

Meeting Minutes

Regular City Council Meeting

March 19, 2007, 7:00 P.M.

Council Chambers, County-City Building

Mayor Gary W. Wescott, presiding Roll Call: Ald. Sevenich, Walther, Hanson, Wiza, Robinson, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, Stroik, Moore

Excused: Ald. Barber

Also Present: City Attorney Molepske, City Clerk Moe, Comptroller/Treasurer Schlice, Directors Gardner, Schrader, Euclide, Halverson; Police Captain Dowling, Fire Chief Barnes, Transit Manager Lemke, Kari Yenter, Gene Kemmeter (Portage County Gazette), Jason Zencka (Stevens Point Journal)

Index to these minutes:

2. Salute to the Flag and Mayor's opening remarks.
3. Approval of the minutes of the minutes of the Regular Common Council meeting of February 19, 2007.
4. Persons who wish to address the Mayor and Council on specific agenda items other than a "Public Hearing" must register their request at this time. Those who wish to address the Common Council during a "Public Hearing" are not required to identify themselves until the "Public Hearing" is declared open by the Mayor.
5. Persons who wish to address the Mayor and Council for up to three (3) minutes on a non-agenda item.
6. Plan Commission meeting of March 5, 2007.
7. Public hearing - amendment of zoning ordinance - "PUD" Planned Unit Development for Schmeeckle Trails Subdivision.
8. Ordinance on the above.
9. Public hearing - amendment of zoning ordinance - sideyard setback requirement in Two Family Zoning District.
10. Ordinance on the above.
11. Public hearing - request to expand/remodel tavern at 1200 Park Street as a conditional use.
12. Resolution on the above.
13. Public Protection Committee meeting of March 12, 2007.
14. Board of Public Works meeting of March 12, 2007.
15. Finance Committee meeting of March 12, 2007.
16. Special Finance Committee meeting of March 19, 2007.
17. Reconsideration of Council action to prepare RFP for Contractual Assessor.
18. Personnel Committee meeting of March 12, 2007.
19. Board of Water and Sewage Commissioners meeting of March 12, 2007.
20. Reports: Police and Fire Commission meeting of March 13, 2007.
Statutory monthly financial reports of the Comptroller-Treasurer.
21. Adjournment.

2. Salute to the Flag and Mayor's opening remarks.

Mayor Wescott reminded everyone about the upcoming election on Tuesday, April 3, 2007. The Mayor noted that absentee ballots are available at the City Clerk's office.

3. Approval of the minutes of the Regular Common Council meeting of February 19, 2007.

Ald. Moore moved, Ald. Trzebiatowski seconded, for approval of the regular Common Council minutes of February 19, 2007, with a correction to Ald. Moore's comment on item #17.

Roll Call: Ayes all.

Nays none. Motion carried.

4. Persons who wish to address the Mayor and Council on specific agenda items other than a Public Hearing must register their request at this time. Those who wish to address the Common Council during a Public Hearing are not required to identify themselves until the Public Hearing is declared open by the Mayor.

Reid Rocheleau

408 Cedar Street

Whiting, WI

Item #5 Persons who wish to address Mayor and Council

Item #17 Reconsideration of Council action to prepare RFP for contractual Assessor

Item #18 Personnel Committee meeting of March 12, 2007

David James

1257 Main Street

Stevens Point, WI 54481

Item #5 - Persons who wish to address Mayor and Council

Item #6 Plan Commission meeting of March 5, 2007

Item #15 Finance Committee meeting of March 12, 2007

Mary Ann Laszewski

1209 Wisconsin Street

Stevens Point, WI 54481

Item #15 Finance Committee meeting of March 12, 2007

Item #18 Personnel Committee meeting of March 12, 2007

Andrew Halverson

3116 Jordan Lane

Stevens Point, WI 54481

Item #5 Persons who wish to address Mayor and Council

Norm Myers Sr. Item

416 Union Street

Stevens Point, WI 54481

#5 Persons who wish to address Mayor and Council

Doug Radtke

3800 Heffron Street

Stevens Point, WI 54481

Item #17 Reconsideration of Council action to prepare RFP for contractual Assessor

Item #18 Personnel Committee meeting of March 12, 2007

Doug Stingle

1932 Church Street

Stevens Point, WI 54481

Item #5 Persons who wish to address Mayor and Council

Bob Woehr

727 Second Street

Stevens Point, WI 54481

Item #17 Reconsideration of Council action to prepare RFP for contractual Assessor

Item #18 Personnel Committee meeting of March 12, 2007

Steve Decker

1500 Briggs Street

Stevens Point, WI 54481

Item #5 Persons who wish to address Mayor and Council

Carol Kuehn

3701 Lorraine Street

Stevens Point, WI 54481

Item #17 Reconsideration of Council action to prepare RFP for contractual Assessor

5. Persons who wish to address the Mayor and Council for up to three (3) minutes on a non-agenda item.

Reid Rocheleau, 408 Cedar Street, hopes the Mayor fulfills his promise of cleaning up unlicensed vehicles in the City. Mr. Rocheleau reviewed the City's file of possible downtown sites for the new Justice Center and concludes the City is in support of this matter with the County. Mr. Rocheleau suggested doing away with the City's practice of requiring a motion and second before any discussion. He also suggested reorganizing the Plan Commission and appointing members who are willing to attend the meetings.

Attorney David James, 1257 Main Street, is here on behalf of Tony's Landscaping and Excavating. Attorney James expressed frustration on behalf of Tony that the item regarding the conditional use permit is not on tonight's agenda. This issue came before the Plan Commission on March 5, 2007 and was properly published on March 2 and March 9, 2007.

Andrew Halverson, 3116 Jordan Lane, said it is an honor to have the opportunity to run for Mayor. Mr. Halverson encouraged everyone to vote on April 3, 2007.

Norman Myers Sr., 416 Union Street, is a candidate for First District Alderman. Mr. Myers will do his best to serve the best interest of the City and the First District.

Doug Stingle, 1932 Church Street, applauded Mayor Wescott for signing the Climate Protection Agreement. Mr. Stingle said the City can be a model for other communities in using renewable resources.

Steve Decker, 1500 Briggs Street, is a First District Aldermanic candidate. Mr. Decker stated the proposed Tony's Landscaping site is not a good choice or location.

6. Plan Commission meeting of March 5, 2007.

Ald. Moore moved, Ald. Hanson seconded, for approval of the Plan Commission minutes of March 5, 2007.

David James, 1257 Main Street, relinquished his three minutes for comments.

Roll Call: Ayes all.

Nays none. Motion carried.

7. Public hearing amendment of zoning ordinance - PUD Planned Unit Development for Schmeeckle Trails Subdivision.

The public hearing was declared open by the Mayor.

Reid Rocheleau, 408 Cedar Street, said the zoning for this property should be single-family low density.

As no one further wished to speak, the Mayor declared the public hearing closed.

8. Ordinance on the above.

Ald. Moore moved, Ald. Trzebiatowski seconded, for approval of the ordinance amending the revised municipal code of the City of Stevens Po

PUD Planned Unit Development for Schmeeckle Trails Subdivision.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ald. Moore, Stroik, Molski, Trzebiatowski, Slowinski, Robinson, Wiza, Hanson, Walther, Sevenich.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

9. Public hearing amendment of zoning ordinance - sideyard setback requirement in Two Family Zoning District.

The public hearing was declared open by the Mayor.

Reid Rocheleau, 408 Cedar Street, stated the setback should be a standard 10 feet on both sides of the building. He suggested postponing this item, return it to the Plan Commission and make the sideyard setback a standard 10 feet.

Mary Ann Laszewski, 1209 Wisconsin Street, was surprised that two-family zoning only requires a total of 15 feet for both sides of the yard with not less than 6 feet on one side. Ms. Laszewski noted that all the other zonings require a total 20 foot setback. She said all lots should have a standardized 10 foot setback on each side.

Bob Woehr, 727 Second Street, said the Traditional Overlay District was created with the intent to utilize buildable space for single-family homes provided that they fit into the neighborhood.

As no one further wished to speak, the Mayor declared the public hearing closed.

10. Ordinance on the above.

Director Gardner said the 15 foot combined sideyard setback existed for over 30 years. The Director suggested instead of having a minimum of 6 feet on one side, the amendment to the zoning ordinance would split the 15 foot setback into equal distances of 7 1/2 feet on each side for newly created lots.

Ald. Stroik asked what would be the impact of a minimum 20 foot sideyard setback.

Director Gardner said it would not effect most developments. The Director suggested creating a committee where you have input from a variety of points of view.

Ald. Robinson moved, Ald. Slowinski seconded, for approval of the amendment to the zoning ordinance - sideyard setback requirement in Two Family Zoning Districts.

Ald. Wiza said if this is going to be revisited in another month, it does not make sense to approve this. The alderman suggested changing the setback to 10 feet now or postpone this for another month.

Mayor Wescott said this will not happen next month. He said this is something that will wait until the new Mayor decides how he wishes to precede with this.

Ald. Stroik asked if the Council can go to a more restrictive 10 foot setback.

City Attorney Molepske said the Council can make it more restrictive but not less restrictive.

Ald. Trzebiatowski asked if a 10 foot setback would be more appropriate in case of a fire.

Chief Barnes replied more space is a safer environment. The Chief's concern is with structures so close together, the fire could jump from one structure to the next.

Director Gardner said the current ordinance states the combined total must be 15 feet with one side not less than 6 feet. The Director noted **changing the setback to 7 ½ feet on each side would make it more restrictive.**

Mayor Wescott ruled that the Council vote on the amendment presented. If the Council wishes to do something different, then this amendment would be rejected and carried over to the new administration.

Ald. Robinson noted approving this amendment is a step in the right direction.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ald. Sevenich, Walther, Hanson, Robinson, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski.

Nays: Ald. Wiza, Molski, Stroik, Moore.

Ayes 6. Nays 4. Motion carried.

11. Public hearing request to expand/remodel tavern at 1200 Park Street as a conditional use.

The public hearing was declared open by the Mayor.

Reid Rocheleau, 408 Cedar Street, agrees with granting a conditional use permit to expand/remodel the tavern at 1200 Park Street.

As no one further wished to speak, the Mayor declared the public hearing closed.

12. Resolution on the above.

Ald. Stroik moved, Ald. Molski seconded, to approve the request to expand/remodel the tavern at 1200 Park Street as a conditional use.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ald. Moore, Stroik, Molski, Trzebiatowski, Slowinski, Robinson, Wiza, Hanson, Walther, Sevenich.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

13. Public Protection Committee meeting of March 12, 2007.

Ald. Sevenich moved, Ald. Trzebiatowski seconded, to accept the minutes of the Public Protection Committee meeting on March 12, 2007.

Roll Call: Ayes all.

Nays none. Motion carried.

14. Board of Public Works meeting of March 12, 2007.

Ald. Wiza moved, Ald. Walther seconded, for approval of the Board of Public Works minutes of March 12, 2007.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ald. Sevenich, Walther, Hanson, Wiza, Robinson, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, Stroik, Moore.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

15. Finance Committee meeting of March 12, 2007.

Attorney David James, 1257 Main Street, encouraged the Council to give the authority to the Mayor and Comptroller to negotiate the purchase of property at 701 Mason Street so this process can move forward.

Mary Ann Laszewski, 1209 Wisconsin Street, is encouraged to hear that the City may even consider purchasing the entire parcel. Ms. Laszewski voiced her concerns and reasons why the City should purchase this land such as water drainage, screening, storage, overcrowding and safety.

Ald. Molski moved, Ald. Hanson seconded, for approval of the Finance Committee minutes of March 12, 2007.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ald. Moore, Stroik, Molski, Trzebiatowski, Slowinski, Robinson, Wiza, Hanson, Walther, Sevenich.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

16. Special Finance Committee meeting of March 19, 2007.

Clerk Moe read the minutes of the Special Finance Committee meeting of March 19, 2007.

Ald. Slowinski moved, Ald. Robinson seconded, for approval of the Special Finance Committee minutes of March 19, 2007.

Ald. Wiza pointed out that there is adequate plumbing, electricity, kitchen and two overhead doors at this location.

Chief Barnes said the process is just beginning.

Mayor Wescott stated the City is moving quickly to re-establish a strong fire suppression and EMS presence on the eastside.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ald. Sevenich, Walther, Hanson, Wiza, Robinson, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, Stroik, Moore.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

17. Reconsideration of Council action to prepare RFP for Contractual Assessor.

Reid Rocheleau, 408 Cedar Street, read from the Robert Rules of Order that a reconsideration can be applied to a vote on any motion except an affirmative vote where provisions have been partly carried out. Mr. Rocheleau said it is improper to reconsider this issue. He said the City is not following the rules.

Doug Radtke, 3800 Heffron Street, said it does not make sense for the Council to reconsider something that has already been accomplished. Mr. Radtke stated any action taken on this issue should be covered under Item #18 of the Council agenda.

Bob Woehr, 727 Second Street, is a member of the Board of Review. Mr. Woehr said the Assessor is elected by the Council every two years. He stated to change from an elected to a contractual Assessor would require changing the ordinance. Mr. Woehr said the Board of Review is required to meet for its initial meeting within 30 days of the second Monday of May. If the assessment roll is not completed by that date, the Board will have to adjourn to a certain date.

Carol Kuehn, 3701 Lorraine Street, said time is a factor and it is prudent for the City to move forward with hiring a full-time Assessor.

Mayor Wescott said last month, the Council decided to divide the question. The first part of the question was to advertise to fill the Assessor's position. The Mayor stated advertisements have been placed in the appropriate locations. The process of hiring a full-time Assessor is well on its way. The Council also directed that a RFP be prepared and sent to the Personnel Committee. The Council and Personnel Committee have not approved a RFP for contractual Assessor services. The Mayor noted the standing rules of the Council would allow this item to be reconsidered at this point.

City Attorney Molepske said the RFP was drafted in house, no committee approved the RFP and no Council action was taken. The City Attorney stated under the current rules, any action taken by the Council in the previous month can be reconsidered by an individual who voted in the affirmative.

Ald. Hanson moved, Ald. Trzebiatowski seconded, that the City of Stevens Point will not write or prepare an RFP for contractual Assessor services and it will not report any of these items back to the Personnel Committee as the process is being abandoned.

Ald. Hanson said there are time line issues with hiring an Assessor. The Alderman compared the costs and salary of the Assessor with other communities.

Ald. Trzebiatowski is concerned if a RFP is created what effect it would have on potential applicants.

Ald. Robinson said he does not disagree that a full-time Assessor is the best option for the City but they should at least explore the possibility of contracting services.

Carol Kuehn said the individual must hold an Assessor II level certification. Ms. Kuehn stated the law is very specific, the Assessor cannot assume the duties of an Assessor without the level II certification. She again noted that time is a factor.

Mayor Wescott said the Assessor, by the City charter, is an officer of the City of Stevens Point. The Mayor has found no evidence that contracting services for Assessor will save money. Currently, the City has quality full-time employees who provide day to day customer service.

Ald. Walther thought this was an idea worth exploring but after speaking with people with assessment knowledge, he is now in full support of a full-time Assessor.

Ald. Sevenich would like to leave things as they were.

Ald. Trzebiatowski said having an Assessor on staff, living in the City and being dedicated to the City is saving money.

Ald. Robinson pointed out that he never asserted that there would be a cost savings by hiring a contractor. He just asked that the Council consider it because constituents have asked the Council to do so.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ald. Moore, Stroik, Molski, Trzebiatowski, Wiza, Hanson, Walther, Sevenich.

Nays: Ald. Slowinski, Robinson.

Ayes 8. Nays 2. Motion carried.

18. Personnel Committee meeting of March 12, 2007.

Ald. Moore moved, Ald. Wiza seconded, for approval of the Personnel Committee minutes of March 12, 2007.

Reid Rocheleau, 408 Cedar Street, is concerned with the way Ald. Molepski's motion is worded for the closed session in the Personnel Committee minutes. Mr. Rocheleau said the public should be aware of who the employee is and what it is costing the City.

Mary Ann Laszewski, 1209 Wisconsin Street, declined her opportunity to speak on this item.

Doug Radtke, 3800 Heffron Street, agrees with the motion for hiring an Assessor at this time, but believes the procedure taken was inappropriate.

Bob Woehr, 727 Second Street, said the question of the management pay plan has been brought up for a long time and at some time needs to be resolved. Mr. Woehr said it is time to put together more Mayoral Advisory Committees.

Ald. Molski said an employee on unpaid leave that wishes to stay on the City's insurance pays the full cost of the insurance.

Roll Call: Ayes all.

Nays none. Motion carried.

19. Board of Water and Sewage Commissioners meeting of March 12, 2007.

Ald. Molski moved, Ald. Slowinski seconded, for approval of the Board of Water and Sewage Commissioners minutes of March 12, 2007.

Roll Call: Ayes all.

Nays none. Motion carried.

20. Reports:

Police and Fire Commission meeting of March 13, 2007.

Statutory monthly financial reports of the Comptroller-Treasurer.

Ald. Moore moved, Ald. Wiza seconded, to accept the reports and place them on file.

Roll Call: Ayes all.

Nays none. Motion carried.

21. Adjournment 8:50 P.M.

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