

October 25, 2018

The Board of Public Works & Safety met at 4:00 pm on the above date in the Meeting Room at City Hall Annex with Mayor Curtis presiding and members Williams and Higgins attending. Others attending were Chief Dixon; Chief Alldredge; Supt Gray; Comm. Dieterle; Attorney Higgins; Gene Moore; Joe Winiger; Marcie Miller; Charlotte Thomas; Judy Heberer; Ruth Duckworth; Joyce Babillis; Paula Rudibaugh; Nancy Sexton; Corey Woolsey – Mount Vernon Democrat; and Lois Gray – Posey County News.

Mayor Curtis called the meeting to order by stating members were emailed copies of the minutes of their previous meeting and by asking if there were any corrections or additions. He added if not, he entertains a motion to waive the reading and approve the minutes as presented.

Board member Williams moved the reading of the minutes be waived and they be approved as presented. Seconded by Board member Higgins.

Mayor Curtis asked if there was any discussion ?

There was none.

Mayor Curtis stated all those in favor of the motion should signify in the affirmative; and following the vote, he reported the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Curtis requested action on the claims presented.

Board member Higgins moved the claims presented be allowed for payment. Seconded by Board member Williams.

Mayor Curtis asked if there was any discussion ?

There was none.

Mayor Curtis stated all those in favor of the motion should signify in the affirmative; and following the vote, he reported the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Curtis stated they will now hear the reports of the Departments.

Chief Alldredge stated they have had 186 calls since the last meeting.

Mayor Curtis asked if there were any questions ?

There were none.

Chief Dixon stated they have had 31 calls since the last meeting.

Mayor Curtis asked if there were any questions ?

There were none.

Supt. Gray stated there is training on December 2-5 in French Lick and he would like permission to send Gene Carroll along with the city credit car and vehicle.

Board member Higgins moved permission be given. Seconded by Board member Williams.

Mayor Curtis asked if Mr. Carroll will get his CEU's and if he had money in his budget ?

Supt. Gray replied yes to both.

Mayor Curtis stated all those in favor of the motion should signify in the affirmative; and following the vote, he reported the motion carried unanimously. He then asked if there were any questions ?

There were none.

Comm. Dieterle stated for two days the new Hwy 62 was very nice, but it looks like they are back to construction again for a while, but they are getting there.

Mayor Curtis asked if there were any questions ?

There were none.

Mayor Curtis stated they are now ready for the Legal portion of the agenda and addressed Attorney Higgins by stating there was a question at the last Council meeting concerning the jurisdiction of the Park & Rec properties.

Attorney Higgins stated there are no specifics here and she will try to explain in general terms use of property, which involves the Park & Rec, Board of Works, and Council. It is not always exact black and white. In general, the State statute says that the Council is in charge of city property and money. Then the Council has the authority to set up departments (Board of Works, Park). The Board of Works handles day to day decisions and daily operations. When it comes to the Park, security at parks is handled by the police department, which comes as a recommendation from the Board of Works, and so they work together. The City of Mount Vernon Black Township Park & Rec Department has separate powers that were set up in a different section of the statute. Their Board (Park & Rec Bd) is responsible for use of their facilities. The Park can not sell or purchase property in the name of the City. The use of their property lies within the Park Board. For example, reserving the amphitheater is done through the Park Office. Requests to use certain facilities, that as a Park matter, lies with the Park Board, as recommended by Council and the Board of Works. So different statutes/ordinances were passed based on that. She stated what is needed is a dialog between all of the groups represented.

Mayor Curtis stated Gene Moore spoke at the Council meeting and he met with him earlier this week. They had a good discussion on everything and they discussed objectives and goals. He added everyone in the group is in a favor of a playground for all, an inclusive playground. He stated Mr. Moore and he talked and decided it would be a good idea to get representatives of the groups against the location together with the groups in favor of the location to discuss how they feel. He added he does not want divisiveness. This is a great project and he does not want it to come between the community. He would suggest the Board get together with those planning the playground, and those against the location, to discuss goals and issues. He added he feels this should be done before this comes before the Park Board. He stated he and Mr. Moore talked again this afternoon as well. He then asked if anyone in the Audience wished to address this ?

Mr. Moore stated he appreciates the time Mayor Curtis and the Board and Council have allowed them. He stated he believes they are on the same wave length on 99% of things and he would love to sit down with all groups involved. He does not want it to be "them against us". They need to be united for strength; united on a different location. One thing for certain, they are 100% for the playground. He continued by stating there may be five to 10 kids visiting the playground at Riverbend if it is built there, but there are 15-20 adults down there everyday either walking their dogs, swinging, or enjoying the gardens. The Azalea Club and Garden Club and the other various organizations have made Riverbend exactly like everyone wanted it. Once the playground is put there, it can't be removed. He added he is sure the residents at the Landing enjoy the view they have. That would also be disturbed. Many folks have put in a lot of sweat equity, again, the Garden Club for example. He then stated he does not want to name drop, but the owner of WSI is against having the playground at Riverbend as well after all the money that was invested in having the silos taken down.

Charlotte Thomas approached and stated she has tried to get the different groups together and she added she was told she would be invited to their next meeting, but she didn't. She then stated she is

a lifelong resident of Mount Vernon, and is very much in favor of the playground, but also very much against the location. The riverfront is Mount Vernon's best most natural resource and is enjoyed by all at various events throughout the year. She stated she would like to commend the young lady who proposed this, and she also knew Avery Beste when she was alive as well as her family. One small group should not define a park put together by so many others. Green space should be preserved. She concluded by stating she loves Mount Vernon and thanked the Board for their time.

Ruth Duckworth stated there is a swing at Riverbend in memory of her late husband, Don. She added she is in favor of the playground, but not at Riverbend. She continued by stating her husband loved the river so when he passed she felt a good way to remember him was to have a memorial swing in his name put there. She stated before they could even proceed with plans for the swing, her family had to go to the Park & Rec, twice, for approval for the swing. They never had to come before the Board of Works. Why did the organizers of the playground not have to go to Park & Rec ? She added she is confused by that. The Park & Rec Board needs to be involved in this. The veterans are also very upset that this playground would be right next to the war memorials. Where is the respect for the veterans ? Right now, Riverbend is a serene place to go, and so many others agree. She added she would hate to see that atmosphere removed. Finally, she stated she would like to know why Park & Rec was not consulted.

Mayor Curtis replied he has no answer to that.

Attorney Higgins added Park & Rec will be consulted they closed they get to their fundraising goal.

Mayor Curtis agreed they will have to go through Park & Rec.

Nancy Sexton stated the permission comes from Mayor Curtis, as the Mayor, correct ?

Mayor Curtis replied right.

Ms. Sexton stated the Board of Works is in charge of the city departments, but not land management ? Park & Rec gets their money from the state. That being the case, the first step should have been to go to the Park Board.

Mayor Curtis stated the city partially funds Park & Rec and Black Township funds the remainder.

Ms. Sexton stated Supt. Harshbarger asked Council in May for a loan, from the state ?

Attorney Higgins replied they get their money from property tax that is disbursed from the county.

Ms. Sexton agreed and stated they then spend their money the way the Park Board sees fit. She has also heard that there is nothing the city can do to change that.

Mayor Curtis stated budgets can be changed, but there is a process.

Ms. Sexton stated if she is fundraising for a project, wouldn't she need the permission of the Park Board before that starts ?

Attorney Higgins replied the Park Board is in charge of the use of their facilities.

Ms. Sexton asked how the Board of Works got to be in charge of that decision ?

Attorney Higgins replied she does not know, she is not on that committee. She stated we (the city Board of Works) are easy to find. People know when the meetings are. They came to the Board of Works and then to the Council.

Ms. Sexton stated a vote was taken.

Attorney Higgins replied they need to get it back and have a discussion.

Joe Winiger stated it sounds like they are headed in the right direction. He personally put in quite a bit of sweat equity in the silo demolition. He added he WILL name drop and there were a lot of miles put on Barry Cox's truck looking at riverfronts all around the area. He then stated Mount Vernon has the best river view.

Mayor Curtis agreed there have been many folks that have made efforts from Friends of the Park, to the Garden Club and Azalea Trail Committee. He added he was on Council when Mr. Winiger and former Councilman Fuelling got the silos down. He stated he appreciates their efforts and agrees that they need to move forward and get it done. He then asked if Gene Moore would be his contact with this group ?

Mr. Moore replied yes, that is fine.

Board member Williams added the school needs to be contacted as well if they are thinking of Hedges as a potential location.

Mr. Winiger asked if the Imagination Station is also overseen by Park & Rec ?

Board member Williams replied yes.

Mayor Curtis stated they need to be getting on this in a timely manner.

Joyce Babillis stated she understands they are talking about children, but what about the elderly ? They enjoy Riverbend Park. There is no reason to disturb that when there are other places for this playground. The folks at the Landing love their beautiful view. She concluded by stating there has been so much work go into this.

Mayor Curtis stated he is sure that will be part of the discussion.

Mr. Moore asked what the city's liability would be if a child ventured south, and into the river ?

Mayor Curtis replied they have other parks closer to the river, but there would be no more liability he wouldn't think. He then asked if anyone else wished to address the Board ?

There was no response.

Mayor Curtis asked if there was any Old Business ?

There was none.

Mayor Curtis asked if there was any New Business ?

Board member Higgins stated she needs to request the street closures for Christmas on Main Street. She then gave Board copies of maps with the closures highlighted. She added the closures would be from noon to 9:00 pm on December 1, with the rain date being December 8. The following would be closed:

Water Street from Locust to College

Main street from Water to right at the alley

Walnut Street from Water to right at the alley

Board member Williams moved closures be permitted. Seconded by Mayor Curtis, who then asked if there was any discussion ?

There was none.

Mayor Curtis stated all those in favor of the motion should signify in the affirmative; and following the vote, he reported the motion carried.

Mayor Curtis stated next is discussion of the Regional Pavement Management System Grant, in conjunction with EMPO (Evansville Metro Planning).

Comm. Dieterle stated this is a road study/evaluation. Posey County signed up for the grant and was successful. The cost is \$18,000, but Mount Vernon's share is only \$3,300.00. He then stated Mount Vernon city has 43 miles of streets.

Board member Williams asked what the grant is for ?

Comm. Dieterle replied to evaluate the condition of the roads.

Mayor Curtis added through EMPO, who has the grant, but the city would only have to pay its share. He then stated they have to do this and turn it in to get CCGF money. This is actually an excellent price.

Board member Williams moved they proceed. Seconded by Board member Higgins.

Mayor Curtis asked if there was any discussion ?

There was none.

Mayor Curtis stated all those in favor of the motion should signify in the affirmative; and following the vote, he reported the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Curtis stated if there was no further business, he entertains a motion to adjourn.

Board member Higgins moved the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Board member Williams.

Mayor Curtis stated all those in favor of the motion should signify in the affirmative; and following the vote, he reported the motion carried unanimously and adjourned the meeting.

Bill Curtis
Mayor

ATTEST:

Cristi L. Sitzman
Clerk-Treasurer