

**CITY OF WHITING – JULY 3, 2007**

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHITING, INDIANA**

The Common Council of the City of Whiting met in regular session on Tuesday, July 3, 2007, at 6:30 p.m. with Mayor Stahura presiding. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by the invocation from Councilwoman Greer.

**I. ROLL CALL**

Councilmembers Greer, Jennings, Sarvanidis, Spebar, Stolman, and Unate were present. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Drewniak, City Attorney Sejna and interested citizens.

Councilman Zubeck was unable to attend the meeting.

**II. MINUTES**

Mayor Stahura asked for consideration of the June 5, 2007, regular Common Council meeting.

Councilman Sarvanidis moved to approve said minutes, as submitted. Councilman Stolman seconded the motion. Roll Call: (Voice) All Councilmembers voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Stahura asked for consideration of the June 19, 2007, special Common Council meeting.

Councilwoman Unate moved to approve said minutes, as submitted. Councilwoman Greer seconded the motion. Roll Call: (Voice) All Councilmembers voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

**III. COMMUNICATIONS, PETITIONS, MEMORIALS OR REMONSTRANCES**

None.

**IV. REPORT OF THE MAYOR**

Mayor Stahura wished all present a happy and safe Fourth of July.

**V. STANDING COMMITTEES**

Councilman Spebar stated that Resolution No. CC-2007-15 authorizes a temporary loan to the City's Bond Fund.

**VI. REPORT OF THE CLERK-TREASURER**

Clerk-Treasurer Drewniak asked the Councilmembers to add the following claims to their list of Accounts Payable Vouchers:

- #1682, payable to Norb Dudzik, in the amount of \$1,548.00
- #1683, payable to AT&T, in the amount of \$5,936.73

- #1684, Purchase Agreement for 1946 New York Avenue, with earnest money of \$1,000.00
- #1685, Purchase Agreement for 1944 New York Avenue, with earnest money of \$1,000.00

Clerk-Treasurer Drewniak presented Civil City Accounts Payable Vouchers #1607 - #1685 inclusive for approval.

Councilman Jennings moved to approve said Vouchers for payment; seconded by Councilman Stolman. Roll Call: (Voice) All Councilmembers voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

### **VII. REPORT OF THE CITY ATTORNEY**

No report was given.

### **VIII. SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

Councilman Stolman reported on the following highlights from the June 21<sup>st</sup> Shared Services Committee meeting:

- The Veteran's Memorial project will be expedited after the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday.
- The fire extinguisher inspections for both the School City and Civil City have been coordinated to take place in early July.
- The Chamber of Commerce wishes to use the school auditorium during the Pierogi Fest for the screening of a documentary about the Polish heritage. The City has agreed to sponsor the costs of the use through its Shared Service agreement with the School.
- Mr. Lowry forwarded a 4-H request to the school from Jim Duha, a Whiting resident.
- BP volunteered to purchase paint for the painting of the School gymnasium seating.
- Tom Rueth of Lake-Park Development will present his street lighting proposal to the School Board.
- The School was given a water billing comparison, benchmarking their new meter readings to their previous billings as an indicator for 2008 water usage budgeting.

Councilman Stolman stated that the next meeting will be held at City Hall on August 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

### **X. ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**

Councilman Spebar stated that Resolution No. CC-2007-12 was passed on June 3, 2007, authorizing a temporary loan of \$435.00 from the General Fund to the Civil City Bond Fund. This amount helped execute a payment on 2004 General Obligation Bonds. A fee is due to the Trustee of the Bonds, necessitating an additional loan at this time.

Resolution No. CC-2007-15 authorizes a temporary loan of \$1,000.00 from the General Fund to the Civil City Bond Fund, to be repaid by December 31, 2007.

There being no questions or comments, Councilman Spebar read Resolution No. CC-2007-15 by title only.

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY LOAN  
OF ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$1,000.00) FROM THE GENERAL FUND  
TO THE CIVIL CITY BOND FUND (DEBT SERVICE) OF THE CITY OF  
WHITING, INDIANA

Councilman Spebar moved to adopt Resolution No. CC-2007-15; seconded by Councilman Sarvanidis. Roll Call: Councilmembers Greer, Jennings, Sarvanidis, Spebar, Stolman, and Unate voted aye. Vote: 6 ayes, no nays, no abstentions. Motion carried unanimously.

**XI. NEW BUSINESS**

Councilman Sarvanidis moved to hold a Special Meeting of the Common Council on Tuesday, July 24, 2007, at 6:30 p.m., in the Conference Room of City Hall. Councilwoman Greer seconded the motion. Roll Call: (Voice) All Councilmembers voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Stahura noted that he found several typographical errors in the Traffic Ordinance recently passed by the Common Council. He stated that he and the City Attorney will review Ordinance No. CC-2007-1772 and present any revisions at the next Council meeting.

**XII. PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

Marianne Magro of 1734-119<sup>th</sup> Street thanked the Mayor and his Administration for their efforts to clean up Whiting and improve the City. Ms. Magro then stated that last year's Pierogi Fest Beer Garden was set up in front of 119<sup>th</sup> Street apartments without consulting the residents who would be affected. Now a daycare center has been set up in their neighborhood, near taverns, with insufficient parking available, without knowledge or consent of the neighbors. She voiced complaint about the many inconveniences her neighborhood residents endure.

Mayor Stahura agreed that the daycare center owner should have consulted the neighbors about her plans; however, she is not obligated by State law or City law to do so. Her business is regulated by State law only if there are more than six children; if there are less than six children, there are no regulations. Inspections will be made to make sure she complies with the law.

Mayor Stahura informed Ms. Magro that the Whiting Police officers regularly check Illinois license plates in town, including several sting operations during the year. Over 100 tickets have been issued, and those cited come to Court to prove residency and schedule a deadline for getting Indiana license plates.

Regarding truck traffic on 119<sup>th</sup> Street, there is a BP refinery expansion generating this contractor/truck traffic. Once Standard Avenue is open to traffic, the BP contractors can exit the refinery eastbound instead of westbound through town. When 121<sup>st</sup> Street reopens, the truck traffic will be rerouted onto that street. The Mayor noted that BP has paid Whiting Police officers to work overtime to direct traffic at shift change.

New home construction is generating a lot of the dirt that is a problem on 119<sup>th</sup> Street. By the end of this year, most of the construction dirt mounds will be gone. The Mayor noted that truck traffic coming from a secondary route on Front Street, from the labor dispute area, is not permitted and those trucks can be ticketed. The trucks from BP are following the truck route designated by the City.

Mayor Stahura apologized for the inconveniences caused by City construction. Ms. Magro informed the Mayor that she and her neighbors are upset by parking congestion as well, and asked whether a landlord is responsible for supplying parking for all his tenants. The Mayor noted that new apartments are regulated for parking, but apartment buildings that have been in existence for some time are exempt from those newer regulations. A discussion ensued about possible parking solutions, and the Mayor listed the new parking lots and parking improvements the City has funded.

Councilman Jennings noted that this parking problem exists everywhere in Whiting; he sent letters to his constituents asking them to park in their garages whenever possible. Mayor Stahura added that, when 119<sup>th</sup> Street is restriped, there will be an effort to maximize street parking, within the limits of State rules and regulations.

Councilman Sarvanidis stated that, if every person in town who has a garage would park a car in it instead of using it for storage, there would be no residential parking problems.

Councilman Spebar stated that the dirt pile on Standard Avenue is diminishing as the water line there is installed. He noted that there is also frustration with the operation of some bars in town, which operate without respect for the surrounding neighborhood and with ignorance of their clientele.

Councilwoman Unate stated that the Illinois license plate problem is being addressed, and a lot of the cars with Illinois plates have been ticketed. Mayor Stahura offered to meet with Ms. Magro and her neighbors to discuss all the problems she has brought to his attention.

Councilman Jennings stated that there was a recent article on railroad quiet zones in The Times, stating that there should be a quiet zone in Munster by this September. Mayor Stahura voiced skepticism, and noted that the railroads are notoriously unresponsive to resident complaints about whistle noise. The FRA must determine what the City of Whiting and other interested municipalities will have to do to make the railroad crossings safe so that the train whistle will no longer be needed.

Brady Phillips of 1518 Fred Street thanked the Mayor for his updates in his column in The WRite Stuff. Regarding the paving of sidewalks and streets on New York Avenue, Mr. Phillips stated that it is very difficult to walk on New York Avenue with his toddler daughter or with his father, who suffered a stroke. He asked when the sidewalk will be fixed, and why it has not been fixed to date.

Mayor Stahura noted that the repair and replacement of sidewalks are the responsibility of the homeowner. In this case, the repair would be difficult and costly, so the City helps when possible by planning sidewalk repairs throughout the City. In the case of New York Avenue, repair was delayed because of water line problems. The problem was complicated by the water line proximity to the existing sewer line. Now funding is available, and the bidding process is completed. The project is expected to begin immediately after Pierogi Fest, and will include installation of new water lines and street surface, new curbs, sidewalks, removal of as many telephone poles as possible, and installation of decorative street lighting.

Councilman Jennings apologized to Mr. Phillips for not informing him of the actual start date of the sidewalk repair. Mr. Phillips understood, and noted that so many people walk in the street rather than on the New York Avenue sidewalks that he feels it is a public safety concern.

### **XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Councilman Sarvanidis moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m.; seconded by Councilman Stolman. Roll Call: (Voice) All Councilmembers voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

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MARGARET DREWNIAK, Clerk-Treasurer