

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

December 6, 2012

The City Council met at 5:00 p.m. in regular session with Mayor Larsen presiding. Council present: True, Frahm, Humann, Bierbaum, Shepherd.

Guests in attendance: Tim Lockard, Roxie Lockard, Larry Roberts, Izetta Dierking, Daniel Campbell, Lynn Driver, and Dave Bradley.

City staff in attendance: Jim Blum and Terri Abel.

Motion by True, seconded by Shepherd to approve the agenda. Ayes: Bierbaum, Humann, Shepherd, Frahm, True. Carried.

Mayor Larsen opened the public hearing regarding the adoption of the proposed Code of Ordinances of the City of Walnut, Iowa.

Motion by Humann, seconded by True to approve the preceding month's minutes and Library minutes. Ayes: True, Frahm, Bierbaum, Shepherd, Humann. Carried.

Motion by Frahm, seconded by True to approve the Treasurer's and Clerk's reports. Ayes: Humann, Shepherd, Frahm, Bierbaum, True. Carried.

Relative to discussion of a possible Streetscape Enhancement Project, Mayor Larsen reminded the Council members that Snyder & Associates, Inc. had completed a topographic survey, which included the measurements and elevations of the street, sidewalk, and storefronts in the Business District. The Mayor reported that the Streetscape Committee had recently met with Tim Teig, of Snyder and Associates, to discuss various components of the proposed project. Teig had completed a preliminary concept plan before the meeting to aid the committee members in brainstorming the desired elements of the project. No costs have yet been associated with the proposed improvements.

Frahm reported that the committee is gleaning information regarding the need and desire of the proposed project, and he commented that he welcomed questions and comments from the public. Trace spoke of the success that the City of Woodbine has had through a similar project. He quoted the Missouri Valley newspaper, stating that Woodbine has realized thirteen new businesses and thirty-five new employees since its downtown revitalization project, which was completed approximately eighteen months ago. Trace said that he was interested in learning what benefits were derived from similar projects in other communities, and he commented that he would like to visit with Woodbine officials. Frahm noted that more research is needed before the City Council would make the decision to proceed with a streetscape enhancement initiative.

Both Mayor Larsen and Frahm felt that the proposed project would proceed slowly, as additional research and concept plans are considered. The Mayor felt that it would be worthwhile to investigate the impact that similar projects have had in other communities. Larsen encouraged the public to look at the concept drawing in City Hall and to express their opinions and also to voice their questions and concerns.

Tim and Roxie Lockard were present at the meeting to request permission to close one block of Antique City Drive and one-half block of Pearl Street in conjunction with the Walnut Antique Fall Festival, which is scheduled for September 14-15, 2013. Tim explained that he has been the promoter and the manager of the festival for the past two years. He proposed that the City Council give its permission to close the downtown block of Antique City Drive and one-half block of Pearl Street in front of the Granary Mall for the 2013 event. Lockard reported that during the 2012 show, the area on Pearl Street was closed as well as two half-blocks of Highland Street. The show will be in its fourth year in 2013; it has steadily grown, with forty-one inside and outside dealers participating in the 2012 festival. Lockard estimated the 2012 crowd at 2,000 to 2,500 people for the weekend with shoppers from eight states. Tim also reported that he had surveyed the show's dealers; Lockard provided a conservative estimate that the dealers themselves spent \$10,000.00 to \$12,000.00 in the area during the course of the weekend. Tim felt that by moving the festival to the downtown block of Antique City Drive, the show would be more cohesive, safer, and easier to manage. He is planning to add a few more indoor dealer spaces in 2013, utilizing the Amvet's building along with the American Legion Hall. The 2013 event will accommodate a maximum of 45-50 inside and outside dealers. Lockard stated that he would like to work with more local people and organizations for expanded events. He indicated that each year he has attempted to broaden the advertising base to attract more visitors, and he welcomed and appreciated

the City's help with advertising. Lockard said that he has appreciated all of the cooperation and support that he has received from the community. On a final note, he reported that he had received comments from the public requesting a temporary restroom at the south end of the festival.

Both Dave Bradley and Larry Roberts made statements in favor of Lockard's request to move the festival to the downtown block of Antique City Drive. Bradley reported that he had talked to most of the downtown business owners, and they were all in favor of the relocation.

The pros and cons of moving the festival were discussed. The relocation would require the detour of truck traffic, which some felt could present an issue during harvest time. After a brief discussion, Lockard clarified that the 2013 festival would be changed to a two-day format, with the streets to be closed from 6:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 14, 2013 until 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 15, 2013. The two-day format seemed to help alleviate any concerns regarding the detour of traffic around the downtown block. Jim felt that there would be an advantage to leaving the intersection of Antique City Drive and Highland Street open.

True suggested, and Lockard agreed, that the outside vendors should be located in the middle of Antique City Drive facing the shops. Lockard and Blum discussed the need to maintain a fire lane throughout the event.

Blum stated that he had also received complaints during the 2012 Fall Festival regarding the need for a temporary restroom. The Mayor stated that the promoter pays for the portable restrooms during the June Antique Show; True noted that she paid for a portable restroom during her flea market. It was mentioned that Bohlmann and Sons Sanitation is in the restroom business; Shepherd stated that she would be willing to talk to Rick Bohlmann to determine whether he would consider donating a restroom for the event.

Motion by Shepherd, seconded by Bierbaum to give Tim and Roxie Lockard permission to close one block of Antique City Drive from Pearl Street to Highland Street and to close one-half block of Pearl Street from Antique City Drive to the alley directly east of Antique City Drive for the Walnut Antique Fall Festival, which will be held on September 14-15, 2013. Ayes: Frahm, Bierbaum, True, Humann, Shepherd. Carried.

Daniel Campbell was present at the meeting to express his concern about post office regulations that would require him to either pay an annual fee of \$100.00 for a post office box or to install a rural box near his residence. Campbell stated that he understood that it is up to the discretion of the postmaster to determine the proper method of enforcing a 2008 regulation concerning mail delivery to residences farther than ¼ mile from the post office. Campbell stated that he had paid a six-month fee to the post office for his post office box; however, he would prefer to install a rural mailbox. He has been unable to determine where he would be allowed to install his mailbox, whether in front of his residence or whether he will be required to cluster his mailbox with his neighbors. Campbell stated that he brought the matter to the attention of the City Council because he felt that it would be more aesthetically pleasing if the mailboxes were to be installed uniformly as opposed to an unsightly hodge-podge of rural boxes. Mayor Larsen reported that he and Blum had discussed the matter with the local officer in charge of the post office and her supervisor who had agreed to allow the City some input as to the location of the mailboxes.

There was a great deal of discussion concerning the post office regulation. Mayor Larsen stated that the City has no jurisdiction over the post office. Everyone agreed that it would be in everyone's best interest for the City to work with the post office to determine a mutually agreeable location for any rural mailboxes that are to be installed as a result of the regulation. Blum stated that he has had several discussions with the local post office representative; she has flagged some proposed mailbox locations. Jim hoped to cluster the boxes on one side of the street whenever possible. On a final note, Mayor Larsen announced that there will be a public meeting sometime in February to discuss the future of the local post office.

Motion by Shepherd, seconded by True to approve a Class C Liquor License for Emma Jean's. Ayes: Humann, Bierbaum, Shepherd, True, Frahm. Carried.

There was no Fire Department discussion.

The City Council has been in the process of the recodification of the City's Code of Ordinances. Mayor Larsen requested any written or oral comments regarding the proposed Code of Ordinance of the City of Walnut, Iowa. There being no written or oral comments, the Mayor closed the public hearing.

Motion by Bierbaum, seconded by Humann to waive two readings and adopt on the first consideration Ordinance No. 136, AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WALNUT, IOWA. Ayes: Shepherd, True, Frahm, Bierbaum, Humann. Carried.

There was no discussion pertaining to the Walnut Housing Rehabilitation Program.

The Council members were each provided with a copy of a Wastewater Treatment Facility Inspection report. An Environmental Specialist of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources had completed a compliance sampling inspection of the Walnut wastewater treatment facility on October 23, 2012; the report was provided as a result of that inspection. Blum reported that at the time of the inspection, the dialer at the north lift station was not operating. He has since ordered a new wireless dialer, which has been installed in the lift station. As specified in the report, Jim sent the flow meter to a company to be calibrated to ensure accurate flow readings at the lagoon; the cost will amount to approximately \$1,000.00. Jim reported that the possibility still exists that the City will need to address wastewater treatment upgrades in the future. He noted that the treatment facility is currently passing all testing requirements; ammonia levels are within limits. Blum indicated that the City should continue to allocate funding in the upcoming budget for televising and cleaning sewer lines.

The Council members discussed plans for the City-owned property that is located at 308 Atlantic Street. Mayor Larsen reported that the Fire Department had conducted practice burns in the dwelling. Later that same evening, the house caught on fire and ultimately burned to the ground. The Fire Department had actually planned to burn the house sometime during the upcoming winter months, which will no longer be necessary. Larsen stated that the City men covered the remaining debris and graded and seeded the lot; the City will mow the property.

The Council members also discussed the unsightly condition of the neighboring property, which is located at 310 Atlantic Street. Mayor Larsen reported that he had already instructed Abel to send the owner of the property an abate of nuisance letter regarding the junk and trash that has been allowed to accumulate on the property. The letter instructed the owner to remove all trash and debris from the property within ten days. Mayor Larsen stated that if the trash and junk is not removed within the allotted time, he is planning to instruct the City men to clean the property, with all costs billed to the owner.

Humann reported that the house is not secured, and she questioned whether the City should send another letter to the owner mandating that the house be secured. The City has a dangerous building ordinance in the City's Code of Ordinances; the City should enlist the services of the City Attorney when considering the use of the dangerous building ordinance.

Motion by Humann, seconded by Shepherd to send an abate of nuisance letter to the owner of 310 Atlantic Street mandating that the house and outbuildings be secured, windows repaired, and skirting reattached to the trailer within ten days. Ayes: Bierbaum, Frahm, Shepherd, True, Humann. Carried.

Discussion followed regarding the FY 2013-2014 budget with the Council giving its input regarding desired budgetary items.

The decision was made to include an allocation for siren repayment to Pottawattamie County.

Abel questioned whether she should include an allocation for the proposed Streetscape Enhancement Project in the upcoming budget. The Mayor reminded the Council members that the City has already allocated \$10,000.00 for the project, in the formation of a preliminary concept, the completion of a topographic survey, and a concept of façade enhancement for two downtown buildings. Even if the project does not materialize, Mayor Larsen stated that the data from the survey will remain viable.

Abel also questioned whether the Council has any plans to continue with another phase of curb and gutter or any other projects. Mayor Larsen stated that, in his opinion, Walnut Street is too narrow where the City already completed a curb and gutter project. Larsen felt that the City should address problems where drainage issues already exist, instead of completing a curb and gutter project down the entire length of Walnut Street, for example. He stated that there is a drainage problem on Atlantic Street, specifically in the 300 block of Atlantic Street. He felt that the City-owned property at 308 Atlantic Street would be an attractive lot for building a house, if the drainage issue is first addressed. He suggested that the City address curb and gutter issues on streets other than

Walnut Street. Mayor Larsen commented that it might be possible to alleviate drainage problems in specific areas of the community without the necessity of installing a new street and new stormsewer, thus making the overall project far less expensive than the Walnut Street Curb and Gutter Project. Blum suggested foregoing sealcoating the streets for one year, dedicating that funding toward a curb and gutter project.

Frahm felt that the Streetscape Enhancement Project would protect and promote the economic vitality of the community, which he felt was a priority. True stated that the sidewalks in the Business District need to be repaired; she also commented that the Council needs to promote the business climate in the community.

The decision was made to allocate one-half of the Local Option Capital Improvements Fund on behalf of a curb and gutter project and to allocate one-half of the fund on behalf of a proposed Streetscape Enhancement Project.

Abel requested that the Council members continue to consider any additional budget allocations, which will again be discussed at the regular January Council meeting.

The proposed budget for FY 2013-2014 will be approved for publication at the February City Council meeting. The final budget, without changes from the published amount, will be approved at the March 2013 meeting.

The meeting was recessed at this time for a short break.

Relative to the possible hiring of a part-time City maintenance employee, Blum reported that Wayne Rush had injured his shoulder, which will most certainly require shoulder surgery. Jim noted that Rush could be gone from work for up to six months. Wayne has seen one doctor, and he is planning to get a second opinion from another doctor later in December. Blum stated that he will need help during the winter months, especially during snow removal operations. The job opening for a part-time City maintenance employee has been posted for more than ten days, and the City has received applications from four interested individuals. Because it is unclear when Wayne will need to be gone, when the surgery will occur, and how long he will be gone from work, it was the consensus of the Council to allow the Mayor to make a decision regarding the hiring of a part-time temporary employee when the need arises. Mayor Larsen reported that Wayne Rush is currently limited on activity. Blum said that Rush has stated that he is able to and can operate the tractor until he has shoulder surgery.

Regarding discussion of City maintenance, Blum reported that the City men had been preparing the equipment and the community for winter. They were commended by the Mayor for the great looking Christmas lights and community Christmas tree.

Relative to Mayor items and announcements, Mayor Larsen reported that City Hall will be sending letters regarding the new garbage contractor, Bohlmann & Sons Sanitation, who will be beginning collection on January 1, 2013. Larsen noted that there will be some changes in garbage collection, namely all trash and recycling for the entire community will be picked up on Friday of each week. There will no longer be staggered days for trash collection and recycling collection. Residents are to continue to place their garbage and recycling in the same locations as has been customary. If residents have been placing their trash in the alley, they should continue to do so. If they have been placing their recycling at curbside, that practice should also continue. The only real change will be that all collection for the entire community will occur on Fridays. Residents are to have all garbage and recycling out for collection by 7:00 a.m., as has also been customary.

Larsen stated that commercial businesses are free to hire any contractor for trash collection, as long as the trash is transported to the landfill site near Malvern. The Mayor clarified that all of Walnut's solid waste must be delivered to Malvern, whether the trash is commercial or residential. The City will no longer bill the landfill fee for commercial trash collection; all commercial billing will be done by the contractor.

Mayor Larsen instructed Abel to prepare a draft ordinance prohibiting the use of engine compression brakes in the City limits. Consideration of the ordinance is to appear on the agenda for the next regular City Council meeting.

Relative to Council items or announcements, it was announced that during Christmas week, all recycling will be collected on Wednesday, December 26, 2012. All residential garbage will be collected on the usual days.

There were no public items or announcements.

Motion by Bierbaum, seconded by Shepherd to pay the following bills and issue warrants for the same. Ayes: True, Humann, Frahm, Shepherd, Bierbaum. Carried.

The remainder of the meeting was spent performing an evaluation of the City employees and discussing their wages. Mayor Larsen prefaced the discussion by

informing the Council members that he had requested that Blum perform an evaluation of Wayne Rush and that Abel perform an evaluation of Shannon Wood. Both of the completed evaluations were provided to the Council members for their information. Mayor Larsen had completed evaluation forms for Blum and Abel; the completed forms were provided to the Council members for their review.

Frahm provided the Council members with an analysis of wages and benefits for Blum, Rush, Abel, and Wood. The analysis included wages, health insurance, and the self-insurance fund, including scenarios for increases in wages ranging from 1% to 3%.

The Mayor clarified that a typical overtime situation for Abel is oftentimes evening meetings after regular working hours. The City men are required to cover the Water Plant during the weekend; the City pays for two hours of overtime for both Saturday and Sunday of each week.

Trace reported that the City of Neola pays each employee for health insurance, based on quotes for individual insurance instead of purchasing a group insurance plan for all employees. According to Pete Sorenson, a Neola Councilman, Trace said that the City of Neola was able to realize a dramatic savings by switching health insurance coverage to an individual basis. Trace was not certain of the mechanics of Neola's plan; however, he felt that the idea was worth investigating. Frahm suggested that the Walnut City employees obtain a quote for health insurance coverage prior to the renewal of the City's group health insurance policy in the spring of 2013. Trace noted that it is possible that more money would be available at wage time should the City realize a savings in health insurance premiums. All of the Council members agreed that health insurance benefits need to be considered when discussing wages.

Discussion of employee health insurance is to appear on the agenda for the next regular City Council meeting.

Trace suggested that the Council consider moving Abel into more of an economic development role, with Wood taking on more of the City Clerk responsibilities. The change would probably require Shannon to work more hours. Currently, Shannon works the equivalent of two days, or sixteen hours per week, spread over three days. Abel has been free to request that Wood work more hours should the need arise. Shannon fills in when Abel is gone from the office for vacation, training, or meetings.

There was a brief discussion concerning the employees and ideas for the future.

Motion by Shepherd, seconded by Humann to increase the hourly wage for Terri Abel, Shannon Wood, Jim Blum, and Wayne Rush by 2%. Ayes: Shepherd, Frahm, Humann, Bierbaum, True. Carried.

All wage increases are typically effective on January 1 following December approval.

Current employee wages, after the increase in pay, are as follows: Terri Abel, \$40,788.80 yr., (\$19.61 hr.); Jim Blum, \$38,625.60 yr., (\$18.57 hr.); Wayne Rush, \$29,224.00 yr., (\$14.05 hr.); and Shannon Wood, \$11.44 per hour.

#18796 Terri Abel, wages	1,131.67
#18797 James Blum, wages	1,103.34
#18798 Wayne Rush, wages	875.84
#18799 Shannon Wood, wages	355.60
#18800 Cardmember Service, fuel, Christmas lights, EDR chemicals, ink	4,277.79
#18801 Walnut Merchants Association, contribution-2012 Christmas Walk	1,000.00
#18802 Terri Abel, wages	1,131.67
#18803 James Blum, wages	1,103.34
#18804 Wayne Rush, wages	875.84
#18805 Shannon Wood, wages	349.26
#18806 Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, employee insurance	5,876.06
#18807 Herb Wood, hauling; recycling fees; rent of dumpsters	3,010.00
#18808 U.S. Postmaster, billing postage	124.16
#18809 Ransom Development, interest due-development agreement	6,531.60
#18810 Terri Abel, wages	1,131.67
#18811 James Blum, wages	1,103.34
#18812 Sherry Jacobsen, wages	99.21
#18813 Margo Matthies, wages	995.22
#18814 Wayne Rush, wages	875.84
#18815 Judy Schrecengost, wages	679.22
#18816 Shannon Wood, wages	378.84
#18817 Terri Abel, wages	247.86

#18818	James Blum, wages	367.92
#18819	Wayne Rush, wages	254.34
#18820	Atlantic Motor Supply, service fire trucks & ambulance	360.25
#18821	Atlantic Pest Control, spray fire station	50.00
#18822	Avoca Building Material Center, roof repair; dump truck repair	426.49
#18823	Bob Martens, building permit fee	10.00
#18824	Cappel's, dump truck repair; bulbs; street lights-Fireman's Park	45.74
#18825	Carley Drug Co., ship samples & brochures	109.46
#18826	City of Atlantic, sewer testing	440.00
#18827	City of Walnut, water deposit to account	50.00
#18828	Counsel Office & Document, copier maintenance	118.88
#18829	Dave's Country Repair, snow plow repair	20.16
#18830	Denison Truck & Trailer Repair, dump truck repair	760.62
#18831	Dona Grooms, Treasurer fee	100.00
#18832	Electric Pump, dialer – north lift station	2,975.00
#18833	Wayne Rush, 2012 medical reimbursement	1,943.21
#18834	Fastenal Company, dump truck repair; street lights-Fireman's Park	21.84
#18835	Fire Guard, Inc., extrication equipment	4,098.30
#18836	Greve Petroleum Service, fuel	274.89
#18837	Hach Company, water testing supplies	872.15
#18838	Harlan Parts Inc., sea foam	21.06
#18839	Hawkins, Inc., water chemicals	1,600.23
#18840	Ingram Library Services, books	8.02
#18841	Iowa Rural Water Association, 2013 membership dues	200.00
#18842	IPERS, withholdings	1,680.50
#18843	James Blum, 2012 medical reimbursement	2,000.00
#18844	Jessica Newcomb, cleaning City Hall	50.00
#18845	Kasperbauer Cleaners, Inc., cleaning floor mats	50.03
#18846	Kum & Go, fuel	617.84
#18847	Lookout Books, books	273.77
#18848	Margo Matthies, supplies; DVD's; books	456.82
#18849	Medivac, ambulance mutual aid	300.00
#18850	MidAmerican Energy Co., gas & electricity	2,903.89
#18851	Mike Gettler, EMS mileage	67.71
#18852	Nelson Machine & Forge, oxygen for torch; dump truck repair	49.74
#18853	Omni Site, lift station dialer wireless service	27.22
#18854	Pottawattamie County Treasurer, landfill fees	2,915.00
#18855	Quill Corporation, supplies	2.98
#18856	Robinson Implement, Inc., disk mower repair	15.54
#18857	Sam's Club, membership fees	105.00
#18858	Shannon Wood, EMS mileage	67.71
#18859	Smart Apple Media, books	122.70
#18860	Southwest Iowa Clerks' Association, SWICAA dues	20.00
#18861	State Hygienic Lab, sewer and water testing	746.00
#18862	Terri Abel, mileage; 2012 medical reimbursement	2,085.47
#18863	U.S. Postmaster, postage	90.00
#18864	United Electric Supply Co., street lights – Fireman's Park	145.61
#18865	Verizon Wireless, cell phones	138.04
#18866	Walnut Bureau, publication	389.18
#18867	Walnut Telephone Co., phone; fax; Internet	244.47
#18868	Marye Bierbaum, 13 Council meetings	306.64
#18869	Tracy Frahm, 8 Council meetings	188.70
#18870	Kathleen Humann, 11 Council meetings	259.46
#18871	Gene Larsen, 13 Council meetings; Mayor fee	2,003.23
#18872	Susan Shepherd, 11 Council meetings	259.46
#18873	Darren Tooley, 2 Council meetings	47.17
#18874	Cheryl True, 13 Council meetings	306.64
#206E	Internal Revenue Service, Federal withholdings	774.69
#207E	Internal Revenue Service, Social Security withholdings	1,200.43
#208E	Internal Revenue Service, Medicare withholdings	334.72
#209E	Employee Benefit Systems, insurance self-funding	1,474.62
#210E	Employee Benefit Systems, insurance handling fee	77.49

#211E Rolling Hills Bank & Trust, ACH fee 10.00
#212E EMS Billing Services, Inc., ambulance billing 389.47
Summary of Receipts: General, 37,962.16; Mun. Ent., 1,261.62; Road Use Tax, 5,782.35; Trust & Agency, 15,170.46; Water, 10,721.42; Sewer, 3,671.91; Water Revenue Bond Sinking Fund, 1,650.00; Customer Water Deposit, 100.00; Local Option Capital Improvements Fund, 9,402.13; Housing Rehabilitation Project Fund, 21,149.00; TIF Fund, 12,413.15; Ransom Subfund, 1,105.76; Ambulance Trust Fund, 2.58; Fire Equipment Fund, 1,259.39; IPAIT Fire Account, .59; IPAIT Library Account, .35; EBS Account, 1,474.62; TOTAL: 123,127.49.
Meeting adjourned, 7:40 p.m.

Gene Larsen
Mayor

Terri L. Abel
City Clerk