



City of SANDWICH, ILLINOIS

City Hall Annex · 128 East Railroad Street

Committee-of-the-Whole Council Meeting

March 20th, 2023 immediately following Regular Council Meeting

MINUTES

Mayor Latham called the meeting to order at 8:15 PM. Roll call was taken:

Present: Mayor Latham, Clerk Li, Aldermen Erickson, Fritsch, Johnson, Killey, Kreinbrink, Robinson & Whitecotton

Quorum established

Also Present: Attorney Gottschalk, City Administrator Penman, City Treasurer Schwemlein, City Administrator Penman, Building Official Steffens, Chief Bianchi, & EMA Director Ciciora

Absent: Alderman Littlebrant

Mayor Latham

1. **Turning Point Solar Field Discussion:** Mayor Latham had an opportunity to meet with the property owner and the vice president of the company to discuss some of the City's reservations and concerns. An email was received earlier that indicated the location of the solar field will be to the southwest of the property rather than the northeast. The location of the pipeline running diagonally through the property raised concerns that remainder portions of the land would become unbuildable. Since it is a community solar field, Mayor Latham requested that a program be created that would allow low income, disabled people including veterans, people of hardship, be allowed to participate at a lesser burden for electrical energy. The Plan Commission will be meeting to determine rezoning.

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

City Clerk Li:

1. **Economic Interest Statements:** Clerk Li reminded Council that Economic Interest Statements are to be returned to the County mid-May. It is important that the date is not ignored or overlooked as hefty fines would be assessed by the County.

City Treasurer Schwemlein: No report

City Administrator Penman

1. **Griswold Springs Culvert:** Bids have been let twice that were cost prohibitive the first time, and no contract interest on the second bidding. Administrator Penman reached out to a local contractor for a quote that was \$14,000 lower than that received from the first bidding process. With

work that the City is conducting with Little Rock Township, additional money could be saved because of the new asphalt being laid. It is estimated the entire project will cost approximately \$70,000.00. This matter will be discussed further at the April 3rd meeting.

2. Illinois Municipal Insurance Co-op: Administrator Penman attended the monthly IMIC meeting. At the May meeting, there will be discussion on changing the by-law allowing withdrawal from the co-op.

3. DeKalb County Visitors Center: The Mayor and Administrator attended the most recent tourism meeting where City Clerk Li was complimented on her monthly reporting of incurred hospitality taxes. The DeKalb County tourism bureau recognized the City for their downtown and industrial park.

City Department Reports:

EMA Tom Ciciora - No report
Chief Bianchi - No report
Engineering - No report

Aldermen Reports:

Alderman Erickson reported that she has received several complaints on code violations. She also suggested that money be budgeted to provide each alderman with chrome books.

Alderman Robinson had previously commented that the rules for public comments be amended. After reviewing them at length, he feels that rules for public comments is satisfactory.

New Business:

1. International Building Code / International Residential Code: Building Official Steffens explained that the City currently uses the 2006 Edition, and via new Ordinance, the City would be adopting the 2018 Edition. He stressed the City is woefully behind, and should never be more than ten years in updating Code Editions. Meetings were conducted twice a week for over year in updating the City's Code to comply with the 2018 International Building Code and International Residential Code. Recommendations and amendments were made such as house plans would be stamped for any remodeling over 500 square feet. Residential roofing permits will now be required, and only one layer of roofing will be allowed. Changes to the International Building Code are minimal. Building Official Steffens stated he is available to explain any amendments and changes.

2. Solicitors Permits: Complaints had been received on solicitors impersonating city staff, demanding, offensive, and rude. Several aldermen asked how a solicitor's permit can be rescinded for such behavior. Mayor Latham and Attorney Gottschalk explained there is a process that includes a hearing with the offender. Council may want to investigate the City's ordinance further on this matter.

3. Discussion on Native Plantings & Wildflowers vs Noxious Weeds: Under Section 90 of the City's municipal code, native plantings and noxious weeds are discussed. Concern for safety, and visibility was raised but the Municipal Code does not directly define nor discuss such

plantings, but does address in detail noxious weeds, such as thistles. Mayor requested the Council to review Section 90 and bring back to the Council if there is a desire to amend the Code and take further action.

Announcement: The next meeting for the Finance Committee will be on Monday, April 3rd, 2023, at 6:30 PM. The Regular Council meeting will meet at 7 PM on the same date immediately followed by the Committee-of-the-Whole meeting.

Audience Comments: Resident, Jeremy Bousselot, expressed concerns on rules for public comments, including comments on social media platforms made by aldermen. Attorney Gossschalk reiterated the purpose of “audience comments” was for comments, not a question-and-answer session. If that is desired, question should be directed to a specific Council member outside the realm of a public meeting.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the Council, **motion made by Alderman Robinson and seconded by Alderwoman Erickson to adjourn the Committee-of-the-Whole council meeting at 8:52 PM. Motion carried unanimously on voice vote.**

/s/ Denise Li – City Clerk