

Corrected 12/20/11**Minutes of the General Government and Public Safety Committee meeting of Monday, December 12, 2011.**

The meeting was called to order by Alderman Bormann at 7:00 p.m. Present were Mayor Grenke, Aldermen Orsini, Wilkins, Sanders, and Angell. Also attending were Lynn Behrns, Police Sergeant Bob Bias, Fire Chief Denny Rusch, Heather Lockett, Darryl Spauldin, Don Bagley, Don Bobbitt, and James Smith.

Those present participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Comments from Citizens

Orsini read from a letter sent to her by Evelyn Robertson. Robertson voice a concern about tree leaves which were left untended by her neighbors. The leaves sometimes ended up blocking the inlet grates of the stormsewers near her. She asked for the City to take additional efforts to insure that the leaves are raked and properly disposed of. She suggested that more be written in the City's news letter concerning the topic.

Behrns said he will try to do so. Bobbitt of 610 Ivy suggested that Robertson also make personal visits to neighbors she felt were not doing their share.

Economic Development

Ginny Zoellers was not present, but had submitted a written report on recent Chamber of Commerce and economic development activities.

Mayor Grenke presented an email from a local businessman, who suggested that the lighted-tractor parade would be enhanced if the City were to turn off downtown street lights during the event. Committee discussed this in some detail. Several aldermen were concerned that large numbers of small children might not mix well in the dark with moving equipment and candy throwers. One alderman noted that the extra contrast would not aid in picture taking. Another said that Disneyland turned off much lighting before it's evening parade event. For this year, the Board thought the lights should remain on. They suggested that next year families might be given advanced notice to bring flashlights. For now, perhaps the newspaper can direct watchers to areas on Railroad Street and Sneed Street where there are far fewer street lights or storefronts.

The next Board meeting for CREDI is scheduled for Dec. 27, but may be rescheduled. A notice will be emailed if there is a change or cancellation.

Park Department

Minutes of the previous meeting of the Park Board have been distributed. There will be no December meeting.

Cemetery Advisory Committee

There was no report.

Tree Board

Behrns noted receipt of a progress update prepared by Tree Board Chairman Kottwitz. The report listed recent accomplishments and prospective efforts, including renewed recognition as a Tree City. At the last minute, Kottwitz had to work late and sent his regrets about not being able to attend.

Library Board

No formal report was made, but minutes and a future agenda were presented in the Committee packet. Behrns will attend that meeting because of the possibility of a new bond issue will be discussed. Mayor Grenke and Bormann may also try to attend.

Finance

Financial statements for November were made available. The Committee had no questions yet.

Bills over \$1,250

Committee received a preliminary list of bills over \$1,250. Committee members had no immediate questions.

Other General Government

Behrns said that the packet included the draft of the ordinance annually adopted by the Board to call for the April Municipal Elections. This year an alderman will be elected in each ward. An additional aldermen position will be voted on by Ward I for the last year of a two-year term. This is the seat presently held by Alderman Wilkins.

A resolution will be proposed for the next regular Board meeting to update the City Policy for use of City-owned communications equipment. Wilkins is reviewing the document with a new eye. Unless he has additional suggestions, there are only a few changes made to the end section, which describes the timing for replacement of computers and procedures for safely disposal of old hard drives.

Lockett distributed an updated price sheet for new fund accounting software needed by the City. City Staff has looked at five or six packages from various vendors, talking to references and watching product demonstrations. Last week, staff had a second look at the Summit software programs from Data Technologies, Inc. of Omaha, Nebraska. Aldermen Wilkins was able to sit in on the more-detailed presentation and asked several probing questions. Behrns noted that the base price of \$22,950.00 was much less he initially planned for. He is not enamored with the annual maintenance and licenses fees of \$2,600 per year, but they are in the normal range for such products. The base bid is for General Ledger, Accounts Payable, Bank Reconciliation, Receipts Management and Payroll models. More importantly it covers most costs (except travel) for vendor personnel to migrate historic data from the City's present software to the new programs. After the demonstration, the vendor representative had determined that, while the program developed an auditable trail for monetary changes, the record for other information would only contain the result of changes and the time and identified for the person making the change. The system would not retain a record of how the record read before the change. None of our present software does this either. Behrns will ask the auditor about their needs and the usefulness of alternatives, such as a print-screen saved before any text change. Lockett noted that vendor support is available from Independence and that there is a "Missouri Support Group" of other cities using the software. The City of Lincoln has been with the system for 5-6 years and is very happy with the service. Wilkins said the software platform is prevalent and stable. It interfaces well with the Asset Keeper programs, which he teaches for his employer. This software should work fine with existing utility billing software. Office staff is double-checking for possible conversion costs associated with Accrued Employee Benefits, Equipment Use, and Cashiering and Collecting calculations. They will also examine the immediate need, if any, for any of the other program modules. A final cost estimate and approving ordinance will be on the next Board agenda if these last questions can be answered in time. The staff desires to get on the vendor's schedule for implementing the new programs around the first of March.

Fire Department

Rusch presented a report of Fire Department activities in October. Committee briefly discussed the large number of alarm calls to the Hubbell/Chance Factory resulting from water pressure drops. Rusch said there have been no calls in December and the problem is perhaps fixed.

Rusch said that he had located fire trucks that might meet Centralia's need for a replacement. However, they had been sold almost immediately, before Centralia could even express an interest. Next time he may react immediately and express his regrets later if the truck is not as advertized.

Rusch said that a cover fire was leaf burning at the Guest House, which had gotten out of control. He has also delivered some updated budget request information to Behrns.

Emergency Management

There was no formal report.

City Prosecutor

No report.

Police Department

Bias presented the report of Police Department activities in November.

Behrns said that Attorney Beck will have a report at the regular Board meeting concerning the progress of legislation which would allow the City to assess court fees to fund bio-metric identification equipment.

Behrns reported that before he and Chief Dudgeon could take the surplus patrol car to the auction, he received a late bid by email and a written bid from Clarence Hoskins which was high, but not equal to the previously advertized minimum. Committee decided not to advertize for a re-bid, but accepted the offer of Hoskins for \$855.00.

Protective Inspection

Behrns noted a letter from Clifford de la Rosa which explained what was being done at the Narragansett Building.

Closed Session

Orsini moved that the General Government and Public Safety Committee go into Closed Session and hold a closed vote, and the purposes of such closed session and closed vote shall be (1) preparation, including any discussions or work product, on behalf of the City of Centralia or its representatives for negotiation with an employee group, (2) hiring, firing, disciplining or promotion of particular employees by a public governmental body when personal information about the employee is discussed or recorded, as provided for under Section 610.021 (3) and Section 610.021 (9) of the Revised Statutes of Missouri. Wilkins seconded the motion. On roll call vote the following members voted aye: Bormann, Angell, Wilkins, Grenke, Sanders, and Orsini. The following members voted nay: none.

The motion carried and the Committee entered into Closed Session, during which they discussed proposals from the employee union and future budgeted rates for the employees who are paid a salary. During the meeting no close votes were taken.

Orsini then moved that the General Government and Public Safety Committee return to Open Session.

Bormann seconded the motion. On roll call vote the following members voted aye: Bormann, Angell, Wilkins, Grenke, Sanders, and Orsini. The following members voted nay: none. The Committee returned to Open Session.

As May Arise

Behrns reported that the additions to the city limits signs which would acknowledge the recent high school softball champions would cost about \$520 each.

Orsini requested that the City revisit the topic of adding gender identity and sexual preference to the classes of protected citizens in the City's discrimination classifications. Behrns will add this to the next General Government Committee agenda and give the City Attorney an opportunity to renew his research.

Mayor Grenke inquired about Alderman Orsini's absence from the previous week's Public Works and Public Utilities Committee meeting. Orsini said that she had been in Columbia at its City Council meeting to support their proposed ordinance expanding their anti-discrimination rules.

The Committee then adjourned at about 8:50 p.m.