

**Murphysboro City Council Meeting
January 18, 2017**

The Murphysboro, Illinois, City Council met in regular session, pursuant to its ordinances, on the 18th day of January 2017. Mayor Stephens called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and Alderman Hughes led the council in prayer. Following the invocation, Mayor Stephens led the council in the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Mayor Stephens then directed Deputy City Clerk Ripley to call the roll. The roll was called with the following:

Present: Barb Hughes, Linda Porter-Smith, Russell Brown, Gary McComb, Bill Pierson, Danny Bratton, John Erbes

Absent: Herb Voss, Gloria Campos, Tom Ridings

Mayor Stephens introduced Steve Schemonia with the Murphysboro Elks Lodge. Mr. Schemonia was in attendance to present the City of Murphysboro with a \$500 check from their charitable trust to be split between the fire department and the police department. Mayor Stephens expressed his appreciation for the efforts put forth by the Elks Lodge membership.

Motion: To approve the minutes of the December 22nd and December 27th, 2016 council meetings. All aldermen received a copy of the minutes, for their review, prior to the meeting.

Motion by Alderman McComb

Second by Alderman Brown

Mayor called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

Motion: To approve the accounts payable, accounts receivable and payroll reports as presented. All aldermen received a copy for their review, prior to the meeting.

Motion by Alderman McComb

Second by Alderman Bratton

Mayor called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS

Alderman Bratton opened discussion for Budget & Finance related items. There were no old or new business to discuss as well as no public comment on Budget & Finance related items.

Alderman Brown opened discussion for Building & Grounds related items.

Attorney Blake gave an update on the franchise agreement with Ameren for gas and electric. At this point, we are still waiting to hear back from Ameren. Attorney Blake indicated that he will contact them for a status update.

There was no public comment on Building & Grounds related items.

Alderman Bratton opened discussion for Community Relations related items.

There were no old items for discussion. A request for street closures for Cruise Nights were submitted for consideration. The council agreed that the event was a worthwhile event and wished to see it continued. Mayor Stephens thanked Josh Sayer for his efforts in continuing the monthly cruise nights. Mr. Sayer stated that the format for each month would remain the same running from 5p to 9p on the 1st Saturday of each month from April to September.

Motion: To approve the request for street closures as presented for cruise nights on the 1st Saturday of each month from April to September.

Motion by Alderman McComb

Second by Alderman Pierson

Mayor called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

A request from Cindy B's was received for the use of two city-owned parking spaces for placement of their dumpster. They are attempting to clean-up their property and make the entrance more appealing to their customers. It was stated that the dumpster will be placed in a completely enclosed fenced in area that will not interfere with traffic and all expenses will be paid by the owners of Cindy B's. Attorney Blake indicated that it will take a 3/4th vote of the council to approve a property lease. It was determined that we will move forward with requesting the city attorney to draft a lease agreement with the owners of Cindy B's for the use of two parking spaces behind their building.

The next item on the agenda was the discussion of items owned by Sallie Logan Public Library in which they have declared as surplus. The city has first right of refusal for the items which consisted of a typewriter, paper shredder, chairs, rolodex and other miscellaneous office supplies. It was indicated that Chief Roberts had requested the paper shredder, but the other items were of no use to the City.

Motion: To refuse all items declared as surplus by the Sallie Logan Public Library with the exception of the paper shredder.

Motion by Alderman McComb

Second by Alderman Brown

Mayor called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

There was no public comment on Community Relations related items.

Alderman McComb opened discussion for Public Improvement related items.

Alderman McComb inquired of Harold Sheffer the status of improvements to the road leading to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Engineer Sheffer stated that there was a letter in everyone's packet outlining the costs associated with the Wastewater Treatment Plant road improvements. The council needs to decide if they would like to recoup expenses already paid on the plant construction so that funds would be available for the road improvements or if the city would like to pay for the road improvements separately. Budget Officer Scott Evans indicated that adding the road improvement expenses to the loan would create an additional annual loan repayment cost of approximately \$25-26,000. Alderman McComb stressed that it is a safety issue for our employees and would like to see the project done. Alderman Bratton requested that easement information be acquired from the Murphysboro Park District and adjacent property owner Jackie Krueger. Jim Stewart offered to speak with Ms. Krueger. Engineer Sheffer will speak with the Murphysboro Park District Board President.

Motion: To approve moving forward with the improvements to the road leading to the Wastewater Treatment Plant by capturing the excess funds from the IEPA loan.

Motion by Alderman Erbes

Second by Alderman McComb

Mayor called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

Mayor Stephens discussed the contract with HeartLands Conservancy for completion of the city's comprehensive plan. Our attorneys have reviewed the contract and made some suggested changes. HeartLands Conservancy have approved those changes and we are now ready to proceed with council approval.

Motion: To approve the contract with HeartLands Conservancy for the completion of the City's comprehensive plan.

Motion by Alderman Erbes

Second by Alderman Porter-Smith

Mayor called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

There was no public comment on Public Improvement related items.

Alderman Pierson opened discussion for Public Works related items.

The issue with granting an easement to allow One Hot Cookie to connect to our city sewer was discussed. A letter was distributed to the council from the owners of One Hot Cookie outlining their request. Mayor Stephens advised that it was his understanding from researching the issue that the City of Murphysboro does not have authority to grant an easement. Attorney Blake gave a more in depth background of the Suburban Heights Subdivision plat and how the easements were assigned. There was much discussion from Ms. Karen Lavender as well as the neighboring property owner Robert Poole relative to the circumstances surrounding the construction of the building for One Hot Cookie. The council is very sympathetic

to the situation, but at this point does not have the authority to provide them with a means to connect to the city sewer.

The next item discussed was change order #33 and #34 for the Wastewater Treatment Plant construction project. Change Order #33 was revised to exclude removal of the trees. This resulted in a reduction in cost. Change Order #34 was requested by Brian Manwaring for a required upgrade to the fire alarm system.

Motion: To approve the change orders as presented for the Wastewater Treatment Plant construction contract with River City.

Motion by Alderman Bratton Second by Alderman Hughes
Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion carried.

Alderman Pierson advised that Plant Operator, Jim Stewart, is requesting maintenance to replace the nitrate caps at the Wastewater Treatment Plant be performed by Schreiber. This will allow our employees to see how the maintenance is done and be able to do it ourselves in the future. The cost for the maintenance is approximately \$2400, but is a budgeted expense.

Motion: To approve contracting with Schreiber for maintenance to the nitrate caps at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Motion by Alderman Bratton Second by Alderman McComb
Alderman Pierson called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion carried.

Mayor Stephens indicated that he had been contacted by Vergennes Mayor Don Wisely requesting any surplus Christmas decorations. Street Foreman Darrin Mills advised that there are approximately 10 items that have not been used in about 12 years.

Motion: To approve declare the old Christmas decorations as surplus property and donating them to the Village of Vergennes.

Motion by Alderman Pierson Second by Alderman Bratton
Alderman Pierson called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion carried.

Alderman McComb requested a status update on the Old Depot property. He stated that we had given the owner a 60-day time limit to repair the roof and replace the windows, but had not seen any progress. Alderman Bratton requested that the item be tabled and he be given permission to approach the owner and request his presence at the next meeting.

There was no public comment on Public Works related items.

Alderman Brown opened discussion for Public Safety related items.

It was stated that clarification is needed for the time limit for trailers to be parked on city streets. The ordinance was passed stating that trailers could not be parked on streets overnight and used the term dusk to dawn. Chief Roberts requested that a specific time be listed in the ordinance. There was much discussion on the issue including issuing a permit for those that would be parked overnight as well as possible elimination of the time frame all together. Alderman Bratton expressed his thoughts against the matter. The council made no resolution to the topic and Mayor Stephens suggested that it be left as is.

Alderman Brown requested that Chief Roberts advise the council of his request to purchase rifles. Chief Roberts indicated that he would like to purchase 16 rifles to be assigned to each full-time officer. The expense will be charged to the Seized Assets account that currently has enough funds to cover the purchase. Mayor Stephens indicated that he has received citizen support for the purchase.

Motion: To approve the purchase of rifles using seized asset funds.

Motion by Alderman McComb

Second by Alderman Pierson

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion carried.

Public comment came from Ms. Judith Stambach regarding the purchase of the rifles. She interrogated Chief Roberts with various questions. Don Gladden commended the council for the decision.

Alderman Hughes opened discussion for Personnel related items.

The issue of health insurance was discussed. Human Resource Coordinator Sandra Ripley stated that new information has been received and a proposal for new coverage is not yet ready. It was requested that the item be tabled until the next council meeting.

Alderman Hughes discussed the option for pay increases for our non-union staff. It was suggested that the council wait until the end of the 1st quarter to see where the revenue dollars come in before a lot of expenses be approved. The council agreed.

Alderman Hughes provided an update on FOP Contract stating that negotiations were still in progress and a counter-offer was being drawn up by our labor attorney. More information will follow as negotiation progress.

There was no public comment on Personnel related items.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Stephens passed out a revised picture of the proposed city seal. The updated version includes the year that the city was established. Alderman Hughes indicated that she had received comments from residents stating that additional proposals should be considered.

DEPARTMENT HEAD ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS

Attorney Blake	Nothing
Sandra Ripley	Nothing
Harold Sheffer	Nothing
Steve Swafford	Nothing
Chad Roberts	Updated the council on the \$25 fee for City Court. Met with Judge Schwartz and it will begin this month.
Eric Kennedy	Nothing
Tim Lee	Nothing
Brian Manwaring	Absent
Darrin Mills	Nothing
Jim Stewart	Nothing
Scott Evans	Nothing

Motion: To adjourn

Motion by Alderman Bratton

Second by Alderman Hughes

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.