

SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

February 16, 2010

Brian Woody, President, called the Regular Meeting of the Syracuse Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Other council members present were Bill Musser, Larry Siegel, and Paul Stoelting. Town Manager Henry DeJulia, Town Attorney Mike Reed, and Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline were also present. Council member Cassie Cowan was absent.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Brian asked for comments from the public on agenda items. There were none.

The minutes of the January 19th meeting were presented. Paul moved to approve the minutes; Bill seconded. Three voted for the motion; none against. Larry abstained. The motion carried.

Claims #127 through #255 were presented for payment. Paul moved to approve the claims; Larry seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager Henry DeJulia discussed the EDA grant we applied for; it was suggested we apply through a different nomenclature. He presented a draft letter he would like to send. Larry asked if we know the timeframe; Henry could not advise. Larry suggested we set a deadline to wait for a response and look into other ways to proceed. Henry added we also have a possibility of obtaining funds through the appropriation process in 2010 and also in 2011.

Henry advised he and the department heads received training for the website. The Kosciusko Leadership Academy held a meeting at the Community Center earlier this month. Mike Kubacki, of Lake City Bank, was the presenter. Henry announced he is the new president of the Kosciusko County Redevelopment Commission.

POLICE

Police Chief Tony Ciriello provided more information about the new website. He explained each department inputs their own information. Henry added it can be changed on a daily basis.

Tony continued with his report; the police department had 257 calls for service last month. He also provided a 2009 year end report and a 2005 through 2009 comparison. It was noted there are fewer calls; this may be because we are out there making our presence known. We are also part of a county wide drug agency, and

they have taken over some of the cases from us. Bill asked if the number of calls for service has been affected by the switch to county dispatch. Tony responded that now we only count it as a call when a police officer is dispatched. Larry commented the decrease may also be due to the police deterring crime.

Tony reported for the Traffic and Safety Commission. Henry Kohl has agreed to serve as the citizen representative; Tony is still searching for a business owner to serve.

Tony announced he has been elected Secretary Treasurer of the Indiana Association of Chiefs of Police for 2010.

PARK

Park Superintendent Chad Jonsson reported the Daddy Daughter Dance held on February 6 was sold out with 250 attendees. Today the annual Mardi Gras luncheon was held at the Community Center. The top walker was honored; he walked 857 miles in 2009, over 17,000 laps. On February 27, the Cabin Fever Indoor Yard Sale will be held; the booth rentals are sold out.

Chad presented an idea to the council; he would like to have a Community Garden where the old water plant was located. He would like to have the council's blessing before he goes any further with the idea. Spaces would be rented out for people to grow food for themselves or the food pantry. Paul asked about keeping it up. Chad advised it will be in the agreement. He asked the council to consider having a Community Garden; he will bring it up next month. A short discussion took place; Chad advised he has requested information from other communities that have the gardens.

PUBLIC WORKS

Jeremy Sponseller, Public Works Superintendent, requested permission to purchase a boom jib for the front loader at a cost of \$3,800.00. Jeremy explained lifting heavy items is a problem. This piece of equipment could be attached to the front end loader and used to lift pumps, gear boxes, pallets, etc. It can also be used for unloading trucks and moving trees. Larry asked how this is different from a backhoe. Jeremy replied there is better lifting height and stronger hydraulics. He cited the gearboxes at the wastewater plant as an example; they are over seven feet in the air. Paul moved to approve the purchase for a cost not to exceed \$3,800.00; Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Jeremy advised the 2010 street and water budgets included replacing the backhoe. The current backhoe is ten years old and has become a maintenance issue. Jeremy would like to replace it and purchase a new or slightly used backhoe. He requested council permission to obtain quotes for a new backhoe. Brian suggested looking into purchasing with a reverse auction. Jeremy was asked if this was included in

the budget; he advised yes. Larry noted with the economy, there is a lot of used equipment out there. The council agreed Jeremy could bring quotes for their approval.

CLERK TREASURER

Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline advised we received a special distribution from the state. We received \$219,963.09 of excess COIT revenue and \$72,652.92 in excess CEDIT revenue; the money represents excess funds as of December 31, 2007.

Julie also announced we received notification from the DLGF that our 2010 budgets have been approved. Tax bills and distributions should be on time.

Julie added information about the garbage contract. Henry has provided each council member with a copy of the current contract, which expires on July 31 of this year. He would like input from the council on any changes they would like to make to the specifications. Brian asked if the large container is included; Henry stated it can be one of the options. Julie added that although the contract does not expire until July 31, we need to award the new contract by the May meeting. Larry asked what other towns use stickers; he asked if we could save money if the contractor did not have to supply stickers. Brian would like to eliminate the stickers and go with a large container. It was noted last time we received an alternate bid for a 96 gallon container rather than the current "sticker" requirement; that alternate required a seven year contract rather than the three year contract that was advertised and we were advised by the town attorney not to consider it. When we advertise we want to make sure our specifications allow for alternates. Larry advised the recycling bins are overflowing; he suggested weekly recycling or a bigger bin. Discussion followed on large item pickup.

TOWN ATTORNEY

Town Attorney Mike Reed had nothing further to report.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

None.

OLD BUSINESS

Larry asked if we have any updates from the Save the Depot Committee or Quiet Zone Committee. It was noted the Depot Committee received a \$9,500.00 donation from the Harkless Foundation.

NEW BUSINESS

Brian advised the Fire Territory Board advertised for bids for a new vacuum tanker. This equipment would eliminate having to have a fire truck there to fill it; it

eliminates the requirement to have two trucks to do one truck's job. The bid was about \$5,000.00 more than a regular tanker; it was \$257,601.81. As per the contract, the expenditure from the Equipment Replacement Fund must be presented to the Syracuse Town Council for their approval. Larry asked if it changes the tax rate; he was advised it would not. Mike Reed explained the Equipment Replacement fund has a fixed tax rate. Larry asked if they have the money in the bank; Brian advised yes. A lengthy discussion followed. Brian explained the process of transporting water to the scene with the current tanker and pumper. Larry noted the budget has more than doubled; Brian advised it has tripled. Brian noted we bought the present tanker used. Brian moved to approve the expenditure of \$257,601.81 for the purchase of a vacuum tanker. Paul seconded. Larry stated he is a proponent of public safety, but the fire territory has tripled their budget and there has been no increase in the number of fires. He added there is a lot of new technology out there that is great to have if you need it. We have more trucks than people to drive them; he can't support the purchase. Paul asked where we are on the budgeting; we were originally going to do things on a three year plan. Paul was advised the law changed; the maximum levy is now set the first year. After that, maximum levy increases are capped at the same amount as all other governmental units. After more discussion, Paul stated we need the Fire Chief here to explain the issues we have questions on. Larry said we are spending hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars; he asked did we save that much property. Brian suggested asking them to come up with a plan to bring to us. After more discussion, Brian moved to rescind his motion; Paul seconded. Four voted for the motion; none against. The council agreed they would like the Fire Chief to come to next month's meeting.

Paul moved to adjourn the meeting; Bill seconded. Four voted for the motion; one against. The motion carried.

The Syracuse Town Council adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

ATTEST:

Brian Woody, President

Julie Kline, Clerk Treasurer