

Minutes
City of Villa Grove, Illinois
Committee of the Whole Meeting
February 24, 2020

Call to Order—Roll Call: The City Council of the City of Villa Grove met in committee session on Monday, February 24, 2020, in Council Chambers. Mayor Eversole-Gunter called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Roll call found the following members present: Aldermen Garrett, Hooker, Johnson and Pangburn. Advisory members Hutchison and Mixell were present, as well as City Administrator Athey, Fire Chief Elston, Police Chief Gire and PW Director Arbuckle. City Clerk Osborne was absent.

Pledge of Allegiance: The Mayor stood and led all attendees in The Pledge of Allegiance.

Engineer Reports: No one from Fehr Graham was present. Arbuckle stated that in relation to this we are just waiting for the river to go down to complete the relocation of the force mains for IDOT. The Mayor stated that she felt that IDOT was overly optimistic about the changed schedule expectation to under a calendar year.

Public Comments: There were no members of the public present.

At this time, the Mayor asked Phil Donelson of Utility Pipe Sales to go ahead with his presentation on meter upgrades to allow him drive time back home. Donelson presented a handout to members for reference, and went over the history of the meters, the intricacies of their systems and the advantages to moving to more automated reading systems. A “worst case” price quote was presented, meaning that the entire project could be new meter installations contracted out to be done very quickly as opposed to retrofitting receivers to current meters or installing the new meters ourselves. He also had an actual meter with the radio head attachment for members to see/feel. Donelson invited members to tour another committee already installed and using the system if they would be interested in seeing the program live.

Council touched on several issues concerning how projects are financed through the EPA, how City labor and customer services would be impacted, as well as various pricing and plans for total replacement. Council concurred to consider the matter further and look into financing of the project, and to plan to get this into the strategic plan later this year. Council asked Athey to come up with some numbers that equate water loss to revenue loss.

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City Administrator Reports: Athey explained that it was “business as usual” with the office still being short-staffed. She noted that the budget process is a bit behind schedule the published timetable but can still be completed on time. Athey also spoke to the governor’s proposed budgets, noting that revenues will be hit if the upcoming progressive income tax changes are not approved in the November election. She also noted that with the Census being this year, it’s basically a lot of strange things coming together at once that will impact our revenues for next year, so it will probably be best to be conservative and leave the revenues flat since upcoming changes are not known.

Mayoral Reports: The Mayor said that in relation to the senior center budget, we would be looking at the extra costs we have incurred to provide services to the surrounding rural areas that should not be subsidized by Villa Grove taxpayers.

The Mayor asked about the Census process and how we could monitor it locally, and Athey replied that since it’s a Federal task there is little to do on our side to influence their thoroughness with the count. Local input should just be keeping it in the forefront and letting people know how important it is to us and it’s impacts.

Other Reports: Mayor Eversole-Gunter asked Arbuckle the status of the crosswalks north of the school; Athey replied that the easements for the McCoy Avenue crosswalk had been forwarded to the respective landowners for completion. Chief Elston reported that he recently had to make a quick decision on the purchase of used fire hose (since the opportunity had been missed last year) and that a bill for \$1,200 would be coming for that very soon. He also mentioned that plans are coming together for the prom accident demo for juniors/seniors, with the helicopter coming to land during the exercise as well. Chief Gire reported that the new part-time officer had just completed some additional training and was working very well.

Discussion of Pending Business:

Mayor Eversole-Gunter raised the issue of having both regular employees working overtime and part-time help to cover the clean-up days event since elected officials have so many

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commitments and should not be handling some of the items for insurance purposes. She also stated that she would not be willing to over-exert herself physically and risk being hurt, and that any female employees should be the same way. Tire charges were briefly discussed, and the consensus was to increase the fee by \$0.25-0.50 to cover the extra tires that are dumped overnight. Scheduling was then discussed, and the weekends of either June 12-13 or 26-27 were selected, in order to avoid conflicts with the IHSA state softball championship and Father's Day weekend.

There were no comments on the financial statements presented.

Discussion about the wind/solar ordinance and potential cannabis zoning ordinances were discussed. Athey reported that Building Inspector Mike Broeker could not be in attendance for the meeting, but that they would touch base the following morning concerning the public hearing dates required so that Beth Elston would be able to advertise and notify the P&Z board members of the issues. She referenced an email from Marc Miller on the process to proceed with the potential ordinance changes; she also noted that the earliest potential date for the change will be April.

An email request from local resident Rod Vollmer was discussed, concerning his home business handling firearm sales. He is already federal licensed, but the ATF recently conducted a review that showed that his physical location does not allow for this type of business according to the City's land use/zoning codes. The initial resolution was to create a definition for this type of business under the list of approved special use activities, and then allow Vollmer to apply for a special use permit. After some back and forth, Alderman Garrett recommended that the definition of home occupations be updated to address businesses operated via the internet. Council concurred that this should be drafted for approval at the next regular meeting.

Adjournment: With no further items to be discussed, all members concurred to conclude the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted,



Jacqueline S. Athey, CIMT, CPFA, CPFIM
City Administrator

xc: Mayor
City Council
Building Inspector
Department Heads
File