

City of Fulton

City Council Meeting Minutes

February 28, 2022

Mayor Wendy Ottens called the meeting to order and directed the Clerk to call the roll. On roll call, Alderpersons Hunt, Nederhoff, Banker, VanKampen, King, Brondyke, and VanZuiden were present. Alderperson Mask was absent. Staff included, Administrator Clark, Officer Adam Wherry, and PW Director Sikkema. Visitors were present.

COMMUNICATION FROM VISITORS – N/A

PRESENTATIONS

Bill French - Sun Vest Solar

Bill states that he has been before the council several times, first was the original option to buy 20 acres in the Industrial Center and secondly, he returned and asked the council to purchase an additional 13 acres, totaling 33 acres in all. He states that these projects will be built. The time frame would be early 2023. Mayor Ottens asks if the money is there to fund this project. Mr. French says, yes, it is there.

Tonight, Mr. French is asking for 13 additional acres. Mayor Ottens asks CA Clark if these acres are available. Administrator Clark says, yes. She also asks if these additional acres would conflict with what Dan Dolan is asking for. Clark states, no not at all, and shows the areas on the map.

Mayor Ottens asks Mr. French if he needs an answer tonight. He states, yes, or in the very near future. Paperwork must be filed by March 15, 2022.

The price would be \$15,000 per acre. The other option would be a 25-year lease, with 2 – 5-year extensions. Cost of a one-year lease would be approximately \$39,600 per year. Mayor Ottens would like to see a business that would support employees. This will not. Property tax would be the only revenue that this would bring in.

Alderman Banker asks, tonight you are just asking for the additional 13 acres. This would be a separate agreement from the first 20 acres.

Mayor Ottens is not in favor, stating that land is going fast in the Industrial Center and wants to see employee-based businesses.

Attorney Shirk states that with a lease no matter what the term, the City will always have the land come back. Mayor Ottens, asks CA Clark his opinion, which he states that he is leaning toward the lease option.

Once again, City Administrator, reiterates that this is just for the additional 13 acres, not the first 20 acres. Mayor states that the council will make its best effort to get back with you and soon as possible. If there are any other questions please ask now, with no further questions we will move forward. If need be, the council would have to have a special called meeting.

City Administrator Clark asks if we could move to Item #E on the agenda at this time. Attorney Shirk said that we would need to pass an ordinance for the additional 13 acres.

Item #E would state that Sun Vest would like an additional 13 acres, and it would be the option of the city to decide if it would be a lease or a sale. It could be an amendment to the original agreement, or it would be an additional contract. Attorney Shirk states an amendment would be a better option. Motion will be to amend the original contract to add the 13 acres, deadline is July 1, 2022. Alderman King motioned, seconded by Alderman VanKampen. No further discussion. Roll call vote, 7 yes, 0 no. Motion approved.

Charles Dykstra – Cemetery, Right of Way

Charles is asking that the city deed over the unused roadway on the southern edge of the Fulton Township Cemetery. The strip of land is approximately a 66-foot strip, totaling 1 acre. This would give the cemetery additional burial space for the future. City Administrator Clark states that there are no utilities in this area. The Township will pay for all legal fees. Attorney Shirk states that this will be a vacation of the roadway.

Mayor Ottens states that this will be on next month's meeting for action.

Dan Dolan – Land Acquisition of Property

Updates that he has 28 employees at the Dispensary at the present time. The cannabis industry now is being monopolized. Mr. Dolan states that he is one of two smaller business owners that are left waiting on the cultivation license.

At this point of time, he is willing to buy the acreage in the Industrial Center. He would like the council to consider that the original 18 acres that he had the option to buy, which the contract ended a short time ago, to be sold at the lower price of \$10,650/acre and the additional 12 acres to be sold at a higher price of \$15,000/acre.

There would be a roadway for access to this property. City Administrator Clark states that all these properties will be on their own for water and sewer, which would be their own well and septic. Mr. Dolan states that there would be no problem with a gravel road at this time, verses, blacktop.

Alderman VanKampen agrees with this offer, due to all the good that Mr. Dolan has done for our community.

Mayor Ottens states that this will be the first business out there that will employ a multitude of employees.

Mr. Dolan states that, "Hemp" is also a possibility of a future endeavor for this area too.

Majority of the council is willing to move forward with the sale. Will be on the future meeting's agenda.

E-Zone, Grant Writers

Consensus of the council is to get information and handout materials first, before sitting through an agenda.

Vicky Grewal – Fulton Liquor and Food Mart Business Plan

Ms. Grewal's business plan is included in the council packet for viewing. Her proposal states that her business will include groceries, pizza, sandwiches, specials, and beverages (including, beer, wine, liquor and soda, etc).

Business hours will be at least until midnight. This will be varied in the future, depending on demand. There will be online ordering also in the future.

She is an established business owner in the Clinton area. Grocery and liquor at one location (Manufacturing Drive) and the same at the other location (Former Gateway Supply).

Alderman VanKampen is not in favor of increasing the number of Class A Liquor licenses currently. Mayor Ottens states that there is a Class C currently available. Mayor Ottens also states that she has told Ms. Grewal that she would support a Class A License for her.

Visitor, Denny Ottens, asks to see her business plan that she states will be at least \$1,000,000. Ms. Grewal says it is available anytime for viewing.

Alderman Brondyke states he cannot vote in favor at this time. He is representing his ward, and many of his constituents are not in favor of another liquor store.

Alderman VanZuiden agrees with Alderman Brondyke. Residents of Fulton are not in favor, and he represents them as well.

BUSINESS

Approve the February 12, 2022, Council minutes. Alderman Brondyke motioned, seconded by Alderman King. No discussion to follow. Roll call vote, 7 yes, 0 no, minutes approved.

Approve the February 2022 Bill List. Alderman King motioned, seconded by Alderman VanKampen. No discussion to follow. Roll call vote, 7 yes, 0 no, bill list approved.

Approve the motion to move forward with an Ordinance change for the serving of alcoholic beverages at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings. Alderman VanZuiden motioned, seconded by Alderman King. No discussion to follow. Roll call vote 7, yes 0 no, motion approved.

Approve a change of ordinance to add an additional Class A Liquor Licenses to accommodate Vicky Grewal, Fulton Liquor and Food Mart. No motions to move forward. Motion denied.

Discussion and approval for the City of Fulton to make a monetary donation to the SVCC Impact Program. No motions. Discussion to follow. Mayor Ottens thinks that the council should consider some amount. Even if it was a \$1000, it would show that we were very much in favor of program. There are many students in Fulton that are benefitting from this program. Alderman VanZuiden would like to give this some further thought. Alderman VanKampen would like to know where the monies would come from. General Fund? Alderman Nederhoff agrees that this is a fantastic program - but is this the roll of the city council to give donations. This is something to consider for future requests. This will be brought back to table later.

Approve J.A. Proclamation. Junior Achievement Day is to be held on April 7, 2022. This is an opportunity for the City of Fulton to recognize and celebrate Junior Achievement of the Heartland. Alderman VanKampen motioned, seconded by Alderman King. No further discussion. Roll call vote, 7 yes 0 no. Proclamation approved.

City Administrator Search Committee (Mayor would like to have 2 volunteers from the Council and 2 volunteers from the community to search for candidates and create contract). Discussion: Alderman King thinks that this is way too early to start this discussion. Consensus of the council to wait, way too early to start this process.

Approve employee bonus from Federal Relief Funds. (Amount and Motion) Alderman Brondyke states that he is in favor and would like \$1000 for current full-time employees and \$500 for current part-time employees who worked during the covid epidemic. Alderman King motioned, seconded by Alderman Hunt. Discussion to follow. Paul Banker would like to state that there is an increase in health insurance this year again, and that bonuses come and are forgotten quickly. Employees need to be aware that we are covering health care increases. This will be in the amount of approximately \$13,000 that will come out of the Federal Rescue Funds, and not the current budget. No further discussion. Roll call vote, 7 yes, 0 no. Motion approved.

Approve employee Christmas bonus for the upcoming fiscal year budget. (Amount and Motion) City Administrator states that this was brought up for discussion previously and needs to be addressed for budget input. Alderman VanZuiden motions to make bonuses in the amount of \$200 for full time employees and \$100 for part time employees, seconded by Alderman Brondyke. Discussion to follow. Alderman King says this amount should go up. It has not been increased in years. Mayor Ottens would like to know how many people in the room get a bonus at work. Mayor Ottens says she knows most businesses do not give bonuses anymore. Alderman VanKampen states she does not believe that is true. Mayor Ottens thinks it is very generous at \$200 and \$100.

Alderman Nederhoff believes bonuses are good. He would like to see it at \$300 and \$150.

Motion for the \$200 and \$100 Christmas bonus. Roll Call Vote, 2 yes, 5 no. Motion denied.

Alderman VanKampen motions for \$300 for full time employee Christmas bonus and \$150 for part time employees, seconded by Alderman VanZuiden. Roll call vote, 4 yes, 3 no. Motion approved.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

City Administrator Clark states that the deficit is \$56,000. This includes the onetime expense for the new HVAC purchase for City Hall. (This would come from reserves) This would leave approximately \$11,000-\$12,000 that would have to be adjusted.

Special Funds where discussed. These include - social security, IMRF, Police Protection, Audit, TIF 1, TIF 2, etc. These are pretty much all covered from levied funds.

Recreational Cannabis funds are starting to come in.

MFT Funds are healthy but limited for their own expenditures.

Bonds and Payments. (funding)

8th Street Project.... came in with a great bid.

Water and Sewer – 4% increase on water and sewer. (Keeping up with the cost of living and upkeep)
Debts will remain the same. Saving monies in the depreciation fund for the painting of the water tower, will also apply for a grant also. Approximate cost of water painting is about \$700,000.

Garbage fund – is good. Helped with the derecho expenses and is building back up.

Marina – no increase on summer slip fees this year but will increase next year. Dredging will take place this spring. Marina building is rented this year. Parking area will be rocked. What the marina takes in will take care of the expenses.

City Administrator asks that if anyone has questions at any time, please stop and see him.

REPORTS

Finance

Economic Development

Parks and Recs

Public Safety

Marina – Report included

Zoning

MAYOR’S REPORT - NA

ALDERMAN REPORTS - NA

CITY ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT – Included

CHIEF OF POLICE REPORT – Included

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR – Included

TOURISM REPORT - Included

FULTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY – Included

ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL, SALE OF PROPERTY, FOP NEGOTIATIONS AND LITIGATION.

Alderman VanZuiden motioned, seconded by Alderman Brondyke. Roll call vote, 7 yes 0 no. Council adjourned to closed session at 7:27p.m.

RETURNED TO REGULAR MEETING

Alderman Nederhoff motioned, seconded by Alderman Brondyke. Roll call vote, 7 yes 0 no to return to regular meeting at 7:58 p.m. Roll call vote, 7 yes 0 no.

ADJOURN REGULAR MEETING

Alderman Brondyke motioned, seconded by Alderman King. All in Favor, 7 yes, 0 no. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tammy L Garibay
City Clerk