

The Board of Alderman met on December 19, 2016 and took the following actions.

Jeffrey Burkemper, a citizen, made a request of the board to have a car cruise to benefit Lincoln County Special Olympics in Fairgrounds Park on May 12, 2017. Mr. Burkemper asked if the board would approve having food trucks at the event, hoping that they would help attract more people. The board approved the car cruise and took the food truck request under advisement. They said they would study the issue and get back with Mr. Burkemper at a later date.

The board approved the Audited Financial Statements for the FY2016 ending June 30, 2016. By state statute, the city is required to forward a copy of the audit to our bond holders and the Missouri Auditor's office within 180 days of the end of the fiscal year. A copy of the audit is available for public viewing at City Hall and on our website.

Mr. Donald F. Morris was approved to serve on the Planning and Zoning Commission and Ms. Amanda Hogan was approved to serve on the Park Board. We appreciate their desire to serve and look forward to a mutually satisfying relationship.

Three site plans were approved at the meeting. One was for an expansion of the Witte Bros. Trucking distribution facility; the second was for an expansion for Toyota/Bodine; and third was a new building over on Ellis St. where Dr. Kevin Harrell will be moving his dentistry practice.

Finally, the board approved the renewal option for year 5 in the Christian Environmental Services Sanitation Agreement. The rate will remain the same at \$18.00 a month for once a week pick up of trash, recycling and yard waste collection. This final option will begin on July 1, 2017. Christian/Meridian made an offer to add an addendum to the contract that would lock in the same rate over three additional years. That would carry the \$18.00 per month rate through June 30, 2021. The board agreed to take the offer under advisement.

In the Police Department, during the week of December 5-9, 2016, Chief Taylor was in Jefferson City for the Missouri Police Chief's Year End Training and Conference. The Chief received close to 20 hours of required continuing educations and close to 15 hours of training in reference to criminal codes for our court system. At the same time, Major Raymond Floyd was in training in Kansas City from December 5-9, 2016 for the Executive Leadership Training put on by the FBI/LEEDA Program. The department has also completed their night time qualifications for firearms training are up and running on the V-Academy On-Line Training.

Both of our K-9 units, Nitro and Lobo, were certified in their drug training.

Finally, the department has two new Dodge Charger squad cars on the street replacing two aging units.

In Public Works, the biggest story was the ice storm on December 16th. It came out of nowhere and surprised everybody; I thought our guys did a great job. I had people telling me that the roads were terrible until they got to Troy, and some that were going north said it was bad north of Troy. Troy's crew even helped on some bad spots on Hwy 61, trying to keep that highway open. Since I got stuck out on Hwy D, I can attest to how bad the situation was. I haven't hitch-hiked in a long time, but I did that night and I found some nice people that gave me a ride.

In the Building Department, the Board of Adjustment approved a variance for Witte Bros. Truck Lines on their upcoming expansion. They want to almost double the square footage of their facility, which is great, but the new section they wanted to be 35 feet tall. The city ordinance says buildings cannot be more than two stories or 25 feet tall. With this expansion Witte Bros. is looking to add at least 35 jobs over the next two years.

Also in building, we had eleven permits for new housing starts in the month of November, making that thirty three year to date. We had projected that we would do 45 for this current fiscal year, so I feel confident that we will meet, if not exceed, that goal.

The Treasurer's report shows that sales tax deposits for the latest period of 2016 were down 5.6% vs. the same period in 2015. The 1% local sales tax was 6.36% down vs. last year, the ½% transportation tax was down 4.855% less and the ½% Capital Improvement tax was down 6.32% vs. last year. We are now through the first six months of the 2016-2017 FY and we are down 1.46% vs. the first six months of the 2015-2016 FY; this translates to \$37,617.76. Finally, the City's annual audit and a draft of the Continuing Disclosure for 2016 are now complete and are available for reading. If you would like to take a look at them, you can come by City Hall and look at it here.

In the parks, you may have seen four trees that are in the process of being removed. Parks Director Ryan Howell had contacted the Ameren Forestry Division in the spring of 2016 and asked them to take a look at these trees while they were in town doing power line trimming. We were contacted by Nelson Tree Service and we met with them to determine if the trees were salvageable. Unfortunately they were not. Nelson, on behalf of Ameren, trimmed the limbs back from the tree and we will take the remainder of the tree trunk down when the ground is frozen to make sure we don't make too much of a mess. Additional trees will be planted in the Park. Trust me, Ryan and I discussed these trees coming down before a final decision was made because neither of us wants to have to take any trees unless it is absolutely necessary.

After a twelve-month delay, residents are easily adjusting to the new EMV-compliant credit card readers placed on the utility window counters to pay their utility bills. The City is in compliance with mandated credit card industry regulation that was passed last October 2015 for EMV (chip) enabled readers. The City had to wait until all three vendors for billing software, industry credit card readers, and the credit card payment gateway spoke the same language prior to implementation.

The TAP sidewalk project bid deadline was Thursday, December 15th and will be laced on the agenda for Board approval to award the project based on the engineer's recommendation. The project will begin in March of 2017.

Candidate filing has begun (December 13th, 2016) and will continue through and including Tuesday, January 17, 2017. There is one Aldermanic seat up for election in each of the three wards – I, II and III.

Finally, I hope everyone had a safe and wonderful Christmas. My wife Phyllis and I want to wish everyone a safe, prosperous and Happy New Year.

Please be kind to one another and God bless you all.