

Common Council Meeting – Monday, April 25, 2011 – Held at Ligonier City Hall – 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 April 11, 2011

Motion to approve by: John Lutton Seconded by: Ken Schuman Vote: All Ayes

Citizens Comments

Name & Address: Bob Buttgen, Advance Leader

Comment: Bob inquired as to the time of the upcoming BZA and Plan Commission meetings

Mayor Fisel replied that the BZA meeting is May 10 at 7:00 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

The Plan Commission meeting is May 10 at 7:00 pm in the training room at the Police Dept.

Unfinished Business

Building & Zoning Administrator – Salary

The Mayor informed Council that she has a candidate, Jonas Gingerich, for the Building & Zoning Administrator. He comes with a recommendation by Dick Adair, the county building commissioner. He is a retired builder with a good reputation and is qualified for the position. He has two conditions to accepting the position. He would like mileage reimbursement for business miles. This would be in line with all other City employees who are reimbursed for use of their personal car for business. Because he is retired, his other condition is that he would like his pay to be salaried, to be paid the already approved \$13 per hour, for 20 hours per week or \$520 per bi-week. If he works over or under the 20 hours, pay would be steady at 20 hours. He would still complete a time sheet which would be reviewed periodically to be sure he is averaging the hours paid for.

Discussion ensued ending in a motion to hire Jonas Gingerich @ \$13,520 per year by: John Lutton

Seconded by: Ken Schuman Vote: All Ayes

Ken Schuman commented that he felt we should revisit the salary and hours at the end of this year.

New Business

1. Request to waive permit fee for City Wide Garage Sales on May 6 & 7, 2011

The City Wide Garage Sales have been set for May 6 and 7, 2011. A request was made by Bob Buttgen on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce, to waive the \$5 permit fee for the weekend.

Motion to waive the garage sale permit fee for May 6 & 7, 2011 by: John Lutton

Seconded by: Gary Bishop Vote: All Ayes

2. Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement – Rick Pharis, Brads-Ko Engineering

Triad, the engineering firm granted the contract for the CSO in the northeast quadrant, has selected Brads-Ko Engineering to do the survey work. Since Rick Pharis of the firm is the City Engineer, he felt he should file a conflict of interest disclosure statement.

Motion to accept the conflict of interest disclosure statement by Rick Pharis on behalf of Brads-Ko Engineering by: Ken Schuman Seconded by: Gary Bishop Vote: All Ayes

3. *Review of City Sign Ordinance*

The sign ordinance was reviewed by the Mayor. Businesses in the downtown are required to have their signs flush with the building; they cannot overhang the sidewalk as stated in our code 156.068. A new business owner in the downtown put up a sign which overhangs the sidewalk. This was done without a permit and the situation will be rectified. The Mayor asked Council if they wish to look at the ordinance to re-evaluate the rule and if so, they can make a recommendation to the Plan Commission to do so. At this time, there is no interest in pursuing the matter.

Claim Registers

APV# 33224 through 33318

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

Comments by Members of Council and Administration

Street Commissioner Mike Burdette

The 2011 tree program has resulted in the removal of 16 trees with 3 additional scheduled to be taken down. John Lutton asked if there is a plan to plant new trees. At this time there is not. The Mayor stated that some cities actually restrict planting trees in the right of way, but Ligonier does not at this time. Chris Fought of 506 Main Street commented that he feels the Maple Trees define Main Street and would hate to see that go away.

Council Member Gary Bishop

Commented regarding property on Ravine Park Drive when a house had burned down – there is still a basement which was not filled in. The Mayor commented that she will have someone look into the matter.

Mayor Patty Fisel

The Mayor addressed the rearrangement of the Council room – the move was made in the hopes to better amplify the sound. We are looking into a microphone system for the room so that everyone can be easily heard. Andy Schultz of 1106 West Second Street commented that he attended the Kendallville council meeting and the sound system they use made it very easy for everyone in the room to hear.

The property at 600 South Martin was condemned and found unsafe at a hearing. The City will be accepting bids for the demolition and an advertisement will be published in the paper. Betty Peterson of 603 Martin Street inquired about the pine tree on the property, at the edge of the sidewalk. Because this tree is not in the right of way, permission from the owner would be needed for its removal. Operation Foundation was suggested as a possible means of removing the tree.

The building fees which were approved to be increased will require an ordinance for the new rates to go into effect. City Attorney Steve Hagen will prepare the ordinance.

The Mayor reminded Council that the agenda ordinance was changed to allow for the addition of items to the agenda by the Mayor, City Clerk, or Council President without suspending the rules to add items to the agenda. She informed the citizen's in attendance to contact the Mayor or Clerk by the Thursday morning prior to the Monday Council meeting to have an item placed on the agenda.

The Mayor received a visit from Kathy Gallmyer of Senator Lugar's office. They spoke about the unfunded mandates and the difficulty for communities to comply with the funding cuts. They discussed the expense of the CSO project and the difficulty to fund. Kathy said they can create a white paper on the issue in hope of gaining attention and making a difference. They discussed the circuit breaker tax caps and the fact that Ligonier was hit hard with the cuts.

Lois Rosenogle of 1104 Westfield reminded those in attendance of a meet and greet with the Republican candidates tomorrow night at 6:30.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by: John Lutton Seconded by: Ken Schuman