

Mayor Charles L. "Skip" Lee called a meeting of the Sterling City Council to order at 6:30 pm on Monday, March 19, 2018. 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, Financial Director Cindy Von Holten, Superintendent of Building and Zoning Amanda Schmidt, Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader, Superintendent of Waste Water Treatment Scott Howard, Fire Chief Gary Cook, Police Chief Tim Morgan, and City Clerk Marie Rombouts.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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

A) Minutes from March 5, 2018

B) Bills and Payroll totaling \$665,552.27

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

Alderman Elston noticed that a trailer was purchased for block beautification projects and asked if it was ready. Manager Shumard stated we are looking for a snappy name and to get it furnished.

Kris Noble, Executive Director of the Sauk Valley Area Chamber, presented the Council with their annual report. Noble reported that 2017 was a good year. She has been with the Chamber for three years. The Board consists of 15 members with three year terms. The Chamber is accredited by the US Chamber. Accreditation will be reapplied for in 2018-19. Noble is proud of the 200 volunteers who serve on committees for the Chamber. The Chamber donated \$18,375 for scholarships and non-profit organizations in 2017. Key projects now are workforce development, quality of life, community development, and legislative advocacy. The Chamber puts the people together.

Goals outlined in the Chamber's Strategic Plan are to provide value to members, strengthen the local community, and enhance community leadership.

Noble reported May 3 will be the local manufacturing dinner at Sauk Valley Community College to highlight their multi-craft program. June 15 is the Golf Outing. The first Thursday of August will be the Steak Fry. Toni McCombie is presenting information on Immigration Coalition Thursday morning. Ben Taylor with the US Chamber will be presenting a program on May 31.

Alderman Wilen made a motion to set the public hearing for the budget at the 6:30 pm meeting on Monday, April 2, 2018; seconded by Alderman Elston. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Elston made a motion to engage McCleary Engineering to perform the proposed geotechnical services of soil boring in conjunction with the 2018 Stormwater Construction Projects for a fee of \$19,950; seconded by Alderman Martin. Alderman Stauter asked why there was such a difference in bids; staff did not know. Alderman Conklin asked why the boring is necessary. Shumard stated the soil must be tested to assure it will not contaminate stormwater being stored at the site. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Elston made a motion to enter into the Agreement with Willett, Hofmann & Associates to provide engineering, acquiring easements, and installing a new sanitary sewer main at Avenue D and Walnut Street; seconded by Alderman Martin. Attorney Zollinger stated that owners will be contacted for an easement to reconstruct a sewer line and record those easements with the County. Mayor Lee asked if we would be setting a precedent by replacing this line that is full of tree roots. Superintendent Schrader reported we use root killer on many lines throughout the City. This line was unknown and untreated. When the new line is constructed, it will also be treated for tree roots. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Clerk Rombouts presented information on Amusement licenses. Requests have been received from Operators to reduce their fees. License fees from other communities verified Sterling charges more than double of any other communities. It was a general consensus to reduce the Operator's License from \$1600 to \$800. This change does not affect gaming (gambling) devices.

Manager Shumard announced the engineering for the roundabout at Lynn and LeFevre should be done by July but that is too late in the season for bids. On April 9, the City will accept bids for the first stormwater project at Second Avenue and LeFevre. Bids should be accepted for Douglas Park, on May 25. A couple weeks later the bids for Northland Mall are expected. Wendler Engineering is working on stormwater management on Sanborn Street.

Mayor Lee reported on the National/Stanley building. He has talked with Heather Sotelo at the Greater Sterling Development Corporation (GSDC). Sotelo suggests they hire a person to handle this that she can work with on the riverfront. Another alternative was to partner with Rock Island Growth (RIG). RIG was very interested.

Mayor Lee wants the contact person, either GSDC or RIG, to be the tip of the spear for the project and work with other groups to coordinate.

Alderman Conklin announced that he has returned. Conklin asked if there is a list of roads that will be worked on this summer. Manager Shumard stated the Avenue G Bridge will consume most of the funds. Other funds will be used to partner with Illinois American Water Company (IAWC) on their main replacements. IAWC will contract to have the streets resurfaced. IAWC will pay what it would cost to patch and the City will supplement that payment for a new street surface.

Alderman Conklin received a question from Darlane Davis about Platt Park. She wanted to know if the bike path at Platt Park has increased the City's liability insurance. Manager Shumard assured the Council that the liability insurance has not increased.

Mayor Lee reported Fehr Graham has submitted a USEPA grant for the Lawrence Brothers Building to begin remediation. If we do not receive a grant this year, we will use the fund set aside from GSDC's Revolving Loan Fund.

Manager Shumard reported ten issues have been reported through the phone app and six are already resolved. Commonwealth Edison will be replacing street lights from mercury vapor to LED.

Mayor Lee reported that Deb Dillow has been nominated for two awards at the Women of Achievement Luncheon, Administrative Assistant and Most Inspiring.

With no further business, meeting adjourned to the Budget Study Session at 7:16 pm.

Library – tax levy funds are decreasing and so are the state's per capita grants. Some of the funds spent for the ramp will be refunded.

TIF CBD West – Outdoor Farmers Market Covered Walkway is budgeted for this year. Cost is estimated to be \$450,000, \$200,000 more than originally estimated.

Rock River TIF - \$100,000 is budgeted for Greg Hummel with Bryan Cave. Alderman Wise asked if the City can require a super majority of the Council to approve payment if there are cost over-runs.

Mayor Lee does not think we should use the redevelopment and adaptive reuse strategies proposed by Hummel.

Alderman Wilen asked if there is anything proposed by Hummel that cannot be done locally. Wilen explained she did research on Hummel's letter from January 11. She spoke with people that were listed as being "on board" with the project and they had

not committed to work with Greg Hummel. Wilen does not trust Hummel and does not want to spend any more money on his services.

Alderman Stauter shared his concern about Hummel's bills. Each year the budget is set and there is a large overrun.

Attorney Zollinger suggested to enter into a contract including scope of work, with a not to exceed dollar amount.

Mayor Lee wants to gain control of Hummel's bills. Overrun has been in development versus the environment matters and environmental is what they should concentrate on.

Sewer – budget expenses were reduced with the bacterial sludge reduction instead of dredging. Debate is whether to use flow meters or televise lines to check inflow. There are 101 miles of sewer lines. How do we deal with legacy stormwater connections to the sanitary sewer? Solutions are expensive and other problems do not have a solution. Attorney Zollinger suggested incentivizing. Many downtown businesses connected stormwater run-off to the sanitary sewer lines because it was legal and took the water away quickly.

Superintendent Howard stated the EPA permit for the Treatment Plant expired April 2017. Permits for the Rock River area have been held so permits can be issued together. The permit will be good for five years.

Manager Shumard suggested the base rate for sewer be raised by \$.55 and usage by \$.15. Alderman Martin suggested we raise the base rate by \$1 and the usage by \$.35. These rates are about one-half of last year's increases but will keep increases more constant in the future. Council agreed with Martin's reasoning and asked to direct more funding to target the infiltration issues. Alderman Wise suggested we fix the rate of annual adjustment instead of fluctuating each year.

Solid Waste – We are in the last year of the garbage contract. To continue this contract for three more years, Republic Services is requesting an annual 2-1/2% increase. Dixon and Rock Falls pay less but will have recycling every other week instead of weekly. It was a general consensus to remain with Republic and keep recycling weekly.

The budget will be on display by March 24. The budget hearing will be April 3 and passage will be April 17.

With no further business, meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm.

Marie Rombouts, City Clerk