



**URBANA CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2019**

President Hess called the City of Urbana Regular Session Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. City staff attending: Mayor Bill Bean, Director of Administration Kerry Brugger, Director of Finance Chris Boettcher, Director of Law Mark Feinstein, and Community Development Manager Doug Crabill.

PRESIDENT CALLED ROLL: Mr. Fields, present; Mr. Hoffman, present; Mr. Paul, present; Mr. Scott, present; Mr. Thackery, present; Mr. McKee, present; and Mr. Piper, present.

Gary Ledford spoke about the Champaign Transit System. He stated that the Springfield Urbana Connector is new and that they were hoping for a connector with Bellefontaine. He continued by asking if the City would like to go in with Champaign Transit for the purchase for a new vehicle. This new vehicle would get 21 miles per gallon instead of the 10 miles per gallon on their vehicles they currently use.

President Hess stated that they would look in the budget to see if there is anything the City could do to help.

MINUTES of the Regular Session Meeting Minutes of September 3, 2019 were presented for approval. Mr. Paul moved for the approval of said minutes and Mr. Thackery seconded. Voice vote on approval: all ayes, nays, none.
Motion passed 7-0.

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Letter from Greg Wagner, regarding Geese Management
2. Scrap Tire Disposal Day, October 12, 2019, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
3. Monument Square Roundabout Improvement Update
4. Charter Review Meeting Minutes of September 4, 2019

Mr. Thackery moved to accept all of the communications. Mr. Paul seconded. Voice vote on approval: all ayes, nays, none.
Motion passed 7-0.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS – BOARD OF CONTROL

1. Morrison Sign - \$20,368.00 (Capital Improvement Fund)

Mr. Brugger began by stating that Ms. Boettcher presented a packet to Council some time ago, which provided a couple of options. He also stated that this is the time to put in the message center when the re-facing of the sign is done.

Ms. Boettcher also commented that the message center could be used like a power point.

Discussions with Council took place and it was agreed upon that this would solve the issue of communication with the citizens.

President Hess asked Ms. Boettcher where the money would be coming from in the budget. Ms. Boettcher advised that it was appropriated money. She also explained that the budget is a “living” document.

Voice vote on approval: all ayes, nays, none.

Motion passed 7-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mike Manoloff – 4172 Middle Urbana, Rd., owner of Oxner’s General Store, spoke about the construction with the Roundabout. He provided a handout and provided photos for Council and the audience to view regarding the construction. He gave his concerns of how the roundabout construction has effected the businesses in the square, including his own. He also spoke about the charm with the brick sidewalks is gone since it has been replaced with concrete. He also mentioned the trees being removed which was also a point of charm. His handout is attached hereto.

Stephanie Trulove – 707 N. Oakland St., spoke about the traffic around the area of the ongoing construction of the hotel. She stated that school, businesses, etc. are all getting off at the same time which causes a tremendous traffic backup in that area and wanted to know what the situation will be regarding the traffic issue.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

First Reading –

Resolution No.: 2563-19

A Resolution expressing the City of Urbana’s support for, and intent to participate with, the Champaign County Complete County Committee, in preparation for the 2020 decennial census.

Mr. Crabill stated that the 2020 census was coming up. He further stated that the census is conducted every ten years per the constitution.

Mr. Thackery moved to put this Resolution on the floor for discussion and possible passage. Mr. Scott seconded.

President Hess called for a roll call for passage: Mr. Hoffman, yes; Mr. Paul, yes; Mr. Scott, yes; Mr. Thackery, yes; Mr. McKee, yes; Mr. Piper, no; and Mr. Fields, yes.

Resolution passes 6-1, Mr. Piper saying no.

Resolution No.: 2564-19

A Resolution to authorize preliminary approval between the City of Urbana and the Ohio Department of Transportation for pavement planing and resurfacing of State Route 29 (PID No. 107427) from straight line mile 10.06 to straight line mile 18.55, more or less, with a portion in the City of Urbana, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Crabill stated this was at no cost for the City to participate.

Mr. Hoffman moved to put this Resolution on the floor for discussion and possible passage. Mr. Fields seconded.

President Hess called for a roll call for passage: Mr. Paul, yes; Mr. Scott, yes; Mr. Thackery, yes; Mr. McKee, yes; Mr. Piper, yes; Mr. Fields, yes; and Mr. Hoffman, yes.

Resolution passes 7-0.

Resolution No.: 2565-19

A Resolution enacted by the City of Urbana, Champaign County, Ohio to authorize the Director of Administration to formally accept the awarded funds for the South High Street Corridor Improvements and to proceed with the project, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Crabill said that this Resolution was a formality to accept the monies awarded from the grant that the City applied for.

Mr. Fields moved to put this Resolution on the floor for discussion and possible passage. Mr. Paul seconded.

President Hess called for a roll call for passage: Mr. Scott, yes; Mr. Thackery, yes; Mr. McKee, yes; Mr. Piper, yes; Mr. Fields, yes; Mr. Hoffman, yes; and Mr. Paul, yes.

Resolution passes 7-0.

Second Reading –

None

Third Reading –

None

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS/WORK SESSION

Mr. Hoffman spoke about the Roundabout Project, making reference to Mr. Manoloff's discussion. He stated that the Council knows of the square's business' temporary discomfort. He added that the point of this project was mainly for the safety of the citizens.

Mr. Thackery mentioned that Coffee with Council was still ongoing and there is a lot of good dialogue going on.

Mr. McKee stated that it may be considered to make encouragements to citizens to do activities in the downtown area, and possibly put items on Facebook, as an example.

Mr. Crabill spoke of the location of the south end of the City and how they were scoping with the LUC, looking at the signal at the school with regard to the timing of the light.

Mayor Bean spoke about the DAR's program at Freedom Grove, for Constitution Day. He added that Judge Weithman was the speaker and thanked Judge Weithman for sharing his knowledge with regard to the constitution.

President Hess brought up the topic of Home Rule and said that if Council was still interested, Mayor Bean knew a gentleman that could come in and speak to Council about the same. Mayor Bean added that the gentleman was the Village Administrator for Obetz, Ohio, and is very knowledgeable about Home Rule and would be glad to attend a Work Session to speak about it.

Mr. Fields moved to adjourn and Mr. Thackery seconded. Voice vote on approval: all ayes, nays, one from Mr. Hoffman.

Motion passed 6-1.

ADJOURN AT 7:14 p.m.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

October 3, 2019, at 6:00 p.m.



Council Clerk



Council President

To: Citizens of Champaign County
Fr: Mike Manoloff, owner of 'Oxner's General Store

The city of Urbana is the 'core' of Champaign County & the 'Downtown' is the focal point that everyone identifies with. When people come to Urbana to shop, they come downtown, dare I say like Tipp City, Troy & Bellefontaine.

My wife & I moved to Champaign County twelve (12) years ago. We both retired and found property that we could enjoy & embrace for a long time. We vote 'yes' for schools always and everything else for the benefit of our community. Three years ago, we started our business. We were fortunate to locate on the 'square'. We invested heavily as do all small business owners. We keep our corner clean all year round.... shovel snow, water the plants and power broom the debris ie. cigarette butts, dirt and pigeon feathers. We want to make maintain a clean/welcoming store front, again like many business owners. Our business was growing and I say 'was' because the construction that began in May is hurting us real bad. Our business is not alone in struggling. I think it ironic that Urbana has given tax incentives for construction of the new hotel and offered no assistance to the entrenched businesses who are paying the very taxes that support the governments 'incentive' to get the hotel constructed. Obviously, the new pipes & roundabout will improve the infrastructure downtown... we just hope we will be in business when this is all completed.

People tell me there were beautiful trees along the streets in the downtown. There were small brick areas as well that added some 'charm' to the multi colored concrete. Fact is, we tried to save the brick areas around our corner of the square as they were in great condition.

If it isn't broken...don't fix it. Well, the charm has been replaced with concrete. Now we have no trees, no nice brick work. We still have a planter out front which we take care of, not the city.

I have books on 'revitalizing' downtowns. The best is titled, "Building a Vibrant Community", by Quint Studer. Mr. Studer is nationally respected as an expert on this issue.

Here are some 'bullet' points from his book & lectures.

1. People want to live in places where they can SHOP, WORK & PLAY. People must come downtown on a regular basis, not just for special events.
2. The COMMUNITY must get the 'wealth' off the sidelines. Investment DOES return to the investor!
3. The 'CITY', our elected officials, need to STEP UP to the plan, if there is one, to make Urbana a great city to live, visit, and shop.
4. Compatible businesses & occupancies should be grouped together. Codes must be specific and ENFORCED fairly! Look around the 'square' ... it is a 'blight'. There are LONG TIME VACANT buildings, & ugly facades to many. Neither are 'welcoming' to anyone... and it just continues!

The facts are undeniable, OUR city is way behind in revitalizing itself.

It is very important that the criteria for business placement be followed.

1. Street level should be reserved for Retail stores, clothing, restaurants, photography & art, hair styling, specialty businesses...you get the point.
2. Space for 'non retail' ie. Real estate, insurance etc. should NOT be on the first level. The rationale is obvious and it has always been obvious. So why does OUR city ignore this? Please don't deflect the facts. Remember, there is a 'zoning' board.

I'm looking out our front windows onto the 'square' as I write this. In another 7 or 8 weeks the construction will have ceased and we will have a new roundabout, pipes, lights and some green areas. The sidewalks will still be void of 'charm' and the vacancies and ugly facades will remain.

There are 'stake holders' in every community that need to recognize how important it is to work together. No elected city official has ever been in our store to introduce themselves or ask questions or discuss plans. Certainly, I wonder if they even care about we business owners. Seems like as long as we pay our taxes all is fine. Well, all is not fine. In our store, business has dropped nearly 70% and we have had one dealer leave from the decline. I have given incentives for dealers to stay and picked up the slack with my retirement money. My options for staying afloat are minimum now.

Building owners need to occupy them and keep or make their property attractive.

Business owners need to be appreciated for trying to sustain ourselves throughout the construction. We are receiving no compensation for the thousands of dollars lost in revenue. If there is a plan in the works to help us, we would like to know about it.

Mayor, Council & Audience, I'm a pretty 'laid back' person. If I have something important enough to speak about, I do it face to face...that's why I'm here. I appreciate your courtesy.

Michael Manoloff

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&
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