

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

January 18, 2005

In the absence of President Judi Mitten, President protem Bob Breneman called the regularly scheduled meeting of City Council to order at 7:30 p.m. in the council chambers and upon roll call, members answered present as follows: Breneman, Buytendyk, Cavin, Griffin, Silvestri, Topovski. Mr. Ulbright arrived at 8:00 p.m.

The agenda stood as ordered.

Mr. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Topovski, to approve the minutes of the December 20, 2004 minutes as received. Motion carried. Mr. Buytendyk moved, seconded by Mr. Silvestri, to approve the minutes of the January 3, 2005 minutes as received. Motion carried.

Mr. Griffin stated that on February 22, we have David Wheeler, regional general manager of AEP, scheduled to be here at 6:30 p.m. for a committee meeting with the specific topic being Mr. Wheeler explaining to us and citizens how and why power goes out. He'll also discuss the tree trimming issues around electrical wires. Mr. Griffin said that several of his neighbors had contacted him during the power outage so he had advised them of this meeting.

Mr. Silvestri stated that he has scheduled a Safety Committee meeting for February 7 at 6:30 p.m. (prior to council meeting). Andrea Wagner will be present to discuss reverse 911 and what all is involved with that service.

Mr. Breneman stated that he had some sad news to relay and that was that we've lost a team member of the city crew, that being Jim Long from the recreation division who was killed in an auto accident about a week ago. He leaves behind a wife, Robin, and two daughters, Heather and Heidi. He had been employed in the recreation division about five years and before that he was with the civil conservation corp. for 12-15 years. If you were involved in any of the playground projects, Jim was there helping with anything that needed done; he was always at the soccer matches. There is a trust fund that has been set up at Wayne Savings for Robin Long.

Mr. Breneman stated that on a happier note in the recreation division, we have an informal resolution this evening honoring residents in our city for some good things that have happened. Ms. Cavin stated that this honored Steve Webster and the Christmas Run Reforestation Committee; she felt this was overdue. It was a very generous act that Mr. Webster and everyone involved on this committee took on for the betterment of the community and something we probably couldn't have done ourselves considering the current financial conditions. Mr. Webster stated that he wished to thank everyone in the room – the mayor, city council and the people sitting beside him (parks & rec. staff) who were the lead players in this process. He also thanked those members of his committee who were not present. There will be more work done this spring at the entrance off Grant Street. He asked that everyone stop down in the spring to see the theme of colors that were planted in the park – dogwoods, redbuds, etc. so it should be very colorful. It was very gratifying to see the support from the whole Wooster community including the schools and the students who helped in the planting.

The clerk read an informal resolution in honor of Steve Webster and the Reforestation of Christmas Run Reforestation Committee. Ms. Cavin moved, seconded by Mr. Topovski, to adopt the informal resolution. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution No. 2005-5 authorizing the Director of Administration to advertise according to law and enter into contracts with the lowest and best bidder for improvements to Knights Field Park, and declaring an emergency was read by title, being on first reading. Ms. Cavin stated that this pertained to monies we are being granted through the State of Ohio CDBG and would be used for constructing a sidewalk on Theodore Street and to purchase playground equipment for Knights Field Park. It was her understanding that Kiwanis Club had generously offered to install/build the playground and that is very much appreciated. Mr. Malta explained how old the current playground equipment was and that they would like to be able to install this in May so it would be ready for the kids this summer. A representative from Kiwanis Club was present and he said that at the present time, they didn't have a project scheduled until June, so May would be a perfect time for this to participate in this but after June, they were very busy and it would be fall before they could provide the labor to do this. Ms. Cavin moved, seconded by Mr. Buytendyk, to suspend the rules and place on third and final reading. Upon roll call, motion carried. Ms. Cavin moved, seconded by Mr. Topovski, to adopt. Upon roll call, motion to adopt carried unanimously.

Resolution No. 2005-6 authorizing the Director of Administration to purchase vehicles and equipment in accordance with the capital plan for 2005 and declaring an emergency was read by title, being on first reading. Mr. Silvestri stated that we are all very grateful to the police force and for the work that they do to protect us. One of the things they require in order to do what they do and have short response times and be on the scene as fast as possible is reliable transportation. What we have before us is a joint resolution including also a vehicle for the engineering division that being a Ford pick-up. The police division is requesting three Ford Crown Victoria police interceptors and two Ford Taurus sedans. All the prices for these vehicles are below the state purchasing program price and were being offered by Pallotta Ford. These cars run 24-7 and very rarely get a break and that's very hard on a vehicle so that might explain the faster turnover. Mr. Ulbright stated that he didn't claim to be an expert on cars, but when he looked at these Fords, especially the 2001 Crown Victorias and the fact that we're going for three more of the same vehicles, it seemed to him that we could use what some of the other cities use and that being the Chevrolet or Chrysler products and they make use of them. Some of them use a little smaller car such as the Impala. He wasn't knocking Fords, but he also had been around people who had told him that these particular vehicles were not the easiest to work on and the cost of the repairs was exorbitant. Chief Thornton explained the reason they were staying with these vehicles and a lengthy discussion followed. Mr. Silvestri moved, seconded by Mr. Griffin, to suspend the rules and place on third and final reading. Upon roll call, motion carried unanimously. Mr. Silvestri moved, seconded by Mr. Buytendyk, to adopt. Upon roll call, motion to adopt the resolution carried unanimously.

Resolution No. 2004-7 authorizing the Director of Administration to advertise according to law and enter into a contract(s) with the lowest and best bidder for the purchase of certain materials for the Water Treatment and Water Pollution Control Plants, and declaring an emergency was read by title, being on first reading. Mr. Griffin stated that Mr. Borton had sent an email explaining the function of each chemical. This was a \$200,000 estimated expense out of the water fund and water pollution control fund and revenue was generated by user fees. The lime, carbon dioxide and soda ash are for the water plant used for water softening and to lower ph levels and the sodium hypochlorite for the water pollution control plant was to disinfect water and ensure there were no disease-causing bacteria. Mr. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Buytendyk, to suspend the rules and place on third and final reading. Upon roll call, motion carried. Mr. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Buytendyk, to adopt. Upon roll call, motion to adopt carried unanimously.

Resolution No. 2005-8 authorizing the Director of Administration to enter into a contract with Brandstetter, Carol & Zofcin of Cleveland, Ohio for professional engineering services related to the design of the Beall Avenue Reconstruction Project, and declaring an emergency was read by title, being on first reading. Mr. Griffin stated that council members should have received the copy of the Beall Avenue Streetscape master plan; it was very comprehensive document and very interesting. The City of Wooster, Main Street and the College of Wooster have collaborated in this project. The \$700,000 in engineering fees associated with this project was a big expense and it was based on 8% of the total project cost. The City made it clear going into this was that our contribution to the project would be the same contribution we would make for any street improvement project with sewer/water line separation; in other words, the things we would do to normally improve a street. These entities have worked hard with Congressman Regula's office to procure federal dollars for this project and taking in the huge area to be improved -- Liberty Street north to Bloomington -- in the long run, we are getting a bargain. Mr. Griffin stated that this would create a strong link between the college and the commercial district downtown and act as a gateway providing a safer more attractive environment for students, faculties and administrators within the college area and extending into the commercial district. The College of Wooster is the 5th largest employer in the city and anything we can do to improve that area and link it commercially and aesthetically with the downtown is a great idea and he commended our city administration for sticking to the point that the city contributes to what we normally would for this type of project and the rest coming from the college and federal dollars. Some of this cost will be supplemented with federal dollars.

Mr. Ulbright was under the impression that the last time we took this topic up, we were agreeing to pursue the project in theory. We, along with the college, spent some money to hire a consultant to come up with some plans for the area and he assumed this was the result. He had thought that we as a council along with the administration, Main Street, the College and any other interested parties would come together in a work session to discuss the pros and cons of actually going any further with the project. He was opposed to going much further with this until we have that type of discussion. Mr. Sigg stated that this was a preliminary design and was subject to change and within the design phase there will be meetings and we've had discussions with property owners up and down the street but again, there's always been discussion of doing Beall Avenue as a streetscape. We are in a position right now where we are going to have to tear up that street from one side to the other anyway because of the storm sewer separation program and the street needs repaved. So if we can come up with a more pleasing way of putting the street back together and the college is willing to help, now was the time to do it. Mr. Buytendyk asked if we knew how much the assessments would be on the properties. Mr. Sigg said we wouldn't know until the final design but it would be comparable to what people paid on Milltown Road. Ms. Cavin stated that she had attended the finance committee meetings and this wasn't discussed; it is a big project and she felt it would be in the city's best interests to have a presentation on this project; she would like to hear the sales pitch. Mr. Sigg said that prior to the next council meeting we plan to have a formal presentation from Brandstetter, Carroll & Zofcin. Mr. Silvestri stated that this was a huge project and he felt better knowing that the cost would be \$700,000 if we just did the city's part and put the street back the way it was now with the extra cost incurred being covered by the college and Main Street and federal funding. Mr. Ulbright's argument holds water as far as the process or a service to the community; he felt it could have been a lot clearer that there was another step in the process. He also felt that citizen input was necessary in a project of this magnitude. Mr. Breneman agreed that public input was important in a major project like this. He felt it was an exciting thing for the city; the downtown streetscape projects have done good things for the city as a whole and tying the college into that was a wonderful idea.

Mr. Topovski had some concerns as well and felt there should be community involvement and opinions on the final design of the plan and the alternative designs being proposed in the master plan.

Resolution No. 2005-9 authorizing the Mayor to submit an application to the State of Ohio Department of Development's office of energy efficiency for a grant to fund a co-generation system at the Water Pollution Control Plant, and, upon approval, to accept and apply such funds, and declaring an emergency was read by title, being on first reading. Mr. Griffin stated that an opportunity had presented itself for some money related to our renovation of the Water Pollution Control Plant and funds up to \$150,000 was available. This would authorize us to apply for that money. There is also loan money available at a lower interest than the Ohio EPA money (currently at 3.15% interest and if we obtain this it would be at 2.25%). Mr. Borton stated that this was a competitive grant and if we secure the \$150,000, the maximum loan amount we would apply for was \$172,000 which was actually at 2.625% interest. A short discussion followed during which Mr. Borton explained the co-generation process. Mr. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Buytendyk, to suspend the rules and place on third and final reading. Upon roll call, motion carried unanimously. Mr. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Buytendyk, to adopt.

Miscellaneous

Ms. Cavin thanked Mr. Breneman for the outstanding job he had done tonight as acting president. She also thanked the Mayor and Police Chief for their part in the event honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. last Monday at the high school; she felt their involvement was important. Ms. Cavin also wished to once more express her thanks to the Kiwanis Club for their help in keeping our parks in good shape. During tough times like we are experiencing, it is very hard to come up with money for these types of projects and their involvement was very much appreciated. They have done exceptional work in the parks in her ward and she appreciated that; and she was also grateful for the playground equipment that was put back at the Walnut Street School.

Mr. Breneman stated that after our ice storm, he did see the purpose of an emergency generator now and he had said the same to Mr. Borton at the city luncheon. He did understand how two power sources could both go down at the same time.

Mr. Ulbright moved, seconded by Mr. Silvestri, to adjourn. Motion carried and meeting so adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Robert Breneman
President Protem of Council

Sheila Stanley
Clerk of Council