

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE ZION CITY COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2022, 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 Eric Barden, Fire/Rescue Chief Justin Stried, Building & Zoning Director Richard Ianson, Public Works Director Ray Roberts, City Administrator David Knabel and City Attorney James Vasselli.

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

AGENDA CHANGES

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, 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

Mary Lou Hiltibran, Zion ESDA Director, gave a monthly report of the recent activities that ESDA performs in assistance to the City. Additionally, she stated that they have also attended training sessions. They were able to have a Holiday dinner with the generous donations received. She invited those who wish to serve as a volunteer with ESDA to go to the City's website and fill out an application. They are currently working on the application process. If individuals are interested in joining, uniforms and training will be provided. Mayor McKinney stated he truly appreciates what ESDA does for the City.

Raymond Gilmore, Cypress Park Subdivision, stated he was not aware of a recent meeting between Cyprus Park homeowners and City officials. He believes there was discussion that the City would assign a special committee to maintain the common areas and then add the costs to the annual property taxes. He invited the City Council to attend the Annual Meeting of the Cypress Park Homeowners Association on January 31, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at the Zion Park District, 2400 Dowie Memorial Drive.

Shone Davis, Business Owner at 3242 Sheridan Road in Zion, stated that the business across the street from him is doing work on the building and believes it is going to be a gaming café. He believes that they were granted a liquor license for a restaurant. He asked that the City take a close look at the business as he does not believe the intention is to be a restaurant but rather a gaming café. He has heard from the Council in the past that they do not intend to add any more gaming cafes in the City. He is worried this business may be trying to back-door a gaming café disguised as a restaurant. Additionally, he commented on the lights on 31st Street to 33rd Street that have been out for the last five years. He asked if someone could follow up on this.

Kathy Champine, Zion, commented on the City's mask mandate. She asked that the City enforce their mask mandate as the deaths are approaching 850,000. Hospitals are turning people away as they are at their capacity. Omicron is highly contagious but masks are needed to help the spread. She reminded individuals to wear a mask and social distance to help in the spread of the virus. She stated there are those with a religious exemption for the vaccine and asked what would Jesus say? She believes he would say, "Wear the darn mask".

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- (a) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** a Regular Meeting held on December 21, 2021 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 139508 through 139762 drawn on Huntington National Bank, N.A.
Total: \$2,820,119.16

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

ORDINANCE/SPECIAL USE PERMIT/1415 27th STREET

A memo (22-DOC-1) was received from Director Ianson requesting a Special Use Permit for property located at 1415 27th Street. Director Ianson stated Lee's Family Daycare and Learning Center is requesting a Special Use Permit to operate a daycare located at Grace Missionary Church, 1415 27th Street. At their current location, they care for 58 children and have 9 staff members. At the proposed location, there will be additional square footage allowing them to potentially increase to 100 children and 13 staff members. Drop off and pick up will be located in the parking lot on the south side of the building. The Building and Fire Department have both inspected the proposed site and found no issues for a daycare use at this location. At the January 6, 2022 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting, they recommended to approve the request. Commissioner Fischer asked if this is the second daycare approved for this location. Director Ianson stated the previous daycare has moved out. Commissioner Frierson asked if a Special Use was previously approved for this applicant. Director Ianson stated the applicant is currently located in Beach Park and had not previously requested a Special Use Permit.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner Holmes that an Ordinance (22-O-1) be passed granting a Special Use Permit to Lee's Family Daycare and Learning Center, for the operation of a daycare located at 1415 27th Street, Zion, IL The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye Fischer, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

ORDINANCE/VARIANCE/ZION MUNICIPAL CODE/SECTION 152(3)(a)

A memo (22-DOC-2) was received from Director Ianson requesting a Variance to Section 152(3)(a) of the Zion Municipal Code. Director Ianson stated Michael and Patricia Litewski are requesting a Variance to Section 152(3)(a) of the Zion Municipal Code, Zoning Docket 22-Z-2, to increase the height of their accessory building, for property located at 2111 Gilead Avenue. When applying for permits, the specifications that were provided show the shed at a height of 16 feet, not considering the platform the building would be attached to. During construction, after pouring a concrete slab and erecting the shed onto its platform, it was then realized the actual height would be 17 feet, exceeding the height of the principal building by 6 inches. As soon as the homeowners realized this discrepancy, they contacted the Building Department. At the January 6, 2022 Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting, they recommended to approve the request.

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner Holmes, that an Ordinance (21-O-2) be passed granting a Variance to Section 152(3)(a) of the Zion Municipal Code to increase the height of the accessory building for property located at 2111 Gilead Avenue. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye Fischer, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

BATTALION CHIEF/EXTRA SHIFT STIPEND/EXTENSION

A memo (22-DOC-3) was received from Chief Stried regarding the extension of a stipend for the Battalion Chiefs for taking on extra shifts. Chief Stried stated last summer the Council approved adding a Battalion Chief stipend due to the multiple vacancies across the department and the increased overtime load on Firefighters and Lieutenants. That approval included an end date of October 1, 2021. With a recent increase in COVID cases, some Battalion Chiefs are again willing to work some extra shifts, even though historically no provision has been available to have exempt management personnel receive compensation for working above and beyond their normal hours. He is requesting approval for a \$1,000 stipend for 24-hour shifts (\$500 for a 12-hour half shift), which will potentially decrease the overtime burden currently faced by the Lieutenants and Firefighters. Due to the unknown future of the current pandemic and potential variants, he is recommending that the stipend remain in place indefinitely, or until otherwise decided by City Council and/or Zion Fire/Rescue Department and City Administrator.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner McDowell to approve the extension of a \$1,000 stipend for Battalion Chiefs when filling a 24-hour shift and \$500 for a 12-hour half shift to remain in place indefinitely, or until otherwise decided by City Council and/or Zion Fire Rescue Department and City Administrator. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye Fischer, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

MINIMUM WAGE ADJUSTMENT/POLICE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

A memo (22-DOC-4) was received from Chief Barden regarding an increase in the minimum wage for Police Department employees. Chief Barden stated pursuant to the change of Illinois Compiled Statutes 820 ILCS/4 Minimum Wage Law, effective January 1, 2022 anyone over the age of 18 years old will now be paid no less than \$12.00 hourly. He requests that the employees under his command be appropriately adjusted and retro paid back to January 1, 2022 if applicable.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner Holmes to approve an hourly wage of \$12.00 for employees over 18 years of age in the Police Department and adjust and retro payment back to January 1, 2022 if applicable. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye Fischer, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

NON-BINDING LETTER OF INTENT/BRIGHTON PONDS

A memo (22-DOC-5) was received from Administrator Knabel regarding a non-binding letter of intent (LOI). Administrator Knabel stated Brighton Ponds was planned to be a "luxury mobile home park" back in the 70s and was designed accordingly. That development fell apart, however, owners and developers at the time starting putting in (inadequate) infrastructure and building homes within a Homeowners Association. The City does not, nor do they have any obligation to maintain any of the infrastructure (water/streets) out there. The City does have a court judgement wherein they have prohibited further development in Brighton Ponds until infrastructure is upgraded as there are public health and safety risks. The current owners are left in the lurch and the remainder of the property remains undeveloped and stagnating. A developer, RachLake LLC, purchased many of the north parcels of Brighton Ponds. After many meetings with them, they now understand the situation and the City has worked towards a resolution for their investment as well as addressing the issues on the property. To make it financially

viable, they cannot do single family homes but rather are proposing approximately 174 townhome units to be built on the north part of the property while also taking on refurbishing the infrastructure of the entire development (north and south as the City requires). To do this, the City would need to do a residential TIF and give an estimated “not to exceed” \$4 million TIF incentive (solely to be used for the infrastructure piece). These funds would come solely from the taxes that would result from the new residential development. There are many other pieces that need to happen prior to entering into that agreement, however an LOI allows the City to start moving forward with next steps in the process. Staff recommends approval of the LOI. Commissioner Frierson stated he does have a parks and green space concern. He would like to make sure there is space for parks. He does however like the idea of giving the residents the help they need. Mayor McKinney stated Zion has a variety of the types of homes that are available here. He believes townhomes will be good for those who may be transitioning to Zion. Commissioner Fischer stated this has been a long-term problem with no resolution. Hopefully the City can work with the developer to solve the problem and the residents can get some relief with the street maintenance and plowing. He thanked Administrator Knabel for all his efforts in trying to resolve the problem.

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner Holmes to approve a Non-Binding Letter of Intent regarding the development of Certain Parcels of Property in the Brighton Ponds Subdivision. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye Fischer, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

TELEPHONE LINE CONVERSION/INSTALLATION

A memo (22-DOC-6) was received from Administrator Knabel regarding a telephone line conversion. Administrator Knabel stated when they moved a lot of the telephone services over to Granite, they recognized significant overall savings. However, they noticed a spike in some of the rates and costs of the individual fax lines and other alarms and circuits compared to AT&T. They approached Granite to see if there was a better solution to get those lines down further. Granite has a product called Epik which moves those lines and circuits away from antiquated analog lines. Converting to this would result in approximate savings of \$27,163, annually over current Granite rates (\$17,952 over the old AT&T rates). Staff recommends transition to Granite’s Epik solution conversion and installation as presented.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner Holmes to approve the transition to Granite’s Epik solution conversion and installation as presented. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye Fischer, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTARY

Director Ianson reminded residents of the City’s sump pump ordinance whereas they may only discharge their sump pump on their own property and not onto the neighboring property or City sidewalks or streets.

Director Roberts reminded residents with the weather turning and the possibility of snow, to be careful when behind a snow plow. He urged citizens keep a good distance between them and a plow.

Administrator Knabel asked that residents be aware of the parking ordinance with the snow. Plows cannot get through to plow the streets. Additionally, he asked that residents be courteous and patient with City staff. He understands people’s patience is frayed and tempers are short with the pandemic. Recently an individual had their water shut off and was angry with the City and came down to City Hall stating they had COVID. This put a great amount of stress on the employees. He asked that everyone treat each other with respect. City staff is here to help the public the best they can. Mayor McKinney stated he

understands that mental health issues have increased especially in teens. He suggested citizens call 211 for mental health issues and financial assistance.

Chief Barden noted the following:

He reminded residents of the two-inch snow minimum. Any vehicle parked in violation of the ordinance will be towed. Additionally, there is no parking on streets from 2:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m. Residents may call the non-emergency number 847-872-8000 to be put on the list for a temporary overnight park.

He thanked Mary Lou Hiltibran and ESDA for their service as they have been very helpful with recent incidents.

He reminded citizens if they see something, say something. Crimestoppers may be contacted anonymously.

He thanked his team for doing a good job and getting things done. There has been a big push to get new officers hired and they were able to fill two spots in the academy. He asked that the public welcome them into the community once they return from the academy. He stated the City is divided into 4 districts and the officers and sergeants are each assigned to one of those districts. The sergeants of the district can be contacted anytime by email. District maps and contact emails are available on the City’s website.

Chief Stried reminded the public of the importance of smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors in their homes. He also urged families to discuss an exit plan in case of a fire. Mayor McKinney asked how often smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors should be tested. Chief Stried stated a good rule of thumb is to change the batteries when clocks are changed; in the spring and the fall. Mayor McKinney asked if detectors are handed out by the Building Department when they go on inspections. Director Ianson stated they used to hand them out when they had a supply but have not had a supply for a while. Mayor McKinney asked if there are suggestions for escape plans for people to look at on the City’s website. Chief Stried stated a plan of escape along with other resources can be found on the Fire and Rescue Page on the City’s website. Mayor McKinney asked if there was a way to properly dispose of lithium batteries. Chief Stried suggested contacting SWALCO as they deal with hazardous materials. Commissioner Fischer state he was recently in attendance during a garage fire and wanted to thank Chief Stried for explaining the process of how a fire is dealt with.

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

ANNOUNCEMENT

February 1	7:00 p.m.	Zion City Council Meeting
February 15	6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Zion Township Board Meeting 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 Holmes and unanimously approved the meeting be adjourned at 7:40 p.m. Motion carried.

City Clerk