

Minutes of the General Government and Public Safety Committee for Monday, May 8, 2009.

The meeting was called to order by Alderman Orsini at 7:00 p.m. Present were Mayor Grenke, Aldermen Hensley, Simmons, Skirvin, and Bormann. Also attending were Lynn Behrns, Fire Chief Marvin Rodgers, James Lee, Police Chief Larry Dudgeon, Linda Bormann, John Rinehart, Dori Burke, Kathy Colvin, and James Smith.

Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Alliance.

Special Presentation

Dudgeon present certificates of appreciation to several individuals and organizations for the assistance they provided in the “docudrama” presentation at the Centralia High School. Honored were John Rinehart and the Centralia School District, Bob Bias and Nick Helm from the Police Department, the Boone County Fire Protection District, the Dori Burke of the Boone Hospital Medical Examiner’s office, John Oliver, and Carl’s Towing. The presentation involved a realistic car accident and was intended to heighten awareness of student just prior to prom night. Dudgeon thought the presentation went well and noted that prom evening happened without incident.

Economic Development

Ginny Zoellers presented a report of recent Chamber of Commerce and economic development activities. She stated that most of her focus has been, of course, on Anchor Festival preparations; and she noted that the 3-on-3 baseball tournament is much expanded. There will be a washer toss tournament held at the pool hall on Hickman Street. One of the scheduled bands has shown lots of fan interest, even from out of state. The Chamber is still working on ways to cover wiring and enhance accessibility for disabled persons attending the Anchor Festival. Spaces at the Friendship Church lot have been reserved for handicapped parking. Committee discussed other issues and means of addressing accessibility

Zoellers reported that the Chamber has assisted one business prospect in locating a store front in downtown Centralia. She has been trying to help a second prospect, but as yet nothing has been found in the prospect’s range for rent costs. She also reported that she is receiving almost daily calls or emails with requests for information. Most seem to be generated by the Chamber’s revamped web page.

The Chamber is still exploring a way to promote a barbeque contest. They believe that an event around Veterans Day would work well here.

Behrns reported that Boone County had adopted the revised policy of the use of Chapter 100 bond incentives for industrial development. This has previously been distributed to the Board. Since the City has adopted Boone County’s policy to also be that of Centralia, a resolution will be on the next Board agenda for adopting the revised policy as a substitute. Most of the revisions deal with lowering investment thresholds to qualify for the bond use.

Park Department

Minutes of previous meeting of the Park Board has been distributed. The Park Board will next meet on May 19.

Cemetery Advisory Committee

There was no written report, but Colvin reported that there will be a meeting this week. Preparation for the Avenue of Flags to be put up on May 22 and down on May 28 and for Memorial Day events at to be topics of the meeting..

Tree Board

There was no written report. Lee told the Committee that the Tree Board helped with an Arbor Day event with the school system.

Library Board

Library Board minutes from its April meeting were distributed.

Finance

Financial statements for April (and all of fiscal year 2008-09) are not completed. Colvin said she has to make many entries in order generate a true accrual-based statement for the March was presented. After those statements are printed, the entries will be reverse out so that statements on a cash basis can be generated and given out with the packets for the regular Board meeting.

Preliminary bills over \$1,250 were presented. Alderman Orsini was asked about the bill for the new file server and was told that it had been installed and was in operation. Behrns noted that the bill for wholesale power was not yet on the list, but would run about \$158,000. Colvin also mentioned that the old surplus computer equipment from upstairs had been sent to the electronics recycling program, except that Jarad Douglas had removed the hard drives and Phil Hoffmann had destroyed them as a security precaution.

Colvin referenced a letter form the County Collector. Because of changes in state law concerning the percentage of collections which are distributed to the County Assessor, the County Collector believes that the contract for services between the County and the City needs to be updated. In doing so, several other items have been amended. City Attorney Beck is reviewing the new contract. When it is ready, an ordinance authorizing adoption will be put on the Board agenda. Responding to a question, Colvin also assured the Committee that the City was receiving a higher proportion of billed property taxes through the County Collector than when it was collecting its own taxes.

Mayor Grenke said that a weekend meeting with the City Prosecutor and City staff had cleared up several matters dealing with the process of the municipal court. Colvin mention that she had just received the annual audit of the municipal court. Only one issue had been mentioned, dealing with access to records of closed cases. Colvin had responded to the auditor that all requests for records are referred to the County Court office, which is the true custodian for such records. This satisfied the auditor.

Fire Department

Rodgers presented a report of Fire Department activities in April. The testing of air bottles and the cascade system has been completed. Training has included medical response situations. Rodgers told Mayor Grenke that the problem with one pumper was exactly the sort of thing that practice sessions are intended to discover. In this case the practice was with a suction hose, instead of the usual use of pressurized hydrants. The loss of suction was easily patched.

Rodgers reported that Dr. Womack, the Medical Director for the Boone County Fire Protection District, had agreed to serve as medical director for the Centralia firefighters when they are responding to emergency

situations in support of the District's EMS personnel. Centralia firefighters will need to get hepatitis and tuberculosis shots if they expect to participate as first responders. Behrns suggested that Chief Dudgeon might check the status of shots for his officers and include them in any mass immunization session. Rodgers said that Scott Olsen is working on protocols describing the initial roles for Centralia firefighters at emergency scenes. More training sessions are planned before Centralians hit the streets. Olsen and the LEPC would like some of the Centralians to participate in hazmat operations training. Training for Tuesday and Thursday evenings should be available. This will be live training used in conjunction with some on-line classes.

Rodgers asked the Committee to consider increasing the size of the fire department. As employment at Hubbell/Chance has diminished, several more members of the department now work out of town. This is a severe drawback if the City adds first responder runs. Any new members are recruited on the basis of daytime availability, but turnover is small. Rodgers suggested growing to a department of 30 members. He believes that he has most of the gear to support this. The extra expense for added responses is included in the lump sum set aside assuming EMS duties. Behrns believes that the projected expense for personnel, supplies, and insurance, along with the possible contract for services with the Boone County Fire Protection District should fall within the amount budgeted. Behrns will prepare a proposed revision to the City Code to allow for a larger volunteer department. Committee members were assured that they will still have the power to approve individual appointments and will not be obligated to expand to the upper limit.

Police Department

Chief Dudgeon presented a report of Police Department activities in April. He noted that percentage of time spent on felony cases.

Dudgeon and Committee members discussed the suggest by Don Bagley of elimination of the stop signs on Lakeview Street at Columbia Street. Behrns said that the issue needed more consideration. He noted that when the sidewalk grant was implemented, removal of the stop sign would necessitate their replacement with pedestrian crossing signs. Dudgeon said that he believed that an east-bound bus stopping at the railroad would have thereby complied with the requirement to stop for the stop sign. Orsini asked that the City consider requesting a state exemption for the crossing, since there were so few trains through this intersection (usually only two per day, at a very slow speed). Dudgeon also tossed out the possible use of a yield sign as an alternative. Behrns said that he will contact traffic engineers from MoDOT for advice on traffic control.

Dudgeon told the Committee that there had not been any accidents on Highway 22 near the east city limits. The Committee did not direct that the speed limit be lower in this area, as had been previously suggested by Jason Shackelford. Staff will monitor the area, and may reevaluate it after any future extension of Randolph Street adds slow truck traffic just to the west.

Dudgeon has no information to report on grants for stimulus money or other possible funding for a repeater for police radio signals.

Emergency Management

No report.

Protective Inspection

Behrns noted that Department of Economic Development has received the complete applications for a Community Development Block Grant to pay for demolition of the structure at 105 N. Allen. Most of the historical and environmental studies are already done, so a response should not be long. Behrns has a proposal from Trabue, Hansen, and Hinshaw for engineering services in the preparation of bid documents for the actual demolition. Behrns said that it would be easier for the City to contract for this work on its own. It would count toward the required grant match. Total fees would not exceed \$3,100. To be eligible, not contract should be signed before the grant award.

Committee discussed other structures and properties that needed City attention as nuisances. Behrns is working on notices to several. He reported that the situation at the Redwood Motel may soon be solved through demolition by a new owner.

As May Arise

Mayor Grenke mentioned a brochure concerning opportunities for jobs for young people until a federal stimulus program. Behrns will relay this to department heads and to local businesses through the Chamber of Commerce.

Behrns said that Flynn Drilling had almost finished videoing the bore at old Well #3. Both the driller and Forsee believe that the well could possibly be set up to provide water in the amount needed to run as replacement or in tandem with the other two existing wells. Staff will probably be requesting that we proceed to full pump draw-down testing. Layne-Western has indicated they do not want to submit a bid on that work (but would like to bid on new well equipment, if that is the course chosen by the City). Behrns said that Flynn was willing to hold by their first quote for the whole extraction and testing operation, of which the City had only approved pulling the pumps and videoing. Rather than wait for the Board meeting, Behrns asked if Flynn could proceed with phase 2. Bormann then moved that the City authorize Flynn to proceed with the drawn-down pump testing for a total cost of not more than \$19,500. Simmons seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion and it carried.

Committee discussed the effect of having meth labs found on properties in town. Behrns noted one which had been cleaned up and now was re-occupied. Another had had a meth lab in an out building. The main house had been subject to foreclosure and never re-occupied. Dudgeon told Committee that the State of Missouri spends \$5-6 million each year for cleanups, and this is not sufficient to cover needs.

Closed Session

Bormann moved that the General Government and Public Safety Committee of the City of Centralia, Missouri hold a closed meeting on a close vote tonight, and the specific reason for closing the meeting and having a closed vote is: hiring, firing, disciplining or promoting a particular employee by the City of Centralia where personal information about the employee will be discussed or recorded, as provided for under Section 610.021 (3) of the Revised Statutes of Missouri. He asked that the motion be adopted by roll call vote. Skirvin seconded the motion. On roll call vote the following voted aye: Bormann, Skirvin, Hensley, Orsini, Simmons, and Grenke. Voting nay or abstaining: none. The motion carried.

The Committee retired to closed session. During the session no action was taken.

Return to Open Session

Simmons then moved that the Committee return to open session. Skirvin seconded the motion. On roll call vote the following voted aye: Bormann, Skirvin, Hensley, Orsini, Simmons, and Grenke. Voting nay or abstaining: none. The motion carried and the Committee returned to open session.

The Committee then adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

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