**OGLESBY CITY COUNCIL
MARCH 4, 2024**

A regular meeting of the Oglesby City Council was held on Monday, March 4, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 7 pm by Mayor Jason Curran.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Jason Curran, Commissioners Richard Baldridge, Gregory McDermott, Tony Stefanelli, City Clerk Becky Clinard and Attorney Pat Barry.

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Terry Eutis

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS**:

* Curran reads a letter from Oglesby resident Anthony Alvarado, who asked that his letter about his concerns about a variance request from Oglesby Storage, LLC. Alvarado was not in favor the granting the request, citing the need to follow the city’s rules.
* Dominic Rivara voiced his support for item No. 14 on the agenda, the extension of the IMEA contract. He urged the council to vote for the extension, calling if a “great thing for the city and IMEA.” He also reiterated his support for the solar farm, and urged the council to approve the letter of support so that the project could move forward.
* Angie Loebach, speaking on behalf of her father, Jim, voiced her concerns about the Oglesby Storage, LLC, requests for variances and special use permit. Loebach said she didn’t believe that a storage facility belonged in a residential area, and she asked that the city hold the developer to the standards in the land development code. Loebach said she felt the developer was asking for variances that he had not proved a hardship existed for.
* Bob Mullane also expressed his concerns about the storage facility, saying that he had two concerns: Tenants coming in and dumping unwanted items over the fence into the neighbors’ yards and the need for two entrances. He feared that the 24-hour access would result in someone unloading “large U-Hauls” in the middle of the night.

 **A MOTION WAS MADE BY** Stefanelli, **SECONDED BY** McDermott to approve the minutes from the February 20, 2024, city council meeting and executive session. **AYES:** Baldridge, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** Stefanelli, **SECONDED BY** Baldridge to approve the invoices presented for payment in the amount of $198,387.24. **AYES:** Baldridge, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**BILLS PRESENTED FOR PAYMENT: Total, $198,387.24**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** Stefanelli, **SECONDED BY** McDermott to approve the February 29, 2024, payroll in the amount of $81,851.03 **AYES:** Baldridge, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Stefanelli then told the council about his desire to send some proposed changes to the Land Development Code to the Plan Commission. He said the proposed changes would clean up some language and update building codes. Curran asked about the short-term rental provision, which Stefanelli said would also be included in their discussion. Stefanelli said he wanted the Plan Commission to go over the suggested changes and provide input before the changes come before the council for final approval.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** Stefanelli, **SECONDED BY** Baldridge to send the proposed text amendments to the Plan Commission for review and recommendations. **AYES:** Baldridge, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Discussion then turned to the recommendations from the Zoning Board of Appeals regarding Oglesby Storage, LLCs, requests for variances. Grant Griffith, the developer, asked the city to grant two variances: one to waive the requirement for trees along the north east side of his lot and the second to waive the width requirement for drive lanes. Commissioners Stefanelli and McDermott both expressed a reluctance to go against a board or commission’s recommendations. Curran noted that there “were boards for a reason,” and he, too, would unlikely vote against a recommendation unless there was an “extraordinary” reason to do so.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** Stefanelli, **SECONDED BY** Baldridge to place on file the recommendations of the Zoning Board of Appeals re: Oglesby Storage, LLC variance requests. **AYES:** Baldridge, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** Stefanelli, **SECONDED BY** Baldridge to deny the variance requests from Oglesby Storage, LLC. **AYES:** Baldridge, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The council then turned its attention to the request from Oglesby, LLC. For a special use permit. The property is currently zoned B2 which requires a special use permit for mini warehouse storage. The property is currently being used for storage.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** Stefanelli, **SECONDED BY** Baldridge to place on file the recommendations from the Plan Commission concerning the special use permit from Oglesby Storage, LLC. **AYES:** Baldridge, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** McDermott, **SECONDED By** Stefanelli, to approve the special use permit for Oglesby Storage, LLC. **AYES:** Baldridge, Eutis, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** Stefanelli, **SECONDED By** Baldridge, to approve the raffle license for the Oglesby Ambulance Association. **AYES:** Baldridge, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED**

Baldridge then asked the council to place an extension of the IMEA contract on file. The contract would extend to 2055. Baldridge explained that the longer contract allows the IMEA to keep power costs down by allowing the IMEA to enter into long-term contracts with its suppliers. Baldridge said the IMEA provides great service to the city and the last contract was signed in 1990, which runs until 2035.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** Baldridge, **SECONDED BY** McDermott to place on file the IMEA Power Sales Contract Extension agreement through 2055. **AYES:** Baldridge, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

McDermott told the council that the next action, to grant the mayor power to accept the easement agreements, is standard practice – basically cut and dried. Curran explains that the city is waiting on easements from Buzzi Unicem, and this will allow him to sign the agreements without waiting for another council meeting. The easements are time sensitive.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** McDermott, **SECONDED BY** Stefanelli, to authorize the mayor to enter in easement agreements with Buzzi Unicem for water, sewer and storm sewer near the dry bridge and wastewater and storm water related to work at the proposed wastewater treatment plant. **AYES:** Baldridge, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED**

Baldridge told the council that he’d like to pursue several grant opportunities he recently learned about after a meeting with NCICG. Baldridge said that he felt the city should take advantage of the “free money,” out there like other communities do. He mentioned the OSLAD and ITEP grants, but was most excited about the Housing Rehabilitation grant, which he noted is at least 4 years old. That grant is up to $650,000 and is used to repair and renovate homes owned by seniors, the disabled and low income to allow them to stay in their homes. He said that NCICG will make a presentation at a future council meeting which will provide additional information.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** Baldridge, **SECONDED BY** McDermott to explore OSLAD, ITEP and Housing Rehabilitation grant opportunities. **AYES:** Baldridge, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

The council then discussed the four engineering agreements with Chamlin and Associates. McDermott had told the council earlier that the agreements were necessary to have projects ready to go to be able to take advantage of grant opportunities. Curran corrected a statement he had made at the previous meeting concerning plans that were done and “on the shelf.” The Durant project was just a cost estimate, not engineered plans. He said that information changes his opinion on the need for additional shovel-ready plans.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** McDermott, **SECONDED BY** Stefanelli to approve the engineering agreements with Chamlin and Associates placed on file at the last meeting. **AYES:** Baldridge, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED**

Curran then asked the council to move forward with the IMEA Solar Farm letter of support. Baldridge told the council he had learned of a “restricted land agreement” between the city and Buzzi when the property was conveyed to the city. He said the property was originally deeded to the city for recreational use. He said he met with Jill Sapp from Buzzi and she asked that the city request written permission to use the lot for a solar farm. Baldridge said that Sapp didn’t feel it would be a problem, if the city acted quickly. Attorney Barry said he didn’t believe the request was necessary, but was willing to put it in writing. Curran said that Buzzi was a part of the conversation previously about the solar farm and the issue never came up.

Curran urged the council to take action on the letter of support and that it really didn’t “do anything” as he believe all of the other agreements would need to be updated. Barry told the council he believed the IMEA was nearing a deal with the vendor and the letter would be needed soon. Baldridge said that he had spoken with the IMEA the day before and they were okay with holding off on the letter of support. McDermott and Stefanelli voiced their support for waiting until the next council meeting to resolve the issues.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** Baldridge, **SECONDED BY** McDermott to table the letter of support for the solar farm. **AYES:** Baldridge, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** (none)

**COMMISSIONER REPORTS:**

**Tony Stefanelli, Accounts & Finance:**

* Congratulated the Saint Bede Girls Basketball team for their third place finish at state.
* Wished businessman Gary Grosenbach all the best as he retires. Stefanelli said he would be “sorely missed.”

**Gregory McDermott, Water, Streets and Sewers**

* Told the council the asbestos removal at the wastewater treatment plant has been removed.
* Told the council of a pre-construction conference on Friday (March 8, 2024) for the Clark Street and Hickory Avenue culvert replacements.

**Rich Baldridge, Parks and Public Property**

* Read a letter from Oglesby school thanking the Parks and Recs department for allowing the students to bowl at Dickinson House.

**Mayor’s Report:**

* Announced the $1,000 IMEA Scholarship contest for high school seniors.
* Mentioned the volunteer opportunities on the back of this month’s newsletter
* Talked about CASA and the need for volunteers.
* Announced that the city would have a banner program this year.
* Talked about two upcoming events hosted by the city: Bark in the Park and a laser light dance party featuring the music of Taylor Swift.
* Thanks Congresswoman Lauren Underwood and State Rep. Lance Yednock for their attendance at a meeting earlier in the day to discuss the city’s funding needs for a new waste water treatment plant. Curran said he “was very hopeful.”

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** McDermott, **SECONDED BY** Baldridge to enter into executive session at 7:47 pm to discuss *“the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees … “ 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1*). And “*litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent … “ 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11).* **AYES:** Baldridge, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Oglesby City Council resumes the regular city council meeting at 8:16 pm

**PRESENT:** Baldridge, Eutis, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran, Barry and Clinard.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** Stefanelli, **SECONDED BY** McDermott, to approve the buyback of vacation time from Ambulance Director Cathie Edens. Edens has not been able to use all of her vacation time due to staff shortages. **AYES:** Baldridge, McDermott, Stefanelli, Curran. **NAYS:** None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY** McDermott, **SECONDED BY** Stefanelli to adjourn at 8:17 p.m. **MEETING ADJOURNED.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Becky Clinard, City Clerk