

Minutes of Sweetser Town Council

May 14, 2020

Held via ZOOM

- I. The meeting was called to order by Dave Fox at 7:00 pm; the roll was called as follows:

Rich Gamble—present
Matt Stewart—present
Travis LeMaster—present
Dave Fox—present
Chuck Briede—present

The roll was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer offered by Matt Stewart

II. **Minutes**

Chuck Briede made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 24, 2020 meeting. Dave Fox seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Rich Gamble-Aye
Matt Stewart-Aye
Travis LeMaster-Aye
Dave Fox-Aye
Chuck Briede-Aye

III. **Bills**

After discussion, Travis LeMaster made a motion to approve the paying of the bills as written. Chuck Briede seconded the motion.

Rich Gamble-Aye
Matt Stewart-Aye
Travis LeMaster-Aye
Dave Fox-Aye
Chuck Briede-Aye

After discussion, Chuck Briede made a motion to approve the paying of the bills as written. Travis LeMaster seconded the motion.

Rich Gamble-Aye
Matt Stewart-Aye
Travis LeMaster-Aye
Dave Fox-Aye
Chuck Briede-Aye

IV. **Public Forum**

No comments.

V. **Department Reports**

Police Department Dept.—Superintendent Marshal Ryan Hornback was present at the meeting.

- Camera Security system has been installed and is operational. The breadth of the view is somewhat wider than optimal. The back camera is losing signal or at times has a poor signal. Ryan pointed the antenna down towards the window in hopes that might be the issue. Chuck was at town hall for the meeting and checked it. He said all four cameras appear to be working. Ryan related that he and Josh Miller has spent 7 hours installing the system and that Josh had done a professional job and contributed some good ideas. Ryan recommended that the town pay Josh Miller \$300 for the installation.

Chuck Briede made a motion to approve paying Joshua Miller \$300 for installing the security camera system. Matt Stewart seconded the motion.

Rich Gamble-Aye
Matt Stewart-Aye
Travis LeMaster-Aye
Dave Fox-Aye
Chuck Briede-Aye

- Dave said that Matt had mentioned that the town needs a new police cruiser and some stop sticks. Ryan confirmed and said the stock sticks would be easy to get. However, as far as Dodge/Chrysler products there are no Chargers available. There are some Durangos, which would be the least expensive option in the market for police vehicles. Ryan said that he is being told by others that the best option is a Chevrolet Tahoe. He has not checked on the pricing or availability of the Tahoe. Dave suggested that Ryan gather some options together for the council's consideration.
- Chuck asked Ryan or Michael about enforcement of the weed ordinance and if it was required to be advertised. Michael responded that there was no requirement that it has to be advertised, but it was recommended to do so as that constitutes the first warning and streamlines the process. Michael will place the advertisement.
- Dave asked Matt to let Ryan know it was okay order the stop sticks. Devin suggested that there may be some stored upstairs.

Maintenance Dept.—Superintendent Devin Cole present at the meeting.

- Regarding the excess electricity usage at the Short Street lift station, American Pump was in town on another matter and took a look at the issue. They discovered a guide rail bracket in the bottom of the pit had broken and there was a broken check valve, the result of which the water was continually circulating and the pump was continually running. The issues were corrected so we should see a reduction in power usage going forward.
- B.L. Anderson was here to connect the Mission System to the new Eagle Drive lift station pump. Devin said the new pump is working well. Still we are just waiting on CIC to the bracketing.
- Chuck asked if CIC is going to be installing bracketing at the Case lift station as well. Devin said he has requested a quote from them for that project but to-date has not received a response. If he doesn't hear from them in the next couple of weeks he will seek other proposals.
- IDEM early sewer ban early warning letter was received. Devin said our response we will include the work at the Case lift station, upcoming stormwater system work at Broadway and Meridian, and some sewer taps that have been fixed.
- Broadway and Meridian stormwater work to Burge ditch project scheduled to begin next week. Anticipated completion date has been pushed back two weeks. Chuck has inquired of the Drainage Board about possible reimbursement of a portion of the project. He has not heard anything at this time. Chuck said he will follow-up. Chuck suggested the scope of the project be placed on the town Facebook page. Mitch will get a title sheet with map and summary of the project to Travis and he will post.
- Mitch Hansel of Fleis&Vandenbrink was in attendance and provided update on the sidewalk project. Some title work was done and INDOT does own the right-of-way on SR 18, thus right-of-way will have to be purchased for this project. Mitch will prepare a right-of way clear letter confirming the town owns the right-of way along Main Street and that we verified the INDOT owns the SR 18 right away. Such letter will then be submitted to INDOT for review and approval. Devin asked if the Town still needs to acquire the property at the northwest corner of SR 18 and Main. Mitch confirmed that we do.
- Mitch said we are applying for a railroad permit at the tracks on Main Street.
- Mitch said we may want to apply in July for resurfacing of Main Street after the sidewalk project is completed. Chuck inquired about the cost of the project and Mitch said he thought we could stay within that. Council okayed the application process.
- Devin said to ignore the LOI's he distributed after last meeting as they would have to be redone.
- Chuck inquired if we had any additional information about Patrick's ability to waive benefits. Clerk responded Patrick could waive medical coverage. Clerk said as to the retirement system, he had an inquiry into INPRS but has not received a response. But in reading through the materials it does not appear that waiving the retirement coverage is an option. Clerk will follow-up with INPRS.

- Chuck asked if we still had the apparatus to perform some street sweeping along Main Street. Devin said that we did.
- Chuck asked if they were able to empty the trash cans and Devin said they were.
- Chuck asked when Devin was going to turn on the water to the trail restroom. Devin said around the first of June.
- Chuck asked if the water had been turned on to the train cars. Devin said Steve did.
- Chuck asked if we were going to put the picnic table up at the dog park. Devin said the metal one needs some welding work; so until that is done he is going to put a wooden picnic table out.
- Chuck inquired about a possible hole in a water pipe feeding the dog park. Steve said he believes it is an issue inside Mitch Cook's building. Steve will follow-up. Devin said they are trying to find the right plugs.
- Devin said we need to get some gravel for the path back to the compost pile so it is accessible to other equipment.

Parks Dept.—Parks President Steve Kelley was present at the meeting.

- Memorial sign for Howard Schick is ready to go up.
- Steve said he got the okay from superintendent Joel Martin to place a town sign on school property.
- Steve inquired about the possible purchase of a replacement trail drinking fountain for \$1,539. Clerk reviewed Parks and Parks Non-Reverting fund budgets and anticipated spending for the remainder of the year and indicated that there are remaining appropriations to cover this purchase.

Travis LeMaster made a motion to approve purchasing the replacement water fountain for \$1,539.00. Dave Fox seconded the motion.

Rich Gamble-Aye

Matt Stewart-Aye

Travis LeMaster-Aye

Dave Fox-Aye

Chuck Briede-Aye

- Steve said Patrick helped him hang a banner from Oak Hill in recognition of the graduating class of 2020.
- Steve has a quote from All-Things-Custom of \$1,008 to replace the plaques for the Kiosk. Steve says they are covered in tree sap and would look tacky if they were placed in the new kiosk. Matt wondered if we could Chuck said that he thought that was excessive and we should try to find a less expensive alternative. Matt asked if a rather than replacing each individual plaque if we could get one board that then would have individual engraved plates recognizing or in memory each donor to the trail. Steve will follow-up.
- A discussion ensued about the price level of plaques, benches and the need to develop some consistent guidelines about those items. Travis suggested we need to advertise the memorial opportunities. Rich suggested perhaps selling bricks for the trailheads.
- Steve said we have not yet annexed the newest mile of the trail. Town counsel Michael Hotz will initiate the process.
- Clerk reported that Ryan has shelved plans for additional hiring at this point as two of the current deputies have more availability for the time being.

VI. Continuing Business – town counsel Michael Hotz was present at the meeting

- Regarding the Church Street property, Michael received quotes from Randy Miller (\$1,800 Don Wimmer (\$600). Don had surveyed the property before and had a legal description. So the cost of Don doing it was the lesser of the two quotes as it involves much less work. Don will also see if he can piece together a drawing. Thus, Michael said we will apply for quiet title the first of next week and that it will be approximately a three-month process.
- Dave said information about the electric pole at the dog park and the main street LED light is still pending as his AEP contact is on vacation. Dave will follow-up.
- Town clean-up is still on for June 6.

VII. New Business

- Dave initiated a discussion about the ongoing trash pick-up issues. Current contract with Republic Services expires April 30, 2021. Jami has been keeping a log of complaints. The complaints are primarily about missed pick-ups and the difficulty in having damaged bins replaced. There were some cans of existing customers that were removed by Republic and it was two or three weeks before they were returned. Republic has said they would supply some extra trash bins, to be stored at town hall, so that damaged or missing bins can be replaced in a timely manner: that has not yet been done. Chuck reported that tomorrow (May 15, 2020) he will be meeting with the route driver and his new supervisor to discuss the situation. Possible alternatives to Republic Services were discussed and how and when the request for proposals is to be advertised. Clerk will provide a copy of the current contract to review the terms concerning renewal and termination of the contract. Chuck said we include a request for recycling services in the next contract. Matt said the Facebook survey of users was about 50/50.
- Dave initiated a discussion of an automated method of tracking vehicle fuel usage. Matt said that Marion has a system we could look at. Devin says B.L. Anderson may have a solution as well. Chuck said we have a paper system that is indicating where the issue is at this time. Devin has addressed the issue and will follow-up again if necessary. Chuck suggested if the issue persists we may need to consider taxing personal use of vehicle as a taxable fringe benefit. Dave will follow-up.
- Clerk reported that Sherri Payne owns 3 apartments at 509 North Main Street. She lives in Fairmount and mails her payments from there. For some reason her mail has not been getting to us in a timely manner. She is requesting a removal of the late fees from her bill.

Chuck Briede made a motion to waive the late fees on the three apartments at 509 North Main Street owned by Sherri Payne. Matt Stewart seconded the motion.

Rich Gamble-Aye

Matt Stewart-Aye

Travis LeMaster-Aye

Dave Fox-Aye

Chuck Briede-Aye

- Chuck said Swayzee rummage site is still on for this year. Sweetser's is usually Father's Day weekend. Chuck suggests we do not cancel it but do not sponsor it but leave all preparation to the citizens. Council was in agreement with that suggestion.
- Chuck reported that one of our sewer customers, who is chronically late and behind with their payments. She has questioned why she has to pay a bill for an abandoned house. She also contends that people don't have to pay their sewer bills and we can't file liens during this time. This led into a discussion of the ability of the town to charge late fees and file liens during the course of the State Medical Emergency and if those issues have been addressed in any of the Governor's Executive orders since declaring a Medical Emergency. Michael said he didn't think there was an issue. He will review the relevant ordinance. He and the clerk will also review the Governor's Executive Orders to see if they address these issues.
- Clerk mentioned that as of May 1, 2020, we are in the final year of our five-year contract with Republic Services for trash pick-up. Matt suggested, and Travis and Chuck agreed, that we should solicit bids for the business. Town will ask for quotes to include recycle services. Devin recommended that we ask them to quote the treatment plant sludge removal in the contract. Michael asked if the current contract has an auto-renewal provision. Clerk responded it does contain a one-year auto-renewal at a defined rate.
- Travis said Sesquicentennial committee will meet on May 18, 2020 at 7 pm. Clerk reported that through today we have received \$1,595 in 150th donations.
- Matt inquired if we had made any progress on leveling the low spots at Pawadise Park. No new information at this time.
- Next meeting will be held at town hall with Rich and the clerk remoting in.
- Next meeting is 7pm, May 24, 2020.

VIII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Chuck Briede to adjourn the meeting and passed by voice acclamation. The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
John Potter