

**COMMISSION ON PUBLIC WORKS/UTILITIES
COUNCIL ROOM
MARCH 13, 2018
6:45 P.M.**

The Commission on Public Works/Utilities met in regular session, Chair Quicker presiding. On roll call: Council Member Glassbrenner absent, all other members present.

The minutes of the previous meeting were declared approved.

Director of Public Works Flynn reported on no burials at the Cemetery, snow and ice removal from streets, sidewalks and hockey rink, trimming and pruning trees, maintaining street lighting, filling potholes, cleaning up brush and compost piles, working on the Emerald Ash Borer Tree Grant project, the iron removal/backwash control panel at the water booster plant is having major issues, parts are no longer available, the cost to replace and upgrade the controls are approximately \$39,500, the Sewer Department is preparing to do some system flow monitoring-evaluating high infiltration areas.

Motion Neville, second Counsell, to adjourn. All Aye.

Jerry L. Quicker, Chair

Rex R. Roehl, Clerk

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**COMMON COUNCIL
COUNCIL ROOM
MARCH 13, 2018
7:00 P.M.**

The Common Council met in regular session, Mayor Mabie presiding. On roll call: Council Member Glassbrenner absent, all other members present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The minutes of the previous meeting were declared approved.

Council Member Neville reported on the March 8, 2018 meeting of the Heritage Days Committee regarding: 1) financial report, 2) discussion on possible new events, bands, sponsorship, Tim's Toyz, volunteers and additional help, 3) discussion on go-carts-no action taken, and 4) Grand Marshalls will be Kirk and Nancy Roman.

Council Member Quicker reported on the March 13, 2018 meeting on the Commission on Public Works/Utilities regarding current activities.

Mayor Mabie declared all reports filed as presented with the City Clerk.

Council Member Clough introduced James Schneider UW-Extension/Grant County CONRAD Agent and Melissa Kono UW-Extension/Clark County CONRAD Agent.

Council Member Clough stated the First Impression Program is a program for community improvement where a group of people from each other's communities visit and follow a set list of questions to gather a first impression. The CONRAD Agents compile the comments for the communities use.

James Schneider stated that no matter how much a community plans you are at the mercy of someone's first impression-a five minute stop. When you live in a community you get so use to things, you don't see them anymore or you are afraid to say something, because you are too close to a person for an honest look. It helps if someone from the outside says the same things you were thinking. This is not just a critical assessment, it looks at the good things too.

Schneider stated that you have some darn friendly people in this town. If only you could clone Mrs. Dee Zimmerman at the Clark County Press. The steps of the visit:

- 1) Perception before visiting- what did I expect?
- 2) Checking out the community in advance via website and social media.
60-70% of the people go to the internet on mobile devices; make websites mobile friendly; the City website's first page with "How Can I" was really helpful, but sections like employment opportunities were outdated; the Chamber's website needs real work, maybe do a billboard type of site, the Chamber's Facebook page is extremely well done with good business information
- 3) Five minute drive through without stopping and participants wrote down impressions without talking to each other.
You get a wildly different impression based on what direction you enter from-the views; the conditions of the streets; not a lot of people walking the streets; the Catholic Church was wonderful
- 4) Signage.
Welcome signs are always a fight with the state highway people; the FFA has several real nice signs, but they need some tender loving care (brush trimming, cleanup); the big brown chamber signs are truly not visible, they blend into the trees, etc.; way finding signs-nice job with one or two things like the hockey rink, once you get to many things it becomes very challenging when you are driving, we could find many things, but not your school
- 5) Downtown.
Downtowns have challenges-one word for you "paint". Hire high schoolers to paint, the more you talk about paint, the more it happens to encourage people
- 6) Businesses.
You have an impressive looking industrial park; the Cummins white on black sign is instantly readable; the Tech College is visible
- 7) Residential.
Encourage the rehab of older homes, since you have so many gorgeous Victorian homes, set the tune by providing house assistance-paint, etc.
- 8) Park and Playground.
The Skateboard Park says kids are welcomes; parks are a positive for families that have kids.
- 9) Hospital, Clinics, health services.
Nice mix, very positive
- 10) Walking around.
The transformer station by O'Neill Creek is ugly, maybe working with the utility a facade could be put up; the Gazebo was loved by everyone-make it a community center focal point; lunch at Schmitt's-there was a birthday party going on, everyone was laughing and having a good time, waitress was very friendly; no one seemed to know where the Chamber of Commerce was, once we found it, it was closed with no set hours-call for appointment (the same with the museum) the more you can do to keep these open or have regular hours the better; do things to have more people outdoors; came into City Hall, people friendly and helpful, but hard to find, the front door lettering was hidden by a great big plant out front
- 11) General items.
No problems parking; increase availability of Wi-Fi and phone signals (make free Wi-Fi available); What does your community-smell like, taste like, sound like, feel like; the fairgrounds is impressive; the tour guide is well done; it's a snowmobile /ATV friendly community; a quite agricultural community; radio station could use paint; the town doesn't match the people; would return again to the Highground, not so much for the rest of the town;

the Industrial Business Park says this is a skilled workforce; the Retail Business Areas not so much

12) The Highground.

The view is stunning, breathtaking and humbling; there is a strong disconnect between the City and the Highground, not embracing it, not a part of it, this is a missed opportunity for both.

Schneider stated that we don't expect you to agree with everything, but it is a starting point for discussion.

Deanna Heiman, Vice President of Neillsville Improvement Corporation (NIC), thanked Schneider and the Fennimore, WI group and Melissa Kono for introducing and coordinating the project. NIC has discussed the report and insights. Projects they would like to pursue: Entry signage, connecting downtown to the Highground, and face lifts (painting downtown buildings).

Mayor Mabie on behalf of the Common Council thanked Schneider.

Chief of Police Klueckmann reported on February 2018 complaints, citations, warnings and investigations. The 2016 Chevy Tahoe has been having mechanical problems and General Motors (GM) replaced the motor under warranty. The overnight parking restrictions on residential areas have been lifted due to spring thaw.

City Clerk Roehl reported that after last meeting's discussion on Airbnb's (Bed & Breakfast) and VRBO's (Vacation Rentals by Owners) a letter was sent to the Airbnb owner with the informational packet, City ordinances and room tax forms. The owner filed and paid the room taxes for 2014 through 2017, had no rentals for 2018 and declared they will no longer operate as an Airbnb, resigning from the program.

Tavern Operator's License Applications:

Chris G Behne

Motion Quicker, second Clough, to grant. All Aye.

Motion Neville, second Counsell, that City Bills Nos. 217 to 265 in the amount of \$144,583.81 be paid. All Aye.

Motion Counsell, second Neville, to adjourn. All Aye.

Steven J. Mabie, Mayor

Rex R. Roehl, Clerk

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