

October 6, 2021

## WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The Winchester City Council held their monthly meeting October 6, 2021 at City Hall.

Mayor McIntire called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. with the following council in attendance: Lawrence Coultas, Ron Bell, Terry Gregory, Bill Jacquot, Sandy Long, Jeff Pittman, and City Clerk Teri Little

Also, in attendance were Wanda Cody, City Treasurer; Caleb Handy, Police Chief; John Paul Coonrod, City Attorney; Greg Hillis, Benton & Associates; John Simmons, City Supt of Public Works; Bryan and Molly Taylor; Jill Cox; Dennis Savage; Phill Night; Andre Noel; Lee Conley. Carmen Ensinger, Scott County Times.

Sandy Long led those attending meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MOTION:** Lawrence Coultas moved, and Terry Gregory seconded to pay the bills as presented. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Mayor McIntire asked for any corrections for the minutes September 1, 2021 meeting.

**MOTION:** Lawrence Coultas moved, and Jeff Pittman seconded to approve and dispense with the reading of the minutes of the regular September 1, 2021 meeting. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Bryan and Molly Taylor were present to inquire on status of the Tax Abatement they had submitted for Molly's new business. Molly was present at last month's meeting and the council had tabled the request so they could go over the requirements of the program and get something in writing for future requests.

Bryan questioned how they would have known to come to council prior to starting on construction of the building? They had checked into several locations in town prior to construction of the new building. The other locations were not suited to what was needed. They wanted to keep the business local and they are wanting to expand the seed business as well.

The open house for Elite Health and Wellness is October 15<sup>th</sup> and opening day is October 18<sup>th</sup>.

Taylor also stated that he only received 1 of the 2 payments for the COVID relief payments that were issued in May. Mayor McIntire will check into that and get the other check issued.

Mayor Rex McIntire recommended to the council that they approve the Tax Abatement for the new business.

**MOTION:** Lawrence Coultas moved, and Ron Bell seconded to approve Tax Rebate Resolution 2021-10-01 for Elite Health and Wellness. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Jill Cox from the pool board was present to advise that Rebecca Erickson had resigned from the pool board and would like to appoint Tamara Galloway to fill the spot.

**MOTION:** Ron Bell moved, and Bill Jacquot seconded to accept the resignation of Rebecca Erickson and appoint Tamara Galloway to the pool board. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Phil Knight and Andre Noel from Suez Water Technologies and Solutions were present to present a short presentation on the water and gas meter reading technology that they offer. They currently own 15 water utilities and is the largest owner/operator of advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) systems in the country. This program has many advantages. It can offer hourly readings instead of monthly readings. It can allow you to see a leak before it becomes an issue. The system allows for readings to come directly to city hall and also be able to turn services on and off with the click of a button. No more going to the residence to manually turn on and off. They will come in and change out meters that need updated and install something on current meters to be able to allow them to be read by the system. It also, allows the city to be able to cut down on billing adjustments and forecast revenue for the month. They also offer an app for customers to be able to monitor their own water and gas usage.

Cost for the system, installation and towers would be \$910,000 to \$950,000. This can be paid over 5 years with a delay of the first payment a year after purchase. With looking over the past billings they estimate that in the first year for water only we could see an increase of \$140,000.00 in revenue.

The council thanked Mr. Noel for the presentation and that they would discuss and get back to them soon.

Lee Conley was in attendance and wanted to bring the condition of his neighbor's home to the city's attention. He states that he is in a property line dispute at the current time and will be having property surveyed but he is currently wanting assistance in getting the owner to clean up his property. Dennis Savage is the current owner of the property. He had been mowing and blew grass and debris on his vehicle and cracked his windshield. He has offered to purchase the property in back and he has refused to sell. The grass is over grown, 55-gallon drums, trash and debris. It is just inviting rats, mice and snakes. He has burned mattresses and now an old couch in the yard. He will not maintain the property or sell it so asking the city to assist in having something done. He provided numerous pictures. John Simmons stated he has cited Mr. Savage many times over the years. Pam Jackson the neighbor on the other side has also called and complained about the issues as well. John Paul Coonrod stated that the only thing city could do is bring a nuisance citation against Savage.

Dennis Savage was present and requested to see the pictures. He had no other comments.

Greg Hillis, Benton & Associates announced that we had been awarded the largest USDA Community grant in the state of Illinois for \$331,000.00 for the library expansion. This will bring the local share down to \$82,750.00 with the library portion being about \$70,000.00 we are going to be ahead of the game. Hillis recommended the council accept the low bid from Trotter General Contracting.



**MOTION:** Bill Jacquot moved, and Ron Bell seconded to accept the bid for the library expansion by Trotter General Contracting for \$515,000.00. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Hillis stated that there had been a mistake made on the past bill for the MFT estimate. The State of Illinois sets the amount engineering firms are allowed to charge. The previous statement was for \$4534.00 and it actually should have been \$4434.00. It is a \$100.00 less that first quoted.

**MOTION:** Lawrence Coultas moved, and Terry Gregory seconded to approve the payment to Benton & Associates for the amount of \$4434.00. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Hillis also announced that there was a new grant program just announced. It is Rebuild Illinois Main Street and Downtown Capitol Program. There is \$50 million dollars available for downtown square improvements. It is 100% grant and he hopes to have more information at the November council meeting.

The sewer grant is still not available but they are ready to submit once it opens.

Mayor McIntire brought up the construction job that is in the works for the Illinois Rural Electric sewer line that runs under Cherry Street to the building. Council agreed that the heavier pipe would be best route at this time. City will need to acquire bonds for the job.

Hillis advised that the survey on the Coultas property would start this next week to place the points.

The bill for the oil and chipping by Illinois Valley paving was submitted for approval. Total was \$71,665.22

**MOTION:** Lawrence Coultas moved, and Ron Bell seconded to approve payment to Illinois Valley Paving for road improvement for amount not to exceed \$71,665.22. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Teri Little, City Clerk requested to be able to block the square off for Trunk or Treat on Saturday October 30<sup>th</sup>. It has grown each year and last year we had over 300 children come thru. Having the square blocked off provides more safety to the children and also able to spread out so not so much congestion.

Council agreed to allow this and also that the official trick or treating for Winchester will also be October 30<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 pm to 8 pm.

Caleb Handy, Police Chief passed out his monthly report. His report is as follows: Arrests – 3; Assist EMS – 5; Assist outside agency (police) - 5; Assist Motorist – 5; Attempt to Locate (Warrants) – 4; Burglary – 1; Child Exchange – 4; Clear Roadway (obstructions) – 1; Domestic disturbance – 10; Fight – 1; Harassment – 1; Juvenile - 6; Paper Service – 4; Property damage – 1; Property exchange – 2; Prowler – 1; Scam Alert – 2; Speak to officer – 19; Suicidal Subject – 1; Suspicious Person – 7; Suspicious vehicle – 3; Theft – 1; Traffic stops – Citations – 1; Traffic stops – verbal warning – 3; Trespassing – 2; Well-being checks – 5. Mileage for the month is 1615 miles.

The new police truck is ready except for the radio and cage. These are on back order; however, they will allow us to use one of their radios till the new one comes in.

The bill for the repair to the unmarked are was actually \$800.00 less than quoted.

Officer Handy stated that Chase Burk is doing great and should be done with the academy on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. He also would like to schedule a time to meet with the personnel committee.

**Bill Jacquot, City Alderman** stated that he made calls to 3 of the past bidders on the cemetery restorations to see why they did not bid this year. He contacted Daws Monuments, Crocket Masonry and Jacksonville Monument and all three stated that they were all extremely busy and unable to bid on the project this year. Since it is already late in the year it was decided to hold off and have the job re-bid next year.

He is also working with Amanda and Wanda on getting a detailed report for the pool revenue and expenses for the year.

**Wanda Cody, City Treasurer** passed out the profit/loss statement for the month and the expenses. She also had a report listing all accounts and their balances for all 3 banks.

**Lawrence Coultas, City Alderman** selected 140 residents September water usage. Standard deviation was 1826 gallons which indicates 68% of residents water usage is between 1196 and 4848 gallons per month.

Coultas presented 2 different options for the rate increase. Option one would increase 1<sup>st</sup> 1000 gallons from \$14.30 to \$14.80. next 3000 gallons from \$1.15/100 to \$1.33/100, next 3000 gallons from \$0.87/100 to \$1.18/100 and over 7000 gallons \$0.74/100 to \$1.03/100. Second option is 1<sup>st</sup> 1000 gallons \$14.00 and after 1000 gallons \$1.40 per 100 gallons.

There has not been a rate increase since 2015. The council agreed that option 2 would be the best choice. This would not be in effect until 01/01/2022.

Water Committee will meet and discuss the 3 vendors that have submitted quotes for the meter reading systems and the vote will be in the November Council meeting

**John Simmons, Supt of Public Works** report as follows: Locate tickets – 24; Work orders – 29; Funerals/grave digs – 3; Replaced gas meters – 5; New or replaced gas service with new meters – 3; Replaced water meters – 1; New or replaced water services – 1; Water leak repairs – 2; Poured concrete – 5 yards; More cold patching; 2 snow plows repaired; Monthly brush picked up; Monthly meter reading; Monthly odorant report; Monthly sniff test gas; Mowing; Water tower inspection; Repaired on emergency gas valve; Oiled & Chipped streets; Locate several graves for Monument Company; Cut down 2 big trees in park.

Needing to replace tires on John Deere Gator. The lowest quote was for \$707.44 for 4 tires and mounting.

**MOTION:** Ron Bell moved, and Terry Gregory seconded to approve the purchase of tires for the John Deere gator not to exceed \$800.00. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.



Simmons stated that he would like to insulate the well housing. This will help keep it from freezing up in the winter. Quote from Best Systems in Pittsfield is \$2617.70.

**MOTION:** Ron Bell moved, and Terry Gregory seconded to approve insulation for the well housing by Best Systems for \$2617.70. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Simmon's requested that the on-call pay be raised from \$150.00 to \$200.00. This has been the same pay since the 1990's. This has been brought up to him from all the guys recently. When on call the person has to be available 24/7 on weekends and also 4 pm to 7 am during the week. Each person is on call for a week at a time. This restricts whomever is on call on what or where they are able to do or go. The reason for on call originally was for gas calls only but over time the job has changed and encompasses all duties.

**MOTION:** Terry Gregory moved, and Ron Bell seconded to approve increase on-call pay from \$150.00 to \$200.00. Roll call resulted in 5 yeas and one abstain. Motion carried.

A new door is needed for the utility room at the restrooms in Monument Park. The door has been kicked in so many times that it will no longer close. John will get prices for the next meeting.

**Jeff Pittman, Building** advised that there is an 8x14 spot that needs repaired prior to putting down the last of the roof. This should stop the leaking in the soundproof room in John's area. Should be done first part of the week.

Pittman reported that John Coonrod is working on the issue with the Rita Howland house.

The council considered proceedings to condemn the house on Cherry St.

**MOTION:** Jeff Pittman moved, and Ron Bell seconded to approve moving forward with condemning the house on Cherry St. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Mayor McIntire advised that there was a closing date set for FS to purchase the Drake house, however, Brandy (the daughter) did not show up for the appointment. So, at this time it is still on hold.

**Mayor Rex McIntire** discussed the renewal of the Illinois Municipal League Risk Management Policy. This is the cities insurance policy. Total is \$59,326.27 if paid by 11/19/2021. This also includes the Illinois Municipal League Dues.

**MOTION:** Ron Bell moved, and Lawrence Coultas seconded to approve renewal of Illinois Municipal League Risk Management policy for \$59,326.27. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Mayor McIntire asked about the flag for City Hall. Teri Little, City Clerk will get quotes for next meeting to present to the council.

**John Paul Coonrod, City Attorney** advised while the Attorney Generals Office's online training for the open meetings act, which is required for all city officials, is still unavailable, The Illinois Municipal League is now offering an alternative accredited course. He will get the details to the city clerk, who will speak with the council about the course.

Coonrod stated that the ordinance to change the speed limit within the city is on hold at this time. The city engineer, Reg Benton, needs to map out the signage. Once this is done then can proceed.

Ordinance 924 was presented for approval. This is an ordinance to establish a property tax rebate program. This rebate program is designed to incentivize and assist property owners in the construction, upkeep, rehabilitation and restoration of eligible properties. Ordinance 924 is to set all criteria in writing.

**MOTION:** Lawrence Coultas moved, and Jeff Pittman seconded to approve Ordinance 924. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Ordinance 925 was presented for approval. This is to amend the prior ordinance for animal control fees. Redemption of impounded dogs was changed to \$20.00 for the first time the dog is impounded and also \$20.00 per day until the animal is claimed. For the second time the animal is impounded will be \$40.00 and \$20.00 per day. For the third time it would cost the owner \$60.00 and \$20.00 per day.

**MOTION:** Terry Gregory moved, and Ron Bell seconded to approve Ordinance 925. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Coonrod gave update on Municipal Court cases. 8 were authorized and 4 were not served. He advised the officers to take and tape to door of the 4 not served. Of the 4 others served they have cleaned up and/or did as the citation states.

Manchester was present at the hearing and had 2 out of 3 cases. Therefore, Manchester paid two-thirds of court costs.

There are 3 citations that need approval to serve


1. Travis McNeece, 139 High St for inoperable vehicle
2. Toby Hammond, Lewis St accumulation of junk, trash, inoperable vehicles and rodents
3. Dennis Savage, 234 W Cross St for debris, weeds and rodents

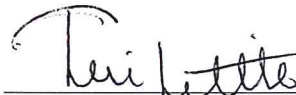
**MOTION:** Bill Jacquot moved, and Terry Gregory seconded to approve citing the 3 citations. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

**MOTION:** Bill Jacquot moved, and Terry Gregory second to approve 3 Municipal Court Citations. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

No public comments.

**MOTION:** Jeff Pittman moved, and Terry Gregory second to move to adjourn 11:15 pm. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

  
Rex McIntire, Mayor

  
Teri Little, City Clerk