
**PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PEKIN, ILLINOIS,
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL
111 SOUTH CAPITOL STREET**

ON MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2015 AT 5:30 O'CLOCK P.M.

LAURIE L. BARRA * MAYOR * PRESIDING

**PRESENT: COUNCIL MEMBERS, ABEL, GILLESPIE, GOLDEN, ORRICK, HENDRICKS,
MCCABE AND BARRA**

ABSENT: NONE

The **Pledge of Allegiance** was led by Mayor Barra.

Roll was called. All members were physically present. A quorum was present.

AGENDA

Motion by Council Member Hendricks, seconded by Council Member McCabe that the **agenda be approved as presented**. On roll call vote all present voted Aye.

MINUTES

Motion by Council Member Hendricks, seconded by Council Member McCabe that the **minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of January 12, 2015 be approved as written**. On roll call vote, all present voted Aye.

**COMMUNICATIONS, PETITIONS, REPORTS
PRESENTATION WATER TANK OF THE YEAR**

The City of Pekin, Illinois American Water and Farnsworth Group were presented awards from Keith Kennett of Tnemec Company, Inc. for one of 12 finalist in 2014 Tnemec Tank of the Year Contest. Council was told the new 1.25 MG water tank on Riverway Drive was selected and would be featured in a coveted month spot in the company's annual calendar. Participants in the project, Dennis Barron, Roger Goodsman, Steve Smith and Joe Mikulecky spoke of the collaboration of all companies involved and their appreciation. The tank and unique paint scheme would be a landmark for years to come.

STAFF REPORT

City Manager Darin Girdler reported the retirement of Police Chief Greg Nelson. He recognized his service for 20 years to the department. Mayor Barra stated the Chief was instrumental in putting programs in place that decreased crime in the community and increase police visibility. She expressed appreciation for maintaining the integrity of the department. With regrets the Mayor wished the Chief continued success on all future endeavors. Chief Nelson thanked the Council for the opportunity to lead an outstanding department that delivered tremendous service to the Pekin citizens.

PUBLIC INPUT

Bob Keiser addressed the Council on figures regarding Tazewell County and Pekin's medium incomes decreases in comparison to the budget numbers in the Financial Report. He pointed out the trend in the City budget growth was not able to be met by citizens that could not afford increased taxes. He asked Council to think before each vote of the need to cut the growth.

Bob Bramham urged the Council to get involved in the budget process to make sure unnecessary spending was out.

Bill Clutts congratulated the Council on their efforts in obtaining sewer grants and favorable rate loans. He acknowledged Council's wisdom with Veterans Drive funds in removing truck traffic to maintain Court Street. He stated that Home Rule was not the difficulty in the City of Pekin but rather if a municipality were not, the State would tell you what you could do. He felt this Council serves to cause no harm to residents, something residents should be thankful for. If residents listen to other people it would discourage good people from running for office.

Larry Wolfer stated the Sewer Treatment Plant was constructed in 1939 not 1936 as reported at the previous meeting. He questioned Council why the new construction project had risen from sixty million dollars on a “Cadillac” plant that was not needed. He felt the Treasurer Financial Report would be an opportunity to learn how much had been received in loans and how much had been spent to date. Mr. Wolfer noted that \$35.00 wastewater fee was too high and would continue to increase.

Ann Witzig commented on several issues of concern and her opinions: public deserved respect for voicing their opinions; news media covered garbage dumping on City property well; spoke of her displeasure with how the Inspections Department was run; City should manage own properties before searching for individual’s violations. Mrs. Witzig suggested the Library expansion was unnecessary and money should have been used to beautify the City.

COMMUNICATIONS, PETITIONS, REPORTS

QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT Treasurer Jim Wolf presented to Council the Sixth Months Ended October 31, 2014 financial reports. Several figures and line items were highlighted from the Revenues Over Expenses, Major Revenue Sources, and the Investment Earnings Reports. Noted were:

- Revenues very comparable to budget
- Sales tax and home rule tax had been below budget for prior 10 months. Encouraging to see trend reverse
- Food & beverage taxes remain strong – a revenue source supplemented by outside residents
- Video gaming taxes continue steady increase
- Drop in general fund property taxes result from increased amounts allocated police / fire levies despite small increase in overall tax levy

Mr. Wolf answered questions from the Council. Mr. Wolf advised that the general fund previously used for garbage services was made available to cover increased expenses to normal operations since revenues were flat. No items were out of line and the report reflected regular operations. Vehicle maintenance now comes out of each department for better monitoring of expenses. He commented that fire and police pension systems were a drain on the City which the City had no control over. Those State obligations were an ominous cloud facing all municipalities. When asked the percentage the pensions were of the operations budget Mr. Wolf stated the approximate \$4 million pension payouts come from the levy but would furnish % at a later date. Council Member Hendricks asked Mr Wolf to explain further that because the City was Home Rule \$5.8 million of the revenues was available from taxes such as the 2% food and beverage. If not Home Rule the difference would need to be added to property taxes or approved by referendum of the citizens. Council Member Orrick requested that the approximate \$457,000 collected for garbage fee be added as a line item to the report. It was reported that Earnings were still struggling at 1.11% yield. The Treasurer was to report back with the 9 months ended January 31, 2015 Report at the first Council meeting in March.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE COUNCIL

Council Members expressed their gratitude for Police Chief Greg Nelson’s service to the City.

City Manager Darin Girdler advised the Council that a preliminary budget would be presented to them in late February.

An announcement was made that the Public Open House for Improvements to Court Street would be held from 5-7:00 p.m. at PCHS Boardroom on February 5, 2015. The information would be placed on Channel 22. Council Member Golden thanked the public for taking the time to speaking at the Council meetings. He asked the status of the number of utility poles on Court Street and the LiDAR mapping of streets report.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Council Member Hendricks, seconded by Council Member Orrick, that the Council move to Executive Session at 6:55 p.m. to discuss 65 ILCS 120/2 (c) (1.) Personnel. On roll call vote, all present voted Aye.

No further business to come before the Council, motion by Council Member Hendricks, seconded by Council Member McCabe that Council adjourn. Motion carried voice vote. Mayor Bara adjourned the meeting in open session.

COUNCIL ADJOURNED AT 7:10 P.M.

Sue E. McMillan
City Clerk