

CITIZENS' ROAD COMMITTEE
JUNE 27, 2019

“CALL TO ORDER” The June 27, 2019, meeting of the Citizens' Road Committee was called to order at 4:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Olney City Hall, 300 S. Whittle Avenue, Olney, Illinois.

“ROLL CALL” The following committee members were present: City Treasurer Jane Guinn, Bob Guinn, Bryce Fehrenbacher, and Mayor Mark Lambird. City Manager Barker, Councilman John McLaughlin, and Street Department Supervisor Tyler Kocher were absent.

“APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM AUGUST 27, 2019” No action was taken on this item.

“PUBLIC COMMENTS/PRESENTATIONS” No one from the public was present.

“DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION: CURRENT CITY STREET PROJECTS” No discussion took place on this item.

“DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION: NEWLY INCREASED MFT FUNDS” Information had been recently released that additional MFT funds would be available for municipalities. Mrs. Guinn and Mayor Lambird estimated that the City would see an additional \$105,000 to \$115,000 worth of MFT funding per year. The City currently received about \$230,000 worth of MFT funds per year.

“DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION: CITY STREET STUDY AND ITS APPLICATION” Mr. Fehrenbacher was pleased with the street study provided by Charleston Engineering. The listed cost estimates included minor base repair and 2.5” of asphalt overlay. The total cost to transfer all oil and chip streets to this asphalt was estimated to be about \$11,600,000. Mr. Fehrenbacher wondered if the suggested base repair and overlay would withstand traffic from garbage trucks over the long term.

Mr. Fehrenbacher was aware that the City Manager was somewhat skeptical as to whether or not the total cost estimate was accurate due to the changing prices of materials and prevailing wages. No matter what, Mr. Fehrenbacher felt that any action would be better than the current situation.

Mr. Fehrenbacher wanted to present the Council at least three options for moving forward.

With the additional MFT funds, it was estimated that the City would have about \$340,000 to work with per year. Mayor Lambird had heard that the State would also have a bond increase to be divided in an unknown manner.

“DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION: FUTURE STREET PROJECT AND FUNDING”

Mr. Fehrenbacher stated that according to the street study, five City streets were rated as being the worst. He offered that if the City was receiving extra MFT funds, perhaps those five streets could be addressed first.

Mayor Lambird asked if the group had considered the idea of a sales tax referendum as a way to finance City-wide street repair. Mrs. Guinn replied that some light discussion had taken place. Mr. Guinn felt it could have been a feasible possibility before the school tax. Now that the State was imposing a host of other taxes, he was even more unsure that such a measure could pass.

Mayor Lambird had been discussing such an option with various members of the public. He was amazed at the number of people that told him they would be in favor of a sales tax increase for surface transportation, road repair, and curb and gutter repair.

Mrs. Guinn stated that a 1/4% sales tax increase could figure to about \$420,000 increase in revenue.

Mr. Fehrenbacher ran some rough calculations, and felt that Wilson Street could be converted to asphalt for about \$14,815, and Oak Street at \$13,069. Mrs. Guinn felt those numbers were very low. She wondered if those totals included equipment, manpower, and/or engineering costs that would also be necessary. Referencing the street study, Mr. Fehrenbacher was not completely sure. He would need to ask the City Engineer.

Mayor Lambird felt that traffic counts would also be important in the order that streets were repaired.

Mayor Lambird then asked what the committee's goals were, moving forward. Mr. Fehrenbacher replied that the voters for the potential sales tax referendum would be voting during an election that would be steered more towards City government. He wished to see such referendum take place. If going that direction, the deadline to submit the referendum information would be December of this year.

Mr. Fehrenbacher then attempted some recalculating on repair costs to Wilson Street. The committee was not completely clear on some of the information listed in the street study, and would need additional guidance from the City Engineer.

Mayor Lambird wanted to ask City Engineer Bridges how much repair per year a 1/4% sales tax increase would allow. He also wondered if the City should consider bonds.

Mayor Lambird wondered if any MFT fund increases would go towards paying off the Whittle Avenue project and reimbursement of STU funds. Mrs. Guinn indicated that the MFT would not go towards the STU funds that were borrowed ahead. Additionally, the City never saw STU funds as those were filtered through the State. However, Mrs. Guinn stated that some MFT funds were still being used to pay for the Whittle Avenue project.

Mr. Fehrenbacher asked if the proposed sales tax for referendum should have a sunset clause. The committee was unsure. Mr. Guinn pointed out that current MFT funds were not enough to maintain what streets the City currently had. He did not see that improving in the future. Mayor Lambird added that by the time all City streets were converted to asphalt, it would be time to start all over with repair. He added that maintenance was important, and that the City should have access to the appropriate equipment in order to properly maintain its streets.

Mayor Lambird then suggested that communities that had nice roads could be invited to drive around Olney and offer suggestions as to what the City was not doing properly in order to improve.

Mayor Lambird requested that Mrs. Guinn research what bond options were available. Mr. Bridges should then be consulted as to what could be done with increases in funds.

Mr. Fehrenbacher asked what the City currently had for debt. Mrs. Guinn replied that the only non-EPA loan outstanding was for the fire truck. The fire truck loan was through the Illinois Finance Authority with no interest.

Mr. Fehrenbacher would ask Mr. Bridges if the numbers in the street study included anything other than material costs.

“OPEN DISCUSSION” There was no additional discussion.

“ADJOURN” The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Jane Guinn
City Treasurer/Acting Secretary