

City Council Minutes: March 16, 2009

CITY OF FULTON

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 16, 2009

5:30 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 in attendance were Randy Balk - City Administrator, Bill Shirk - City Attorney, Dan Clark - Public Works Director, Heather Bennett - Tourism/Chamber Director, Garry Medema - Treasurer, Clink Kettler - Zoning Officer and Jim Rhoades - Police Chief (who arrived late due to a police emergency).

The pledge of allegiance was recited. There was no invocation.

Communication from visitors. Larry Russell, mayoral candidate addressed the council because he was displeased that Mayor Van Zuiden's state of the city information was in the city newsletter. He said it stuck in his craw when he saw it and wondered if the council had approved the newsletter before it was sent. He is going to put out his own statement and although he is not asking the city to supply the mailing labels, he thinks the city should pass a resolution after the election prohibiting the publication of the state of the city in the city newsletter prior to an election. Ald. Field said he did not follow Mr. Russell's thinking and said that the Mayor has every right to issue a state of the city and there is no reason that it should have not been in the newsletter at this time.

Heather Bennett introduced three downtown business owners to the council who spoke to the council on the cause and effect of tourism. Wendy Ottens, owner of Sweet Woodruff for two and a half years, said tourism brings new life and new business. Her business sees a large increase in customers during Dutch Days and Fall Festival. She said she invested her time and money in Fulton because it is a destination town. All the downtown businesses are so supportive of one another; each referring customers to the other stores and attractions in Fulton. The city's many volunteers want Fulton to succeed, but they need the support of the council to do that.

Bill Blecha spoke next explaining that he and his wife moved to Fulton because of the windmill and because the city has so much potential and wonderful resources. He said we need to think about the big picture and should try to build a population that is going to give back to the community. They own 2 buildings downtown and are renovating both of them in the hope of attracting quality renters.

Susan May, owner of Susan's Calico Creations, Attic Woods and Ole Tyme Christmas has had a business in Fulton for eight years. She said people come to Fulton from far away to see the attractions and visit the shops. She feels the community should look at more ways to increase tourism, such as bus tours.

Heather Bennett then went over some of the highlights on her written report which was provided to the council in their packets. She reported a 105% increase in hits on the city's website over the past year. The Lincoln Highway gazebo project should be built by mid to late summer.

Ald. Sterenberg moved, seconded by Ald. Field to approve the February 16, 2009 regular council meeting minutes. Roll call vote/all yes/motion carried.

Ald. C. Letcher moved, seconded by Ald. Sterenberg to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Roll call vote/all yes/motion carried.

Ald. Roels moved, seconded by Ald. C. Letcher to approve the bill list as presented. Roll call vote/all yes/motion carried.

Ald. Dykstra moved, seconded by Ald. Roels to pass Ordinance No. 1386 Authorizing a Variance for Certain Property (Keith and Vickie Norman, 501 11th Avenue) for a garage that will be 156 square feet greater than the 960 square feet limit. Roll call vote/all yes/motion carried. The zoning board approved the variance by a vote of 4-2.

There was a request to amend the personnel policy manual with regard to the residency requirement for all personnel. The police department personnel are permitted to live within a 30 mile radius of the city limits, while public works employees are required to reside within the Riverbend School District. The change to the policy will be on the next council agenda.

The next item on the agenda was an ordinance to authorize the sale of certain personal property owned by the city of Fulton; that being the old bricks recovered from the demolition of the former JT Cullen manufacturing facility. Ald. Roels moved, seconded by Ald. Juist to pass the ordinance. Volunteer millers, Heidi Kolk and Ed Kolk, who were in attendance said the bricks were removed by the volunteers and belong to them. Ald. Roels withdrew his motion and Dan Clark will meet with the chief miller to discuss the disposition of the bricks.

Public Works Director reported that Rt. 136 Bridge is scheduled for improvements and will be closed April 20th for approximately 13 days. It may be an additional 40 days with one lane closed.

Old Business. The Jo-Carroll Energy agreement is going back to them for revisions.

A procedure is in place for the 14 abandoned boats at the marina. The city will either secure the storage fees owed or after 30 days, make the boats available for auction. The police department will begin work on this process immediately.

Ald. Sterenberg moved, seconded by Ald. Field to enter executive session to discuss the purchase or lease of property. Roll call vote/all yes/motion carried.

The council entered executive session at 6:30PM. Executive session minutes are recorded elsewhere.

The council returned to regular session at 6:45PM and immediately adjourned.

Minutes recorded by,

Linda Hollis

City Clerk

