

City Council Minutes: December 3, 2007

CITY OF FULTON

PUBLIC HEARING

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DECEMBER 3, 2007

Mayor Van Zuiden opened the public hearing for public input on the proposed tax levy increase. Fulton resident Marvin Jech questioned whether an increase is really necessary and urged the council to exercise fiscal restraint. Mr. Jech stated his taxes have increased considerably over the last nine years. Another resident Bud Berzinski said he would like more information on why the increase is needed and what the city intends to do with the additional money and how did the council go about determining what is needed. Jim Rippon, resident and owner of five rental properties stated he opposed the increase.

Ald. Roels explained that the city has never levied the total needed for IMRF, insurance and Social Security, but instead have been paying those expenses from the general fund and water & sewer fund.

Ald. C. Letcher stated this was not a decision the council came to over the last week but over the course of the last four years.

Ald. Dykstra said the council has to be fiscally responsible. Ald. Loerop said we need to build back up the water and sewer reserves.

The hearing was closed at 6:10 PM.

Mayor Van Zuiden called the meeting to order and directed the clerk to call the roll. On roll call, Mayor Howard Van Zuiden, Aldermen Charles Dykstra, Gene Field, Merle Sterenberg, Charlie Letcher, Warren Juist, Wes Letcher, Bill Loerop and Ron Roels answered present. Also present were Randy Balk - City Administrator, Dan Clark - Public Works Director, Heather Bennett - Tourism Director, Jim Rhoades - Chief of Police.

The pledge of allegiance was recited. There was no invocation as the pastor had to leave for another meeting before the public hearing was over.

There was no communication from visitors.

Ald. Sterenberg moved, seconded by Ald. Field to approve the regular council meeting minutes of November 19, 2007. Roll call vote/all yes/motion carried.

Ald. Roels said he understands the comments made here tonight regarding the tax levy increase and although he is not enthusiastic about raising taxes, he is convinced it is necessary. Ald. C. Letcher reiterated that it is not a lightly made decision. Ald. Sterenberg said it makes it hard for retired people but it needs to be done.

Ald. C. Letcher moved, seconded by Ald. Juist to pass Ordinance No. 1360, Tax Levy Ordinance for the Fiscal year commencing May 1, 2007 and ending April 30, 2008. Roll call vote/all yes/motion carried.

Ald. C. Letcher moved, seconded by Ald. Roels to pass Ordinance No. 1361 Abating the Tax Heretofore Levied for the Year 2007 to Pay the Principal of and Interest on \$1,445,000 General Obligation Waterworks and Sewerage Refunding Bonds, Series 2004 and Ordinance No. 1362 Abating the Tax Heretofore Levied for the Year 2007 to Pay the Principal of and Interest on \$784,000 General Obligation Bonds, Series 2005. Roll call vote/all yes/motion carried.

Ald. Dykstra moved, seconded by Ald. W. Letcher to support John and Ellie Skornia's request for the use of a storage pod until May 1, 2008. They are the owners of J & E Marine and recently moved a lot of items from Clinton where they operated the marina for the last nine years. Their insurance company will not cover items stored "off property" and they need some time to get organized. They plan to open a store and small service shop in the spring. Mr. Skornia was at the meeting and said they would definitely have the pod out of there before May 1, 2008. Roll call vote/all yes/motion carried.

Ald. Field moved, seconded by Ald. C. Letcher to approve Christmas bonus checks for the staff based on last year's motion, which was a net check amount of \$200 for full time employees and a net check amount of \$100 for part time employees. Roll call vote/all yes/motion carried.

Ald. Field moved, seconded by Ald. W. Letcher to approve the move of the New Year's Eve holiday to Good Friday in the personnel policies. Roll call vote/all yes/motion carried. This will spread out the holidays better and allow the staff to better serve the public.

Ald. Roels moved, seconded by Ald. C. Letcher to approve two street closure requests for the upcoming Christmas Walk. Roll call vote/all yes/motion carried.

Ald. Dykstra moved, seconded by Ald. Sterenberg to give the executive committee the power to act in approving the bill list since the council will not be meeting as a whole on the 3rd Monday of December. Roll call vote/all yes/motion carried.

Ald. Roels moved, seconded by Ald. Loerop to apply hotel/motel tax revenue received this year to the Heritage Canyon parking lot loan. Roll call vote/all yes/motion carried.

New Business. Randy Balk said due to the recent ice storm ComEd had 117,000 customers without power, 115,000 of which have been restored. Some residents in attendance at the meeting said they were still without power so Randy offered to call ComEd after the meeting to find out when they could expect their service to be restored.

Ald. Roels moved, seconded by Ald. C. Letcher to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:35pm.

Minutes recorded by,

Linda Hollis

City Clerk