

CITY OF OLNEY  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
JANUARY 25, 2021

AGENDA #1 “CALL TO ORDER” The January 25, 2021, meeting of the Olney City Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Olney City Hall located at 300 S. Whittle Avenue, Olney, Illinois, with Mayor Mark Lambird presiding.

AGENDA #2 “PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG-PRAYER” Council members and visitors joined in the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Mayor Lambird led the group in prayer.

AGENDA #3 “ROLL CALL” The following Council members were physically present: Mark Lambird, John McLaughlin, Belinda Henton, Morgan Fehrenbacher, and Greg Eyer. Also physically present were City Manager Allen Barker, City Treasurer Jane Guinn, City Clerk Kelsie Sterchi, and City Engineer Mike Bridges. City Attorney Bart Zuber was absent. For the record, several State of Illinois Executive Orders allowed for attendance to take place via video, audio, and/or telephonic means as the COVID-19 crisis continues. No other City officials were present via video, audio, and/or telephonic means this evening.

AGENDA #4 “PRESENTATION OF CONSENT AGENDA”

4-A “Approve Minutes of Council Meetings on January 11, 2021, and January 19, 2021”

4-B “Approve and Authorize Payment of Accounts Payable January 26, 2021” Pooled Cash \$66,237.68, Manual Pooled Cash \$4,504.79, Utility Refunds \$643.85, Fire Pension \$264.00, MFT \$1,680.25, Unemployment \$568.74, Tourism \$4.00

4-C “Application for Permit to Sell in City Park – Code Blue Plumbing Code Compliance Company”

4-D “Ordinance: Authorize Sale of Scrap Metal from the Street Department” **Ordinance 2021-01**

AGENDA #5 “REMOVAL OF ITEMS FROM CONSENT AGENDA” No items were requested for removal from the consent agenda.

AGENDA #6 “CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA” Councilwoman Fehrenbacher moved to approve the items on the consent agenda, seconded by Councilman Eyer. Councilmen McLaughlin, Eyer, Councilwomen Fehrenbacher, Henton, and Mayor Lambird voted yes. There were no opposing votes. The motion carried.

AGENDA #7 “CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA” No consideration was necessary since no items were removed from the consent agenda.

AGENDA #8 “PRESENTATION OF ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, ETC.”

8-A “Resolution: Amend Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget for the City Park Drainage Project” The Council was provided with a proposed resolution that would amend the 2020-2021 budget for the City Park Drainage Project.

Mrs. Guinn told the Council that Phase 1 of the City Park Drainage Project had been completed, and now Phase 2 was finished. A budget amendment would be needed to pay for and close out Phase 2. Enough funds remained in the Street Department's Maintenance of City Roads line item to cover this cost.

Councilman McLaughlin moved to approve 2021-R-08, seconded by Councilwoman Fehrenbacher. Councilwomen Fehrenbacher, Henton, Councilmen McLaughlin, Eyer, and Mayor Lambird voted yes. There were no opposing votes. The motion carried.

8-B "Discussion/Possible Action: Authorize Purchase of Budgeted Police Vehicle with In-Car Camera and Computer" Mr. Barker reminded the Council that during the budget work session last Tuesday evening, a brief discussion took place on the possibility of going ahead with the purchase of a new squad vehicle with in-car camera and computer this fiscal year. These items were included in the current budget. Sedan squads were being phased out by dealerships as squads were now being transferred to SUV models.

Since that time, Mr. Barker had spoken with the Police Chief and the Deputy Police Chief. Both agreed it would be best not to go forward with the purchases this fiscal year and could instead be purchased next fiscal year. Additionally, Mr. Barker stated that remaining sedan squads were 2019 models. He had concern with a new vehicle being purchased already two years old in case of a loss and how much the insurance company would actually cover at that time.

Councilman McLaughlin asked if there was a difference between purchasing the squad now versus in the next fiscal year. Mr. Barker replied that there was no real difference other than the fact that an SUV model would be approximately \$8,000.00 more than what had been budgeted for this fiscal year.

Councilmen McLaughlin and Eyer felt that there was no need to wait, and that a future budget amendment for the purchase would be acceptable.

Councilman McLaughlin moved to authorize the purchase of an SUV squad with in-car camera and computer for the Police Department, and to amend the budget in the future if needed, seconded by Councilman Eyer.

Councilwoman Fehrenbacher asked if the purchase of a squad would be included in the next year's budget. Mr. Barker replied that the next budget would not include two squads and would only include one.

Councilwomen Henton, Fehrenbacher, Councilmen McLaughlin, Eyer and Mayor Lambird voted yes. There were no opposing votes. The motion carried.

8-C "Discussion/Possible Action: Authorization to Apply for a FEMA Grant for a Ladder Truck" The Council was provided with a memo from Interim Fire Chief Rusty Holmes.

Interim Chief Holmes was hoping to write for a FEMA grant for a 100-foot ladder truck with either a platform or a straight stick ladder. There were many buildings in the first-out response area that would be well served by such a truck. The proposed truck would be more utilized than the current, 23-year old snorkel truck. The proposed truck would also have a water tank and pump. The current snorkel truck did not have these features an required and additional pump truck to accompany it when needed.

If awarded the full amount, the grant could be up to \$1,000,00.00, but could also be less than that amount. The total cost of the new truck would likely be more than \$1,000,000.00 and would mean that the City would also need to supply funds for the purchase. In the worst case scenario, an additional \$520,000.00 may be needed or as little as \$70,000.00.

Councilwoman Fehrenbacher asked where the additional funds would be found within the City. Mrs. Guinn replied that no such funds were available in the budget, but there were enough in reserves to cover the cost. Another option would also be to apply for a loan.

Councilman McLaughlin recalled that two trucks had been purchased within the past 8 years. Interim Chief Holmes confirmed. The 1998 snorkel was purchased used in 2013 for about \$25,000.00. A pumper was also purchased in 2017 on an interest-free loan. The County had also paid for half of that cost.

Councilman McLaughlin wondered if the City could decide not to move forward with a truck purchase after notice of grant award. Interim Chief Holmes believed it would be possible. Councilman Eyer felt that would make the City almost ineligible to be granted again in the future if the City declined.

Councilman Eyer asked if the current snorkel truck could be retrofitted for a tank and pump. Interim Chief Holmes did not believe that the cost on retrofitting would make sense on a truck of that age.

Mr. Barker asked how the proposed truck might improve the Department's ISO rating. Interim Chief Holmes did not believe that it would increase the rating enough to go from a four to a three, but additional points would be given toward an improved ISO rating.

Councilwoman Fehrenbacher wondered how many more years remained before an additional pumper truck would need to be purchased. Interim Chief Holmes felt that such a purchase could be pushed out another five years as long as there were no catastrophic failures.

Councilman McLaughlin stated that the opportunity to receive a \$1,000,000.00 grant was almost too good to pass up. Even so, if the grant was applied for, he cautioned that the City would need to seriously think about where another \$500,000.00 could be found.

Interim Chief Holmes told the Council that he did believe that the City's chances of being granted were quite slim, but in case the City was granted, he wanted the Council to be fully aware that additional funds would still be needed. He hoped to get the Council's decision this evening as the grant requests would need to be fully submitted by February 12, 2021.

Councilman Eyer asked if this particular FEMA grant was available each year. Interim Chief Holmes believed so, although there may have been some years skipped for some sort of reason.

Mayor Lambird asked how many surrounding areas had a snorkel or ladder truck that could help if mutual aid was needed. Interim Chief Holmes believed that Mt. Carmel, Lawrenceville, Vincennes, and Effingham had such trucks.

The Mayor then asked if there were any other areas that the City assisted with its current snorkel. Interim Chief Holmes replied that Olney typically assisted Newton with that particular truck.

Although large purchases were not exactly desired, Councilman Eyer pointed out that purchasing what was needed now may be more beneficial in case the City was in a worse financial position down the road. Councilman McLaughlin agreed and added that zero-interest loans and local grants could also be possible. Councilwoman Fehrenbacher did not see the push in applying for the grant this year if it was available every year.

Councilman McLaughlin moved to authorize the Fire Department to apply for a FEMA grant for a ladder truck, seconded by Councilman Eyer. Councilmen McLaughlin, Eyer, Mayor Lambird, and Councilwoman Henton voted yes. Councilwoman Fehrenbacher voted no. The motion carried.

#### AGENDA #9 “REPORTS FROM ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS”

9-A “Status Report-City Manager” Mr. Barker had nothing additional to report.

9-B “RCDC Report” RCDC Executive Director Lauren McClain stated that her office had been quite busy recently.

9-C “Chamber of Commerce Report” Councilwoman Fehrenbacher reported that the Chamber would have much to discuss at its March meeting when several decisions would be made on the future of events for this year.

9-D “Parks & Recreation Board Report” There was no report.

9-E “Tourism Board Report” Councilwoman Henton told the Council that ILLINOISouth visitors guides would be set to deliver on March 23, 2021. A quantity of 70,000 guides would be distributed. The ILLINOISouth Tourism Bureau would also start printing the Tourism Times guides again. These guides were suspended when COVID-19 hit last year.

Councilwoman Henton then reported that the ILLINOISouth social media presence was ever-increasing and providing great exposure. Lastly, a \$145,000.00 CARES grant had been received. This grant was a great help with financing since tourism had declined.

AGENDA #10 “PUBLIC COMMENTS/PRESENTATIONS” No one from the public wished to speak.

Councilman McLaughlin told the Council that he had read an article in The Gazette that said the Richland County Board was wanting to ask the City for more money for Animal Control. He wondered if anyone from the County had reached out about that topic. Mr. Barker and the Mayor indicated that they had not heard anything from the County.

Councilman McLaughlin said that he had strong feelings about that topic and would rather say them to the County when the time approached.

AGENDA #11 “CLOSED SESSION: SALE OR LEASE PRICE OF REAL PROPERTY; ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY; APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, AND PERFORMANCE OF SPECIFIC EMPLOYEES” Councilman McLaughlin moved to adjourn to closed session to discuss sale or lease price of real property; acquisition of real property; appointment, employment, compensation, and performance of specific employees, seconded by Councilwoman Fehrenbacher. A majority affirmative voice vote was received.

The meeting adjourned to closed session at 7:31 p.m.

AGENDA #12 “RECONVENE OPEN SESSION” Councilwoman Henton moved to enter back into open session, seconded by Councilman Eyer. A majority affirmative voice vote was received. Open session resumed at 7:53 p.m.

Councilwoman Henton asked about use of the Fire Department’s drone. Her son was a drone instructor and had been called out on a need because the Fire Department did not want the liability. She felt that the City spent too much money on the drone for it to go unused.

Mayor Lambird recalled that the drone was originally proposed to be used for several purposes.

Councilman McLaughlin wondered why the drone would not be used. Councilwoman Henton was aware that the previous Fire Chief and one other firefighter were the only ones trained and certified to use the drone.

Councilman McLaughlin wished to see officers in the Police Department also trained on use of the drone. He recalled it was desired to be used on search and rescue calls. Councilwoman Henton agreed and added that the Sheriff’s Department could also benefit from use of the drone.

Mayor Lambird asked if training and certification could be completed through OCC. Councilwoman Henton confirmed.

Councilman McLaughlin recalled that the drone was purchased with public safety funds. Because of this, he felt the drone should not only be able to be used by the Fire Department. Mayor Lambird agreed and felt that the drone should be used as much as possible.

Mr. Barker told the Council that his discussions with the Fire Department had recently included interest in certifying two individuals from the Police Department, two individuals from the Fire Department, and two individuals from the Sheriff's Department.

Mayor Lambird then expressed his wish to have access to Knox boxes be given to the Police Department along with the Fire Department. He felt there was no reason that the Police Department should not be trusted to use the Knox boxes in case of emergency.

AGENDA #13 "ADJOURN" With no further business to discuss, Councilman McLaughlin moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilwoman Fehrenbacher.

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Kelsie J. Sterchi  
City Clerk

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