

MINUTES OF A PUBLIC HEARING CONDUCTED IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, FOURTH FLOOR UPTOWN STATION, 11 UPTOWN CIRCLE, NORMAL, MCLEAN COUNTY, ILLINOIS – MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2013 – PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Chris Koos called the public hearing for the Proposed Property Tax Increase to order at 7:00 p.m., Monday, November 18, 2013.

2. ROLL CALL:

The Clerk called the roll with the following persons physically

PRESENT: Mayor Chris Koos and Councilmembers Sonja Reece, Jeff Fritzen, Kevin McCarthy, Scott Preston, and Chuck Scott.

ABSENT: Councilmember Cheryl Gaines (arrived at 7:05 p.m.)

3. CERTIFICATE OF PUBLICATION:

There is on file in the office of the Town Clerk a Certificate of Publication from The Normalite dated November 7, 2013.

4. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Mayor Koos announced he would receive comments from the public on the proposed Property Tax Increase for the Town of Normal.

Mayor Koos called for comments from the public; Mr. Kevin Coakley, 1402 Lismore Lane, Normal, Illinois, addressed the Council, showing the Council a picture of two Town employees painting fire hydrants. Mr. Coakley indicated perhaps the Town could eliminate the need for a real estate tax increase by eliminating some services, including the painting of fire hydrants. Mr. Coakley indicated he believed there was some “fat” that could be cut from the Town’s budget.

Mr. Jim Woodward, 106 Veronica Way, Normal, Illinois, indicated he believed the Town needs to “scale back” on some services and a tax increase would put an additional burden on the taxpayers.

Mr. Joseph Zompetti, 813 ½ W. College Avenue, Normal, Illinois, indicated Town Staff should look for other revenue streams to eliminate the need for a real estate tax increase. Mr. Zompetti further indicated certain cutbacks could be made, for example expressed concern with a line item in the budget that was for employee gifts.

Mr. Ron Ulmer, 1114 N. Linden Street, Normal, Illinois, indicated the Town could solve the budget concerns with no tax increases or cuts. Mr. Ulmer expressed concern with “free money” from either Springfield or Washington, DC, indicating these types of programs should be terminated. Mr. Ulmer also suggested an increase to the Liquor Tax, as well as the Food and Beverage Tax on Alcoholic Beverages, as well as a greater restraint on expanding Tax Increment Financing Districts.

Ms. Rhonda Coyle, 2013 Haverhill CC Drive, Normal, Illinois, expressed concern with some of the projects currently being considered or recently being funded by the Town, such as an additional \$500,000 for the Uptown Development, 3 new fire stations, a new library, Broadview Mansion, the paid study to locate a grocery in Uptown Normal, \$500,000 to Illinois State University for the stadium sign, weekly curbside recycling, the demolition of Underwood House, and the construction of soccer fields to name a few.

Mr. Ed Kaufman, 2252 Emory Lane, Normal, Illinois, expressed concern with the impact this tax increase would have on senior citizens on a fixed income.

Mr. Bob Broad, 306 W. Virginia, Normal, Illinois, thanked the Council for their service to the Town. Mr. Broad agreed with many of the comments made during the Public Hearing that the Town should be careful with spending and revenues; however, he has full confidence in the Council and the decisions they make. Mr. Broad further indicated he believed the Town should do what is required to meet the requirements of the state-mandated pension plans.

Mayor Koos issued the second call for comments from the public.

Mr. Dean Baird, 1703 Gregory, Normal, Illinois, expressed concern that if every taxing body makes small increases, this would culminate in a large real estate tax increase. Mr. Baird questioned referring to Normal as “exceptional.”

Mr. John Barnes, 3221 Turquoise Way, Normal, Illinois, suggested several ideas to save the Town money: outsource several jobs currently being performed by Town employees, which would in turn reduce the need for supervisors, paid Town benefits, and quite possibly reduce the Town’s Human Resources Department; employees should have to live in the Town and if not, pay a non-resident fee on their salary; and get pensions under control. Mr. Barnes further indicated he did not agree with the local contractor preference in the Town’s purchasing policy.

Mr. Carl Teichman, 1103 Kings Mill Road, Normal, Illinois, sent an e-mail to Mayor Koos, requesting it be read at the Public Hearing. Town Clerk Wendy Briggs read the following e-mail: “I can not attend the meeting tonight, but wanted to convey my support for the action of the Council to increase property taxes in Normal. The Town needs to operate from a position of strength and this small increase will allow an already lean operation to provide needed basic services to the citizens of Normal. I do not mind paying a bit more each month to maintain the momentum from the Uptown projects.”

Ms. Sharon Knight, 2 Ridgemont Road, Normal, Illinois, suggested the Town save money in just meeting the required mandatory 90 percent funding for the fire and police pensions by 2040, rather than attempting to fund these pensions 100 percent.

Mayor Koos issued the final call for comments from the public; there were none.

5. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION:

Councilmember Fritzen moved, seconded by Councilmember McCarthy, the Public Hearing be adjourned.

AYES: Reece, Fritzen, McCarthy, Preston, Scott, Gaines, Koos.
NAYS: None.

Mayor Koos adjourned the Public Hearing on the Proposed Property Tax Increase at 7:45 p.m., Monday, November 18, 2013.

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE NORMAL TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, NORMAL CITY HALL, FOURTH FLOOR UPTOWN STATION, 11 UPTOWN CIRCLE, NORMAL, MCLEAN COUNTY, ILLINOIS – MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2013.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Chris Koos called the regular meeting of the Normal Town Council to order at 7:46 p.m., Monday, November 18, 2013.

2. ROLL CALL:

The Clerk called the roll with the following persons physically

PRESENT: Mayor Chris Koos and Councilmembers Sonja Reece, Jeff Fritzen, Kevin McCarthy, Scott Preston, Chuck Scott, and Cheryl Gaines. Also present were City Manager Mark Peterson, Deputy City Manager Pamela Reece, Corporation Counsel Steve Mahrt, and Town Clerk Wendy Briggs.

ABSENT: None.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Koos led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

4. OMNIBUS VOTE AGENDA:

Mayor Koos excused himself from voting on any expenses he may have incurred while performing his Mayoral duties.

Councilmember Reece excused herself from voting on any bills submitted by Advocate BroMenn Medical Center and from any expenses she may have incurred while performing Council duties.

Items C and L were removed from the Omnibus Vote Agenda.

MOTION:

Councilmember Fritzen moved, seconded by Councilmember Scott, the Council Approve the Omnibus Vote Agenda.

AYES: Reece, Fritzen, McCarthy, Preston, Scott, Gaines, Koos.

NAYS: None.

Motion declared carried.

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF NOVEMBER 4, 2013: Omnibus Vote.

B. APPROVAL OF TOWN OF NORMAL EXPENDITURES FOR PAYMENT AS OF NOVEMBER 13, 2013: Omnibus Vote.

- D. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN EXTENSION AND RATE ADJUSTMENT TO A CONTRACT WITH LAESCH ELECTRIC, INC., OF TOWANDA, IL, FOR TRAFFIC CONTROL EQUIPMENT AND HIGHWAY LIGHTING MAINTENANCE: Resolution No. 4939: Omnibus Vote.
 - E. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AMENDMENT NUMBER ONE TO THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR THE PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS, SOUTH BOARDING PLATFORM, AND IMPROVEMENT TO THE OLD AMTRAK STATION: Resolution No. 4940: Omnibus Vote.
 - F. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A LICENSE AGREEMENT WITH CONNECT TRANSIT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PASSENGER INFORMATION DISPLAY SYSTEM (PIDS) IN THE UPTOWN STATION: Resolution No. 4941: Omnibus Vote.
 - G. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A LICENSE AGREEMENT WITH CONNECT TRANSIT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PASSENGER INFORMATION DISPLAY SYSTEM (PIDS) IN THE UPTOWN STATION: Resolution No. 4942: Omnibus Vote.
 - H. RESOLUTION CONDITIONALLY AND PARTIALLY APPROVING A FINAL PLAT WITHIN ONE AND ONE-HALF MILES OF CORPORATE LIMITS BY EXPEDITED PROCESS – HARTLEY SUBDIVISION (OLD PEORIA ROAD): Resolution No. 4943: Omnibus Vote.
 - I. RESOLUTION ACCEPTING AN EASEMENT FOR PUBLIC WATER MAIN AND RELATED UTILITIES – TRAILS ON SUNSET LAKE: Resolution No. 4944: Omnibus Vote.
 - J. RESOLUTION CONDITIONALLY AND PARTIALLY APPROVING AN AMENDED FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR LOT 3 IN THE RESUBDIVISION OF LOT 3 IN THE OMNI SPORTS PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (1531 FT. JESSE ROAD): Resolution No. 4945: Omnibus Vote.
 - K. ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 18 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE (PERSONNEL): Ordinance No. 5514: Omnibus Vote.
 - M. ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 11.4.3-3, 11.4.3-7, 11.4.4-1 AND 11.4.4-2 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE TOWN OF NORMAL – ADOPTING THE 2012 INTERNATIONAL ENERGY CONSERVATION CODE: Ordinance No. 5515: Omnibus Vote.
5. ITEMS REMOVED FROM OMNIBUS VOTE AGENDA:
- C. MOTION TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL STREET RESURFACING PRIORITY LIST FOR FY 2013-14:
MOTION:

Councilmember Fritzen moved, seconded by Councilmember Scott, the Council Approve the Annual Street Resurfacing Priority List for FY 2013-14.

Councilmember Fritzen explained a yearly list is prepared, setting forth the priorities for street repair, as this is a large yearly expenditure for the Town. Councilmember Fritzen further explained this is an on-going process, with the Engineering Department constantly evaluating the condition of the asphalt streets in Normal.

AYES: Fritzen, McCarthy, Preston, Scott, Gaines, Reece, Koos.

NAYS: None.

Motion declared carried.

L. ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 7.20-11 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE TOWN OF NORMAL – ALTERING DATE OF REQUIREMENT OF OVERHEAD SEWERS: Ordinance No. 5516:

MOTION:

Councilmember Reece moved, seconded by Councilmember McCarthy, the Council Approve an Ordinance Amending Section 7.20-11 of the Municipal Code of the Town of Normal – Altering the Date of Requirement of Overhead Sewers.

Councilmember Reece explained the background of this Ordinance, indicating the use of overhead sewers would alleviate the problem of sewer back-up in basements after severe rains. Councilmember Reece indicated she understood the current struggling housing market and the request to postpone the requirement on new construction for another year, but expressed concern with this action. Building Commissioner Greg Troemel indicated three of the new subdivisions in Normal require the overhead sewers as part of their annexation agreement. Mr. Troemel indicated the majority of newly constructed homes are being built with overhead sewers.

AYES: McCarthy, Preston, Scott, Gaines, Reece, Fritzen, Koos.

NAYS: None.

Motion declared carried.

GENERAL ORDERS

6. MOTION TO AUTHORIZE AN AMENDMENT TO THE FY 2013-14 SOCIAL SECURITY AND ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL RETIREMENT (IMRF) BUDGETS FOR THE GENERAL FUND:

MOTION:

Councilmember Reece moved, seconded by Councilmember Preston, the Council Authorize an Amendment to the FY 2013-14 Social Security and Illinois Municipal Retirement (IMRF) Budgets for the General Fund.

City Manager Mark Peterson explained this item is a technical requirement, as these numbers need to match the proposed tax levy.

AYES: Preston, Scott, Gaines, Reece, Fritzen, McCarthy, Koos.

NAYS: None.

Motion declared carried.

7. ORDINANCE APPROVING THE 2013 PROPERTY TAX LEVY: Ordinance No. 5517:

MOTION:

Councilmember McCarthy moved, seconded by Councilmember Scott, the Council Authorize an Amendment to the FY 2013-14 Social Security and Illinois Municipal Retirement (IMRF) Budgets for the General Fund.

Councilmember Fritzen reiterated the proposed increase is only on the Town's portion of the tax bill, not the overall tax bill. Councilmember Fritzen stated a person's property is the greatest personal investment a person makes and he feels the Council should do everything they can to protect that investment. Councilmember Fritzen further related taxes go up with increased assessed values, not simply tax increases. Councilmember Fritzen indicated the Council continually discusses expenditures, not just once a year.

Councilmember Gaines echoed several of the comments made by Councilmember Fritzen, further stating she believed Normal is indeed a "special community" and the Council works hard to keep Normal as a municipality where people want to live and businesses want to locate in and thrive.

Councilmember Reece indicated she appreciated the concerns and anxieties expressed during the Public Hearing. Councilmember Reece indicated the Council strives to make decisions that are "best" for the entire community, the overall picture.

Councilmembers Scott, Preston, and McCarthy all also thanked the citizens who spoke at the Public Hearing, as well as the many e-mails sent to the Council over the past few weeks concerning this item. Councilmember Scott indicated he had faith in the City Manager and the Finance Director and reassured the citizens that they would submit a viable proposed Budget to the Council in January.

Councilmember Preston indicated he had been torn on this issue from the start and indicated there was a value in being in a community that people can afford to live in. Councilmembers Preston and McCarthy further indicated they were looking forward to the Budget worksession that will be held in January.

City Manager Mark Peterson explained some "misconceptions" raised during the public hearing and clarified the Town's intention to be fully funded in the Fire and Police Pensions by 2040.

AYES: Scott, Gaines, Reece, Fritzen, McCarthy, Preston, Koos.

NAYS: None.

Motion declared carried.

8. ORDINANCES AUTHORIZING THE ABATEMENT OF 2013 PROPERTY TAXES FOR DEBT SERVICE: Ordinance Nos. 5518, 5519, 5520, 5521, 5522, 5523, 5524, 5525, and 5526:

MOTION:

Councilmember Fritzen moved, seconded by Councilmember McCarthy, the Council Approve the Ordinances Authorizing the Abatement of 2013 Property Taxes for Debt Service.

AYES: Gaines, Reece, Fritzen, McCarthy, Preston, Scott, Koos.

NAYS: None.

Motion declared carried.

CLERK'S NOTE: The following Ordinances were Approved:

Ordinance No. 5518:

An Ordinance Abating the Levy of Taxes for General Obligation Corporate Purpose Bonds, Series of 2005, for the Town of Normal, McLean County, Illinois, in the Principal Amount of Ten Million Dollars as Authorized by the Town Council on May 16, 2005, by Ordinance No. 5008.

Ordinance No. 5519:

An Ordinance Abating the Levy of Taxes for General Obligation Corporate Purpose Bonds, Series of 2006, for the Town of Normal, McLean County, Illinois, in the Principal Amount of Ten Million Dollars as Authorized by the Town Council on March 20, 2006, by Ordinance No. 5062.

Ordinance No. 5520:

An Ordinance Abating the Levy of Taxes for General Obligation Corporate Purpose Bonds, Series of 2007, for the Town of Normal, McLean County, Illinois, in the Principal Amount of Twenty-Four Million, Seven Hundred Thousand Dollars as Authorized by the Town Council on February 19, 2007, by Ordinance No. 5118.

Ordinance No. 5521:

An Ordinance Abating the Levy of Taxes for General Obligation Corporate Purpose Bonds, Series of 2008, for the Town of Normal, McLean County, Illinois, in the Principal Amount of Ten Million Dollars as Authorized by the Town Council on August, 4, 2008, by Ordinance No. 5207.

Ordinance No. 5522:

An Ordinance Abating the Levy of Taxes for General Obligation Refunding Bonds, Series of 2009, for the Town of Normal, McLean County, Illinois, as Authorized by the Town Council on July 6, 2009, by Ordinance No. 5276.

Ordinance No. 5523:

An Ordinance Abating the Levy of Taxes for Taxable General Obligation Bonds, Series 2009A (Build America) for the Town of Normal, McLean County, Illinois, in the Principal Amount of Five Million, Nine Hundred Thousand Dollars as Authorized by the Town Council on July 6, 2009, by Ordinance No. 5275.

Ordinance No. 5524:

An Ordinance Abating the Levy of Taxes for Taxable General Obligation Bonds Series 2010(A) (Recovery Zone Bonds) for the Town of Normal, McLean County, Illinois, in the Principal Amount of One Million Eight Hundred Fifty-Five Thousand Dollars as Authorized by the Town Council on November 15, 2010, by Ordinance No. 5361.

Ordinance No. 5525:

An Ordinance Abating the Levy of Taxes for General Obligation Refunding Bonds Series of 2012 for the Town of Normal, McLean County, Illinois, as Authorized by the Town Council on September 17, 2012, by Ordinance No. 5455.

Ordinance No. 5526:

An Ordinance Abating the Levy of Taxes for General Obligation Refunding Bonds Series of 2013 for the Town of Normal, McLean County, Illinois, as Authorized by the Town Council on July 15, 2013, by Ordinance No. 5505.

Mayor Koos announced Items 9 and 10 had been withdrawn for consideration at this meeting.

9. ORDINANCE APPROVING THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE TOWN OF NORMAL/UPTOWN CIRCLE DEVELOPMENT, INC., REDEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE TOWN OF NORMAL, ILLINOIS, AND UPTOWN CIRCLE DEVELOPMENT, INC., IN CONNECTION WITH THE ONE UPTOWN CIRCLE PROJECT:
10. ORDINANCE VACATING CERTAIN PUBLIC WAYS, APPROVING A FINAL PLAT AND ACCEPTING DEDICATION OF PROPERTY FOR THE UPTOWN CIRCLE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT – NORMAL UPTOWN I RESUBDIVISION:

NEW BUSINESS

11. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF THE BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL AREA AND VARIOUS OTHER LOCAL PROPERTY TAXING ENTITIES PERTAINING TO AN ABATEMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAM TO ASSIST WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Resolution No. 4946:

MOTION:

Councilmember Reece moved, seconded by Councilmember Scott, the Council Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the Execution of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Economic Development Council of the Bloomington-Normal Area and Various Other Local Property Taxing Entities Pertaining to an Abatement Incentive Program to Assist with Economic Development.

AYES: Reece, Fritzen, McCarthy, Preston, Scott, Gaines, Koos.

NAYS: None.

Motion declared carried.

12. CONCERNS:

1. PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR:

City Manager Mark Peterson acknowledged Public Works Director Robin Weaver will be retiring at the end of this week and thanked her for her service to the Town.

2. CLEAN-UP WORK:

City Manager Mark Peterson recognized the tremendous job the Town operating departments have been doing in response to the storms that came through Central Illinois on Sunday.

13. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Koos called for a Motion to Adjourn.

MOTION:

Councilmember McCarthy moved, seconded by Councilmember Gaines, the Regular Meeting of the Normal Town Council be Adjourned.

AYES: Fritzen, McCarthy, Preston, Scott, Gaines, Reece, Koos.

NAYS: None.

Motion declared carried.

Mayor Chris Koos adjourned the regular meeting of the Normal Town Council at 8:43 p.m., Monday, November 18, 2013.