

City of Watseka
201 Brianna Dr
PO Box 338
Watsoka IL. 60970

CODE ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 11, 2022
7:06 PM

PRESENT: Aldermen Garfield, Miller, Barragree, Cahoe, Marcier, Rushbrook, Alderwomen Ulfers and Musk, Mayor Allhands

GUEST: Building Inspector Eric Brandt

Alderman Garfield opened the meeting at 7:06 pm. There was no public comment. Building Inspector Eric Brandt reported on the following properties:

DNR Mitigation Grant: The next closings are January 20th for 111 W Juanita and 221 W Park Ave. Bids are out now for these 2 properties and 117 E Elm and 209 W Maple St. No money has been received for several months and the city is about at the top of the line of credit. The last payment received from the state was in June 2021. The bids will be put on the agenda for full council this month.

Façade Grant: Eric reported he has handed out a few applications but nothing else is new

Sign Ordinance: Eric stated Alderwoman Ulfers has asked several times about businesses closing and leaving their signage. He and Attorney Cainkar have looked at the current sign ordinance and it needs to be updated. The committee is ok with updating it, Eric will get with Attorney Cainkar.

2021 Building Report: Eric went over a quick review of the building permits that were issued in 2021. He stated there was no commercial permits issued in 2021. The fees were also down in 2021 compared to 2020 and 2019. Eric stated he thinks the residential permits are way to low. For a sign permit the fee is \$15.00 and would like to raise it to \$25 and the rest of the permits to at least \$50.00. The committee is ok with this they suggested he come back next month with suggested increases.

IAFSM Conference: Eric reported this is a 2-day conference in Bloomington and it will be during the Code meeting in March. It was suggested to move the March code meeting to before the full council meeting in March at 6:30.

Crime Free Rental: Eric reported they have had 3 seminars so far. 30 people at a time are invited but only 10 at a time have been showing up. Some are ok and some are not happy with the ordinance. The biggest problem seems to be the dead bolt locks that are required. A few of the Alderman stated they have been getting phone calls protesting the ordinance. Alderwoman Musk asked how a rental was different than a homeowner. Eric stated a rental is a business and in order to keep a business the property needs to be kept clean so that it doesn't attract crime. Eric reported this crime free rental is a nationwide program and lots of communities use it. It was stated the inspections should be done when the properties are empty when one tenant moves out and before another moves in. Eric stated he has been having trouble with contract sales, he is going with the rule if the sale is not recorded at the county, then it's a rental property. **Alderman Cahoe makes a motion to recommend to the Council to appoint Eric Brandt, Bill Stanley, Jeremy Douglas and Ken Baier to inspect crime free rentals.**

Alderman Garfield amends the motion to state in one of their absence's they can appoint someone to take their place. Alderman Garfield seconded. Roll call carried 9-0.

Eric gave Bill Stanley's report:

Property Clean Up: Eric passed around pictures of 543 E Walnut and 513 E Oak that need to be cleaned up. The committee told Eric to get Attorney Cainkar involved with these properties.

Ordinance Tows: 3 more towed to impound and more letters have been sent out

Municipal Court: 12 citations issued for January court, 7 for junk vehicles, 3 for failing to maintain property and 1 RV violation.

Mayor Allhands asked the committee to look over the public works proposed help wanted ad from Robinson. Alderman Garfield asked Eric to look at all the cargo containers Wal Mart still has on their property.

Alderman Garfield makes a motion to adjourn at 7:37 pm and Alderman Miller seconded. Roll call carried 9-0.

Mark Garfield, Chairman