



CITY OF HIGHWOOD
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - TUESDAY, JUNE 1, 2010

1. Call to order

Mayor Pecaro called the regular meeting of the Highwood City Council to order at 7:40 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Pecaro; Aldermen Bruni, Cahnmann, Falberg, Fiore, Harpster, Linari, Murphy-Pieri, and Sepulveda

Absent: --

Also present: M. Burke, City Clerk; T. Lenzini, City Treasurer, R. Pieri, Deputy Fire Chief; A. Marrin, Assistant City Manager; J. Ponsi, Superintendent of Public Works

Not attending: L. Rossi, Chief of Police; J. Harding, Director of Community Development & Water Distribution; S. Hannon, Finance Director

There being a quorum present, the Mayor announced the meeting to be in session.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Everyone present rose to say the pledge of allegiance

4. Minutes

4.1 Committee of the Whole minutes: May 18, 2010

4.2 Regular meeting of the City Council: May 18, 2010

4.3 Executive Session; February 16; April 26; April 28; May 4; May 18

The May 18 Executive Session minutes were tabled to allow time to review them. The February 16 minutes were tabled because Alderman Falberg wants to discuss them in Executive Session.

Motion to accept the May 18 COW, May 18 regular meeting, and the April 26, April 28, and May 4 executive session minutes by Alderman Murphy-Pieri; seconded by Alderman Cahnmann. Vote:

Yes: Aldermen Bruni, Cahnmann, Falberg, Fiore, Harpster, and Murphy-Pieri,

No: 0

Absent --

Abstain Linari and Sepulveda

The motion passed by a vote of: 6 Yes; 0 No; 0 Absent; 2 Abstain. The May 18 COW and regular Council meeting and the April 26, April 28, and May 4 Executive Session minutes were all accepted as presented.

5. Special Business -- none

6. Appointments

Mayor Pecaro asked for volunteers to serve on the Library Board. There are currently three open seats.

7. Review and approval of bills.

2nd meeting of month

8. Public Input – Items not on agenda

Alison Aldrich, Acting President Library Board Ms. Aldrich said that there would be a meeting of the Library Board on Saturday at 7am to make a final decision on a library director. She said that no matter who is chosen, there will be big focus on technology going forward. Ms. Aldrich thanked architect Diane Melichor for all the work she has done for the library on a pro bono basis. She announced that the library was not going to close in June for renovations. Ms. Aldrich also said that she wanted to thank Lisa Cervac for her efforts. She said she was sorry that Ms. Cervac had left the Board.

Patty Stone 241 Prairie—Ms. Stone wanted to know who was next on the Council's hit list.

Lisa Cervac, President – Highwood Historical Society Ms Cervac invited everyone to come to the Historical Society's Sports Night on Saturday, June 26. The Historical Society will be installing a 3.5' x15' mural in the Rec Center. She reminded everyone that they will be installing new members Highwood Sports Hall of Fame at the event on the 26th of June. There will be a light dinner and dancing to the music of a live orchestra. Tickets are \$13 each or \$25 for a couple.

9. Mayor's Report

The Mayor thanked Ms. Cervac for her service as Library Board President. He noted that the Library had made tremendous progress under her leadership. He extended a special thank you to the American Legion and the VFW for the Memorial Day service they held. The Mayor said that he also attended the very impressive Memorial Day Service the Army did at the Fort Sheridan cemetery. He said that it was very moving and recommended that everyone who could do so attend next year.

10. Committee Reports

10.1 Finance – Alderman Linari, Chair; Treasurer Lenzini reporting

No report.

10.2 Long Term Planning - Alderman Harpster, Chair

Alderman Harpster said that the committee had reviewed the CPAC process. He reported that key person interviews were held with 20 people the CPAC had identified (noting that Houseal, Lavigne, at no extra charge, had doubled the number of interviews they had planned to do). He said that a business workshop had also been held and was very well attended. A summary of their findings will be sent to elected officials and will be available to the public at City Hall and at the Library.

Alderman Harpster reminded the Council that there are still CDBG funds that need to be utilized this year. He is working to try to wrap up the lift station project. The Long Term Planning Committee recommends that the City complete all of its preparatory work on Western Avenue so that Highwood is ready to go. He said we could then more readily hold Highland Park to their commitment to complete this joint project

10.3 Legislative - Alderman Murphy-Pieri, Chair

no report

10.4 Public Safety - Alderman Cahnmann, Chair

No report.

10.5 Special Events - Alderman Falberg, Chair

Alderman Falberg updated the Council on the Gourmet Farmers' Market which starts June 9. Highlights will include the Chef's Corner from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. and live music starting at 5 o'clock.

On June 26, The Highwood Street Market will be kicked off with a "Fashion Train" bring the people from Chicago. June 26 – fashion train from city to kick off market.

Alderman Falberg also announced that there will be a Bloody Mary Fest -- a contest among Highwood's restaurants as to who makes the best Bloody Mary's.

He pointed out that the committee is pulling the summer/fall events together so that meaningful sponsorships can be offered. Alderman Falberg stressed that the committee intends to raise all monies needed for special events privately.

10.6 Parks and Rec - Alderman Fiore, Chair
no report

11. Treasurer's Report
2nd meeting of month

12. Clerk's Report
nothing to report

13. Action Items
The action items were reviewed one at a time.

13.1 Ordinance 10-O-19: AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE SIMPLIFIED MUNICIPAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS TAX RATE

Summary: In 2002, the City Council adopted Ordinance 2002-O-48 increasing the telecommunications tax from 4.5% to 6% . The City has recently learned that this Ordinance was not filed properly with the State. The intended rates have to be readopted and filed with the State.

Alderman Falberg made a motion that was seconded by Alderman Sepulveda that the necessary steps be taken to increase the telecommunication tax charged by Highwood.

Vote:

Yes: Aldermen Bruni, Cahnmann, Falberg, Fiore, Harpster, Linari, Murphy-Pieri, and Sepulveda
No: 0
Absent –
Abstain –

The motion to increase the telecommunications tax to 6% and to file the necessary paperwork passed by a vote of: 8 Yes; 0 No; 0 Absent; 0 Abstain.

13.2 Approval of an Ordinance Repealing the City Manager Ordinance
Removed from agenda for further study.

13.3 Ordinance Revising Water and Sewer Fees

Summary: Highwood had a professional study done by the State. The result was a recommendation to significantly increase water rates. The Ordinance under consideration included an increase of about 25% to be effective July 1.

Alderman Murphy-Pieri made a motion that was seconded by Alderman Harpster to adopt the proposed ordinance.

Discussion: Alderman Bruni stated that he objects to having multiple rates. He said that it would be more appropriate to use sewer fees to recognize the additional costs generated by heavy users. Mayor Pecaro noted that Alderman Harpster had proposed a rate scale that would be the same for everyone that also would reflect Highwood's costs, but that it could not be considered because of software limitations.

Alderman Sepulveda noted that even after the planned rate increase Highwood's water rates would still be lower than neighboring communities.

Public comments:

David Strossberg – Morningside. Said that he didn't believe the comparisons were accurate. He noted that the water bill for Fort Sheridan Place would be 50% higher by 2011. He later said that he felt the Highwood charges were really a tax and said that Highland Park's rates are much lower.

Alex Largo developer: questioned the validity of having multiple rates.

Bill Lolli 91 Leonard Wood North; Said that the water numbers being discussed today really surprise him because the last audit showed a profit.

Ms. Marrin said that we showed a \$180,000 deficit last year and a deficit of \$328,000 the year before that.

Alderman Harpster made a motion that was seconded by Alderman Sepulveda to table discussion of water rates until all remaining issues can be resolved..

Vote:

Yes: Aldermen Bruni, Cahnmann, Fiore, Harpster, Linari, Murphy-Pieri, and Sepulveda

No: Alderman Falberg

Absent --

Abstain --

The motion to table the Ordinance to increase water and sewer charges passed by a vote of: 7 Yes; 1 No; 0 Absent; 0 Abstain.

Alderman Linari left the meeting at 8:45 p.m. at the conclusion of the discussion on water and sewer rates.

13.4 Approval of an agreement with M.E. Simpson Co. Inc, for leak detection for the City of Highwood

Summary: It was reported at the last meeting that Highwood is losing 20% of the water that is being treated and pumped.

Alderman Bruni made a motion that was seconded by Alderman Harpster to approve execution of a contract with M. E. Simpson Co., Inc. to for all of Highwood at a cost not to exceed \$2,400 when funds are available.

Vote:

Yes: Aldermen Bruni, Cahnmann, Falberg, Fiore, Harpster, Murphy-Pieri, and Sepulveda

No: –
Absent –
Abstain –

The motion passed by a vote of: 7 Yes; 0 No; 1 Absent; 0 Abstain.

13.5 Approval of an Agreement with Melinda Fox for web-site maintenance service.

Summary: Mayor Pecaro sought a proposal from Ms. Fox for both the web-site and a print newsletter in response to the complaints about inadequate communication that he got in all four of his ward meetings. The Mayor said that given the reduced staff he thought it appropriate to outsource the web-site maintenance function.

Alderman Bruni noted that the proposal included a lot of front-end costs; he also said that this proposal was for a larger job than had been discussed previously.

Mayor Pecaro responded that this is what other communities are doing.

Alderman Murphy-Pieri said that she understands that the Mayor wants this because people have been asking for it. She said that she knows Ms. Fox has worked with the Mayor before but said that she wanted to know who else she has done this type of work for. Ms. Fox replied that she mostly did project management and noted that pulling this together would involve input from a number of different elected and appointed officials. She described the services she provided as a one-stop shop.

Alderman Murphy-Pieri pointed out that the City was currently cutting back on everything else. Ms. Fox said that that is why she would want to move ahead with a small team.

Alderman Murphy-Pieri explained that the City was able to do a newsletter before because Highwood had the income from the hotel tax to fund it.

Alderman Bruni asked whether this work is something that Highwood's PR firm could handle. Alderman Falberg replied that they did not do this kind of communications (newsletters and web-sites).

Alderman Bruni asked Ms. Fox what the City could do at the lowest cost.

Alderman Murphy-Pieri commented on the complexity of maintaining the current web-site and asked if it could be moved or redone on a platform that was easier to work with.

Ms. Fox recommended focusing on the newsletter first.

Alderman Bruni suggested a fee equal to ½ of the monthly fee of \$1,000 that Ms. Fox had proposed with no additional up-front charges. Both Ms. Fox and the Council said that would be acceptable.

Alderman Bruni made a motion that was seconded by Alderman Falberg to authorize contracting with Ms. Fox to develop and publish a quarterly newsletter at a fee of \$500/month with people costs not to exceed \$6,000/year,

Vote:

Yes: Aldermen Bruni, Cahnmann, Falberg, Fiore, Harpster, ~~Hippen~~, Murphy-Pieri, and Sepulveda
No: 0
Absent - Linari
Abstain –

The motion to retain Ms. Fox to develop and publish a newsletter passed by a vote of: 7 Yes; 0 No; 1 Absent; 0 Abstain.

14. Old Business

14.1. New Health Insurance proposal with Viti Insurance (Fiore)

Summary: The Council needs to decide on what group health insurance plan to offer employees for the period June 1, 2010 through April 30, 2011.

Alderman Falberg made a motion that was seconded by Alderman Harpster to go with the \$500 deductible plan that is currently offered by Blue Cross/Blue Shield (the option labeled Alt. 1 in the Viti proposal). The plan would be in-force for the rest of Highwood's fiscal year. .

Discussion: There was general agreement that what the Council was trying to do was to reduce the cost to Highwood of providing this benefit without dramatically affecting the benefits. The Council was working under two constraints:

The Police Contract required that substantially similar coverage be provided throughout the life of the contract

The Fire contract specifies that the maximum out of pocket cost from one year to the next cannot exceed \$250. .

Vote:

Yes: Aldermen Bruni, Cahnmann, Falberg, Fiore, Harpster, Murphy-Pieri, and Sepulveda

No: –

Absent : Alderman Linari

Abstain –

The motion to offer employees the current version of the BC/BS \$500 deductible plan passed by a vote of: 7 Yes; 0 No; 1 Absent; 0 Abstain.

14.2. Discussion of Vehicle Sticker Late Fees

Alderman Murphy-Pieri noted that anyone who does not buy his/her city sticker by July 1 is charged a late fee of only \$20 and that's only if a police officer notices that a vehicle has no sticker. She also said the City hasn't been aggressive enough on getting these bills out. If this is going to be stepped up, then the Council needs to let people know that they intend to do this.

Aldermen Cahnmann and Sepulveda each made the point that many municipalities don't even send out bills, they put signs out and people are expected to know when they are due.

The general consensus was to charge a late fee that was equal to 100% of the original fee, Seniors who are late would pay full price for the sticker.

Disposition: Action agenda – June 15.

14.3. Discussion of Comcast broadcast and alternatives for viewers

not discussed

15. New Business

15.1. Approval to Use Remaining Line of Credit to Pay Bills (\$200,000)

Summary: Ms. Marrin told the Council that this money is needed to pay current bills. She pointed out that after that, there will be no cash left. The big expense that the City is facing is for liability insurance. There was general agreement among Council members that this had to be done

15. Executive Session

None

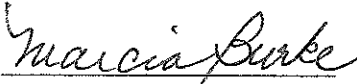
16. Any Action Necessary Coming Out of Executive Session

n/a

17. Adjournment

There being no further business, Alderman Bruni made a motion to adjourn and to reconvene the recessed COW; seconded by Alderman Harpster; approved by voice vote with no objections. The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



MARCIA BURKE, CITY CLERK

Reviewed and accepted by the Highwood City Council on: June 15, 2010

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