

CITY OF FULTON COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES SEPT. 11, 2023 5:30 P.M.

Regular Meeting

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

New Appointments by Mayor Wendy -None

Recognition of Volunteers – None

Communications from Visitors – None

Presentations – None

Mayor Wendy asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion to approve the City Council Meeting Minutes from August 14, 2023, the bill list and the Treasurer's Report all in one motion.

Motion to approve with corrections to the August 14, 2023, minutes Alderperson Mask, seconded by Alderperson Burggraaf

On Roll Call, I all yes.

Motion passed.

Business

Mayor Wendy asked for a motion to approve an Illinois certified police officer for a sign-on bonus to be given out incrementally at: \$1,000.00 upon hire; \$1,000.00 at 6 months; \$1,000.00 after 1st year; then the final \$2,000.00 being paid out at the end of the 2nd year.

Alderperson Mask asked if this has an end to it or is this just first when you're hiring. Chief Neblung stated that this would be just for this application.

Alderperson VanKampen made a motion to amend the amount for the sign-on bonus from \$5,000.00 to \$7,000.00. Her reasoning is that Camance just raised their sign-on bonus to

\$6,000.00. Police officers are hard to find and we need to stay competitive with surrounding towns.

Chief Neblung stated that if we offered \$7,000.00 it would break it out into \$1,500.00 upon hire; \$1,500.00 at 6 months; \$2,000.00 after the first year; then \$2,000.00 being paid out at the end of the 2nd year.

Aldersperson Boonstra asked if this is a 2- year contract? Chief Neblung stated that if they leave before the end of their second year of service, they would not be eligible for the final \$2,000.00 payment. This offer only applies to a certified officer.

Mayor Wendy wanted to clarify that we would want to give a certified police officer for a sign-on bonus of \$7,000.00 incrementally given out for \$1500.00 upon hire; \$1,500.00 at 6 months; \$2,000.00 after the first year; then \$2,000.00 paid at the end of their second year of service.

Mayor Wendy asked for an Amended Motion. First Aldersperson VanKampen. Second Aldersperson King.

Upon roll call: All in favor yes, Aldersperson Brondyke absent.

Mayor Wendy stated that we should address this sign-on bonus with each new hire for the Police Department.

Mayor Wendy asked for a motion to approve a trial bus route for Clinton's MTA bus service at a cost of \$10,000.00 beginning August 21, 2023 and ending December 1, 2023.

Motion 1st Aldersperson Wilking. Second Aldersperson Burggraaf.

Discussion held:

Mayor Wendy stated that we are now sure of the dollar amount, now that being \$10,000.00. We have the MTA Director here representing this proposal so we can ask him any sort of question that we want to, but we need to make that decision now.

Aldersperson Banker asked that the Clinton MTA Director explain the times the drop off and pick up. The map was included in the council packet along with pick up and drop off times. Chief Neblung further explained the bus route details. As did the Clinton MTA Director on stopping, waiting for riders, etc.

He explained that this is a new route, not just because Fulton was added.

The Clinton MTA will be monitoring this new route as to ridership numbers. Fulton will receive these reports, as well.

Questions were asked about the outcome of the trial period. We would have to discuss the continuation of the route, the cost, etc. at that time.

Aldersperson Mask asked about the need for residents she spoke with that they might not be able to drive or walk the, for example, the 6 or 7 blocks it would take to get to City Hall for bus pick up. Is there any alternative for those in need? Clinton MTA Director answered that with this agreement, we have a paratransit that goes along with this agreement for individuals that are not able to walk/drive to City Hall,

their ADA regulations are that they have to provide paratransit services up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the route they have given us. This would allow those with door - to - door service with our rate of \$2.00 per ride. Those individuals would have to go through the Clinton MTA's application process to determine whether they are eligible medically or not.

More discussion was held on the logistics of the route, pick up, drop off, etc. Use of Google apps for seeing bus routes and time. Discussion was held on students riding the bus.

Mayor Wendy asked if we have a motion to approve this or are there any other questions?

Council member VanKampen asked where the money is going to come from? Mayor Wendy said we have several outlets, we have 25 percent of our dispensary money. That line item is now at \$103,000.00. That is exactly what that money was designated for. It is the Counsel's decision. Mayor Wendy stated that City Administrator, Clark, may have a different suggestion, but there is also enough money in the General Fund to cover this.

Chief Neblung asked that if the City was going to pursue this service, we would have to make a decision by the end of November, 2023. Correct? Clinton MTA Director replied, yes that is correct.

He will also supply a monthly report to the City of Fulton as to the numbers of riders, etc.

Aldersperson Mask asked that going forward, will this always be a quarterly fee? No, it will be a yearly fee.

4 quarters x \$10,000 = \$40,000 per year. Clinton MTA Director agreed, yes. More discussion was held on the future possibility and costs if this route grows and prospers.

A member of the audience asked to speak to the Council, even though he declined to sign the Request to Speak form upon entering the Council Chambers, Mayor Wendy said she would allow it.

Audience member said his question has to do the math. So, the City is paying \$10,000.00 for 3 months, correct? Yes. So for a year would be \$40,000.00, that's only 25%, right? Yes. So if the City decided to go forward with the whole thing it would be 40 times 4 for the year? Mayor Wendy stated that no it would be \$40,000.00 per year, correct? Aldersperson Mask stated that the quarterly rate would stay the same at \$10,000.00.

The audience speaker then asked that the 25% cost to the City of Fulton is only for the trial period? He asked that question to the City of Clinton MTA Director and he stated that this amount is only for the trial period and the 2 cities would have to work that out depending on the outcome of the trial route.

Aldersperson Mask then asked if the MTA Director could give an estimate of the yearly cost, saying that the audience speaker raised a good point. Aldersperson Burggraaf said that the City of Fulton will be roughly paying 25%. The question being raised is if after the trial, all of the sudden the City owes 100% of the cost of this route? The MTA Director said, yes, this amount is for the trial period only. The MTA Director stated that the only way the City of Fulton would have to pay 100% of the cost of this route is if the City of Fulton had a whole town route. Then it may be better to own our own bus.

Aldersperson Wilkin asked the question of who is going to be the City's point person on answering questions about the bus route, educating the community, who are they going to call if there are questions or problems, etc. Mayor Wendy said it would be our City Hall employees,

they are the ones that answer the phone. Chief Neblung said the plan to publicize the service is already in motion. He is in contact with local pastors, etc. to publicize this service once the Council approves it.

Mayor Wendy asked for Roll Call.

Alderspersons King, VanKampen, Boonstra, Burggraaf, Wilkin, Mask, Yes. Alderperson Banker, No, Alderperson Brondyke, absent.

Motion passed.

Mayor Wendy asked for a motion to approve, as per previous years, Fulton Christmas Walk to receive \$2,000.00 from the City for the 2023 Christmas Walk. Fulton Fall Festival to receive \$1,500.00 from the City for the 2023 Fall Festival.

Discussion held.

Alderperson Mask made a motion to amend the motion to give each committee \$2,000.00.

Seconded by Alderperson Wilkin

Roll call: all yes, Brondyke absent

Liquor licenses passed for Dandelion Wishes and Gatherings were granted and paid for.
Motion passed

Committee Meetings:

Personnel - Applications are coming in and it is going well. Alderperson Burggraaf asked if the City would be considering an Interim City Administrator. Mayor Wendy said, no they are not.

Discussion on signs coming into town - The signs are in disrepair and they are not easy to change information. They are really old, maybe we should look at something better, maybe digital signage. The City may have to talk to IDOT, it's their property. Future discussion to budget for next year.

Finance - None always the 3rd Wednesday of the meeting of the month. so those reports will always be on the 2nd City Council meeting of the month.

Several of the committees meet after the first City Council meeting of the month. So those reports would be available for the second meeting of the month as well.

Public Works - Report sidewalks getting done starting at the North end of town. Starting with the sidewalks with tripping hazards. We are waiting for Erickson Paving to repave 13th Ave., 4th Ave. from 4th St. to 6th St.. and 11th St. from 10th Ave. to 12th Ave. will be paved.

Mayor Wendy asked Public Works Director, Eric Sikkema, where are we with the progress of the Bandshell. He hopes to start the project in the next month. He is waiting on Frary Lumber. He told Frary Lumber to go ahead and order the supplies needed to start the project. The new bathroom project is being moved forward with just adding on to the existing bathroom. The Public Works Director is in contact with Peterson Plumbing for estimates.

Mayor Wendy said that the Dolan property sale is complete. The amount was \$814,750.00; we owe \$450,000.00; leaving a balance of \$364,750.00. Some of that money, at least \$100,000.00 goes back for the TIF. That leaves \$264,750.00 that can possibly be used for roads.

Safety Committee - Alderperson Boonstra reported that the committee is pursuing the Code Enforcement Officer, starting with property maintenance officer, plans to visit other communities in the area and general requirements for our community. Working toward the International Building Code with the possibility of incorporating the Zoning officer into that position so we have a full time person.

Present Zoning officer position was explained and discussed.

Discussion on shirts for the City Council member and City Administrators. Polo shirt samples were shown, \$25.00 each. \$30.00 set up fee for logo. Any color is available. Shirts made to identify City Council members and administrators. Put on as a motion for the next meeting? Yes.

NIMS certification was discussed again. Chief Neblung explained the reasons for being NIMS certified and the benefits to the City.

Mayor Discussed her recent meeting with Gary Camarona and attending a Mayor's meeting in Amboy, IL. Washington, DC contacts were so important for our 1.2 million dollars needed. It sounds promising and that they like what we would use the funds for.

Alderperson Mask would like to see a main street presentation. Public Works Director, Sikkema said wait until October when they have a 3-D presentation ready. A town meeting will be held for everyone to see this presentation, as well.

Alderperson VanKampen brought up the mold situation in the Council Chambers and said it needs to be addressed immediately. Alderperson Boonstra stated that it will be checked out and possibly bring in industrial dehumidifiers. Discussion was held on the remodeling of the whole council chamber.

Alderperson Mask gave detailed information about the Historical Society and went over the original agreement between the City and the Historical Society.

Adjourn Meeting – Mayor asks if all are in favor of adjourning regular meetings?

Roll call vote, all in favor. Aye's have it – meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tori Wade
City Clerk

