

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE ZION CITY COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 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 McDowell, Fischer, Holmes, Frierson, and Mayor McKinney. A quorum was present.

Also present: Police Chief Eric Barden, Fire/Rescue Chief Justin Stried, Public Works Director Ray Roberts, City Administrator David Knabel and City Attorney Erin Kiernat. Building & Zoning Director Richard Ianson was absent.

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

**AGENDA CHANGES**

It was moved by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Holmes to amend the City Council meeting agenda as follows:

Add Item 8 (b) Discussion regarding allowing backyard chickens in Zion

The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Holmes, aye; Frierson, 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. She invited those who wish to serve as a volunteer with ESDA to go to the City's website and fill out an application. Mayor McKinney thanked ESDA for all they do, coming out to help in all types of weather. He stated First Responders get all the attention but ESDA is behind the scenes assisting the First Responders.

Wendy Driver, Zion, stated she was at the last meeting asking the Council to consider allowing citizens to have backyard chickens. She stated she is back to plead her case explaining why chickens should be allowed.

**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 February 1, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Holmes, aye; Frierson, 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 139866 through 139932 drawn on Huntington National Bank, N.A. Total: \$721,264.29.

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

### **ABATING TAX/GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS - SERIES 2017**

Administrator Knabel stated when the City issues bonds they are required to provide collateral for the financing. The Bonds are written stating the City will set aside the money for the next year' principal and interest in a separate escrow account. If this is done the taxes can be abated, which means you do not levy for them. If this is not done then the City would be required to levy additional funds to cover the debt service so the bank would have collateral in their bonds. Due to the fact that the funds had been set aside in December in accordance with the bond agreement, he is now requesting abatement of the principal and interest amount from the 2021 tax levy. Commissioner Fischer asked what the \$3,000,000 was spent on. Administrator Knabel stated it was for the purchase of the ballfield. In 2012 they had an agreement to pay the property taxes on the property which came to about \$270,000 a year without City ownership of the property. They decided to convert the property to a purchase in order to use the property for future development and to have an asset for the City. Commissioner Fischer asked if they have a contract for Broker to sell the property. Administrator Knabel stated they are in the process of trying to consolidate all City-owned properties for a Broker to market all of the properties.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner Fischer that an Ordinance (22-0-3) be passed abating the tax heretofore levied for the Year 2021 to pay the Principal of and Interest on \$3,140,000 Taxable General Obligation Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source), Series 2017, of the City of Zion, Lake County, Illinois. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Ordinance passed.

### **AGREEMENT/BLACKBOARD INC/EMERGENCY NOTIFIATION SERVICES**

A memo (22-DOC-9) was received from Chief Stried requesting approval of a renewal agreement with Blackboard Inc. for Emergency Notification Services. The City's BlackBoard Connect contract is currently up for renewal as of March 25, 2022. Staff is recommending approval of the renewal in the amount of \$11,505. As in the past, the joint JETSB fund will reimburse 50% of the funds for the emergency notification system. The remaining funds will come from the City's E-911 Fund budget. Chief Stried urged all residents of Zion to register with BlackBoard Connect to receive rare but noteworthy messages from City staff. Easy instructions can be found on the homepage of the City's website. Mayor McKinney stated they have used the system in the past to let residents know about the available COVID shots and about a dangerous accident on the highway. The more people that sign up, the better opportunity the City has to reach the residents. Notifications can be received by a phone call, text or email.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner Holmes to approve an agreement between Blackboard, Inc. and the City of Zion for Emergency Notification Services. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Holmes, aye; aye; Frierson, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

### **DISCUSSION/BACKYARD CHICKENS**

Commissioner Holmes stated she added this item to the agenda to make sure the subject of the backyard chickens did not get overlooked. Mayor McKinney stated the City currently has a process in place and they will review the parameters in the County, the City Code and other surrounding communities. He reminded the public that the set-up for each community is different. They will investigate to see if this is feasible. Administrator Knabel stated they did look at the information regarding County guidelines provided by Ms. Driver and two things were noted, the 30 ft setbacks and the regulations that they cannot be so many feet from the

street. They are trying to look at it to see if it can work in Zion and see if anyone would be eligible. Ms. Driver stated that she received information from Director Ianson that he will look into it.

### **DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTARY**

Director Roberts stated the Lake County Board approved a resolution for the operation of Ride Lake County, a new countywide paratransit service. Seniors age 60+ and people with disabilities can get transportation to any area of Lake County for work, shopping, medical appointments, and more. Beginning May 1<sup>st</sup> eligible residents can schedule a trip to or from anywhere in Lake County through Pace's Call Center. The service will run from 6 a.m. – 6 p.m. seven days a week, excluding holidays. One-way fare costs will vary between \$2.00 and \$6.00 depending on how far you travel. Additional information regarding the service including how to sign up is available on Lake County's website at [lakecountyil.gov/RLD](http://lakecountyil.gov/RLD). Mayor McKinney stated he is a member of the Lake County Housing and Community Development Commission and they to have been working on providing transportation for seniors and those with disabilities.

Chief Stried offered residents without computers help in signing up for Blackboard Connect. He suggested residents contact him by phone at 847-746-4042 or by email [justins@zion.il.us](mailto:justins@zion.il.us) to coordinate it. Additionally, he asked residents to help keep the fire hydrants clear during a snowfall along with their walkways and steps for EMS access. He suggested those who are able should try to help out an elderly or disabled neighbor.

Chief Barden shared the following information:

Officers will be enforcing the 2:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m. no parking ordinance. Citizens may call the police department to be put their vehicles on a list for overnight parking to avoid a citation.

They will also be enforcing the City sticker ordinance.

They will be hiring officers at the PD in the coming months.

With spring approaching, and the possibility of storms he asked that citizens turn their headlights on and slow down.

Administrator Knabel stated on Saturday, March 12, 2022 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at ZBTHS South Commons, the taxing bodies and staff will be holding a Community meeting recapping the things that they each have accomplished. This will be a chance to meet with the public and have them provide feedback to the taxing bodies to listen to and take in how to make things better in Zion.

Commissioner Frierson stated have been working on a few things this month. They recently had a chance to sit down with the State's Attorney's office to talk about some of the personnel changes within their office and expanded prosecution. They will be switching to a vertical prosecution strategy which will help with some of Zion's repeat offenders. They also met with Donna from their office to talk about the Living Room Wellness Center in Waukegan to talk about expanding some of the opportunities here for providing services for those with mental or behavioral health disorders. Also discussed was grant opportunities to extend for partnerships in Zion. In partnership with the Lake County Health Department through the Coalition for Healthy Communities there will be a mental health first aid class on March 18<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m. It will be an 8 hour in person session and has limited seating. If interested, contact Commissioner Frierson at [richardf@zion.il.us](mailto:richardf@zion.il.us). Mayor McKinney stated they continue to work with the State's Attorney and the PD to identify residents that can help with some of the youngsters that may be heading down the wrong path and try and look at prevention instead of punishment when things happen. Part of the quest is improving public safety. There has been an uptick in violence and financial struggles in the communities

and they are trying to come up with strategic ways to prevent something bad that may happen. Additionally, Commissioner Frierson stated the Junior ZBLA is underway and this week they will be running a mock trial to get a better understanding of what resources are available in trying to catch people before they get into the felony system.

Commissioner Fischer recognized Administrator Knabel for the great job he did testifying before the Senate Committee on the Nuclear Stranded Act. This is an effort that they are still pursuing to get federal compensation for storage of the nuclear fuel rods on the lakefront. He thanked Administrator Knabel for his efforts. Mayor McKinney stated the bill for the Nuclear Stranded Act has been championed by Senator Duckworth and Congressman Schneider who introduced the Bill. He stated this is the most progress that has been made to get compensated for the spent fuel rod storage on the lakefront. It is a priority for the City as they continue with state and federal government.

Mayor McKinney shared his sentiments regarding Black History Month. He recognized people from the past that have been instrumental in shaping the City of Zion.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

March 1	7:00 p.m.	Zion City Council Meeting
March 15	6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Zion Township Board Meeting Zion City Council Meeting

**CLOSED SESSION**

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner Frierson that the Council recess to Closed Session at 7:44 p.m., pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 "Open Meetings", for the discussion of filed, pending and/or probable or imminent litigation, collective bargaining and personnel. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner Holmes to reconvene the Regular Council meeting at 8:14 p.m. with all members present. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Holmes, aye; Frierson, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, it was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner Holmes and unanimously approved the meeting be adjourned at 8:15 p.m. Motion carried.

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City Clerk