

## Common Council

### Special Meeting as Committee of the Whole

Thursday, May 17, 2012, 6:00 p.m.

Creekside Place, 102 Maple Street, Evansville, WI

### MINUTES

1. **Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. No quorum was present until Barb Jacobson appeared at 6:17 p.m. No business or official actions were taken until a quorum was present.
2. **Roll Call.** Members present: Mayor Sandy Decker, Alderpersons Mason Braunschweig, Jim Brooks, Floyd Hayes, Josh Manning, Jon Senn, Barbara Jacobson (6:17 p.m.), and Ben Ladick (7:13 p.m.). Absent: Cheryl Fuchs. Others present: Public Works Director Dave Wartenweiler, Finance Director/Treasurer Lisa Novinska, Police Chief Scott McElroy, Water & Light Superintendent Mark Sendelbach, Library Board Member Gwen Clendenning, Planner Ben Zellers, and EMS Director Mary Beaver (6:25 p.m.).
3. **Approval of Agenda.** After a motion and a second, the agenda was approved 6-0.
4. **Previous Minutes.** Already approved.
5. **Citizen Appearances.** None.
6. **Basics.** A-ha sheets were passed out. Brooks was appointed to be the parking lot scribe, Braunschweig was the process monitor, and Kopp was to take minutes.
7. **Report on League New Officials Workshop.** Senn and Manning reported their impressions of their attendance at the New Officials Workshop.
8. **May 8 Financial Overview.** Senn suggested that the City obtain a bond rating and noted that smaller communities are rated. Manning indicated he was impressed with the status of the City's financial situation. Mayor Decker noted that Ehlers via e-mail from City Administrator Dan Wietecha, updated the City's possible rating status. E-mail will be forwarded to department heads.
9. **Wrap-up from last Committee of the Whole meeting**
  - a. **Additions to the list of "Appreciate What Is".** Possible additions to the appreciation list are the solid financial situation of the City, including the positive fund balance. Also noted was the improvement to the City's website, the transparency in which the City operates, the improved public input provided during citizen

appearances, the electronic payment option for the Municipal Court and Water & Light, the City's more active role in advocacy for itself (WPPI an example), and Wartenweiler's active role in the League of Wisconsin Municipalities.

b. **Other comments/questions.** None.

**c. Cohesive Team Model**

- i. **Trust** - Mayor Decker began a brief discussion regarding trust and noted that people are willing to make comments and provide input because others are respectful of their opinions.
- ii. **Attention to results** – The general discussion was that the City wanted to provide top notch service desired to drive for excellence, and took pride in its infrastructure stewardship.

**10. Trust at Pivotal Moments**

- a. **Ehlers Public Finance Seminar panel on economic development.** Brooks and Mayor Decker discussed their February 3<sup>rd</sup> participation in a public finance seminar set up by Ehlers. During discussions of economic development projects, some of the participants discussed situations where members of a municipality were required to execute confidentiality agreements with developers prohibiting the officials from speaking to anyone about the project. Such shows the need to trust your front line officials but also caused concerns with the stated policy of transparency. Mayor Decker revealed that she and City Administrator Wietecha were asked to enter into such agreements three (3) years ago but nothing came of it. It was noted that the City needs development but under what circumstances? Confidentiality agreements are more common, so it will be important to determine the new City Administrator's position on this issue. It was also noted that agreeing to remain confidential might box out competitors and hurt your bargaining advantage. It was also noted that constituents may be angered by this backroom negotiating. The topic of confidentiality agreements was added to the parking lot.
- b. **Procedure for city administrator hiring.** Mayor Decker provided a report on prior procedure used to hire City Administrator Wietecha. Braunschweig elaborated. The City used a consulting firm (PAA) in 2006. The cost was \$5,000. Their current costs will probably be around \$8,000. Other consultants are more expensive. To start the process, the City, with PPA help, created a job description. PAA advertised the position, collected resumes, and analyzed the resumes to make sure that the minimum job requirements were met. PAA then made a list of top candidates and identified others as "wild cards". The Council watched videos of the

candidates and whittled the field to five (5) candidates. On a Friday, the candidates were given tours of the City and met with Department Heads. Department Head input was solicited by the Council. The candidates were interviewed on Saturday and participated in a writing exercise. Discussions were held and decision was made.

**11. Break**

**12. Constructive Conflict.** Mayor Decker rephrased this topic as Constructive Debate. There needs to be open discussions and healthy debate for all ideas to be put on the table. Participants need to be comfortable in sharing their ideas. There should be no demeaning comments regarding others' positions. People must keep an open mind and listen. Don't come to meetings with your mind made up. The focus should be on the issues, not the dynamics of the group.

**13. Commitment.** Once a decision is made, all of the members of the body need to get behind the decision and stick with it. There can be no sore losers. Don't revisit/rehash prior decisions because that is moving backwards.

**14. Accountability.** When a decision is made, the body needs to take action to follow through. The team needs to ensure implementation of the group decision. An example is that follow-up on the City's comprehensive plan has been solid. The members in attendance committed to starting work on the mandated ten (10) year review of the comprehensive plan. That issue was put in the parking lot. The final comment was that members are ultimately accountable to the citizens and the taxpayers; there is a fiduciary duty to them.

**15. Attention to results – How do we succeed?**

a. **What is top notch service.** Top notch service was defined as a provision of basic services at a high level. Timeliness, and the ability to get things done before citizens complain, is important. The City needs to continue its culture of responsiveness and needs to continue to respond to citizen complaints respectfully. City employees need to be available to the citizens, should never be satisfied, and should work to move beyond what is expected.

b. **What are components of quality of life.** This topic dovetails into the comments above but issues such as safety, peacefulness, quiet enjoyment of life, volunteer opportunities, and social events were mentioned.

c. **How are top notch service and quality of life translated to city budgeting strategy.** The use of the capital budget as a policy planning document/tool discussed. This issue was placed in the parking lot. Examples would be road replacement and the sidewalk policy. The discussion was to incorporate department heads more into the capital budget process.

## 16. Check-out

- a. **Review Cohesive Team Model.** All five (5) of the steps in model are inter-related. All are important. If the City fails in one (1), it will not receive the best results. As an example, Mayor Decker noted that a lack of trust building may have led to some dysfunction in the process to appoint a City Engineer.
  - b. **A-ha sheets.** Nothing noted.
  - c. **Parking lot.** The three (3) parking lot issues were noted and will be discussed at future council meetings.
  - d. **Next steps.** No new Committee of the Whole meetings were set. They will be established on an as needed basis. With the budget and replacement of the City Administrator coming up, there may not be an opportunity in 2012 for another such meeting.
17. **Adjourn.** A motion was made and duly seconded to adjourn at 8:02 p.m. Approved 7-0.