

City of Decatur  
Board of Public Works & Safety Minutes  
December 5, 2023

The City of Decatur Board of Public Works and Safety members met on Tuesday, December 5, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall in Council Chambers, 172 N. Second Street, Decatur. Members present were Craig Coshow, Tyler Fullenkamp and Mayor Dan Rickord. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Phyllis Whitright and City Attorney Anne Razo.

The Clerk-Treasurer had emailed the minutes from the November 21, 2023 meeting. Fullenkamp made a motion to approve the minutes. Seconded by Coshow, the motion was adopted.

The first item on the agenda, Mayor Rickord noted a special guest was present—Canine Ivar and handler, Officer Corey Hamm. It was shared that canine Ivar was retiring after 6 years of service, with 300 drug searches and 125 arrest. Ivar was selected in February, 2018. Mayor Rickord thanked Officer Hamm for taking part in the program noting that was a full-time position as he could be called out at all hours of the day and night. Mayor Rickord also thanked the community for their support of Ivar. Officer Hamm shared that the dogs are really an asset to the Department as well as the community. Officer Hamm commented that needed arrests were often successful as the presence of the canine kept some who had been stopped from running away. Mayor Rickord thanked all the Officers present for taking time to attend this evening meeting to show their support.

Police Chief Kevin Gerber appeared before the Board and announced the resignation of Officer Blaze Brooks effective December 1, 2023. Coshow made a motion to make a matter of record Officer Brooks' letter of resignation. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted. Mayor Rickord thanked Officer Brooks for his service and wished him well in his future endeavors.

Karey Fuelling, Wastewater Superintendent appeared before the Board with an update regarding the aeration project approved at the November 21, 2023 meeting. Fuelling informed the Board members that money will be saved as City employees will be doing a great deal of the work. Also, there is a price break by ordering all items together on one shipment. The final cost is now \$63,271.00 which is a significant decrease. Utilities Auditor noted that it will be recommended before the Council to transfer funds from the Sewage Depreciation Fund to cover the costs.

Wastewater Superintendent Karey Fuelling then sought permission to hire a part-time Certified Operator with 39 years of experience as part-time on-call, as-needed employee. Verlin Butcher, who has recently retired, has agreed to be on-call, as-needed beginning in 2024. Coshow made a motion to approve hiring Verlin Butcher in 2024 as a part-time employee as an on-call, as-needed position. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Fire Chief Jeff Sheets, appeared before the Board seeking permission to start the application process for on-call position for the Fire Department as two (2) openings exist due to two (2) retirements. Fullenkamp made a motion for Chief Sheets to proceed with taking applications for the on-call positions. Seconded by Coshow, the motion was adopted. Mayor Rickord noted the on-call firefighters are the heart and soul of the Fire Department. It is great that they have jobs they can take off when needed. Jim Barker and Tim Ulman were thanked for their years of service.

Fire Chief Jeff Sheets next sought permission to start working on the specs for a new aerial truck. Issues are becoming greater with the current truck and it is desired to have the specs in place when the time comes to seek a bid for a new truck. The current aerial truck is a 1996 model. Coshow made a

motion allowing Chief Sheets to proceed with defining specs for a new aerial truck. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Utility Auditor Kevin Hackman requested permission to continue the contract with Christopher B. Burke Engineering for on-call NPDES MS4 Assistance. The cost for the professional services is not to exceed \$50,000. Hackman noted that the engineers have helped with permits, and it has been a great working relationship with them. Coshow made a motion to continue the contract with Christopher B. Burke at a cost not to exceed \$50,000. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Curt Witte, Building and Zoning Superintendent, appeared before the Board with an update regarding code enforcement issues.

The first code enforcement issue was 133 N. 8<sup>th</sup> Street that has been condemned and is unsafe and is leaning towards the other neighbor's property. Having been told by the owner he could not afford to pay for demolition of the home and planned to try to sell it, which the property went on the market on November 28, 2023. A letter was sent to the owner on Nov. 20, 2023 and was notified that December 1, 2023 was the deadline to respond, and no response was received. Witte sought permission to demolish the home and received two quotes from contractors. The low quote was from Advanced Demolition Services, LLC in the amount of \$18,961.00 and the other quote was from Luginbill Excavating, LLC in the amount of \$38,900.00. Witte informed the Board members that if the owner does sell the home, the process would start all over again. It was also noted that no home could be built on the lot due to City Code. The cost of demolition would be the responsibility of the owner and if not paid, would become a lien against the property. Coshow made a motion to accept the low quote from Advanced Demolition Services to proceed with the demolition, seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

The second code enforcement issue was 922 Harrison Street. Curt Witte, Building and Zoning Superintendent shared that the situation had been turned over to City Attorney Anne Razo who had sent a certified letter which was returned. It was noted fines should be at or near \$4,600. It was also noted the regular letter sent had not been returned so evidently someone received it. Witte recommended hiring a contractor to clean up the property. Fines are levied at \$100 a day to a maximum of \$5,000 for weeds, rubbish, and vegetation. Other violations are a dilapidated shed and vehicles not operable. If fines are not paid, a tax lien will be placed on the property. Mayor Rickord commented that these code enforcements are complaint driven and neighbors shouldn't have to see such lack of upkeep of these properties. Both Witte and the Mayor remarked that the City is unable to help the property owner if no one responds to letters and phone calls. Fullenkamp made a motion allowing Witte to proceed with hiring a contractor to clean up the property and invoicing the owner for the cost. Seconded by Coshow, the motion was adopted.

The third code enforcement issue was for 1034 Parkview Drive. Building and Zoning Supt., Witte shared that a notice had been sent giving the owner until December 1, 2023 to respond, but no response. The property is now owned by the USDA. Witte noted he would like to get a court order to demolish the property. Coshow made a motion for Witte to proceed to get a court order for the demolition of 1034 Parkview Drive. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Witte gave an update regarding the code enforcement issues at 1620 W. Madison Street that has gone on for years. Previously permission had been given to have the property cleaned up. The property has been cleaned up and items have been placed in a storage unit by a contractor the City hired. The owner has until December 21, 2023 to claim any items and if not claimed, the City will hire the contractor to pick up the items and dispose of the items. The property owner will be invoiced for the costs of the storage unit, and the cost incurred for cleaning up the property, and nuisance fees. If not paid, a tax lien will be placed on the property.

The next item on the agenda was the replacement of the heating system at the MERIT Center. Operations Manager, Jeremy Gilbert shared that the price for the items, boilers, pump, and controls, could be locked in at \$455,503.00 if the contract is signed tonight. The contract is with Dilling Group. It was noted funds will be available from the READI Grant and \$200,000 from Adams County from the purchase of a portion of land at the MERIT Center for Council on Aging. It was noted that the chillers and rooftop unit is not part of this contract. Fullenkamp made a motion to proceed with the contract with Dilling Group for replacement of the boilers, pumps, and controls, and authorized Mayor Rickord to sign the contract. Seconded by Coshow, the motion was adopted.

Included in the bid from Dilling Group was also cost for replacing the cooling system at the MERIT Center. Operations Manager Jeremy Gilbert informed the Board members that Dilling Group guaranteed any items not ordered before the new year would have a price increase. Gilbert also shared that there would be an estimated 42 weeks before the chillers would arrive. As part of the bid was also the rooftop unit that would need to be replaced. Thus, it was decided it would be better to order the chillers and the rooftop unit now, to avoid a price hike. Coshow made a motion for Gilbert to proceed with getting a contract from Dilling Group for the replacement of the chillers and rooftop unit for the December 19, 2023 meeting. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

City Attorney Anne Razo presented the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the veteran banners sponsored by the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR). The MOA includes the City's and the NSDAR responsibilities. It was shared that a donor had funded additional brackets so more banners could be raised. The banners will be hung on light posts within the downtown district on 1<sup>st</sup> Street from Jefferson to Jackson St., and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street from Jefferson to Monroe St., and Monroe Street from Monroe St. extended towards 13<sup>th</sup> St. Coshow made a motion to approve the MOA and authorized Mayor Rickord to sign the MOA. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted. The MOA will now be sent to NSDAR for their approval and signature.

There being no other business, Fullenkamp made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Coshow, the motion was adopted.

Adjournment was at 6:57 P.M.