

MAQUOKETA CITY COUNCIL MEETING

March 18, 2019—7:00pm

City Hall

Mayor Schwenker called the Maquoketa City Council meeting to order at 7:00pm with six members present.

Present: Baker, Lyon, Collister, Kuhlman, Barker, Horan

The group recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Collister, second by Barker approving the consent agenda consisting of the agenda, minutes from the March 4, 2019 regular meeting, bills, February Financial Reports, Event Application filed by Coronado Car Club for May 18, 2019, Event Application filed by Trackside Promotions for Weekly Stock Car Races, Event Application filed by Maquoketa Kiwanis Club for The Kiwanis Easter Egg Hunt, Event Application Filed by Maquoketa Chamber of Commerce for the Great Maquoketa Scavenger Race, Application for Waiver for Snow Removal for Existing "Sidewalk to Nowhere" at 411 E Judson. Motion Carried 6-0

Skot Gent, Mike Schmidt, and Bonnie Andersen made a presentation to the Council about expanding the FFA program and why there is a need for a new building. Not everyone will be attending college and they are offering classes that will help train students for careers in the trades. They have had such an increase in student participation that an additional teacher was hired to help out. With the added space they will be able to have a lab and a greenhouse, which is needed for some of the offered classes.

The school has pledged \$450,000 and they have raised approximately \$300,000 for the expansion. They want to apply for a grant that will require the city and the county to make a contribution to the project and they are asking for the city's pledge for a monetary contribution. Andersen said the deadline for the grant is April 15, 2019 and the contribution cannot be in kind. Kuhlman asked how much the County was contributing. Gent said they are contributing \$5,000.

Schwenker asked how much the grant was for. They didn't know for sure because the amount is based on the grant application.

Andersen said the classes they offer also include training for industry and mechanics, not just agriculture.

Schwenker said the request could not be voted on tonight, but an item could be put on an upcoming agenda. It was the consensus of the council to make a contribution to the Ag Expansion up to \$5,000.

Motion by Collister, second by Lyon approving Resolution 2019-25 entitled, "Resolution Ratifying Tentative Agreement with Police Union". Motion Carried 6-0

Motion by Lyon, second by Collister approving Resolution 2019-26 entitled, "Resolution Declaring Surplus/Junk Property and Authorizing Sale". Motion Carried 6-0

Motion by Collister, second by Barker accepting \$29,900 gift from Fire Association for Purchase of 2016 Chevrolet 2500HD Pickup. Motion Carried 6-0

Motion by Horan, second by Barker approving Event Application filed by Andrew Amvets for Grand Opening of Jackson County Memorial Park and waiving the \$25 application fee. Motion Carried 6-0

Motion by Lyon, second by Barker approving the bid from Kelly Tree Farm, LLC in the Amount of Not to Exceed \$7,330 for 45 Trees to be Reimbursed by Trees Forever Grant. Motion Carried 6-0

Motion by Barker, second by Kuhlman approving the Request for Proposal for Professional Engineering Services for Preliminary Engineering Design, NEPA Services and Final Engineering Design and Authorize Letter to IDOT for Approval of Consultant Selection Committee for Platt Street Project.
Motion Carried 5-1

Motion by Barker, seconded by Lyon approving Resolution 2019-27 entitled, "Resolution Between the City of Maquoketa and East Central Intergovernmental Association to Provide Grant Administration for the 2019 CDBG Upper Story Rental Rehabilitation Community Development Block Grant Pilot Project".
Motion Carried 6-0

Dan Fox and Ron Schaefer spoke to the Council about ECIA's request for additional funds to complete the Comprehensive Master Plan. Fox said there was a lot of good input from the Committee for survey questions, but it did take more time than expected to get the questions worded in a way that everyone agreed to.

When results of the survey came in, they felt they hadn't hit enough of the population so they tried to target certain demographics.

Schaeffer said it was not the fault of ECIA that this project is taking/costing more than anticipated. He said there were a lot of different opinions on questions. Fox said there was better data collected from the additional time.

Collister questioned them going out for additional results once the survey had ended. Lyon commented they wanted to be sure they included all classes/ages. He said you can't make people take surveys, but they made their best effort.

Schaefer said 50% - 70% of those answering the survey were college educated. They were concerned they hadn't reached everyone.

Baker commented in the last 1 ½ years they've collected the results of the survey. What else has been done? Fox said it is all in draft form, with 11 planned chapters. They are pretty close to finishing up with a couple of the chapters. Baker said he feels they will come back again asking for more money once they get this completed. Lyon said he disagreed.

Motion by Lyon, second by Barker to approve amending the Agreement with ECIA and contributing and additional not to exceed \$5,000. Motion Carried 5-1

Collister said he feels everyone has figured out they can always come back to the City and ask for more money to complete the projects they were hired for. It needs to stop. Baker said they were assured it wouldn't cost more. Barker if we reject the requests, what are the options. Collister said he pays taxes on his home and business property, something has to give. Kuhlman commented people have to be held accountable.

Smith asked if there was anyone interested in the Rural Summit, there needs to be a team of three in order to attend. Barker said she has a conflict. Smith said he would try to get on the JCEA team.

Baker said he was asked to research ways to cut the additional 13.5 cent levy that is being recommended in the budget. He said there was a lot of bad information given about the parks budget and CIP at the last meeting that he would like to clarify. The total parks budget is not \$30,000, but \$158,000. The \$30,000 is only what is contributed to the Parks CIP. The Parks CIP is not at a deficit, there is \$83,000 available but there haven't been any plans given to administration as to how those dollars might be spent. The City of Maquoketa does not have the lowest tax rate, we have the highest in Jackson and Clinton counties. We are in the top 36% of highest tax rates in Iowa. He feels if we are going to raise the rates by 13.5 cents, it would be better utilized in the Police or Public Works budget. Barker commented this is a non-voted levy for Civic Center. Baker said it would still free up money for either of those departments.

Horan said on the Thursday's Parks agenda they will be discussing what they can get for play structures in the range of \$40,000 - \$60,000. A handicap park would cost around \$250,000 and City funds would not be used for that structure. He said the City needs to look at things that will attract millennials.

Schwenker stated the parks have been an issue for a long time. We need to save money to accomplish anything. If the tax rate is approved and the 13.5 cent tax levy goes through there will be a contribution of \$60,000 to the Parks CIP, if not it will be \$30,000. We need a plan to upgrade the parks. No one wants to raise taxes but we have to in order to bring the City to a level that people want. Horan said they are prioritizing the needs in the park and figuring out what they can do with what they have. Horan invited Baker to the Parks meeting on Thursday at 5:00pm.

Kuhlman thanked Baker for his research.

Schwenker said there are trees being thinned out the Western Avenue property. He said this is a natural process and with the help of Kevin Oetken, trees were marked that should be removed.

Schwenker said he received a letter discussing various issues in the City. He said there were some good ideas and also some misinformation that he would have liked to discuss with the writer, but the letter was signed anonymous. He wants to encourage people to put a name on their letters so the issues can be discussed.

Motion by Horan, second by Barker approving the Mayoral re-appointment of Jennifer Fowler to the Historic Preservation Commission. Motion Carried 6-0

Motion by Horan, second by Kuhlman approving the Mayoral appointment of Nathan Woodward to the Cable Commission. Motion Carried 6-0

Mayor Schwenker proclaimed April 2019 as Keep Iowa Beautiful Month.

Motion by Collister, second by Kuhlman adjourning at 7:53pm.

Don Schwenker, Mayor

ATTEST:

Gerald Smith, City Manager