

Hillsboro City Council Meeting
March 25, 2008

Mayor Baran opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Roll call was taken and those present were Mayor Baran and Commissioners Trost, McCammack, Hill and Sherer.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting were approved.

Mayor and Commissioners Reports:

Commissioner Hill informed the Council that her Parks Department has been working on getting the shower building in the campground ready for opening day. Hill mentioned that they will be looking into heating the building through the winter to cut back on much of the maintenance involved with winterizing and preparing for spring. Commissioner Hill informed everyone that the Eisentrauts will again be operating the beach house.

Commissioner Hill next discussed an issue that has cropped up at the Sports Complex involving installation or moving of equipment facilities. Hill informed the Council that she has sent a letter to the Sports Association stating there is to be no moving of equipment or any excavations done without first outlining the plan to Bill Clinard, who was present when all the various utilities were installed. Clinard would review the plans and make recommendation to the Commissioner of Public Property for her final decision.

Commissioner Hill discussed the rental property located behind the Harkey House that is used to help fund repairs of the Harkey House. The rental house needs extensive work before it can be rented out to help supplement any Harkey expenses. Plans are underway on how the rental house could be improved and made more rentable. Due to lack of funds in the Harkey bank account they will have to rely on a lot of volunteer labor to make these improvements.

Commissioner Hill next discussed the metal building behind City Hall that was owned by the Telfer family and to be given over to the City after 20 years, which has since passed. The previous Council had sent a letter to the Telfer family giving them permission to use the building until Ms. Telfer passes away. The family wanted the agreement to remain as previous with the City being responsible for all maintenance. Commissioner Hill asked the Council for their input as to whether to accept this proposal or proceed in another direction. Hill noted the roof is in serious need of repair right now.

Mayor Baran asked Commissioner Hill for a ballpark figure as to the cost of repairs to help the Council in any decisions made.

Commissioner Hill informed the Council that the Natural Resource Committee has just held their election of officers and Mark Joy was elected President, Dr. Roger McFarlin Vice-president and Carl Reynolds Secretary. Hill also noted that the Council needs to reappoint Dr. McFarlin to the Committee for another term.

Commissioner Hill next discussed the past brush-pickup policy and her intent is to have the last senior citizen brush pickup in April.

Commissioner Hill informed everyone that there would be a “Spring Cleanup” to be held with the same guidelines as in years past. A date for cleanup would be set by the next meeting.

Commissioner Hill next discussed an issue with the gate to the Street Department being found unlocked way too often after hours. The general consensus was there are too many keys to the gate and they can’t all be accounted for. It was suggested by Commissioner Trost to get a lock with keys stamped “do not duplicate” as these have worked well at his employment.

Commissioner Hill next discussed the issue with parking at Seward and Broad Street that was brought up at the previous meeting. Hill stated she had studied the situation and found the problem to be equally as bad on the north corner of Seward and Broad Street. There are similar situations at Water Street and Main. It was decided the best solution for now might be a sign stating “no parking here to corner”.

City Engineer Hunt asked the Council to come to a decision on parking before specifications are sent out for the resurfacing and striping of Main Street. Hunt also informed the Council the present plans call for a parking angle change and cutting the width of spaces from 12 to 10 feet.

Commissioner Hill next briefly discussed the possibility of an early retirement incentive and asked for a committee to study the feasibility. Mayor Baran assigned himself and Commissioners Hill and Trost to research the idea.

Commissioner Hill next gave the Council a copy of a letter she intends to send to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources concerning the intended location of the waste pile from the proposed Deer Run mine. Hill’s concern is any leakage from this pile would go into the water shed for Lake Hillsboro and she would like to see it relocated.

Commissioner Hill discussed the financial status of the City and challenged all the Council to look into ways to cut costs and increase revenue. Hill used an example of the fact that most building permit fees do not even cover the cost of sending a person out to review the site and plans.

Commissioner McCammack used the opportunity of fiscal responsibility to state the City needs better controls on monitoring gas usage for all the City vehicles. One such idea was to install a device that would only turn gas pumps on after being activated by a tone from the Fire Station where a log would also be kept.

Commissioner Hill felt this was a lot of money to be spent and her policy is anyone caught stealing from the City or purchasing things for their own use would be fired. There would be zero tolerance.

Commissioner Sherer informed the Council that the Volunteer Fire Department has agreed to purchase a replacement dive van and would be securing a loan for the additional funds needed.

Sherer stated he had hoped that some time in the future the City could reimburse the Volunteers for a portion of the expenses.

Commissioner Hill commented on the dive truck asking if it were located in Texas and how the travel expenses would be paid and the equipment to outfit the truck as none of this was authorized by the City. The question was also brought up as to how the truck would be titled. If the Volunteers were purchasing the vehicle the title would be in their name and the question then would be how it would be insured. Commissioner McCammack stated he did not think it could be put on the City equipment insurance as it would not be titled in the City's name. This situation would be looked into.

Commissioner Trost asked everyone to be working on their budgets. Commissioner Trost commented on Commissioner Hill's challenge of money saving ideas and took it one step further and extended the same challenge to any City employees, with the reward being a free dinner or something.

Mayor Baran asked all the Commissioners to consider instructing their departments to clear any purchases over \$100.00 through their respective Commissioners. The Commissioner of that department would then contact City Hall and approve a purchase order for the items.

Commissioner Hill noted she has nothing but respect for the entire Volunteer Fire organization and the jobs that they do. That being said, Hill went on to state in her opinion the purchase of a dive vehicle by the Volunteers was a slap in the face by not clearing it with the Council. Commissioner Hill stated she realized the need for the vehicle, but was it necessary at this time and could the purchase have been postponed.

Commissioner Trost stated he is a Volunteer Fireman and had informed the organization that they could be out on limb with the purchase with the chance of never being reimbursed.

Mayor Baran informed the Council there would be a meeting this coming Wednesday with engineers from Ameren to discuss getting electricity to the new raw water pump station. Mayor Baran next mentioned the way Ameren has adjusted the electric rates at the Sports Complex and called the restructuring a travesty. They have penalized the rates for the entire year because of higher usage during the baseball season.

City Attorney Jarman informed the Council that the Mellow's have asked for a 15 day extension on their nuisance abatement allowing them until April 15th to comply. Jarman stated he has still not heard anything from the bank holding the mortgage on the "Chances" building, but will try contacting them again.

City Engineer Hunt reported work was progressing well at the new water plant and estimated it is 70% complete. CB&I has completed their work on the metal vessels and they are currently being painted. The exterior walls are being installed and it was estimated it would take 4 good working days for their completion.

Hunt next discussed change order #4 involving the water transmission lines from the plant to the water tower. Hunt asked for a deadline of the next Council meeting to secure funding for the change order.

Hunt next reported the 2008 Motor Fuel Tax program has been submitted to I.D.O.T for their approval and bid dates would be set when approval is received.

Hunt reported dirt work and seeding where discharge lines crossed the Sports Complex has been completed. Ditch work along Smith Road would be completed as soon as the conditions allow.

Motion was made by Commissioner Hill and seconded by Commissioner Trost to hire the following personnel at the pool and beach. Lifeguards would be Sarah Puckett, Maria Pretnar, Hope Schulte, Cory Evans, Katy Jarman, Katie Homa, Stacie Wright, Allie White, Hannah Sweet, Kelsie Maroney, and Bailey Braun. Caleb Grantham as concession worker and Annette Blankenship as manager. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion was made by Commissioner Sherer and seconded by Commissioner Hill to approve an agreement with I.D.O.T to install battery backup units at the stoplights. The City's cost would be \$4,000.00. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion was made by Commissioner Trost and seconded by Commissioner Sherer to approve a agreement establishing a cost "per hour" rate with Hurst & Rosche for small projects. Motion carried 5-0.

Upcoming agenda items would be the reappointment of Dr. McFarlin to the Natural Resource Committee, the hiring of Kyle Meyer as meter reader and water operator, pay request on the new water plant and cost for radio controlling City gas pumps.

Motion to adjourn was made at 7:58 by Commissioner Trost and seconded by Commissioner Hill. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dave Booher, City Clerk