

Minutes of the General Government and Public Safety Committee meeting of Monday, June 13, 2016.

The meeting was called to order by Alderman David Wilkins, Chairperson at 7:01 p.m.

I. ATTENDANCE.

Present also were Mayor Tim Grenke (by phone), Aldermen Landon Magley, Don Rodgers, Andrea Vollrath, and Jim Lee. Absent – Don Bormann. Also attending were City Administrator Matt Harline, Fire Chief Denny Rusch, Police Chief Larry Dudgeon, Corey Mehaffy of the Moberly Area Economic Development Corporation (MAEDC), Lorry Myers and Emily Curtis from CREDI, Library Director Jack Meyer, City Intern Nathan Kuhn, and James Smith of the Fireside Guard.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Those present participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS.

None.

IV. PRESENTATION BY COREY MEHAFFY OF THE MOBERLY AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION.

Mehaffy made a presentation about the operation and services available from MAEDC. Mehaffy gave a short history of MAEDC since its birth in 1988. Mehaffy noted that it wasn't working to get potential site selectors because they were not interested in making a one-stop call. Site selectors need to visit many sites in a visit, and this led to a regional approach. Mehaffy added that having prepared details on several ready sites is essential, and that it isn't an issue of one city pulling all the business away, the company is going to the place that is the best fit for them. He said that MAEDC had aided in the launch of 27 businesses. Mehaffy described how they had developed an entrepreneur program. They had a lot of projects that failed to thrive, so they developed a network of potential capital investors.

Mehaffy went on to describe how the regional process works for MAEDC, and how Howard, Randolph and Monroe counties pool their resources together and have a vote on the board. Mehaffy described the variety of projects by size and type and how the project in Glasgow was coupled with a CDBG grant and improved infrastructure there.

Mehaffy went on to describe more about the efforts of MAEDC saying that they generated over 40 site visits per year and how he travels to meet site selectors and other contacts. In addition to new projects, they have helped bridge contacts that led to contracts for business. Mehaffy noted that a lot goes in to being prepared to have a conversation about economic development, for instance having a certified site and all the information that goes in to that. Mehaffy asked for questions.

Lee asked if the Glasgow projects were related to their proximity to the river. Mehaffy said it was not really the river access so much as having a facility with special features like heavy cranes and a concrete designed for heavy loads. Wilkins asked about staff levels and Mehaffy replied that they had two full-time economic development professionals, one part-time, and one administrative staff. Rodgers asked about how much activity they had in Monroe County, and Mehaffy described an expansion project in Paris. Mehaffy noted that there were three certified sites in Monroe County and that they were about to get certified work ready status for Monroe County.

Harline stated that he had spoken with REDI, with whom the City had an excellent long-term

relationship, but they did not have additional capacity to help Centralia with more efforts. Harline added that he was also looking for a more rural development angle. Harline noted that it was hard to staff economic development out of his office and there was a need for staff because volunteer efforts were not enough. Harline asked if MAEDC had an incubator/accelerator and Mehaffy said that what they did was not really an incubator/accelerator, but they did coaching and held events that brought entrepreneurs in contact with each other. Lee asked if he would stay around. Lorry Myers asked if they were funded by membership. Mehaffy answered in the affirmative and explained that they partnered with the economic development organization in each of their counties.

V. PUBLIC SAFETY.

A. Police Department

1. *Activity Report:* Wilkins asked if there were any questions or comments on the Activity Report and there were none.

2. *Speed Limit on West Singleton:* Wilkins noted that there was a wealth of information in the packet. Wilkins stated that reason for the study was to see if the speed limit needed to be reduced and he said he thought the data indicated that it did not. Harline reviewed the data collected by the police department and assembled by Nathan Kuhn. Harline noted that the MODOT standard was to keep the speed limit at the 85th percentile of the observed speed driven by vehicles. Harline said that the data suggests that you could lower the speed limit but it would not be likely to change the behavior of the drivers. Harline said that he thinks Chief Dudgeon is of the same mind and thanked his officers for collecting the data. Chief Dudgeon said that it was no burden. He stated that he felt that the City looked into this and that no change in speed limit was needed.

3. *Other* Police Chief Dudgeon noted that our police department is still in the running for the freedom award from the Department of Defense. Chief Dudgeon noted that the City was going to be recognized for the Missouri Pro Patria award as the highest honor for a public entity showing support for our military on July 8th. Dudgeon added that the nomination was put together by Sargent Bellamy, and there is still a good chance that we would be going to D.C. to accept an award.

In response to a question from Wilkins, Chief Dudgeon stated that he didn't have much else to add except that Anchor Fest went well, especially the car show, although there are always some people that make you shake your head. Wilkins asked about odd pets, and Chief Dudgeon replied that was not a problem this year.

B. Fire Department.

1. *Activity Report:* Wilkins asked if there were any questions or comments on the Activity Report.

2. *Fire truck purchase update.* Chief Rusch reported that he was planning to send two firefighters down to see the truck in St. Louis to inspect and to bring some tools to see how they should fit on the truck. Chief Rusch added that it was getting pretty much done. Chief Rusch added that the radio would be installed and the truck could be here next week.

3. *Other.* Chief Rusch said in reply to a question from Wilkins that this was their first year providing the EMS support for the Anchor Fest and they were fairly busy. Chief Rusch noted that

there were about ten incidents of dehydration of mostly kids that hadn't had enough food and fluids.

D. Emergency Management. No report.

E. Protective Inspection.

1. *Dangerous Buildings.* – Harline noted the memo in the packet explaining that he and Kuhn had been inspecting properties starting with a list generated by Lynn Behrns. Harline reported that Kuhn had developed a checklist and form letter based directly from the City Code and we had three letters ready to send off. Harline said that he had a meeting arranged with Clifford De La Rosa and James Canon from the Boone County Resources office. Harline noted that the chart showed that we had been active in issuing demolition permits and removing dilapidated structures.

2. *Demolition contracts* Harline reported that the City had budgeted \$7,500 each year for the last five or so years to reimburse qualifying expenses for the demolition of dangerous houses. Harline stated that we had three contracts in hand, and one from last year that has not been executed, plus at least three people interested in signing a contract with the City for the \$1,500 reimbursement contracts. Harline said he had two questions for the Committee. The first was if the Committee would approve allowing up to three additional contracts (a total of \$4,500) and in exchange we would spend \$4,500 less on contracted sidewalk repairs where we had budgeted \$10,000. **Magley made a motion to allow spending of an additional \$4,500 for demolition and \$4,500 less for contract labor for sidewalk repair. The motion was seconded by Vollrath and approved by unanimous voice vote.**

Wilkins asked Harline to explain the second item. Harline said that the Maranatha Missionary Baptist Church at Rollins and Switzler had requested funds to assist them in demolishing their church. Harline noted that it was not a single family home, per se. Rodgers asked if Harline was considering commercial structures. Harline replied that he was not, just non-profits. Harline suggested that the \$1,500 might not be much incentive for a commercial structure. Wilkins said that he did not have a problem with the use of funds in this case. Wilkins asked if there was an ordinance that established this. Harline replied there was not. Harline said it was a program administered by the City, but it would require a change in the standard contract to sign an agreement with the church. Rodgers asked if there was a limit to the amount we spend. Harline said that the \$7,500 budget limited it to five per year. Harline said in response to a question from Rodgers that this is a one-time request to increase the amount this year and the Board could revisit it next year. Last year we only had one assistance contract and now we had a spike in interest. **Vollrath made a motion to allow using the demolition funds for a non-profit organization with a qualifying structure for demolition. The motion was seconded by Lee and approved by unanimous voice vote.**

Harline asked if the Committee would mind if he interpreted the program to allow funds to be spent for the removal of a trailer. Wilkins said it was targeted to residences so he did not have a problem with it and no objection to it being used for a trailer removal. No objections were raised by the Committee. Harline said he would allow the funds to be used for the trailer removal.

VI. GENERAL GOVERNMENT AND FINANCE.

A. Economic Development.

1. *CREDI contract renewal* Emily Curtis said that she has volunteered with CREDI for a couple years and the all-volunteer approach is not working, so the City needs to start back at square one. Wilkins asked if it was the lack of staff or the equivalent that was the main problem. Myers said that doing it all by volunteer work was good to lay the ground work, but it was exhausting and it could not be sustained. Myers said that they brought in a lot of young energetic people and ideas they had. They have identified the need for a day care, developed a great relationship with Hubbell, developed relationships with the schools, and laid a groundwork, but economic development is slow and takes lots of work, and so Myers said that CREDI was handing it back to the City. Myers said that with the \$6,000 for CREDI and the Chamber that we had \$12,000 toward the goal of the City's plan. Myers said perhaps a meeting of the important people to develop the economic development plan to find out what the City wants would be important if the City wants economic development. She stressed that while they have done fund raising and good events, but it can't be done by volunteers alone.

Rodgers said that he had talked with Myers about this before and that, like preparing for a hurricane, you have to have a plan before the opportunity comes, as Mehaffy had said. Mehaffy agreed with Rodger's point, noting that some of the replies to the requests for information are 60 pages long and need a response within 24 hours. Myers noted that it would have to have a point person – a face. Harline said that he had discussed this with Myers as well and that for \$6,000 or \$12,000 you can't get a full time contact person. Harline said that Lynn Berhns had always been involved and the City Administrator will always be involved, but it is likely that other people would be needed. Harline added that he had been in conversations with REDI and others, but additional time and effort is needed. Wilkins asked how the cost for membership in MAEDC is determined. Mehaffy said that the cost was based on population. Mehaffy stressed the importance of a long-term approach with trained staff to have the site specific information ready. Mehaffy added that it was expensive to do it that way, but that is what you have to do. Rodgers asked if you could have a successful town without economic development. Mehaffy said that you probably cannot keep the status quo, that you are either moving forward or backward, so you have to keep working at it to avoid losing what you have as well as bringing the new.

Harline said that he anticipated incorporating economic development into the Comprehensive Plan process. Harline said that he thought the answer might be enhancing our relationship with CREDI, maybe working with MAEDC or both, but it was probably not hiring a person on \$12,000. Wilkins agreed. Harline added that MAEDC works with a lot of smaller rural cities and that is why he had invited Mehaffy. He saw a role for CREDI or something like it, but it couldn't work on volunteers alone. Myers said that she did not want the efforts of CREDI to be lost, like the LIVE Centralia tours, and the tear off maps, and trying to bring a hotel to Centralia. Grenke thanked CREDI for their efforts. Grenke said that a steering committee meeting in about two weeks would be a good next step to avoid letting the work of CREDI go to waste. Grenke said that people from the City, CREDI, the Chamber, and the schools should meet to refocus our efforts in the right direction. Grenke suggested having a speaker from REDI maybe during the week of the 28th would be great. Wilkins said that what CREDI had accomplished with volunteer effort was amazing. Myers said that we have learned a lot and she is not in favor of doing nothing.

B. Park Board

Wilkins noted that agenda for the Park Board is in the packet.

C. Cemetery Advisory Committee.

Wilkins noted the information in the packet including the donations collected.

D. Tree Board.

No report.

E. Library Board

Jack Meyer, Library Director said that the Library Board had several members stepping down and they had some suggestions for appointees. Harline read the names and asked if any of the Board needed additional information on Angie Taylor (who will replace Laurel Auck), Julie Rhykart (who will replace Nancy Wheeler), and Terry Hamilton (who will replace Crystal Bridgman) for full terms to June 30, 2109, and Rhonda Brandow who would fill the unexpired term of Jenny Espenschied that runs until June 30, 2018. Wilkins asked about the adoption of the weapons policy. Meyer replied that the Library did not have one before, but this would prohibit weapons from the building and grounds. Meyer noted that he had attended a training where he found that libraries could serve as a center for obtaining passports. Meyer noted that there was a small \$100 training fee to the Library and they received \$25 for each application filled out. The Committee supported the Library moving forward with the passport program. Meyer noted that the summer reading program was experiencing the highest participation ever.

F. Finance

Financial statements for May 2016 were in the agenda packet. Harline stated that sales tax was about where it was last year, but behind two years ago.

G. Bills over \$1,250

Wilkins noted that the Committee received a preliminary list of bills over \$1,250, equal to \$292,527.98. Magley asked about the expense to repair the tractor at Sydenstrickers. Harline said that it was the tractor for mowing that broke down just before graduation.

H. Other General Government.

None

VII. OTHER.

None

VIII. AS MAY RISE.

None

IX. ADJOURN.

Magley, made a motion to adjourn the Committee meeting. Volrath seconded the motion which was then approved by unanimous voice vote at 8:37p.m.