

CITY OF MUSCATINE
IN-DEPTH CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
Council Chambers – 7:00 p.m. – December 8, 2016

Mayor Broderson called the City Council meeting for Thursday, December 8, 2016, to order at 7:00 p.m. Councilmembers present were Rehwaldt, Natvig, Saucedo, Bynum, and Harvey.

The first item on the agenda was a dog park presentation. Mayor Broderson introduced Peggy Gordon who would be providing a power point presentation along with Erin Dindinger.

Ms. Gordon began her power point presentation by showing the first design that was presented to City Council in 2014 which was not cost effective. She then presented a design of the dog park that will make better use of the land located off of Houser Street by the Transfer Station.

Ms. Gordon gave an overview of the project which included the budget for the dog park. She stated the land preparation was completed this year at a cost of \$14,000 which has already been paid out. She stated the projected budget is \$211,500.

Ms. Gordon then explained what will be happening next and reviewed the proposed timeline. She stated the group will be meeting with the city's various departments for guidance. She stated the goal is to have the dog park open to the public in the fall of 2017.

Ms. Gordon stated the group does have a Facebook page and is in the process of setting up a website. She stated that if anyone is interested in making donations, they can be made through the Community Foundation. She stated the information is available on their Facebook page.

There were questions and comments from City Council that were addressed by Ms. Gordon and Ms. Dindinger.

The next item on the agenda was a Quiet Zones update and concurrence from City Council to move forward with the recommendation relating to the agreement with CP Rail.

Community Development Director David Gobin stated the Quiet Zones project has been on the table for a quite a while. He stated the city is now looking for funding and assistance to update the signals and such. He stated there are roughly 600 cities in the United States who have Quiet Zones.

Mr. Gobin stated the public benefits include the upgrading of safety crossings, ADA compliance, Federal Rail Administration and CP Rail agreements, and the fact that none of the funding costs will be paid by taxpayers.

Mr. Gobin stated that some of the features of a Quiet Zone include continuous signalization vs. motion detectors, reduction in downtown noise, 33% of residents/businesses within a mile of the railway will be affected, and there will be no business disruption. He stated there will still be horns but they will be more distant.

Mr. Gobin then stated that there is a horn rule that stipulates if there is something or someone on the tracks, the conductor has the right to blow the horn.

Mr. Gobin stated that Jim Harbaugh of Bolton and Menk was going to be giving a power point presentation on the Quiet Zones Study. He then stated the Quiet Zones does not go into effect until everything is in place between the city and CP Rail.

City Administrator Mandsager stated staff is seeking consensus from City Council tonight to move forward giving CP Rail direction to prepare the estimate and construction and maintenance agreements. He stated that once these documents have been completed by the railroad, a purchase order will be issued and the city will be off and running.

Mr. Harbaugh then began his power point presentation. He stated that the purpose of a Quiet Zone is to improve safety for pedestrian and vehicular traffic crossing the tracks and to improve the quality of life for downtown Muscatine and adjacent neighborhoods through reduction of train horn frequency.

Mr. Harbaugh stated a Quiet Zone is as follows:

- Series of objective, standardized or alternative safety measures implemented within a defined rail section to reduce the frequency of train horns
- Looks at both vehicular and pedestrian crossings
- Does not totally prohibit horns which will be blown in emergency and construction situations
- Standard practice across the nation and in Iowa

Mr. Harbaugh stated there are numerous communities in the State of Iowa that currently have established Quiet Zones.

Mr. Harbaugh stated the steps in the process of the Quiet Zone Study include the following:

- Data collection
- Alternative investigations and meetings and concurrence with the city, railroad, Iowa Department of Transportation, and Federal Railroad Administration
- Report preparation and presentation
- Community endorsement
- Final design (CP Railway)
- Initial implementation (CP Railway/city)
- Permanent implementation (CP Railway)

Mr. Harbaugh stated the city will be seeking the initial and permanent installation of the Quiet Zone by CP Rail.

Mr. Harbaugh then listed the objective Criteria for a Quiet Zone as follows:

- Looks at both vehicular and pedestrian crossings
- Does not totally prohibit horns (emergency and construction situations)
- Uses standardized Risk Matrix to determine the level of safety improvement
- **Nationwide Significant Risk Threshold (NSRT)** – Average Risk Index for gated public crossings nationwide
- **Risk Index with Horns (RIWH)** – Existing conditions of specific crossings with horns sounded at every crossing
- **Quiet Zone Risk Index (QZRI)** – Proposed conditions of crossings with Standard Safety Measures installed

Mr. Harbaugh then gave a brief overview of the Crossing Improvement Matrix. He stated the ultimate goal is the creation of a good matrix.

Mr. Harbaugh stated there are two steps to the creation of the Quiet Zone. He stated the first is the initial solution and the second is the permanent solution. He then gave an overview of what the initial solutions would be at Chestnut Street, Iowa Avenue, Sycamore Street, and Cedar Street. He then explained what the permanent solutions would be for each of these streets.

There were questions and comments from City Council that were addressed by Mr. Harbaugh and City Administrator Gregg Mandsager.

Both Mr. Harbaugh and the City Administrator agreed that CP Rail has been very cooperative in this process.

There was a consensus from City Council to move the process forward for the establishment of the Quiet Zone.

The next item on the agenda was a presentation on surplus property located in the City of Muscatine.

Community Development Director Gobin gave an overview of the information that was provided to City Council as part of the agenda packet. He stated staff will be asking City Council to declare the property as surplus at the December 15th City Council meeting. He stated that once the property is declared as surplus, steps will be taken to dispose of the property.

There were questions and comments from City Council that were addressed by Mr. Gobin and City Administrator Mandsager.

The next item on the agenda was a presentation by Lt. Jeff Jirak concerning the transition of the entire Police Department fleet to Chevy Tahoes.

Lt. Jirak stated the purchase of new squad cars has been approved in this fiscal year's budget. He stated he was present tonight to ask City Council to consider replacing squad cars with the Chevy Tahoe. He stated the Tahoe would offer equal fuel economy, decreased maintenance cost, increased room for training, added value/utility for other agencies, and would provide safer prisoner transport. He gave further details on why he felt the Tahoe would be a good replacement for the squad cars.

There were questions and comments from City Council that were addressed by Lt. Jirak.

The final item on the agenda was a presentation by Finance Director Nancy Lueck on financing for the Musser Park to Deep Lakes Trail Project. Ms. Lueck stated that state and federal grant funding for this trail project total \$840,736. She stated that because of the state and federal funding, the project is required to be bid by the Iowa Department of Transportation.

Ms. Lueck stated the permanent trail route has been determined, easements acquired, and the design completed. She stated the contract cost for the project is estimated at \$1,315,200 with the projected funding shortfall being approximately \$386,000. She explained why there was an increase in the project cost.

Ms. Lueck stated staff is proposing City Council consider funding the \$386,000 shortfall from the spring 2018 bond issue. She then listed the projects identified to date to include in this bond issue noting the project costs are only preliminary estimates. She stated that with the IDOT letting bids for this project,

they require the city provide a not to exceed amount for the contract for the project. If the estimated project amount of \$1,315,200 is used, the city will need to commit to the projected \$386,000 in local funding and this is the amount needed before the IDOT will set the bid date for this project.

Ms. Lueck stated staff is looking for consensus from City Council to commit to the estimated total debt presented tonight. She stated that once the bid is let, she stated there could be a chance the debt could be lowered once the project is let.

There were questions and comments from City Council that were addressed by Ms. Lueck, the City Administrator, and City Engineer Jim Edgmond.

It was the consensus of City Council to commit to the estimated debt as presented.

Under comments, Mayor Broderson thanked everyone for making the Holiday Stroll a success last week. She then stated she has received several calls from residents about the flags not being flown at half-staff in memory of Pearl Harbor. She encouraged staff to be careful about lowering flags when ordered.

Councilmember Harvey moved the meeting be adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Gregg Mandsager, City Administrator