

TRENTON CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING FEBRUARY 12, 2018

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Trenton City Council was called to order by Mayor Kyle Jones on Monday, February 12, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall.

**ROLL CALL**

Hooker, Mohme, Sims, Weh, Woods, Zurliene All present

Also present were City Clerk Karen Buzzard, City Administrator Doug Brimm, Superintendent of Public Works Kurt Wehrle, Chief Chris Joellenbeck, Doug Ratermann of HMG Engineering, Travis Norris and Kenny Grasle of Schulte Supply and Mike Conley of the Trenton Sun.

**PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS**

Mayor Jones called upon Travis Norris and Kenny Grasle of Schulte Supply, the City's water meter supplier. They are here tonight to answer any questions regarding the operation of our water meters.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Mr. Brimm stated that although Facebook was a buzz with people voicing concerns about their water bills only two had legitimate concerns and those concerns are being addressed. Information received from Travis Norris of Schulte Supply verified that when meters age they slow down, not speed up. The meters that Trenton purchases exceed the American Water Works Association standards for accuracy. Mr. Norris also informed the Council that if there is a backflow situation and water runs backwards through the meter then the meter will register backwards, deducting consumption. That would result in the resident not being billed accurately. Mr. Brimm informed the Council that if the frost plate (bottom of the meter) breaks then the meter will not register any flow at all. Mr. Norris confirmed that. Superintendent of Public Works Wehrle explained to the Council the benefits of installing all R900i radio read meters. Not only will we be able to read meters by driving by, but these meters have the capability of storing 96 days' worth of flow data. Every fifteen minutes a snapshot of data is taken. If there is flow for 50 intervals within a 24 hour period that meter is flagged as having an intermittent leak. If there is flow for all 96 intervals within a 24 hour period then that meter is flagged as having a continuous leak. Mr. Wehrle went on to explain the equipment that could capture this data, including an app on a smart phone. Mr. Norris stated that this can be used as a tool when dealing with residents. The Illinois Court system has even accepted this information as evidence in the courts. Mr. Brimm reviewed the number of meters needed and the cost to replace those meters. One thing to keep in mind is that as meters are replaced we will bill more accurately and this will ultimately help our financial picture. Residents will pay more for water, but this is water that they have already been using and not paying for. Mayor Jones acknowledged a meter problem and was quick to point out that is just one factor in this big picture. Superintendent Wehrle informed the Council that a water leak has been found at the Parkview Apartments. Water was found draining directly into the storm sewer. Mr. Wehrle believes this problem has been going on for years. It has been fixed and this should help reduce our water loss.

**PUBLIC INPUT**

**COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS – MAYOR**

Mayor Jones said that he is aware of the Facebooks posts and is disheartened that people would blast on that forum and not call City Hall to discuss a potential problem. The Chamber of Commerce has held one meeting and has another scheduled to discuss the building of a community center. Mayor Jones would like for this group to bring to the City a plan so no words

are put into our mouths. The City is willing to work with this group, but any commitment on the part of the City will be discussed in an open meeting and voted on by the whole Council. These meetings hosted by the Chamber are open to the public and any City Officials are free to attend. Mayor Jones just wants it known that no City official has the ability to bind the City.

#### **COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS- ALDERMEN**

Alderman Hooker held a Community Coordination committee meeting earlier tonight. He would like the Council to approve up to \$3500.00 for the purchase of cabinets, countertops, sink, and miscellaneous equipment for a concession stand at the pool. The recreation fund has fund balance to support this cost.

#### **COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS – CITY STAFF**

Chief Joellenbeck reviewed the January 2018 police activity. He has also started a campaign to remove derelict vehicles and clean up yards. Warnings have been issued all throughout the City. Chief Joellenbeck reminded everyone that the next large item pick-up with Republic Services is next Monday, February 19<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Jones said that this is tax season and IRS scams are hot and heavy.

City Administrator Brimm reported that the deadline for submission of bids for the concession stand project is February 21, 2018. He would expect that the Council will award the bid at the February 26<sup>th</sup> meeting and the deadline for project completion is March 9, 2018. Coach Groennert has been made aware of this work and he does not anticipate interference with his baseball schedule.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Alderman Hooker made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Second Alderman Weh, all yes, motion carried. The Consent Agenda included the minutes of the January 22, 2018 Regular Council meeting, a motion to Approve Bills for Month of January 2018, a motion to Approve Payrolls for Month of January 2018, a motion to Approve Treasurer's Report for Month of December 2017, a motion to Approve Resolution #20180212 Approving Preliminary Plat for North Ash Street Subdivision, a motion to Approve Resolution #20180212-001 for Maintenance Under the Illinois Highway Code (2018 Motor Fuel Tax Program), and motion to Approve Ordinance #1700 Granting Special Use Permit for 19 South Main Street, Trenton, Illinois.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Mayor Jones felt that it was important to have a representative here from our water meter supplier to answer questions. The Council has previously discussed a water rate increase and a monthly meter fee. This coupled with more accurate meter readings could result in a lot of pissed off residents. This is not good. It appears as if we are gouging our residents for the betterment of the water fund. The lack of a maintenance program for the water department should not be borne by the residents all at once. The Council can always raise rates again in the future if the additional consumption capture is not what we think it might be. Mr. Brimm reviewed with the Council the various rate increase/meter fee scenarios that he prepared. There was much discussion about the percentage of water increase versus the amount of a meter fee. A rate increase will affect our top water users while a meter fee will affect those on fixed incomes. Right now we need to shoot for stabilization of the water fund and not a huge fund balance. There are multiple problems and they won't all be solved with a rate increase or meter fee. Several of the Aldermen gave their opinions on what level of rate increase and how much of a meter fee they would like to see. Mayor Jones suggested giving the public works department a reprieve of some of their big projects to concentrate for the next year on meter replacement. Then we can evaluate the outcome and determine if the impact was what we expected. Superintendent Wehrle would like to have materials on hand so that when he has a break in between jobs he can have his guys replace

meters. Optimally he would like to have 30 on hand. This would be at a cost of roughly \$15,000. With the number of meter replacements needed just for the businesses right here on Broadway it was decided to purchase 60 meters right now. Mayor Jones is not a fan of Interfund loans, but Capital Improvement or Infrastructure funds could be used to purchase meters and the water fund could repay the loan over the course of a year. There was much more discussion on the rate increase and it was decided that an 18% rate increase with a \$4.00 meter fee would be effective March 1, 2018. Mr. Brimm will prepare an ordinance for Council approval at the next meeting.

In addition, effective March 1<sup>st</sup> the City will go to one billing cycle per month. Currently we bill four times per month with the City being divided into four separate quadrants. All meters will be read at the beginning of the month and the whole City will be billed at the same time. This will result in some residents having a short bill cycle for the March billing.

Mr. Brimm brought up another situation for Council consideration. Currently our code states that if someone wishes to have their water meter tested for accuracy they must put down a \$160.00 deposit. This is our cost to have the meter tested. If the meter comes back tested fine then we keep the deposit. If the meter comes back tested bad then the deposit is refunded to the resident. This can be a hardship on some residents especially if they have just received an unusually high water bill. Mr. Brimm would like to change code to say that the City will pay up front for the meter to be tested and if the meter tests accurate then the resident will be charged the \$160.00 testing fee and have to pay their water bill. Everyone was fine with this. Mr. Brimm will have this for approval at the next meeting.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Brimm said that there is a 440kw generator that was previously used at the wastewater treatment plant that is no longer needed there. He would like to surplus that property. It is too large to be used at any of the other City buildings. Mayor Jones asked what that generator was worth. Superintendent Wehrle did not know. Mayor Jones asked whether that generator could be traded in for a dedicated generator for City Hall or the Public Works building. Mr. Brimm will look into that option.

Alderman Hooker made a motion to Approve Change Order No. 5 for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Construction Project. Second Alderman Mohme, all yes, motion carried.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Trenton Chamber of Commerce Dinner Dance Auction will be held February 17 at Hidden Lake Winery in Aviston. Let Mr. Brimm know if you plan to attend.

Also, the Chamber will be hosting another meeting to gauge interest in a Community Building. This meeting will be held February 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 pm at the Trenton House.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

Alderman Hooker made a motion to enter into Closed Session citing 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance or Dismissal of Specific Employees of the Public Body and 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2) Collective Bargaining. Second Alderman Mohme, all yes, motion carried. The Council entered closed session at 9:00 p.m.

The Council re-entered the regular meeting at 9:24 p.m.

Roll Call: Hooker, Mohme, Sims, Weh, Woods, Zurliene All present.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Alderman Hooker made a motion to adjourn. Second Alderman Woods, all yes, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

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Karen Buzzard, City Clerk