

## Watseka City Council Meeting

August 23<sup>rd</sup> 2022

The City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor John Allhands at 7:00pm. Present were Aldermen Marcier, Cahoe, Barragree, Miller & Alderwomen Musk & Ulfers. Absent Alderman Rushbrook & Garfield

Motion was made by Ulfers, seconded by Barragree to Approve the City Council Regular Meeting Minutes of July 26<sup>th</sup> 2022. Motion passed 6-0.

Public Comment: Jodi Schuler came to the meeting tonight to discuss downtown our downtown is deteriorating we need to better our downtown, she stated we need more small businesses to come to town. Her daughter Kenzie owns a small business A Cut Above, she purchased the Exposed property for \$70,000 and it needs a roof, it has damage she cannot afford a new roof with the recent purchase of the property she has gotten 3 quotes and they are very pricey; Watseka needs to support Watseka, we need to be putting businesses in these empty buildings. Jodi then said the JC penny's building is falling apart, she heard it was supposed to become a Historic site that was a year and half ago bricks are falling off hitting the bar next to it, what is going on with the old JC Penny building, she wants Watseka to flourish.

Mike Schuler came to the meeting for the same issues, he thanked the council for what they do, he is aware of the problems on main street to, roofs are bad, building are falling apart our main street is not going away it's the heart of the community a decision needs to be made on what to do with these buildings are there funds to help with this? He heard that there is money available but to much red tape, you must attend 3 city meetings it's a long process he does not know if this is true or not, he does not have the answers, but it needs to be looked at. He hates to see the downtown deteriorate, empty buildings there are a handful of resale shops, someone needs to do something.

Julie Massey came for that same reason her, and her husband have been looking for a building they wanted to fill a shop downtown for their business, they looked a few places, but they are in bad shape need work, with the purchase of a new building they do not have money for a new roof also and all the repairs that are needed. Small businesses are struggling especially after the pandemic, what can be done to help small businesses. Julie also shared that The Flower Social wanted to be downtown but they could not find a building that did not need a lot of work so they went ahead and opened the business in a location they already own they would have loved to have been downtown. We need to keep our small businesses going,

Shelisa Schroeder came for that same reason also she was a 1981 graduate from here she moved away, she is a Nurse Practitioner she came back to Watseka because she feels like this is home. She wanted to open a small ice cream shoppe downtown to help bring people back downtown Watseka has a foundation that needs to be supportive, Shelisa was very emotional She feels the buildings should be kept up and maintained. She has attended a few meetings about the street scape project and that great but you need the small businesses downtown to keep the community going.

Mayor Allhands shared the revolving loan program with them low interest loan, the façade grants, tax abatements that are available some discussion was had on the Penny's Building it had work last Christmas it could possibly be restored and considered an historic site. Mayor also shared that they are looking into a TIF District for Downtown he reassured them that the council is looking into things, but we have a ways to go.

Lots of discussion was then had on the street scape plans for downtown that's nice and cool but that doesn't help these vacate stores or help small businesses finally Mayor shared that we needed to move on, on the agenda but thanked them all for coming and if they have any ideas of anything that might help to let him know.

#### Ordinances, Resolutions, Agreements & Proclamations

- **Ordinance #2653**-Authorizing the Purchase of Real Property Commonly Known as 327 West Park Ave. Watseka, Illinois.
- **Ordinance #2654**- Authorizing the Purchase of Real Property Commonly Known as 503 West Jackson St, Watseka, Illinois.
- **Ordinance #2655**- Authorizing the Purchase of Real Property Commonly Known as 508 N 2<sup>nd</sup> St, Watseka, Illinois.
- **Ordinance #2656**-Amending Title 8, Motor vehicles and Traffic, Chapter 4, Parking Regulations, By Adding Section 8-4-11, Parking of Certain Vehicles Prohibited, of the Watseka City Code.
- **Ordinance #2657**-Amending Title 11, Building Regulations, Chapter 11, Demolition of Buildings, of the City of Watseka Code.
- **Ordinance #2658**-Amending Title 10, Sewer and Water, Chapter 3, Sewer Use and Wastewater Pretreatment, Article D, Sewer Connection Procedures, Section 3-10D-7, Sewer Line Maintenance and Replacement, of the Watseka City Code
- **Ordinance #2659**-Approving and Accepting A dedication of Land Running Parallel and North of U.S. Route 24 Easterly From Oak Hill Road As A Public Street And Approving and Accepting A grant of Easement For Public Utilities Over, Under, Across and Along Said Public Street In the City of Watseka, Iroquois County, Illinois.
- **Resolution 2022-3**-Authorizing City of Watseka's Withdrawal from the Illinois Municipal League Risk Management Association Effective January 1, 2023.

#### Consent Agenda

- **Ordinance #2653**-Authorizing the Purchase of Real Property Commonly Known as 327 West Park Ave. Watseka, Illinois.
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- **Resolution 2022-3**-Authorizing City of Watseka’s Withdrawal from the Illinois Municipal League Risk Management Association Effective January 1, 2023.

A Motion was made by Ulfers, seconded by Barragree to set the Consent Agenda removing ordinances #2656, #2658, and Resolution 2022-3. Motion passed 6-0.

A Motion was made by Ulfers, seconded by Barragree to Accept Consent Agenda removing ordinances #2656, #2658, and Resolution 2022-3. Motion passed 6-0.

**No motions were made.** **Ordinance #2656**- Amending Title 8, Motor vehicles and Traffic, Chapter 4, Parking Regulations, By Adding Section 8-4-11, Parking of Certain Vehicles Prohibited, of the Watseka City Code. Alderwoman Ulfers shared this was an accident, and accidents happen it could have happened to anyone. Alderman Miller asked if a limit should be set, they decided to just address this issue if it arises again.

A Motion was made by Cahoe, seconded by Ulfers **Ordinance #2658**-Amending Title 10, Sewer and Water, Chapter 3, Sewer Use and Wastewater Pretreatment, Article D, Sewer Connection Procedures, Section 3-10D-7, Sewer Line Maintenance and Replacement, of the Watseka City Code. Motion passed 6-0.

Discussion was had amongst the council. A Motion was made by Miller, seconded by Musk Motion did not pass 4-2 with Alderman Marcier, Barragree, Cahoe, and Alderwoman Ulfers voting no. **Resolution 2022-3**-Authorizing City of Watseka’s Withdrawal from the Illinois Municipal League Risk Management Association Effective January 1, 2023. This gives the council the ability to shop around for better rates.

#### Standing Committee Reports

- **Finance, Legal and Audit**

A Motion was made by Cahoe, seconded by Ulfers to pay claims in the amount \$216,090.17. Motion passed 6-0.

A Motion was made by Ulfers, seconded by Marcier to Accept and Place on file the July Treasurer Report. Motion passed 6-0.

- **Public Works**

A Motion was made by Cahoe, seconded by Marcier Core and Main Automatic Meter Readings Proposal. Motion passed 6-0.

A Motion was made by Cahoe, seconded by Musk Rogers Hydrant Service 1 year agreement \$85 per meter total cost \$23,715. Motion passed 6-0.

- **Public Safety**

A Motion was made by Cahoe, seconded by Barragree Pay Differential for Lateral Hires at 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Pay Scale of FOP Contract. Motion passed 6-0.

- **Code Enforcement**

A Motion was made by Cahoe, seconded by Barragree Adopt A Lot: Robert Gray adopt: 544 & 536 N 5<sup>th</sup> St. Motion passed 6-0.

A Motion was made by Marcier, seconded by Musk Facade Grant to The Flower Social for \$5000. Motion passed 6-0.

A Motion was made by Cahoe, seconded by Marcier Lavicka Sidewalk Restoration Proposal for \$16,000. Motion passed 5-1 with Alderwoman Musk voting no.

- **Water/Wastewater Report**

None

- **Personnel Committee**

None

- **Liquor Committee**

None

#### Miscellaneous Business

-Ratify Operators Local 399 Contract-No action taken

- Ratify Laborers Local 751 Contract-No action taken

- Meeting Time Discussion- Discussion was had amongst the council. A Motion was made by Musk, seconded by Ulfers to change the meeting time from 7pm to 6:30pm year-round. Motion passed 6-0. Purchasing, Liquor, and Personnel will meet before the 6:30pm time.

Alderman Marcier asked if the council was going to have any discussion on what was said during public comment, the council feels if they start giving out money everyone will be coming and asking for funds to fix their businesses or properties, they all agreed. Some discussion was had on setting up a meeting with Fire, Police and Code about starting to enforce things to prevent this from happening going forward, if these people who are not taking care of their properties see we are enforcing things maybe that will help, and it will show those who came for public comment that the council is trying. Mayor shared he is willing to make calls to other communities to see what they do.

Keith from Robinson was also in attendance Alderman Cahoe asked him to give an update on the stop lights, Keith shared that when the road was milled/paved they damaged the detector loops, this is a state issue. He also reported they are looking to install cameras at Rt 1 and 24 west junctions, no

timeframe yet and no agreement on the price has been done it will be at least 6 months. Discussion was had on the railroad tracks on 4<sup>th</sup> street all of the equipment is there no time frame of when this will start and the 4<sup>th</sup> Street mastic they have it now it will be back on schedule to be done.

Alderwoman Ulfers reminded everyone that the Watseka Family Festival is this weekend the committee and volunteers will be out at the park all day Wednesday and Thursday if anyone wants to help.

Report from Officers-None

A Motion was made by Cahoe, seconded by Ulfers to Adjourn meeting at 8:14ppm. Motion passed 6-0.

Amanda Hibbs, City Clerk