

AGENDA

A regular meeting of the Wood River City Council was called to order by Mayor Tom Stalcup at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, October 21, 2024, in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 111 N. Wood River Avenue, with the recital of the Pledge of Allegiance. The Clerk called the roll and reported that the following members were:

PRESENT: David Ayres
Bill Dettmers
Jeremy Plank
Tom Stalcup

ABSENT: Scott Tweedy

and that a quorum was present and in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Councilman Ayres moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of October 7, 2024, as printed, seconded by Councilman Dettmers, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)
NAYS: None (0)

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Councilman Dettmers moved to approve the bills submitted for payment for the period October 3, 2024, to October 16, 2024, as printed. (Expenditures pertaining to the Local Government Travel Expense Control Act: Approval of 2024 IML Conference expenses for Mayor Stalcup in the amount of \$314.38.), seconded by Councilman Ayres, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)
NAYS: None (0)

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT:

Councilman Plank moved to approve the Financial Statement ending September 30, 2024, as printed, seconded by Councilman Dettmers, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)
NAYS: None (0)

CITIZEN/CITY OFFICIAL COMMENTS:

Jeff Cooper stated that he is at the meeting again to express his concern about the City street sweeper and the lack of it. He would like to know the status of the street sweeper. He stated that he grew up in this area and the City used to run the street sweeper regularly. In his neighborhood, the street sweeper would come on Thursday and people would plan their lawn care around the street sweeper schedule. He stated that last spring City Manager Steve Palen and Mayor Stalcup responded by coming out to look at his street and it took City employees an entire day to clean two blocks. The storm drains were full of leaves, there were gumballs and dirt and without the street sweeper, dirt settles in low areas and grass and weeds are growing in the street. In fact, there is a section of the street next to his house that he mows. He then stated that if the street sweeper was going over that area on a regular basis, he does not think that the grass and weeds would be there. He explained that he has been given several reasons why the street sweeper is not running regularly, but he thinks that the City of Wood River would look a lot better with clean streets. He stated that now that residents put their trash in front of their houses on the street, sometimes trash overflows and ends up in the street and Republic Services does not pick it up, so it is up to the residents to pick it up or it just lays there. He thinks that it would be a good idea to reconsider running the street sweeper on a regular basis.

Sara Sladek announced that the Veteran's Day Memorial Service is Monday, November 11, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. at the EAWRCHS Memorial Gym. She then stated that back in February or March of this year, she asked that a flagpole be placed at the Recreation Center, and it is still not there. She is asking again that a flagpole be placed at the Recreation Center. She then expressed her concern about what is happening at Central Park. She stated that there has been trouble at Central Park for 56 years. She does not know what prompted the ordinance for Central Park, but the City has the crown jewel sitting on that property, the Recreation Center, that is supposed to draw kids into the park and into the Recreation Center. She is curious who is going to enforce the ordinance. She

October 21, 2024

asked if the cameras will enforce the ordinance. She stated that people are curious how it is going to be enforced and are upset about it. She agrees that the trouble at Central Park needs to stop, she just does not know how it will be stopped. The citizens of Wood River would like to know how the ordinance is going to be enforced.

Mayor Stalcup stated that the City has been pushed to the point where the City must take strict actions at Central Park. There have been multiple incidents that have led the City to pass the ordinance that is on the agenda. City Manager Steve Palen stated that there needs to be supervision at the park for the age group that is causing the trouble. The Mayor has received phone calls from mothers stating that they will not take their children to Central Park.

Mayor Stalcup announced that the Downtown Trick or Treat is Wednesday, October 23, 2024, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Ferguson Avenue. The 39th Annual Halloween Parade is Saturday, October 26, 2024, beginning at 10:30 a.m. The parade route starts at Emerick Sports Complex, goes on to Ferguson Avenue to Wood River Avenue, and will end at Central Park. He thanked the Fire Department for all of their efforts organizing the parade.

Mayor Stalcup asked City Manager Steve Palen to explain the upcoming aggregation program that the City has enrolled in. Homefield Energy sent out a letter explaining the upcoming change in the rate and the option to opt out of the program. The new aggregation program starts with the December meter read and will run through May 2025's meter read. This program is only six months because Good Energy LP is hopeful that by next spring/summer, the rates will be lower and the City will be able to lock into a lower rate at that time. Residents that are currently in the aggregation program and want to stay in the program do not need to do anything. Residents who opted out of the current program must stay with Ameren for twelve months but if the twelve months have ended, residents will automatically be enrolled in the new program that will begin in December with a rate of \$0.09054 per kWh. If residents have not received and opt out letter from Homefield Energy that means that they have not been with Ameren for twelve months. Every quarter, the company runs a report and will send out opt out letters to residents that have completed their twelve months with Ameren. If residents want to stay in the aggregation program, they do not have to do anything. If residents want to opt out of the program, they will need to call Homefield Energy.

Councilman Dettmers announced the opening of the new Mexican Restaurant located at 1822 Vaughn Road, El Michoacan.

City Manager Steve Palen asked Kristen Burns to give an update on the Main Street Program. Ms. Burns first introduced Erik Reader, the Director of Illinois Main Street. She then explained that the City of Wood River became an Illinois Main Street in July 2024, and since then there have been four new businesses open in the Downtown District. There have also been several successful events including, the Summer Kickoff Event, Movies in the Park, Concerts in the Park, the Food Truck Festival, and the Farmers Market which was bigger this year than previous years. A bi-weekly e-mail newsletter has been started throughout the district as well as to residents and is being sent to over 400 people. Thirty-three new partners have been added through the Wood River Business Alliance and the Main Street Program has worked with the East Alton Wood River High School on a volunteer program for their students as well as helped them market the Oiler brand and other things that they are doing. The school is also a partner, so they work with the High School getting the kids involved which is really important to the mission of engaging the entire community.

Erik Reader thanked the Mayor and the Council for their time and thanked them for their commitment on behalf of the entire Main Street Organization. He stated that it is impressive to have a Main Street organization in the community and it relies upon the public private partnership and without that strong bond and relationship it does not move forward with a lot of progress. He stated that this is his third visit since April 2024, and he wanted to make it to a Council Meeting this time to welcome all of the Councilmembers. He explained that Main Street is a network across the country of over 2,000 communities that has been going on for about 40 years. There is a time-tested movement that has been going on and it requires dedication and a lot of effort and strategy behind the things to make downtowns vibrant and prosperous. He stated that it is very easy to notice the energy and the community spirit that is around the City of Wood River, and he has seen it every time he has been in town and there is momentum and things happening and there is investment, so it is already starting out a lot better of a place than many other communities and is a community that others inspire and they are calling to get information about becoming a Main Street community. In just a short amount of time, it is already starting to take off. There have been different events along

the way that have been attended and he welcomed everyone back again to the Illinois Main Street State Conference which will be held November 12 through November 14, 2024, in Batavia, Illinois. As a Main Street community, all of the councilmembers and City officials are welcome to attend the conference. On behalf of the Main Street Organization, he thanked the City for their partnership.

ORDINANCE NO. 24-22: ORDINANCE AMENDING CITY CODE 90-7, TITLE IX: GENERAL REGULATIONS, CHAPTER 95: PARKS AND RECREATION, ADDING SECTION 95.30: PROHIBITING UNSUPERVISED MINORS AT CENTRAL PARK:

Councilman Plank moved to approve an ordinance amending City Code 90-7, Title IX: General Regulations, Chapter 95: Parks and Recreation, adding Section 95.30: Prohibiting Unsupervised Minors at Central Park, seconded by Councilman Ayres

Councilman Dettmers asked if the sidewalks surrounding Central Park are considered a part of the park.

Mayor Stalcup asked Chief of Police Brad Wells to answer the question.

Chief Wells stated that he considers the sidewalks surrounding Central Park part of the same area.

Councilman Dettmers asked if the parking lot is also a part of Central Park.

Chief Wells replied in the affirmative.

Councilman Dettmers stated that he is reluctant to approve this ordinance, not because he is not in favor having safe parks but because he does not know how the City will enforce this ordinance.

Chief Wells replied that it will be up to the Police Department to enforce it.

Councilman Dettmers stated that the City just spent 11 million dollars on a Recreation Center and the big draw for that was that it is something for the youth and now the youth cannot go there unless they have a 25-year-old supervising them. They cannot even be on the grounds.

City Manager Steve Palen replied that the park area is different than the Recreation Center.

Councilman Dettmers replied that it is in the park, it says Central Park.

Chief Wells replied that the park itself is "Central Park", and the Roundhouse and the Recreation Center have their own set of rules.

City Manager Steve Palen stated that the Recreation Center has rules about kids being unsupervised, he thinks the age they must be for them to be unsupervised is 13 years old.

Councilman Dettmers asked how they are supposed to get to the Recreation Center if they cannot go through the park.

Councilman Plank replied that he hopes that the police will not monitor that closely.

Councilman Dettmers stated that is his point, they are violating the ordinance by the mere fact that they are walking on the sidewalk or in the parking lot to get to the Recreation Center.

Chief Wells replied that there is not a policeman at the Wood River Police Department that is going to violate someone for walking to the Recreation Center.

Councilman Dettmers replied then that confirms his concern, the City is discriminating.

Chief Wells told Councilman Dettmers that he can say that if he wants, but this is not discrimination against anyone. The problem is that there are mothers of small children who cannot go to that playground. He has received phone calls regarding this. One person called him saying that they have the option of sending their five-year-old to either Roxana School District or Wood River School District, and after a trip to the playground at Central Park and seeing the way the juvenile delinquents were bullying other kids, taking over the playground and the language that they were using, they will send their child to Roxana School District. That is the greeting card the City is giving. The City spent \$450,000.00 on that playground, and small children cannot play on it due to

October 21, 2024

juvenile delinquency. When they have those disturbances at Central Park now and the Police Department shows up, there are generational people that do not like the Police and they are feeding that down to their children, and when officers show up, they will not hardly give the officer their name much less information about who was fighting and how the problem started. His officers are spending a lot of time there trying to sort these incidents out. Councilman Dettmers asked if the City will be posting signs at Central Park. Chief Wells replied in the affirmative. Chief Wells then explained that the time his officers are spending down at the park trying to sort out the incidents is becoming cumbersome to the point where he is going to need to place an officer at the park around the clock. He is not sure that the City Council or the City Manager is ready to start adding Policemen to his budget to furnish and uniform a policeman to stand in Central Park to police these activities. He stated that he spends a lot of time worrying about this town and the security of this town. This is one of the issues that he has spent a lot of time on thinking about how the City will address these issues. This is the best solution that he can come up with right now and he stated if someone has a better solution, he is all ears and he is all for it.

Councilman Dettmers stated that no one contacted him about the ordinance that is on the agenda contrary to what the Mayor said. He had no idea that this was coming and that is why he is asking questions about the ordinance.

Councilman Ayres asked what security measures the City currently has at Central Park.

Chief Brad Wells stated that there are cameras there currently. He also has his dispatchers watch and monitor those cameras so when groups start to congregate at Central Park, they can send an officer down there if an officer is available. Also, if the officers are not on another call for service, he has them patrolling the area of Central Park especially when school is letting out and the kids start to congregate. He stated that City Manager Steve Palen asked the Director of Parks and Recreation to remove the tables from the pavilion at Central Park to see if that would help curve the activity, but it has not seemed to slow it down.

It was confirmed that the cameras in place at Central Park are working cameras. Discussion ensued regarding some of the blind spots at the park that the cameras do not pick up.

Chief Wells stated that he thinks that the idea behind this is as the groups start to congregate, that is what will get the Police Department's attention, and the individuals that are starting the trouble are generally the individuals that the Police have problems with in other areas as well, but when the Police get there, the individuals do not cooperate and his officers have to spend a tremendous amount of time trying to sort it out. If the City has this ordinance in place, it will give the officer pretty quick authority to bring it to a resolution. His hope is that once it is out there and the signs are up it will bring the activity down and the parents with small children will start coming back to Central Park, which is what the City wants.

Councilman Plank asked where the signs will be located.

Chief Wells explained that he and the Director of Parks and Recreation have discussed what the signs should say, but they have not come to a final determination at this time. Once the language is finalized, they will spend time picking out the best locations for the signs. The signs will be very visible, and the signs will also include the non-emergency phone number to the Police Department.

Councilman Dettmers asked how many incidents there have been at Central Park.

Chief Wells explained that it has been numerous incidents, and it is becoming a regular occurrence. He also stated that the incident that was brought up earlier in the meeting did not take place at Central Park. That incident took place across the street on Eckhard and some of the people that witnessed that incident ran to the Recreation Center for safety. Discussion ensued regarding Chief Wells having a conversation with the Superintendent of East Alton Wood River Community High School and the Superintendent is one hundred percent behind getting this issue resolved.

City Attorney Mike McGinley explained that drafting ordinances of this nature is not always simple. What the City will rely on is the discretion of the Police Department to utilize this ordinance as another tool that they can use when necessary. It allows them to cite those who need to be cited and to have the legal means to instill order. That is the purpose of this ordinance and if there are any holes in the ordinance, the City can amend the ordinance at a later time.

Councilman Dettmers stated that he would like to confirm that the City has no other option but to pass this ordinance to protect the citizens that go to Central Park.

Chief Wells replied that he cannot think of a better solution right now. He asked Councilman Dettmers if he can think of a better solution.

Councilman Dettmers replied that he wants an answer from Chief Wells.

Chief Wells replied that he had already answered the question. He cannot think of a better solution, and he has spent a lot of time thinking about it.

City Manager Steve Palen replied that the City put a lot of thought into this, they spoke to the Director of Parks and Recreation Pat Minogue, Mayor Stalcup, and corporate counsel to figure out how to get a handle on it. Maybe sometime in the future if things mellow out at the park the ordinance could be lifted but right now someone is going to get seriously hurt. The ones that should be using the park are not able to because of this.

Councilman Dettmers stated that he does not know anything about these incidents, this is news to him.

City Manager Steve Palen replied that these are police incidents.

Councilman Dettmers replied that he was not being informed about the incidents.

City Manager Steve Palen asked Councilman Dettmers if he wants to be informed of all police reports.

Councilman Dettmers replied no, but he was not aware of the specifics in Central Park.

Councilman Plank stated that he takes his kids to that park on a regular basis, and the playground is great. He has seen some teenagers there making some noise, but he did not think much of it at the time. He now thinks he should have said something to them because even though they were not bothering him, they could have been bothering other people and it does not mean other incidents have not occurred. He is in favor of doing something for sure from a personal perspective. It is a nice playground in a nice area and the City needs to keep it that way.

Discussion ensued regarding Central Park. City Manager Steve Palen stated that they are more concerned about the law-abiding citizens who want to use that facility and who should be using that facility as opposed to whether or not they are going to hurt someone's feelings because they cannot congregate underneath the pavilion after school. Councilman Dettmers asked if the kids are coming out of the high school and congregating in the park. City Manager Steve Palen replied that it is the place to hang out. Councilman Dettmers replied that he thought the police are there as soon as they got out of school. City Manager Steve Palen replied that he does not think they sit at Central Park. Councilman Dettmers replied that they sit across the street. City Manager Steve Palen replied there is a resource officer at the school, but he does not know if they have a car stationed there every day. Chief Wells replied it depends on calls for service. If he had enough manpower, he would put someone at Central Park 24 hours a day. City Manager Steve Palen replied that an officer will be there as long as someone is available. Councilman Dettmers stated that he has seen them there. City Manager Steve Palen replied that the police may be there often. City Manager Steve Palen stated that for the City it is the best solution to get the people who should be using that park to be able to use the park, which is why the wording is the way it is in the ordinance. Councilman Dettmers replied that he still thinks there is going to be a problem with the ordinance. City Manager Steve Palen reiterated what City Attorney Mike McGinley said, the Council can amend the ordinance at any time.

The ordinance was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)

NAYS: None (0)

ORDINANCE NO. 2912: ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2434 TO AMEND TERRITORY OF THE RIVERBEND ENTERPRISE ZONE:

Councilman Ayres moved to approve an ordinance amending Ordinance No. 2434 to amend

October 21, 2024

territory of the Riverbend Enterprise Zone, seconded by Councilman Plank, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)
NAYS: None (0)

ORDINANCE NO. 2913: ORDINANCE AMENDING THE RIVERBEND ENTERPRISE ZONE INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT:

Councilman Plank moved to approve an ordinance amending the Riverbend Enterprise Zone Intergovernmental Agreement, seconded by Councilman Ayres, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)
NAYS: None (0)

RESOLUTION NO. 2091: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT WITH SPECTRUM ENTERPRISE FOR HIGH-SPEED INTERNET SERVICES AT THE POLICE STATION:

Councilman Ayres moved to approve a resolution authorizing the execution of an agreement with Spectrum Enterprise for high-speed internet services at the Police Station, as submitted by the Chief of Police, seconded by Councilman Plank

Councilman Dettmers asked who the City is currently using for internet services.

City Manager Steve Palen replied it is Spectrum currently, but it is 100GB now and will be 500GB at a cheaper rate with this agreement.

Councilman Dettmers asked if the City had to put this out for bid.

City Manager Steve Palen replied in the negative.

The resolution was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)
NAYS: None (0)

RESOLUTION NO. 2092: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY TO FILE THE NECESSARY DOCUMENTS TO INTERVENE IN THE PROCEEDING BEFORE THE MADISON COUNTY BOARD OF REVIEW BY WAL MART REAL ESTATE, DESCRIBED AS PARCEL ID 19-2-08-23-00-000-017, AND LOCATED AT 610 WESLEY DRIVE, WOOD RIVER, ILLINOIS 62095:

Councilman Plank moved to approve a resolution authorizing the Prosecuting Attorney to file necessary documents to intervene in the proceeding before the Madison County Board of Review by Wal Mart Real Estate, described as Parcel ID 19-2-08-23-00-000-017, and located at 610 Wesley Drive, Wood River, Illinois 62095, seconded by Councilman Ayres

Councilman Dettmers asked what the current assessment is on this property.

City Manager Steve Palen replied that he believes it is just over five million dollars.

Councilman Dettmers asked if there was a change over the prior year.

City Manager Steve Palen replied that Wal Mart is asking for a change, anytime it is over a \$100,000.00 change, municipalities are allowed to intervene, meaning they would send someone to plead their case on why the City would not want them to reduce it by more than half.

Councilman Dettmers wanted to clarify that the assessed value is roughly five million dollars and now they are challenging that wanting to lower it to two million dollars.

City Manager Steve Palen replied that is correct.

Councilman Dettmers asked what the assessment was last year.

City Manager Steve Palen replied it was roughly five million dollars.

Councilman Dettmers asked why they would reduce the assessment like this.

City Manager Steve Palen replied that he heard Wal Mart is going through the entire state, doing this for all their buildings.

Councilman Dettmers stated that he is going to vote for this, but he has a very big concern about it. This is not uncommon for Wal Mart to use this to decide if they are going to stay or go. He has talked about the revenues from this entity, and he is concerned that if the City challenges it, the City could be cutting their own throats.

City Manager Steve Palen replied that the times he has talked to the manager at the store, who has been there for a long time, he tells him that the Wood River store is one of the highest-grossing Wal Marts in the Country.

City Attorney Mike McGinley stated that with tax challenges, large corporate entities ask for massive cuts in their property taxes, and it is not just Wal Mart. This is something that he does not think will stop at any time, they are going to keep coming back asking for their taxes to get cut repeatedly.

Councilman Plank asked if Wal Mart would still contest it even if the City does not get involved. He stated that the outcome may not necessarily change.

City Manager Steve Palen replied that he does not think they will win but they may get somewhat of a cut in taxes.

Councilman Plank replied that it does seem like a pretty steep change.

City Attorney Mike McGinley replied what seems to be happening is they will take a challenge to the Board, the Board will for instance deny their request then they will appeal it up to Springfield, Illinois to the PTAB (Property Tax Appeal Board), and then whoever their attorney is will work with the City's Attorney and try to figure out some sort of a resolution. All they are trying to do is get a cut in their taxes. The issue is that just because the taxes get cut for Wal Mart does not necessarily mean that the tax base goes away, but pieces of that tax get spread out to all the people in the community. So, everyone else's taxes go up, but Wal Mart's taxes go down and that is what is troubling about this.

The resolution was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)

NAYS: None (0)

RESOLUTION NO. 2093: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A FRANCHISE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF WOOD RIVER AND SPECTRUM MID-AMERICA, LLC DBA CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS:

Councilman Plank moved to approve a resolution authorizing the execution of a Franchise Agreement between the City of Wood River and Spectrum Mid-America, LLC dba Charter Communications, as submitted by the City Manager, seconded by Councilman Ayres

Councilman Dettmers asked if Spectrum has a current agreement with the City.

City Manager Steve Palen replied the City has a Franchise Agreement with them that expired around six months ago. The City has been going back and forth negotiating and reviewing the agreement with Spectrum.

Councilman Dettmers asked City Manager Steve Palen to explain exactly what this agreement means.

City Manager Steve Palen explained that the City is giving them the right to use the City's right of ways but when the City needs their facilities moved, Spectrum does it at their cost.

Councilman Dettmers asked if this is something that had to go through the bidding process.

October 21, 2024

City Manager Steve Palen replied in the negative.

The resolution was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)

NAYS: None (0)

APPROVED: RECOMMENDATION TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL FROM SIDWELL TO UPDATE THE CITY OF WOOD RIVER'S ZONING MAP:

Councilman Ayres moved to approve a recommendation to accept the proposal from Sidwell to update the City of Wood River's Zoning Map, as submitted by the Building and Zoning Administrator, seconded by Councilman Plank

Councilman Dettmers stated that he read the proposals, and he did not see an annual cost for Cloudpoint which is not the company that is being recommended but on the proposal for Sidwell there is a \$700.00 annual cost. He then asked how long the contract is if the City accepts the recommendation for Sidwell.

Building and Zoning Administrator Brad Wells replied that it will be perpetual.

City Manager Steve Palen stated that it has been hard to get companies to respond to the request for proposals for the zoning map. He figured it would be a relatively simple job, but the City only received a couple of proposals for it.

Councilman Dettmers suggests seeking proposals again for this in three to four years.

The recommendation was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)

NAYS: None (0)

APPROVED: RECOMMENDATION TO RENEW THE CITY'S PROPERTY, LIABILITY, WORKERS' COMPENSATION, AND CYBER LIABILITY INSURANCE WITH IML/RMA:

Councilman Dettmers moved to approve a recommendation to renew the City's property, liability, workers' compensation, and cyber liability insurance with IML/RMA, as submitted by the Finance Director, seconded by Councilman Ayres, and approved by the following vote:

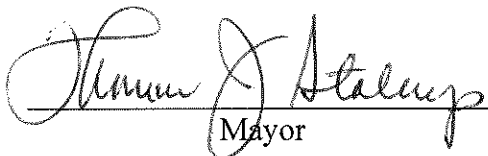
AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)

NAYS: None (0)

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:44 p.m.



Mayor



City Clerk