

Mayor Charles L. "Skip" Lee called a meeting of the Sterling City Council to order at 6:30 pm on Monday, November 6, 2017. Roll call. Present: Aldermen Bob Conklin, Retha Elston, Joe Martin, John Stauter, Christine Wilen, and Jim Wise. Absent: None.

Also present were City Attorney Tim Zollinger, City Manager Scott Shumard, Finance Director Cindy Von Holten, Director of Superintendent of Building and Zoning Amanda Schmidt, Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader, Fire Chief Gary Cook, Police Chief Tim Morgan, and City Clerk Marie Rombouts.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

There were no communications from Visitors.

Alderman Elston made a motion to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- A) Minutes from October 16, 2017
- B) Bills and Payroll totaling \$4,416,112.07
- C) Plan Commission Minutes of June 22, 2017
- D) Partial Pay Request #1 for 2017 Street Resurfacing Project for Civil Constructors, Inc. in the amount of \$126,096.46
- E) Partial Pay Request #2 for 2017 ADA Sidewalk to Twin City Construction Company in the amount of \$109,551.67
- F) Partial Pay Request #4 for East 16th Street to Twin City Construction in the amount of \$59,270.49
- G) Resolution No. R2017-11-22 abating the 2017 tax levy in the amount of \$483,902.50 for the General Obligation Refunding Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source), Series 2010A (Recovery Zone Facility Bonds)**
- H) Resolution No. R2017-11-23 abating the 2017 tax levy in the amount of \$385,015.00 for the Taxable General Obligation Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source), Series 2010D (Recovery Zone Economic Development Bonds – Direct Payment)**
- I) Resolution No. R2017-11-24 abating the 2017 tax levy in the amount of \$3,373,250.00 for the General Obligation Refunding Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source), Series 2012**
- J) Resolution No. R2017-11-25 abating the 2017 tax levy in the amount of \$898,365.00 for the General Obligation Refunding Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source), Series 2017**
- K) Accept Bid for Demolition for a single-family dwelling and attached garage at 614 West Third Street in the amount of \$12,830 from Burke Excavating, Inc. of Tampico
- L) Petition from Home of Hope to hold a Bucket Brigade on November 18, 2017

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

Alderman Wilen made a motion to pass the Proclamation declaring Saturday, November 25, 2017 as Small Business Saturday; seconded by Alderman Elston. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried. Mayor Lee read the proclamation into the record and presented it to Janna Groharing, Sterling Main Street Director.

Bill Yocius from Mitchell, Vaught and Taylor, Inc. (MVT) presented information on the Police and Fire Pension Funds. MVT has been working with the Fire Pension Board since 2009 and the Police Pension Board since summer of 2015. Yocius was Mayor in Fox River Grove from 1992 to 1997 and understands the position the Council is in with the pension funds. Pensions are governed by Articles 3 and 4 of the Illinois State Statutes. Yocius explained pensions are defined benefit pay-outs with only three funding sources: 1) approximately 10% of salary from current employees, 2) investment returns, and 3) taxpayers of the City. The state also regulates what types of investments the pension boards can use. State law requires funds to be 90% funded by the year 2040. Using the statutory minimum payments to reduce the actuarial accrued liability would create a balloon payment.

Discussion followed regarding changes in funding due to market drops, smoothing out losses/gains, paying today for current employees' pensions, possibilities of the state changing the 2040 deadline, and tiers of investment strategies based on the monetary size of the funds.

Alderman Elston made a motion to pass **Resolution #R2017-11-26 Authorizing Application to United States Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Assessment Grant Program**; seconded by Alderman Martin. Manager Shumard estimated this to be our seventh attempt for grant funding and noted the City will be seeking Requests for Quotes from Contractors to begin the remediation study. Voting: Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise.

Alderman Elston made a motion to approve the Estimated Tax Levy in the amount of \$4,729,694, an increase of \$135,704, or 2.95%; seconded by Alderman Conklin. Alderman Wise advocates reducing taxes for one year, not three. This will give the taxpayers relief while we regroup to find other revenue sources and avoid major increases in the future. Wise believes this would restore the citizens' faith in the Council. Alderman Martin reminded everyone that only three ways exist to reduce pension liability: 1) higher rates on investments, 2) deaths in retirees, and 3) lay-off staff. Manager Shumard stated that local option sales tax could be used to reduce tax burden, also. Mayor Lee reminded the Council that the increase could be determined at a later time, as long as it remains under 5% so that a public hearing is not necessary.

Voting on estimated 2.95% tax levy increase: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Martin made a motion to pass **Ordinance #2017-11-24 Amending the Zoning Map to Reclassify Property owned by Schmitt Partners, L.P. (Owners) and Sandy Glazer (Hair & Company) to reclassify the property located at 2605 Woodlawn Road from Community Business to Community Business with a Special Use Permit** to allow for cosmetic tattooing; seconded by Alderman Elston. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Wise made a motion to pass **Ordinance #2017-11-25 Approving Petition of J. Herzog & Sons, Inc., for Re-platting of Lot 1 of the Northland Mall Subdivision**; seconded by Alderman Martin. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Wilen made a motion to pass **Ordinance #2017-11-26 approving Petition of David Sigel, as owner of 901 and 903 Avenue G for Subdivision Plat**; seconded by Alderman Conklin. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Elston made a motion to pass **Ordinance #2017-11-27 to Amend Section 102-660 to Modify Exterior Lighting Standards**; seconded by Alderman Martin. Alderman Conklin was concerned about changing these standards mid-stream. If current code requires 20' poles, why should be allowed 30' now. Superintendent Schmidt stated contractors and developers have been fighting this since the code was enacted and it would only be for entrances and drive aisles. Schmidt believes 30' is a compromise but not giving it all away. Alderman Martin asked why 30' would be preferred. Schmidt explained that 30' can throw more light eliminating a few poles and saving money. Martin asked for comparisons to other communities. Schmidt reported some Chicago suburbs limit to 20'. Attorney Zollinger reminded this is for the entrance and drives only. Voting on lighting standards: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – Alderman Conklin. Motion carried.

Alderman Wise made a motion to pass **Ordinance No. 2017-11-28 Authorizing the Sale of Surplus Personal Property and Extension of Economic Development Grant**; seconded by Alderman Conklin. Manager Shumard reported the Greater Sterling Development Corporation would move part of the Best Cobb building to the Industrial Park and remnants would be recycled. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Chief Cook announced the holiday parade is November 18 and asked Council to meet at the fire station at noon to ride in the fire truck.

Chief Morgan reported a police officer in Rockford lost his life on duty. Mayor Lee asked for a moment of silence to remember Officer Jaimie Cox.

Mayor Lee thanked Alderman Martin for presiding over the last meeting.

Alderman Elston reminded everyone of the Christmas Walk and Tree Lighting on Friday, November 17. Elston asked Chief Morgan how many flashlights were given away. Morgan reported 400 were given away on October 30 and the other 100 were gone by 2:00 pm on Halloween. Elston asked the status of the Public Works sign.

Alderman Stauter reminded citizens that December 8 would be the last yard waste pick up for this year. Stauter asked the status on the City's mobile phone app. Manager Shumard believes it should be live before the end of the year.

Alderman Wise thanked Manager Shumard and the engineers for the streets that were repaved. It made a noticeable difference.

Mayor Lee thanked Ray-o-Vac for providing the batteries for the Halloween flashlight give-away and Chief Morgan for community oriented activities.

Meeting adjourned at 7:59 pm.

Marie Rombouts
City Clerk