

Committee of the Whole
August 14, 2018

Present: Mayor Pro Tempore Allesee; Councilmembers Gassman, Seeley, McGraw, Connell, Schemers, and Odor, City Attorney, City Administrator, City Clerk, Press and interested citizens. Mayor Vulich – absent.

1. Downtown Economic Development – Jim Thompson, Iowa Economic Development Authority

Thompson stated he specialized in economic development for downtowns. Thompson stated assistance could be obtained for both downtown and the Lyons neighborhood. Thompson stated a healthy downtown reflected a healthy community and provided the following benefits: a good incubator for small business, sprawl reduction, protection of property values and public investment, and a tourist attraction.

Thompson stated Main Street Iowa offered assistance to an entire town by encouraging development within the context of historic preservation. Councilmember Allesee inquired if Main Street Iowa was only for the downtown or for all of the City. Thompson stated it was for all of the City. Thompson stated the ultimate goal was to make the community a place where people chose to live.

Thompson stated empty storefronts equated to a loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars each year, while upper floor rented housing contributed tens of thousands of dollars each year to the economy. Thompson stated owner-occupied units equated to more value, as higher quality finishes and materials tended to be chosen for said structures. Thompson stated appropriate, quality housing was a must for downtown.

Thompson stated a key goal was to have a better return on investment. Thompson stated front of store and window displays helped to invite customers in and if a storefront was vacant, advertising (geared to what citizens would like in the structure) could be placed in the windows to help attract a developer. Thompson stated an “opportunities hot list” would provide potential developers and entrepreneurs with a listing of available and potentially suitable properties. Thompson stated improvements to downtown would start with one building and business at a time and success was created by having a unified vision.

Thompson stated the Community Catalyst Building Remediation Program could provide \$100,000.00 of funding toward one property for redevelopment or rehabilitation. Thompson stated the City must be the applicant, with applications due December 14, 2018. Thompson stated a match was required. Thompson stated the Community Catalyst Building Remediation Program legislation was drafted by Senator Hart and 40% of the funding was dedicated to smaller communities. Thompson stated a larger community like Clinton would need to tell a compelling story and show that it was serious about making improvements. Councilmember Seeley stated the City was serious about improving. Downtown Alliance Director Karen Rowell stated the Downtown SSMID could acquire properties needing improvement and could partner with the City. Rowell inquired if this would help make an application more compelling. Thompson answered in the affirmative and stated acquisition of property could count toward a match.

Thompson stated the Community Development Block Grant Downtown Revitalization Fund provided an award opportunity of \$500,000.00 in order to complete sixteen to twenty façades. Thompson stated Ottumwa utilized the fund and made improvements one block at a time –

now working with funds from its third application. Thompson stated there were Federal requirements and slum and blight objectives to qualify for an award – which Clinton would meet. Thompson stated awarded applications in the past few years have included dedicated City funding of \$250,000.00, dedicated funding from property owners in the amount of \$250,000.00 and a match through the Block Grant. Thompson stated a seven year easement must be granted by the property owners and it was recommended to get several structures done collectively. Thompson stated Clinton would not qualify for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Derelict Building Grant, as the grant was geared toward smaller communities.

Rowell requested that Thompson discuss the pilot program for rehabilitation. Thompson stated the Community Development Block Grant was restricted to a five year action plan. Thompson stated Ottumwa had a pilot program to focus on housing, with \$500,000.00 awarded. Thompson stated the property owners were also vested in the program and 51% of housing would be income based, with the remainder being market rate. Thompson stated if the program was successful, it would be part of the five year plan in the future.

Thompson stated the biggest issue to community improvement was apathy. Thompson stated Clinton had great offerings. Thompson stated the development team would return to Clinton County in October to complete downtown assessments for other cities in the County.

2. Purchase of Properties in SSMID District by Downtown SSMID II – Downtown Alliance Director Karen Rowell

Rowell stated permission was previously granted by the Council for the Downtown SSMID to use SSMID funds to acquire 130 5th Avenue South; however, the property had undisclosed liens and the offer had to be withdrawn. Rowell stated rather than approach the Council for each potential property the SSMID would like to acquire, it would be requested that the Council approve the ability for the SSMID to spend no more than \$25,000.00 of SSMID funds to purchase buildings. Rowell stated the SSMID Board would determine which buildings to acquire. Councilmember Connell inquired if the SSMID Board already had a structure in mind. Rowell answered in the affirmative.

M/S, Seeley-Schemers moved to forward a resolution authorizing the Downtown SSMID to spend no more than \$25,000.00 of SSMID funds to purchase buildings to the next Council agenda. On roll call, carried unanimously.

3. 28E Agreement CCASWA – City Administrator Matt Brooke

Administrator Brooke stated the 28E Agreement for the Clinton County Area Solid Waste Agency (“CCASWA”) would need to be executed by the thirteen participating cities as well as the County. Administrator Brooke stated the most recent draft of the agreement had been provided to the Council and City Attorney O’Connell and CCASWA Attorney Peavey would make final revisions.

Administrator Brooke stated the Board of Supervisors would need to vote on implementing a seven cent levy, which would cover the cost of closing cells. Administrator Brooke stated weighted votes and the head tax would be eliminated. Administrator Brooke stated a transfer station for recycling would be created at the landfill. Administrator Brooke stated the landfill board had become very cohesive and the item was on the agenda for the Council’s review and questions.

Councilmember Gassman stated the City of Clinton contributed very little waste to the landfill but paid more than everyone else for a tipping fee. Administrator Brooke stated tipping fees for solid waste could be reviewed and tipping fees for recycling could also be reviewed. Administrator Brooke stated Clinton was the only City that brought its own waste to the landfill, with all other cities utilizing contractors to haul their waste to the landfill.

Councilmember Schemers inquired if any other cities were recycling. Administrator Brooke stated during the nine months that Clinton had been utilizing single-stream recycling, there had been a 400 ton increase in recycling and a 312 ton drop in solid waste. Administrator Brooke stated the City would be considering picking up recycling each week. Administrator Brooke stated other cities were doing some recycling but not on the same scale.

Councilmember Connell stated the tipping fee should be adjusted so that the City was not penalized. Councilmember Seeley inquired how often twelve members were present at the Board meetings. Administrator Brooke stated usually eight members were present. Councilmember Seeley inquired if it would be hard to carry out operations if a super majority was not present, which was needed to spend in excess of \$15,000.00. Councilmember Seeley stated the board could vote to borrow up to \$90,000.00 without a super majority. Councilmember Seeley inquired if a board was still needed if the County would be levying for the landfill. Attorney O'Connell stated the City would not be able to get out of the 28E Agreement and the board determined borrowing. Administrator Brooke stated the board oversaw the day-to-day operations and the awarding of bids. Administrator Brooke stated the levied funds could only be used for cell closure and post-closure. Councilmember Connell stated even if the City chose to leave the landfill, it would still be responsible for all of the waste that it had brought to the landfill.

Councilmember Seeley inquired about the need for taxpayer support when there were other landfills that were privately owned and operated. Attorney O'Connell stated that discussion had occurred before. Administrator Brooke stated the item would return to a future Committee of the Whole meeting after the Board of Supervisors moved forward on the levy. Councilmember Seeley requested more information on the tipping fees and the fees paid by haulers contracted by cities to haul city waste.

4. City Flag and City Seal Discussion - Morgan Whaling

Administrator Brooke stated Morgan Whaling was a Clinton Middle School student. Whaling stated he was interested in flag design and flags helped create identity and character. Whaling presented a video on flag design. Whaling stated it was important for the flag design to be simple, to use meaningful symbolism, to use two to three basic colors, to not have lettering or seals, and to be distinctive. Whaling provided examples of flags that were well designed and that were poorly designed. Whaling stated the flag in the City of Chicago was well done and heavily used throughout the City.

Whaling stated the City of Clinton did not have a flag and presented a proposed City flag. Whaling stated the blue color on the flag represented the Mississippi River and the green color represented natural areas. Whaling stated the paddlewheel on the flag represented commerce and trade.

Whaling stated the City of Clinton currently had a seal but it could be improved. Whaling presented a proposed City seal. Whaling stated the seal had the Mississippi River, rocks, the lighthouse and a saw blade.

Administrator Brooke stated Whaling was willing to sign over his rights to the designs. Councilmembers expressed positive comments on the designs.

M/S, Schemers-Odor moved to forward the proposed City flag and City seal designs to the next Council agenda for formal approval. On roll call, carried unanimously.

5. Mayor and Council Updates

Councilmember Gassman stated the Back to School Bash and Clinton Night Out would take place on Thursday, August 16, 2018 from 3:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. Councilmember Odor stated the Community Center at the old Henry Sabin school had many offerings and positive activities for youth. Councilmember Schemers stated the “push-in” ceremony for the new fire truck was well done and well attended. Mayor Pro Tempore Allesee thanked Supervisor Determann and the Highway 30 Coalition for the Highway 30 meeting that occurred during the morning.

M/S, Gassman-Seeley moved to adjourn. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Frederick
City Clerk