



City of SANDWICH, ILLINOIS

City Hall Annex · 128 East Railroad Street

Committee-of-the-Whole Council Meeting

January 3, 2022 @ 7:00 PM

MINUTES

Mayor Latham called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Roll call was taken:

Present: Mayor Latham, City Clerk Ii; Aldermen Fritsch, Holcomb, Johnson, Killey, Kreinbrink, Littlebrant & Whitecotton

Quorum established.

Also Present: City Attorney Gottschalk, Chief Bianchi, City Treasurer Dell & EMA Director Ciciora

Absent: Alderman Robinson & City Official Steffens

Mayor Latham:

1. Progressive Business Solutions Presentation: Arnie Schramel, Managing Partner, provided a solar field bid summary to be located at the water treatment plant. The proposed site is in a designated flood zone. GRNE Solar and Keystone Solar were the top recommendations. It was noted that the City tried working unsuccessfully with Keystone Solar last year. GRNE proposal was the better at a 25.1% savings and selling back 15% of the solar production. Under the Keystone proposal, the City would be selling back approximately 50% of solar back to the grid. About half of new solar field construction costs are covered by tax credits and depreciation. These incentives are not available to the City because the City does not pay Federal income taxes. Under this scenario, it would be best suited to enter into a price agreement with a third-party owner. If a decision is reached by the City within the next 60 days, construction could be completed in December, 2022.

Under the "Illinois Climate & Equitable Jobs Act", the new bill mandates the closure of coal and natural gas plants by 2045. With the omission of carbon-emitting energy sources, the bill calls for a general increase of renewable emergency eventually attaching 100% clean energy by 2050. The bill earmarks \$580 million each year to build out wind and solar including increased funding for community solar. The financial impact on the City will be by paying \$8,034 more in 2022 with annual increases to an overall 10-year impact of \$145,158.00 to fund the bill. Increased costs could be avoided by installing a solar field at the water treatment plant.

This matter will come before the COW meeting of January 17th for additional discussion.

- Mr. Schramel also explained the cancellation of the Eligo Energy contract under the electrical aggregation program. Sandwich was part of 11 communities that signed with Eligo Energy. Within the contract, there was an “out” if there was a regulatory change; in fact, there have been two regulatory changes since October when the new contract took effect. Changes included a shift from commercial versus residential usage caused by Covid increasing residential power usage. Currently, ComEd is cheaper than the energy companies, and it is recommended that the electrical aggregation be reviewed in April, 2022 when ComEd releases new rates.
2. 2022-2023 Council Goals: Mayor Latham requested the Council to start thinking of goals for the upcoming year. He felt it is important to establish some milestones that the Council hopes to attain. Goals could be established by ward or overall projects for the community.
 3. 2022-2023 Strategic Plan: With the goals previously mentioned, the Mayor said plans can be made and incorporated into the budgetary process.
 4. Council Retreat: Mayor Latham asked the Council to consider a retreat to be held on a Saturday morning with a date to be set in February or March. Planning opportunities can be discussed, and discussions can be held with the City departmental superintendents including the Police Chief. The retreat would be an open dialogue and no action would be taken during the meeting.
 5. Fund Balance Policy: Treasurer Dell and Mayor Latham have created a draft that has been forwarded to Wes Levy (Lauterbach and Amen) for review.
 6. Mayor Latham requested Executive Session at the end of the meeting under Section 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2) “Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees”.
 7. Grant Applications: In the past, the Council has expressed interest in grant applications. Mayor Latham received notification this date information pertaining to the Illinois “Rebuild Downtowns & Main Streets” grant. The City would be requesting approximately \$850,000.00 with a commitment of \$450,000.00 MFT (Motor Fuel Tax) funds to be pledged. The grant would be used for downtown electrical lighting upgrades. The grant application must be submitted by Monday, January 10th. Council will hold a Special Meeting on Thursday, January 6th, 2022 at 7 PM to consider making application.

Foster, Buick, Conklin & Lundgren Law Group: No report

City Clerk li: No report

City Treasurer Dell announced a virtual meeting will be held with departmental superintendents and IPRF (IL Public Risk Fund) on loss control to be held on Tuesday, January 11th at 10 AM. Discussion will center on current workmen comp claims and reduction of such claims.

Recently a FNBO (First National Bank of Omaha) CD rolled over for five years at .05% interest. The bank was agreeable to reduce to a 6-month or 12-month CD dependent on Council’s choice. It is Treasurer’s Dell’s recommendation to take the 6-month CD at .03%. Council was in agreement with the Treasurer’s recommendation.

City Department Reports:

EMA Director Ciciora: No report

Chief Bianchi: No report

Engineering: Council was in agreement to have EEI (Engineering Enterprises, Inc) provide project updates in January. They are also scheduled to attend in February. Mayor Latham noted that the City experienced its first snow fall without incident. Additionally, he noted that the City was unable to make the hire for the waste water position, and will continue to advertise the position opening.

Aldermen Reports: Alderman Kreinbrink advised that there is a Budget Committee Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, January 5th at 4:30 PM. Police Department, water department, and water reserve budgets will be discussed. He stressed that MFT money be reviewed to assure earmarked obligations will be met.

Announcements: The Finance Committee Meeting will meet immediately following the Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting on January 3, 2022. Budget Committee will meet Wednesday, January 5th at 4:30 PM.

Audience Comments: A business concept was brought before the Council by local residents, Sandy Koehler, her daughter Brianne Koehler, Kelly McDuffee, and her son, Tristan Wyland. They are interested in purchasing the Indian Springs Shopping Center along with the 3-acre acreage to the east of the shopping center. The concept would be developed in phases with the first phase being a league-only billiard hall that would serve beer and wine. Phase 1 would not be a public bar but would offer video gaming. The Council would need to create a new liquor license for the new business. Stressing the need for children / teens entertainment, other phases would include an arcade center, an escape room concept, and a sports dome on the acreage. This matter will be placed on the January 17th agenda for further discussion.

Executive Session: Motion made by Alderwoman Johnson to move into Executive Session at 8:00 PM for collective bargaining under 5 ILCS 120 / Section 2(c)(2) "Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees". Motion was second by Alderman Whitecotton. Aye: Aldermen Fritsch, Holcomb, Johnson, Killey, Kreinbrink, Littlebrant & Whitecotton Nay: 0 Motion carried unanimously

Alderwoman Johnson made a motion to return to open session of the Council Meeting at 8:31 PM. Motion was seconded by Alderman Whitecotton. Aye: Aldermen Fritsch, Holcomb, Johnson, Killey, Littlebrant, Robinson & Whitecotton Nay:0 Motion carried 7:0

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the Council, motion made by Alderwoman Johnson and seconded by Alderman Whitecotton to adjourn the Committee-of-the-Whole council meeting at 8:33 PM. Motion carried unanimously on voice vote.

/s/ Denise li – City Clerk