chad Jonsson reported the first football games will be on Saturday at the ball park. The trail is complete around the outside of the ball park. An adult softball league is planned for this fall. The final canoe program was tonight; we have had many bad weather weeks for this event. The Farmer's and Artisan's Market continues.

Kathy advised the grass at the boat launch is not being maintained by the DNR.

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Director Jeremy Sponseller presented the paving bids that were received. Niblock was the low bid for both projects. For the Oakwood paving, the bid was \$158,201.20; this is within our budgeted amount. Larry asked which roads will be paved; Jeremy advised the part of Line St that is currently blocked off will not be paved. Paul moved to accept the bid from Niblock for \$158,201.20; work is to be completed by October 31. Kathy seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Jeremy discussed the bids for the town paving. For 2014, the town paving budget was lowered to \$105,000.00. In order to come in within that budget, we would have to subtract #7, Main St., from the paving to be done. That would put us under \$100,000.00; Jeremy may be able to complete a small section somewhere else with the remaining budgeted amount. Paul made a motion to approve the quote from Niblock Excavating for paving the town projects for an amount not to exceed \$105,000.00; work is to be completed by October 31. Larry seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Jeremy presented the quote he received for the annual tree removal. Only one contractor responded out of the five contractors who were contacted. Wawasee Tree Service quoted \$10,700.00. Paul moved to accept the quote from Wawasee Tree Service for \$10,700.00; work is to be completed by Thanksgiving. Larry seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Jeremy advised last month he was asked to provide more information about replacing the current meters with radio read meters. Jeremy estimates the cost will be about \$280,000.00 over three calendar years. Utility Supply has agreed to hold the current price over three years. The cost is \$185.00 each if only the radio head is needed; to replace the meter and add a radio head is \$215.00. The meters will be ordered as they are installed and needed. The goal is to have all meters changed by the spring or summer of 2016. The meter replacement would be paid from the Water Depreciation Fund; about 1,400 meters need to be replaced. It was the consensus of the council to proceed with the meter replacement program.

Brian had questions about the ditch at the ball park; he asked if it will drain into Turkey Creek. Jeremy advised the elevation at Brooklyn St is about four feet higher. Some areas need to be regraded and reseeded since a storm occurred shortly after the work was completed.

CLERK

Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline presented a letter from the Kosciusko County Clerk about the 2015 elections. Normally we do not have to pay for an election if there are county, state or federal vacancies, however, only municipal positions are up for election in 2015. If we would like the county to conduct the elections, the total cost would be \$6,000.00. The cost would be \$3,000.00 for the primary election, and \$3,000.00 for the general election. There would be no cost if the candidates are unopposed. Council members signed the form authorizing the county to conduct our election.

TOWN ATTORNEY

Town Attorney Vern Landis had nothing further to report.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

None.

OLD BUSINESS

Larry noted we did not ask earlier if there were any ADA complaints; there were none.

NEW BUSINESS

Bill reported for the Fire Territory; they are running behind on construction of the improvements to Fire Station #1.

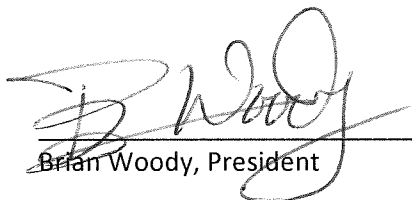
2015 BUDGETS

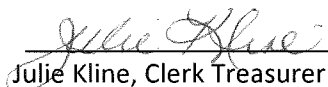
Larry asked Julie about the raise the employees will be receiving in 2015. Julie advised the employees will see a 3% raise on their bi-weekly paychecks, however, since there are 27 pay periods, their W-2 will show a total increase of 6.85%. Bill stated he believes employees should receive bonuses for good work. He feels the employees deserve it, and he has no problem with it. Brian stated last month it was proposed to pay a capital item from a different fund in order to cover the cost of a raise. Julie explained Henry's line item for Capital Improvements for the amount of \$29,000.00 was reduced to \$0. That line item is used for decorative lights and beautification. The \$29,000.00 is now budgeted in the Rainy Day Fund. Except for the salary line items, all other line items remain the same as proposed last month. Council members agreed the budget should be advertised as presented on the budget summary.

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

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

ATTEST:


Brian Woody, President


Julie Kline, Clerk Treasurer