

MINUTES
WOODSTOCK CITY COUNCIL
March 15, 2016
City Council Chambers

The regular meeting of the Woodstock City Council was called to order at 7:00 PM by Mayor Brian Sager on Tuesday, March 15, 2016 in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Sager explained the consent calendar process and invited public participation.

A roll call was taken.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Daniel Hart, RB Thompson, Maureen Larson, Mark Saladin, Joseph Starzynski, and Mayor Brian Sager

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Michael Turner

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Roscoe Stelford, City Attorney Ruth Schlossberg, Finance Director Paul Christensen, Economic Development Director Garrett Anderson, Public Works Director Jeff Van Landuyt, Building and Zoning Director Joe Napolitano, Opera House Director John Scharres, Chief of Police Robert Lowen, Library Director Nick Weber, City Planner Nancy Baker, Librarian Pamela Moorhouse, and Opera House Production Manager Joe McCormack.

OTHERS PRESENT: City Clerk Cindy Smiley

A. FLOOR DISCUSSION

1. Library Proclamation

Mayor Sager stated this evening the Council is recognizing a very important anniversary – the 125th anniversary of the Woodstock Public Library. He noted this anniversary coupled with the upcoming 132nd season of the City Band concerts is evidence of Woodstock’s dedication to cultural awareness and the arts. Without exception the City Council approved and accepted the proclamation, after which Mayor Sager invited Library Director Nick Weber, members of the staff of the Public Library, and members of the Board of Trustees of the Public Library to come forward. Mayor Sager read the proclamation and presented it to library staff and trustees and thanked them for their dedication to the library and for the services they provide to the public. Accepting the proclamation on behalf of the library, Director Nick Weber thanked the Council and the City for their support of the library, noting the value placed upon the library is evident. Mr. Weber invited those present to attend the library’s anniversary party on March 23, which is the official anniversary of the Woodstock Public Library.

2. Music in Our Schools Proclamation

At the request of Mayor Sager, the City Council approved and accepted without exception the document proclaiming March as Music in Our Schools Month in the City of Woodstock. With pleasure, Mayor Sager read the proclamation for those present. He expressed gratitude to music educators and all those who work to bring music to the community and also to the Music Boosters.

3. Friends of the Opera House Donation

Representatives from the Friends of the Opera House came forth to present a check to Mayor Sager as a donation to fund the remodeling of the Opera House business office. They detailed some of the events that were held to raise the \$10,500 which is being donated. Mayor Sager thanked them for their dedicated service on behalf of the Opera House, noting the group’s support has brought many wonderful events and improvements to the facility throughout the years.

Mayor Sager then noted with sadness the passing of Ed Hall who was a long-time producer and supporter of the Opera House. He stated the City mourns his loss and offered thoughts and prayers for Mr. Hall's family and friends, noting he will be remembered for the joy he brought to the community.

Public Comments

Scott Gessert, 801 Gerry Street, Woodstock, thanked Mayor Sager for taking time to meet with him last week noting his appreciation for the Mayor's approachability and his generosity with his time. He stated that as he moves forward throughout the community, he will hold Mayor Sager in respect.

Noting that three communities in Illinois are today voting on whether to become Home Rule, he stated his opinion that Home Rule status has one characteristic that is objectionable to the greater community which is unbridled taxing authority. He passed out a document detailing his request for the Council to discuss and consider passage of a "Home Rule Policy" similar to that adopted by Downers Grove. The Downers Grove policy provides for information to be published for general circulation prior to the imposition of any home rule tax and delaying vote on such an item for two Council meetings to allow citizens to circulate petitions requiring an advisory referendum opposing the tax.

In response to Mayor Sager's invitation, there were no other comments forthcoming from the public on this issue.

Mayor Sager stated during his conversation with Mr. Gessert, he agreed to raise the topic of a Home Rule Policy as a discussion item with the Council. He noted the policy described in the document given to Council by Mr. Gessert provides for a number of things: 1) Publication so there is information provided to the community, which is inherent in the Open Meetings Act as well; 2) Establishment of parameters around which the tax considered would take place; 3) Council would refrain from voting on the ordinance for two meetings subsequent to the publication notification; 4) A trigger for a mandatory advisory referendum, which is a petition bearing the signature of 10% of the voters in the previous mayoral election. Mayor Sager stated unfortunately there is usually not a large turn-out in mayoral elections and this would probably not be a large enough trigger. He further noted that holding an advisory referendum would be dependent upon the date on which it could be held according to the election calendar and those involved would have to be mindful of timing. Further, he noted an advisory referendum is not binding and does not determine Council action.

Mayor Sager stated it is his belief that it is the intent and desire of the City Council to work with the public at large. He noted Council has tried to hold tight on taxes as evidenced by not extending the PTELL for the past five years and that, as a result, the City's percentage of the overall tax bill has declined. Mayor Sager stated Council agrees that taxes are too high and that the City must hold tight on taxes and that the body might be willing to enter into a dialog. Noting that it may not be at the next meeting due to scheduling, Mayor Sager pledged that, with the consensus of the Council, this item will be placed on a future agenda. It was the consensus of the City Council that this be done.

Lydia Baltalbos, 621 Dean Street, stated she recently began reading a book entitled, *Corrupt Illinois – Patronage, Cronyism, and Criminology*. Reading from the book, Ms. Baltalbos urged everyone to read it. She noted that former governor Jim Edgar has stated Illinois is the 3rd most corrupt state in the nation and stated the authors' goal was to publish an encyclopedia of corruption in Illinois, but found the subject matter to be too large. Ms. Baltalbos described her years sharing a building with Ryan Pharmacy in Kankakee and the activities she witnessed. She stated people have listed corruption as a bigger problem in Illinois than job loss. Ms. Baltalbos noted Sunshine Week in Illinois is March 13 through 19.

Council Comments

There were no comments forthcoming.

CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were removed from the Consent Agenda:

- Item E-1 at the request of D. Hart
- Item E-2 at the request of M. Saladin
- Item E-5 at the request of J. Starzynski
- Item E-6 at the request of RB Thompson

Motion by M. Saladin, second by M. Larson, to approve the remaining Consent Agenda items B through D, E-3, E-4, and E-7.

Mayor Sager opened the floor for questions and comments from the Council concerning those items remaining on the Consent Agenda:

Item E-3 – Revolving Loan Fund

M. Larson thanked the owners of the Thoughtfulness Shop for their investment in the City as did the other Council members.

Item E-7 – Current Refunding

M. Saladin noted this is a cost saving step with the City taking advantage of saving money by paying something off early. He commended Finance Director Paul Christensen for prompting this action.

Item E-4 – NAAC Agreement

Responding to a question from RB Thompson, Mayor Sager described the location of the public restrooms on the 2nd floor of the Old Courthouse, noting they are accessible.

In response to further questioning from Mr. Thompson, R. Stelford noted NAAC takes great pride in the building, including the chalkboard with the election results. Mayor Sager continued stating that the group does not have the right to remove the board or the election results.

A roll call vote was taken on the following items on the Consent Agenda as identified:

B. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

March 1, 2016 Regular Meeting

C. WARRANTS: 3704 3705**D. MINUTES AND REPORTS:**

Economic Development Monthly Report – February 2016

Human Resources Monthly Report – February 2016

Public Works Department Monthly Report – February 2016

Environmental Commission Minutes – February 11, 2016

Economic Development Commission Minutes – March 8, 2016

E. MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 64

3. Revolving Loan Fund – Adoption of Resolution No. 16-R-06, identified as Document No. 3, *A Resolution Authorizing a Loan Agreement between the City of Woodstock and the Thoughtfulness Shop*, subject to final review and approval by the City Attorney.

4. NAAC Agreement – Adoption of Ordinance No. 16-O-14, identified as Document No. 4, *An Ordinance Authorizing a Space Usage and Donation Agreement Between the City of Woodstock and Northwest Area Arts Council for the Old Courthouse Art Center* in the Old Courthouse for a term of April 1, 2016 through April 30, 2017 subject to final review and approval by the City Attorney.

7. Current Refunding – Alternate Revenue Bonds – Authorization to complete a current refunding and call of the Series 2004F Alternate Revenue Bonds.

A roll call was taken. Ayes: D. Hart, M. Larson, M. Saladin, J. Starzynski, RB Thompson and Mayor Sager. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: M. Turner. Motion carried.

Item E-1 – Benton Street Event – Road Closures

D. Hart recused himself and left the Chambers at 7:45 PM.

In response to a question, Mark Bezik, 2410 Maritime Lane, Woodstock, organizer of the event, stated the Cass Street pedestrian crosswalk will remain open.

In response to questions from the Council, Chief Lowen stated the music will not be played until 11:00PM but will shut down at 10:00PM. He also noted the event will be held within a tent which will mitigate the noise. Mayor Sager noted the new event times will allow the event to come to a more gradual conclusion.

Motion by M. Saladin, second by J. Starzynski for the following:

- 1) Closure of Benton Street between Cass Street and the railroad tracks, as well as closure of East Judd Street between Benton Street and North Jefferson Street between the hours of 6:00AM on Saturday, March 19, 2016 and 7:00AM on Sunday March 20, 2016;
- 2) Approval of alcoholic beverage in the public ways during specified event hours for the fenced event area only and during specified event hours for the aforementioned event and date only, with all alcohol consumption in the public way ceasing at 12:00AM on Sunday, March 20, 2016;
- 3) Approval of Ordinance 16-O-15, identified as Document No. 1, *An Ordinance Imposing Certain Temporary Traffic Restrictions and Parking Restrictions in the City of Woodstock for a Benton Street Event*;
- 4) All approvals to remain conditional upon the terms set forth within the staff report approved at the February 2nd Council meeting.

A roll call vote was taken: Ayes: M. Larson, M. Saladin, J. Starzynski, RB Thompson and Mayor Sager. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: D. Hart and M. Turner. Motion carried.

D. Hart returned to the Chambers and rejoined the proceedings at 7:49 PM.

Item D-2 - Special Use Permit – 930 Northampton

M. Saladin recused himself and exited the Chambers at 7:50PM.

Mayor Sager thanked Terry Egan for Hearthstone's involvement in the community. M. Larson expressed her appreciation for Hearthstone's willingness to work with the Plan Commission on this issue.

Motion by J. Starzynski, second by RB Thompson, to adopt Ordinance 16-O-16, identified as Document No. 2, *An Ordinance Issuing a Special Use Permit for the Redevelopment of Property, generally referred to as 930 Northampton Street, as Part of the Woodstock Christian Life Services Senior Living Complex.*

A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: D. Hart, M. Larson, J. Starzynski, RB Thompson, and Mayor Sager. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: M. Saladin and M. Turner. Motion carried

M. Saladin returned to the Chambers and rejoined the proceedings at 7:53PM.

Item E-5 – Traffic Code Amendment

In response to a question from J. Starzynski, Chief Lowen stated the proposed amendment to the City Code will provide more flexibility in sentencing and will come into play for more serious moving violations.

Motion by J. Starzynski, second by M. Saladin, to approve Ordinance 16-O-17, identified as Document No. 5, *An Ordinance Amending the Woodstock City Code Regarding Motor Vehicles and Traffic.*

A roll call vote was taken: Ayes: D. Hart, M. Larson, M. Saladin, J. Starzynski, RB Thompson, and Mayor Sager. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: M. Turner. Motion carried.

Item E-6 – Professional Agreement – Old Courthouse Windows

RB Thompson questioned whether Gary W. Anderson Architects seeks out bidders in areas other than Rockford as it seems the City only receives bids from that area. He noted there certainly should be capable artisans in the Chicagoland area. He also stated that Mr. Anderson seems to come in over deadline requiring change orders, which seem to require additional dollars as was discussed at the last City Council meeting.

M. Saladin asked whether this is a matter of the architect or the condition of the building. J. Starzynski opined this is because when the building is opened up, it is found to be in worse condition than originally thought. Noting perhaps there is no way to begin the work without this study, M. Larson stated she would rather spend the money on fixing the windows if possible.

Mayor Sager stated he appreciates Council's comments and staff's oversight of this project. He noted this is an old building and a project of magnitude requiring significant investment. He stated the costs have been high and unexpected, but he believes the public appreciates the City's efforts. He asked staff to comment.

R. Stelford stated this is part of the challenge of working with this building noting there have been many surprises. He further noted the City does not have the staff to prepare the bid specs. He stated commissioning the report from Mr. Anderson would provide more information to bidders who then can provide more accurate bids. Without this information, bidders are likely to err on the high side.

Nancy Baker noted the bids are put on the City's website and firms throughout the region who specialize in historic buildings are contacted. She stated one of the problems found with many of the Chicago companies is that this project is not big enough for them to come out here. She further stated some bids have been received from companies in other areas, but they have not been chosen.

Ms. Baker echoed Mr. Stelford's comment concerning obtaining bid plans. She stated if the City does not provide bidders with detailed information for each window, the City will receive higher bids because the bidder will have to bid on the worst case scenario for each window. Mayor Sager summarized that the windows must be specked out on an individual basis so it is better to obtain these specifications prior to going out to bid. He noted that both the Council and the Old Courthouse Advisory Commission have identified the windows as the highest priority and this will be money well spent.

In response to a question from D. Hart, N. Baker noted Mr. Anderson knows the building and his approach was successful in the Sheriff's House window project. In response to a question from M. Larson, N. Baker stated there are a lot of things that come into play once work has begun, some of which cannot be known when the specs are being developed. In response to a question from D. Hart as to why bids are not solicited for the specs, N. Baker stated Mr. Anderson can provide the information more quickly and has been very effective in dealing with the contractors.

J. Starzynski stated his feeling that this is a case of only being able to know so much until the building is opened up.

In response to a question from RB Thompson, N. Baker stated the Historic Preservation Commission recommended the building be restored back to its 1905 appearance and described how this will affect the windows.

M. Larson stated it is her feeling that based on Ms. Baker's experience with Mr. Anderson and his experience with the building, it is probably better to use him. She also stated her opinion that the bid specs are not causing the issues and that using Mr. Anderson to develop the specs is probably actually a cost savings in getting lower bids. She thanked Ms. Baker for her oversight of this project.

Motion by J. Starzynski, second by M. Saladin, to approve an agreement with Gary W. Anderson Architects to provide architectural services for the surveying of existing courthouse windows, preparation of specifications, cost estimates, assistance through the bidding process, and contract administration assistance for an anticipated cost of \$12,000 as identified in the staff report.

A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: D. Hart, M. Larson, M. Saladin, J. Starzynski, and Mayor Sager. Nays: RB Thompson. Abstentions: none. Absentees: M. Turner. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

8. Transportation Commission – Plan Update

Transportation Commission Chairman Andrew Celentano presented a summary of the updated 2015 Woodstock Transportation Plan, thanking the members of the Commission for their valuable contributions. He noted because of the interest and dedication of members Caron Wenzel, Jason Osborne, Susan Hudson and Mark Indyke, the Transportation Commission has canceled only one meeting in four years due to a lack of quorum.

Mr. Celentano also thanked Public Works Director Jeff Van Landuyt for his guidance, interest and expertise.

Mr. Celentano noted the Commission did not see the need for major changes to the Plan's current structure or focus, stating as Woodstock grows, transportation becomes more crucial.

Mr. Celentano stated the introduction raises the issue of electric cars and low-speed vehicles and also the continued value of enhancing the ability to walk or bike around Woodstock. He noted the Commission studied places where people would gather and transportation needs to get people to and from those locations. He also noted the next Transportation Plan must contemplate change that will come after the widening of Rt. 47.

Mr. Celentano then discussed pedestrian traffic, including sidewalks and crosswalks, noting the Commission adding the prioritization of constructing missing sidewalks within a quarter mile in all directions of schools and parks. He stated that in a 2013 survey, 70% of respondents indicated the sidewalk system in Woodstock did not meet their needs and 25% of respondents recommended constructing a sidewalk where none currently exists. He stated connectivity was the overriding complaint and noted the Commission asked that priority be given to making sure that the sidewalk requirement be extended beyond the property line of a subdivision to foster that connectivity. He further noted the Commission advocates multi-use paths be constructed around new subdivisions to at least the limits of each new development and added references to accommodate seniors and handicapped individuals to make sure their needs are considered in any plans, even if not required by law. The Commission also recommends that the City adopt some or all of the Complete Streets parameters for safe access for all users.

Mr. Celentano noted the Transportation Commission developed the City's first Master Bicycle Plan in 2009 and believes the Plan should be updated periodically.

Mr. Celentano then discussed public transportation, including adding a Metra station at Lily Pond Road, moving the train yard west of Woodstock, and expanding bus service. He stated the Commission is constantly looking at the integration of MC Ride and PACE service in the overall plan and continues to review new ideas to enhance transportation options. He noted the Commission strongly recommends that maps and timetables be placed in all municipal offices and gathering places.

Mr. Celentano stated the Commission request the City push for the additional rail stop at Lily Pond Road, work with Metra to provide a low-cost Metra pass for persons traveling within McHenry County, encourage and support a waiting area and expanded platform on the inbound side at the train station, and consider covered bike racks and low-speed vehicle parking in public lots. He stated the Commission believes any new development should include provisions for public transportation and asks that the City support increased public transportation in conjunction with local business, major employers, and the courthouse complex. He further stated the Commission is looking at various types of transportation options within the City limits such as a low-speed bus system, golf cart-type vehicles, and special event transportation.

Mr. Celentano then discussed air travel noting the Commission recommends focus being on O'Hare Airport. He stated because there is no direct public transportation to O'Hare and drive time is increasing, the Commission suggests the City encourage and support a transfer at Des Plaines to the North Central line from the Northwest line.

Mr. Celentano then discussed motor vehicles, noting this chapter of the Plan was most difficult. He noted the cost of making the Woodstock road network congestion free and safe is enormous and it is difficult to mitigate this issue to enhance the growth of commerce and our population, while still maintaining a small town feel.

He stated the current impact of Route 47 congestion is obvious and the City must continue strong efforts to make the Route 47 expansion the viable alternative by allowing for future bus service and safe crossing alternatives. He also noted the disruption during the three-year construction period must be carefully managed.

Mr. Celentano stated the Commission recommends partnering with local business along Route 47 in an effort to help them survive the financial burden that will befall them during construction.

Mr. Celentano then indicates some other congestion-relieving positions such as extending Lake Shore Drive to McConnell Road, extending Zimmerman to Route 120, and widening parts of Lamb Road and Raffel Road.

Mr. Celentano stated the Commission recommends that the City search for new ways to fund the maintenance of the City's roadways as those costs will only increase and also to explore new methods and procedures that increase pavement life. He noted the Commission also recommends the City consider changes in technology that deal with new methods of travel such as small "street-legal" electric vehicles and also consider charging stations for electric vehicles and fueling stations for natural and compressed gas-powered vehicles.

Mr. Celentano noted that a good internal transportation network, well connected to the surroundings increases the attractiveness of the community for all potential businesses and residents. He stated the Plan is a living document and should be revisited in 2020 as there will be many technological and procedural changes to be recognized.

Mayor Sager thanked Mr. Celentano and expressed his gratitude to the Commission and Public Works Director Jeff Van Landuyt for their diligent work on transportation issues and the Transportation Plan. He also noted that members of this Commission frequently attend meetings of other Commissions and also thanked Mr. Celentano for his work with students.

Mayor Sager stated this Commission has a strong commitment to transportation issues and has worked collaboratively with other individuals and other bodies resulting in signs of progress including the City's efforts in Springfield for improvements to Routes 14 and 47. He also noted the City continues to have a strong commitment to improve Metra service, including moving the rail yard to the other side of Woodstock, which would increase service. He stated much of the work on these projects take place behind the scenes.

Mayor Sager stated the Route 47 project does not include just widening, but also includes ensuring access for the businesses along this route and safe pedestrian crossings.

Mayor Sager also stated the City is partnering with Metra to place an inbound warming station in 2017, noting this property is owned by UP, however, and will require negotiations with that body.

Mayor Sager noted City staff has identified a task force to study street maintenance and repairs, and look at a variety of plans and methods to have greater efficiencies in cost and longevity.

Mayor Sager stated the Transportation Commission has the commitment of the Council to bring transportation issues to the fore.

In response to a question from RB Thompson, Mr. Celentano noted that “people movers” require a large population to move in order to be cost effective as they are very expensive.

M. Larson opined that charging stations could be located in Woodstock at a fairly low cost. She also stated a bike-share program could be implemented at a low cost.

In response to a question from J. Starzynski, Mayor Sager noted that, while a bypass may be looked at down the road as the City grows, the priority at this time is the widening of Rt. 47.

9. Transmittal of FY16/17 Budget

R. Stelford stated staff is proud to transmit the FY16/17 Budget to the Council tonight, noting it has been placed in Council’s Dropbox and will be placed on the City’s webpage tomorrow. He stated the operating budget is once again balanced so the City is spending within its means. He further noted the budget includes the priorities identified at the Council workshops. He stated staff worked diligently and came up with creative solutions for the challenges faced. Mr. Stelford noted that, for the first time, this year the budget includes performance measures and hopes to hear feedback from the Council on these.

Mayor Sager thanked staff noting he knows this takes a huge amount of time and effort.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no items added or removed from the Tentative Future Agendas.

ADJOURN

Motion by M. Larson, second by M. Saladin, to adjourn this meeting of the Woodstock City Council to the next regularly-scheduled meeting on Tuesday, April 5, 2016, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Ayes: D. Hart, M. Larson, M. Saladin, J. Starzynski, RB Thompson, and Mayor Sager. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: M. Turner. Meeting adjourned at 8:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Smiley
City Clerk