

**THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CIVIL CITY OF NEW ALBANY, INDIANA,
HELD A REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING IN THE THIRD FLOOR ASSEMBLY
ROOM OF THE CITY/COUNTY BUILDING ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16,
2017 AT 7:00 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Council Members Mr. Coffey, Mr. Caesar, Mr. Phipps, Mr. Nash, Mr. Blair, Mr. Aebersold, Mr. Barksdale, Dr. Knable and President McLaughlin.

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Lorch, Police Officer Davidson, Mr. Duggins, Mr. Gibson, Mrs. Moeller, Mr. Hall, Mr. Wilkinson, Deputy Fire Chief Gadd, Mr. Warren Nash and Mrs. Glotzbach

Mr. McLaughlin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Boy Scout

ROLL CALL:

APPROVAL OR CORRECTION OF THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:

Mr. Caesar moved to approve the **Public Hearing Minutes (Sewer Rates) for February 6, 2017**, **Mr. Coffey** second, all voted in favor.

Mr. Barksdale moved to approve the **Public Hearing Minutes (Blessings in a Backpack) for February 6, 2017**, **Mr. Caesar** second, all voted in favor.

Mr. Phipps moved to approve the **Regular Meeting Minutes for February 6, 2017**, **Mr. Barksdale** second, all voted in favor.

COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEMS):

COMMUNICATIONS – COUNCIL:

Mr. Nash informed the council of a problem with mail delivery on McDonald Lane. He said that sometime in December when they put new mailboxes up for the residents they put them on the opposite side of the road than where they were before so everyone's mailbox is now on the side of the road that their house is on. He said that prior to that half of the road had to cross the street to get their mail because the US Postal Service refused to deliver to one side of the street at that point. He said he doesn't know where the communication broke down but somewhere it did so for a few weeks the one side of the road went to the post office to pick up their mail. He explained that they have since put their temporary mailboxes back up on the corner of Roanoke and Knobview which to him is more dangerous. He stated that with Dr. Knable's help he contacted Mr. Hollingsworth's office and they received a response from the post office and he read some of that response. He said that their point is that it is a hazard to deliver mail on both sides of the street as they do on any other street in the city but it's not a hazard for 40 households to cross the street to in order to get their mail every day. He also said that Mr. Hollingsworth's office said this is not the last and they will try a few more topics. He stated that they have also been in contact with Mr. Joe Donnelly's office and they are working together on it.

Mr. Duggins stated that there is no other street in the city set up that way and that's why we are taking issue with this.

Mr. Caesar said that he doesn't understand it all.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that is because McDonald Lane was not in the city at that time it was set up.

Mr. Nash stated that they mentioned that it has been that way for 40 years but things have changed in 40 years.

Mr. Aebersold asked if the city took the boxes down at one time.

Mr. Nash stated that they took the temporary boxes down when they put the new ones up but the post office wouldn't deliver to them so they put the temporary boxes back up.

Mr. Duggins stated that they put them back so they would have service.

Dr. Knable stated the he also made a preliminary inquiry with Senator Young's office but will wait to hear from Congressman Hollingsworth first.

Mr. Blair stated that Mr. Phipps and he are having an initial meeting with Mr. Wood next Wednesday at 4:00 p.m. in the third floor conference room on annexation and they are more than willing to share the work if anyone wants to join them.

COMMUNICATIONS – MAYOR:

Mr. Hall stated that Mayor Gahan wanted to update the council on the grid modernization in the downtown area. He said that there is initial work being done to prep for the conversion. He explained that any ADA ramps around town that are not in compliance are being updated along with bump outs along Market Street because when that is changed to two-way, those bump outs needed to be reconverted so that the parking spaces would remain the same and we wouldn't lose any parking.

COMMUNICATIONS – OTHER CITY DEPARTMENTS OR CITY OFFICIALS:

Mrs. Moeller passed out the budget to actual for January 2017 to be read into the minutes. She then explained that the city received the audit back from 2015 and it was the best yet. She said there was only one minor finding and from what she was told at the exit conference, this is the only municipality in the state that didn't get more than one. She stated that the mayor is very pleased and she hopes that the council is too.

Mr. Wilkinson stated that he was present to respond to the questions that were presented at the public hearing for the sewer rate increase. He said that two individuals had questions in the minimum bill category and the other two were in the outer zone. He explained that in the minimum category the bill went up \$0.45 per month. He also explained that in the area outside the city limits there is a 50% surcharge and apparently the gentleman that just moved here from Clarksville didn't realize he was in the county so the rate is a little higher than in the city. He said that one of the other gentlemen thought his rate was high and made mention of \$30.00 and \$40.00 rates around him so he checked on everyone around us. He reported that Jeffersonville's average is \$67.00 per month and the state average is \$55.00 per month. He stated that Clarksville bills off of cubic feet

and a minimum bill is \$18.80 so the gentleman that moved here from Clarksville did not say how many units he was using so he couldn't tell if he was a minimum bill or something else. He also stated that the minimum bill in New Albany is \$15.00 so the gentleman may have been surprised by the rate because he moved into the county area.

Mr. Nash asked if he moved prior to Clarksville's rate increase.

Mr. Wilkinson replied yes, they are just now entering their increase and then stated that Jeffersonville is debating with IDEM and EPA about getting extended time to meet their qualifications for the EPA mandate that they are going to be under and they don't have all of the engineering design completed to even know how much money they are going to spend in the future. He explained that they currently have a \$95M bond, another \$60M in identified construction projects and they only have bonding capacity for about \$12,000.00 so that means they have to raise the rate. He said that if you don't raise the rate, the state will come in and raise it for you and take over your department. He then stated that we used to service Georgetown and their minimum bill is \$36.90 but the bills run \$60.00-\$75.00 per month. He explained that in our billing with a family using 7 units which is basically 5,200 gallons per month, our rate is \$52.00 which is the lowest around this area. He said that Louisville's rates are more than ten times what ours are and they are under a mandate to get their system separated. He also said that they have \$1.4B in bonds outstanding and they have to do some more. He explained that their current minimum rate is \$66.00 per month and then the surcharge on each 100 cubic feet goes on top of that so you can be comfortable with the fact that our rates are extremely competitive and better than most everyone in the area. He said that there were two comments that came about what we were going to do with the \$12M. He explained that there are two reservoirs and one is about \$4M and the other is about \$1.4M. He said there are two half mile long 18" diameter pipelines to be installed and one is \$700,000.00 and the other is \$850,000.00. He stated that the Jacobs Creek Lift Station is going to be approximately \$1.6M-\$1.8M and the uphill run lift station is going to be between \$1.2M-\$1.4M. He explained that the upgrade at the plant on the squircle clarifiers will be \$1.5M-\$1.7M. He said that the bond cost and debt service reserve is approximately \$1M and \$832,000.00 is pulled out of the bond right up front to go in reserve. He then explained that we will get all of the engineering and some construction started in 2017 and will carry over to 2018 and will be pretty much done with it at the end of 2018. He said that after all of the projects are under contract then we can petition the EPA for closing of our consent decree. He also said that there was some criticism about the bond coming up at the end of last year but we wanted to get the finance completed because the state does not allow you to engage in construction contracts that you can't pay for so we have to put together money to fund projects when we have them identified. He explained that the other thing that came into play was the amount of credits and pointed out that in the month of November we were finally made aware that one of the hotels to go on the top of the hill at State Street is going to happen right away. He said he kept asking how many sewer credits they were going to need because we had two other 200 unit apartment complexes on Grant Line Road that needed credits. He reminded everyone that we had 191,000 credits in hand and had demand for 216,000 credits so the push to do things faster came about because of sewer credits. He commended the council and thanked them as a group in helping get this done. He said that our debt load on January 1st was about \$31M and when he came on the board in 2009 it was \$75M. He also said that in 2023 we would've had all debt bond payments paid off but we added back \$13M which is going to be two and one half more months so we pay about \$5.5M per year on bond debt. He pointed out that the department is in excellent shape and thanked the council for supporting the department.

Mr. Coffey stated that we are about 20 years ahead of all of the surrounding communities as far as sewers go. He then explained that we already had to go through all of the pain and expense but the surrounding communities are just starting and our rates are equal to or less than theirs are now. He added that their rates are going to be doubling, tripling, etc. He said that there was a gentleman that spoke about his rate on County Line Road. He then explained that the subdivisions out there were on septic tanks years ago and you couldn't walk in their yards so the EPA told the city that they had to fix them. He said that he finds it disingenuous that the city had to fix their problems and then they come in and gripe about their sewer bill because if they would've had to do that themselves, it would've been a fortune. He then stated that if you want to stop economic development then stop the sewer credits. He said that we are right at the cusp at getting so many more credits that we need.

Mr. Barksdale asked Mr. Wilkinson to explain the situation with the Ms. Jordan that was present at the public hearing.

Mr. Wilkinson stated that she was the realtor that was having an issue with sewer bills that had come about by one of her tenants who was in and out of the hospital for about a six month period. He said that there is a process for these types of situations so he asked Ms. Jordan to put together all of the paper work and then Ms. Dickey in the billing department will submit to the sewer board an application for assistance or help, etc. He said that the sewer board will deal with it and be very fair.

REPORTS – COMMITTEES, BOARDS OR OTHER OFFICIALS AS REQUESTED BY A MAJORITY VOTE OF THE COUNCIL:

APPROVAL OF CF-1 FORMS:

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:

READING

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS:

BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC (NON-AGENDA ITEMS):

Mr. Roger Baylor read a piece that was co-written by Mr. Randy Smith and himself on behalf of a walkable New Albany. He then asked that the city council take a walk with them along Spring Street someday soon to observe the vast stretches of Spring Street where no pedestrian can cross safely. He said that he would like to call it a feasibility study with a goal to selecting the six or seven intersections where safety and traffic calming can be effected with installation of four-way stop signs and crosswalks. He encouraged the council to make the walk because as elected public officials they are in the best position to advocate for their constituents and he would love to have them as allies.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Pat McLaughlin, President

Vicki Glotzbach, City Clerk