

Common Council Meeting – Monday, February 28, 2011
Held at The Crosswalk, Townline Road Ligonier, Indiana at 7:00 pm – Audio Available

Call to order by Mayor Fisel

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Roll Call

Council members present: John Pettit, Gary Bishop, Karen Richendollar, Ken Schuman, and John Lutton.
Also present: Mayor Patty Fisel, City Attorney Steve Hagen, and Clerk-Treasurer Barb Hawn

Minutes from previous meeting of February 14, 2011

Motion to approve by: John Lutton Seconded by: John Pettit Vote: All Ayes

Citizens Comments

Name & Address: Patty Armstrong, Water Street, Ligonier

Comment: Question regarding the Census – does it help us get additional money since we show an increase of 48 people. Mayor Fisel addressed the question by stating it is too early to tell how the numbers will affect us at this time. The numbers have been reported in the newspaper, but to date have not yet been confirmed.

Unfinished Business

1. Northeast Indiana Solid Waste Management District Representative

The mayor asked the Council if any member would be interested in replacing John Pettit as the City representative. As there were no volunteers at this time, the matter was tabled.

New Business

1. Pavilion at Pettit Park Project

The design plans for the Pavilion at Pettit Park were provided by Triad. City Engineer Rick Pharis remarked that they are currently working on the spec book to be sure certain items are included in the plan. He hopes to have it ready for BOW next week to be able to bid the project for a June 2011 completion. Chris Fought of Main Street, Ligonier asked if the plan called for the Pavilion to look similar to the current sketches provided by The Troyer Group. Mayor Fisel answered in the affirmative adding that with the funding help through local foundations, the focus is on the look of the Pavilion being suitable to the historic downtown.

2. Update on House at 600 South Martin Street

City Attorney Steve Hagen addressed the burned out house at 600 South Martin. Proceedings have begun to have the house declare the house an unsafe building under City code. We are trying to get notice to the mortgage holder through information obtained by City code enforcement officer Mike Alexander. The goal is to have Operation Foundation assistance in the tear down this summer. The funds used by the City for the tear down could then be liened against the land and recovered upon tax collection.

3. Building code fees discussion

There was discussion regarding the current fees charged by the City for building permits. Mary Beth Lemings, Deputy Field Assessor from Noble County has reviewed the fee schedule and finds it to be low in comparison to other cities. Rick Pharis provided the City with a copy of Goshen fees for comparison, and we are low in comparison to them as well. Information was provided for review at this time, tabling a decision to a future date.

A comment was also addressed about temporary lighted signs. We do have an ordinance against temporary signs becoming permanent. Residents and business are required by ordinance to have a permit for the temporary signs. This issue will be reviewed and placed on a future agenda.

4. Request for authorization to void uncashed checks from 2008

A list of outstanding checks from 2008 was presented to Council for approval to void. Clerk Barb Hawn clarified the list for Council. The void listed included uncashed checks dating back to 2008, but also included checks which were marked as voided but did not actually get voided in the system. All of the checks marked void were

duplicates and the actual payments were made to the payee. In addition, there was a list of four checks marked void from 2009 to be added back.

Motion to authorize the Clerk to void checks on the Void list for 2008 and 2009 by: John Lutton
Seconded by: Ken Schuman Vote: All Ayes

Claim Registers APV 32757 through 32849

Motion to approve by: Gary Bishop Seconded by: John Pettit Vote: All Ayes

Comments by Members of Council and Administration

Fire Chief Jeremy Weaver: Jeremy presented Council with a printed copy of his annual report. He reported that the department made a total of 605 runs for the year including 274 medical runs. Weaver also notified those present that March 13-19 is the statewide severe weather week. There will be a test of the tornado siren on March 16, once in the morning between 10:00 and 10:30 and once in the evening between 7:30 and 7:45.

Street Superintendent Mike Burdette: Mike commented to Council that with all of the snow, the main additional cost to the City has been in fuel. The overtime has not been too significant so far. We have plenty of salt to get us through the remainder of the winter season.

Water Superintendent Jeff Boyle: Jeff presented Council with a printed copy of his annual report. He reported that the number of customers is relatively the same but the usage is up slightly, to 205 million in 2010 from 191 million in 2009. The City was forced to raise rates in 2010. Costs have increased significantly on parts, especially brass and copper. We have started using plastic pipe when possible to save costs. Fuel surcharges have also played a part in increased costs.

Police Chief Bryan Shearer: Bryan presented his annual report to Council in a Power Point presentation. He recapped the comparisons between 2009 and 2010 in several areas. He reminded those present that the Police Dept. offers vacation checks to citizens when you are away. He recapped the City code violations noting that in 2009 a total of 6 violations were cited. In 2010 that increased to 148 with the addition of Mike Alexander as code enforcement officer. Mike is willing to work with the homeowners as long as progress is being made. The department actively seeks grants to help in several areas. A resident asked about noise ordinance and Chief Shearer answered that 8:00 pm is the current cut off time for equipment and mowers, etc. adding that he feels Council might look at extending the time with the State's move to daylight savings time.

Waste Water Manager Mark Schultz: Mark reported that things are going well at the WWTP. He is pleased with personnel and the cooperation and help from other City departments.

Building Inspector Stan Wiley: Stan expressed concerned that the City would end up owning properties such as the burned out house on Martin Street. City Attorney Hagen addressed the issue stating that the City would not take ownership, the property belongs to the owner/mortgage company and the City would lien property to the cost of the tear down.

Council Member Gary Bishop: Gary thanked Mayor Fisel for her State of the City address prior to the meeting. He appreciated the reports and topics she addressed.

Clerk-Treasurer Barb Hawn: The City's CTAR (Cities-Towns Annual Report) for 2010 was submitted to the State Board of Accounts on 2/17/11. With this completed, the 2010 year was closed.

Mayor Patty Fisel: Thanks to everyone in the audience for coming to the State of the City address and staying for the Council meeting. It is your City, your tax dollars. Please let us know what we can do for you, we are here to serve you. Thanks also to employees and family for all they do.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by: John Lutton Seconded by: John Pettit