

CITY OF FULTON
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Cattail Park Pavilion
April 22, 2024
5:30 PM
(Held at Cattail Park, Fulton, IL)

Public Hearing

Open Hearing

Roll Call

Meeting was called to order by Mayor Wendy Ottens at 5:30 p.m. Alderpersons Boonstra, Burggraaf, King, Mask, VanKampen, Banker and Wilkin were present. Alderperson Brondyke was absent. Police Chief Neblung, Business Manager Garibay, Public Works Director Sikkema, City Attorney Huizenga and City Clerk Wade were also in attendance.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mayor Wendy asked if there were any questions regarding the proposed 2024/2025 Budget.

Tammy Garibay, Business Manager, was asked about the current revenues, being that this fiscal year is not over yet. She stated that the current revenues for the City are at 2.4 million dollars in the General Fund Reserves of that is \$460,000.00 in ARPA funds. Also \$900,000.00 needs to be kept in the budget without touching it. That is 6 months worth of reserves.

Tammy also stated that the use of ARPA funds has been extended one year to 2026.

No other questions were asked.

Mayor Wendy closed the Public Hearing and continued directly on to the regular meeting.

Regular Council Meeting

Presentations –

Julie Meiners addressed the Council regarding the 35th annual Blessing of the Bikes to be held in downtown Fulton on June 2, 2024. She asked that the downtown area streets be blocked off for the event from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Streets involved are 4th Street from 12th Avenue to 10th Avenue. She also would like to have the side street (11th Ave.) blocked off just in case it is needed. Krumpet's customers will be able to park there if needed.

Mayor Wendy asked Julie if she had filled out the Special Events. They are available at City Hall. She explained that this form will need to be filled out 90 days in advance of an event in the future.

Meiners asked if this included the insurance needed for the event. Mayor Wendy said, no, you will have to obtain your own insurance because this group is not a City entity. When she has proof of liability insurance it needs to be given to the City.

Meiners also brought it to the City's attention, a missing stop sign on the bike path by Route 84. Public Works will replace it.

Erin Thrift from Simple Grants gave a presentation via a zoom meeting. She informed the Council that her company will work with the City to find grants that fits our needs. This is the Comprehensive Grant Strategy portion of their services. That comes at a cost of \$8500.00, that is split into 2 payments. One payment of \$4250.00 to start the process. Then a final payment of \$4250.00 when the strategic plan is finalized, usually 2 to 4 weeks. The Comprehensive Grant Strategy is a stand-alone document. Once we purchase it, it is ours to do with it whatever we see fit. If we would like them to work on the grant applications for us, their hourly rate is \$165.00. We will receive an estimate of hours for a particular project, but that may be amended if Simple Grants deems it will take longer to complete. The \$8500.00 is a one time fee for the Comprehensive Grant Strategy list of possible grants to go after. They will keep us updated on any new grants they think we should be aware of during those 4 quarters (1 year).

Communication from Visitors – None

Motion to approve the City Council meeting minutes from March 25, 2024, (April 8, 2024, meeting was cancelled) and the Bill List.

Aldersperson King made the motion. Aldersperson Wilkin seconded.

On roll call, all yes. Aldersperson Brondyke was absent.

Motion approved.

Business

Mayor Wendy asked for a motion to approve bids for all audio/video equipment for the new council chambers and award bid to CTI. Also, to award bid to SPL (Sound Production & Lighting. LLC)

Aldersperson VanKampen made the motion. Aldersperson Burggraaf seconded.

Chief Neblung explained that he had sent out requests for bids from 3 different companies. CTI is out of the Quad Cities. They came on site and looked at the City's needs. The other company, Sound Production & Lighting is out of Chicago area and they held a zoom meeting. Both companies had basically the same set up. CTI was the best price. Probably because costs are much higher in the Chicago area. Chief stated that he never received a response back from the third company.

On roll call, all yes. Aldersperson Brondyke was absent.

Motion approved.

Mayor Wendy asked for a motion to approve the cancellation of the May 27, 2024, City Council meeting due to it falling on a holiday.

Aldersperson King made the motion. Aldersperson Boonstra seconded.

On roll call, all yes. Aldersperson Brondyke was absent.

Motion approved.

Mayor Wendy asked for a motion to approve the 2024-2025 Annual Budget for the City of Fulton, IL.

Aldersperson Wilkin made the motion. Aldersperson VanKampen seconded.

On roll call, all yes. Aldersperson Brondyke was absent.

Mayor Wendy asked for a motion to approve the Certificate of Authority by Vote for Public Works Director, Eric Sikkema.

Aldersperson Burggraaf made the motion. Aldersperson Boonstra seconded.

Sikkema explained that this gives him the authority to enter into a contract with IDOT for road salt. He explained the contents of the contract.

On roll call, all yes. Aldersperson Brondyke was absent.

Motion approved.

Mayor Wendy asked for a motion to approve the Police Department to purchase a dog kennel and related materials from Sterling Fence and Deck, LLC in the amount of \$1,750.00.

Aldersperson King made the motion. Aldersperson Boonstra seconded.

Chief Neblung explained the need for the kennel. The last one was purchased from Farm & Fleet and lasted about 2 years. A German Shepherd chewed through it, destroying it. This would be coming out of

their general operating budget for next fiscal year. The new kennel will have space for 2 dogs to be separated. It does include a wire top so bigger dogs can't go over it.

Chief told the Council that we do not have a chip reader to check the animals that they find. They are very expensive, about \$2,000.00. He stated that the City has a contract with Whiteside Animal Control to pick up our strays. It costs us about \$400.00 per year.

On roll call, all yes. Alderperson Brondyke was absent.

Motion approved.

Mayor Wendy asked for a motion to add a Class A-1 Liquor License for Adim and Sanela Dzeladini based on the approval of Chief Neblung stating they have followed the proper procedures to obtain the license.

Alderperson King made the motion. Alderperson VanKampen seconded.

Alderperson Van Kampen asked if they were aware of the new ordinance of not selling certain items in their store. Mayor Wendy said, yes, she had spoke with them.

Alderperson Wilkin asked how many do we have now? (liquor licenses) Renee Grant responded that if this one is added, the City will have a total of 15.

On roll call, all yes. Alderperson Brondyke was absent.

Motion approved.

Committee of the Whole Discussion –

Public Works Director, Eric Sikkema gave the Council an update on the construction of the new building at City Hall. The walls are up and they will begin working on the roof. Window glass is in and so is the siding. HVAC and electric work will begin soon.

Regarding the new position of a Code Officer/Zoning Officer. Mayor Wendy asked Chief Neblung to explain the need for this position and its urgency. Mayor Wendy asked the Council if they had any questions for Neblung. There were none.

Chief Neblung said he would like to meet with the Public Safety Committee asked the Council if they would like him to put together a job description for the position and any additional costs that this position may incur. He asked if this was the direction the Council wants to go to move forward?

Alderperson Mask asked if this would be a licensed police officer. Chief replied, no it will not be a certified police officer. This would be a civilian position so they would not have to be academy certified. This would not be a union position. By combining the two positions, he said it would be a full-time position.

Discussion was held on the position as it being a hireable position. Business Manager Garibay said the Right now the Zoning officer is an appointed position, but when combining the two positions, it will become a hireable position.

Aldersperson Banker asked what the vision is for this position? Chief Neblung said that hypothetically, this position would start July 1, 2024, their primary focus would be to start enforcing the ordinances that we currently have in place; grass, trash, weeds, automobiles, parking complaints, etc. Then working with Eric Sikkema to learn the zoning part of this position.

Neblung stated that if we did adopt the International Property Maintenance and Building Code, his recommendation would be six months to a year getting it out to the public whether it's January 1, 2025, or July 1, 2025, enforcement action will take place, getting the community educated on what the rules are going to be. Fortunately for us, Clinton has already adopted this code, so landlords or property owners that work both sides of the river the same rules apply and they will know what to expect.

Aldersperson King stated that the Council needs to adopt this building code before we can move ahead with creating this new position. Chief Neblung said we can adopt the code at any time and then look for someone for this position to enforce it.

Discussion was held on adopting the code, learning what is all involved and then begin looking for someone to fill that position.

Public Works Director Sikkema said that if the City does not adopt the code by January 1, 2025, we will fall under the state of Illinois rules and we will have to get a third party vendor involved and they will conduct all inspections. Compared to if we adopt it prior to January 1, 2025, structural inspections will be the City's responsibility.

Mayor Wendy recommended that the Council should adopt the International Property Maintenance and Building Code at the next meeting so we can move forward. This will involve creating a new ordinance.

Chief Neblung's recommendation was to adopt the code at the next meeting with the enforcement date of July 1, 2025.

The Council gave permission to Chief Neblung to begin working on a job description for a new Community Service Officer (CSO).

Work continues on the Business Registration Form.

Discussion was held regarding the Special Events form whether it needs to be completed 60 or 90 days prior to an event. Time constraints for police department employees' schedules need to be taken into consideration. Chief would like it to be 90 days even if there were some minor changes to the application.

Business Manager-in-Training, Hamling present to the Council new hours for City Hall. Those hours will be 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. beginning April 29, 2024. Present office staff will work 4-10 hour days per week. This gives residents an extended time to access City Hall. Residents have complained that City Hall

is not open when they get off of work in order to conduct business. Previous hours were 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Committee Reports –

Parks & Rec –

Aldersperson VanKampen said she has spoken to the IDOT about trees that need to be taken down by the on/off ramp to the bridge at the south end of town. They agreed and they will starting mowing twice a month now.

Aldersperson Boonstra reported that the lights are falling down at the ball park on 9th Street. (Pleasure Park). They are in need of repair. He said the cost would be about \$3600.00 to do this. Aldersperson Mask supported replacing the lights at the park stating it is a busy park.

Public Works Director Sikkema said he was curious as to how anyone is turning the lights on at the park because they are locked with a padlock. He stated the lights are closed because the wiring is shot, it all needs to be replaced.

Aldersperson King asked Sikkema to look into how much it would cost the replace the lights. Aldersperson Wilkin asked if all the wiring is bad, we would have to replace everything, not just the lights. Eric Sikkema agreed that everything would need to be replaced. The City has gotten bids before on this project and it was around \$30,000.00. That was a while ago, now it could be as high as \$36,000.00.

Aldersperson Wilkin stated that this field is not used to schedule games for the rec league. She doesn't feel it is a wise investment when other parks that the rec league does use are in need of lights. The park is being used by Unity Christian School for PE classes, but that is during daylight hours. Those using the park now at night are usually just families.

Public Works Director, Eric Sikkema, said his recommendation for Pleasure Park is to eliminate the lights. Right now he feels it is a safety issue because some of the poles are broken at the top. He said he will get an estimate on the cost of new lighting.

Tourism –

Dutch Days is this weekend. Mayor Wendy asked Aldersperson Burggraaf if she needed any help from volunteers for the band on Friday night. She said she has about 15 volunteers, but would like to see 5 or 10 more.

Mayor's Report –

Aldersperson Mask asked about the Economic Development Committee at the County level and do they have a list of items that they expect people to do? Mayor Wendy said yes and that the Whiteside County Regional Development is the only committee that actually gives some incentive to people in our area.

Mayor Wendy said she was so proud of Fulton because when she went to the meeting, Fulton had a 6 million project listed. She explained the benefits of being in the Enterprise Zone and the timeline for doing so.

Mayor Wendy asked Chief of Police Neblung to inform the Council about the grant he received. He said they were awarded of \$64,000.00 grant from the Illinois Training and Standards Board. This will be used for hiring incentives and retention of officers. He explained the way this would work for current and future officers. It will also be used for promotional purposes within the City.

Historical Society Report –

Aldersperson Mask reported that they had a great program at the Martin House Museum

Mayor Wendy asked for a motion to adjourn.

Council members, all yes.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

Tori Wade
City Clerk