

MEETING MINUTES
Monday, March 12, 2007

Invocation was given by Pastor Gary Underwood

Present on Roll Call: Mayor Tom Meeks, Commissioners - Jack Emmons, Norman Brunson,
Mike Witters, and John Fearheiley

Also Present: City Administrator Merle Weems and City Attorney Tom Price

MAYORS COMMENTS

Mayor Meeks brought the city council meeting to order.

Mt. Carmel Mayor Tom Meeks on Monday thanked Wabash County leaders for agreeing to share raster files so that the city can utilize geographic information system (GIS) map programming. County commissioners made that decision on March 5.

According to www.gis.com/whatisgis, "GIS is a collection of computer hardware, software, and geographic data for capturing, managing, analyzing, and displaying all forms of geographically referenced information."

We will be able to link information (attributes) to location data, such as people to addresses, buildings to parcels, or streets within a network. You can then layer that information to give you a better understanding of how it all works together. You choose what layers to combine based on what questions you need to answer."

Mayor Meeks said the decision to share information will save both the county and the city some money.

IN OTHER BUSINESS

The City Council officials announced the city is working to raise funds in order to construct permanent restroom facilities at Don Liddle Park (the 4th Street Ball Park). And they've discovered a unique potential source of funding: The Hamburger Helper Co. is giving away up to \$15,000 a month to towns across the U.S. to help with projects like the one the city is proposing.

Mt. Carmel Mayor Tom Meeks described less-than-desirable conditions at the ball park, located near 4th and Ash streets, where the porta-potties are continually vandalized. Young baseball, softball and football players who use the park during their respective sports seasons — plus the fans attending — are forced to go to the local gas station etc. to use their facilities.

City Economic Development Director Brandi Stennett told the council the ball park proposal fits the criteria set forth by the Hamburger Helper Company. The city is asking for \$6,000, and Stennett said a group of volunteers have already stepped forward, willing to perform the work.

The public may be able to help the city get its funding: Residents can go online, look up the city's application, and add comments in support of the project, Brandi said.

Here are the steps;

1. Go to www.myhometownhelper.com
2. Click on "Find A Project"
3. There is a pull-down menu where you select "Illinois." Also, type "Mt. Carmel" in the text box, and click "Search."
4. Click on "Mount Carmel ball park restrooms"

At this point, residents can read the city's description of the ball park, and its request for assistance.

Also, two other local projects can be found on www.myhometownhelper.com as well: A request by District 348's Pre-K program for \$6,000 for a playground project, and a \$15,000 plea from District 348 to help with supplies, snacks and staff for after-school programs.

Residents logging on to support the Don Liddle Park proposal can weigh in on other local and area projects as well.

Mt. Carmel city officials made clear Monday night they are seeking other grant opportunities as well to hopefully upgrade the park.

A unique public apology was heard by the Mt. Carmel City Council Monday night, from a man who admitted his business venture, frankly, just didn't work out like he thought it would.

"I thought things would work differently," Michael Koonce told the mayor and city commissioners during their regular session. "I recognize that I didn't get it done."

He purchased a building that had been vacant for about 12 years at Southgate Industrial Park and, in the summer of 2004, had an independent engineer and consultant begin surveying the area to map out a route for installation of a fiber optic system.

Koonce thanked city officials for their positive support and encouragement over the past few years.

Mr. Koonce expressed interested in working with the city again, and possibly Wabash Valley College, he mentioned, to start up a small business incubator — another business idea he has discussed in the past.

That is, he said, if the city is indeed interested in some kind of arrangement. A small business incubator is essentially a physical resource center that offers tools and training to assist existing and potential businesses.

“It could be an option,” Koonce said, noting that after discussing the idea in the past, he had several people express interest in starting small businesses here.

If the city isn’t interested, Koonce said there are other ventures he would like to pursue.

But first, he said, “I felt I should offer the space for resources and training.”

Mt. Carmel city officials thanked the local man for his comments, though offered no formal decisions or discussion on them Monday night.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

COMMISSIONER JACK EMMONS - FINANCE AND SENIOR CITIZENS 02/26/07-03/12/07

. Cash Investment balance as of 02/26/07:	200,506.44
Receipts:	195,493.43
Expenditures:	116,330.70
Cash Investment Balance 03/12/07:	279,669.17
Recreation Fund:	20,459.11
Receipts:	0.00
Expenditures:	2,082.36
Balance:	18,376.75
Accounts Payable:	569.98
Garbage Fund Account beginning Balance:	87,922.21
Receipts:	15,825.83
Expenditures:	3,172.80
Balance:	100,575.24
Accounts Payable:	17,213.08
Airport Fund:	(50,470.73)
Receipts:	2,535.24
Expenditures:	3,690.24
Balance:	(51,625.73)
Accounts Receivable:	2,965.71
Accounts Payable:	2,216.91
Water Fund Account beginning Balance:	(2,709.89)
Receipts:	37,793.39
Expenditures:	25,906.06
Balance:	14,597.22
Accounts Payable:	13,522.33
Sewer Fund Account:	9,489.97
Receipts:	25,418.05
Expenditures:	25,570.40
Balance:	9,337.62
Accounts Payable:	7,393.94
Golf Course Fund:	(268,074.17)
Receipts:	9,974.00
Expenditures:	11,659.16
Balance:	(269,759.33)
Accounts Payable:	11,387.67

COMMISSIONER WITTERS - STREETS, CEMETERIES AND PARKS

Commissioner Witters reported it's 'last call' for nomination of streets and alleys residents would like to see improved in the 2007 summer maintenance program. You can read Thursday's DRR for details. The street department will start the street program three months earlier this year after running into weather problems last year. Final plans will be available at the next city council meeting. We will also be cleaning up the town for spring which will include cutting down dead trees, and pouring some sidewalks. The sidewalk replacement agreement is "the resident will pay for the concrete and the city will take care of the rest."

COMMISSIONER BRUNSON - FIRE, HEALTH & SAFETY, GARBAGE, CITY HALL AND CIVIL DEFENSE

Commissioner Brunson reported the Fire Dept. has applied for a small equipment grant that comes to 12,407. This grant will cover numerous things like body suits, etc. The Fire Dept. will be looking forward to hopefully receiving this grant.

Fire Chief Steve Partee is having surgery today and would like everyone to keep him in their prayers.

The Fire Dept. made six runs in the past two weeks.

Commissioner Brunson reported they are also adding another building down at the training complex at Southgate. We've had different cities use this facility. This money will come from the Fire Departments 2% fund not the general fund.

COMMISSIONER FEARHEILEY - WATER AND SEWER

Commissioner Fearheiley reported city staffer Mike Gidcumb — who, with Meeks, made the initial appeal to the county board for the electronic files — has been working to apply water department information to the maps, making readily accessible such details as location of water lines and the size and meters, even information on each meter's model number and installation date.

That's beneficial, Commissioner Fearheiley indicated, because water meters are generally replaced about every 10 years.

If his departments decide to utilize the programming beginning in June, it would cost about \$7,200.

He also noted he felt such mapping technology could benefit other city departments, like the fire department and street department.

City Attorney Tom Price

Reported Mr. Weems had brought it to his attention that he has had some interest expressed on our oil and gas lease on the airport. The city authorized Mr. Tom Price to write up a lease with certain restrictions, and a bid sheet to post in paper with a minimum bid.

Administrative Assistant Merle Weems

No additional report.

Inspector Don Price

No report.

City Economic Development Director Brandi Stennett

Brandi updated the city council on all that she has been involved with in the past few weeks, from proposals and requests to marketing. The city council praised Brandy for the excellent job she does as our Economic Development Director.

BUSINESS MOTIONS

A motion was made by Commissioner Emmons and seconded by Commissioner Fearheiley to approve to pay all bills bearing the proper signatures. All present voted Aye.

A motion was made by Mayor Meeks and seconded by Commissioner Brunson to accept the Minutes from the last regular meeting of the City Council. All present voted Aye.

Meeting was adjourned.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk