



Common Council Meeting – Minutes for October 19, 2020

Council Members in Attendance: Todd Nunemaker (OL), Anna Huff (OL), Amy Rosa (OL), David Kauffman (OL), Denny Miller (IP).

Also Present: Mayor: Phil Jenkins (Unable to Attend), **City Attorney:** Brian L. Hoffer (OL), **Clerk Treasurer:** Jeff Knight (IP) plus 9 guests (OL) and 1 member of the press (OL)

- Call to Order: Deputy Mayor Nunemaker called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
- Roll Call: All members listed above were in attendance either in person or online via ZOOM videoconference.
- Approval of Minutes from October 5th, 2020: Councilwoman Huff motioned to approve the minutes. Councilman Miller seconded. There were no other questions or comments. The minutes were approved unanimously via roll call vote.
- Petitions or comments from citizens:
 - Deputy Mayor Nunemaker asked if there was anyone who had any petitions or comments to make. Mrs. Kathy Brown (362 S. Nappanee St.) stated that she wished to ask some questions. She began by commenting that the agenda was not posted online nor was there a link to the documents to be discussed at the time she looked. She asked for the agenda and a link to the documents to be discussed to be posted on the website by 12:00 pm. The agenda was posted by 3:00 pm. Statutorily there is no requirement for the agenda to be posted online nor is there any such requirement to have a link established to the documents to be discussed. Due to COVID-19 and the attendees primarily attending via videoconference, the agenda has been posted for all members to see and if there were any requests, it was provided. The agenda was provided to all in attendance at the meeting.

Mrs. Brown continued by commenting that she was in favor of the 2% salary increase built into the 2021 budget. However she wished for the Council to watch over the proposed increase in the monthly utility costs. This is a Board of Works issue and not a Council specific issue, but she wanted the Council to be involved regardless. At this point, Mr. Jake Dermott (1 Arbor Ct.) interjected that the proposed utility payment increase would be in the range of \$40 to \$50 a month. CT Knight informed all in attendance that the amount Mr. Dermott referenced is nowhere close to what is being discussed. The amount of increase in



discussions with Baker Tilly is \$2.00 to \$2.50 per month. Neither Mrs. Brown nor Mr. Dermott agreed with what CT Knight said, which put them in disagreement with Baker Tilly (Municipal Advisors and accounting specialists) who is working through all the financial information in order to come up with a projected utility increase. At this time, the projected increase is what CT Knight told the Council. Mrs. Brown also asked if the salary ordinance discussion had taken place yet. Deputy Mayor Nunemaker indicated that it had not, although he wished it had. He noted some timing/scheduling issues had arisen but that the conversations would be held in the next few days. He noted some of his concerns about the economic impact that COVID-19 has had and that the budget would be watched carefully over the ensuing months in order to make wise decisions going into the 2022 budget, which is when the financial impact of COVID-19 during 2020 will most likely be felt. His desire next year is to have that part of the process taken care of prior to the budget.

Mr. Dermott then inquired of Superintendent Gerber how he could manage a proposed project, such as the Water Main Replacement and Airport Water Tower, without having an established budget. Superintendent Gerber responded that there has never been a formalized established budget for the Water or Wastewater utility (which is a correct statement). Mrs. Brown and Mr. Dermott began to argue with Superintendent Gerber at which time CT Knight suggested to Deputy Mayor Nunemaker that the discussion was off topic and that perhaps it was best to move forward with the agenda instead of dwelling on issues from the past. Deputy Mayor Nunemaker concurred and asked if there were any further questions.

Mrs. Brown pivoted the conversation to the City's use of the CARES Act funding. She proposed that the funds received be used to reduce the budget and expounded upon how the SRF reimbursement process works. CT Knight responded that there have been numerous conversations with the Council over the course of the last few months regarding the use of the CARES Act funding and that those funds were already earmarked for internal projects that will reduce the demand on the budget for 2021. Mrs. Brown did not believe CT Knight had discussed this with the Council and asked Deputy Mayor Nunemaker if his statement was true. Deputy Mayor Nunemaker confirmed it was true. Mrs. Brown also asked if there had been any additional appropriations for the year. CT Knight said yes, \$485,000. \$400,000 of TIF to assist with remodel costs of 253 W. Main Street (\$250,000) and the HVAC for Central School's new heating and AC (\$150,000). The remaining \$85,000 was out of the General Fund



for the remodel of, and furniture for, the Mayor's office (\$20,000) and utilization of HR consulting services as well as an intern (\$65,000).

Mr. David Price (510 W. VanBuren) was also in attendance and asked Park Superintendent Davis why the curly slide and swings had been taken down at West Side Park. Superintendent Davis responded that the swings are being replaced. The new swing structure is here, but the installation may not be until next week or the week thereafter. Getting the swings installed has been what has driven the delay. The slide was taken down due to safety issues. A couple of inspections were completed, and it was decided that the best thing to do was remove it. Mr. Dermott commented that swings that were taken down by former Park Superintendent Donny Aleo were never replaced. These concerns predated Superintendent Davis who assumed the responsibilities in mid-2016.

There were no further questions or comments. Deputy Mayor Nunemaker proceeded to the next item on the Agenda.

- Reports from Committees, Boards and Commissions:
 - Clerk-Treasurer Report – September 2020: CT Knight made a few brief comments regarding the report, noting that all was in balance and the cash balances were at good levels. Since the August 2020 report was submitted at the last meeting, there was very little to add. CD interest rates remain extremely low. Funds held in the money market account will remain there until the interest rate environment improves. There were no questions or concerns noted. Councilwoman Rosa motioned to approve the CT report. Councilwoman Huff seconded. The CT report was approved unanimously by roll call vote.
- Unfinished Business:
 - Third Reading of Ordinance 1575 – 2021 City Budget: Deputy Mayor Nunemaker asked CT Knight if the version presented incorporated the changes discussed at the second reading as proposed by Mayor Jenkins. CT Knight said yes. The date was shown as 10/5 to match with the last meeting date when the recommended changes were approved. The departments that were impacted by the changes had their worksheet pages updated and inserted into the final presentation as well as the adjusted summary and total pages. Councilwoman Huff motioned to approve the Ordinance 1575 – 2021 City Budget as presented on third reading. Councilman Kauffman seconded. Councilman Miller followed up on the earlier salary ordinance discussion by commenting that Mayor Jenkins had stated that he would be meeting with the salary



committee in order to have something in place prior to the final reading. Councilman Miller's question was when the salary committee would meet; if it would be closer to the end of the year. Deputy Mayor Nunemaker informed the Council that Mayor Jenkins talked about scheduling a meeting either this week or next week. Knowing that there is a 2% salary increase built into the budget he noted his frustration with the focus being on a percentage versus other important things that should be considered. It is Deputy Mayor Nunemaker and Mayor Jenkins intent to have this completed soon. That is their goal. There is no specific timing deadline, other than it needs to be accomplished by year end. Councilwoman Rosa agreed, stating that the salary committee is looking at much more this year than they have in years past, and are establishing the foundation for this budget season as well as for years to come. There were no further questions or comments. The budget was approved on third reading unanimously by roll call vote.

- New Business:

- First Reading – Ordinance 1578 – Amending Zoning Ordinance: Deputy Mayor Nunemaker presented the ordinance to the Council, noting that It was discussed at the last Council meeting. This ordinance was approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission and sent back to Council. City Attorney Hoffer noted that this will be the first reading of the ordinance. The third reading will take place after the Planning and Zoning Commission has the public hearing and then returns it to Council once more. Councilman Miller motioned to approve the ordinance on first reading. Councilwoman Huff seconded. There were no further questions or comments. The ordinance was approved on first reading unanimously by roll call vote.
- Resolution 734-20 – Authorization to Invest Public Funds: CT Knight presented the Resolution to the Council. The resolution allows the use of non-local banks when investing funds on behalf of the City. Mrs. Brown inquired if this is a one-year resolution and when it matures. Councilwoman Huff pointed out that the resolution states that it expires one year after adoption. Councilwoman Rosa motioned to approve the resolution. Councilman Kauffman seconded. There were no further questions or comments. The resolution was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

- Approval of Accounts Payable Vouchers:



- 2020 APV's totaling \$692,001.26: Councilman Kauffman motioned to approve the APV's. Councilwoman Huff seconded. The APV's were approved unanimously by roll-call vote.

- Reports of City Officers:
 - Each department head was in attendance except for Police Chief Rulli. There were no specific questions or concerns for the department heads apart from one question from Councilman Miller directed toward Fire Chief Lehman. Councilman Miller asked about the use of the AutoPulse machine that was granted to the City by K21 out of Kosciusko County. Chief Lehman responded that the machine has been called out three times, used twice, and has saved one life.
 - CT Knight concluded the meeting by updating the Council on the status of the \$1.1 million recovery of funds that were paid out of cash instead of paid by the bond via the SRF process by his predecessor. On Friday, October 16th, the SRF informed Commonwealth Engineers (assisting in the recovery process) that the remaining \$306,000 was being issued to the City. Once received, that should account for the funds that were paid out incorrectly, that we are aware of at this time.

Adjournment: With no further business to be discussed, Councilwoman Huff motioned to adjourn the meeting and Councilwoman Rosa seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm by unanimous voice vote.

Todd Nunemaker, Deputy Mayor

Attest: _____
Jeff Knight, Clerk of the Council