

COUNCIL ASKED QUESTIONS

For the meeting of 09/12/2016

Agenda Items Comments/Questions/Concerns

- ❖ The Planning Commission is an advisory committee. They send their recommendations to Council. Council approves or rejects their recommendations. City employees enforce those recommendations based on the City Code. Employees follow the code. If it is vague or outdated, it is the Council's job to change it.
- ❖ The City has been working with the County to comply with City code for the parking lots downtown. They then had to work with their own building department and with their highway department on the design. Those designs have been reviewed. It is supposed to go out for bid in the next couple of weeks. Government entities have to jump through several more hoops than the average citizen, as well as several government entities prior to starting and funding many projects.
- ❖ There is more to Home Rule than taxes. USLegal.com gives the following definition of Home Rule. "Home rule cities are those cities which have adopted a home rule charter for their local self-governance. The citizens of a home rule city are free to choose their own form of municipal government, choose between a large or small city council, fix the terms of office of council members, decide on the method of election of the Mayor, provide for creation of more boards and commissions which they feel is essential for proper city functioning, etc. In US, most of the states have home rule cities...
Home rule cities are not burdened by the limitations of Dillon's rule which is a doctrine that says that **a unit of local government may exercise only those powers that the state expressly grants to it.**"
Another definition says "Home rule is the right to local self-government including the powers to regulate for the protection of the public health, safety, morals and welfare; to license; to tax; and to incur debt, however, it is subject to limitations prescribed by state constitutions and statutes". Yet another says that home rule gives local governments freedom to pass laws and ordinances as they see fit to further their operations, within the bounds of the state and federal constitutions. Home rule keeps the control local, rather than at the state level.

Council Member and Staff Comments/Questions/Concerns

- ❖ Councilman Orrick mentioned that when council did a survey a few years ago, council agreed that infrastructure was important, but nothing was done about it. That exercise took place during fiscal year 2014. Staff took heed of that recommendation and proposed additional funds for the purposes of street maintenance and repair at the budget immediately following those results. The 2015 budget proposed \$1,300,000 in MFT for Street Maintenance. That was ultimately cut to \$100,000. The Street Dept cut \$50,000 in street repair, \$25,000 in sidewalk repair and \$100,000 in street maintenance. The \$300,000 that was budgeted to alleviate the flooding issue at Koch & Riverway Dr was cut. Several demolitions were slated for that year, however that \$60,000 was also cut. These were not the only cuts, just the items that addressed streets and sidewalks. It takes \$400-500,000 to mill and overlay ¼ lane mile of street. Our streets have

been seal coated so many times, because it was the cheapest option, that the only option left is to mill and overlay many of them. Bloomington has been spending \$4 million per year on road repair. This year they are asking for \$8 million. Pekin's street maintenance proposed budget has been cut the last few years. Having said all that, several sewer relining projects have been done and there are several more capital projects in the planning stages.

Respectfully submitted,
Angie Evans, Asst Finance Director