

The Common Council of the City of Knox met in regular session at the Knox City Hall at 7:00 PM CST with the following members present: Mayor, Rick Chambers; Clerk-Treasurer, Jeff Houston; Councilmembers, Linda Berndt, Jeff Berg, Don Kring, Greg Matt and City Attorney, Dave Matsey. Councilman, Ron Parker was absent.

RE: AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Linda Berndt made a motion seconded by Don Kring to add "Contract with Ann Mannix for BEP Grant" to the agenda. Motion passed with Four (4) ayes and No (0) nays.

RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the previous meeting were mailed to the Councilmembers prior to the meeting for their review. Jeff Berg made a motion, seconded by Don Kring to accept the minutes as presented. Motion passed with Four (4) ayes and No (0) nays.

RE: CITIZENS COMMENTS

Probationary City Police Officer Eric Vanderhoef introduced himself to the Council. He will begin the academy on March 31st and continue for 15 weeks.

RE: CONTRACT WITH ANN MANNIX FOR GRANT ASSISTANCE WITH BEP

Mayor Chambers presented the contract with Ann Mannix for help with the Blight Elimination Grant. She would charge \$50.00 an hour with a maximum of \$10,000.00. He listed various items that her firm, Neighborhood Development Associates, LLC, would be responsible for.

Jeff Berg made a motion, seconded by Linda Berndt to authorize the Mayor to sign the contract pending review by the City Attorney. Motion passed with Four (4) ayes and No (0) nays.

A copy of the contract will be on file in the Clerk-Treasurers Office.

RE: WOMEN ANCHORED IN HOPE - REQUEST FOR USE OF COMMUNITY CENTER.

Mayor Chambers said the representative of Women Anchored in Hope could not attend the Council meeting but was requesting the use of the Community Center for free for April 25, 2015. Her name is Kathleen Davidson, she wants to hold a community event for women offering hope and uplifting support of women recovering from substance abuse and make known that they offer this help to people in Starke County. Don Kring made a motion, seconded by Linda Berndt to offer the "A" side of the Community Center for free for April 25, 2015. Linda Berndt seconded the motion. Motion passed with Four (4) ayes and No (0) nays.

RE: DUMPSTER ORDINANCE #1150 - 2ND READING

Mayor Chambers presented the Council with the latest version of the dumpster ordinance that incorporated the changes the council requested at the last meeting.

Various new suggestions were made to be included in the new ordinance including allowing a dumpster on private property in the back of a residence with a fence around it and a building permit or for a 10 day period within a 30 day period once a year, an amended version of the ordinance will be presented at the next council meeting. Greg Matt made a motion seconded by Don Kring to table the ordinance. Motion passed with Four (4) ayes and No (0) nays.

RE: FIREWORKS DATE FOR 2015

Mayor Chambers said no one contacted the Mayors office stating a preference for when the fireworks should be held, an informal poll by WKVI showed Five (5) people in favor of having them on Friday July 3rd and two (2) in favor of Saturday the 4th.

An informal poll of the Council was taken and the consensus was to hold the display on Friday July 3rd.

RE: PARK SUPERINTENDENT APPOINTMENT

Mayor Chambers announced that the Park Board nominated George Byer again as Park Superintendent. He has again been appointed to that position.

RE: CLERK-TREASURERS REPORT

Clerk-Treasurer Jeff Houston told the council the budget order came back from the state and it came in just under the max levy by \$45.00. The maximum levy is the maximum amount of money the City can collect from taxes. Clerk-Treasurer Houston noted that he spoke to Matt Parkinson from the Department of Local Government Finance who said the City will know in April about how much the tax caps will affect the budget. At that time each department will be told how much will need to be cut. This is the same process that was used last year. The total budget this year is 2.8 million dollars.

RE: MAYORS REPORT

Mayor Chambers reported the following items: The Mayor is putting together a year end report for each department to re-cap 2014. There is a meeting on Thursday about the planning grant with Green 3 at the Community Center at 6:30 PM. Anyone is invited to attend.

The next park board meeting will be on February 26th at the Knox City Hall and the Farmers Market vendors have been invited to attend.

There was a meeting last Wednesday with the Harvest Festival Committee. There is an individual who has volunteered to run the festival. The next meeting will be Wednesday February 11th at 10:30 AM anyone who wants to help out can attend.

Pizza Hut is closing down March 1st for six weeks for remodeling.

The Blight Elimination Program Grant is waiting for an inspector from the state to check for recyclable materials in the homes to be demolished or hazardous materials such as asbestos. The state has been asked for an extension on the re-hab housing grant.

Mr. Poindexter from the school who is working on the project on the corner of Main and Lake has been in contact with Hensler Nursery about donating trees. The Mayor wants to make sure the trees won't interfere with the power lines in the area. The Mayor will bring it back to the Council when a particular tree or shrub is selected.

RE: COUNCIL ITEMS

Councilman Greg Matt noted that there was another afternoon that there was no crossing guard at the school. He said it is the City's responsibility to have someone there.

The Mayor said the guard texted him and was told to text the police chief, but the chief was also unavailable. She has been told to call the jail when she is not available and be sure to talk to someone.

Councilman Don Kring asked if there could be some lines painted on to indicate a turn lane in front of the grade school. The Mayor said maybe a center line and turning line could be painted to help the flow in the area. He will have the MVH department look at the situation.

Councilperson Linda Berndt asked about replacing the traffic light in that area. The Mayor said he will receive a quote soon from a company that is replacing a number of lights in LaPorte County.

Councilman Jeff Berg noted that the building at 10 South Heaton Street looks really bad. He thinks the building should perhaps be razed. He asked what the City could do to improve the Heaton Street corridor and perhaps have the building removed. The Mayor said he will have the Building Commissioner look at the building.

RE: MOVING COMMON COUNCIL MEETING

Don Kring made a motion to change the Council meeting scheduled for Tuesday February 24th to Monday February 23rd Greg Matt seconded the motion. Motion passed with Four (4) ayes and No (0) nays.

RE: VOUCHERS AND ALLOWANCES

the following properly filed vouchers (see Voucher Docket, Voucher #19687 - #19736) were presented and approved.

There being no further business to come before the council at this time the meeting upon motion was duly adjourned.

  
Rick Chambers, Mayor

Attest:  
Jeffery J. Houston, Clerk-Treasurer