



# City of SANDWICH, ILLINOIS

City Hall Annex · 128 East Railroad Street

## Committee-of-the-Whole Council Meeting

March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 immediately following Regular Council Meeting

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## 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, Littlebrant, Robinson & Whitecotton

Quorum established

**Also Present:** Attorney Gottschalk, City Administrator Penman, Street Superintendent Grube & EMA Director Ciciora

Absent: City Treasurer Schwemlein & Chief Bianchi

### **Mayor Latham**

1. Turning Point Solar Field Proposal: Mayor Latham reached out to each alderman asking for the input on the proposed solar field to be located on the west of Sandy Bluff Road, north of the railway. Council was indecisive on their opinions questioning if the proposed area was the best use of the land. A major concern was that the pipeline runs through the property and how this may affect future industry. Mayor Latham will be meeting with Alex Mendelson (senior development manager) to further discuss the proposal.

2. Opera House Sign Proposal: Rick Crispin, representing the Opera House, requested updating the existing sign to include wording "Performing Arts Theater", better lighting and lettering. The current sign was installed in the mid-1980's. The Opera House would be responsible for all costs including painting of exterior doors and railing the building that would include City Hall. Council was in total support of the project.

3. Comcast Annual Report regarding citizens' concerns was provided to the Mayor. Concerns included the number of billing complaints, installation, and termination complaints, quality of service and repair, programming, and miscellaneous complaints.

### **Foster, Buick, Conklin, Lundgren & Gottschalk Law Group:**

1. Ordinance 2023-04 entitled "An Ordinance Amending Chapter 10, Amusements and Entertainments, to Add a New Article IX, Raffles, to the City of Sandwich Municipal Code" was presented for second reading. There is no urgency to adopt this Ordinance, but Mayor Latham requested that Council review "raffle limits" shown on Page 4 of the Ordinance and also page 5 pertaining to fees and reimbursement of city costs.

2. Ordinance 2023-05 entitled “An Ordinance Amending Chapter 18 “Buildings and Building Regulations”, Article III, “Building Residential Mechanical, Fuel Gas, and Energy Conservation”, Adopting the International Residential Code, 2018 Edition as Amended” presented for first reading. Building Office Steffens is reviewing, and the concern is how Ordinance will impact residents. This ordinance will update from the current 2006 Edition. There will also be an additional ordinance forthcoming covering the International Building Code, 2018 Edition.

**City Clerk Li:**

1. FOIA Updates: Clerk Li reported that during the recent Opera House complaints involving adult entertainment, she received 5 FOIA request that required 7.45 man-hours to complete involving 2 staff members and the IT Department. Mayor Latham recommended tracking actually man-hour costs on future FOIA's.

2. Solicitors Discussion: Last week six solicitors canvassed the community selling electric and gas bundled energy programs to residents. Clerk Li said between the police department and City Hall, a record number of complaints were received. Apart from complaints that the solicitors were rude or pushy, the common consensus was the public thought the city was endorsing the product and was part of the electrical aggregation program that was discussed about 2 years ago. Under first amendment rights, the City cannot prevent soliciting if the vendor has been vetted and holds a city permit. The Clerk questioned if there was a better way of communicating with the public apart from Facebook and the City's website. Mayor Latham and Attorney Gottschalk explained due process rights and recommended a review of the City's Municipal Code to increase fee costs and reduce soliciting hours.

3. Registered Municipal Clerk Certification: Clerk Li announced that she has received her RMC (Registered Municipal Clerk) Certification for the State of Illinois. The Certification is based on skills assessment for identifying and evaluating required knowledge as well as increase of productivity and credibility within the community. She added that she has made application for the CMC (Certified Municipal Clerk) Certification that is recognized globally. She thanked the Council for their financial support in allowing her to attend the annual institutes for further education.

**City Treasurer Schwemlein:** Absent

**City Administrator Penman** thanked City Hall office staff for the challenging week enforcing the Amnesty Program.

**City Department Reports:**

EMA Tom Ciciora - No report

Chief Bianchi - Absent

Engineering - No report

**Aldermen Reports:**

Alderman Fritsch passed on his topic to discuss on a city-wide contractor for garbage services.

Alderwoman Johnson reported that she has received several calls regarding flooding and has started a spreadsheet to track. She indicated there is an issue of gravel getting into the sewer lines that may need to be addressed. She also asked that the City consider a “half-way to the fair” day to preempt the upcoming fair in September, recognize volunteers, and entry ribbon winners.

Alderman Killey said there is a lot of interest in the downtown beautification program and forms are available at City Hall.

Alderman Kreinbrink reminded everyone that the next Budget Committee Meeting will be Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM. He added that a resident recently thanked him for the maintenance of the sledding hill.

Alderman Robinson questioned if audience comments can be limited when the topic continually repeats. Attorney Gottschalk recommended a review of the City's policy on public comment.

**New Business:** None

**Announcement:** Next meeting for the Finance Committee will be on Monday, March 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

Budget Meeting will be held Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 6:30 PM.

The planning retreat will be held on Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, at 8:00 AM. Budget matters will be discussed first with department heads being present.

Bid openings for the sewer plant will be held on Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at 11 AM, and for janitorial services at the public safety building at 2 PM.

**Audience Comments:** No comments

**Adjournment:** There being no further business to come before the Council, **motion made by Alderman Robinson and seconded by Alderman Erickson to adjourn the Committee-of-the-Whole council meeting at 9:15 PM. Motion carried unanimously on voice vote.**

/s/ Denise Li – City Clerk