

THE CORUNNA CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
March 3, 2014

Present: Horton, Rodriguez, Sliwa, Bennett, Hess.

Absent: Johnson.

Guests: Joe Sawyer, City Manager; Merilee Lawson, City Planner/Assessor; Gary Holzhausen, County Commissioner; Brad Breiler, VFW Commander; Dave Moore, Superintendent of Corunna Public Schools; Arnie Dunchock; Rex Menzer; Diane Johnson; Bob Buschman; Mark Green; Jodi Green; Doug Haskins; Brandon Wagner; Mrs. Robert Evans; Helen Granger, Independent.

The meeting was called to order in council chambers in the lower level of the Community Center by Mayor Kerridge at 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: Bennett moved, Sliwa seconded, to approve the minutes of the 02-18-2014 regular council meeting with the following correction: Regarding the Mack St. property, the address is to be changed from W. Mack to E. Mack on pages three and four of the minutes.

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Rodriguez, Sliwa, Bennett, Hess, Horton.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED.

AGENDA APPROVAL: Sliwa moved, Bennett seconded, to approve the agenda with the following additions: Excuse Councilperson Johnson from the March 3, 2014 Regular Council Meeting Due to a Traffic Situation and Discuss Rotary Sign Approval.

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Sliwa, Bennett, Hess, Horton, Rodriguez.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF VENDOR DISBURSEMENTS: Johnson moved, Horton seconded, to approve vendor disbursements from 02-13-2014 through 02-26-2014 as presented. (This was changed at the March 17, 2014 council meeting to Bennett moved)

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bennett, Hess, Horton, Rodriguez, Sliwa.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED.

CALL TO THE AUDIENCE: Mark Green, 106 St. Mary St., stated that he had a house fire on April 23, 2013, which resulted in a complete loss, and his family moved into their new house on December 23, 2013. He just realized that, during that time, he had been charged a sewer bill. He spoke to someone at city hall and was told that since it was not disconnected at the road, he still had to pay a sewer bill even though there was no sewer running through the line. He was told that going to council was the only way to get any relief from the bill. He stated that if he disconnects from cable, the lines would still be there, but he would not have to pay a cable bill. He asked why he had to pay a sewer bill. Bennett asked how much the bill was and Green stated that he did not have the bill with him. Sawyer asked Green if there was a well meter and Green stated, yes, on the old house that burned. Sawyer stated that there was zero usage for sewer, but there were other charges such as capital improvement and sewer improvement that would still be on the bill. Rodriguez asked if that was a standard practice and Sawyer stated yes. If a house is vacant the owner still pays for the improvement and ready to serve charges. However, this is different from a vacancy. He stated that the city is fortunate that the Greens wanted to rebuild in the same spot. Green stated that his builder was in contact with the city, but nothing was ever said about

disconnecting from the sewer. Bennett asked to get the amount owned and bring it to the next meeting. Council can consider it then. Sawyer stated that this might be a situation where there is no city policy that covers this. The current policy is either you are hooked up to the city and are charged or you are disconnected from the city. However, if you are disconnected, when you want to come back on to the city's system, you pay a tap fee, which is normally much more than just paying the bill. Green wondered if there was a check list of what you need to do in a case like this. Rodriguez stated that there are not many house fires in the city. Sawyer stated that when the Meadowview fire happened, it seemed like the city gave some relief, but that was a much longer construction period. Green asked how he would find out what council decides and Bennett stated that it should be on the next agenda. Sawyer stated that he would get Green the information.

MANGER'S REPORT: Sawyer stated that the water heater froze and split in the Community Center. Sawyer also stated that the DPW Superintendent was asking residents to run water at their homes to help keep water circulating in the system. Adjustments will be made to the utility bills if the history of the property shows an increase in use.

CONSIDER EXCUSING COUNCILPERSON JOHNSON FROM THE MARCH 3, 2014 REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING DUE TO A TRAFFIC SITUATION: Bennett moved, Sliwa seconded, to excuse Councilperson Johnson from the March 3, 2014 regular council meeting due to a traffic situation.

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Sliwa, Hess, Horton, Bennett, Rodriguez.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED.

PROCLAMATION PRESENTATIONS FOR STATE VFW TEACHER OF THE YEAR, BRANDON WAGNER; VFW PATRIOT PEN WINNER, BLAKE MCCLELLAN; AND FORMER VFW COMMANDER ROBERT E. EVANS: Mayor Kerridge presented city proclamations to Brandon Wagner, the VFW's State Teacher of the Year from Corunna Middle School, Blake McClellan, the VFW's Patriot Pen winner from Corunna Middle School, and a posthumous proclamation to past VFW commander, Robert E. Evans. The proclamation was presented to Mrs. Robert Evans.

CONSIDER RESOLUTION #030314-01, CONSUMERS ENERGY LIGHTING SERVICE CONTRACT: Consumers recently inventoried their lights in the city. Because of the new light count, which showed there were lights that Consumers was charging the city for but were no longer there, the city should be getting a \$3000-\$4000 refund check. Sawyer requested a copy of our former agreement from Consumers from 1977 to compare with the new contract and the new contract is essentially the same. Bennett moved, Sliwa seconded, to approve Resolution #030314-01, Consumers Energy lighting service contract, as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bennett, Horton, Rodriguez, Sliwa, Hess.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED.

CONSIDER RESOLUTION #030314-02, AUTHORIZATION TO MAKE CHANGES IN LIGHTING SERVICE: Sawyer stated that Consumers is trying to get new contracts in place and then start upgrading to more energy efficient fixtures. Bennett moved, Hess seconded, to approve Resolution #030314-02, authorization to make changes in lighting service, as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Rodriguez, Horton, Sliwa, Hess, Bennett.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED.

CONSIDER AMBULANCE SERVICE AGREEMENT: This is the agreement that council held a public hearing on last year to increase the ambulance assessment from \$25 to \$45 a year. Sawyer went over the minor changes he recommended in the wording to the agreement and Caledonia Township's

underpayments to the ambulance department were outlined. The city is suggesting either a catch-up option or an equity adjustment option for Caledonia Township. If Caledonia continues to pay their reduced amount, adjustments will be made to the city's assessment. Sawyer asked Kerridge and Horton if, to their knowledge, there has been an annual audit done at the ambulance department since that was a part of the ambulance agreement. Kerridge and Horton both stated they never saw one. Sawyer explained that in Corunna, the assessor charges one unit per household and a business is one unit per 10 employees. Caledonia Township just pays out of their general fund. This year, they will continue to pay \$25 per unit out of their general fund, but will also assess \$20 per unit to residents and businesses. Sawyer stated there are still some concerns with what is being paid since the city is not sure Caledonia's assessment numbers are correct. Estimates for their underpayment is as much as \$110,000. Sawyer stated that in the end he will make sure that Corunna residents will be equally assessed with Caledonia Township. Bennett moved, Hess seconded, to approve the ambulance service agreement, as presented. (At the March 17, 2014 council meeting, the following was added: Rodriguez stated that council would like it noted that they would like to be apprised of Caledonia Township making equal payments on a regular basis).

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Hess, Horton, Rodriguez, Bennett, Sliwa.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED.

DISCUSS ROTARY SIGN APPROVAL: Sawyer said that Rotary is asking for a 12" x 18" sign to commemorate their 75th anniversary, but it might end up being a little larger than that. They are planning to place the signs on the city limit signs or a stand-alone post where needed. Also, they are also looking into a sign in the park next to the tree that was planted by them. This sign would be smaller in size with some landscaping or maybe flush to the ground. If council decided that the signs needed to be removed, they would be removed. Bennett moved, Hess seconded, to allow the Corunna Rotary Club to attach their signs at various locations, at Rotary expense, to commemorate their 75th year anniversary.

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Sliwa, Bennett, Rodriguez, Hess, Horton.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED.

CALL TO AUDIENCE: Gary Holzhausen, Owosso, reported on county activity. He did not agree with the cost or the need for a new county administrator. He stated that Mr. Plowman wants to put a mileage on the ballot to help with county costs, but did not agree with it if they did not cut their costs first. Holzhausen, stated that he made a motion to the commission to cut benefits and not pay an administrator or get pay raises, and the vote was 5-2 against his motion. Bob Morehouse, Converse St., stated that the corner of Hastings and Corunna Ave. has a snow pile that you cannot see around. There is also six inches of hard packed snow in the intersection. He would like that taken care of. He called city hall about it. Doug Haskins, N. Norton, wondered what the percentage of city property is rental and in foreclosure. Sawyer stated that we have a lot of rentals, but only about 25% of actual homes are rentals. We have very few foreclosures in the city. Lawson stated that many times, the rental count for the city contains the apartment complexes which increase the totals. Haskins thought that the city should make information on government aid programs available. Sawyer went over the city hall remodeling updates and Kerridge stated that Kulhanek's labor rates will stay the same as 2008.

ROUNDTABLE:

Councilperson Hess: She gave her congratulations to those who received proclamations that evening.

Councilperson Horton: Hopes that the warm weather will come slowly so there will not be as much flooding. She felt that the bridal show did not do as well as last year, but it was still successful. Kerridge stated that the total marriages he performs were down from last year. The historical village church is also currently down on bookings.

Councilperson Sliwa: She will be attending the VFW commander's dinner. She felt council needs to support them.

Councilperson Rodriguez: Nothing to report.

Councilperson Bennett: He commended Tim Crawford for cold patching the roads the other day.

Mayor Kerridge: He has talked to Crawford about DPW employees being exposed in the cold especially during water breaks.

ADJOURN: Hess moved, Bennett seconded, to adjourn.

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bennett, Hess, Horton, Rodriguez, Sliwa.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED. Time was 8:25 p.m.

Charles Kerridge, Mayor

Nichole Cowdrey, City Clerk