

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
Minutes of Rossford City Council Meeting
Held August 8, 2011

The meeting was called to order by President of Council Larry Oberdorf and was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Verbosky is on vacation and Mr. Oberdorf will preside over tonight's meeting.

ROLL CALL: Mackinnon, Oberdorf, Eckel, Marquette, Hermes, Scott, and Duricek all present.

PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE REEMPLOYMENT OF DAVID JONES

Mr. Ciecka gave an update on the retirement of Mr. Jones and his interest in returning to employment and that the primary reason for retirement was due to changes in state retirement system and wanting to secure the current level of benefits. The process for rehire is a 60 day process which required a resolution be acted on and also today's public hearing. Mr. Jones has been the leader of the department since the 1990's. Audience comments were then requested. Judy Davenport, 305 Eagle Point wondered if a number of people applied for this and would Mr. Jones retain his seniority. Mr. Ciecka said he would not retain seniority, he would be considered a new hire, and that applications were not solicited as under the city charter this position is a mayoral appointment with approval of city council. Mr. Duricek said if Mr. Jones is rehired it will be as a salaried, appointed position unlike the hourly rate he was paid before thus saving the city money. John Vargo, 412 Eagle Point Rd. said his concern is for people that are unemployed or for people in the department with experience being denied the opportunity to move up. He would also like to know more about why he has to retire. Mr. Ciecka said the Ohio legislature is proposing changes to the pension system that would affect PERS and eliminate the 3% annual cost of living adjustment which overtime could be a considerable amount. Thus a number of people are retiring early in order to preserve their benefits as they are now and this is a concern of multiple public employees who are retiring to protect their future. Kay Vargo, 412 Eagle Point Rd. asked again why this position was not advertised. Mr. Ciecka explained this is an appointed position that under the city charter is not a civil service position but an appointed position that goes with the term of the mayor and that the city would not go out at this time publicly to hire someone when the position is guaranteed only until November 30, 2011. Barbara Weir, 1252 Grassy Ct. feels that there should be a cost saving and where it would come from. Mr. Ciecka and Mr. Duricek said the savings would come about from not paying overtime. Mr. Ciecka said the salary is suggested to be \$55,000 which would be a savings of \$11,000 from last year. Mr. Marquette said he has known Dave Jones to be a dedicated employee of Rossford since he was 18 years old and that his knowledge and experience is unquestioned. If there are some concerns other than those he just heard he would like to know about them. Mrs. Eckel said Mr. Jones has worked with very little and worked hard to save the city money and stretch what dollars his department is given and that you might not get that with a new hire. She feels he is a great benefit to the department and community. Mr. Mackinnon said that with other retirements coming up in the department and one employee on sick leave it is important with Mr. Jones background and experience to keep him as a valuable resource to the city. Mr. Duricek said Mr. Jones had no plan to retire and is only doing it because of potential changes to retirement benefits., He feels we need to get this position to the administrative level and that if Mr. Jones is rehired he may only have the job from September 12 to November 30. Mr. Scott said Mr. Jones brings a wealth of knowledge to the position which he needs to pass on to others in the department so someone is ready to replace him when he finally does retire. Mr. Oberdorf related his own position as someone who is considered a "double dipper" and offered that sometimes experience is important. Pat Richards, 176 Hannum, asked if Mr. Jones successor would come from the department, are we going to have two supervisors for six guys, and if this situation would not have happened would we have been changing this from an hourly to a salary position. Mr. Duricek said we hope the successor comes from the department but that we cannot say that for sure. Mr. Ciecka noted that Mr. Richards is an employee of the public works department and said that had this not come about there probably been no movement to change this from hourly to salary, however in his reading of the charter this would still have been an appointed position by the next mayor. He said there is never a guarantee that a person will be reappointed at the next mayor's four year term. He also said there will not be two supervisors.

Mr. Marquette moved and Mr. Hermes seconded the motion to close the public hearing. All ayes. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Approval of regular council meeting minutes of July 11, 2011. Mr. Scott moved and Mr. Duricek seconded the motion to approve the minutes. All ayes. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Agenda for regular council meeting of August 8, 2011 was presented to council. Mr. Hermes moved and Mr. Scott seconded the motion to approve the agenda as amended. All ayes. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

REPORT OF MAYOR AND/OR ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Ciecka said on behalf of the mayor he wanted to report that a meeting was held with the Rossford Board of Education regarding the property up for forfeiture on Bergin St. He said the city and the school board are working on a formal written agreement for maintenance cost of the property. Mr. Marquette asked who will be the titleholder on the property and Mr. Ciecka said the parcels that contained the house and garage would belong to the city and the previous parcels would be titled to the Board of Education. Mr. Marquette said the property is an eyesore and we need to cut the grass and remove debris. Mr. Ciecka said the city has already cut the grass once or twice this summer knowing we could not recoup the cost. He said one of the reasons that we did not want the state to take over was that fear that the property would not be maintained. Mr. Hermes said our objective in taking over the property was to prevent the neighborhood from eroding and wondered what the school board's objective is. Mr. Ciecka said they voiced the same objective and Mr. Hermes responded that is not in their charter or mission statement as it is in ours nor does this property enjoin any school property. Mr. Mackinnon this an easy deal and that he had personally brokered this deal some weeks back and it should not have taken this long or been this difficult. He is glad the city and schools are now talking as they should have been along. He feels we have done our constituents a disservice by not being in constant contact with probably the largest or second largest economic engine the community has and that we are married at the hip to them. He said it is embarrassing to him that we do not have an open dialogue with them on a regular basis. It is our town and our schools and it is important to him and his constituents that we are always talking to them and it is in our best interest, their best interest, and the community's best interest that we are always talking and working together and reaching out to each other in partnership since we share the same small community. Mr. Marquette said he disagrees with Mr. Mackinnon's statement. He suggested Neil look at the charters of the city and school and that the city's duty is to protect and serve the citizens of Rossford Ohio and the school's duty is to educate children. He said he read in either the Record or Sentinel that the schools stake is this was development and money. In his personal opinion they have overstepped their bounds in this and it is the city's responsibility to look out for the benefits, well-being, and safety of the citizens of Rossford. Mr. Mackinnon said according to the school officials he had met with the safety of the children was very important and that's why they wanted to take control of this. He is blaming both parties for not getting this done sooner and that the lack of communication between both parties is unacceptable and we are a better community if we are working together. Mr. Ciecka said he had received a notice for ODNR that our new flood ordinance was deemed compliant and will be forwarded to FEMA with a recommendation for acceptance. He thanked Mr. Drouard, Mr. Heban, and Mr. Fredrickson for their hard work on this. He said the Civil Service Commission had authorized the test for the public works department and that 39 applications have been received. The test will be given on August 16th. This does not mean we are necessarily going to hire anyone but we will have a list of potential hires. He has asked ODOT about the downtown streetlight project and has been told the schedule shows will be completed before Halloween. He said he has received a number of calls regarding water/sewer bills and that Mr. Huffman and Mr. Michaels are here to talk about later. Mr. Hermes asked about the status of the new financial computer system. Mr. Ciecka said that Mrs. Freeman has met with two companies and he would expect that the finance committee will have a recommendation by the next meeting. Mrs. Eckel asked if the second streetlight project had been bid yet and was told no.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

ORDINANCES

#2011-43 - AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ADMINISTRATION TO DISPOSE OF CERTAIN SURPLUS PROPERTY NOT NEEDED FOR ANY MUNICIPAL PURPOSE; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Duricek moved and Mr. Scott seconded the motion to read by title only. All ayes. Motion carried. Mr. Ciecka said the fire chief had asked permission to dispose of old gear that has no value. Mr. Marquette asked if it was usable and was told by the Chief that it was not fire ready. Mr. Scott moved and Mrs. Eckel seconded the motion to suspend with the second and third readings. Audience comments were requested and none received. Vote on the motion all ayes. Motion carried. Mr. Scott moved and Mrs. Eckel seconded the motion to declare an emergency. All ayes. Motion carried. Mr. Scott moved and Mrs. Eckel seconded the motion to adopt. All ayes. Motion carried.

#2011-44 – AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF A CONTRACT FOR THE 2011 ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mr. Duricek moved and Mrs. Eckel seconded the motion to read by title only. All ayes. Motion carried. Mr. Ciecka said that bids had been opened for roadway improvements which the engineer had estimated at \$130,000 and that eight bids had been received with a low bid of \$88,492 from Ebony Construction Co. and he would recommend acceptance. He noted that the bid does call for the restoration of the boulevard at the entrance to the Recreation Center. It has been blocked off for two weeks and thus far he has not received any comments or feedback. Mr. Hermes moved and Mr. Scott seconded the motion to suspend with the second and third readings. Audience comments were requested and John Folcik, 215 Hannum, said that during the summer season the recreation center has buses using that cut through on the boulevard. Vote on the motion all ayes. Motion carried. Mr. Hermes moved and Mrs. Eckel seconded the motion to declare an emergency. All ayes. Motion carried. Mr. Hermes moved and Mrs. Eckel seconded the motion to adopt. All ayes. Motion carried. Mr. Ciecka added that since the bid was under the estimate and under the funds set aside in capital improvements he would suggest seeking bids for the second project which we thought we did not have funds to do. Mrs. Eckel moved that we go out for bids on the Sioux Trail/Indian Ridge Project (2011 Roadway Improvements Phase 2) and Mr. Duricek seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS

#2011-07 – A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT FOR ADDITIONAL FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PROTECTION WITH WOOD COUNTY POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.

Mr. Duricek moved and Mr. Scott seconded the motion to read by title only. All ayes. Motion carried. Mr. Ciecka said this had been recommended by the Fire Chief and is an updated version of an agreement the city has been operating under for a number of years. Chief Verbosky said there are minor changes to the agreement. Mr. Ciecka said this is a voluntary agreement and it is not mandatory that we respond, it is under the discretion of the Fire Chief. Mr. Hermes moved and Mr. Scott seconded the motion to suspend with the second and third readings. Audience comments were requested and none received. Vote on the motion all ayes. Motion carried. Mr. Hermes moved and Mr. Scott seconded the motion to declare an emergency. All ayes. Motion carried. Mr. Hermes moved and Mr. Duricek seconded the motion to adopt. All ayes. Motion carried.

COMMENTS FROM NWSO REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Scott introduced Leonard Michaels, our board representative to NWSO, and Rex Huffman, legal counsel for NWSO to address concerns about the letter from the City of Toledo concerning liens on property, higher water/ sewer bills, and the notice regarding bacterial levels. Mr. Huffman first talked about the billing and the history of where Rossford was going with the City of Toledo and then explained the increase in the bill. He said that is due to the March 18th increase to the Toledo base rate of 9% on water and 3% on sewer, the increase in the surcharge charged by Toledo from 50% to 75%, a \$15 flat charge from Toledo due the consent decree to separate storm water for sanitary sewer and then finally the remainder can be attributed to higher maintenance fees collected by NWSO. He agreed that the largest share of the increase can be attributed to the City of Toledo. Mr. Huffman said the bacterial notice is an EPA requirement when some part of the system shows bacteria but that there was not a problem in Rossford. He said that unpaid water/sewer bills can be put on the tax bill every August and that in the past the City of Toledo has been slow on doing that. NWSO's experience is that people usually pay before their water/sewer gets to that point to prevent shutoff. Mrs. Eckel asked if new meters are being placed in the district and who would pay for. Mr. Huffman said yes, new meters are being put in and will be paid for by NWSO. Mr. Hermes said that yes we are paying as part of our O & M charge, it's just not a specific charge. These will allow the district to monitor usage remotely and notify a homeowner if an unexplained spike in usage occurs. Mr. Michaels said 2250 hours have been spent by the NWSO in Rossford since January at a monetary cost of \$173,543 with open orders totaling another \$115,000. The cost of the meter changeover will be \$591,000. Mr. Scott said he is impressed with the amount of work NWSO is putting in the city but he wished their trucks were a different color so people wouldn't confuse them for city trucks. He asked Mr. Michaels to provide a quarterly update. Mr. Marquette asked what the new meters entails of the homeowner and was told it may require access to the house. A private contractor will do and homeowners will be notified on a case by case basis. Mr. Duricek said the best thing has been that when you call NWSO the phone is answered.

COUNCIL REMARKS

Mr. Duricek said he did not like the comments attributed to Wendy Stramm that the citizens of Rossford should embrace the casino. He also took exception to the comment by the General Manager of the casino that he will decide whether Toledo or Rossford is their first responder. Mr. Duricek said there is no question that Toledo is the first responder as this is in Toledo. Mr. Duricek also said that there is no doubt in his mind that Rossford will see increased police activity and an increase in DUI's and where are we going to get the money that this will cost. He suggests that if we get out of TARTA that we keep that that amount of tax money and redirect for police protection. Mr. Scott says our interest in leaving TARTA is based on the window of opportunity that ends in 2012. He does not think the intent is to scuttle the services that TARTA provides. He said we are looking to see if we can do as good or better with the same amount of money that we give to TARTA. Mr. Scott said he and Mr. Oberdorf have met with Ottawa County and he has also talked to Representative Gardner and the City of Perrysburg about other avenues. Ottawa County has suggested several consulting groups and we will see if we can share with Perrysburg.

Mr. Marquette asked what the work behind the hotels along I-75 near the turnpike was about. Mr. Ciecka said it is a repair on an unstable sewer line due to a slumping embankment.

Mrs. Eckel said she attended the library end of summer event which was very nice. She said she will be scheduling a public works meeting to talk about paving projects and asked about the Labor Day fireworks. Mr. Ciecka said that the RBA has taken over the primary responsibility for the fireworks celebration which is scheduled for September 3rd.

Mr. Oberdorf asked if council saw a need for a second meeting in August or for a September Committee of the Whole meeting.

Mrs. Eckel moved and Mr. Scott seconded the motion to suspend with the August 22nd meeting. All ayes. Motion carried.

Mrs. Eckel moved and Mr. Duricek seconded the motion to suspend with the September Committee of the Whole meeting. All ayes. Motion carried.

Mr. Mackinnon thanked our constituents for coming to the meeting this evening and that their concerns and questions are duly noted. He also thanked Mr. Huffman and Mr. Michaels for their explanation of the NWSD bills. He also recognized the deaths of Mrs. Stahl and Mrs. Vrablic as pillars of the community. He said he is glad to see the city and school working and talking together. He noted the athletic booster kickoff is this Friday.

AUDIENCE REMARKS

Jim Verbosky, 302 Jennings, said he had seen Wood County Commissioner Tim Brown on WBGU voicing his opposition to the lease of the Ohio Turnpike and wondered if Rossford should pass a resolution against the proposed lease and send it to our state legislators and the governor's office.

John Folcik, 215 Hannum Ave. asked when action will be taken on Mr. Jones and was told not until the first meeting in September unless a special meeting was called.

Mr. Duricek moved and Mr. Scott seconded the motion to adjourn. All ayes. Motion carried.

William Verbosky Jr.
Mayor

Robert P. Watrol
Clerk of Council