



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2010

Mayor Alan Picha called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. on Tuesday, February 9, 2010. Committee members present at the time the meeting was called to order were: Mark Lankey, R. Dale Jones, Don Ehler, Richard Sweeney and Darrow Novy. Greg Kubarski and Rick Hanke arrived at 7:12 and 7:14 p.m. respectively.

Others present included: Administrator Brett Klein, Chief of Police Thomas Richardson, and W/S Superintendent Mike Lange.

Mayor Picha asked if this meeting received proper public notice to which City Administrator Brett Klein confirmed that the meeting did receive the proper notice.

A motion was made by Lanky and seconded by Novy to approve the January 12, 2010, regular Committee of the Whole minutes. Motion carried unanimously. This was done at the conclusion of the Safety and Welfare items as a quorum did not exist prior to the committee beginning.

**Safety and Welfare**

The Chief of Police provided his report including the activity for the month.

Administrator Klein discussed the upcoming request for reconsideration of an operator's license that will be held in closed session. However, according to the City attorney the individual may request it be held in open session and then the Council must conduct the appeal hearing in open session.

A follow-up conversation from last month's committee meeting on the Amish horse waste upon City street ensued and it was determined that dialogue with the elders would be conducted and an ordinance drafted. Jones and Klein have opened up discussions and will be meeting with the elders in the near future following their convention.

Klein discussed the possibility of obtaining grant funding and creating a new walking trail using the progress the Mt. Tabor Snowmobile Club has already made in terms of removal of brush and delineation of a clear path which flows

adjacent to the Kindred Hearts assisted care living facility. The Committee was supportive of this idea and look forward to updates.

Klein discussed that there are issues with Hillsboro Co-Op apparently circumventing the building permit process. They applied for a permit after the foundation had already been poured and only after it was brought to Klein's attention. They then assured the building inspector that no electrical or HVAC was needed, however it has been determined that there is electric and HVAC in the building. Some discussion then took place regarding the seriousness of storing fertilizer in the building and that the facility was not built to comply with the storage of chemicals. The building inspector will follow-up and provide a report at the next meeting.

The Vernon County Unit on Aging is looking for a bus drop off / pick-up point in the City for a regular bus service through Hillsboro, on a loop to LaCrosse. Several ideas were presented, but more information will be needed from Vernon County.

A complaint received in City Hall was brought up in reference to outdoor wood burning furnaces and the amount of smoke this is causing. The Committee took no action on this.

With no other updates, the Committee moved on to Improvement and Services.

### **Improvement and Services**

Administrator Klein provided an update on the public works building projects. New information received from the USDA makes it no longer a viable financial option for the City to pursue USDA funding. The City will continue with the projects utilizing designated capital funds and GO borrowing as long as the bids are competitive with the engineer's estimate.

Downtown parking was discussed and the need to enforce some sort of limit on parking in the downtown stalls. It was recommended that a 2-hour parking limit be enforced M-F from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Klein mentioned the possibility of acquiring grant monies and using designated room tax funds to build or acquire a building for housing a tourism center and to be used as the Hill Country Chamber of Commerce headquarters.

Klein discussed the next step in the airport project, which is the Environmental Impact Process petition. The Committee remained supportive of the airport improvement project.

There was discussion regarding the vacant County owned land adjacent to the cheese store. If the county will permit the cost of an environmental assessment to be deducted from the purchase price, the City would still be willing to acquire this property after a favorable environmental assessment.

The Committee discussed General Chemical's proposed resolution to the cracked alum tank, which entails the company setting up the repair, the City funding the repair and then General Chemical providing a credit to the City in product for an amount slightly more than the overall costs. The Committee was agreeable with this resolution.

Superintendent Lange discussed the DNR's sanitary survey of the City waterworks. The City received a very favorable and comprehensive report. It was determined that the City should begin planning for replacing well number 1 and make some repairs to well number 2.

Hora Implement requested the City reimburse the owner for sidewalk repairs that were done over the past two years due to cracks and shifting already. The Council deferred this matter until the spring time.

The Committee considered a citizen request to consolidate the lots at 635 and 633 Klondike. The citizen was looking for assurance that in the event he purchased the available lot, he would be able to consolidate with his current residence lot and have one larger lot with a house and a 3-stall garage. The Committee provided a preliminary approval pending the CSM submission and plan.

Klein provided an update on the WWTP upgrade including the lien from United Liquid Waste. The lien has been released and the issue between the sludge hauler and contractor has been satisfied. The issue with the screen remains pending the outcome of the Buy American waiver request submitted to the EPA.

The final item discussed was the local property tax status of several buildings owned by the private phone utility. It was determined that the City would look into this further.

With no other items or updates, the Committee business moved to Finance and Personnel.

## **Finance and Personnel**

After reviewing the monthly bills, the Committee recommended the bill approval be placed on next Monday's Council Meeting agenda.

Klein discussed the contract with the waste and recycling hauler. Klein has negotiated a very favorable contract and is recommending remaining with the current service provider, Southwest Sanitation. The Committee was in agreement.

Klein then discussed the current short term disability insurance provided and dental. It was determined that the City could obtain both benefits at a lesser cost, while improving the benefits by switching providers. The Committee agreed and advised Klein to pursue those options.

There was some discussion on the recent survey that was sent out. Klein stated that it was more cost effective to provide the return envelope with the postage as opposed to bulk mail for this one-time endeavor.

The 4<sup>th</sup> of July Committee had met earlier in the week and was hoping to solve a myriad of issues by requesting the event be held at the Firemen's Park. This item will be followed up on at next month's meeting.

Several resolutions to be acted on at next Monday's meeting were discussed, including: Hospital Buy Back resolution; 4<sup>th</sup> of July Designated Funds resolution ; and several financing / money market resolutions. The Committee had no issues with any of the proposed resolutions.

Klein then mentioned the persistent and continuing problems the Clerk's office is having with the City newspaper. It was decided this issue would be addressed following the spring elections and reorganization.

Mayor Picha discussed the possibility of reducing the size of the Council and having a referendum question placed on the ballot. All members were in agreement regarding allowing the public the chance to determine this through the referendum process. The referendum question will be considered at the month's Council meeting.

The Committee then reviewed the farm land lease bids and had some discussion regarding the bids. This item will be voted on at the Council meeting.

With no other updates, a motion was made by Sweeney and seconded by Kubarski to adjourn at 9:18 p.m. Motion carried.