

Vice-Mayor Joe Martin called a meeting of the Sterling City Council to order at 6:30 pm on Monday, October 16, 2017. Roll call. Present: Aldermen Bob Conklin, Retha Elston, Christine Wilen, and Jim Wise. Absent: Mayor Skip Lee and Alderman John Stauter.

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, Deputy Fire Chief Mike Dettman, Police Chief Tim Morgan, and City Clerk Marie Rombouts.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Manuel Garcia at 707 Broadway asked about the shrubs in the boulevard on Broadway. When the shrubs were removed for street reconstruction, Vern Gottel told Garcia the City was working on a grant and would replace the shrubs after the street was finished. Garcia stated the street has been done for two years. He attended a meeting in February, asked about this matter, and did not receive a response. Manager Shumard stated Gottel had no recollection of that conversation and the shrubs would not be replaced.

Dennis Hemminger, 703 Dillon Avenue, confirmed that road kill was being picked up by Public Works. He wanted to know why two dead animals have been laying on the other side of his street for a week when City crews have driven by it.

Bryce Mead, owner of the local bike shop has been in business for 14 to 15 years. The dirt pump track at Platt Park has been a great addition to the community. He wants to see cycling grow. He heard a petition was circulated against the track. Mead has sold new bikes since the track has been finished. It will draw out-of-towners. The track is a positive change and a sign of growth.

Alexis Fazio, 1615 East 15th Street, lives near Platt Park. The proximity to the park was a reason they moved there. She did not know what was going on and the dirt was just dumped there creating an eyesore. Why weren't neighbors informed? If money can be spent for the dirt pump track, why can't the rest of the park be cleaned up? Fazio is concerned about safety in the park. She saw six kids without helmets although the sign stated to "wear helmets". Kids run into traffic and ATVs have been on the track at night. Can a fence be installed for safety? Manager Shumard explained there are plans to install a new baseball field fence, sidewalk, and new trees. This project moved forward because of volunteers.

Superintendent Schrader stated that the graffiti has been removed.

Several area residents and members of the Tempo Velo Cycling Club thanked the City and volunteers for the dirt pump track.

Bryce Mead offered help with the fence from the bike shop and Temp Velo.

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

- A) Minutes from October 2, 2017
- B) Bills and Payroll totaling \$828,271.76
- C) Toys for Tots to hold a bucket Brigade on October 21, 2017
- D) Halloween Trick or Treat hours on Tuesday, October 31 from 4:30 to 7:00 pm
- E) Sterling-Rock Falls Jaycees to hold a bucket brigade on November 4, 2017

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

Alderman Elston made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring October 2017 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month; seconded by Alderman Conklin. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Elston read the proclamation into the record. The proclamation was presented to Rebecca Munoz-Ripley of the YWCA of the Sauk Valley. She distributed purple ribbons representing the victims served.

Chief Morgan presented a shadow box to Claudia Garcia for 27 years of service to the City of Sterling. Garcia has worked as a Records Clerk, Dispatcher, and Supervisor. She is now the Director of Twin Comm.

Chief Morgan announced the Halloween flashlight give-away will be on Monday, October 30 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm.

Todd Schroeder with Lauterbach & Amen distributed a presentation on "Sterling, Illinois Pension Fund Reporting" that summarizes the Actuary Reports. Schroeder explained that a 4 to 4-1/2 percent increase is expected annually. Schroeder noted GASB 75 standards would create new rules that will become effective April 30, 2019 regarding insurance.

Alderman Wise questioned the difference between the actuarial and statutory recommended funding levels; Entry Age Normal (EAN) and Projected Unit Credit (PUC) calculations; and if contributions would increase if we only contributed the statutory amount. Schroeder stated if actuarial contributions are not made it can become more volatile. Wise confirmed that the City would be meeting its obligation if they made the statutory contributions. Schroeder indicated it is not recommended in the long run.

Manager Shumard reported the assumed rate of return has not been met since 2008 which increases the City's liabilities. The benefits are constitutionally set by the number of employees and contributions. Wise would like to see a level percent of payroll. Schroder stated we are paying off the unfunded liability and contributing against the interest. Shumard reiterated that a lower funding rate at this time will create a greater liability on tax payers later.

Wise would like to fund at the statutory level and give citizens a tax reprieve while we work on a long-term strategy. Shumard stated there are two choices for future revenue to fund pensions – another funding source or reduce the number of employees.

Schroeder stated he could prepare a report if Sterling would cut back to statutory funding for the next three years.

Alderman Wise asked if two tax levy proposals could be prepared, one using the statutory recommendation and one using the actuarial recommendation. Shumard stated it has been done in the past and he would prepare both for this year.

Vice-Mayor Martin stated that he has served on the Council for over 20 years. He has learned that if we do not fund with the actuarial recommendations, we'll only be kicking the can down the road for the next generation.

Alderman Wise made a motion to raise **Resolution #R2017-10-21 to close streets for the Downtown Walk and Tree Lighting** from the table; seconded by Alderman Elston. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried. Vice-Mayor Martin confirmed that the Tree Lighting is at 8:00 pm and the street will be closed from 7:30 to 8:30 pm. Alderman Elston made a motion to pass **Resolution #R2017-10-21 to close streets for the Downtown Walk and Tree Lighting**; seconded by Alderman Conklin. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Wilen, and Wise. Motion carried.

Alderman Conklin made a motion to approve **Resolution #R2017-08-18 in support of the ITEP grant application and commitment to funding**; seconded by Alderman Elston. This project entails construction a pathway along Second Street to connect the existing bike path system from Martin's landing and the pedestrian pathway over the dam to the downtown and the pedestrian path on the Route 40 bridge. Voting: Ayes – Alderman Conklin, Elston, Martin, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Wise made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System (ILEAS) and Sterling Police Department and authorize the Mayor to enter into the Agreement; seconded by Alderman Conklin. Chief Morgan stated a photo of the unit is attached. It will be stored in Sterling and we will

have fuel and maintenance expenses. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Elston made a motion to authorize the Manager to enter into an agreement for technical services and certain task agreements related to engineering of certain stormwater management projects; seconded by Alderman Conklin. Mark Shubak and Michael Williams from Strand were available for questions. Mark Shubak observed these projects were chosen for the best value and benefit. Alderman Wise confirmed that these are projects that will be completed with funding from the bonds. Shubak estimated these projects to cost approximately \$4.4 million. Attorney Zollinger stated this agreement is only for the engineering on these proposed projects. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Conklin, Elston, Martin, Wilen, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Chief Morgan asked those in attendance to get on-line and vote for Brinkley. If Brinkley is chosen, Sterling will receive a grant from Aftermath to help support the program.

Manager Shumard reported that two street sweepers have been running; manholes have been replaced; and crack sealing is being done.

Alderman Elston asked how the Hops on the Rock turned out. Main Street Director Janna Groharing reported about 250 participants.

Alderman Conklin thanked Chief Morgan for the ride-along with the Police Department.

Alderman Wilen thanked the Police Department for their quick response when she and her husband found somebody sleeping in their front yard at 4:00 am.

Vice-Mayor Martin thanked everyone for their patience and interest. With the approval of stormwater projects and the Christmas Walk, Martin reminded people to shop local. Sales tax supports the stormwater projects and shopping local supports your neighbors.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm to discuss Code Enforcement.

Superintendent Schmidt reviewed matters handled by Code Enforcement. Along with enforcing weed and garbage complaints, Code Enforcement administers all building codes. New building codes will be adopted in 2018, along with a new permit fee schedule.

Bright green door hangers are left on doors to notify residents of code violations. The door hangers get their attention and serve as their first notice. Owners have seven days to comply. After seven days, City may initiate mowing. A bill is sent to the owner and a lien is placed on the property if no payment is received.

Administrative hearings can only issue fines. A lien remains on the property, but a fine can be sent to IDROP for payment. Administrative hearings are the third Tuesdays of the month starting at 8:30 am. Code Enforcement is seeking compliance versus fine revenue. Overgrown lawns are written up when the yard is in excess of 8". Alderman Wise commented that vacant buildings are a drag on the EAVs in the community. Wise asked if the new permit fee schedule would be figured into next year's budget.

Alderman Wise reported that at his Town Hall meetings, citizens were in favor of home inspections for rentals as long as homeowners were treated the same. Alderman Conklin is worried about rentals because a home-owner lives in his own problems. Conklin is concerned about safety. Vice-Mayor Martin asked Superintendent Schmidt if an additional Enforcement Officer would expedite matters. Schmidt did not think it would. Attorney Zollinger reported that these Code Enforcement problems are not unique to Sterling. Sterling has been pro-active.

Meeting adjourned at 9:38 pm.

Marie Rombouts
City Clerk