



**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEOGA HELD IN
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS MUNICIPAL BUILDING 533 CHESTNUT
AUGUST 18, 2003, 7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Gary A. Mercer and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Those present were: Commissioners Varner, Russell, Warner, Stewart and Mayor Mercer. Others present were City Clerk Patricia Ehrhart, City Treasurer Cheryl Eastin, Deputy Treasurer Diana Foor, Deputy Clerk Brenda Evans, Alan Baker, Justin Russell, Nancy Lawson, Gary Kastl, Stan Hagerstrom, Marilyn Smyser, Sue Livingston, Ben Bland, Judy Brown, Clint Brown, and City Attorney Glenn Braden.

MINUTES

Commissioner Russell made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Warner, to approve the regular and executive meeting minutes of August 4, 2003. Yeas, Commissioners Russell, Warner, Varner, and Mayor Mercer. Abstain, Stewart. Nays, none. Motion carried. 4-0.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Cumberland County Engineer Ben Bland, addressed the Council regarding the new Geographic Information System (GIS) the Cumberland County Board purchased. Mr. Bland explained that the county was mandated to have a system up and running before 2005. To help fund this program, the County Board has increased the recording fees for the county, which should generate approximately \$20,000 - \$25,000 per year. They have also been awarded a grant for \$80,000 with matching funds of \$20,000. The system will be used to map all roads and structures in Cumberland County to benefit a number of agencies in the County including the Supervisor of Assessments office. This program will also allow 911 to establish where cell phone calls are coming from with a pinpoint location, whereas now they can only come as close as a five-mile radius. Other benefits will be to designate where the flood plains are located in Cumberland County, to help create a data base for road signs, and numerous of other possibilities. Mr. Bland also explained to the Council that these photos may also be used for projected businesses in our area. However, a committee will need to be set up so that this program will benefit everyone in the county. At this time, Mr. Bland is asking for names of area residents that might commit to serving on the advisory board for an extended time frame so that he can contact them before the end of the week.

AUGUST 18, 2003

LIQUOR ORDINANCE

The City council reviewed the current liquor ordinance and felt that it was too restrictive, because at this time no one under the age of 21 is allowed into the establishment after 9:00 p.m. and must be accompanied by a parent at all times. An example given was a grandparent could not take a grandchild into the restaurant for dinner because they would be in violation of the ordinance.

After a lengthy discussion, the council made the motion to amend the liquor ordinance to read as follows: an establishment must have a defined barrier between the bar and dining room, and a barrier between the dining area and the gaming room. A sign must be posted on the barrier stating that no one under the age of 21 is allowed in the bar area. Another sign must be posted on the barrier into the gaming area that states no one under the age of 21 unless accompanied by an adult or guardian. Anyone under the age of 21, will be allowed in the establishment for dining purposes only, but must vacate the premises prior to 10:30 p.m. Council instructed the City Clerk to have the City attorney prepare the ordinance for the next council meeting.

MODULAR HOMES

Clint and Judy Brown addressed the council regarding the need for housing in our community. Their home burnt on July 17th and are now weighing their housing options and the insurance is only allowing a few days to do this. They explained after a great deal of investigation, it was their understanding that both modular homes and manufactured homes have been approved by the federal government as quality housing. The Brown's felt that if they changed the roof pitch and added a front porch onto a manufactured home, it would give the appearance of a stick built home. Brown's stated that the only differences between the two kinds of homes are that a modular home has had the paperwork sent to the state and has been classified as a modular, which increases the cost of the home by about \$20,000. They asked the council to reconsider the current ordinance and allow manufactured homes inside the city limits and not mandate that they stay in the designated mobile home parks.

Building Inspector Gary Kastl explained to the council and the Brown's, the main reason the City of Neoga will accept modular homes and not a manufactured home is because of the flooring system and the way they sit on the foundation.

Mayor Mercer thanked Mr. & Mrs. Brown for the information and time and explained this issue should be brought before the Zoning Board for their consideration and then the Zoning Board would bring any new recommendations back to the Council.

FALL FESTIVAL

Marilyn Smyser told the council that as of right now, the Neoga Days Committee is planning the fall festival for October 11 with a rain date on October 18. The flea market will open at 9a.m. and food booths and beer tent will open at noon. The Band will begin at 6p.m. until 9 or 10p.m.

The committee

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

PAGE -3-

AUGUST 18, 2003

would like to know if they could use the restrooms in the city building instead of renting port-a-potties. It was the decision of the council to not allow the use of the building due to liability.

FINANCE

Commissioner Warner made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Russell to approve the bills as presented in the amount of \$31,085.66. Ayes, Commissioners Russell, Warner, Varner, Stewart, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0.

The treasurer's report was given to the council and after review was okayed.

ECIDC DUES

Commissioner Warner, seconded by Commissioner Varner, to renew the dues to East Central Illinois Development Corporation, in the amount of \$250.00. Ayes, Commissioner Warner, Varner, Russell, Stewart, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0.

PUBLIC PROPERTY

SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Superintendent of Public Works Stan Hagerstrom reported on the following:

1. Still waiting on De-stratifier to get put in, hopefully soon.
2. Hired a firm to come in and recalibrated the equipment at the water and sewer plants and the water tower. Informed the council, according to the company, that the equipment is so old they could not calibrate the phone line that ran from the water tower to the water plant.
3. The lift station located at Cedar Avenue and Trowbridge road has been tripping out and after contacting AmeranCIPS, the transformer was replaced and is now working correctly.
4. The lift station at the old truckstop will cost a total of \$4300 and the work is to be done by Sudkamp Plumbing and Heating.
5. Daily & Associates televised the 7th street sewer and everything looks like its in good working order. One location that had a lot of roots was at Cedar and Elm Avenue. The television crews also went along the 5th street sewer and were able to go under the Railroad tracks but not under Rt. #45. Superintendent Hagerstrom feels that the main in that area has been reduced from 10" main to a 7" main. He is still waiting for Daily analysis.

STREET'S AND ALLEY'S

Sue Livingston, homeowner at 214 E. 8TH Street, explained to the council some issues that

concerned her around her home. One problem was the sidewalk on the south side of her house was raised, broke

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

PAGE -4-

AUGUST 18, 2003

and a hazard when people walked along there. The other problem was the old tree on the same side that was dying and limbs were falling and damaging her fence. She said that the city had cut down one tree along there but they didn't remove the stump and she would like something done with it also. The Council felt that if they had the sidewalk, tree and both stumps removed, the homeowner could repair her fence herself. They then instructed Superintendent Hagerstrom to try and get it done in a timely fashion.

DAILY & ASSOCIATES

Commissioner Russell told the council that he received an email from Tom Overmeyer and he would like to set up a meeting to discuss Motor Fuel Tax either on the 19 or 21st.

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY

ANIMAL CONTROL ORDINANCE

Commissioner Stewart made a motion to amend the current animal control ordinance by increasing the fines from \$25 on the first offense to \$100, and \$50 for the second offense to \$250 for each occurrence thereafter. Seconded by Commissioner Warner. Ayes, Commissioner Stewart, Varner, Warner, Russell, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0.

7th & GROVE

The house located here is now down and cleanup is almost complete. Letters for both houses located at 5th and Walnut are in the process, just waiting on the title work to be completed.

DEMOLITION ORDINANCE

The council ask if a new demolition ordinance has been prepared and would like to have one presented at the next Council meeting.

SOLICITATION ORDINANCE

Illinois Risk Management, the City's insurance company, sent a notice with guidelines for all solicitors collecting on the street corners. These guidelines include the group or organizations must be licenced as not for profit, where visible vest and be over 18 years of age. The City Council felt that these guidelines should be included on our solicitors ordinance.

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

**PAGE -5-
AUGUST 4, 2003**

NEOGA MEMORIAL CEMETERY

The City received a complaint regarding tombstones in bad shape and after investigating found that several headstones have been lifted and need to be reset. The council will take further action on these after cost estimates are in.

RECESS INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion from Commissioner Russell, seconded by Commissioner Warner, to go into executive session for Personnel - Section 2 (c) (1) - Employee hiring, firing, compensation, discipline and performance. Yeas, Commissioner Warner, Russell, Varner, Stewart, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0.

RECONVENED AND ROLL CALL

The meeting reconvened on a motion from Commissioner Russell, seconded by Commissioner Stewart. Those present for roll call were: Commissioners Russell, Varner, Warner, Stewart, and Mayor Mercer.

EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE

Commissioner Varner made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Warner, to suspend Public Works Employee Robert Althoff, without pay, for two days pending further discipline action. Ayes, Commissioners, Stewart, Russell, Warner, Varner, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Stewart made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Russell, to adjourn the regular meeting at 10:03 p.m. Yeas, Commissioner, Warner, Varner, Russell, Stewart, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0.

Gary A. Mercer, Mayor

Patricia D. Ehrhart, MMC, City Clerk