

## SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

### REGULAR MEETING

September 17, 2013

Bill Musser, Council President, called the Regular Meeting of the Syracuse Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Other council members present were Kathy Beer, Larry Siegel, Paul Stoelting, and Brian Woody. Town Manager Henry DeJulia, Town Attorney Vern Landis, and Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline were also present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Bill asked for Public Comment on agenda items. Larry Lane, of 750 Bishop St, spoke about the fire station renovations. He expressed concern about building a second story addition and questioned if all financial options had been reviewed before the taxpayers are charged. He suggested purchasing a house nearby or leaving the station one level. He noted people are upset about the increase in taxes. Rick Williams, of 1019 S Lake St, agreed with Mr. Lane's concerns. He asked how the fire station addition got to this point without board members seeing red flags in this project. He noted the fire budget has gone from a \$500,000.00 budget to almost \$2 million in five years. He added the sprinkler system was originally left out; he questioned where are the costs really going to stop. Both speakers stressed they are not questioning the quality of service by the fire department.

Bill thanked the men for their comments; he stated they will be used to make a decision. Bill explained the renovations were approved by the Fire Territory Board in March of last year and subsequently by the Advisory Board and Town Council. The original cost was \$669,000.00; that has been reduced to \$541,000.00. Larry asked Bill if purchasing a house was considered. Bill answered there were concerns about winter weather and personnel going back and forth. A lengthy discussion between Larry and Bill followed about various options, and the information provided to the council. Bill noted we are here to approve the remodel of Fire Station #1, not to discuss options. Larry asked about square footage; it was noted the square footage in the plans is 3,900 square feet. Larry again brought up buying a house. Brian answered the Fire Territory Executive Board already explored all of those options. Bill called for a motion.

Larry made a motion to respect the very valid concerns of these taxpayers and the many others they represent by fully exploring and quantifying the other viable solutions to the fire fighters and paramedics needs by not approving this tonight until other less expensive options are explored to the satisfaction of the Town Council, Turkey Creek Township, and the taxpayers of Turkey Creek Township. Paul seconded the motion. More discussion followed. Brian pointed out the portion paid by Syracuse residents will only be 14%, which is \$75,740.00. Larry and Paul voted for the motion; Bill, Brian, and Kathy voted against. The motion failed.

Brian made a motion that we move forward with the current plan and approve \$541,000.00 to renovate the fire station; Kathy seconded. Bill commented he is in favor because he has visited the fire station and he has seen the current accommodations. Larry stated no one is questioning the credentials of the firefighters, EMTs, and paramedics; other options have not been quantified. Bill, Brian, and Kathy voted for the motion; Larry and Paul voted against. The motion carried.

The minutes of the August 20, 2013 meeting were presented. Brian moved to approve the minutes; Larry seconded. Four voted for the motion; Bill abstained. The motion carried.

Larry moved to approve claims # 1041 to #1159; Kathy seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. Motion carried.

Bill opened the Public Hearing and First Reading of the 2014 budget. Bill asked for public comments on the 2014 budget; there were none. Julie read the advertised budget amounts. She pointed out the proposed 2014 levy is \$1,700,562.00, which is less than the 2013 tax levy of \$1,750,021.00. She added the proposed budget is under the \$1,801,890.00 maximum levy allowed. Bill again asked for public comments; there were none. Bill closed the Public Hearing. Paul moved to approve the 2014 budget on First Reading; Larry seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Brett Konarski, of Jones, Petri, Rafinsky, gave the monthly report on the Industrial and Technology Park. He reported that as of today, NIPSCO has completed installation of gas and electric, and Cripe Excavating can return to complete their work. Paving will be completed by the end of next week. Substantial Completion for Cripe Excavating is expected by the October meeting. JPR requested quotes from landscape contractors for landscaping at the site entrances. At this time, it appears the low quote is about \$26,000.00. Mr. Konarski distributed a copy of the proposed sign, which will be reviewed with Henry before it is submitted to EDA. H & G has some minor site restoration to complete. The last issue is the Scadata system at the water booster station; Jeremy is working with Precision Systems. They are looking into installing a utility pole to make the radio antenna higher. The estimated cost for the utility pole is \$2,100.00 and will be presented to EDA to include in the grant. Brian asked about the repeater that was installed; Jeremy explained how the communication works with the system.

#### DEPARTMENT REPORTS TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager Henry DeJulia advised work continues on the website for the industrial park. JR Parent has the road agreement to sign. Work on the Harkless Bridge is expected to begin next week. The decorative lights are in. For the S.R. 13 road project, Phend and Brown still has to complete the ADA portions of the project. Henry added the Front St bridge project may be delayed until next year.

Henry presented an annexation petition that was received from Timothy and Bobbie Campbell of 5307 E 1400 N. Larry moved to accept the petition from Timothy and Bobbie Campbell; Bill seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

#### POLICE

Police Chief Tony Ciriello reported the police department had 384 calls for service in August. There were 9 accidents; two of them resulted in personal injury. There were also 17 criminal arrests.

Tony announced that because of the paving on S.R. 13 and the upgrade of intersections, many of the intersections that are targeted in the ADA transition plan were improved.

Bill asked about residency requirements for officers who have take home cars. Tony advised the council approved officers must live within 15 miles; anything else must be approved by council.

Tony asked if there were any ADA complaints; there were none.

#### PARK

Chad Jonsson, Park Superintendent, announced that Harvest Festival will take place on October 12; it is the last day of the Farmer's Market. The Lakeland Youth Center has a carnival on October 19 at the Community Center. The Haunted House at Crosson Mill Park will be held on October 24, 25, and 26. Football runs through October 12. Fundraising continues for lights at the Schrock Athletic Complex. Chad met with the K-21 Foundation, and the Park Department has also submitted other applications.

Bill asked if the Park Department is going to replace the pavilion. Chad explained a businessman has approached them about helping to replace the structure.

#### PUBLIC WORKS

Jeremy Sponseller, Public Works Director, reported he expects the town paving to start the week after next.

Jeremy asked for council direction on what kind of trash cans they would like uptown. He asked if he should present options to the council, or work with Henry. The cost is about \$750.00 each. Council members had no objections to Jeremy working with Henry to get this done.

Jeremy received two quotes for the Oakwood entrances and resurfacing of Palm Dr. The quote from Niblock was \$82,566.00 for the entrances and \$21,830.00 for Palm Dr. Total quote was \$104,396.00. Phend and Brown quoted \$80,400.00 for the entrances and \$17,477.50 for Palm Dr. Total Phend and Brown quote was \$97,877.50. Kathy asked if this is in an area where there are sewer concerns. Jeremy stated no. He added they will be moving at least one fire hydrant before paving. Phend and Brown can hopefully start the work the first or second week of October. Larry moved to approve the quote from Phend and Brown; Kathy seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

#### CLERK

Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline had nothing further to report.

#### TOWN ATTORNEY

Town Attorney Vern Landis had nothing further to report.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Dick Peletier reported he continues his efforts to raise money for the athletic complex. He was able to get money from township; the township will budget \$7,000.00 per year. A total of \$11,000.00 annually has been promised from various sources. He asked the council to consider giving a little more to the athletic complex. He suggested \$10,000.00 or \$15,000.00.

OLD BUSINESS

Larry asked Attorney Landis to review the fire contract and expenditures from the Fire Equipment Fund. Attorney Landis went over the procedure in the contract. A spending request is made by the Fire Department to the Fire Territory Executive Board. The Executive Board would then approve/reject/modify the expenditure request by a majority vote. Recommendations that are approved by the Executive Board would then be forwarded to the Township Advisors and the Town Council. Each entity would then approve or reject the proposed expenditures; any expenditure that is rejected is to be returned to the Executive Board for further recommendation. In his opinion, an expenditure that is not approved goes back through the same process to be reviewed. According to the contract, they can not ignore the council and go ahead with it. Larry confirmed all expenditures from the Equipment Replacement Fund must be approved by the Town Council and the Township Advisors; Attorney Landis advised that is correct.

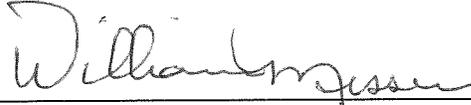
NEW BUSINESS

Kathy asked if Jeremy was looking into purchasing a new mower. Jeremy explained he feels a mower is needed to maintain the industrial park; he is not sure if it will work with our current equipment. Henry commented it has to look good. Kathy suggested bids from a contractor might be lower. Jeremy advised they are looking at equipment that could be used for multiple purposes.

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

The Syracuse Town Council adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

ATTEST:

  
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William Musser, President

  
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Julie Kline, Clerk Treasurer