

**CITY OF WHITING – SEPTEMBER 4, 2012**

**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, September 4, 2012, 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 and Zubeck were present. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Adam, City Attorney Sejna and interested citizens.

Councilman Stolman and Councilwoman Michko were unable to attend the meeting.

**II. MINUTES**

Mayor Stahura asked for consideration of the minutes of the August 7, 2012 regular Common Council meeting.

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

Mayor Stahura asked for consideration of the minutes of the August 21, 2012, special Common Council meeting.

Councilman Spebar moved to approve said minutes, as submitted. Councilman Zubeck seconded the motion. Roll Call: (All) Councilmembers Jennings, Sarvanidis, Spebar, and Zubeck voted aye. Councilwoman Greer abstained from voting, due to her absence at said meeting. Vote: 4 ayes, no nays, no abstentions. Motion carried unanimously.

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

None.

**IV. REPORT OF THE MAYOR**

Mayor Stahura stated that the following demolitions will be underway shortly:

- 1622 LaPorte Avenue
- 2137 Indianapolis Boulevard
- 2428 Schrage Avenue

Mayor Stahura added that, within the next two months, the demolition of 2016 Davidson Place and the two homes purchased on Standard Avenue will begin. By the end of the year, demolition of the Harris Bank Building and the Horseshoe Club should be underway. The Harris Bank parking lot project was delayed until next year. In early 2013, demolition of two City-owned properties on Center Street will begin.

The Mayor informed the Council that the City is discussing options on three Whiting properties for total rehabs by multiple interested parties:

- 1632 Central Avenue
- 1712 Sheridan Avenue
- 1632 LaPorte Avenue

Mayor Stahura added that there are many interested in construction of new homes on the vacant lots on New York Avenue, John Street (former St. Mary's convent) and 1811 Sheridan Avenue.

**V. STANDING COMMITTEES**

No report was given.

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

Clerk-Treasurer Adam presented Civil City Accounts Payable Vouchers Checks #15216 - #15276 inclusive and Payroll #40 for approval.

Councilman Spebar moved to approve said Checks and Payroll for payment; seconded by Councilwoman Greer. Roll Call: (Voice) All Councilmembers voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

**VII. REPORT OF THE CITY ATTORNEY**

City Attorney Sejna informed the Council that the City of Whiting will be having a new attorney prosecute City Ordinance code violations. The current attorney has retired, and Joseph Curosh III has accepted the position. Mr. Curosh will begin work September 24, 2012.

Mayor Stahura added that the old procedure will be changed; the new prosecutor will meet with Building Department before the Court date to establish a dialogue and speed up Court proceedings.

**VIII. SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

No report was given.

**IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**X. ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**

None.

**XI. NEW BUSINESS**

Councilman Spebar reported that the Council received the 2013 Civil City Budget and the 2013 Sanitary District Budget from Clerk-Treasurer Adam and has begun the review process.

Mayor Stahura reported that the figures on the spreadsheets for the Budget are updated constantly, including the Capital Plan and cash flow figures. Year comparisons are readily available, and both the Mayor and Clerk-Treasurer Adam can answer any questions.

Councilman Sarvanidis stated that in October, because of the budget process, the regular scheduled Council meetings need to be changed as follows:

- The October 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting should be changed to October 9<sup>th</sup>; and
- The October 16<sup>th</sup> meeting should be changed to October 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Councilman Sarvanidis moved that the October Common Council be rescheduled, as presented, with both meetings at 6:30 p.m. in Council chambers. Councilman Jennings seconded the motion. Roll Call: (Voice) All Councilmembers voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

## **XII. PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

Bryan Ciers of 1831 LaPorte Avenue stated that the Council should consider ending the residential tax abatement program, which subsidizes new construction in Whiting. Prior to tax caps, it made sense; but now the program should be re-evaluated.

Mayor Stahura stated that, at some point, there may be enough activity to discontinue the tax abatement program, but not yet. Also, because of the tax caps, the residential tax abatements are minimal at this point; and some of the new construction does not qualify for abatement. The program will constantly be re-evaluated for its need.

Councilman Jennings stated that having the new prosecuting attorney meet with the Building Department is a great idea that will help streamline the court process. Mr. Jennings also complimented the clean-up after Pierogi Fest, especially the steam power washing of sidewalks/streets done by Leo Gonzalez.

## **XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further matters to come before the Common Council, Councilman Spebar moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:43 p.m. Councilwoman Greer seconded the motion. Roll Call: (Voice) All Councilmembers voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

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MARK S. ADAM, Clerk-Treasurer