

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF JANUARY 27, 2014

The minutes of the regularly scheduled Monticello City Council Meeting of January 27, 2014, held in Council Chambers of the Municipal Building in Monticello, Piatt County, Illinois.

Meeting convened at 7:00pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Corrie
Superintendent Allsop
Police Chief Carter
Maura Hankinson
Callie Jo McFarland

Alderman: Hayes
Hiller
Brown
Kuetemeyer
Stoner
Murdock
Miller

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Clerk Harlan
Alderman Brock

Mayor Corrie led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Participation-

Suzanne Wells thanked the City Council on behalf of Willow Tree Missions, for the City's donation towards Willow Tree Mission's goal of purchasing the building for their resale shop, which funds the organization. She said the City was the first "yes," which allowed 82 other donations by businesses, organizations, governments, churches, etc. to follow. Willow Tree Missions closed on the property in December.

Brian Fulton, resident, invited the City Council and staff to a "Souper Bowl" event held February 1st. Five Piatt County restaurants are participating in a chili cook-off for visitors to try and vote on. All proceeds will benefit the Piatt County Ecumenical Food Pantry.

Brian Murphy, resident, stated he understood the need for the meeting ordinance on the agenda, as some have abused the rules. He appreciates the efforts underway for the comprehensive planning process, and suggested a committee be created for the review of funding of outside organizations. He has read the Freedom of Information Act requests and was shocked by the amount of abuse.

Consent Agenda-

The mayor asked for a motion to approve the items listed on the consent agenda; Claims Report for claims dated January 14, 2014 through January 27, 2014; Budget Report of December 31, 2013; Police Report of December, 2013; and Treasurer's Report of December 31, 2013. The Council wished to leave these items on the consent agenda. Alderman Stoner made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Alderman Miller seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Mayor's Report-

Mayor Corrie asked that the public take reasonable measures to protect animals in below-zero weather.

Old Business-

Alderman Hiller addressed a letter to the editor that he took offense to, regarding the cost of a meal himself and two other city affiliates had while at a conference in Chicago. He stated the system the City has in place works, and while there could be a per diem policy, it would end up costing the city more money, which he doesn't see it necessary until there is abuse. Regarding the Illinois Municipal League Conference, he reported that there were 334 communities in attendance that included alderman, clerks, administrators and staff, and why wouldn't the City of Monticello attend to benefit. He listed some of the sessions that were attended at this years' conference.

Alderman Kuetemeyer has received calls from independent electric suppliers. He reminded that individuals do not have to participate in the electric aggregation program, but does encourage them to do their research on the rate and term length that is being offered.

Alderman Murdock stated the cost spent on the meal at the Chicago conference mentioned above is not unrealistic.

New Business-

Ordinance 2014-02; An Ordinance Amending Title III of the Municipal Code. Mayor Corrie stated this ordinance addresses a need for the council and public to recognize clearly defined rules. He read the ordinance aloud, stating that the portion which limits the public comments to only agenda items has been stricken from the ordinance. Mayor Corrie said some of these items reflect Roberts Rules of Order. He stated the need to conduct business at the meetings without disrespect, reminding that the public can disrespect the individuals, but may not disrespect the process. Alderman Hayes was pleased to see an effort to return the meetings to civil discourse. Alderman Hiller said this ordinance was thoroughly thought out and debated, which shows the sign of a good council. Alderman Miller stated the ordinance was also reviewed by multiple attorneys to make sure it was a good fit for Monticello. A motion was made by Alderman Hayes to approve Ordinance 2014-02, seconded by Alderman Miller. Motion passed 7 yes, 0 no, 1 absent.

Alderman's Reports-

Alderman Murdock reported the water department has had several water main breaks, and are continuing to identify leaks by listening to the fire hydrants. Alderman Miller commended the public works employees for their work during the cold weather. Alderman Brown provided an update on the waste water treatment plant. Alderman Hiller said as the Police Pension fund keeps coming up, he wanted to make mention that the City has made significant headway in funding it. Alderman Hayes also commended the public works employees. He is pleased the employees attend conferences to learn more information that can help/benefit the overall community. Mayor Corrie recognized the city staff's efforts as well.

Superintendent's Report-

Maura Hankinson provided a Per Diem report as requested by Mayor Corrie. Comparing six communities similar in size to Monticello, she found three communities have a per diem policy and three do not, like Monticello. Of the three with a policy, one uses \$40/ day, one uses \$50/day, and all use the GSA rating for mileage. Comparing costs associated with three conferences attended by employees (Illinois Municipal League, Civic Systems, and Pumper Expo), Ms. Hankinson stated that the city actually saved money by using the current system.

Mr. Allsop gave his apologies for not moving further on the budget than he had planned, as his time has been spent responding to the increasing number of FOIA requests. Mayor Corrie suggested Mr. Allsop advertise for a new full-time position for FOIA responses, the reasoning being that he cannot get daily business done when all his time is spent responding to FOIA requests. Alderman Hiller felt this needed to be part of the budget discussions, and suggested the council be cognizant of the current FOIA employee who is ¾ time. Alderman Hayes reminded that the Illinois Municipal League stated FOIA requests were a burden to a community that needed to be addressed. He recommended contact with legislators to let opinions be known. Alderman Miller didn't think the council should be considering hiring another position after laying one off. Alderman Stoner said with 6 to 10 FOIA requests a week, it is impossible to keep up.

Mr. Allsop said he is working on a more comprehensive budget with a 5-year projection to illustrate surpluses and deficits. He identified some equipment and projects the city has obligations to, and some projects that will need to be addressed this year. Alderman Hiller asked about road projects. Mr. Allsop said the City is still hopeful for a Jurisdictional Transfer Agreement with the Route 47 Bridge. IDOT is considering the possibility of annual payments since they do not have the funds up front. This could open the door for road projects, in addition to Motor Fuel Tax revenues.

Mayor Corrie stated the Council will go into closed session to discuss personnel (5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)), and review closed session meeting minutes. The council will come out of closed session and may or may not act on Resolution 2014-03 to release certain closed session minutes. A motion was made by Alderman Hayes, seconded by Alderman Stoner to go into closed session at 8:09pm following a short recess. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Alderman Hayes, seconded by Alderman Murdock to come out of closed session at 9:00pm. Motion carried.

The council will take no action on Resolution 2014-03.

A motion was made by Alderman Hayes, seconded by Alderman Stoner to adjourn the meeting at 9:01pm. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,

Callie Jo McFarland
City of Monticello