

City of Fox Lake
Committee of the Whole Synopsis
September 16, 2020

The September 16, 2020 committee of the whole meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Mayor Tom Bednarek, in the community center. Those in attendance were Alderpersons John Mund, Dan Ault, Dennis Linke, Peter Hartzheim, Robert Jenswold and Don Zilewicz. Also attending were City Attorney Mike Devitt, City Administrator Dean Perlick, Public Works Superintendent Gene Huettner, Librarian Erin Anders, Police Officer Mitch Wegner and City Clerk Jenny Quirk. Robert & Pam Dolan, Kathy Jenswold and Brenda Penoske were in the audience.

Public Works

Huettner shared that the DPW has been working on pothole filling.

Fire / Police

Linke stated there is a need for the 1 yield sign to be changed to a stop sign at the intersection of Warehouse St. and Cordelia St. Currently 3 of the corners have stops signs and 1 has a yield sign. Also, noting the need for the trees to be trimmed at that location in order to have a better view of the signs and intersection. Huettner said the DPW would take care of the tree trimming if it is obstructing the view of the sign & intersection. The Mayor asked to have this placed on the October Council Meeting agenda for voting.

Regarding the solar powered stop sign for Hwy 68 & CTH A; Huettner said the sign that was purchased was said to be legal by the company that sold it. However, the State said it was not. Chief Rohr is trying to make a trade for a compliant sign or find out what needs to be done to make it compliant. Huettner suggested having the salesperson speak with the state to find out what can be done. Atty Devitt said he would check the regulations as well.

Brenda Penoske of 610 Trenton St. presented the Council with a letter and spoke in regard to having a handicap person crossing sign placed near their home. She noted her husband has been diagnosed with stage 4 brain cancer and uses assistance with his mobility equipment. The traffic coming from CTH P often speed through the intersection and past the house even though it is marked as a slower speed limit, and we do not have a sidewalk. Penoske had included pictures of ideas for the sign. Devitt noted he was not sure if our ordinance will allow the requested sign due to the uniform traffic code, but will check into it. Ault asked about the option of the Penoske's placing a sign of their own on their lawn. The Mayor noted that there won't be a way to enforce that kind of a sign. The Mayor asked Atty Devitt to look into this further and to have this placed on the October Council meeting agenda for further discussion and voting.

Building & Parks

Discussion of installing signs with set closing hours at the City Parks. Hartzheim read examples of park signs he had found posted at different municipality parks showing park rules and hours. He noted we would need to alter ours to fit our parks and rules. Perlick noted that we already have rules and times in place with our ordinances. Huettner asked what would be done for special events held at the parks? Discussion regarding changing or setting the hours for the parks based on the seasons and daylight. The Mayor suggested the option of issuing permits for special events planned at the parks and having set hours across the board. Ault stated he feels we need to make it set times, not dusk to dawn. Huettner noted that if we change the times then the ordinance needs to be amended. The Mayor asked Perlick to work on an amendment to the ordinance changing the parks closing time to 9:00 pm – 6:00 am, excluding the Clausen Park boat launch and the dam. Then to review again at the next committee of the whole meeting.

Discussion of signage at parks to use at your own risk. Hartzheim asked if that is allowable to be added? Devitt felt it wouldn't make any difference if it was added to the signs or not. The Mayor stated, with legal council recommendation, to leave "use at your own risk" off of the signs.

Discuss improvements to Crocker St. Park and construction of a pavilion. Hartzheim said they are still waiting to hear back from Alliant Energy. They can't move forward until then, so they know where they can place lights. Dolan noted they have formed a committee and will be attending the October Council and Committee of the Whole meetings to share any updates. Linke asked if the City should look into a surveillance camera at the park? Huettner felt he could have it placed on his surveillance system. The Mayor asked if we should see if placing the light in the park and posting the set hours first makes a difference? Atty Devitt felt it was not in the best interest to use camera surveillance at this point.

License & Finance

Review of the Downtown Business Support Program policies and application form. Perlick recapped that the City Council had approved the concept of using an existing TIF district to fund a Downtown Improvement Program. Before agreeing to approve it there needed to be a policy and an application form to review. These draft forms were provided to the council showing details and figures. Perlick also noted it was based on the application forms used for the COVID-19 Business Support Program. The RDA has reviewed the application and policy and approved them. The numbers used can be adjusted and are still up for discussion. The projects are on a 50/50 cost share basis, so the property owner would need to cover at least 50% up to the maximum of the potential \$10,000. The projects would follow the guidelines of the TIF 2 district. This also includes availability of City projects. In the application the applicant would explain their proposal and the amount of funds requested. Also, with RDA approval, projects completed within the last 6 months may be included. There are limits to the amount available and how often. Hartzheim asked if this included interior and exterior work? Perlick said there is an evaluation criteria used to determine if the work will positively impact the downtown and community. There will be discretion used by the RDA. Zilewicz asked for clarification if the 1 grant award is per total work done or per individual projects? Perlick explained the intent is to allow multiple small projects under the 1 grant up to a certain dollar amount. Apply prior to doing the work to verify the amount of funds that will be awarded. The only exception is for the projects that had already been done within the 6 months prior that are presented to the RDA for approval. Perlick stated the total amount available will be determined by how much the council is willing to put into the program. Perlick questioned if this should wait until budget time to put the numbers in or do we want to do this as soon as possible? How often do we want to do this? The Mayor said we may be able to do some small projects yet this year using the leftover funds from the COVID-19 Downtown Support Program and then look at putting this in the budget for a certain amount each year. Perlick noted that additional money had been lent to TIF 2, so there may be a need for a resolution to bring that money back.

Library

Library board minutes were reviewed.

Cemetery, recycling & transfer station

Discussion about signs for the cemetery entrances showing a closing time. Huettner reported that he has ordered signs for the entrances showing the closing times as set in the City ordinance.

With no other business to come before the committee of the whole, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.