

February 7, 2022

## WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The Winchester City Council held their monthly meeting February 7, 2022 at City Hall.

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

Also, in attendance were Wanda Cody, City Treasurer; Caleb Handy, Police Chief; John Simmons, Supt of Public Works; John Paul Coonrod, City Attorney; Greg Hillis, Benton & Associates; Ben Cox, WLDS; Carmen Ensinger, Scott County Times; Barb and Steve Hoots; Stevie VanDeVelde; Sonnie Hoover.

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

Wanda Cody, City Treasurer presented bills for approval.

**MOTION:** Bill Jacquot moved, and Jeff Pittman seconded to pay the bills as presented. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Mayor McIntire asked for any corrections for the minutes January 5, 2022 meeting.

**MOTION:** Bill Jacquot moved, and Sandy Long seconded to approve and dispense with the reading of the minutes of the regular January 5, 2022 meeting. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Robin Malloy, Accountant was on the agenda to present the audit, but due to a family emergency she was unable to attend.

Greg Hillis, Benton & Associates presented an application to pay Trotter General Contractors for library construction that has been completed. Pay request is for \$29,121.75. Windows and concrete blocks are still on back order. Fifty percent of the frame work is complete.

**MOTION:** Terry Gregory moved, and Bill Jacquot seconded to approve Payment of Application Trotter General Contractors for amount of \$29,121.75. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Until the library grant money is received from the USDA and Secretary of State the city will need to transfer money from General Fund to the Library Fund for current payments. This will be reimbursed once the grant money is received.

**MOTION:** Terry Gregory moved, and Jeff Pittman seconded to approve interfund loan approval to transfer money from the General Fund to the Library Fund as needed to be reimbursed with library grants. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

The USDA grant for the pool renovations is still being checked into. Seems as though the department went from 8 to 3 employees and they are trying to locate information. Hillis will report on the progress next month.

Hillis and the Water committee have met 3 times to go over the water main issues that the city has been facing. John Simmons supplied a detailed report of all the breaks that have happened in the past. He stated there is money out there to help with this project. Grants from USDA and EPA are the best funding options that the city would benefit from. The Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) was presented for approval. This will give Benton and Associates the information they will need to find the best options available. If a health threat can be provided due to the leaks it can actually make the grant percentage higher. USDA could provide 38-year loan at 1.25% interest and the EPA has loans at .84% for a maximum of 20 years.

Since the prior PER was done for the elevated water tower, the new PER is for the water main project only which is for an amount of \$15,000.00. The total cost of the project with the water main upgrades and elevated water tower is approximately \$3.4 million. This would include engineering, legal and bond cost and interest. The city is not committing to the project. The PER is for allowing Benton and Associates to look for what funds are available

**MOTION:** Ron Bell moved, and Terry Gregory seconded approval of Letter Agreement Preliminary Engineering Report for \$15,000 to Benton & Associates. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Sonnie Hoover and Stevie VanDeVelde, Winchester Historical Society presented the updates they are wishing to make to the Depot. There have not been any updates to the inside for 30-40 years. The Bread of Love used the building for many years so the carpet is needing replaced from the wear and tear and stains. By upgrading the building, it will allow for more rental and community event options. A listing was passed out to describe all improvements that they are wanting to accomplish such as new flooring, kitchen counters, new toilets and sinks in bathroom and kitchen. A new coat of interior paint for entire building. Initially the mayor was contacted in hopes of grants that could be applied for. Unfortunately, there are no historical grants available at this time. Prior to COVID several fundraisers had been done that collected about \$6500.00. Expenses for running the depot are about \$5000.00 a year. They are requesting assistance from the city thru the TIF improvement program. The program is set up to help with Façade and Roofing improvements. The program does not include interior improvements. However, since the Historical Society is a non-profit organization, the work would be permissible under the terms of the current TIF agreement if the City would agree to assist the group. Mayor McIntire stated that the group works along side the Civic Group on events and would like to continue seeing this in the future. He recommended that the council approve.

**MOTION:** Terry Gregory moved, and Jeff Pittman seconded to approve TIF funding for The Depot improvements not to exceed \$5000.00 upon completion in line with the existing funding. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

Teri Little, City Clerk presented invoice for 2 new trash cans. There are one or two that do not have lids and we are not able to get replacements. These were order thru Amazon for total of \$747.16.

**MOTION:** Ron Bell moved, and Jeff Pittman seconded to approve the purchase of 2 trash cans for \$747.16. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.



**Caleb Handy, Police Chief** passed out his monthly report. His report is as follows: Animal Complaint – 2; Assist EMS – 6; Assist Outside Agency (Police) – 4; Assist Fire Department/Fire Call – 5; Building Alarm – 1; Child Exchange – 1; Clear Roadway(Obstructions) – 1; Domestic Disturbance – 2; Golf Cart Inspection – 1; Interviews – 3; Juvenile – 1; Noise Complaint – 3; Paper Service – 3; Speak to Officer – 28; Suicidal Subject – 1; Suspicious Person – 2; Suspicious Vehicle – 1; Theft – 1; Traffic Accidents – 1; Traffic Stops-Citations – 3; Traffic Stops-Verbal Warnings – 9; Traffic Stops-Written Warnings – 3; Trespassing – 2; Vehicle Complaint – 2; Well-Being Checks – 1. Total Vehicle Miles – 1531.

Chief Handy pointed out that citations were up this month and he was happy to see this.

Annual employee evaluations have started as well.

The police truck has been in use. Still waiting on the additional equipment.

**Wanda Cody, City Treasurer** passed out the profit/loss statement for the month and the expenses.

**John Simmons, Supt of Public Works** report as follows: Locate tickets – 7; Work orders – 20; Funerals/grave openings – 3; Replaced gas meters – 2; Replaced water meter – 3; Monthly brush picked up; Monthly meter reading – 3 days; Monthly odorant report; Monthly sniff test gas; Gas Leak Call – 1; Plowed Snow - 1 day.

An estimate on the 2020 Big Truck to change from electric to hydraulic is \$5000.00 to \$6000.00. This is needed due to the electric portion is not working for the needs of spreading salt as it is freezing up and not allowing the truck to lift. With the previous cold weather there were issues with it freezing up and going thru batteries.

Alderman Jacquot suggested we wait out the warranty and then revisit replacing.

Utility Safety and Design presented a proposal to convert the City's gas main information into a master system map. This will enable the city to receive new data and new pipeline safety compliance information.

This GIS system, Geographic Information System, is not mandatory right now, but Simmons stated it probably would be in the near future. So might as well look into it now and discuss next month.

Spring 2022 Training Seminar March 31 in Auburn will be \$100.00 each and Derik and Joseph will be attending.

Lights are needing to be replaced at the water plant. Alderman Pittman stated he spoke with Randy Long from Illinois Rural Electric about pole security lights. They can install 3 40-watt and 1 100-watt security lights and it will be a cost of \$57.50 a month. Illinois Rural Electric will be responsible for maintenance and upkeep.

Gregory Electric gave estimate on replacing lights inside water plant. It would be the change over from regular lighting to LED lights. This will add better lighting and savings on the monthly bills.

**MOTION:** Ron Bell moved, and Sandy Long seconded to approve the change to LED lighting at the Water Plant by Gregory Electric not to exceed \$1000.00. Roll call resulted in 4 yeas and one abstain. Motion carried.

**MOTION:** Ron Bell moved, and Terry Gregory seconded to approve allowing 3- 40 Watt and 1 -100 Watt Security lights to be installed by Illinois Rural Electric for \$57.50 a month. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

**Mayor Rex McIntire** requested that the payment schedule for the new cell tower be reviewed as the city has only received the first payment. Attorney Coonrod will check into the situation.

Budget Billing adjustments will be done on an annual basis, in April, going forward. The City has been lax in enforcing the rules of budget billing and people have been taking advantage of this. Going forward the rules will apply to all on this program. In April the monthly payment is set and that amount is due every month no matter if the bill is lower or higher. At the end of the year (catch up month) the member will be expected to pay any additional amount due and if any credit is available, it will be applied to the next month billing. If a person fails to comply with the guidelines they will be removed from the program.

Mayor McIntire asked about approval for the city's mark up on gas from \$3.00 to \$3.15 a deco therm. Attorney Coonrod stated that a new ordinance was not needed as Ordinance 859 dated 12-6-2017 authorized the increase.

The city had waived the late fees during COVID to help customers manage during the hard times, however, this has been abused as well.

Mayor McIntire is concerned on the late and delinquent payments. Seems the current penalties do not seem to effect people. There are several habitually late customers. Right now, the city runs about 12 1/2% delinquent, about 90 people, almost monthly. It may be time to impose higher penalties for the re-occurring accounts. Also, raise the \$50.00 reconnect fee to \$100.00 each time. For return check for NSF funds after 2 occasions a customer will need to pay by cash or money order.

Some customers have stated that they didn't receive a bill. Mayor McIntire stated that the bills are sent the same time every month and are due by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month. This has been the schedule for years. You know the bill is due and when, whether you get a bill or not. Need to budget accordingly. He advised there are always some with extenuating circumstances and these will be looked at on case-by-case basis. A customer has a 10-day grace period after the 25<sup>th</sup> to pay the bill or a disconnect notice will be sent.

It was decided to discuss and finalize the new fees and penalties to be effective May 1<sup>st</sup>.

A letter was received from the Outreach Center for donation. It did not have a specific reason for the donation. It was to first look and see the total we have donated in the past.

**John Paul Coonrod, City Attorney** advised on condemning the Gauges house on Cherry St. First hearing was held last month. The mortgage has been released and bank dismissed and it is on fast track to show abandonment in a month or two.

Coonrod asked permission to get a few quotes on recodification of the city ordinances this has not been done since 2014. Council agreed.

Platt map for Dollar General has been received for approval. Mayor McIntire stated that the Dollar General owners are hoping to have the new building completed by September 2022.

**MOTION:** Bill Jacquot moved, and Ron Bell second to move to approve Sub Division Platt for Dollar General subject to purchase of land and also approval of City Engineer. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

No public comments.

**MOTION:** Bill Jacquot moved, and Jeff Pittman second to move to adjourn 9:58 pm. Roll call resulted in all yeas. Motion carried.

  
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Rex McIntire, Mayor

  
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Teri Little, City Clerk