Murphysboro City Council Meeting
April 24, 2018

The Murphysboro, Illinois, City Council met in regular session, pursuant to its ordinances, on the 24th day of April, 2018. Mayor Stephens called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. and invited Alderman Hughes to lead the council in prayer. Following the invocation, Mayor Stephens led the council in the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Mayor Stephens then directed City Clerk Hunziker to call the roll. The roll was called with the following:

Present: Barb Hughes, Jance Curry-Witzman, Russell Brown, Herb Voss, Gary McComb, John Erbes, Dan Bratton, Mike Bastien, Gloria Campos, W. J. Pittman.

Absent: None

Presentation by Solar Alliance: Jason Bak, Chairman & CEO, Michael Clark, COO. They are excited to develop this site and appreciate the wonderful opportunity to do so in Murphysboro. They plan to utilize the building to bring in tenants to help create jobs. Solar Alliance is a public company whose focus is solar installations, renewable energy and green energy. They are proposing a community solar generation and battery storage project and will provide high value skills training and employment to community members. Phase 1 will involve the Curwood facility and potential tenants with high power consumption, such as crypto-currency mining. Phase 2 would be at the old waste water treatment plant location with construction of solar panels there. Alderman Bratton inquired if it would affect electric rates – no effect. Mayor Stephens stated that Solar Alliance has commissioned their own environmental study and as soon as that goes through, they will be ready to conclude the deal.

Correction to be made to page 4, last paragraph of the April 10, 2018, minutes: Alderman Erbes made the motion that was later withdrawn, not Alderman Bratton also.

Motion: To approve the minutes of the April 10, 2018 council meeting. All aldermen received a copy of the minutes, for their review, prior to the meeting.
Motion by Alderman Campos Second by Alderman Bratton
Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.
Motion Carried

Alderman Bratton inquired on page 1, first item, if it was for the work done on the Ava blacktop. City engineer Sheffer stated yes but it is not finished. Will hold this payment until the project is complete. Also on page 6 for $662.17 for latex gloves. These are for the public works and sewer plant, saves by buying in quantity. Alderman Hughes inquired as to how long that quantity lasts.

Alderman Erbes asked about the payment on page 7 to Mark, he did not receive the first check so a stop payment was put on it and another check issued.

Alderman Campos inquired on page 8 of the 2 bills for the legal team – 2 billing cycles. Also page 10 to USEMCO - for the compressor for the lift station at the river.

Motion: To approve the accounts payable, registers #662 through April 25, 2018. All aldermen received a copy of the accounts payable for their review, prior to the meeting.
Motion by Alderman McComb Second by Alderman Bastien
Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.
Motion Carried

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS

Alderman Pittman opened discussion for Budget & Finance related items.

Senior Citizens Center Repairs/Contract: Mayor Stephens and Alderman McComb met with Joe Balsano. The Mayor would like to have Ozburn Insurance see what it would cost for the city to provide the insurance for the inside of the building. They have been under budget since 2013 and provide a needed service to the community. Alderman Hughes asked if the City can get a better rate then the Senior Citizens? And is the Mayor recommending the City pay for the insurance? Per Mayor Stephens yes and yes. That would then allow them to pay off the van sooner. Alderman McComb stated they have laid new carpet and wood floors. Per Alderman Bratton Clover Roofing will repair the roof and floor from the ceiling that fell in the kitchen. Alderman Pittman stated we still need a contract or verbal agreement/policy that they are to use whoever we have a contract with for maintenance. Mayor Stephens suggested a threshold of what Joe could spend for an emergency. Alderman Bratton added it needs to outline who is responsible for what and who to call in case of an emergency. Alderman McComb stated that the metal fire door was also damaged. Alderman Bratton will forward that information to someone to get it fixed.

Financial Reports were presented by Scott Evans. Sales Tax is higher than the previous April. Income Tax Receipts are down from the last several years. This is a census driven tax. Payroll is under budget for the current month and the over budget balance for the year has decreased. The General Fund is slightly under budget. Therefore for the first 3 months there is a $48,505.00 surplus. Alderman Bratton

inquired as to staffing of the Police Department. Per Chief Roberts there is one officer graduating and currently 1 slot open.

Review of grant writing contract and consideration of part-time position was made by Mayor Stephens and Alderman Pittman. Per Mayor Stephens Murphysboro has a low median income so that should increase our success with grant possibilities. We are a member of Greater Egypt and he will ask for their assistance. Alderman Pittman stated the position will pay for itself. Stated we should require them to work out of the City Administration building. Alderman Bratton asked if we had heard back from Mr. Hollo- per Mayor Stephens no. Need a part-time person who will report to the council and that will be held accountable. Alderman Campos inquired if we have a contract with Mr. Hollo. Yes but we can opt out. Alderman Voss commented that Mr. Hollo has not done any of the legwork he was going to do.

Motion: To give 30-day notice to Brian Hollo.
Motion by Alderman Erbes Second by Alderman Bastien
Alderman Pittman called for a voice vote. All were in favor.
Motion Carried

Alderman Pittman asked what the potential salary for a grant writer as a city employee might be? Per Mayor Stephens $15,000-$20,000. Alderman Erbes stated Greater Egypt might have an idea of what it would pay. Per Alderman Pittman the national average for a full-time position is $34,000-73,000. He will look into the numbers and a job description. Mayor Stephens will contact them and invite them to our next meeting. Will have Sandra prepare a draft and have the attorney look it over for the Mayor to sign.

Consideration of hiring a temporary part-time employee for water billing department: Sandra stated this would be a temporary part-time summer position for 10 weeks at 12 hours per week at a total salary of $1600. This person will get all the information needed to the collection agency.

Motion: To hire a temporary part-time employee for the water billing department.
Motion by Alderman Bratton Second by Alderman Campos
Alderman Pittman called for a voice vote. All were in favor.
Motion Carried

Public comment: Oueida asked if the city used the state? Per Sandra no, have not had good results with them.

Alderman McComb opened discussion for Building and Grounds related items.

Nothing at this time.

No public comment.

Alderman Erbes opened discussion for Community Relations Committee related items.

Alderman Hughes passed out a flyer for a Golf Scramble fund raiser for Bald Knob Cross of Peace. They are looking for sponsors, $100 per hole. Asked if the city council members would each donate $10 to sponsor a hole – yes.

No public comment.

Alderman Bastien opened discussion for Public Improvement related items.

Update on the fence issue on Division Street – work on the fence is moving forward and they are communicating with each other.

Alderman Erbes mentioned the house at South 20th and Division that has a hole in the roof – it is on the demolition list.

Alderman Bratton inquired as to the intake process at the old Masonic Lodge Children's Home. Police Chief Roberts stated Spiro has contracted with DCFS and are doubling the number of beds. The children are more traumatized, Chief Roberts is in the process of writing protocols and meeting the children. Alderman Erbes inquired if any are juvenile offenders – yes.

No public comment.

Alderman Bratton opened discussion for Public Works related items.

Approval of Streets for the 2018 Street Maintenance Program – Alderman Pittman suggested Shomaker, Hanson with the intersection, 17th from Spruce to Oak and 22nd from Gartside to Hortense. Alderman Hughes inquired if the repairs on 17th Street need to go through the Historical Preservation Society first? Attorney Blake does not think it applies to streets. Alderman Bratton stated should check with them as a courtesy. Alderman McComb stated we can't do South 20th Street until we make sure the sewer is secure underneath it. Per Alderman Bratton Tim Lee has been in contact with the sewer lining guy and he is getting the pipe size and length and will run his camera through it. Mayor Stephens asked Scott Evans from a financial position how does it look. Scott stated it will have a $165,000 cushion. Mayor Stephens asked if we need to adopt a motor fuel resolution? Mr. Sheffer will take care of it.

Motion: To approve the surfacing of the 4 locations suggested by Alderman Pittman – Shomaker, Hanson with the intersection, 17th from Spruce to Oak and 22nd from Gartside to Hortense.
Motion by Alderman Campos Second by Alderman Pittman
Alderman Bratton called for a voice vote. All were in favor.
Motion Carried

The Street Department has been patching holes.

No public comment.

Alderman Brown opened discussion for Public Safety related items.

Concerns with No Parking approved on North 10th and Locust Street: Per Alderman Bratton there is a city and state ordinance that there is no parking within so many feet of an intersection. The distance marked as no parking has been corrected. Per Attorney Blake an ordinance has already been passed. Another ordinance is needed to correct this issue.

Motion: To eliminate the No Parking Ordinance 18-3.
Motion by Alderman Hughes Second by Alderman Erbes
Alderman Brown called for a voice vote. All were in favor.
Motion Carried

Alderman Campos stated she had received complaints of home and auto burglaries. Police Chief Roberts stated patrols and auxiliary officers have been added. Alderman Bastien inquired as to where these had been taking place and Chief Roberts stated in several areas – 17th Street, Roberta Drive and Walnut Street.

No public comment.

Alderman Hughes opened discussion for Personnel related items.

Discussion regarding process for selection of Fire chief: 2 members of the Fire Department have expressed interest. Need to let them know they will go through the interview process. Alderman Hughes also feels it needs to be advertised immediately and need to set up an interview committee.

Motion: To advertise the Fire Chief position.
Motion by Alderman Bratton Second by Alderman Brown
Alderman Bratton called for a voice vote. All were in favor.
Motion Carried

No public comment.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Stephens stated he had received 2 bids for a Recycling Station. Republic Services would be single stream – everything would go into 1 bin and they would sort later. Cost would be $147.75 per month for 2-8 yard dumpsters and a $70 one time delivery charge. Burris Disposal would cost $40 per month plus $75 charge to empty the 15-yard container. Alderman McComb stated this had been looked into

several years ago and it turned out to be $50 per trip to empty. Mayor Stephens stated that there are 2 recycling stations already, one at the Health Department and one at the Illinois Extension building. Alderman Hughes inquired as to who owns these – the Health Department. Does not think that type would be allowed in town. Scott Evans stated Cary Gale is the contact at the Health Department. Mayor Stephens will check into this and do some research. Alderman Bratton stated that the wooden donation boxes located throughout town need to be emptied more frequently.

Motion: To go into executive session at 8:05 pm to discuss matters related to 5ILCS 120/2(c)(1) regarding the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or general counsel.
Motion by Alderman Bratton Second by Alderman Pittman
Yeas: Alderman Hughes, Alderman Curry-Witzman, Alderman Voss, Alderman Brown, Alderman McComb, Alderman Erbes, Alderman Bratton, Alderman Bastien, Alderman Campos, Alderman Pittman
Nays: None
Motion Carried

Motion: To come out of executive session at 8:33 p.m.
Motion by Alderman Hughes Second by Alderman Pittman
Yeas: Alderman Hughes, Alderman Curry-Witzman, Alderman Brown, Alderman Voss, Alderman Erbes, Alderman Bratton, Alderman Bastien, Alderman Campos, Alderman Pittman
Nays: None
Motion Carried

ALDERMEN ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS

Barb Hughes	Nothing
Jance Curry-Witzman	Nothing
Russell Brown	House across the street needs boarded up. Leandra will remind Eric. Wags – green house on the alley, they are doing drugs.
Herb Voss	Nothing
Gary McComb	Nothing
John Erbes	congratulations to Jim Stewart for being in the Top 5 Waste Water Treatment Operators in Illinois.
Dan Bratton	Congratulations to Jim – he goes above and beyond.

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Mike Bastien	Nothing
Gloria Campos	Asked if the groundbreaking for the new hotel is still May 1? Mayor Stephens stated on that date or shortly thereafter. Also thanked City Clerk Hunziker for doing a good job with the minutes and reports.
W. J. Pittman	Nothing

DEPARTMENT HEAD ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS

Richard Blake	Nothing
Sandra Ripley	Nothing
Harold Sheffer	Nothing
Steve Swafford	Nothing
Chad Roberts	Computer grant came today and having community meetings.
Scott Evans	Nothing
Brian Manwaring	Nothing
Jim Stewart	Nothing
Leandra Bryant	Nothing
Don	Thanked Police Chief Roberts for giving the Active Shooter training to the library staff.

Motion: To adjourn
Motion by Alderman Bratton Second by Alderman Erbes
Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.
Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.