

TRENTON CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING AUGUST 10, 2015

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

A special meeting of the Trenton City Council was called to order by Mayor Kyle Jones on Monday, August 10, 2015 at 6:45 PM at City Hall.

ROLL CALL

Hooker, Mohme, Sims, Woods, Zurliene (absent)

Also present were Clerk Karen Buzzard, City Administrator Doug Brimm, Mike Conley of the Trenton Sun, Superintendent of Public Works Kurt Wehrle, Attorney Tim Palen, and Chief Jones

INPUT FROM RESIDENTS

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE: Mr. Brimm opened a discussion with the Council regarding a progressive fine schedule. He cited several sections of code that impose a penalty or fine for violating our code. Of the 50+ cases so far this year there are several properties with the same offense over and over. Currently an offender can settle their citation for \$50 with the fine increasing to \$75 after 10 days. If not paid then the citation is turned over to the circuit courts for prosecution. Mr. Brimm would like to propose changing the fine to \$75, \$100, \$125 etc. for each additional citation for the same offense to alleviate the chronic violators. Attorney Palen suggested setting the floor at \$100 not \$75 because the \$75 doesn't cover the administrative costs to process these citations. Then look through the code book to make all fines consistent. Mayor Jones stated that this is not about making money; it is about getting people to comply. We have the same offenders that would rather pay the fines than take care of the problem. He asked the Council's opinion. Everyone was in agreement. There was discussion on setting several tiers of fines and what they should be. Attorney Palen explained that it is not necessary to tier all of the way up to the \$750. Just set one or two tiers. Set the floor, and he can take care of the rest in court.

Mayor Jones discussed with the Council the possibility of changing the meeting schedule and format from the one voting meeting per month and two work sessions, to two voting meetings per month and no work sessions. The focus will be on efficiency. This would eliminate the need for calling a special meeting to vote on an item that can't wait until our next voting meeting. Alderman Woods expressed a concern with things being pushed through to a vote too quickly. Mayor Jones assured him that he will preserve his practice of review prior to vote. Mr. Brimm stated that this will be beneficial in building/zoning instances. There are times currently that the process can take two to three months before the Council takes action on an application because of the Council's meeting schedule. Mayor Jones said that the pay structure would remain the same for everyone. If this is voted on in September it may not take effect until October. The Monday meetings would begin at 7 p.m., not 6:30 p.m. like they currently do.

PUBLIC WORKS:

PUBLIC SAFETY: Alderman Hooker said that he was contacted by resident Leslie Williams. She is concerned with the traffic that comes off of Broadway onto Locust and she would like a stop sign at the intersection of Locust and Illinois. Alderman Woods asked for Chief Jones' input on this. Chief Jones stated that a traffic study is supposed to be done prior to installation of any stop sign. The problem with that intersection is the wide curb area acts as a ramp from eastbound

Broadway to southbound Locust. Mayor Jones is not OK with a stop sign but is OK with a curb extension. Chief Jones stated that if you narrow the road you slow the traffic. Mr. Brimm asked if IDOT approval would be needed for a curb extension there. Yes. At this time we will beef up police presence in that area.

MAYOR'S REPORT

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Brimm stated that this weekend's 4" to 6" rain in 2 hours resulted in 8 calls for backup, with only 3 actually being backup. This reinforces the need for smoke testing of the sewer system. The camera for the cross connection inspections arrived today and the public works department will get that up and running. An e-mail was received from Don Williams regarding the volume of water in the park, specifically the pool parking lot and ball diamonds. Superintendent Wehrle said that was a good thing, the park is acting as a retention pond and that water is not going into basements.

CLOSED SESSION

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Jones reviewed a spreadsheet of public works staffing cost comparisons. This spreadsheet outlined different scenarios of staffing over this year and the cost of hiring a new public works employee. It was reviewed for the Council how public works employees are currently funded; 1/3 each from general fund, water fund and sewer fund. Mayor Jones stated that if anyone is hired next summer for grass cutting that person will be paid entirely from the park fund. With Wes Wright leaving the City any savings the City will see will cover the cost of any part time help. Overall the City will probably not save any money, but the added productivity in the public works department will be seen by being able to do projects in house. That savings will more than cover the salary of another employee. Mayor Jones stated that this will also be advantageous for future Councils in that when Mr. Wehrle decides to retire he may not be replaced with someone possessing his skill set, and when public works employees retire it will be up to the Council whether to replace them. Mr. Wehrle stated that he needs an employee now. If the decision to hire someone isn't made by the Council until the September meeting then the new employee won't start until October. That being the case, then you might as well wait until spring to hire. Mayor Jones would like for the Council to consider authorizing Mr. Wehrle, Mr. Brimm and the Mayor to interview and hire someone for public works. The job would be re-opened for 10 days with the application deadline being one week from this Friday. Interviews would be conducted and someone would be hired. Anyone who applied this last time would still be considered, and would not need to apply again. Alderman Woods made a motion authorizing the Mayor, Mr. Brimm and Mr. Wehrle to hire a new public works employee. Second Alderman Hooker, all yes, Zurliene absent.

Alderman Hooker asked if the pool closing had been changed. Mr. Wehrle stated yes, he had a meeting with the pool staff last week and enough lifeguards have committed to working weekends only until Labor Day. Effective August 17, 2015 the pool will only be open Saturdays and Sundays from noon – 7 p.m. through Sunday September 6, 2015. Mayor Jones encouraged the Community Coordination committee to invite the park board to meeting and discuss what the City's goals are and find out what the park board's goals are.

ADJOURNMENT

Alderman Hooker made a motion to adjourn. Second Alderman Woods, all yes, Zurliene absent, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Karen Buzzard, City Clerk