

The Common Council of the City of Knox met in regular session Tuesday May 10, 2018 in the Knox City Hall at 7:00 PM CST with the following members present: Mayor, Dennis Estok; Clerk-Treasurer, Jeff Houston; Councilmembers, Ron Parker, Don Kring, Jeff Berg, and City Attorney, Leslie Baker. Councilmembers, Bertha Blue and Tim Manns were absent.

RE: PUBLIC HEARING – 5 YEAR PARK MASTER PLAN

Mayor Dennis Estok opened the Public Hearing on the 5 year Park Plan.

Mike Reese from Troyer Group presented the plan to the council and public citizens present asked a few questions that were answered by Mr. Reese. The Mayor closed the public hearing. No objections were voiced.

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 approve the minutes as presented. Motion passed with Three (3) ayes and No (0) nays.

RE: PUBLIC HEARING: J.W. HICKS HOLDING LLC – PETITION FOR ANNEXATION INTO THE CITY

Mayor Dennis Estok opened a public hearing for voluntary annexation of 17 acres into the City of Knox Industrial Park for J.W. Hicks. The land is already zoned M-2 (Heavy Industrial). The City has given the required 20 day notice. Ron Gifford outlined the plan for expansion of the J.W. Hicks campus. No objections were heard from the constituents.

RE: RESOLUTION #962 – APPROVING THE 5 YEAR PARK MASTER PLAN

Don Kring made a motion, seconded by Ron Parker to approve Resolution #962. The Five Year Park Master Plan. Motion passed with Three (3) ayes and No (0) nays.

RE: ORDINANCE #1167 – DESCRIBING THE OFFICIAL DUTIES OF COMMON COUNCIL MEMBERS AND PROVIDING FOR RULES TO GOVERN PROCEEDINGS (I.C. 36-4-6-6) WHEREBY A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL MAY BE EXPELLED OR SEAT VACATED ACCORDING TO LAW – 1ST READING

John Molitor, Attorney at Law presented Ordinance #1167 to the Council. He explained that the ordinance establishes policies about attendance and sufficient constituent representation. He stated that under State law I.C. 36-4-6-6 the council has the power to expel a member or to declare the member's seat vacant when the member doesn't participate in meetings, but the home rule law says that you would need to pass an ordinance to put a procedure in place.

Ron Parker made a motion, seconded by Jeff Berg to approve Ordinance #1167 on first reading. Motion passed with Three (3) ayes and No (0) nays.

Don Kring made a motion, seconded by Ron Parker to suspend the rules and take a second and final vote on Ordinance #1167. Motion passed with Three (3) ayes and No (0) nays.

Jeff Berg made a motion, seconded by Don Kring to approve Ordinance #1167 on second and final reading. Motion passed with Three (3) ayes and No (0) nays.

Attorney Molitor told the Council that the next step in the process will be for the City Attorney to draw up a bill of impeachment outlining the rules that have been broken, referencing consecutive absences as proof that a Councilmember isn't performing his duties. In order for an expulsion to pass, two thirds of the members (4 members) would need to vote in favor of it to pass.

RE: ORDINANCE #1155 - AMENDING ORDINANCE #1090 - GOLF CART REGULATIONS – 2ND AND FINAL READING

Mayor Estok said the Golf Cart Ordinance is not clear when a new license is due. He noted that the Ordinance just states that a license is good for one year. The Mayor consulted with Police Chief Harold Smith and it was suggested that the year run May 1st to April 30th. Local resident Don Marshall asked that the start be July 1st through June 30th. He also objected to where the license needs to be posted on the cart. Don Kring made a motion to add that the license should run from June 1 to May 31st of the following year and approve Ordinance #1155 on second and final reading. Jeff Berg seconded the motion. Motion passed with Three (3) ayes and No (0) nays.

RE: STARKE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

Larry Wickert, Director of the SCEDF. He said he would like to see a coordinated effort between the City and surrounding communities to qualify for the Steller Communities Program. He noted that Culver was designated last year as a Steller Community. From now on it has to be a regional effort. It could be the County and three incorporated communities to apply according to OCRA. He will supply additional information soon.

RE: KNOX REDEVELOPMENT PILOT PROJECT

Mayor Estok announced that the Redevelopment Commission has purchased a downtown building to re-hab and use as an incubator for a business to help re-vitalize the downtown area. Incentives will be used to entice new businesses downtown. The City will own the building and after the business becomes successful the entrepreneur would buy the building.

The City will work with the Small Business Development Center with Ron Gifford from SCEDF.

Councilmembers expressed support for the project and some positive development downtown already was noted.

Ron Gifford explained what the Small Business Development Center can do to help develop a successful business model for a prospective business. He noted that the program is funded through the Small Business Administration Center in Crown Point. Ron is in charge of Starke and Pulaski County and their services are free to the businesses. He assists them when they go to the bank for a loan or to the City for assistance in getting started. They work with them once the business is established to make sure they don't make common mistakes and assists them in marketing a prospect, who would then be immediately referred to him and then sent back to the City for their acceptance.

The Mayor noted that it will be a while before it goes to market. Marsha Boggs, President of the Development Commission was also present and the Mayor thanked the Commission for its support for the other City projects like the splash pad, performance stage, mural etc.

RE: CLERK-TREASURER'S REPORT

Clerk-Treasurer Houston thanked the citizens for being patient with all the road construction and rehabilitation going on and said that it will be worth it when the work is complete.

RE: MAYOR'S REPORT

An updated time schedule for the fire truck general obligation bonds was distributed to the Council prior to the meeting. The Mayor said Umbaugh suggested moving ahead earlier to take advantage of lower interest rates and may be a lower pre pay price from manufacturer, Toyne. We should close by June 28 with the bond sale taking place June 14.

Mayor Estok told those present that the money for the recent road paving came from the Community Crossings Grant. This is the third year the City has received it. The City doesn't know how much longer the program will last after 2022 or so, but the City wants to take advantage of it while it still is available.

Mayor Estok said the City cleanup is May 19 and 20th from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the Wastewater facility. People need to bring an ID and utility bill.

There will be a car show at the park on May 26th. The Neuter Scooter will be coming again to the City on Friday June 15th. One hundred and twenty cats were neutered last time. They are also working with a company that will trap feral cats.

Work on the concession stand will begin on Monday, May 14th. He hopes it will be up and functioning by the 4th of July.

RE: COUNCIL ITEMS

Councilmember Jeff Berg noted recent new businesses opening in the town including the B & K.

RE: VOUCHERS AND ALLOWANCES

The following properly filed vouchers (see Voucher Docket, Voucher #25509 - #25592 inclusive) were presented and approved. Voucher

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

Dennis Estok, Mayor

Attest: _____
Jeffery J. Houston, Clerk-Treasurer