

REGULAR SESSION, COMMON COUNCIL, JANUARY 8, 2018

Be it Remembered that the Common Council of the City of Plymouth, Indiana, met in regular session on January 8, 2018. The meeting was held in the meeting room of the Plymouth Fire Department, 111 N. Center St., Plymouth, IN. The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m.

Mayor Senter led the Pledge of Allegiance and Council Member Ecker offered prayer.

Mayor Senter presided for Councilmembers Culp, Ecker, Grobe, Houin, Milner and Walters. Councilman Cook was absent.

Council Members Ecker and Milner moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the last regular Common Council meeting on December 27, 2017, as presented. The motion carried.

Council Members Culp and Grobe moved and seconded to elect Council Member Ecker as Mayor Pro Tempore. The motion carried.

Council Members Houin and Ecker moved and seconded to adopt the same meeting dates as the Board of Public Works and Safety. Meeting times will remain at 6:30 or immediately following the Board of Works meeting and meeting dates will remain the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month with the following exceptions:

- Monday, May 28th meeting will now be Monday, May 21st
- Monday, November 12th meeting will now be Tuesday, November 13th
- Monday, December 24th meeting will now be Wednesday, December 26th

The motion carried.

City Attorney Surrisi opened discussion regarding the central dispatch fees charged by the county. He explained that the Center Township and West Township Trustees have asked the city to pay their dispatch fees. They feel this is appropriate due to the language in the contracts we have with them from 2013. West Township Trustee Terry Borggren was present to discuss the views of the townships and answer any questions.

Surrisi discussed the totals calculated by the county based on population and volume of calls. The city's contracted amount with the county is \$126,354.00 annually. The county calculated and billed Center Township for \$4,000.00 and West Township for \$2,759.00.

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Grobe asked if the townships had any contract with the county for these services. Borggren said no, they are only contracted with the City of Plymouth. Grobe said if the contract between the city and the townships states that the city will pay these costs, then it would be wise to determine if the services rendered by the county are in line with the amount they are invoicing.

Surrisi said the agreements with the townships as written state that the city is privy to pay all costs.

Council Members Culp and Milner moved and seconded to authorize the clerk-treasurer to pay the Center and West Townships' invoices from the county. The motion carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Xaver asked the council to authorize City Attorney Surrisi to draft a resolution for the next meeting to transfer cash from the Rainy Day Fund to the Plymouth Greenways Trail Project Fund in the amount of \$250,000 to cover the city's share of the project and to keep the fund in the black through the cycle of being reimbursed by the State of Indiana.

Grobe asked if the reimbursement funds go back into the Rainy Day Fund. Xaver said the funds get receipted into the Plymouth Greenways Trail Project Fund, however the council can put in their motion that at the end of this phase of the project, all those reimbursed funds go back into the Rainy Day Fund.

Council Member Grobe and Ecker moved and seconded to authorize City Attorney Surrisi to draft the resolution to move \$250,000 from the Rainy Day Fund into the Plymouth Greenways Trail Project Fund with the stipulation that the reimbursed funds go back into the Rainy Day Fund at the end of this phase of the project. The motion carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Xaver notified the Council that in 2017 the city was told to expect just under \$6.4 million in property taxes. The city only received \$5.9 million, which is a short fall of \$452,000. The difference is likely made up of tax abatements, property tax appeals, and unpaid property taxes. Xaver asked the Council at the July 10, 2017 meeting how they intended to offset the new expenses for the police and fire department raises with additional income. It was discussed that the user fees needed to be addressed. A sub-committee of volunteers was formed at the August 28, 2017 meeting to review the city's

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user fee rates throughout all departments in the city. Xaver asked where the subcommittee was in their process of evaluating these fees and recommending increases.

Houin said the committee has met several times and they are working on reviewing current fees for the city as well as other surrounding cities. Surrisi asked if the committee would like to piece-meal information as they get through each department or if they would rather receive information and make decisions in a lump-sum. Houin said it would be nice to receive information in piece-meal from department heads whenever they have that information together. Xaver reminded the committee that the upcoming budget discussions will begin in about four months. Houin said an update can be provided by the committee at the next Council meeting.

The Promotion of the City Coordinator, Laura Mann, addressed the council with the following update:

2017 was spent trying to dispel the myth that “there’s nothing to do in Plymouth”. As the promotion of the city coordinator, I joined forces with quite a few different folks to create, organize, promote and execute events in Plymouth.

Social Media has become how our residents receive information. Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are among the ways The City of Plymouth communicates with the world. In 2017, we gained 917 new “likes” on Facebook. We went from 1866 to 2783. In the world of marketing, an impression is the number of times a post from your page is displayed, whether the post is clicked or not. People may see multiple impressions of the same post. For example, someone might see a page update in the News Feed once, and then a second time if a friend shares it. For 2017, the City of Plymouth’s Facebook impression count averaged over 44,000 weekly. To show how important our Social Media reach has become, I will use a post from December 27th as an example. Due to the frigid temperatures, a warming station was created for citizens to utilize if necessary. This information was dispersed to the local media and Marshall County EMA but it was also put on our Social Media sites. On the Facebook post alone, it was seen by 27,800 people and shared 355 times. This is an amazing way to quickly spread important information.

During 2017, I spoke to Lions Club, Rotary, Harvest House, Kiwanis and even did the Welcome to Plymouth at the Indiana Street Superintendent’s Conference at Swan Lake Resort. I was able to inform these groups about what was happening in our City and let them know that we were available to help promote their organizations. I also was a guest on WTCA and MAX 98.3 quite a few times to promote events.

Mayor Senter hosted the Northern Indiana Mayors Roundtable luncheon, which brings approximately 18 Mayors to our City along with numerous engineers, architects and consultants. The event was held at Opie’s Deli in the City Center. We also hosted a luncheon

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for the Indiana Mayors Assistants organization this year. There were 20 Mayor's Assistants here to explore our City. After a great lunch, they were able to explore the Marshall County Museum and the downtown shops.

A couple of highlights from 2017 were the return of the Latino Fest and the Holiday Parade & Christmas Tree Lighting. After 7 years, the City of Plymouth spearheaded the return of the Latino Fest. This event was given a huge financial boost by receiving a grant from the Marshall County Community Foundation and we also secured numerous sponsors. A committee was formed with a diverse cross-section of the Hispanic community to make this event something that would be well attended. In 5 short hours we had lucha libre, amazing food, flamenco dancing, a quincenera dress fashion show, vendors and music. Attendance was estimated at over 2500 people. Planning has already begun for 2018 and the event will be an all-day party!

Dueling fireworks capped off an amazing evening that included a holiday parade with 22 units...up from 8 units in 2016, the arrival of the big guy in red, the illumination of the tree and an amazing light and music show at River Park Square. We estimate that more than 3000 people filled the downtown for this event.

The City hosts a blood drive every 56 days. The South Bend Medical Foundation brings their mobile unit to either River Park Square during the Farmer's Market or at the Fire Station during the winter months. Blood collected by the South Bend Medical Foundation stays in our community hospitals. In 2017, 146 units were collected at the City's Blood Drives. Each unit can save up to 3 local lives so we potentially saved 438 local lives!

One of my favorite parts of my job is being one of the Adult Advisors for the Mayor's Youth Council. This group of young people is outstanding! 2017 has been one of reorganization, better direction and getting things done. As the Adult Advisor, I believe it is my role to let them drive their own direction with only necessary direction from me. It is their plan to expand the Earth Day Event that they execute. They want to get the community more involved with larger projects. It is their intent to do mulch work at River Park Square this spring.

The City became a co-host with Discover Plymouth for the Downtown Tractor Show in 2017. The show was bigger than the years past and we hope to keep growing! Michigan Street was full of all sorts of tractors and engines! 2018 will bring numerous new ideas for the show.

The Park Department has hosted the Coca-Cola Family Fun Day for many years. This year we decided to step it up a bit. The Recreation Director and I approached Frances Ellert at Coke and asked him to increase his sponsorship so we could expand the event. He was more than happy to help us out! With the extra sponsorship we were able to add a band, more children's games and bounce houses. This event has turned into an amazing day for families in our community.

Volunteerism is a personal mission of mine that I want to spread throughout our City. I am very thankful that the City Department Heads were happy to help with a volunteer project that is very important to many children in this community. Our Department Heads and employees took an hour out of their day to help pack backpacks for the Blessings in a

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Backpack program. This program feeds hundreds of children every weekend. The Mayor's Youth Council took time out of their morning to help pack backpacks, too.

With the loss of 2 large employers, the Mayor's Office wanted to help displaced workers find a new job. We joined forces with WorkOne to host a Job Fair. 30 employers came out to meet potential employees and let them know about potential opportunities at their companies. Over 100 job-seekers visited the Job Fair. We have heard from numerous employers about how successful the Job Fair was for them.

The Mayor's Month of Music will be the highlight of the summer again in 2018. There are 5 Fridays in August this year and each one will be filled with awesome, FREE music at River Park Square. We have added food trucks to the concession stand so everyone can come down for dinner, too.

Please like us on Facebook, add us on Twitter and Instagram and join us in dispelling the myth that there is nothing to do in Plymouth!!

Mayor Senter offered the privilege of the floor. There were no comments.

Members Ecker and Milner moved and seconded to accept the following communications:

Minutes of the Board of Public Works and Safety meeting of December 27, 2017;
Minutes of the Board of Aviation Commissioners meeting of November 14, 2017;
Minutes of the Board of Zoning Appeals meeting of October 3, 2017;
Letters from Center and West Townships to Mayor and Clerk-Treasurer re: Central Dispatch;
Letter from James Clevenger re: Intergovernmental Agreement for Planning Services;
Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services Agreement between the City of Plymouth and Center Township (signed 9/24/13);
Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services Agreement between the City of Plymouth and West Township (signed 11/23/13)

The motion carried.

There being no further business to discuss, Council Members Ecker and Grobe moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting was declared adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Jeanine M. Xaver, IAMC / CMC
Clerk-Treasurer

APPROVED

Mark Senter, Mayor