

Minutes of the Public Works and Public Utilities Committee for Monday, January 7, 2013.

The meeting was called to order by Alderman Bormann at 7:00 p.m. Present were Mayor Grenke, Aldermen Sanders, Wilkins, and Magley. Also attending were Lynn Behrns, Mike Forsee, Phil Hoffman, Mark Mustain, Art Dollens, Ron Bellamy, and James Smith.

Those present participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Comments for Citizens

Art Dollens of 230 S. Rollins spoke on his complaints about the Centralia public schools and their administration. He said the City was complicit by allowing its police officers to keep him from school meetings. He said that school officials kept changing rules on how he could request permission to attend. Dollens displayed a DVD, which he said has many records concerning Title II violations by the school district. Many of his complaints are of long standing, dating to the mid-1990s. Sanders asked Bellamy how he was able to bar Dollens from a school meeting. Bellamy said that state law gave any chairman of a governmental body the power to direct police to exclude or expel disruptive persons. The Police Department in this case was enforcing a school request because of a history of peace disturbance and disruption. Dollens said that Bellamy misrepresented the situation. He feels school engages in mis-accounting and misusing of money, particularly money from donations and other outside sources. Wilkins asked Bellamy to provide the aldermen with the text of state law for discussion at their next meeting. Dollens then left.

Water and Sewer Department

Committee reviewed the activity report and future work schedule for the Water and Sewer Department. Board members had no comments or questions.

Behrns reported that he and Forsee had a meeting with an engineer scheduled for Tuesday to negotiate contract price and scope of work for preparation of the NPDES permit application renewing the City's ability to run the sewer treatment operation. Behrns has penciled in \$10,000 for the task in the draft budget, but he believes the contract will be for much less. He expects to have a contract and ordinance for Board approval at the regular Board meeting on the 21st.

Streets and Sanitation

Committee reviewed the activity report and future work schedule for the Street and Sanitation Departments.

Hoffman reported that one of the dump trucks slid into a ditch at a narrow intersection. The old cinder spinner was hung-up and damaged. It will have to be replaced. The truck went to Meyers, the nearest International service center, where they are checking for more significant damage. So far there are some small repairs, but no major problems. Meyers is waiting for parts. The truck and plow could be put into service immediately if necessary for a big snow event.

Forsee said that the new water department pickup had also received accidental damage while at the electric department shop. The truck was there for installation of a radio. The front driver's door was destroyed when an electric bucket truck hit it while backing in. Backing mirrors on the electric truck fogged over when the tuck entered warm air, and the driver did not see that the pickup truck door was ajar and extending into beyond a lane stripe. The repairs to the pickup were already complete.

Hoffman noted a large volume of residential trash collected during the holidays.

Electric Department

Committee reviewed the activity report and future work schedule for the Electric Department. Members had no comments or questions.

Behrns asked for direction on the subject of a possible GIS contract. Bormann asked Sanders what he would recommend. Sanders said that he was still skeptical of the underlying need for such a GIS program. He didn't want to spend public money unnecessarily. However, he said that, of the options presented, he thought that of Midland GIS was better for the City. Forsee repeated the observation that, with almost three years of work on videoing sewer mains, less than half the system has been finished. The utility departments have too many other demands on their time to accomplish the initial field work. Forsee and Bormann agreed that the City needs the highest accuracy for both valves and elevation measurements of the sewer manholes. Having the system may save some expense in future engineering design. Bormann said that the Joplin firm was principally acting as a broker, and that Midland represented a single party to be responsible for the product. Magley asked if we would do the upkeep. He was told yes, that staff would eventually have to buy equipment and train to assume responsibility for the system. This is much less demanding a task than initial field work. For a least the first year or two, the City could negotiate some sort of addendum to have Midland come in once a year or so and record system changes. The contract contains a yearly charge for software upkeep, but we save by not having to buy updates on our own. Angell wanted to examine the purchase of equipment in a near future budget. Eventually, the aldermen reached a consensus. Angell moved that Behrns should prepare a contract with Midland and an ordinance of approval by the next Board meeting. Magley seconded the motion. On roll call vote, all members present voted in favor and the motion passed.

Other

Behrns made an annual report on the City's "Red Flag Rule". He noted that there has been no turnover in office personnel and no new third-party vendor contracts that touch on the personal information of City customers. Behrns and the office staff have reviewed the policy and the City's experience for the past year. No instances of any breach or attempted breach of protected customer information has been detected. Staff found no reason for any change to present practices. The current policy appears sufficient and will be reviewed again in a year's time.

Budget Consideration

Behrns presented draft summaries of the budgets for the public utility funds for Fiscal Year 2013-4. The capital and special projects expenditures are much the same as those suggested last month. Behrns reports that all the funds should achieve reserve balances without a need for any utility rate increases. Behrns was cautious about estimating water and sewer revenue. He believes that a major customer may take measures to reduce its water consumption. It seems unlikely that sewer sliplining will occur before the end of March, so funds previously budgeted are being rolled over for a larger project in 2013. Behrns is still working on the General Fund budget, and a draft of public works expenditures will wait until the General Government/Public Safety Committee meeting.

The aldermen agreed to change the meeting time for the General Government Committee to 7:00 pm on Tuesday, so that the aldermen can attend a meeting of the School Board.

Behrns reported on an ADA Grievance received from the Advocacy Coalition. He acknowledged that he had initial difficulty understanding the nature of the complaint. The Coalition wants to have a clear

path from the sidewalk ramp exiting the center of the south side of the City Square. This ramp was there to help provide access during Anchor Festival and similar events—when the street was shut to car traffic. In normal times, there are parking spaces at the end of the ramp. Behrns emailed for a clarification, but none has been forthcoming. Therefore, he has asked Hoffman to paint out the parking spaces when there is dry, warmer weather. He does not intend to create any sort of crosswalk in mid-block. To date, the Coalition has not requested a similar action on the east side of the square. The public works crew should be working on adding sidewalks on the south and east, which would do more to promote accessibility.

As May Arise

The agenda packet contained material and first draft of an ordinance that would implement an increase in the fees for building plan review and permitting. They would then match those which Boone County adopted, effective January 1. Most of the aldermen felt that the City did not want to absorb the expense of paying for the differential between the old and new rates. Aldermen will examine the material and give Behrns direction at the General Government meeting. They will also review whether to extend the fees to churches, government buildings and garage additions, which have previously been exempted by the City (but not by the County).

Behrns reported that the State Department of Economic Development has announced that Centralia's EEZ application has been approved. Behrns has already told a prospective user that they may now try to use the program.

Mayor Grenke told Magley that he is still waiting for City Attorney Beck to finish the polished text of his findings concerning the hearing on the Narraganset Building and direction for Clifford de la Rosa.

The Committee adjourned at about 8:58 p.m.