

MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION OF THE CHENOA CITY COUNCIL

MEETING HELD MARCH 12, 2024

The Chenoa City Council met in regular session on March 12, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall. Mayor Shane, Commissioners Pickett, Myers, Lopeman, Hernandez, Attorney Mann and City Clerk Rhoades were in attendance. Several Boy Scouts were present and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#5646 Commissioners Pickett and Myers moved and seconded the Motion that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 27, 2024. That the bills and payrolls be allowed, and orders on the Treasurer be drawn in payment of same. The roll call vote was affirmative.

#5647 Commissioners Myers and Pickett moved and seconded the Motion to Approve to Enter into Executive Session to Discuss the Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance or Dismissal of Specific Employees of the City of Chenoa - Section 2(c)(1) and Executive Session to Discuss Litigation – Section 2(c)(11) – Pending Probable or Imminent Litigation. The roll call vote was affirmative.

#5648 Commissioners Myers and Pickett moved and seconded the Motion to Approve to Return to Open Session. The roll call vote was affirmative.

#5649 Commissioners Lopeman and Hernandez moved and seconded the Motion that the council do now adjourn. The roll call vote was affirmative.

IN OTHER BUSINESS BEFORE THE COUNCIL:

Water System Improvement Plans

Mayor Shane said he just wanted to give an update after the staff and himself met with Kevin Hannel. They added some, removed some and combined some. They decided to do a main down Crittenden instead of the alley. They will have to redo some service lines but will still be cheaper in the end. Commissioner Pickett said it was a very important and informative meeting they had last week. The total cost will be a little over 4 million dollars. The plan is to start digging a year from now. If they do the project in two different phases there will be a year in between the phases. Mayor Shane said the biggest decision to make is how much to take on at once. He said if they take on all of it it will raise the water bills about \$20 a month. The engineer has said that typically when water rates go up water usage goes down. As it is hard to determine how much water will be used to be billed for it makes it hard to determine how much exactly to raise the rates. They need to be able to show they have a plan and will be able to for the entire project in order to get grants and loans. There will be a public forum once things get more figured out. The engineers are redoing the maps based on their meeting and will get those back to the City soon. He said out of the 18 miles of water mains we have we will redo 14,000 feet with this project. If all the mains need to be replaced it will take about 5 to 25 years to do depending how aggressive they are with it.

Comprehensive Plan

Mayor Shane said the last plan that was done was in 2009. About the only thing that is still good in it is the history. The Bloomington-Normal Development Committee has said they will help us with doing this. He said if we can be lucky and get this done in the next 6 to 8 months it will really help in getting grants. He said the 2009 was really good, it is just outdated and was never followed. He would like anyone interested in helping with this to reach out to him as they could use as much help as they can get to get this done. Commissioner Myers said in order to get a federal grant we have to have an updated comprehensive plan. Mayor Shane said he would like to figure out what to do with the buildings downtown and develop the property between Route 66 and the interstate. Attorney Mann said it seems that the zoning board needs to be involved in all of that. Mayor Shane they have so much going on that he feels they need to delicate and have committees handle some of the stuff like this.

Comments from the Floor

Larry Legget asked about the status of the crumbling buildings. Mayor Shane said the owner, Jack Miller is coming Thursday to figure some things out for his building. Larry asked how to keep it from becoming the City's problem. Attorney Mann said he helps once it becomes time for the City to take possession of the building. Larry asked about the building across the street as well. It was said there is still electricity going to the buildings. Mayor Shane said he checked and was told there is no power to the Schopp building. He will need to check into the other one but there probably is as they were using the other end of that building. The building by union roofing has had people look at it and quote to take it down but everyone has backed out. It was asked if the City is liable for anything as there are barricades around these buildings. Attorney Mann said no it does not make the City liable. He also said the issue is ongoing zoning enforcement and not letting the buildings get to this point. Commissioner Lopeman said you would never sell a lot for what it will cost to take a building down. Attorney Mann said they do not want to get into property management.

Andy Jolly said he is working on closing on some ground south of town that touches the football field. He is looking at using that for a corn maze in collaboration with OB's and having a corn maze beer festival. There is something similar to this in Indiana and in 2023 they had about 4,500 people go to it. He said the property is kind of landlocked. He is not formally asking anything at this time but would like to open up the conversation to possibly using the football field as a right-of-way access to the corn maze.

Attorney's Comments

Attorney Mann said he went to an IML Attorney Conference a couple weeks ago. They did have some updates on the All Workers Act. There was an interesting section on distressed buildings which he will share with the council at some point. There was also a record retention guide as well. There are some things that the City is already doing and some things that could be changed.

Treasurer's Comments

None

Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Myers said he has been working with Tanner and the EDC and finally got his TIF application done. They are about ready to present it to the council. There were some questions from Gwen the first time and that has all been looked at and updated with this new one. He confirmed that this is for the Business District as they are not in the TIF District. He also asked for an update on 206 E Cemetery regarding the junk sitting outside. He has talked to Embry and nothing has been done.

Commissioner Pickett

None

Commissioner Hernandez

None

Commissioner Lopeman said they have been working on brush. They have been working on the salt shed and getting equipment ready for Spring. He talked with the railroad about the beaver dams and possibly getting them out of the culverts. He also asked the fire department to burn the ditch over by the pool. He will take a look at the area by FS to see what they can do about burning off that as well.

Mayor Shane

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Rhoades City Clerk