

SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

AUGUST 21, 2012

Larry Siegel, Council President, called the Regular Meeting of the Syracuse Town Council to order at 7:02 p.m. Other council members present were Jeff Morgan, Bill Musser, Paul Stoelting, and Brian Woody. Also present were Town Manager Henry DeJulia, Town Attorney Mike Reed, and Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Town Attorney Mike Reed opened the Public Hearing for the Patrick Industries tax abatement request; he announced the council will also consider a Confirmatory Resolution designating 203 S Huntington St. as an economic revitalization area. George Robertson, President of the Kosciusko Economic Development Corporation, spoke. He advised Patrick Industries acquired AIA Countertops; since the acquisition, they have added 70 new employees and doubled the sales. Patrick Industries plans to add 65 more new jobs; an incentive package from Kedco and the State of Indiana was put together. In addition, since Patrick Industries will be purchasing an empty building, they are eligible for a three year property tax abatement. Mr. Robertson added the equipment abatement would be for 10 years. Patrick Industries bought the building for half the assessed value; they will be making improvements that will bring it back up to the previous assessed value. He asked the council if there were questions; the council had none.

Sharon Fowler, of Pittsburgh St., questioned the 10 year abatement for 26 jobs. Mr. Robertson explained the 10 year abatement is for equipment only; the 26 jobs are immediate, with 65 projected. Sharon commented about the homes and jobs lost in the area.

There were no further public comments; Mike Reed closed the public comment portion of the Public Hearing. He announced Confirmatory Resolution 12-04 is before the council. The Declaratory Resolution 12-03 designated the property as an Economic Revitalization Area, with a three year abatement on the real estate and ten years on new equipment. The building will be abated 100%, then 66%, and finally 33% according to the SB-1. The SB-1's submitted with the Declaratory Resolution would then become a part of the Confirmatory Resolution. Paul moved to adopt Resolution 12-04, A Confirmatory Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Syracuse: Larry seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Larry asked for Public Comment from the floor on agenda items. Jerry Gouker, of Flow Technics, spoke about the booster station for the North Industrial Park utility expansion. Recently bids were accepted for the project. After the bids were opened, Mr. Gouker stated he was asked by Wightman Petrie to submit a quote for a product that was equal to the one specified in the bid specs. He also stated the Flow Technics quote was \$100,000.00 less than the original supplier. He asked the council to take the Flow Technics quote into consideration; he feels their product is comparable or even better than what was specified in the bid specs. Mr. Gouker added it bothers him that the sole source bid was unreasonably high. He went on to state Wightman Petrie has contacted the original contractor looking for ways to reduce the project; the Flow Technics quote was submitted based on design specifications.

The minutes of the July 17, 2012 council meeting were presented for approval. Paul moved to approve the minutes; Brian seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Paul moved to approve claims #831 through #968. Brian seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Ken Jones, of Wightman Petrie, gave his monthly update on the North Industrial Park project. He announced we just received approval from EDA to sign the construction contracts. Mr. Jones

discussed a pay item on the bids that came in higher than estimated. He explained he contacted H & G (the low bidder on the contract), not Flow Technics, about the specs. He stated John Milner, of H & G, suggested he could contact another vendor. Mr. Jones added the water booster station was designed around a specific product, which is manufactured by Precision Instruments. Wightman Petrie advised H & G it would be okay to check with other vendors to see if the contractor can provide an equal product from a different vendor that would reduce the costs. Mr. Jones stated Wightman Petrie also asked the contractor to set a response deadline when they contacted other vendors. Mr. Jones advised additional bids were received from the original vendor, Gasvoda, and from Flow Technics. Such things as making the enclosure smaller, as well as moving the generator outside, were looked at. Wightman Petrie met with H & G Underground Services to go over the proposals. The new quotes received were significantly lower than expected; all were reviewed and met standards. Mr. Jones noted the contractor set a deadline of August 10 to receive proposals; an additional submittal was made after that date from the original subcontractor. The original bid from subcontractor was lowered by \$107,000.00 and met the specs exactly. Since that time, Flow Technics has reduced their quote; the latest reduction was received yesterday. Mr. Jones added that particular pay item on the bids was high and worthy of scrutiny. He would like to look at what was received; he is not prepared to make a recommendation tonight. Mr. Jones stated he would like to discuss this with Henry, the Town Attorney, and EDA before he makes a recommendation to make sure everything is done properly. Larry asked if this will delay the project. Mr. Jones explained it will not delay the project. The council can still sign the contract; this would be a change order. Mike Reed will check on the timing issue and provide input before a decision is made.

Paul made a motion to authorize the Town Council President to sign the contract with H & G Underground Utilities of Indiana for \$1,903,604.00, and the contract with Cripe Excavating for \$887,683.55. Brian seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Additional Appropriation Ordinance 12-09 was introduced; the ordinance appropriates \$800,000.00 in the EDIT Fund for the town's share of the EDA grant. Brian moved to approve the ordinance; Bill seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Ordinance 12-10, An Ordinance Clarifying Ordinance 11-04, An Ordinance Annexing Certain Territory to the Town of Syracuse, was introduced. Paul moved to adopt the ordinance; Bill seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager Henry DeJulia asked the council to approve and authorize the council president to sign an agreement with Region III-A for administrative services for the CDBG grant for Oakwood Park. Paul moved to approve the agreement and authorize Larry to sign; Jeff seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Henry reported work continues on the property switch with Polywood. A legal description has been done; a drawing is needed to match the description of the property. He announced Mike Reed is working with the Oakwood attorney on a general utility easement, and on the transfer of roads and other easements.

Henry announced that Don Cowan has resigned from the Syracuse BZA; Mr. Cowan's term ends December 31, 2014. He recommended Jim Allegret, who now serves as the proxy, be appointed to fulfill

Mr. Cowan's term. Paul moved to appoint Jim Allegret to fulfill the remainder of Don Cowan's term on the BZA; Bill seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

POLICE

Police Chief Tony Ciriello reported there were 441 calls for service in July. The first day of school was last week; he reported there were no incidents. Tony is working with the school on new safety policies.

PARK

Park Superintendent Chad Jonsson reported a Tai Chi class will begin next Wednesday. The last day for the Farmer's Market is October 13; the last day for the lifeguards is September 2. Progress continues on the Youth Athletic Complex. The sprinklers have been installed in 2 ½ fields, building interiors are being worked on, and the fence was delivered yesterday. Nipsco has begun the electric installation, and Chad and Garrett are taking care of other items.

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Director Jeremy Sponseller announced paving should be completed Wednesday and Thursday. The valves installed by G & G Hauling have been completed. The water leak from Chicago St is fixed and has been completely repaired. The fire hydrant at Lake and Main has been replaced; more work was needed since it was discovered there were no isolation valves and line stops were needed.

Jeremy requested permission to purchase trees for the fall planting. The low quote was from Blue Grass Farms at \$1,450.00 for 11 trees. Paul moved to approve the purchase. Jeff seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Larry thanked Phend & Brown for their fast work to complete Northshore Dr before the Triathlon.

CLERK

Clerk Treasurer Julie Kline reminded everyone that the last day for weekly recycling will be August 27. Recycling will then be every other week until next May.

Julie announced she will be advertising the 2013 budgets on August 29 and September 5. The first reading and public hearing is set for the September 18 council meeting, and the final reading and adoption is set for the October 16 council meeting. The budget also must be submitted for County Council review by September 1. She asked council members if they would like her to advertise the budgets as approved at the July meeting. Larry noted our assessed value went down significantly; he confirmed our tax rate will go up if we advertise the budgets as they were approved in July. Julie confirmed that is correct. Paul noted we can reduce the budgets below what was advertised later; we just can't raise them higher than advertised. Julie explained the process for reducing the budget after it is advertised. Jeff advised we will lose about \$270,000.00 in tax revenue at the old tax rate due to the drop in assessed value. Bill asked if that was feasible; Julie pointed out one of the increases in the Clerk's budget was due to a NIPSCO rate increase. That must be paid. Larry stated departments have traditionally spent under their budgeted amount. Julie explained 2012 must be formally reduced in

order to have an effect on the tax rate. Discussion followed on the drop in the assessed value. Larry suggested we could ask the department heads to trim 5% from their budgets. Using Rainy Day funds to supplement budgets was discussed. Brian pointed out that for many, many years we were well under the max levy; he is okay with using the budgets as approved in July. After a lengthy discussion, Julie was directed to advertise the budget numbers as presented in July. Council President Larry Siegel signed the County Council review form.

TOWN ATTORNEY

Town Attorney Mike Reed had nothing further to report.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Sharon Fowler asked what the town was doing to maintain the alley ways that are “forested over.” Brian asked for specific locations; she said there are several, but one is behind her house. Brian suggested that Sharon get with Henry on specific locations. Paul asked Sharon what she feels we should do about it. Sharon answered we need to clear it.

Jeremy added that unimproved streets and alleys are normally taken care of by adjacent owners.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Larry pointed out the council members receive a fairly thick report from the clerk’s office every month. In the interest of saving paper, Larry asked council members if the first two pages would be enough. Council members agreed that would be enough; Brian Woody suggested the clerk could provide an electronic copy if requested.

Paul moved to adjourn the meeting; Larry seconded. Five voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

The Syracuse Town Council adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

ATTEST:

Larry Siegel, President

Julie Kline, Clerk Treasurer