

**Committee of the Whole**  
**December 6, 2016**

Present: Mayor Vulich, Council Members Gassman, Seeley, McGraw, Determann, O'Neill, Connell, and Allesee, City Administrator, City Attorney (by telephone), City Clerk, Press and interested citizens.

1. Review of City Administrator Candidates – Richard Fursman

Mr. Richard Fursman, Brimeyer Fursman, provided the Council with a brief overview of 10 of the 22 candidates who have applied for the position of City Administrator. He advised that these are the most qualified candidates. Mayor Vulich inquired regarding what happened to the other 10 candidates. Mr. Fursman stated that he reviewed the resumes and separated out the persons that did not possess the proper qualifications.

Councilmember Seeley stated that he has concerns regarding this process being rushed through and potentially leaving out some good candidates. Mr. Fursman stated that the candidates the Council will pick to interview will be good and the couple that were excluded should not cause the process to stop. He continued in stating if the Council goes through the process and does not choose a candidate, other candidates can be invited to interview.

Mr. Fursman requested that the Council write down the numbers of 5 candidates they would wish to interview on index cards he had distributed prior to the beginning of the meeting. The resulting candidate numbers for interviews were chosen: #1, #4, #5, #9, and #10. Mr. Fursman stated that a complete background check would be run on each candidate and he would compose a press release when information on the candidates can be released to the public. He continued in stating that the community can come out to the Wild Rose Casino and Resort on Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 PM to 5:30 PM to meet the candidates.

2. City Assessor Position – Dick Schrad

Interim City Administrator Dick Schrad stated that for property owners in Clinton, the City Assessor's Office is funded by an Assessor Levy in the Clinton County Levy for taxing districts. The current levy for the City Assessor is .54823 and the County Assessor levy is .35546 for a net difference of .19277 mills. If these computations were applied to a home with a \$150,000 assessed value, which would be \$112,500 when the FY18 Rollback is applied, the tax on that home for the City Assessor's Office would be \$61.68. If the City Assessor rate were replaced by the County Assessor rate, the tax on that home would be \$39.99 for a net difference of \$21.69.

The total taxation level for the City Assessor's Office in FY 17 was \$479,410. If the City should choose to abolish the Office of City Assessor, those functions would be assumed by the County Assessor. I do not know if the County would require a significant increase in budget/personnel to assume the City Assessor duties.

Interim City Administrator Schrad advised that the position of City Assessor is not a City Council appointment; but rather an appointment by a commission. He stated that this item comes before the Council for discussion regarding whether it is efficient to maintain two offices or to combine the office of the City Assessor with the office of the County Assessor. He continued

in stating that the ordinance creating the position would need to be revoked and then a new ordinance would need to be adopted combining the two offices.

Mr. John Moreland, Clinton City Assessor, stated that there are eight cities in the State of Iowa with city assessors. He continued in stating that the Mayor and Council have no control of the County Assessor. He further stated that they would only have one vote. He proceeded to state that combining the offices would double the workload of the County Assessor. He advised that in his opinion the City Assessor's Office should be maintained. 99% of the parcels are assessed by the City Assessor and 1% are assessed by the State.

Councilmember Determann inquired regarding why cities in the state gave up their city assessors. Mr. Moreland stated that sometimes there is a death or they retire, it is not done for economic reasons. Councilmember O'Neill inquired regarding whether any of the cities reinstated the office of city assessor. Mr. Moreland stated that when the office is gone, it is gone.

Ms. Jill Heims, Clinton County Assessor, advised the Council that she has spoken to the Department of Management regarding the budget; however, has not received the information about what would need to be done if the offices are combined. Councilmember Determann inquired regarding whether Ms. Heims could handle the added workload. Ms. Heims stated that with the right staff she could handle the workload.

Mr. Bill Schemers, 400 Randy Drive, advised that he moved to Clinton on July 17, 2015 and started attending Council meetings on July 18, 2015. He stated that he did not move to Clinton because he was sent here, he wanted to move here. He continued in stating that he has owned six homes in five different cities with populations from ½ half million to 5,500. He further stated that he is not pleased with the process in Clinton. He advised the Council that when he moved here he began hearing statements like "I bet you can't wait to move out". He stated that he has obtained signatures of others who are not happy with the process; however they do not want their names revealed for fear of financial retribution. He continued in stating that Clinton is one of eight cities in the state with a City Assessor and in 2016 Clinton led the state in PAAB appeals. He further stated that when compared to the County, Clinton County is last in the state for PAAB appeals. He proceeded to state that comparing the City to ten peer cities, nine do not have city assessors. He advised that he had come before the Council to request that the City Assessors office be turned over to the County Assessor.

Councilmember Allesee stated that she would like more information from the County Assessor regarding staffing. Councilmember Gassman stated that the Council does not have to make a decision right away since there is no information from the County or the School District. This has come up several times.

City Attorney Patrick O'Connell stated that he would look into whether this item will need a public hearing. He continued in stating that it would need three reading of an ordinance and staff would need to draft an ordinance.

County Supervisor Dan Srp stated that all three County Supervisors support going to one office. The Conference Boards and functions are similar and there is an opportunity for savings. He continued in stating that he would give the County Assessor as much time as necessary to get the information together for the budget.

Mayor Vulich read a section from Chapter 441 of the Iowa State Code “A city desiring to abolish the office of city assessor shall repeal the ordinance establishing the office of city assessor, notify the county conference board and the affected taxing districts, provide for the transfer of appropriate records and other matters, and provide for the abolition of the respective boards and the termination of the terms of office of the assessor and members of the respective boards. The abolition of the city assessor’s office shall take effect on July 1 following notification of the abolition unless otherwise agreed to by the affected conference boards. If notification of the proposed abolition is made after January 1, sufficient funds shall be transferred from the city assessor’s budget to fund the additional responsibilities transferred to the county assessor for the next fiscal year.”

M/S, Determann-O’Neill to move forward with the proposal to abolish the City Assessor’s Office and direct the City Attorney to draft the ordinance. On roll call, McGraw, Determann, O’Neill, Allesee – Yes; Gassman, Seeley, Connell – No. Motion carried.

3. Cell Tower Lease Extension (Ericksen Center & Chancy Sites) – Dick Schrad

Interim City Administrator Schrad advised the Council that American Tower currently has a lease agreement with the City for a tower adjacent to the Chancy Fire Station. The City of Clinton currently has equipment mounted on this tower which serves as a repeater for communication of the Regional Water Reclamation Facility. The City wishes to elevate it higher on the tower for better service. As part of this negotiation, ATC stipulated that this should be a separate License Agreement for which the city would pay a monthly license fee of \$100.00. We have been paying this fee since the repeater was installed so it represents no change.

He continued in stating that ATC originally wanted the City to pay a pro-rata share of property taxes on the site as part of the lease extension agreement. This was the issue Jessica disputed and finally prevailed as that is no longer part of the agreement.

M/S, Seeley-Connell moved to forward the Cell Tower Lease Extension to the next City Council agenda. On roll call, carried unanimously.

4. Legislative Lobbyist – Mayor Vulich

Mayor Vulich advised the Council that he had invited Threase Harms, Advocacy Strategies, to speak to the City of Camanche, the Chamber of Commerce, CRDC, City of Clinton, etc. Advocacy Strategies is a group of legislative lobbyists who meet with legislators and do follow-up on bills. He stated that they are willing to represent the group for \$15,000 divided between the City and other entities. He continued in stating that they would target three specifics the group wants to accomplish. Councilmember Connell inquire regarding whether the City would still send representatives to Des Moines Day. Mayor Vulich stated that representatives would still go; however, the items would be submitted to get on the subcommittee and they would monitor the progress. Councilmember Connell inquired regarding which fund would be used to pay for the service. Interim City Administrator Schrad stated that payment has not been discussed. Councilmember Allesee stated that it would be beneficial to have a lobbyist. Interim City Administrator Schrad stated that a lobbyist provides updates as legislation moves along. A lot of cities have their city administrator as their lobbyist. Mayor Vulich stated that the City would have a bigger presence out in Des Moines. Finance Director Anita Dalton stated that there are funds in the Demo Account which would cover the City’s cost. Councilmember O’Neill stated that the City pays the biggest share and all of the other entities gain equally. He continued in stating that he did not know how this would be accepted by the public. He further

stated that there should be an equal split. Councilmember Connell stated that the City's budget should be looked at first to find a funding source.

Mayor Vulich stated that three items of importance are the Hotel/Motel Tax, Demo Reserve and Highway 30.

M/S, Seeley-Determann moved to forward the Legislative Lobbyist contingent upon approval from the other entities. On roll call, Seeley, McGraw, Determann, O'Neill, Connell, Allesee – Yes; Gassman – No. Motion carried.

5. Selection of Community Interview Group – Mayor Vulich

Mayor Vulich advised the Council that a community group needed to be formed to conduct interviews with City Administrator candidates. He stated that this group would then meet with the Council and City Staff to discuss the candidates. He requested that the Council Members email their choices to the Interim City Administrator.

Interim City Administrator Schrad stated that the candidates would interview with the Mayor and Council, the community group and City staff. Each group will choose a chairman and a scribe and write their observations on a paper. Each group will present their observations and the City Council will then make their decision.

Ms. Deanna Galbraith, 1927 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street stated that the Community should be allowed to be present during the community group session and should be allowed to stay during the Council decision. Interim City Administrator Schrad advised that the candidates may request a closed session. He stated that when this is done in opened session it puts a damper on the other groups to share how they feel.

The Mayor and Interim City Administrator will work on this.

6. Amendments to Chapter 97 Streets and Sidewalks – Jason Craft

City Engineer Jason Craft advised the Council that when he tried to find this ordinance on the website it was not there. After investigation he found that it had only had one reading and was never adopted. He proceeded to go over the changes made to the ordinance. Interim City Administrator Schrad stated that additional work would be done on the ordinance and it would be brought back to the next City Council meeting.

7. Mayor & City Council Compensation – Gary Watters

Mr. Gary Watters, City of Clinton Maintenance, advised the Council that a Compensation Board was established to discuss Mayor and Council compensation. He stated that in 2010 the Mayor and Council began receiving a stipend for electrical devices and a raise. He continued in stating that they were requesting that the Council approve moving forward with a \$3,000 raise for the Mayor and a \$3,000 raise for Councilmembers bringing the Mayor's compensation to \$18,000 per year and the Council's compensation to \$9,000. This would result in a \$24,000 increase in the budget. He further stated that if the Council votes to move this forward it would not take effect until 2018.

Councilmember O'Neill advised the public that this does not mean that the Council is voting for a raise for themselves. This does have an impact on who may be drawn to run for office.

Councilmember Determann advised that this is not a raise for the current Mayor and Council. He stated that the Council will keep this in mind during the budget discussions.

8. Council Meeting Schedule for December – Mayor Vulich

Mayor Vulich advised that the second Council meeting falls right after Christmas. He requested that the Council consider having the Council meeting on December 20<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 AM and cancel the December 27<sup>th</sup> Council meeting and Committee of the Whole.

M/S, Gassman-Seeley moved to forward the change in the December Council meeting schedule to the next City Council agenda. On roll call, carried unanimously.

9. Mayor & Council Updates

Mayor Vulich stated that he had spent the last three days in Des Moines for the PAAB appeal. He stated that he learned a lot; however, no decision has been made. The Council will not know the outcome prior to the budget.

City Attorney Patrick O'Connell advised that the Mayor was very helpful during the appeal and assisted them during the hearing.

Interim City Administrator Schrad advised that the City received numerous calls after the snowfall and Creighton Regenwether and Amby Johnson met personally with the callers to alleviate any snow related issues. Mayor Vulich stated that he has received positive comments related to the City's snow removal. He commended Interim City Administrator Schrad for calling a snow emergency.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pat Van Loo

City Clerk