

Mayor Charles "Skip" Lee called a meeting of the Sterling City Council to order at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, February 16, 2016. Roll call. Present: Aldermen Bob Conklin, Retha Elston, Joe Martin, Chris Schuchard, John Stauter, and Chris Wilen. Absent: None.

Also present were City Attorney Ron Coplan, City Manager Scott Shumard, Finance Director Cindy Von Holten, Superintendent of Building and Zoning Amanda Schmidt, Fire Chief Gary Cook, Deputy Fire Chief Mike Dettman, Interim Police Chief Tim Morgan, and City Clerk Marie Rombouts.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Alderman Elston made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

- A) City Council Minutes
 - 1) Regular Meeting of February 1, 2016
 - 2) Study Session of February 8, 2016
- B) Bills and Payroll totaling \$577,458.34

The motion was seconded by Alderman Martin. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Schuchard, Stauter, and Wilen. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Elston made a motion to pass **Resolution #R2016-2-1 Authorizing the Mayor to enter into an Agreement with Abiding Word Christian Center** accepting approximately five acres of land on the northeast corner of Lynn Boulevard and Sixth Avenue in lieu of \$53,740 owed for the detention pond. The motion was seconded by Alderman Conklin.

Alderman Stauter asked if the access onto Lynn Boulevard ended with the church. Attorney Coplan stated that it would be transferred with property and if this access ends with the church, Item "E" could be amended to restrict the Lynn Boulevard access to the church only and not subsequent property owners. Alderman Conklin asked what would happen if the church goes bankrupt. Attorney Coplan stated the property would remain in the City's hands. The insurance is required because tenants are farming the land and to hold the City harmless. Alderman Martin asked who would get farm rent if the Church lost their property. Attorney Coplan explained that could be negotiated with a subsequent owner. Mayor Lee asked what would become of the access drive if new owners did not utilize it. Manager Shumard stated that a culvert is planned whether the access drive is built or not.

William Inks asked how much the Church owes the City. Manager Shumard reported \$53,740.

Shirley Sharp asked where the route would run for school children. Manager Shumard stated it would run along the north of Thomas Park, between the City's proposed property and the Church's property and then south along Sixth Avenue to Challand School. Sharp expressed concern that children would be crossing Lynn Boulevard at Sixth Avenue which is very busy. Manager Shumard stated the City is issuing an easement to the Sterling Park District to construct the Safe Route to School with a possible grant. The Park District designed this route.

Alderman Stauter made a motion to amend the motion passing **Resolution #R2016-2-1 Authorizing the Mayor to enter into the Agreement with Abiding Word Christian Center** to include language to Item "E" limiting access on Lynn Boulevard for the church's purposes only, any subsequent owners would not have access; seconded by Alderman Schuchard. Voting on the motion to amend the Agreement: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Schuchard, Stauter, and Wilen. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Voting on **Resolution #R2016-2-1** with an amended agreement: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Schuchard, Stauter, and Wilen. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Elston thanked Amanda, Scott, and Brad for helping her resolve a problem in her neighborhood.

Mayor Lee thanked the crews and emergency services for the job they did with the recent snow. Mayor Lee also commented on the Police staffing issue and wanted to make the public aware that our level of protection has not been compromised. Interim Chief Morgan reported that Sterling does not have a unique problem. Many communities are facing the challenges of keeping full forces.

At 6:50 pm, budget discussions began. Manager Shumard started with the Northwestern Steel and Wire Redevelopment Fund. The building housing Best Cobb was discussed. The plan for a round-about at Wallace Street and Avenue B would necessitate moving the building. The building has several code violations and hazards. Manager Shumard stated the options for the building are to sell, move, demolish, or keep. Superintendent Schmidt stated that some of the valves have been replaced. The main concern is that the building needs repairs but does generate income.

Council expressed concern that MFT funds were reduced. Director Von Holten stated we get checks but have no back-up as to how those funds are calculated, so we get what the state sends.

Sterling Industrial Development Commission was reviewed.

Superintendent Schmidt advised the Council of a Capital Item for the Coliseum Fund. The elevator needs to be replaced, either in a three-year process or an estimated \$25,000. Alderman Stauter asked if a chair lift would be less expensive. Schmidt was unsure if the state would permit that when the elevator shaft is already existing. William Inks asked why the elevator was not replaced during renovations. Manager Shumard stated the elevator worked fine before renovation but the added stress during construction compounded the problem.

Other funds reviewed were Civil Defense, 2012 CGH Medical Center Bonds, Special Service Areas, Police Pension, Fire Pension, and Trust Committee.

Manager Shumard reviewed strategic themes and initiatives and asked the Council to think of how these items will work into the budget.

- 1) Community Sustainability – appearances in gateways and thoroughfares
- 2) Economic Development and Workforce Development
- 3) Neighborhood Life
- 4) City Services, Funding Projects and Having Employees to Complete Them
- 5) Communications

It was a general consensus to work on the budget next week, Monday, February 22, 2016. Any other budget components can be completed before April 4. A business item will be placed on the agenda for an easement for the Sterling Park District.

Alderman Schuchard made a motion to adjourn to a "Closed Session" at 8:06 pm for Deliberations concerning Salary Schedules for One or More Classes of Municipal Employees as provided for in subsection (1) of 5 ILCS 120/2(c); seconded by Alderman Martin. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Schuchard, Stauter, and Wilen. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Conklin made a motion to reconvene the open meeting at 10:10 pm; seconded by Alderman Schuchard. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Schuchard, Stauter, and Wilen. Nays – None. Motion carried.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:10 pm.

Marie Rombouts
City Clerk