

Elmhurst City Council meeting

December 5, 2016

Mayor Steven Morley

Attendance: 2 press; approx. 20 residents; Treasurer;
City Attorney Storino; City Manager Grabowski;
Secretary Spencer; 13 aldermen; 2 first responders
LWV observer: B. Lipton

****AGENDA REVISED**** The revision includes the removal of Report - Comprehensive Review of Chapter 36, Article II (PAS) from the Consent Agenda.

1. Executive Session - 7:00 p.m. for the Purpose of Discussing: Purchase of Real Property, pursuant to the Open Meetings Act 5 ILCS 120/5 (c)(5)

2. Call to Order 7:39 pm Roll Call - Ward 1 Ald. Honquest absent

3. Public Hearings

a. on the Tentative Annual 2017 Budget – No written or oral public comments

b. Public Hearing to Approve a Proposed Property Tax Levy Increase for Special Service Area #6 of the City of Elmhurst (Elmhurst City Centre) - no written comments; no speakers

4. Receipt of Written Communication from the Public none

5. Public Forum

- a. Frank Worziniak about the oil recycling drive at the Public Works Department this past Saturday. This is the 4th year it is being done and there were about half the participants as last year. Asks that Council consider opening the oil recycling facility more hours, esp. outside business hours; also asks Council to consider branching out to electronics and organic waste recycling.
- b. Claude Pagasz – commends Mayor Morley for showing up at the public meeting about refurbishing the Metra station. But he is concerned about the cost of the project. He is also concerned about yet another no-bid contract set to be approved at tonight’s meeting.
- c. Gilbert Fisher – This is the 46th Christmas his family will be spending in Elmhurst. Every year they put a nativity scene in front of the house with no trouble; this year the scene was vandalized, smashed and destroyed. He feels it is a hate crime against him because he is a Christian. If the vandals are caught he hopes they will be executed within 30 days.
- d. John McNichols – voices his opposition to giving a zoning waiver for the expansion of the Elmhurst Extended Care facility, based on the possibility that property values will decrease; that traffic on E. Fremont Ave., a small street, will increase; that trees will be cut down; that the architecture will not blend with the single family homes on the street; that setting a commercial enterprise in a residential neighborhood is not appropriate.
- e. Julie McNichols – expands on prior comments to say that they moved to Elmhurst this past summer, expecting to live in a purely residential area. To build a huge commercial facility and cut down 4 large old trees does not fit the character of the neighborhood. The proposed large parking lot will cause a hazardous increase in traffic on this cul-de sac.
- f. Theresa McCarthy – Concerned about a letter posted on the City website under City of Elmhurst logo: it states that there was a meeting to discuss the E. Fremont zoning waiver issue, with the facility subsequently approved. But, there were no minutes of this meeting; no agenda; it appears to violate the Illinois Open Meetings Act. No one in the E. Fremont neighborhood was invited to the “meeting”. There are 5 skilled nursing facilities within 5 miles of Elmhurst; all of them currently have open beds, indicating that the proposed facility is not needed. The way this issue has been approached is outrageous.
- g. Andrew Ebert – just moved into Elmhurst in June. Loved the neighborhood, especially the reception by the community. Asks that the Council members vote as if the nursing home facility were being planned for the block where they live.

6. Announcements

a. Ald. Bram wants to clarify the comments of Mr. Pagasz.

b. Ald. York wants to alert the Council to the upcoming screening of the film 1000 Lives on Wednesday, Dec. 7.

7. Consent Agenda All items below approved 13-0 EXCEPT Item 7.10 (see asterisk below)

7.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Elmhurst City Council on November 21, 2016

7.2 Accounts Payable November 30, 2016 - Total \$ 4,246,416.26

7.3 Reappointment to the Heritage Foundation - DeVries (Mayor Morley)

- 7.4 Referral - Coyote Policy - Research and Development (Aldermen Talluto and York) (City Manager Grabowski)
- 7.5 Report - Water Reclamation Facility - Non-Potable Water, Natural Gas, and Fiber Installation Project (PWB)
- 7.6 Report - Utility System Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) Upgrade (PWB)
- 7.7 Report - North Avenue Lift Station Hardening (PWB)
- 7.8 Report - Professional Engineering Services for the WWRP - Emergency Power Design Project (PWB)
- 7.9 Report - Bid, One 2017 Chevrolet Impala (PAS)
- **7.10 Report - Extended Hours Classification of Liquor Licenses (PAS)
 - Ald. Polomsky explains that since more information was received today, she wants this item to go back to committee.
- 7.11 O-81-2016 - An Ordinance Expressing Official Intent Regarding the Use of the Special Tax Allocation Fund for the Tax Increment Financing District Commonly Described as the Lake Street Tax Increment Redevelopment Project Area
- 7.12 O-82-2016 - An Ordinance Waiving Bid and Authorizing the Purchase of One Underground Stormwater Detention Vault from Stormtrap LLC for the Washington Street Stormwater Improvement Project
- 7.13 ZO-09-2016 - An Ordinance Granting a Variation from the Front Yard Setback Requirements at the Property Commonly Known as 292 W. Claremont Street, Elmhurst, Illinois (P.I.N. 06-02-402-002)

8. Committee Reports

8.1 Report - 2016 Tax Levy (FCAAS)

- Ald. York summarizes the issue as follows: The end result of the budget process is that the cumulative City tax levy will be lowered by \$500,000. This excludes the Library which will increase by about \$7 for the average family. The City will have a general fund surplus this year, some of which will be used in 2017 and 2018 for various expenses. The surplus will allow no increase in property taxes, but it needs to be considered that pension obligations continue to increase due to forces beyond the City's control. There will also continue to be expenses related to the stormwater remediation projects.
- Ald. Levin adds that that the Library is a City department but the Council has no control over their budget. He explains that the abatement is linked to the service on the municipal debt; this can be done because the City has recovered from the 2007-2008 recession; the City is in good financial shape. He is concerned that in 2018 it may not be possible to keep taxes from increasing if some unforeseen circumstances occur.
- Ald. Bram thanks the committee for its very thorough report. Asks for clarification on some points in the report, specifically schedule C. He is concerned about relying on projections of sales and property tax revenues, in order to desist from increasing taxes. Ald. York responds that the City's bonds are rated AAA which is the top rating and that there should not be any problems with this.
- Ald. Healy recalls the Council 8 years ago when revenues were way down, the City was cutting services and personnel, and he is happy that the issue is the opposite right now with a surplus fund balance.
- Ald. Talluto clarifies the apparent discrepancy between two debt service numbers in the report.
- Ald. Dunn: His committee met several times on this subject and considered a number of different approaches to the budget surplus. There is a need to be mindful of the challenges the City faced just 8 year ago; it could happen again.

Approved 13 – 0

- Mayor Morley thanks staff and the Committee for their fine work. Points out that in 5 of the past 6 years tax levies have been reduced; this is great.

8.2 Report - City Funding Assistance of \$75,000 for Special/Increased Physical Services in the Central Business District (FCAAS) in addition to \$18,000 for holiday decorations.

- Ald. York explains that this request resulted from the expiration of SSA #7 in 2014; the central business district is essential to the viability of Elmhurst. It continues to evolve. In 1994 there was no residential development in the CBD; now there are several such developments. When the newly developed residential properties are on the tax rolls the expenses will be fully covered. The SSA structure would result in residential tax levies covering a large majority of the SSA revenue when the expenditures benefit the downtown retail businesses.
- Ald. Bram asks for clarification on 2 points. First, where did the money come from in 2015 and this year since the SSA expired 2 years ago. Second, why is there a request for increased services in the CBD, where they were basically the same as last year? Ald. York responds that there were reserves in their funds last year that needed to be spent down. These special services for the CBD are beneficial to all residents of Elmhurst, not just those who work

downtown. Ald. Bram feels that this is just an opening for requests from other business districts in Elmhurst who might be asking for special expenditures. Ald Dunn responds that the CBD is valued by residents; it is much more attractive and vibrant than 30 years ago.

- Ald. Deuter: In addition to the appearance of downtown, it is important to the residents of Elmhurst to have excellent shopping venues, special events, etc. The tax burden is being borne by the residents of the CBD; this burden needs to be shared among all the citizens. In future years attention should be paid to avoiding these special expenditures.

Approved 13 – 0

9. Reports and Recommendations of Appointed and Elected Officials

- Mayor Morley reports on the meeting with Chgo. Dept. of Aviation on O'Hare expansion and runway rotation. Rotation was approved by the federal government but only for 6 months; any further runway rotation requires approval by Congress. The O'Hare Noise Control Commission (ONCC) will evaluate data to understand whether the rotation effort was successful in abating O'Hare noise. The basic configuration of O'Hare is east-west and the airport operates most efficiently and cheaply when east-west flight patterns are followed. Any further expansion will continue with the basic east-west pattern. The runway rotation process costs more. What will happen going ahead will depend on contracts with airlines, negotiations, etc. Elmhurst continues to oppose runway rotation.
- City Manager Grabowski continues the report on airport noise. Reminds everyone to recycle old Christmas lights at City Hall. Finally he reports on the staff review of infrastructure plans to address stormwater issues long-term. Recently the City received a response from the County, and the City has been working with Burke Engineering to move the process forward.
- Ald Healy asks for a ballpark timeline for the Saylor/South Spring neighborhood stormwater abatement process. Mgr. Grabowski estimates a 2-3 year process to get shovels in the ground. Within 12 months of that, the project should be completed.

10. Other Business none

11. Adjournment 9:10 pm

To be followed by a meeting of The Committee of the Whole for Review of Fiscal Year 2017 Budget

Related documents can be accessed online at: <http://www.boarddocs.com/il/coe/Board.nsf/Public> and video recording of the meeting can be found at www.Youtube.com