

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE ZION CITY COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2024 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 Frierson, McDowell, Fischer, and Mayor McKinney. Commissioner Holmes was absent. A quorum was present.

Also present: Fire Chief Justin Stried, Police Chief Eric Barden, Public Works Director Ray Roberts, Building & Zoning Director Richard Ianson, City Administrator David Knabel and City Attorney James Vasselli. Finance Director Kris Conway was absent.

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

AGENDA CHANGES

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

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

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no Citizen Comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- (a) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** a Regular Meeting held on August 20, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

The vote on roll call was: Commissioners 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:

- (a) **BILLS:** Vouchers 146657 through 146747 drawn on Huntington National Bank, N.A. Total: \$970,834.41.

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

ORDINANCE/DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS PROPERTY/BUILDING DEPARTMENT

A memo (24-DOC-80) was received from Director Ianson requesting that vehicles in the Building Department be declared surplus property. Director Ianson provided a list of vehicles that the Fleet Maintenance Department has inspected and deemed to be too costly to repair and are no longer safe for operation. He asked that the vehicles be declared as surplus and scheduled to be auctioned. All vehicles will be sold "as is" and the minimum bid will be determined by Staff and the City Administrator.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner Fischer that an Ordinance (24-O-74) be passed authorizing and approving the disposal of surplus property (vehicles in the Building Department). The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

ORDINANCE/DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS PROPERTY/POLICE DEPARTMENT

A memo (24-DOC-81) was received from Chief Barden requesting firearms and ammunition in the Police Department be declared as surplus property. Chief Barden provided a list of firearms and ammunition to be declared surplus and traded with an approved vendor of law enforcement firearms and equipment. The firearms are from evidence but were not used in the commission of a crime. Also included in the trade-in is approximately 225 pounds of brass (spent training shell casings). Similar trades have been performed in the past and allow the Department to augment budgetary needs for its firearms and tactical programs. All responsibility for the requisite documentation of transfer will be managed by the FFL Dealer and removes the liability held by the Department in retaining the items.

It was moved by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Frierson, that an Ordinance (24-O-75) be passed authorizing and approving the disposal of surplus property (Firearms and Ammunition) in the Police Department and traded with an approved vendor of law enforcement firearms and equipment. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

ORDINANCE/AMENDING MUNICIPAL CODE/GARBAGE/WATER/SEWER RATES

A memo (24-DOC-82) was received from Administrator Knabel requesting to increase the garbage rates. Administrator Knabel stated that the waste (garbage) fund has reached a point where it has a deficit of approximately \$400,000. They have not increased garbage rates since 2013. During this same time the cost from Waste Management has increased approximately 48%. The City was able to absorb the increase for a while after the last increase, however, the fund went into a deficit right around the time COVID hit. It was decided at that time, that they would operate the fund at a deficit so as not to impact households that might be undergoing significant financial strain. After the last contract negotiations with Waste Management, the significant cost increases in the market, general inflation, and the fund being at a deficit, he proposed an increase. While they have held rates unchanged for over ten years, the fund cannot continue to operate at a deficit. He proposed they increase the waste billing (this includes garbage, recycling and yard waste) to \$98 per quarter effective October 1, 2024. This is an increase of \$8.67 per month and would be sufficient to cover costs as well as to begin to bring the fund out of its deficit position.

A memo (24-DOC-83) was received from Director Roberts requesting to increase the water and sewer rates. Lake County Public Water District (LCPWD) has increased what is charged to the City by 33% in this current year (this includes water and the treatment plant operating and depreciation costs). During the pandemic, the City made the decision to not increase rates as initially proposed in the independent water rate study. Unfortunately, in addition to the Water District increases, costs of infrastructure have skyrocketed during this time. Currently, the City owns and maintains 113 miles of the water distribution system of which 21% is 80-100 years old. Replacement costs for this portion of the system is estimated at \$51 million. In addition to the distribution system liability, the meter reading and asset management software systems are outdated and require upgrades. Due to these factors, Staff is recommending a 25% increase to the water and sewer rate. The current rate of \$11.65 per 1,000 gallons would increase to \$14.56 per 1,000 gallons inside City limits and \$13.13 per 1,000 gallons outside the City limits. As part of the increase, they suggest increasing the portion that is devoted to infrastructure projects. The current \$1.60 of the current water rate of \$9.70 would increase to \$2.25. This would bring the water rate to \$12.13 per 1,000 gallons and the sewer rate to \$2.43 per 1,000 gallons. The impact on the average household bill in Zion would be \$7.76 per month. The effective date of the increase would start with the January of 2025 billing.

Commissioner Fischer asked what the increase in water rates were from the Public Water District. Director Roberts stated last month's bill had an increase of 25% with the Repair and Replacement (RR) account going up 33%. The rate is going from \$1.66 to \$2.34 and the RR account up \$160,000. Mayor McKinney asked how the rates compare to other communities. Administrator Knabel stated the rates are in the average range. The new rate is in medium for 2021. Director Roberts stated according to the rate study the recommended rate was \$14.21 and is up slightly to \$14.66. He noted that it costs \$1.3 million a year to maintain $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of water mains. Additionally, IEPA water testing has increased by 40 to 50% including the water loss charges. The water meter reading system will soon be obsolete which will cost \$1.5 million. Commissioner Fischer asked how they are doing with the water loss. Director Roberts stated it has been a roller coaster. They still cannot figure it out. They are constantly testing meters; about 250 a year. They are going to be looking into installing large meters at the entry points of the City. He noted that LCPWD has 5 customers and Zion is 80% of their business. Everything flows through Zion to get to the other customers. Administrator Knabel stated that they have done water leak detection and they are not sure if it is coming from the reads of the LCPWD or the age of the infrastructure. They are currently using 2 reading systems. They may be losing data due to the age of the software. They are currently between 18-20% water loss and noted that Winthrop Harbor is at 30%. Commissioner McDowell noted that they are receiving a 33% increase from the LCPWD but are only raising it 25%.

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner McDowell, that an Ordinance (24-O-76) amending Sections of the Zion Municipal Code to increase garbage, water and sewer rates. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

TABULATION OF BIDS/DEMOLITION /1805 27TH STREET

A Tabulation of Bids (24-DOC-84) was received from Director Ianson for the Demolition of 1805 27th Street. Director Ianson stated the City received five bids, but only four of the five were bidders were responsive bidders for the Demolition of 1805 27th Street:

Rezzar Demolition, LLC	\$337,900
Green Demolition	\$578,800
Doetsch Contractors	\$583,000
National Wrecking Company	\$634,000

Staff is recommending that they accept the lowest responsible bidder, Rezzar Demolition, LLC in the amount of \$337,900. The project will be funded from the Capital Expenditures Fund. Commissioner McDowell noted that the lowest bidder is over \$200,000 lower than the other bidders and asked if this is a concern. Director Ianson stated Staff has discussed the concerns and has done their research.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner McDowell, that a Resolution (24-R-19) be passed awarding the Demolition of 1805 27th Street to the lowest bidder Rezzar Demolition, LLC in the amount of \$337,900. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Resolution passed.

DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTARY

Director Roberts shared information regarding the SWALCO Household Chemical Waste Event on September 21st at ZBTHS. The Flyer will be posted on the website. He noted that this is by appointment only.

Fire Chief Stried noted that Fire Prevention Week is the week of October 6-12. There will be an Open House on October 5 at Fire Station 1. The information will be posted on Facebook and the website. The national theme this year is "Smoke Alarms, Make Them Work for You.". They currently have some fire alarms available and recommended checking the website for the requirements. He also noted that landlords are responsible for smoke alarms in their buildings.

Police Chief Barden noted that they recently received a grant to address speeding concerns in the City. They spent 251 hours from July to August and issued 175 speeding tickets during the day and 18 during the night and had 26 traffic arrests. In August officers focused on DUIs and had 7 citations. Speeding is a concern across the nation and people need to slow down. Officers will continue to address speeding. Mayor McKinney noted he has noticed there have not been as many speeding cars and loud cars over the summer. Additionally, it was noted that there was a great turn-out at the Labor Day Parade.

Administrator Knabel gave an update on the CEJA Grant. The second round of funding recently came out. This will be about a \$2 million allocation to the City. They did submit for reimbursement for the first round but have not received any of money yet. He has been told that DCEO is understaffed but is hopeful that they will receive funds soon. He will share the updates as he gets them.

Commissioner McDowell thanked the Mayor for his comments as the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast. He also noted that the parade was very well run and well attended.

Commissioner Frierson invited citizens to attend the Movies in the Park event on Fridays in September at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioner Fischer noted that he enjoyed the parade and the great weather along with many others.

Mayor McKinney noted that he enjoyed the Prayer Breakfast and Parade. He is happy to see residents getting out and enjoying the community. The Park District has great places for people to go out and enjoy.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

September 17	6:00 p.m.	Zion Township Board Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Zion City Council Meeting
October 1	7:00 p.m.	Zion City Council Meeting
October 6-12		Fire Prevention Week

CLOSED SESSION

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner Frierson that the Council recess to Closed Session at 7:46 p.m., pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 "Open Meetings", for the discussion of filed, pending and/or probable or imminent litigation, personnel, purchase or sale of real estate, collective bargaining and legal counsel. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner McDowell to reconvene the Regular Council meeting at 8:51 p.m. with all members present. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Frierson, aye; McDowell, aye; Fischer, 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 Frierson, seconded by Commissioner McDowell and unanimously approved the meeting be adjourned at 8:52 p.m. Motion carried.

City Clerk