



City of SANDWICH, ILLINOIS

City Hall Annex · 128 East Railroad Street

Regular Council Meeting
November 20, 2023 @ 7:00 PM

MINUTES

Mayor Latham called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Assistant EMA Director Tony Eberle.

Roll call was taken:

Present: Mayor Latham, Deputy City Clerk/Administrator Penman, Alderwoman Erickson, Alderwoman Johnson; Aldermen Fritsch, Arnett, Kreinbrink, Littlebrant, Robinson & Whitecotton

Absent – City Clerk Denise li

Quorum established

Also present: City Attorney Gottschalk, City Administrator Penman, Chief Senne, Assistant EMA Director Tony Eberle, City Engineer Curt Dettmann (EEI); Street Superintendent Nick Grube.

Alderman Robinson arrived at 7:02 pm

Audience Comments:

Resident Dr. Phyllis Wallington, 513 E. 3rd Street spoke about her dissatisfaction with the City's lack of progress with our chronic property offenders. She described her most recent interaction with our code enforcement officer as being "snippy." She suggested that the city should fine them and move on. She said she has been complaining for the last 18 months.

Consent Agenda:

- a. Approval of payout #4 to Vissering Construction Company of Streator for Wastewater Facility Improvement Project in the Amount of \$367,217.82.
- b. Approval of payout to Dixon Engineering for work completed on the Green Street Water Tower at a cost of \$17,700.
- c. Approval of final payout to Universal Asphalt and Paving of Peru, IL for work completed as part of the Pavement Management Program in the amount of \$21,109.21
- d. Approval of renewal of Illinois Municipal Insurance Cooperative (IMIC) policy premiums for the next year. The amount is \$367,142 which is an 8.93% increase over last year.
- e. Approval of November Invoices totaling \$719,048.31 (includes item a.)

- f. Minutes Approval of Regular Council Minutes of November 6th, 2023
- g. Approval of Committee-of-the-Whole Minutes of November 6th, 2023
- h. Treasurer's Report & October, 2023 Financial Report

Alderman Erickson moved to accept the consent agenda as presented. Motion was seconded by Alderman Littlebrant. Aye: Alderman Erickson, Aldermen Fritsch, Arnett, Kreinbrink, Whitecotton, and Littlebrant Nay: Aldermen Robinson and Alderman Johnson

Consent Agenda passed 6 aye / 2 nay

Mayor's Report:

- a. **Recognition of Roberta Troeger** - Mayor Latham mentioned that the proclamation for Roberta Troeger will be presented to her at the December 4th Council meeting.
- b. **Approval of Street Closure** for A Merry Little Sandwich Christmas/parade – Mayor Latham discussed the street closure that has been requested by the Chamber of Commerce for the Christmas Event on December 2. He also discussed that he has been approached by Jaxon Renfrow to hold a parade in the City. The mayor expressed his concerns given the staffing issues we are currently experiencing. Acknowledged that it is a good idea, but might be too quick to put together for this year.
- c. Mayor Latham acknowledged a **moment of silence in memory of City EMA Director Tom Ciciora** who passed away on November 19th. The mayor made mention of his service and dedication to the community noting that there have only been two EMA directors in more than 30 years in Sandwich. Don Frederick and Tom Ciciora. Tom will be missed by many.

Foster, Buick, Conklin, Lundgren & Gottschalk Law Group: Attorney Gottschalk stated she would speak in the Committee of the whole meeting.

City Clerk Ij: Absent - No report

City Treasurer: Vacancy

City Administrator Penman: Penman discussed the contributions that Tom Ciciora made to the City with regard to management of the City's webpage. The level of Tom's involvement has left the city with little choice, but to look at creating a new webpage to better serve the community. Penman recommended moving forward with Civic Plus of Manhattan, Kansas to provide website hosting and page creation. It was noted that Civic Plus is the same company that is currently used for the Municode software.

Alderman Fritsch asked who would be able to make changes to the website? Penman stated that he recommends at least 3 people to have access.

Alderman Kreinbrink asked about any additional requirements that might be required of the City if the Website is handled by a full time staff person?

Atty Gottschalk stated that if the City has a full-time staff member that is responsible for the website, there are some additional expectations in the Open Meetings Act.

Motion made by Alderwoman Johnson to authorize Mayor to enter into an agreement with Civic Plus to develop a new City website and implement meeting management software in an amount not to exceed \$7,500 for year #1. Second by Alderman Arnett

Aye: Alderman Whitecotton, Alderwoman Erickson, Alderman Fritsch, Alderman Littlebrant, Alderman Robinson, Alderwoman Johnson, Alderman Arnett, Alderman Kreinbrink

City Department Reports:

EMA Assistant Director Tony Eberle – Provided a report of activities and read a letter from the Chief of Police in Sycamore in appreciation of the assistance provided by SEMA to support the Sycamore Pumpkin Festival. Tony mentioned that he will continue to handle the emergency sirens

Chief of Police Kevin Senne –

- Chief Senne gave Kudos to Tom Cicoria and his team for the assistance they provided to Sycamore for the Pumpkin Festival.
- Provided Council a written report of department activities.
- He highlighted many of the activities that are taking place:
 - Noted that traffic stops have been trending up since July.
 - Chief provided some highlights from the Police Department website
 - 1,158 instances in October. Instance includes all patrols and calls.
 - Total of 9,932 instances since the beginning of the year.
- Announced the Police Department Holiday event will be taking place on December 5 from 6:30pm - 7:30 pm at the Public Safety Building.
- Discussed the implementation of Oxcart software for Truck permitting.
- Update on Body Camera Grant – Body cameras are to be implemented by January 1, 2025
- K-9 spot for 2024. – Chief has secured a spot in the training academy for April, 2024

City Engineer – Curt Dettmann

- Latham Street Improvements – Commented that it appears utility work should be coming to a close in anticipation of Road work beginning in the Spring.
- Pavement Management Program – Developing 5-year plan: Target for presentation in Council early 2024.
- Wastewater Treatment Project – Foundations have been poured, electrical coordination with solar company continues.
- Water Rate Study Master Plan – 4th meeting took place – a presentation will be given in December.
- 2024 Sidewalk Program – walked sidewalks – putting together recommendation on sidewalk work in the future.
 - Mayor asked about an ADA Master plan.
 - Bringing proposal for ADA plan to the December 4 meeting.
 - Completion of the plan should help grant applications score higher.
 - Alderman Robinson asked about why certain sections of sidewalk were torn out as part of the Lafayette Street project. Engineer Dettmann explained that when

we are doing a road project it is sometimes more cost effective to tear out and replace whole sections (lengths) of sidewalk, rather than to work around individual “good” squares. In case of Lafayette St. there were some good sections of sidewalk that were removed and replaced, but it would have been more expensive to keep those “good sections” and tear out and replace the concrete around them.

Council Reports:

- Alderman Adam Arnett
 - Commented that the Green Street Water Tower looks great, commended Street department staff for their work on leaf collection. He mentioned that leaf collection is not happening this week, but will resume on Monday November 27th for a final week. Last day is scheduled for December, but could be extended if needed.
- Alderman Rich Robinson
 - Requested discussion of personnel in Executive Session ILCS 120/2 (c) 1

Old Business:

- a. Discussion and possible action on Mayor’s request to approve an Economic Development and Tourism Position at a \$45,000 annual compensation with benefits. Need motion to remove from the table.

Mayor discussed his thoughts on reinstating the Economic Development position.

Alderman Kreinbrink – Asked the mayor what he expected from this position. What are we going to do to secure the benefit of this?

Mayor stated some of his goals are

Website update – what available properties, zoned, and utilities available? What amenities are available?

Marketing plan - to provide information on what is available to attract individuals to Sandwich

National Shopping Center Convention – provide materials to promote our city at this type of event.

Alderman Kreinbrink asked what are we going to do help this happen? He suggested that some of the municipal code may need to be looked at to make development more attractive.

Noted that nearly all of the properties that are for sale, do not have signs as they are waiting for the right type of opportunity.

Alderwoman Johnson stated she is in favor of the position and that in her experience it is important to go out and find the right businesses, they do not just come to us.

Alderman Kreinbrink stated that he is not opposed to the position, but that he feels it is important to have clear expectations with clear deliverables and benchmarks for the position. We need someone that can come in and do the job and not need their hand held the entire way.

Alderman Arnett said he would be in favor of Economic Development and Community Development. The mayor mentioned that the bulk of the grants available for Economic Development are under the heading of Tourism.

Alderman Robinson expressed concern about the job description draft. No matter what is in the budget, that is only for salary, and there will be additional costs

Alderwoman Johnson made a motion to take the item off of the table and was seconded by Alderman Littlebrant. Voice vote to approve the position. 8 aye. 0 nays

Alderwoman Johnson moved to approve the mayor's request to hire an Economic Development and Tourism position at a \$45,000 annual compensation with benefits. Motion was seconded by Alderman Littlebrant.

Aye: Alderwoman Erickson, Aldermen Fritsch, Alderman Littlebrant; Alderman Robinson; Alderwoman Johnson; Alderman Arnett and Alderman Kreinbrink. **Nay:** Aldermen Whitecotton
Motion passed 7 aye / 1 nay

b. **Procurement Policy** – Finance Committee is working toward bringing back a proposed procurement policy for consideration in December. **Item remains tabled.**

New Business:

a. Discussion and possible action to adopt Truck Routes as revised. Penman discussed revised proposal. Chief Senne spoke about the Oxcart program he is implementing. The approved truck route list will be provided to Oxcart in an effort to assist trucks in routing through the community. It was mentioned that Engineer Dettmann for review prior to final approval. Alderman Arnett commented that as we rebuild streets, they need to be built appropriately for truck traffic.

b. **Executive Session: Motion made by Alderwoman Johnson, and seconded by Alderwoman Erickson to enter Executive Session at 8:10 pm under 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1):** "Matters pertaining to the appointment, employment, compensation or discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity. **Section 2(c)(5)** The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired; and **Section 2(c)(11) Litigation**, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting.

**Aye: Aldermen Fritsch, Alderwoman Erickson, Alderwoman Johnson, Alderman Arnett, Alderman Kreinbrink, Alderman Littlebrant, Alderman Robinson & Alderman Whitecotton
Nay:0 Motion carried 8:0**

Motion made to return to open session at 8:58 pm by Alderwoman Erickson and seconded by Alderwoman Johnson. Aye: Alderman Littlebrant, Alderman Robinson, Alderwoman Johnson, Alderman Arnett, Alderman Kreinbrink, Alderman Whitecotton, Alderwoman Erickson, Alderman Fritsch. Nay: none

- c. Discussion and possible action to proceed with condemnation of properties.

Motion was made by Alderwoman Erickson and seconded Alderman Arnett to authorize city attorney to proceed with possible litigation against owners of the following properties: 340 - 344 W. Arnold Street; 200 E. Railroad Street; 209 N. Castle Street; 724 N. Main Street; Southeast corner lot at 5th Street and Castle Street. Aye: Alderman Robinson, Alderwoman Johnson, Alderman Arnett, Alderman Kreinbrink, Alderman Whitecotton, Alderwoman Erickson, Alderman Fritsch, Alderman Littlebrant Nay: none Motion carried 8:0

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the Council, motion made by Alderwoman Erickson and seconded by Alderwoman Johnson to adjourn the Regular Council meeting at 9:02 PM. Motion carried unanimously via voice vote

/s/ Geoff Penman, Deputy City Clerk