

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE ZION CITY COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2020, AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 2828 SHERIDAN ROAD, ZION, ILLINOIS

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Mayor McKinney called the meeting to order.

On call of the roll the following answered present: Commissioners Holmes, Frierson, McDowell, Fischer, and Mayor McKinney. A quorum was present.

Also present: Police Chief Kirk Henderson, City Administrator David Knabel, and City Attorney James Vasselli. Fire/Rescue Chief John Lewis, Building & Zoning Director Richard Ianson and Public Works Director Ray Roberts were absent.

Mr. William Bremner led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor McKinney asked for a moment of silence to get rid of the hatred in our hearts and communities for all of those who have lost people dear to them and the first responders who work so hard.

AGENDA CHANGES

It was moved by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Holmes to accept the City Council meeting agenda as presented.

The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mayor McKinney reminded citizens of the guidelines as it relates to public comments.

Peggy Hardy, Zion, stated she lives on 19th Street. She has a neighbor that has a sump pump that is creating a water issue. In April she spoke with Building Inspector Bob Surano regarding this issue. He told her he would talk with homeowners about the issue and get it resolved. Now it is September and he still has not spoken with the neighbors. She had to spend \$125.00 to deal with the water issue. She left a message for Mr. Surano and he called back and asked what the issue was. She explained the issues to him and told him it was still not resolved. He told her someone was currently working on it. She stated per the City ordinance the sump pump is supposed to go underneath the ground and away from her property. She had words with Mr. Surano and he hung up on her. She stated she is tired of the rudeness of the City workers in Zion. Mr. Surano is not the first. She had someone come out and inspect a culvert she needed to have retrenched. He also had an attitude. The water is sitting next to her house all year round. The attitude from City workers is bad. She shouldn't have to go through these issues with City workers. She questions why the neighbors did not get fined and wonders if they are Mr. Surano's friends. There does not seem to be consistency.

Denise Lear, Zion, stated her nephew was killed over the weekend in Zion. They have been residents of Zion since 1969. There have been so many young men that have died in Zion. She can't let this death go unanswered and she wants justice. Months ago she asked the Council to lighten up the City. The darkness is not preventing crime it's helping the criminals. She loves this City and wants something done to help the save kids as a child was also shot. She asked that landlords be notified immediately when things happen at their properties.

Pamela Drone, Zion, stated she is part of the Lear family and she is hurting. The corner where her nephew was killed is bad and it's been like that for years. All she wants is justice for her nephew.

Shawn T. White, Zion, stated he wants to lodge a complaint. After speaking with the City Attorney, Mayor and Building Director he does not believe he was given a fair shake as far as how he was talked to. His questions were not answered by the Attorney and he did not appreciate the way he was talked to by him. He would like to know who decides what an intended use of a property is, the City or the homeowner. He is trying to comply. He has to pay more money to be in compliance. In order to work on his own house he must be the general contractor. He has to pay someone to put in the window. He wants to know how many avenues he has to go through to get this right. He knows the City can't make everyone happy but they have to work with residents who are trying to comply with City codes.

Commissioner Holmes stated she feels for the Lear family. She is indirectly related to the nephew that was killed.

Kathy Champine, Zion, stated she suspects that recent events are on everyone's minds. She stated when they have these discussions they usually omit the ones that are most vulnerable, the children. She stated children are the silent observers of community violence. It is even more so in African American and Hispanic communities due to the disproportionate amount of policing in their neighborhoods. When arrest, jail or death separate the children from their parents the stress can affect their health into their adult life. Witnessing police violence shapes how children see themselves and can taint their racial identity. In order for children to feel good about themselves and do better in school we must make them feel safe. If the police can obtain grant funding she suggested possible de-escalation training for police officers. She asks it as a pro-active move not a criticism of the police.

Clyde McLemore, Zion, offered condolences to the Lear family. He stated five years ago when he started to coming to meetings he saw a lot and didn't present it very well. He was a bully and always upset meetings. He had a vision of what he was trying to get to and founded the movement of Black Lives Matter. He got beat up then but has since proved everyone wrong. Although he never received a grant and safety has always been the main focus. To protest is a person's constitutional right. The purpose is to call attention to the issues. This past week there was an incident in Kenosha. He was there after someone was shot and the neighborhood got rowdy but they were able to calm things down. He protested but the press did not show the peaceful protests. The media only showed the destruction and Black Lives Matter was blamed. He will burn anything up or loot anything. He has people around him that watch his back. He is aware of all the bad protests. He has been all over the country and has never seen a white militia group come out. When they came out with their guns he asked if they wanted to march with them. One of the men killed was his body guard and he was by his side with his skateboard. Today President Trump came though Zion. He thought they had accomplished something. He knew racism would not go away in just five years. A person said to him, "If you don't like it, then go back to Africa." To hear this in his home town he was hurt and disturbed. Five years ago he would have been going to jail but he had enough intelligence to put his head down. He asked what is going on with the Country and the City. He has been here 25 years and would like to help the City come back.

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Holmes that the Minutes be approved as follows:

- (a) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** a Regular Meeting held on August 18, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner McDowell that the Bills be approved as follows:

- (b) **BILLS:** Vouchers 135611 through 135725 drawn on Huntington National Bank, N.A. Total: \$348,078.65.

The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Holmes, aye; Frierson, abstain; McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE/SETTLEMENT & RELEASE AGREEMENT/NORTH SHORE GAS COMPANY

Administrator Knabel stated a few years ago the City contracted with Azavar Audit Solutions to perform an audit of the City's contracts and agreements to ensure that the City's revenue streams are maximized. As a result of that, Azavar recently found that North Shore Gas failed to remit some taxes to the City. The proposed settlement agreement includes back amounts owed the City at 100%. He recommends approval of the settlement agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner Fischer that an Ordinance (20-O-48) be passed authorizing and approving a settlement and release agreement between the City of Zion and North Shore Gas Company. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

ORDINANCE/PROPOSAL & WORK AGREEMENT/DEIGAN & ASSOCIATES, LLC

Administrator Knabel stated items 7(b) and (c) are related. At the last August 4th meeting the Council approved moving forward with Deigan & Associates, LLC to complete due diligence the City's possible acquisition of the real property located at 3905 IL Route 173. The agreement is for a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment which will include soil borings and samples in the amount of \$11,700. He recommends approval of the agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner McDowell than an Ordinance (20-O-49) be passed authorizing and approving a proposal & work agreement between the City of Zion and Deigan & Associates, LLC in the amount of \$11,700. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

ORDINANCE/CONTRACT/LAND SURVEYING SERVICES/PEKLAY SURVEYING CO., LTD

Administrator Knabel stated the proposed agreement will include an ALTA/NSPS Land Title Survey showing correct property lines, buildings, fences and driveways in the amount of \$3,500.00. He recommends approval.

It was moved by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Holmes than an Ordinance (20-O-50) be passed authorizing and approving a contract for land surveying services between the City of Zion and Peklay Surveying Co., LTD. in the amount of \$3,500.00. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

ORDINANCE/TEXTAMENDMENT/ZION MUNICIPAL CODE/CHAPTER 2

Administrator Knabel stated the level of compensation for elected officials must be fixed 180 or more days prior to the date of a general election. He proposed no changes to the current salaries.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner McDowell than an Ordinance (20-O-51) be passed amending Chapter 2 of the Zion Municipal Code regarding salaries of elected officials. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

PROPOSAL/CHICAGO COMMUNICATIONS/PURCHASE OF BI-DIRECTIONAL AMPLIFIER/EXTERNAL ANTENNA/DIRECTIONAL SERVER ANTENNAS/POLICE DEPARTMENT

A memo (20-DOC-60) was received from Chief Henderson requesting approval to purchase a bi-directional amplifier, external antenna and two omni directional server antennas. Chief Henderson stated the equipment is needed to improve Starcom21 radio transmissions and reception in the lower level of the police department. Radio signals do not penetrate concrete well, especially below ground. This was discussed during the initial conversations regarding the purchase of the Starcom21 radios but, the degree to which reception and transmission would be impacted was not known at that time. The equipment would be purchased from Chicago Communications, the vendor for the initial Starcom21 purchase. The cost will be \$13,683.38. The cost will be reimbursed by the Northeast Lake County Consolidated Emergency Telephone Service Board.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson and seconded by Commissioner McDowell to approve the proposal from Chicago Communications for the purchase of a bi-directional amplifier, external antenna and two omni directional server antennas in the amount of \$13,683.38. The vote on the roll: Commissioners Holmes, aye; Frierson, abstain; McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

PURCHASE/TASERS AND ACCESSORIES/POLICE DEPARTMENT

A memo (20-DOC-61) was received from Chief Henderson requesting approval to purchase three new Tasers (conducted energy weapons (CEW), a dock, batteries, holsters and cartridges. Chief Henderson stated the equipment is necessary in order to equip the three detectives assigned to the Lake County Special Investigations Group with CEWs. The devices are a critical less lethal tool for officers. Ideally, they prefer to equip every officer with a CEW. The Zion Police Department does not currently have enough CEWs to permanently assign three to these detectives and have enough for patrol officers. He requests using funds from the Drug Forfeiture Account to purchase the equipment in the amount of \$7,222.50. The purchase would be an approved use of the restricted funds. If approved, the purchase of the equipment would not impact the City's budget.

It was motioned by Commissioner Frierson and seconded by Commissioner McDowell to approve the purchase of three new Tasers (conducted energy weapons (CEW), a dock, batteries, holsters and cartridges in the amount of \$7,222.50. The vote on the roll: Commissioners Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTARY

Administrator Knabel stated due to social distancing he has informed Department Heads that if they do not have any items on the agenda they do not need to attend the meeting. He reminded residents to complete the census as a lot of funding is tied to the census numbers. The City has an incentive program for anyone that completes the census. They will be entered into a drawing monthly. There are three prizes; a \$300, \$200 and \$100 cash gift card. The next drawing will be the first week of September with an additional drawing in October. Information is available on the City’s website.

Chief Henderson addressed Kathy Champine’s question during citizen comments. The State has mandated de-escalation training for police officers. Back in July the Council approved to bring classes to the department. The training will take place on September 16th and October 6th. Additionally Chief Henderson thanked ESDA for their involvement in planning for the arrival of the President. They worked until 2:00 a.m. to set up. Chief Lewis also provided an extra ambulance if needed. Director Roberts also provided dump trucks. All officers were called in and the Zion Police Department was very professional. He thanked Lieutenant Velardi for coordinating the officers. They covered 49 posts.

Mayor McKinney stated with the incident that took place last weekend it’s known that gun violence is an issue. For all who are watching they can tell how hard staff is working. When these types of incident happen the police need help from the citizens. People often know who did the crime but don’t want to talk. The old Zion is one that cares for their neighbors regardless. He has seen it happen in his neighborhood, innocent residents that are involved in senseless violence. There are many ways to communicate with the police department anonymously.

Mayor McKinney stated when he hears about rudeness from City employees he is not happy. He apologized to anyone that has felt disrespected, that is not the way they want residents to feel. The last six months have been difficult for everyone. Tempers are short and violence is prevalent. He stated if people want to change things it must start in their hearts.

Commissioner Frierson read a personal statement which is included with these minutes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

September 7		City Offices Closed for the Holiday
September 15	6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Zion Township Board Meeting Zion City Council Meeting
October 6	7:00 p.m.	Zion City Council Meeting

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, it was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner Fischer, and unanimously approved the meeting be adjourned at 8:01 p.m. Motion carried.