



City of SANDWICH, ILLINOIS

City Hall Annex · 128 East Railroad Street

Committee-of-the-Whole Council Meeting

August 1st, 2022 @ 7:05 PM

MINUTES

Mayor Latham called the meeting to order at 7:11 PM. Roll call was taken:

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

Quorum established

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

Absent: Aldermen Johnson & Littlebrant, City Treasurer Schwemlein & Building Official Steffens

Mayor:

1. Parkway Ordinance 2022-13 (1st Reading): Questions focused on pre-existing drainage issues caused by homeowners laying gravel or asphalt on the City's right-of-way. For the sake of uniformity, a suggestion was to handle drainage issues on a case-by-case status. Council wanted a definition of "unimproved parkway" added to the ordinance.
2. Community Solar Fields: Three developers of community solar fields have expressed an interest in locating in Sandwich. Locations cited was east and west of Gletty Road, and north of town on Pratt Road. Mayor Latham expressed the interest might be due to the City being part of the DeKalb County Enterprise Zone. The Council was asked to consider the best use of land, a better return for the City, and the best proposal that would fit into the City's comprehensive plan.
3. IMRF Audit: A recent audit raised a question how pre-tax items were calculated. IMRP provided a standard Resolution that would state the current calculations were acceptable. The other option is to go back four calendar years making necessary adjustment calculations regardless how long the process may take internally. A straw poll reflected the Council equally divided on the two options. The Mayor favored the 4-year correction adjustments. Final vote will be placed on next week's agenda.
4. Consolidation of Meetings: Mayor Latham asked the Council to consider going from weekly meetings to bi-monthly meetings on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month. The regular voting meeting would be held first following by the committee-of-the-whole meeting. The consolidation of meetings would be comparable to neighboring communities. Mayor Latham proposed the same a year ago that failed to garner enough votes for passage.

5. Classic Cinema Request to Serve Alcohol: Chris Johnson, owner of Classic Cinemas, presented a proposal to serve alcohol to patrons during movie showings. He stressed the drinks would be canned, and there would be no sit-down bar or mixing of drinks. Employees would be Basset trained. The concept has been successful in other Classic Cinemas ownership. Questions were addressed about controlling the serving of liquor in a darkened theater. By a show of hands, the Council was unified in approving a liquor license for the theater with the exception of Alderwoman Killey and Mayor Latham (who would be a tie-breaker vote).
6. Free Alcohol Sampling for Promotional Purposes by Businesses: It has come to the City's attention that some local businesses are offering free liquor samplings to encourage business that do not hold a liquor license. City ordinance states that liquor sampling is allowable to promote the sale of a particular product. The Mayor, as liquor commissioner, will investigate the need to regulate. The business violators have been notified to cease.
7. Hotel Tax Rate – DCCVB: At a recent DeKalb County Convention and Visitors Bureau meeting, discussion concentrated on the hotel tax rate charged patrons. DeKalb charges 7%, Sycamore charges 5%, and Sandwich charges 3%. The DCCVB requested that the City increase their hotel tax rate more comparable to DeKalb and Sycamore.
8. PSA Agreement with EEI for Water Study: This topic has been discussed and approved via prior meetings, and is removed from the agenda.
9. Sandwich Park District Request to Waive Variance Fees: The Park District is requesting a variance waiver relative to the dog park to be located at 1250 Fairwind Boulevard. The variance would increase the height of a fence from the maximum 3' to 4'. Council favored knowing the true costs incurred before committing to a waiver amount. Mayor suggested the Park District go through the variance process prior to determining what costs to waive.
10. Executive Session under Section 2(c)(2) for Collective Bargaining Matters will be held later in the meeting.

Foster, Buick, Conklin, Lundgren & Gottschalk Law Group: Attorney Gottschalk supported the Mayor's request to schedule bi-monthly meetings as opposed to the current weekly meetings. By doing so, there would be attorney cost savings and more time could be devoted to researching and preparing ordinances. She added that she will be preparing a liquor license ordinance to add a new license class to include the movie theater, and amending verbiage in the parkway ordinance for approval at next week's meeting.

City Clerk li reported that the 3rd Supplemental to the City's Municipal Code has been submitted for codification consisting of 17 new ordinances. She also advised that she would like the cutoff for agenda items to be on Thursday allowing her time on Friday to finalize and make any necessary additions / amendments.

City Treasurer Schwemlein: Absent

City Department Reports:

EMA Director Ciciora: No report

Chief Bianchi: No report

Engineering: Brief update on the Latham Street project reported that additional ComEd replacement poles have arrived but remainder poles continue to be on backorder.

Executive Session: Motion made by Alderman Fritsch to move into Executive Session at 8:19 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 Erickson, Fritsch, Killey, Kreinbrink, Robinson & Whitecotton Nay: 0 Motion carried unanimously

Alderman Whitecotton made a motion to return to open session of the Council Meeting at 9:17 PM. Motion was seconded by Alderman Kreinbrink. Aye: Aldermen Erickson, Fritsch, Killey, Littlebrant, Robinson & Whitecotton Nay:0 Motion carried 6:0

Aldermen Reports:

Alderman Erickson shared a neighborhood complaint on a house in the 700 block of S. Main Street. The owner has relocated several years ago leaving the house empty. Neighbors have been maintaining the lawn. This will be reported to the police department for disposition.

Alderman Fritsch advised that weeds are 3-4 feet high west of Johnson’s Florist, adjacent to the tracks. He noted that if cleaned up, the area would create additional parking for the business district. It was unsure if the area in question is part of the City’s lease with the railroad. Street department will be notified.

Alderwoman Killey has received numerous complaints about dog waste and the lack of disposal. The City will investigate signage and means to notify pet owners of their responsibility.

Alderman Kreinbrink reported that he is moving along with the finalization of new audio equipment for the Council Chamber. The next step is scheduling an installation date.

Announcement: None

Audience Comments: Local resident, Bill Yeske, informed the Council that there is a bush in the line of vision at the intersection of Main Street and Route 34 / Church Street. The bush is located on Walgreens property, and the business will be notified to trim it.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the Council, **motion made by Alderman Robinson and seconded by Alderwoman Killey to adjourn the Committee-of-the-Whole council meeting at 9:28 PM. Motion carried unanimously on voice vote.**

/s/ Denise Li – City Clerk