

COMMON COUNCIL MEETING
APRIL 5, 2004
TIME: 6:00 P.M.

Present: Mayor Frank Manus, Helen Gardner, Gary Herbert, Glenn Tebbe, Larry Bower and Ken Dornich.

Minutes were approved with corrections.

Council Chambers was filled with a very large crowd.

Jeff Lawrence, representing the boys and girls baseball and softball, came before Council asking if the City would consider helping fund the amount needed to help put a safety net over the whole sports complex, located out by the park and swimming pool area. He stated that he went to the County Commissioners and they said they have no control. He also went to the County Council and they have a gentleman's agreement to help fund. The County told him to seek out grants from the R.E.M.C. and Community Foundation. Mr. Lawrence stated that they can apply to these, but the ball season would be over by the time the R.E.M.C. grant would be awarded. Mr. Lawrence also stated that the Parks and Recreation has nothing in their budget for maintenance of the complex and hasn't for several years. The boys and girls ball team groups have been working to make money and have been supplying all the upkeep.

Glenn Tebbe stated that he shares the concerns of having a safety net, but sees it as a responsibility of the Parks Department. City residents pay City and County taxes, so City residents pay for things twice if the City and County both contribute to the netting. Glenn stated he was very reluctant to do it. He would like to know whom they have talked to on the Park Board and he would call t Board members to encourage the Board to fund the necessary improvements.

Larry Bower and Helen Gardner both expressed they agreed that this is the problem and liability of the Parks Department.

Mayor Manus asks the Clerk-Treasurer if the City had received the money back from the Alternative School Program or if there were monies anywhere.

The Clerk-Treasurer stated that the City has not received the money back yet and as of right now we are operating without a finalized budget for the 2004-year.

Mayor Manus suggested that the money the City is to get back from the Alternative School could be ear marked towards the netting.

Motion by Glenn Tebbe and seconded by Ken Dornich to use the City's money returned from the Alternative School provided that the Boys and Girls baseball and softball group can come up with the remaining portion needed. So passed.

Tax abatement renewals were sought by Norman Schlemmer, Jr. for Colonial Manor and Lake Point Apartments and Tom Kremer for Charleston Square Apartments LLC. The Mayor, Gary Herbert and Helen Gardner are on the tax abatement committee and review all tax abatements.

Gary Herbert stated that originally Mr. Schlemmer applied for abatement on \$4,000,000. Gary stated he has talked with Auditor, Janet Chadwell, and a taxpayer can have two abatements on the same property if the abatements are three years apart. Gary had questions concerning how many are employed and meeting room that is to be built at the apartments.

Mr. Schlemmer stated the meeting room has not been built yet and told how they employ their employees. He stated that the total project was to be around \$8,000,000 and was to be done in phases.

Helen Gardner believes that the committee needs to be able to sit down with Mr. Schlemmer and discuss the situation.

Gary Herbert told Mr. Schlemmer that they want to do what has been promised to him but in return want what he has promised to the City.

Tax abatement for Schlemmer is tabled for now.

Motion by Ken Dornich and seconded by Larry Bower to approve tax abatement renewal for Charleston Square (Briarwood Apts.). So passed.

Kent McIntosh told Council about the OJT apprenticeship program. Mr. McIntosh had brochures for anyone interested. The program is helping veterans find employment after coming back from a war as well as other people in other situations.

Motion by Helen Gardner and seconded by Glenn Tebbe to approve on second reading Ordinance 2004-3. So passed.

Motion by Larry Bower and seconded by Ken Dornich to approve on third reading Ordinance 2004-3. So passed.

Mark Haston reviewed the different information he handed out to the Mayor and Council concerning the airport expansion.

He commented on the following

At the end of January 2004, Decatur County had a total of 630 on unemployment for an unemployment rate of 4.4%.

Mr. Haston visited airports at Madison, Seymour and North Vernon and talked with managers and City and County Officials and residents. Some are self-supporting and Seymour will be self-supporting for a few years.

FAA does not like to put an airport in a high traffic area for wildlife. If wildlife would be a problem for the airport then they could have restrictions on farming and wildlife.

Two of the airports were former military base land and were given too the cities. Both have a lot of land being farmed; the rent supports helps to support airport operational costs.

Mr. Haston stated that if executives want to be 15 minutes away, they must not fly into the bigger cities because there is no way you can make it downtown in fifteen minutes from metropolitan airports.

Two of the Judge John Goddard's sons were present and Mr. Haston read and submitted a letter from the Goddard family. :

“One of the distinguishing rights provided for in our Constitution that separates us from places such as Cuba and China is the right to have property ownership.

In this country before the Government can take property it does not own, from those individuals that do own it, there must be a compelling reason to do so. It cannot be a reason based on speculation or conjecture. It must be clear and convincing. It must be for the overall benefit of all in the furtherance of the public welfare. Then, and only then, should the government be able to exercise its right of eminent domain. Property ownership should be sacred and government should only exercise its ability to take when only absolutely necessary for the greater cause. Has this showing been done? I think not.

The local officials were not even aware of this "need" for an expansion until people with a vested monetary interest began the process. If the local officials were not even aware of this compelling dire need for the expansion how can they suddenly say one exists?

The tail is wagging the dog. It should not be the Airport Board that determines a need and then brings it to the local officials, as is the case here. It should be the local officials who first make the determination and then tells the Airport Board to begin the process.

Our family already has given the school corporation a large farm in Iowa to be used for scholarships at Greensburg High School. My great great great grandfather gave the land to build the city on. Now, to take the land from my 96-year-old Father against his will based on ambiguities and uncertainty seems like such an injustice to a man who always tried to represent justice. Sincerely, Phillip Goddard".

Mr. Bill Goddard addressed the Council. He believes that based on his experience this is not what eminent domain is for. His father is very elderly and could not be present.

Don McCrary and Don Manley were present to represent the Airport Authority. Don stated the planning now is to build a runway 4000 ft. long and 75 ft. wide. Don stated that he has several support letters, one from Decatur Hills and one from Blackstone when they came to Greensburg. Blackstone sold out to Valeo but Valeo does not need the airport. The Federal Government now reimburses 90 – 95% and the Federal Gov't has returned over \$56,000 for the planning and studies thus far, which is in the airport account with the County Auditor. Don Manley told Council that a crosswind runway is not required as long as alternatives were provided. Don stated the airport board would be willing to look at alternative sites.

Gary Herbert feels a needs assessment should have been done first. Gary feels until a need is seen then he feels this would need to be tabled.

Helen Gardner told that she and a former Council member met with the airport authority board to look at the hangars and see what could be done to extend the runway and that was all the former council ever knew.

Glenn Tebbe stated that Mark Haston and others have presented a lot of useful information. Glenn believes the case has not been made for an expansion and that the proponents only presented assumed economic benefits. He wants

information on what the use is now, maintenance cost and industry support of this and airport expansion. Other questions include how much has to be done to satisfy Federal grant and what that means to the rest of the plans, and what an expansion of 4000 ft would be without the FAA involved. Glenn stated he has real reservations of using eminent domain for economic development. Economic Development is more than the airport; there are several projects being discussed and in the planning stage. There is a limited amount of resources the City has for economic development projects and priorities need to be set. Where does the airport fall in relationship to all the others? Glenn does not feel as though he has enough information to make a good decision.

Don McCrary told Council members that if they continue with the study the City and County would have to purchase the Airport in order to receive the Federal grant.

Larry Bower does not feel the need is there, nor does he feel the airport is compatible in the area it is located.

Ken Dornich appreciated the tour of the proposed site and has not seen anything on paper that shows a specific need for expansion. He does not feel the Council is any better off now than what they were two months ago. Ken feels the present runway does need to be repaved and need to look at extending some of the runway, but he is not comfortable to make a decision to go ahead.

Mayor Manus stated that he and Council do not know the need and until that need is seen it will not pass at this time.

Motion by Helen Gardner and seconded by Ken Dornich to deny funding of the study until a need can actually be seen. So passed.

Mayor Manus told the Council of the need to advertise for applications for two school board appointment positions. One democrat appointed by Council and one republican appointed by the Mayor. Tom Hunter needs to have the new School Board members sworn in by July 1, 2004.

Motion by Glenn Tebbe and seconded by Gary Herbert to approve moving insurance monies from General to Police Equipment Repair. So passed.

Cobra insurance situation was brought up. The City has a person that has been on cobra for a period of 36 months due to her situation and what the law stipulates, whereas the normal period of time is 18 months. The person is asking for an extension until she is of retirement age.

City Attorney, Steve Taylor explained to Council his letter and the Federal Law on Cobra. Steve stated he does not recommend the City opening this up for extension because of the liability that it would put on the City. Glenn Tebbe feels the Council would be setting precedence and would have to give a lot more thought to the whole picture.

Helen Gardner understands and is sympathetic but feels the Council cannot extend.

Council denied.

Mayor Manus told Council the Animal Control Board is in the process of building a new shelter and would like to have a Council member on the Board for the project. Mayor was asking for a volunteer.

Mayor Manus is still working on the elevator lift situation, so as to try and get back into City Hall to hold monthly meetings.

Mayor Manus told that the City Hall offices are running out of space.

Mayor, Gary Herbert and Larry Bower toured Billings School in anticipation of a possibility of turning it into a City Hall. There are 15 rooms and the roof and heating and cooling are pretty new. Mayor feels that part of the rooms could be rented out.

Mayor would like for the other Council members to call Tom Hunter and take a tour.

The School Board meets the second Tuesday of the month and it was decided to try and have City Council put on their agenda for the May meeting.

Helen Gardner stated she has been in Billings School and also some service agencies are looking for space to rent.

A letter from Tom Hunter was received saying the Police Department is doing a good job.

A program on Child Molestation will be April 19th, 2004, 4:00-5:00 P.M. at the Greensburg Junior High School, presented by Sgt. Terry Hall, Indianapolis Police Department.

City Attorney, Steve Taylor stated that he has talked with IACT Attorney, Jodie Woods and State Board of Accounts, Charlie Pride about the cellular phones and take home vehicles and has sent all information to IACT. He hopes to have recommendations for the Council at the May meeting.

Mayor Manus brought up that due to the holidays for July 4th and Labor Day, Council meetings would be held on Tuesday instead of Monday.

Dan Eldridge and Deanna Coyle came before the Council asking to have a Taxi Cab Ordinance to govern taxicabs. Mr. Eldridge believes that an ordinance would be beneficial for the citizens by maintaining standards and assurances. City Attorney, Steve Taylor will review ordinances and get back with Council.

Mayor Manus stated that Bob Barker of the Parks and Recreation is requesting that an Ordinance prohibiting the use of skateboards and other similar devices within a particular area of the Greensburg City limits, mainly around square, be established. City Attorney, Steve Taylor will review this and make recommendation.

Mayor Manus informed the Council concerning outside insurance companies selling supplemental policies to city employees on city time and property. Mayor told Council that cancelled one such proposed event. Mayor stated if they want to have something put with paychecks and then the employees contact them and see them on their own time, he has no problem with that. Council agreed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 P.M.

Presiding Officer: _____

Council Member

Attest:

_____ Clerk-Treasurer

