

Minutes: Feb. 15, 2017, Special Meeting

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE OGLESBY CITY COUNCIL WAS HELD ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2017, AT CITY HALL. THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 5:15 P.M.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS CAREY, RIVARA, YBORRA, MAYOR FINLEY, ATTORNEY ANDREONI AND CITY CLERK CLINARD.

ABSENT: COMMISSIONER PORTER

The Mayor opened the floor to the public for comments on agenda items, there were none.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY YBORRA, SECONDED BY RIVARA to purchase a truck for the Street Department via the State Procurement Process for \$30,710. The bid includes plowing equipment. Before voting, Commissioner Carey that he had spoke with Finance Commissioner before the meeting and Commissioner Rivara has assured him that the City had the money to purchase the truck. AYES: CAREY, RIVARA, YBORRA, FINLEY. MOTION CARRIED.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY YBORRA, SECONDED BY CAREY to approve Ordinance No. 947-021517, which places stop signs at the intersection of Roebuck and Lewis Avenues. Commissioner Yborra said that he hoped the additional stop sign would alleviate some of the problems at that intersection. He instructed the City Clerk to send a letter to Badge-A-Minit to give them a heads up that the signs were going to be installed. The problem, Yborra said, is that the cars coming from Badge-A-Minit are often traveling faster than they should as they round the corner onto Roebuck. AYES: CAREY, RIVARA, YBORRA, FINLEY. MOTION CARRIED.

Commissioner Rivara then reiterated the need for a purchasing policy and a set of checks and balances for the city's finances. Rivara said the city needed "to do things differently" and needed to "look at how, and what we spend money on." In essence, he said the city is using next year's tax revenue to pay this year's bills and his hope is that the city could lessen its dependency on the \$700,000 line of credit little by little, so that eventually the city didn't need a line of credit.

Mayor Finley commented that the city had not yet tapped into the line of credit, a sign he said, that the city is doing better this year financially than in the recent past. He said the line of credit is there if the city needs it, but wanted to make sure that Rivara and the audience understood that the city has not needed it yet. Rivara countered that it was likely the city would need it "within the next 30 days." Rivara said the city needed to address the "basic culture," that if "we want to buy or do something, we just do it," without knowing if the city can afford it or not.

Commissioner Yborra said that he felt that cutting costs meant either laying off employees or cutting services, and he said that he did not feel that anyone on the council was comfortable doing either.

Talk then turned to the need to address the number of Tag Days the city allows each year. Finley told the commissioners that he had asked City Clerk Clinard to look at how other communities deal with tag days, and that he had distributed her findings to them. Commissioner Carey said he didn't want to make groups "jump through hoops," but wanted to be able to pick who could hold a tag day in Oglesby. Both he and Yborra expressed the opinion that only Oglesby groups (boys baseball, softball, etc.),

should be able to hold tag days. After much discussion it was decided that Andreoni would draft an ordinance allowing Tag Days only during the months of April through September (excluding city-sponsored organizations such as the ambulance and firefighter associations), limiting the total number of tag days to less than 15, having all requests in by March 15th, and giving Oglesby-based groups first priority. In the event that two groups ask for the same date, a lottery will be held for that date. Tag days would also not be allowed on the weekends of Summer Fun Fest and Harvest Fest.

Carey also said that he was also concerned with signage and safety equipment, and that the ordinance should address those issues. After some discussion, it was agreed that if a group fails to follow the rules regarding signage and safety equipment – which will be detailed in a letter when their tag day is approved – they will be prohibited from future tag days.

Commissioner Carey then discussed the ongoing electric issues with Wire Mesh. Carey said the city has spent almost a million dollars on the issue, and that Wire Mesh refuses to make the improvements that they need to make to address the problem. Carey said it is unfair that taxpayers are footing the bill. Carey said “he’d just as soon terminate them.” But Andreoni warned that it wasn’t as easy as that. Andreoni pushed for a meeting, this time with engineer Verbal Blakely, and Troy Fodoor, from the IMEA, to discuss the options the city has. He also discussed the need for the city to adopt ordinances that address customers with large demands that impose tariffs that pay the cost of providing those higher voltages. Andreoni said that Blakely believed that even if the city allowed Wire Mesh to get its power from Ameren, Wire Mesh would likely have to make the changes and pay for the line to their building before Ameren would agree to service them. Andreoni is to set up a meeting, Carey said he preferred to meet in person rather than a conference call.

The Mayor then asked the council how they felt about using some of the TIF monies to address the downtown area. Commissioner Carey said that he felt there were 3 or 4 buildings in the downtown area that “should come down.” Yborra said he was against it, saying that he thought TIF monies should be used for streets, water mains and sewers. Rivara said he was willing to look at something and Carey said that the downtown area needed a “good anchor” to get things going.

The council then talked briefly about home rule form of government. Andreoni told the council that the advantages to home rule “greatly outweigh” the disadvantages. He said the major advantage is that home rule allows the city “greater power to regulate and control properties in your municipality.” Commissioner Yborra was particularly interested in whether the city could impose a gas tax to help pay for streets and road improvements. Andreoni said that some people oppose home rule because they fear that governments will impose more taxes on them. He noted that changing to the home rule form of government would require a referendum, and the earliest that could happen would be in April of 2018.

The Mayor then opened the floor for public comments, there were none.

Commissioner & Mayor Reports:

Commissioner Yborra asked if the gaming revenue the city receives from the gaming at Love’s could be put aside to help pay for maintenance of the spur. He noted that painting the traffic lanes cost the city approximately \$15,000, a task that will need to be done soon.

Commissioner Yborra then told the council that a local business in town was testing its fire suppression equipment on a monthly basis, which has, at times, caused citywide problems. Yborra said that he has tried to work with this company to no avail. He says that they test the equipment – that is made to suppress a fire in 15 to 20 minutes– for hours at a time, emptying the city’s water tower and

causing problems for other businesses like Love's and the restaurants and homeowners on the west side. Yborra said that if there was a fire, he had no problem with diverting all the city's water to the site. Yborra said that it is common for sites like this to have their own tank for fire suppression, but this business does not. The line from the main is not metered, so until recently the company was not paying for the water. However, after an incident in December when the pump (which pumps between 2,000 and 3,000 gallons a minute) ran for 4.5 hours, Yborra has instructed the clerk's office to bill them. It was decided that there needed to be a meeting with the plant manager to address this. "It's time to put it (the problem) to bed," said Yborra.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY CAREY AT 6:39 PM, SECONDED BY YBORRA
to adjourn. AYES: CAREY, RIVARA, YBORRA, FINLEY. MOTION CARRIED.

Becky Clinard, City Clerk