

Mayor Charles L. "Skip" Lee called a virtual meeting of the Sterling City Council to order at 6:30 pm on Monday, September 21, 2020. Roll call. Present: Aldermen Retha Elston, Josh Johnson, Joe Martin, John Stauter, Christine Wilen, and Jim Wise. Absent: None.

Also attending were City Attorney Tim Zollinger, City Manager Scott Shumard, Finance Director Cindy Von Holten, Superintendent of Building and Zoning Amanda Schmidt, Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader, Interim Police Chief Alex Chavira, Interim Fire Chief Mike Dettman and City Clerk Teri Sathoff.

Mayor Lee, City Manager Shumard and Interim Police Chief Alex Chavira were present in the council chambers, everyone else attended via Zoom. The meeting was recorded and will be kept on the city hard drive. All members in attendance could hear the other members in attendance.

Tom Brackemeyer was present in the council chambers and given time to speak as a visitor. Tom is concerned about pedestrian safety, he stated the people aged 65 and older at most at risk for pedestrian related accidents. Tom gave a history on CGH Medical Center and Sterling High School and the sidewalks in that area. Tom solicited signatures for the repairs of these sidewalks. City Manager Shumard advised Mr. Brackemeyer that there is currently a project underway with a private donor to repair the sidewalks. There is more to it than just fixing sidewalks, easements will be needed and utility poles will need to be moved. It is a long process, but there is a private donor working on it.

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

- A. Approval of Minutes
- B. Approval of Plan Commission Minutes
- C. Approval of Bills and Payroll
- D. Pay Request #2 for 2020 Street Contract Program #1, 6th Avenue - 11th Street to LeFevre to Twin City Construction in the amount of \$2,855.42
- E. Change Order #5 Sterling Public Market
- F. Proclamation for Fire Prevention Week October 4th through October 10th 2020.
- G. Request from Twin Cities Pads to hold a bucket brigade on October 10, 2020.

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

Alderman Wilen made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2020-09-32 Annexing certain territory contiguous to the City of Sterling (Steelton Subdivision - Group 10); seconded by Alderman Elston. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Johnson, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried and Mayor Lee read the proclamation.

Alderman Elston made a motion to approve Resolution No. R2020-09-22 to Refer Consideration to Annex Certain Territory Contiguous to the City of Sterling (Steelton Subdivision - Group 11); seconded by Alderman Stauter. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Johnson, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Wise made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2020-09-33 Approving Entry into the Local Cures Program; seconded by Alderman Martin. City Manager Scott Shumard advised the council that there is money available that will reimburse the city for expenses incurred from the pandemic, it does not reimburse for lost revenue. Finance Director Cindy Von Holten put in a high estimate of \$200,000. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Johnson, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Elston made a motion to approve Final Payment to Civil Constructors Inc. for the Sanitary Forcemain Extension – 16th Ave and Lynn Boulevard in the amount of \$59,458; seconded by Alderman Stauter. Alderman Stauter questioned City Manager Shumard if there was anything more that would need to be completed in the corn field, Shumard advised there was nothing more to be done. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Johnson, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Wise made a motion to approve Change Order #1 Sanitary Forcemain Extension – 16th Ave and Lynn Boulevard; seconded by Alderman Elston. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Johnson, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried

Mayor Lee opened up a discussion in reference to the Utility Billing Late Fees. Due to the COVID-19 virus late fees and shut offs have been suspended. The average balance on delinquent accounts is \$190. Currently we are not charging penalties on the overdue balances. Illinois American Water and other municipalities have reinstated penalties. The three options we have are

1. Reinstitute the 1.5% penalty on the total unpaid balance.
2. Reinstitute the 10% penalty on the total unpaid bill.
3. Resume shut offs when Illinois American Water resumes shut offs.

The staff recommends reinstating the 10% on the total unpaid bill and resuming shut offs when Illinois American Water resumes shut offs.

Director of Finance Cindy Von Holten stated that Illinois American Water resumed charging penalties on August 1st, and they are planning to resume shut offs on October 1st. The shut off date may get pushed back. She stated that the 1.5% penalty can be changed or removed in the system. We are also able to make payment arrangements if the council would like to do that, this will be more time consuming but it can be done.

Alderman Wise agrees with the staff recommendations, he stated that he believes we should follow suit with IAWC in regards to shut offs.

Alderman Stauter stated that he wanted to be fair to the citizens, it looks like the majority of the municipalities are reinstating penalties. He said he would be willing to go along with whatever the council decides.

Alderman Johnson and Alderman Martin agree with staff recommendations.

Alderman Elston felt that it would be good to offer payment plans to residents with outstanding balances.

Attorney Zollinger stated that the State will more than likely extend the shut offs beyond October and quite possibly into the next year.

It was decided that the 10% penalty on the current outstanding balance will be publicized the entire month of October and be instituted the first of November. The City will follow the lead of IAWC in regards to shut offs.

Interim Chief Chavira thanked everyone for the support that was shown for the officers at the recognition ceremony on Thursday. Trick or Treating will be 4:30 pm to 7:00 pm on the 31st of October.

City Manager Shumard advised that environmental company has been at the National location setting up to take samples. Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader and his crew have met with the RedZone and received training on the software. There are approximately 5 ½ to 6 miles of sewer that have not been videoed yet. Once those lines are all cleaned out they will return and video them all at once. A bid opening for the next set of roads is not scheduled until October 2nd, this will create a rush in the fall or spring to get these roads done. The resolution for Halloween trick or treating will be on the next agenda. Shumard stated he forwarded an email to the council in reference to the sidewalk on LeFevre, Brad Schrader has been working with a private donor to get these repaired, but as mentioned at the beginning of the email it is not as simple as removing

the old sidewalks and putting in new. There are utility poles that need to be addressed as well as easements that we will need.

Alderman Wise stated that he appreciates the work that Greg Hummel, City Manager Shumard and Attorney Zollinger have done to get Stanley to do the cleanup work when they have a history of stalling. Alderman Wise believes it may be a good idea to bring in a second civil engineering provider to keep the city up to speed on the projects that are funded. He believes we are falling short because of the engineers. He said that this is not a good excuse to give citizens as to why their roads are not getting completed.

Alderman Elston thanked Amanda Schmidt for the work her department has put in on a couple of issues in her ward.

Alderman Martin welcomed back Attorney Zollinger.

Mayor Lee noted that there is a larger number of ash trees that are a hazard. The tree board will be sending letters to the owners of these trees. Mayor Lee also advised the council that at the next city council meeting Brick Boss will petition the city council to increase the number of liquor licenses in the city. Mayor Lee advised the council to think about this prior to the next meeting.

Alderman Martin made a motion to move to executive session to discuss Employment/Appointment Matters: 5 ILCS 120/2 at 7:15 pm; seconded by Alderman Wise. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Johnson, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Elston made a motion to reconvene the open meeting at 7:46 pm, seconded by Alderman Wise. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Johnson, Martin, Stauter, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 pm.

Teri Sathoff
City Clerk