

The Common Council of the City of Knox met in regular session at the Knox City Hall at 7:00 PM CST on Tuesday July 8, 2014 with the following members present: Mayor, Rick Chambers; Clerk-Treasurer, Jeff Houston; Councilmembers, Don Kring, Greg Matt, Ron Parker, Linda Berndt, Jeff Berg and City Attorney, Dave Matsey.

There were no amendments to the agenda.

RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the previous meeting were mailed to the Councilmembers prior to the meeting for their review. Linda Berndt made a motion, seconded by Jeff Berg to approve the minutes as presented. Motion passed with Five (5) ayes and No (0) nays.

RE: CITIZENS COMMENTS

Elizabeth Bratt came before the board to complain that several properties along Shield Street have very tall grass and items continually for sale. She noted the problem isn't just on Shield. Mayor Chambers said he already notified three property owners on Shield two weeks ago that have had their properties mowed. Three other property owners have been notified to mow their properties and the City is giving them five days to get that done. The Mayor said it is difficult to keep up with the problem properties.

Steve Dodge noted that the new weed and rank vegetation Ordinance should say grass needs to be under 8 inches or 10 inches not six inches as written now.

Mary Bendt thanked the City for its help with the up coming event to be held at Wythogan Park, called Wood Starke. It will feature mostly music venues and be family oriented. Blue Star Mothers are going to have a parade that day and there is also supposed to be a 5K run sponsored by Moving Starke County Foreward. The event will be held on September 13.

RE: ORDINANCE #1148 - TALL GRASS - 2ND READING

Mayor Chambers presented Ordinance #1148 - Tall Grass and Rank Vegetation for second reading to the Council.

Ron Parker made a motion, seconded by Don Kring to change section 11-3 to read that grass could be no taller than 8 inches. Motion passed with Five (5) ayes and No (0) nays.

Greg Matt made a motion seconded by Don Kring to change section 11-9 to read the fine should be \$75.00 instead of \$25.00. Motion passed with Five (5) ayes and No (0) nays.

Linda Berndt made a motion seconded by Ron Parker to approve Ordinance #1148 on second reading with those two changes. Motion passed with Five (5) ayes and No (0) nays.

RE: ORDINANCE #1147 - 2015 SALARY ORDINANCE - 2ND READING

Clerk-Treasurer Jeff Houston presented the 2015 Salary Ordinance #1147 to the Council that calls for a 3% increase across the board. Also presented was how much per year each worker would receive, the impact on the overall budget and salary comparison to other City's.

A lengthy discussion took place. Jeff Berg made a motion, seconded by Greg Matt to approve Ordinance #1147 on second reading. Motion passed with Three (3) ayes: Jeff Berg, Greg Matt and Linda Berndt, and Two (2) nays: Ron Parker and Don Kring.

RE: CLERK-TREASURER'S REPORT

Clerk-Treasurer Houston reported the following items: A Starke County Commission of Public Records was held on June 26 with the County and other interested parties. The City has already finished thier distruction of old records.

The Clerk-Treasurer will meet with the DLGF on July 25 and will come up with a final budget calendar.

The sign grant is now in the black as we have been reimbursed by the state.

The Knox Community Center has been chosen Banquet Center Best of Starke County.

The City received a check for \$965.38 as a refund due to the Affordable Care Act. The City will keep 85% and 15% refunded to individual employees.

RE: CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

City Attorney Dave Matsey reported that he attended the Municiple Attorney's Conference. Some of the topics discussed were such things as the elimination of the personal property tax. Attorney Matsey handed out an article written by Morton Marcus independent economist and writer that shows that it is a mistake to shift taxes away from the personal property. The fair labor standard act was discussed as it affects overtime and the minimum wage. The Attorney recommends the City institute a safe harbor policy to protect the City from mistakes made on pay. Brownfields were discussed and how they relate to our insurance policies. Bonds and bonding issues and required reports on TIF and how money is being used in those districts. Unemployment changes and appeals were also discussed.

RE: MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Chambers said he attended Circuit Court and Bernie Yunge petitioned the court to expunge his D felony he received for defrauding the City. He testified that he re-paid the money back.

