

Committee of the Whole
November 1, 2016

Present: Mayor Pro Tem Determann, Council Members Gassman, Seeley, McGraw, O'Neill, Connell, Allesee, Mr. Dick Schrad (by telephone), City Administrator, City Attorney, City Clerk, Press and interested citizens. Councilmember Connell – absent.

1. C.A.S.T. Request to place a new sign on Riverfront – David Sivright

David Sivright advised the Council that the Board of Directors for the Showboat is making a request to replace the sign on Riverfront. He stated that they would use the existing pole and replace the sign with an outdoor LED electronic message sign. He continued in stating that funding is in place with monies coming from a Fund B Grant, the CVB and Finally Fridays along with private pledges.

He advised the Council that there are three issues he would like to discuss;

1 – When seeking a sign permit they will need to request a zoning variance since Riverfront is zoned Residential; however, there is already a sign in place which may have required a variance back in 1991. He requested that the City Attorney render an opinion.

2 – There is a tree which is located south of the sign they would like to remove. The new sign will be used to advertise many community activities and the tree will be in the way. He stated that C.A.S.T. will have the tree removed and replace it with any type of tree the City desires at their expense.

3 – Amendment of the lease to cover the sign. He stated that in 2003 the City passed a resolution to lease the Showboat and the deck to C.A.S.T. He continued in stating that C.A.S.T. is requesting that the new sign be included in the lease.

Mr. Matt Parbs, CVB Board President, advised the Council that the Clinton Convention and Visitors Bureau will update the sign with community events to promote tourism.

M/S, Allesee-Connell moved to approve waiving the permit fee, direct the City Attorney to investigate whether a zoning variance is necessary and to bring this information back to the Committee of the Whole meeting on November 22, 2016.

2. Parking Lease with Clinton County – Jessica Kinser

City Administrator Kinser stated that this item is coming forward because the County would like to utilize the north and west parking lots by the baseball stadium during construction. This would be a no-rent lease and the County would be responsible for upkeep of the lots. Councilmember O'Neill stated that he thought they were requesting the lots for employee parking only, not for everyone. Administrator Kinser stated that there will be a small paved lot by the Courthouse; however, the City lots would be used for overflow and people would be shuttled to the Courthouse.

Councilmember O'Neill inquired regarding whether the City is able to establish a lease with a third party. He stated that the lots are leased to the Lumber Kings already. City Attorney Patrick O'Connell stated that he understood that the Lumber Kings approved this. He continued in stating that he was not sure if this would create a problem. A draft of the lease should be sent to the Lumber King's Board and they must agree with it before it gets moved forward.

M/S, Seeley-Connell moved to forward the parking lease with Clinton County to the next City Council meeting agenda contingent upon approval by the Lumber King's Board. On roll call, carried unanimously.

3. Police Staffing – Councilmember O’Neill

Councilmember O’Neill stated that the City did not receive the C.O.P.S. Grant and the Council has been advised to not approve the hiring of additional police officers due to the pending PAAB Appeal. He continued in stating that this is an important matter and the PAAB matter is not a valid reason to not move forward. He further stated that none of the CIP proposals are more important than hiring additional officers. They must have enough staff to back each other up. He requested Police Chief Gyrion advise the Council regarding the need for additional officers.

Police Chief Gyrion stated that currently there are four officers on shift which is the bare minimum on days and there are five officers on nights. We do the best we can with the personnel we have. He continued in stating that he would like to sit down and discuss how to come up with the funding for more officers.

Councilmember McGraw inquired regarding whether there were any impending retirements. Chief Gyrion stated that there is already someone at the academy to fill an opening. He continued in stating that he would like to have two or three more. Councilmember McGraw inquired regarding whether Clinton is behind the comparable cities. Chief Gyrion stated that there are socio-economic issues and the demographics are different. We are at minimum staffing; however, everyone is in the same boat.

Councilmember O’Neill stated that the City had a staffing study performed and eight to ten additional officers are needed. He continued in stating that he knows that it is not the same funding; however, if the City is concerned about the PAAB Appeal, why not cancel all projects. City Administrator Kinser stated that the plan was put forth at the first CIP discussion and if something happens which will affect funding it will be up to the Council to decide which projects will be done.

Councilmember O’Neill moved to forward a resolution to the next City Council agenda to hire additional police officers. Motion died for lack of a second.

Councilmember Determann requested that City Finance Director explain the funding. City Finance Director Anita Dalton advised the Council that she would not recommend borrowing for personnel. Everyone in the General Fund is paid through the 8/10 Levy. Many departments are paid out of one fund and it is not the City’s practice to borrow for operations. Councilmember Seeley suggested that a meeting take place, pre-budget, with the Police Chief, City Administrator and the Finance Director to discuss how the City can fully support the addition of police officers without additional taxes. City Administrator Kinser suggested that this be delayed until the City knows the impact of the PAAB appeal. This is not a conversation which should take place until we know what cuts need to be made. This will affect all departments. Councilmember Seeley stated that the City cannot have the PAAB appeal hanging over its head. This is a conversation which must take place and when the time comes, we will be able to move forward.

4. Lead Abatement Grant Opportunity –Jessica Kinser

City Administrator Kinser stated that ECIA has requested that the City partner with Maquoketa in the grant application process. There are 130 home in Clinton that are known to have lead hazards. Councilmember Seeley inquired regarding how the grant funds would be distributed. City Administrator Kinser stated that ECIA will be the distributors of the grant funds; however, she did not have information relating to amounts. There must be a resolution in support of the grant application and ECIA will apply for the grant for two member cities. An agreement is not necessary. Councilmember Seeley stated that he would like clarification on the percentage of grant funds the City would receive.

M/S, Seeley-Gassman moved to forward a resolution of support for the Lead Abatement Grant to the next City Council agenda contingent upon information relating to the percentage of funding the City will receive. On roll call, carried unanimously.

5. Disposal of 1456 South Bluff – Jessica Kinser

City Administrator Kinser stated that the City has owned the property since 1992. The property has drainage issues which renders it unbuildable. There is a neighbor who is interested in the property. Councilmember Seeley inquired regarding whether the neighbor maintains the property. City Administrator Kinser stated that the City maintains the property. It is zoned R-1B. Councilmember Seeley inquired regarding whether the property would be put out for bid. City Administrator Kinser stated that there would be sealed bid process.

M/S, Seeley-Gassman moved to forward the disposal of 1456 South Bluff to the next City Council agenda. On roll call, carried unanimously.

6. Mayor & Council Updates

Councilmember O'Neill stated that there will be an opened forum at the Ericksen Center on Saturday. He continued in stating that he would not be present; however, Councilmember Determann will lead the discussion.

Mayor Pro Tem Determann stated that he had attended the open house at the Roosevelt building. He thanked CHI for the great rehabilitation and suggested that they receive some kind of recognition for the project.

Councilmember McGraw thanked the City Engineer, Jason Craft for the resurfacing of 4th Avenue South.

Mayor Pro Tem Determann advised that Governor Branstad had toured Ashford Campus and attended a meeting with Mayor Vulich.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Pat Van Loo
City Clerk