

CITY OF OLNEY
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 21, 2016

AGENDA #1 “CALL TO ORDER” The January 21, 2016 special meeting of the Olney City Council was called to order at 6:32 p.m. in the Fire Station Training Room located at 501 N. Walnut Street, Olney, Illinois, with Mayor Ray Vaughn presiding.

AGENDA #2 “ROLL CALL” The following Council members were present: Les Harrison, Belinda Henton, Bob Ferguson and Ray Vaughn. John McLaughlin was absent. Also present were City Manager Allen Barker, City Clerk Kelsie Sterchi, City Treasurer Chuck Sanders, Assistant City Treasurer Jane Guinn, Code Enforcement Officer Mike Mitchell, Fire Chief Rusty Holmes, Police Chief Kevin Paddock, Park/Water Plant Supervisor Frank Bradley, Street/Water Distribution Supervisor Tom Umfleet, and Sewer Plant Acting Supervisor Jeff Lathrop.

AGENDA #3 “PUBLIC COMMENTS/PRESENTATIONS” No one from the public was present.

AGENDA #4 “WORK SESSION: PRIORITIZE PROJECTS FOR COMING YEAR” Prior to the meeting, department heads and Council members submitted goals, equipment and personnel needs to the City Manager. The items submitted were categorized on handout sheets and distributed to everyone in attendance. Also, everyone was given the five-year capital improvement plans for all departments and a vehicle inventory update.

All department heads and Council members were allowed to discuss and answer questions about their suggested goals, equipment and personnel needs. Mayor Vaughn told the group that the goal was for the department head to inform the Council of their needs so they can better understand the reasoning behind the requests.

Fire Chief Rusty Holmes started the session by informing the group that the paid-on-call firefighters had not received a pay raise in about five to eight years. Certified on-call firefighters currently receive \$9.00 per hour. Non-certified on-call firefighters receive \$8.25 per hour. The Chief hoped to raise the pay for the certified on-call firefighters to \$10.25 per hour and uncertified on-call firefighters to \$9.25 per hour.

On-call firefighters, when called out, are paid a minimum of one hour whether they work for one minute or 60 minutes. They are also paid for any necessary trainings. There are currently 25 paid on-call firefighters with approximately three of those uncertified.

Councilman Ferguson asked what other local fire departments paid their on-call firefighters. Chief Holmes replied that he was unsure. Some departments paid their on-call firefighters, and some had no available finances to pay.

Mayor Vaughn then asked how much, on average, a certified on-call firefighter was paid per year. The Chief estimated, dependent on volume, between \$1,000.00 and \$3,000.00 per year.

Chief Holmes also wished to see the grassy area north of the Fire Station transitioned into a permanent parking area. The Fire Station was host to various events through the year such as trainings and pancake breakfasts, and the extra parking would be well used.

The Chief, as in years past, also requested a ventilation hood for the kitchen to help meet regulations.

Chief Holmes also expressed that much of the fire equipment was outdated and aged over 20 years. There are many vehicles on the roadways now that their current equipment would not be able to cut into for rescue. Self-contained breathing apparatus cylinders are necessary for them to fight fires. The cylinders go bad every 15 years. The Chief did note that the equipment replacement programs had been extremely helpful in catching up on some necessary equipment.

The Fire Department is currently in possession of two thermal imaging cameras. One is an old model that needs replaced. These help to search rooms and save lives faster. The Indian backpacks are over 15 years old and need replaced. These help with fires in the woods or along fields. They also help to eliminate hot spots.

The RAD 57 request would be to help identify carbon monoxide in the blood of civilians or firefighters.

For the engine replacement request, Chief Holmes told the Council that it was time to replace their truck that had an age of 31 years. This truck is second out on rescue and third out on fire.

Mayor Vaughn asked what the Chief's top priority was on his list of requests. The Chief replied that the self-contained breathing apparatus cylinders were simply a necessity, but that the rescue equipment ran a close second on need.

Councilman Harrison asked if any of the Fire Department's requests would be carry overs from anything currently listed in the 2015/2016 budget. City Manager Barker replied that nothing on the Fire Department's list would be a carry over.

Councilman Ferguson was curious if any grants were available for any of the requests. Chief Holmes indicated that the department applies for all grants for which they are eligible.

Mayor Vaughn requested that information be gathered on what other departments pay their on-call firefighters. It was his desire to pay a fair rate.

Police Chief Paddock told of his department needing a new squad car. The 2005 Impala would then be taken out of service, and the new car should be a Ford Taurus Interceptor. With

the new car, a new in-car camera would be necessary, along with a new in-car computer. Both pieces of equipment are outdated and starting to go bad. Additionally, the department's administrative assistant needed a new desk unit. Her current unit has broken and is at least 40 years old.

Councilman Ferguson again asked if any grants were available to help with the needs. The Chief replied that there was nothing available to help.

The Chief went on to describe his wish to have some work completed at the Police Range building that would include placement of a concrete pad, rock at the entry and overhead doors, dirt work and electricity. He noted that the Gun Club was interested in helping to provide electricity.

Maintenance at the Police Department was also needed. The bathroom, break room and Detective's office have never been painted, and new flooring is needed in the break room. Additionally, their flag pole has a large, rusted hole in it that may need patched or totally replaced.

The outdoor hand rail is rusting and falling apart, becoming more of an eye sore. Also, the fencing between the department and the Post Office needs to be removed, the tree between the buildings also needs removed, and then new fencing could be placed. The Chief did not feel that any of the Police Department maintenance requests would total much.

Park Department Supervisor Frank Bradley described his need of a new backhoe. He had researched various brands of backhoe, and only the Kubota was of the size and weight needed. He had only found one used Kubota for sale, and that was in Dallas, Texas, so most likely a new one would need to be purchased. The current backhoe is a 1982 Case that is simply wore out.

Mr. Bradley also requested adding a full-time employee to the Park Department. Currently, Mr. Bradley has three full-timers and himself in the department. During the summer, the group is ran especially tight as one full-timer is maintaining Musgrove Park, one is maintaining the cemeteries, and the other, along with Mr. Bradley, rotate through the other locations as needed. Mr. Bradley felt that an employee with carpentry experience would be desired. He noted that part-time help was great in helping with mowing, but other department-necessary skills were hard to come by.

Councilman Ferguson asked what the department worked on during the winter. Mr. Bradley replied that the Christmas Light Display was the largest project, and starts to be placed in October and finishes the week before Thanksgiving. After the display ends, it takes about three weeks to tear down the display. Past that, general maintenance is performed along with any other special projects, such as the current renovation of the Community Building.

Mr. Bradley and the Mayor noted that in 2002, there were seven full-time employees in the department, and employment had dwindled over the years with retirement and not replacing

the staff. Mr. Bradley felt strongly that an extra full-time employee was necessary. The Mayor was concerned with the other obligations that would come along with a full-time employment, other than salary. He noted that the City pays approximately \$25,000.00 per year on a full-time employee for health insurance and pension payments. He would be more interested in hiring additional part-time help, but paying them a higher hourly wage. Part-time employees can work up to 1,000 hours per year.

Mr. Bradley went on to tell how roads would soon be needed at the Memorial Gardens cemetery area. Roads are currently platted. The recent road additions at Maple Dale totaled about \$20,000.00. The Memorial Gardens project would require more roadway and was expected to cost around \$25,000.00.

The City Park office doors and windows were in poor shape. The door is broken with a plywood cover as a temporary fix. The overhead door is also very old, and the windows are in need of replacement.

Mr. Bradley went on to state that bathrooms at Musgrove Park are a must. He suggested that perhaps the Together We Play fundraising efforts could help with the project.

The lockers at the Musgrove Aquatic Center are rarely used. The Parks & Recreation Board had suggested replacement of the lockers, but Mr. Bradley felt that the lockers could be removed without replacement, or only a few of the better lockers could be kept.

Additional parking at Musgrove Park was also of high priority to Mr. Bradley, especially by the soccer field and Senior League diamond. Councilwoman Henton asked if a handicapped parking area was part of the Together We Play plan. It was determined that the Together We Play project did not have funds for parking.

Mr. Bradley went on to explain that the parking lot at the East Fork Lake boat launch had turned to "mush" this year due to the wet conditions and heavy trash trucks. City Engineer Charleston had estimated \$210,000.00 would be needed for repair. The roadway going into Rotary Park also needed repair at an estimate of \$25,000.00. Mr. Bradley felt that removing the dumpster by the Rotary Park shelter would be helpful with the trash truck issues. From there, a larger dumpster could be placed in the boat launch parking lot.

Mr. Barker asked if the project could be completed with City equipment. Mr. Bradley and Street Department Supervisor Tom Umfleet believed so.

Mayor Vaughn mentioned that Councilman McLaughlin wished to see some improvement to the restrooms at Rotary Park. Mr. Bradley replied that the restrooms needed new doors and could also use some fresh paint and possible fixture replacement.

The Mayor asked Mr. Bradley what his top project priority would be. Mr. Bradley stated that the Musgrove Park restrooms and parking were of the highest importance. Mayor Vaughn

then asked how long the road project at Memorial Gardens could be delayed. Mr. Bradley felt it could only be delayed a couple of years.

Mr. Bradley is also the supervisor of the Water Plant. The Water Plant currently has a 16 foot jon boat that is used to apply copper sulfate to the lakes for treatment. The copper sulfate has eaten holes in the boat and plug tube so the boat is no longer waterproof. The new boat would also include a liner for protection against the chemical. Fire Chief Holmes pointed out that the jon boat was also their first out for a water rescue.

The plant itself has a rotten window that needs replaced. Mayor Vaughn recalled past conversation about a potential new Water Plant. Mr. Bradley reported that the EPA does recommend a new plant, and that the Council should keep the possibility of a new plant in the back of their minds because at some point, the EPA's suggestion may become mandatory.

Street Department Supervisor Tom Umfleet noted a need for a new dump truck. This truck and its cost could be shared with Water Distribution. The truck purchase was listed in the 2015/2016 budget so if it is purchased, the request will not appear for the 2016/2017 budget.

The ditch and right-of-way mower unit is not in working order and needs replacement. Additionally, a paint striper was included in the 2015/2016 budget, but the unforeseen need for a concrete saw has come about. Mr. Umfleet suggested putting the striper in the 2016/2017 budget and purchasing the concrete saw this fiscal year.

Mr. Umfleet is also the Water Distribution Department Supervisor. Mr. Umfleet told the Council that there is a storm sewer on Walnut Street that is in bad shape. The storm sewer repair would go hand-in-hand with the upcoming W. Main water main replacement. Mr. Umfleet and City Engineer Charleston were unsure what the project would cost. The problematic storm sewer is over 100 years old, is collapsing, and is the main drainage for a third of the town.

Mr. Umfleet also pointed out that repair is needed for the island at the intersection of Main Street and Highway 50. Mr. Umfleet would not recommend removing the island, but noted that in another five to eight years, Main Street will need re-constructed. The repair to the island could be a part of the Main Street project. Councilman Ferguson felt that money should be set back each year for the Main Street project. Mayor Vaughn requested that Mr. Barker research what the Main Street project would cost the City.

The Mayor then asked if the painting of the Washington Street water tower would also include any maintenance. Mr. Umfleet replied that the painting amount did not include maintenance, but that nothing major needed replaced on the tower.

Acting Sewer Plant Supervisor Jeff Lathrop told of how the department's tank truck is a 1981 model and has been patched numerous times. The vehicle needed replaced. The department also needed a new camera for videoing sewer lines.

A sludge pump was budgeted for the 2015/2016 year. If purchased, the department would not need a sludge pump in the next fiscal year.

The Sewer Plant had been using Borgic Custom Hauling in recent years to haul sludge and apply it to a City field. The City pays approximately \$35,000.00 each year for this service. The City could perform the work, but would need the correct equipment which would cost \$35,000.000 for a used tank/applicator and \$90,000.00 for a used tractor. Additionally, if the Sewer Plant performed the sludge hauling, the sludge could be applied to more than one field.

A disinfect effluent channel would also be needed in the near future. The plant did not have one, but it would soon be required. Mr. Lathrop estimated needing \$300,000.00 for the channel, based off of Flora's numbers.

The plant has screening grinders that run all day, every day. The plant has two of these pumps that are alternated each month. One of the pumps is currently not working.

A filter wet well pump will also be needed. The plant has five and this pump replacement would be the last of the five to be replaced.

Mr. Lathrop's last project for the upcoming year would be the Hall Street sewer extension. The pipe has already been purchased. The only cost moving forward would be in labor.

City Treasurer Sanders had no proposed capital expenditures for 2016/2017. Mr. Sanders wished to continue training on the different uses of INCODE and to continue additional training as the City Treasurer as it becomes available.

Mr. Sanders also noted that Mrs. Guinn had completed general training, and was moving on to train with Cindy Harlan on payroll. Mrs. Guinn would soon be training with the Utility Billing Clerk on functions at the front window.

Mr. Sanders noticed that someone had expressed interest in implementing the State Comptroller's debt collection program. Mr. Sanders told the Council that he had attended a seminar on the program in Springfield a few years ago. At the time, the program was cumbersome to implement and difficult to maintain. Mr. Sanders had kept tab on progress of the program and felt that it had greatly improved. Implementation of the program was a goal of his for the 2015/2016 year. Councilwoman Henton added that the Richland County Housing Authority was using the program with great success. Mr. Sanders mentioned agreed, but noted that the City would not have the same amount of debts to collect.

Code Enforcement Officer Mike Mitchell was still very interested in implementing a rental inspection program. He felt that a part-time employee would be sufficient in aiding with the program at a rate of \$15.00 per hour. He would need someone with construction knowledge. In addition, another vehicle would be needed, as would a computer.

Mayor Vaughn was fully in support of such a program. He would soon have discussion with the Council and landlords on their opinions.

Mr. Mitchell would be continuing to focus on demolition of structures and continuing education. He would also like to see implementation of a program that would require permitting of the remodeling of structures that would involve changes in electrical, mechanical or plumbing.

Mayor Vaughn asked if Mr. Mitchell saw an improvement on enforcement with a full-time City Attorney. Mr. Mitchell replied that for the most part, he had. On issues that are turned over to the attorney, he is not always up-to-date on the status from that point.

City Clerk Sterchi began by stating her need for a City Clerk printer. Hers was past due on replacement, and she was experiencing problems with the printer. She also wished to continue her training at the Municipal Clerks of Illinois Institute.

The Utility Billing Clerk currently uses a dot matrix printer for utility billing. The printer and its technology are less than desirable. Many other communities, and the local gas utility, used a workhorse desktop printer for their billing. Mrs. Sterchi proposed removing a new dot matrix printer from the five-year capital plan and instead purchasing a desktop printer that can also function for utility billing.

Mrs. Sterchi also hoped to implement the ability to accept credit cards as payment at City Hall. Preliminary research had been done on costs and programming needed. The information had been given to the Treasurer and the City Manager for consideration in hopes to move forward.

Mrs. Sterchi also wished to improve the function and appearance of City Hall.

In regard to Tourism, Mrs. Sterchi wished to use more of the available Tourism funds in the future. The White Squirrel Brochure would need a re-print for distribution and also some work on the design and layout. Promotional material for trade shows had been recommended by Tourism Board Member and Councilwoman Belinda Henton in the prior year, and the City Clerk wished to see such purchases made. A new white squirrel costume for events had also been discussed. She and the Councilwoman were in the process of receiving quotes and designs.

During the most recent squirrel count, Dr. Stencel recommended two pilot programs to help aid the white squirrel population. Unless steps were taken, Dr. Stencel predicted that Olney would have no white squirrels by 2034. The programs suggested were a nutrition supplement program and a grey squirrel capture and release program. Volunteers and funds would be needed to implement the programs.

An Advisory Tourism Committee was desired by Councilwoman Henton, as well as a revamp of the Tourism Grant application process.

Mrs. Sterchi would also like to see great promotion and advertising for the 175th anniversary and to write more articles for S.E. Illinois Family Living.

City Manager Barker commented on some upgrades needed for City Hall on both the inside and outside. An important upgrade he wished to see was the added security measures.

Mr. Barker also noted that the supervisors were all asking for reasonable requests and nothing outlandish. He would like to map out a path for completion of the requests. Mr. Barker also had a list of approximately 20 projects that had been lingering for a few years that he would push for completion.

Mayor Vaughn agreed with Mr. Barker's observation of the requests being of just cause. The issue for the Mayor was that the City did not have enough money to meet all of the needs. He felt the City needed to find a way to buckle down and raise revenue in other ways than property tax or fee increases. He felt more creative ideas were needed. Councilman Ferguson echoed that grants could be of significant help.

Mayor Vaughn added that another of Councilman McLaughlin's concerns was with the appearance of the fence along the City Park off of Highway 130.

Councilwoman Henton also added that there is a grant available for \$100,000.00 that could go towards a dog park. In order to qualify, the City would need to dedicate a piece of land specifically for the dog park. The Councilwoman recommended the area south of Miller's Grove. The area has accessible parking and a great sidewalk. From there, fencing and water would be the only necessities.

AGENDA #5 "ADJOURN"

Mayor Vaughn moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Harrison. A majority affirmative voice vote was received.

The special meeting of City Council adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Kelsie J. Sterchi
City Clerk