

SWEETSER TOWN COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes
February 22, 2018

I. Call to Order/Roll Call of Board Members Present/Pledge of Allegiance/Prayer

The regular meeting of the Sweetser Town Council was called to order at 7:00pm on February 8, 2018 at the Sweetser Town Hall by Council President Rich Gamble.

Roll Call:

Rich Gamble – Aye
Chuck Briede - Aye
Steve Kelley-Aye
Matt Stewart-Aye
Dave Fox-Aye

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Rich Gamble. Prayer was given by Matt Stewart.

II. Review and Approval of Minutes / Review and Approval of Bill

Steve Kelley made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2018 meeting and Matt Stewart seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Dave Fox-Aye
Matt Stewart-Aye
Rich Gamble-Aye
Chuck Briede-Aye
Steve Kelley-Aye

Steve Kelley made a motion to accept the bills as written and Chuck Briede seconded the motion.

Dave Fox-Aye
Matt Stewart-Aye
Rich Gamble-Aye
Chuck Briede-Aye
Steve Kelley-Aye

III. Public Forum – Nothing to report.

IV. Tim Eckerle of The Grant Count Economic Growth Council introduced an initiative called “Project Front Door”. They are proposing a welcome package for new residents of Grant County. The package would contain a magnet and other informational items for each new resident. The particular items could be tailored by each community. Each community would also have a website with links to information about various activities and organizations within the community and Grant County. The Marion General Hospital link would be common to all site. The community sites could also be reached through the “What’s Happening in Grant County: site. The overarching goal of the initiative is give generate a positive narrative about our local communities and Grant County in general.

A second initiative is named “The Charm Grant”. This grant is intended to encourage commercial and not-for-profit organizations with Grant County to make improvements to the appearance of their structures, storefronts, etc., and would include 4 quarterly grants of \$1,000 each. The grants would be awarded after the improvements were made. Again the effort is geared towards generating a positive narrative about Grant County.

V. Police Department – Bill reported that he is going to need a new printer for his vehicle. He also reported that new uniforms would be needed in the near future as it had been some years since they had purchased uniforms and the current ones were beginning to wear.

Wastewater & Town Maintenance – After the frequent and heavy rains, Devin reported there is major infiltration in the sewer line from Peterson Drive to the point where it crosses over Rt. 18 and flows south to the Short Street station. Also have issues at the Case lift station. Heavy flow was seen on Wes Way and Meridian Street. Devin reported that they introduced dye into the systems and he was happy to port that the stormwater and sewer water were not running together. Devin also reported that Sweetser's St. Rt. 18 sidewalk project was approved. The town is eligible for an 80/20 reimbursable grant of up to \$300,000 for sidewalks. He will supply more information regarding this grant.

Rich mentioned that there had been a report of large potholes near Liberty Baptist and Devin said that a section of that will be paved during the spring paving project.

- VI. WWTP –There was a conference call with Triad earlier in the week to discuss the mold issue at the plant; Triad submitted in writing their recommendations for mold remediation at the wastewater plant. The Town has received three estimates for the same. Mitch of Fleis & Vandenbrink made some observations and suggestions. One of the issues at the plant as it is currently configured is the combination of low air temperatures and high moisture which is conducive to generating condensation and subsequently mold. One possibility would be to heat the facility. An alternative is to replace any wood surfaces with smooth surfaces impermeable to mold so that mold and other substances could be sprayed off. Devin & Ted suggested that we need a ventilation fix first and then mold remediation. The pipes in the plant were not designed for cold temperatures. The current ventilation system reduces temperatures in the plant and makes the pipes susceptible to freezing. Improved ventilation would require a heated air return. Or alternatively, the pipes would need to be buried. It was also noted that we should be venting the gases from the building every 5 minutes. Chuck suggested discussing the findings with Triad and see if that would changes their recommendations. Matt agreed that the main issue is air flow and we should attend to that first. He suggested we engage Design Air to study the situation and provide recommendations. There was back-and-forth discussion among council, Devin, and Ted Abdon regarding the situation that resulted in the following consensus:

- The Town needs to try and hold Triad responsible for the design error and the subsequent issues resulting from that error
- Ventilation need fixed before damage or mold problem can be fixed
- There is a sense of urgency to address the issue now
- We could have a study done and take the resulting recommendations to Triad and see what their response is

Matt Stewart made a motion to commission Design Air to perform an air study for a cost not to exceed \$2,450 and Dave Fox seconded the motion.

Dave Fox-Aye

Matt Stewart-Aye

Rich Gamble-Aye

Chuck Briede-Aye

Steve Kelley-Aye

Rich ask Devin if he would see if Design Air could provide this within two weeks.

- VII. Other business - Rich reported that he had been in contact with Randy of MEGA Systems and that Randy may be resurrecting the program. Chuck has solicited and received quotes from for software solutions from Govt. Accounting Solutions and Frey Municipal Software. We have also received an updated quote from Boyce Systems (Keystone). Chuck reported that our 2018 budget has been certified and we have some significant financial issues. For one, due to some issues with our budget filing, our approved budget is approximately \$40,000 less than 2017. In addition, we are receiving the maximum tax levy , but the amount of PILOT funds we have been able to transfer from the Wastewater Operating Fund to the General Fund have been significantly less than what had been estimated over the past few years.

Rich and Chuck reviewed in detail and suggested the most we could reduce disbursements in the General Fund is approximately \$15,000; there is very little discretionary spending at the WWTP that could be cut. So the takeaway is that we need a rate increase. The last increase was 4 years ago when we built the waste water plant. At that time Steve Brock recommended that rate increases be implemented every 3+5 years. Chuck contacted Steve Brock and his firm could perform a rate study for The Town of Sweetser for up to \$5,000. There was a suggestion that perhaps the Town could "do it themselves", but it was pointed out that such a course could increase a possible challenge to the rates. Litigation could happen and a rate study would then need to be done to prove the rate.

Chuck Briede made a motion to engage Steve Brock's firm to perform a rate study at a cost not to exceed \$5,000 and Steve Kelley seconded the motion.

Dave Fox-Aye
Matt Stewart-No
Rich Gamble-Aye
Chuck Briede-Aye
Steve Kelley-Aye

In other business, Steve reported that he had attended the ECI District Board Planning Meeting. He also reported that in speaking with INDOT they were still working on detour plans for the State Road 18 bridge project through Sweetser. Steve also mentioned that that the USDA may have funds that could be accessed for repairs of the treatment plant.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:44pm.

Meeting Minutes taken by:
John Potter / Clerk Treasurer

Rich P. Gamble

Chuck V. Briede

Steve Kelley

Matthew C Stewart

RDOF

