

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE ZION CITY COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 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 McDowell, Holmes, Fischer, Frierson, and Mayor McKinney. A quorum was present.

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

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

Mayor McKinney shared that Pastor Dave Adams from New Song Ministry was going to offer prayer at the meeting this evening but was rushed to the hospital and asked those in attendance to keep him and his family in their thoughts and prayers. He noted that Pastor Adams has been very active in the community and in the church.

AGENDA CHANGES

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

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

SPECIAL PRESENTATION/ZION-BENTON LABOR DAY PARADE AWARDS

Sonolito Bronson, President of the Special Events Commission stated that the Zion-Benton Labor Day Parade was held on September 2nd and there were 54 parade entries this year. She thanked the City Council and Park District for all their support. Additionally, she thanked the Police and Fire Departments for their help. She also thanked Roger Whitmore and Larry Stephens for their comedic commentary.

The awards were presented as follows:

- Most Original Award: Christ Community Church
- Overall Best Award: IBEW Local 150
- Most Beautiful: Miss Cornerstone Illinois
- Best Effort: Zion Township/mPOWERu

IUP General Feed Store was chosen to be the Grand Marshall as they celebrated their 100 years in business.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mayor McKinney read the procedure for Public Comment at and asked that anyone who participates adhere to the policy. Additionally, he asked for a moment of silence for the families and victims of 9/11, as well as one of his good friends, the Mayor of Steger, who passed away unexpectedly.

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 help grow the volunteers in ESDA to join. One can apply on the City's website or get an application from an ESDA member. Mayor McKinney commented on how busy ESDA has been with all that has been going on in the City.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- (a) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** a Regular Meeting held on September 3, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.; approval but not release of Closed Session Minutes of a meeting held on September 3, 2024 at 7:48 p.m.

The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Holmes, aye; Fischer, 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 146748 through 146824 drawn on Huntington National Bank, N.A. Total: \$371,343.10

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

ORDINANCE/AMENDING ZION MUNICIPAL CODE/COMPENSATION/ELECTED OFFICIALS

Attorney Vasselli stated that the Zion City Code that establishes compensation for elected officials has expired. Therefore, they must pass a new ordinance to amend the code to establish new salaries for the Commissioners. Commissioner McDowell commented that any of increase in salary for a Commissioner is not in force for the current officials but for those elected at the next election. Attorney Vasselli stated that it would be at the next election and next cycle. He noted it is unconstitutional to raise their own salary or compensation while they are in office.

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner Holmes that an Ordinance (24-O-77) be passed amending the Zion Municipal Code regarding compensation for the elected officials. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Holmes, aye; Fischer, aye; Frierson, aye; and Mayor McKinney aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

ORDINANCE/CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY/3318 SHERIDAN ROAD

Administrator Knabel presented a proposed agreement with MJR Real Estate LLC. They are interested in the old Tuhey Lumber property (3318 Sheridan Road) for development that is in line with the City's Comprehensive Plan and retail corridor. The property was acquired with TIF funds to use for incentive purposes. He noted that at this time they do not have permission from the tenants to divulge the name of the business. Commissioner Frierson asked Administrator Knabel to explain the goal of a TIF and why it is a good idea for the City. Administrator Knabel stated that TIF stands for Tax Increment Financing. The State Statutes allows local government to look at areas that are underutilized or underdeveloped and freeze the values at the time the TIF is established. In that boundary and as values go up or as development comes in, the incremental taxes over what was frozen goes into a pot of funds. The funds get reinvested in the area to incentivize development. He explained that when TIF #1 closed, the property value in that area superseded the normal property values by 140%. This was a very successful TIF to grow the tax base for the community. Commissioner Frierson noted this particular TIF has since closed but the City was able to do a lot of infrastructure and other projects. Administrator Knabel stated all the infrastructure near Culvers going back to the residential area behind the streets and the new infrastructure that went in next to the Popeye's, the widening of Colgate and upsizing a lot of the sanitary and water lines were done with TIF funds to make it more attractive to developers down the road. Mayor McKinney stated that it helps them compete with businesses that are looking to go across the state line. Administrator Knabel stated being on the Wisconsin border as well as the Indiana border is very difficult for them. It is already very difficult to do business in Illinois along with high taxes, but they are able to utilize this to grow the base to be competitive and level the playing field a bit.

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner McDowell that an Ordinance (24-O-78) be passed authorizing the conveyance or disposition of certain real property located within a Redevelopment Project Area (3318 Sheridan Road). The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Holmes, aye; Fischer, aye; Frierson, aye; and Mayor McKinney aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

SPECIAL USE PERMIT/4545 IL ROUTE 173

A memo (24-DOC-85) was received by Director Ianson requesting a Special Use Permit from Section 70-182(2) of the Zion Municipal Code. Director Ianson stated Sylwester Wajda of Identity Services LLC is seeking a Special Use Permit from Section 70-182(2) of the Zion Municipal Code to install an electronic message board for the McDonald's road sign, which will be located on IL Route 173. At the September 5, 2024 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting, they recommended to approve the Special Use Permit.

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner Holmes, that an Ordinance (24-O-79) be passed granting a Special Use Permit to install an electronic message board for property located at 4545 IL Route 173. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Holmes, aye; Fischer, aye; Frierson, aye; and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

SPECIAL USE PERMIT/4521 IL ROUTE 173

A memo (24-DOC-86) was received by Director Ianson requesting a Special Use Permit from Section 102-60(5) of the Zion Municipal. Director Ianson stated RWE Planning & Design is seeking a Special Use Permit from Section 102-60(5) of the Zion Municipal Code to operate an animal hospital. They are operating under a Special Use Permit at their current location located at 4527 IL Route 173. They are interested in building a new facility, located on the vacant parcel, at the northeast corner of the same property. At the September 5, 2024 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting, they recommended to approve the Special Use Permit. Commissioner Frierson noted this is another example of a good use of the TIF to help existing businesses expand.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner McDowell, that an Ordinance (24-O-80) be passed granting a Special Use Permit to operate an animal hospital for property located at 4521 IL Route 173. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Holmes, aye; Fischer, aye; Frierson, aye; and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

ORDINANCE/AUTHORIZING A REAL ESTATE CONTRACT/NSWRD PROPERTY/TRUMPET PARK

Attorney Vasselli stated the City has a contract for the purchase of real property from the North Shore Water Reclamation District (NSWRD)/Sanitary District. The contract requires the seller to finance the purchase by the City using the word "shall" to indicate the mandatory nature of the financing. After a public meeting on Wednesday, and an internal meeting with Staff (Attorney Vasselli, Administrator Knabel and Sonolito Bronson) NSWRD is requiring the following: prepare and submit financing terms and agree to pay and in fact pay \$1.8 million owed for the acquisition of the roadways in Trumpet Park. He is seeking approval to make the payment in the proposed financing terms in Exhibit A. He noted that this is the third time they are coming back for this approval but it was the request of NSWRD that they make this overture to them to provide terms for the financing of the acquisition. Commissioner Fischer asked if this will finally put an end to this issue and close on the property. Attorney Vasselli stated this is just for the proposing of the seller's terms. The City does owe the \$1.8 million and NSWRD said if we do want them to finance, we do need the proposed financing terms of said financing. There has been some back and forth if we would be genuine about the proposal for financing. There was a discussion between himself, Administrator Knabel, Dave Miller and Attorney Jackson about whether they had an obligation to finance. Someone indicated that the word "shall" does not mean mandatory language but he believes that it does as does other City Staff. This is the City's proposal and they will take it then and deliver the other two ordinances that were passed to go forward with this and another copy of the agreement and the survey in an effort to insure they can come to an agreement for closing. Mayor McKinney thanked everyone involved that has been going through this process. This has been going on for a few years now. They have had to make a couple of trips to their board meetings to try and get this item closed so they can bring another business in to town.

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner Holmes, that an Ordinance (24-O-81) be passed authorizing proposed terms to a real estate sale contract and related acts to close on certain real property located within a Redevelopment Project Area (NSWRD property – Trumpet Park). The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Holmes, aye; Fischer, aye; Frierson, aye; and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTARY

Director Ianson stated he has been getting calls asking how to get rid of leaves. He noted that it is just like any other yard waste residents can bag the leaves or put them in a yard waste container and set them out on their normal waste pick-up day. The leaf vacuum program is no longer available in the City. Mayor McKinney asked about the period of time for the disposal of the yard waste. Director Ianson stated April 1st through November 1st. Information is available on the City's website. Commissioner Frierson asked if there has been any discussion of any extensions due to the leaves falling later. Director Ianson indicated there have not been any discussions regarding extension.

Chief Barden stated that several weeks ago he presented information that covered the traffic and enforcement grant they received. He shared that the State has selected them again for an additional traffic grant. This will be in line with the last grant in the traffic enforcement manner. This one will be a year-long program and it is highlighting several of the more alcohol heavy holidays. They are going to be pursuing DUI enforcement, speed and dangerous driving enforcement.

Administrator Knabel shared the following on behalf of Director Roberts:

- The 2024 Road project has started (31st Street & Lebanon Avenue).
- Curb removal and replacement has begun.
- Pavement grinding is scheduled to start the first week of October.
- Contract HMA Patching program is scheduled to start on Thursday at various locations throughout the City.
- They received notice from the Lake County Council of Mayors that the City has been approved for the FY 2025 Road Program grant in the amount of \$980,000. These funds will be used for the Galilee Avenue Resurfacing project. This is part of the STP/FAU Grant that comes up every couple of years. It will be 100% funded with no match necessary. Administrator Knabel noted that the Director Roberts and Staff attend the meetings so they have a vote and make sure they have a voice. They have done great things with grant funding and making a dollar stretch.

Mayor McKinney noted that it has been part of his mission to work on getting grant dollars for the City. He thanked all those who have worked with the elected officials to help bring in Grant dollars into the community. A lot of work goes into networking and building relationships to make this happen. This has aided in bringing in money to improve the roads or demolish buildings.

Commissioner McDowell noted that at the start of the meeting the Mayor asked for a moment of silence for those who have passed in 9/11 and some other tragedies they have experienced. It was troubling for him to hear his friend from high school and college roommate Dave Adams was rushed to the hospital. He shared his thoughts and prayers with everyone.

Commissioner Frierson sent condolences out as well. He also reminded citizens that on behalf of the Coalition they are still hosting movies on Friday nights. It is another example of trying to offer free events for families to come out and enjoy themselves. It's also another example of collaboration which is one of the big things for the Coalition for Healthy Communities. The movie this week is Inside Out 2 which offers a kid play on mental health. This is something that has also been a focus since post COVID and a lot of other things that have happened since that time. He noted that mental health is not always a negative connotation. There some healthy ways and coping skills people can use.

Commissioner Fischer noted it is election season and recommended people check their registration status by going to lakecounty.gov. Under the Clerk's office there is a voter power link where they can look to make sure they are registered to vote.

Mayor McKinney also mentioned the Coalition of Healthy Communities and spoke about collaboration of all the different entities and taxing bodies within the City that work with the Coalition. He noted the great things that have gone on at the Library and Park District. Additionally, he noted the good things happening in Zion. He noted that September 15th through October 15th is National Hispanic American Heritage month.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

October 1	7:00 p.m.	Zion City Council Meeting
October 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 7:50 p.m. Motion carried.