

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE ZION CITY COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2024 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 2828 SHERIDAN ROAD, ZION, ILLINOIS

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Mayor McKinney called the meeting to order.

On call of the roll the following answered present: Commissioners Fischer, Holmes, McDowell and Mayor McKinney. Commissioner Frierson was absent. A quorum was present.

Also present: Police Chief Eric Barden, Public Works Director Ray Roberts, Finance Director Kris Conway and City Attorney James Vasselli. Fire Chief Justin Stried, Building & Zoning Director Richard Ianson, and City Administrator David Knabel were absent.

William Bremner led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

AGENDA CHANGES

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner McDowell to accept the City Council meeting agenda with the following change:

Delete Item 11. **CLOSED SESSION** – (Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 “Open Meetings”) for the discussion of threatened and/or probable or imminent litigation, collective bargaining, purchase or sale of real estate and personnel

The vote on roll call was: Commissioner Fischer, aye; Holmes, aye; McDowell, aye; and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mary Lou Hiltibran, Zion ESDA Director, gave a monthly report of the recent activities that ESDA performs in assistance to the City. She invited those who have a desire to make a difference to consider joining ESDA. One can apply on the City’s website or by contacting the ESDA center at 847-875-5511.

Kelly Davis, Zion, noted that he was an online journalist. He was reviewing the budget and has a concern about future liabilities being very high. He was wondering if there was someone he could communicate with in relation to this concern. He noted upon analyzing it, it looks like the City is looking to take the option of home rule or raising property taxes. He feels neither of these are in the best interest of the City. Mayor McKinney stated the person he would speak to about the budget would be the City’s Administrator, who is not present at the meeting. He suggested he go to the City’s website to find his contact information. The home rule issues he will address later.

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Holmes that the Minutes be approved as follows:

- (a) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** a Regular Meeting held on September 17, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Fischer, aye; Holmes, aye; McDowell, aye; and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner McDowell that the Bills be approved as follows:

- (b) **BILLS:** Vouchers 146748 through 146824 drawn on Huntington National Bank, N.A. Total: \$962,369.25

The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Fischer, aye; Holmes, aye; McDowell, aye; and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE/DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS PROPERTY/PUBLIC WORKS

A memo (24-DOC-87) was received by Director Roberts requesting a vehicle in the Public Works Department be declared surplus. Director Roberts stated a 2003 Ford F350 4x4 Regular Cab Pick-Up in the Public Works Department has been inspected and deemed too costly to repair and no longer safe for operation. Staff requests and recommends that the vehicle be declared surplus and scheduled to be auctioned. The vehicle is to be sold "as is" and minimum bid prices will be determined by Staff and the City Administrator.

It was moved by Commissioner Holmes, seconded by Commissioner McDowell that an Ordinance (24-O-82) be passed authorizing and approving the disposal of surplus property (2003 Ford F350 4x4 Vin #1FTSF31L5EC49015) in the Public Works Department. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Fischer, aye; Holmes, aye; McDowell, aye; and Mayor McKinney aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

ORDINANCE/ADDING ARTICLE VII/CHAPTER 78/ZION MUNICIPAL CODE

Attorney Vasselli stated the Village Code contains Chapter 78 that sets forth regulations regarding streets, sidewalks and other public places. In the recently passed June 28, 2024 case of City of Grants Pass v Johnson, the Supreme Court of the United States held that a local ordinance that addresses public camping; where people camp and put up campsites in streets, sidewalks and other public places did not unconstitutionally infringe upon the 8th Amendment rights of homeless individuals within the City. As such, in an attempt to address public concerns with regards to public camping and to provide a reasonable form of relief for those people so cited, the City is presented with the ordinance. They believe it will help alleviate any possible public camping problems that go on within the City corporate limits. There was some question regarding the legality of camping ordinances and camp Cities coming up, but after the passage of this case, there are some remedial measure that the City could take to ensure that streets and the people who inhabit the City are kept safe and free of public campsites. Commissioner Fischer asked if there have been any recent incidents where they have had someone camping out within the City limits. Chief Barden indicated there have not been any incidents regarding campsites.

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner McDowell that an Ordinance (24-O-83) be passed adding Article VII to Chapter 78 of the Zion Municipal Code regarding Public Camping within the City of Zion. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Fischer, aye; Holmes, aye; McDowell, aye; and Mayor McKinney aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

PAID ON PREMISE/STEP ADJUSTMENT

A memo (24-DOC-88) was received by Chief Stried requesting approval of a part-time wage step increase for part-time Firefighter/Paramedic Paid on Premise (POP). Chief Stried stated the adjustment for the POPs have been discussed as part of the FY25 budget. The current hourly wages remain the same, however, the adjustment is an additional wage step added to help retain employees. The additional step increases hourly earnings to \$31/hour upon an employee working 1,200 hours for the City.

It was moved by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Holmes, to approve the additional wage step increase hourly earnings to \$31/hour upon an employee working 1,200 for the City. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners Fischer, aye; Holmes, aye; McDowell, aye; and Mayor McKinney aye. Motion carried.

DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTARY

Director Roberts stated the contractor large patch program has been completed at various sites throughout the City. He noted that they were able to accomplish more than they expected. He noted that residents can still call and report potholes. Projects are put on a list but they might not be able to get to them right away. They are trying to get the patching done before November. He reminded the public that alleys are third on the tier to get to. Primary and secondary roads are the primary concern. Additionally, he reminded residents that the leaf vacuuming program has been discontinued in Zion. He advised residents not to push their leaves into the street. Leaves will only be picked up if they are in bags or cans. Mayor McKinney noted that there are very few cities that do repair alleys. Director Roberts stated that most do not plow or repair alleys as they are considered an extension of a driveway.

Chief Barden reminded the public to be cognizant of turning their headlights on as it is getting darker earlier and to check equipment on their vehicles. Additionally, he asked that they be on the lookout for kids in the streets and to drive slowly.

Director Conway noted that Early Voting has started in Lake County, currently at the Lake County Courthouse only. Early Voting will start on October 21st through November 2nd at Zion City Hall and other locations throughout the County. She reminded residents that the City does not answer any questions regarding Early Voting, they must call the County Clerk’s Office. Information is posted in the lobby of the City along with a link to the County Clerk’s website on the City of Zion website.

Mayor McKinney explained the City tried a few years ago to get Home Rule by way of a referendum. This was not to raise property taxes but to secure measures related to crime free housing and nuisance abatement. Unfortunately, false information was put out and the referendum failed. They have received some money from the State and are trying to work with the other taxing bodies by helping residents by reducing taxes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

October 5	9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon	Open House at the Zion Fire Station 1
October 15	6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Zion Township Board Meeting Zion City Council Meeting
October 25	4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.	Zion Park District Trail of Treats Shiloh Park
October 25	2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.	Zion Trick or Treating

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, it was moved by Commissioner Holmes, seconded by Commissioner Fischer and unanimously approved the meeting be adjourned at 7:25 p.m. Motion carried.

City Clerk