

**SAVANNAH CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 19, 2012
CLASBEY CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6 P.M.**

Mayor Dave Ingersoll presiding.

Purpose of Special Meeting: This meeting was held to discuss renters' utility bills and deposits.

Council members present: Don Dillman, Vernon Townsend, John Parker and Joy Thompson. Mayor Dave Ingersoll, City Administrator Jill Cornett, Chief of Police David Vincent, City Clerk Beth Kar and Deputy Clerk/Utility Clerk Brooke Bell. City Attorney Ron Holliday arrived right after roll call. The meeting was audio recorded. The meeting notice was posted at City Hall on November 16, 2012.

Mayor Ingersoll reminded everyone that this meeting was discussion only; there is not an ordinance on the agenda regarding utility bills and renters. City Administrator Jill Cornett commented that a key to moving forward is to have the rentals in town registered at City Hall. The City will rely on landlords to register rentals. An additional change is to clarify the exact time that bills become delinquent. Bills would be due upon receipt and delinquent at a specific time and date. Payments would become delinquent at 12:01 a.m. on the 16th day of each month. Another topic is whether or not to allow payment arrangements. Her recommendation is that the City would not allow for payment arrangements any more unless there is proof there was a water break. Mayor Ingersoll summed up the last meeting: all rentals would be registered; eliminate payment plans.

Several landlords were present at the meeting and spoke. Ralph Stanton asked why the landlords should be responsible for anything over 60 days. Mayor Ingersoll explained that right now the City is not making the landlords responsible.

Greg Krull asked about the City's profit/loss ratio. City Administrator Jill Cornett described that before rates were raised, the City water fund was operating at a loss. Rates were too low so the City had to borrow money from the General Fund to make water debt payments. The City water plant has excess capacity. Greg Krull complained that the City was one of the highest tax cities and wanted to know where the money went. He would like to see the City charge a higher utility deposit. He suggested splitting the deposit into two monthly payments. Charge a \$200 deposit to turn it on and another \$100 the next month with first month bill that would make \$300 deposit. He also asked if it would be possible to mandate automatic bank payments for bills for renters. Don Dillman described how United Electric uses a credit system to determine how much a new customer's deposit will be.

One of the problems is that people, who have older unpaid bills, sometimes put the water in someone else's name when they move back to the City. Then the City doesn't know and is unable to collect on the old bill.

Another topic was to raise the reconnect fees for customers whose water was turned off for lack of payment. Raising the fee could be a deterrent. The current reconnect fees are \$75 for same

day reconnection and \$20 for next day reconnection. John Parker suggested if a customer is turned off more than once in 12 months, the City could require an additional deposit.

Council discussed the differences between requiring a \$150 or a \$200 deposit. There was the suggestion that a person start with a good faith deposit of \$150 and more be required if there is a poor payment history. The current utility deposit is \$75. Everyone agreed it needed to be raised. Some landlords did not want to have the deposit too high which could discourage people from renting in Savannah. Greg Krull wanted the deposit high enough to cover a renter's bill. Ingersoll stated again that landlords will not be held responsible for unpaid renters' bills.

Mayor Ingersoll summarized the changes: the landlords will register the renters and will receive copies of their renters' delinquent notices. The utility deposit for new renters will be increased to \$150. Payment arrangements would stop. The ordinance on utility deposit and other changes will be brought for the first reading to the next Council meeting. The effective date for changes will be January 1. The deposit for homeowners would not be changed. Virgil Davison would like to see the changes reviewed in six months.

Council took a break before starting the next meeting.

**SAVANNAH CITY COUNCIL
PROCEEDINGS
REGULAR SESSION
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2012
CLASBEY CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7:30 P.M.**

Mayor Dave Ingersoll presiding.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited at 7:30 p.m.

Roll call was held at the start of the 6 p.m. meeting.

Approval of Agenda

Don Dillman motioned to approve the agenda as posted. Vernon Townsend seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes.

Minutes – November 6, 2012

Vernon Townsend motioned to approve the November 6, 2012 minutes. Joy Thompson seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes.

Public Testimony

Larry Plummer, 404 E Maple Terrace, lives next to a cul-de-sac. He complained about receiving parking tickets. Chief Vincent reported that the call to the residence was originally on illegal burning. At that time the officer reminded Plummer that vehicles have to park parallel to the curb and asked him to stop parking incorrectly. Plummer felt there were too many cars for everyone to park that way. In the winter, incorrect parking would also potentially cause a

problem with snow removal in the cul-de-sac. People cannot park in their yards because that is illegal. City Administrator Jill Cornett asked what would happen if emergency vehicles need to get to a home when the vehicles are not parked parallel to the curb. Fire Chief Tommy George responded that would mean the fire department could not get a fire truck in there. Mayor Ingersoll reported the City and police department would investigate the situation and get back to Plummer. Police Chief Vincent wanted to make sure Plummer knew about the threats to Vincent on the Facebook website about the issue.

Mayor's report

Mayor Dave Ingersoll reported: the company picked up more bricks from the City lot. The City had collected over \$4,000 in brick sales. Ingersoll did not see any equipment out to start on the East Main construction project. He also reported in information items: Filing for City office is December 11 through January 15, 2013 for the April 2 Election.

Police Chief's report

Chief of Police David Vincent reported everything was pretty quiet. John Parker asked City Attorney Ron Holliday about threats on Facebook and if there was anything legally one could do. Chief Vincent responded that he has been threatened many times; he just wanted to make sure Plummer knew about it. Mayor Ingersoll would like for Vincent to receive an apology. City Attorney Ron Holliday described that there was a case filed on a Facebook threat but it was a difficult process. John Parker motioned to approve the Police Chief's report. Don Dillman seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes.

City Administrator's report

City Administrator Jill Cornett reported:

NOTIFICATION TO COUNCIL -- EMERGENCY PURCHASE OF BLOWER FOR WASTEWATER PLANT -- Staff is notifying Council that the City Administrator authorized an Emergency Purchase Order in the amount of \$4,100.00 for the purchase of a digester blower and its installation from Savannah Machine & Engineering. Jason Long's description of the problem and solution is included in the Council packet. Mayor Ingersoll asked if this item was in the budget or not. Cornett was not sure; she thought it was budgeted.

PURCHASING POLICY REVISIONS -- Staff has drafted revision to City Purchasing Policy with two major changes:

1. Per Missouri State Statutes, City will create a Pre-qualified list of architects/engineers/land surveyors through a request for Statement of Qualifications from several firms. Once this list is established, the City may contract with the most appropriate firm for services on a given project or special projects. The City will want an Engineer on contract very soon to oversee the East Main construction project. Therefore, staff recommends passage of an ordinance to revise Purchasing Policy through two readings tonight.
2. Staff recommends raising limits on approvals for purchasing to better reflect the increased costs of day-to-day maintenance and operation items, for example, tires, auto repairs, parts for pumps and motors, supplies, etc. Current spending limits

are outdated and slow down progress in repairing equipment or moving forward with Public Works project.

MISSOURI LEGISLATURE INCREASED MINIMUM WAGE TO \$7.35 PER HOUR -- Staff is notifying Council that the minimum wage in Missouri will go up 10 cents on Jan 1, 2013 to \$7.35 per hour. This makes the State minimum wage higher than the Federal minimum wage, which remains \$7.25 per hour. All City personnel who are/were working for minimum wage will have their wages adjusted up on January 1, 2013.

UPDATE ON POSSIBLE SOLAR PROJECT CAPITAL COST AND ENERGY COST SAVINGS -- Tom Alley visited City Hall to gather electricity use and cost information. He will prepare a very preliminary estimate on the cost of installation and return on investment, per utility cost savings.

PAY OFF NID (Neighborhood Improvement District) DEBT -- Cornett recommended paying off the NID (Neighborhood Improvement District) debt after the scheduled March 2013 payment. This would be a savings of \$18,400 via early payoff. The payoff money would come from the General Fund. The City would continue to collect the NID taxes due from property owners. The collections would be deposited into the General Fund. This would be a budget amendment.

SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES OF NORTHWEST MISSOURI ENTERPRISE FACILITATION -- The City has supported Northwest Missouri Enterprise Facilitation in the past through a monetary contribution of anywhere from \$500 - \$1000. Last year the City contributed \$500. The City benefits from the successes of this organization, as several new businesses are currently operating on our Square and other locations in town as a result of strong advice and guidance from this organization. Savannah does not have an Economic Development department, or dedicated employee. Staff recommends a contribution of \$1000 to this organization to show support and appreciation for their efforts and best wishes for continued success. The available money would come from the General Fund under "Dues and Permits," or "Miscellaneous." Joy Thompson motioned to approve \$1,000 request. Don Dillman seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes.

SCHEDULE BUDGET REVIEW AFTER JANUARY 1, 2013 -- Several key times for the budget to be reviewed and/or amended: personnel changes, contract with Midland GIS, and NID payoff.

Don Dillman motioned to approve the City Administrator's report. Vernon Townsend seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes.

Treasurer's Report -- City Administrator Jill Cornett presented the highlights of the October financial reports. John Parker motioned to approve the Treasurer's report. Vernon Townsend seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes.

BILLS FOR CONSIDERATION:

Bill No. 2012-43 2012 Pool Bond Election Results was read for the first and second readings.

ORDINANCE NO. 2583

This ordinance declares the election results for the \$650,000 bond for the City pool renovations. Vernon Townsend motioned to adopt ordinance no. 2583. John Parker seconded. Vote: Dillman: aye; Townsend: aye; Parker: aye; Thompson: aye. Motion carried.

Bill No. 2012-44 Annual Election: Aldermen & Mayor was read for the first and second readings.

ORDINANCE NO. 2584

This ordinance provides for the annual election to be held on April 2, 2013. Vernon Townsend motioned to adopt ordinance no. 2584. Don Dillman seconded. Vote: Townsend: aye; Parker: aye; Thompson: aye; Dillman: aye. Motion carried.

Bill No. 2012-45 Amend Purchasing Policy was read for the first reading only. Council discussed the proposed changes. John Parker expressed his concerns that even though the City has improved financially, he did not think buying power should be increased without the involvement of Council. Vernon Townsend and Joy Thompson didn't think so either. The current amount limits are \$200 for department heads and \$2500 for the City Administrator. City Administrator Jill Cornett pushed back that these limits have been in place for a long time. Staff is not asking to buy bigger items; rather they want to be able to purchase same items as they did twenty years ago. Don Dillman commented that the figures were reasonable and not excessive. Mayor Ingersoll reminded Council that all of the items still have to have been approved in the budget. Any non-budgeted purchases still require Council approval. The budget is the key document and Council looked at every line. If Council had questions about the items, the questions should have been raised during the budget process. Ingersoll continued that since the budget had been approved, the purchases had already been approved. He thought the big thing was to set up a list of professionals. Purchase orders will also still be required for purchases. John Parker commented on section 3, line 7. He would like to see it updated that when the items are \$5,000 or less but together exceed that amount to the same person, it would require Council approval. Cornett will make the update so it does require approval. Parker would like to see the City bid for anything \$10,000 or over. Mayor Ingersoll agreed. The public does not like it when the City does not bid. John Parker would also like the wording changed so that the Mayor can authorize emergency purchases.

John Parker would like the agenda posted somewhere in addition to the City's Facebook and website. Can the Council agenda be posted on the front window at City Hall? Mayor Ingersoll recommended posting the Council agenda on two sheets in the City Hall window from the inside. John Parker motioned to have the next reading on the purchase policy as amended at the next meeting. Vernon Townsend seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Vernon Townsend was glad the marked trees had been cut but wants the City to take care of the stumps too. Stump grinding was not part of the bid. The City could either get another firm to grind the stumps or have the city staff do it. In the past the City had Larry Abarr grind stumps. Townsend would like the City to get on cohesive program to eliminate ditches. Ultimately the City needs to put in curbs and guttering to take care of the problem. Townsend thanked the fire crews for taking care of the house fire. He walked around town and he's getting some bad vibes about old Andrew County thrift shop/recycling tax area where they have dumpsters and boxes full of trash and vehicles that don't seem to be going anywhere. The City has sent the business

owner a nuisance letter.

John Parker received many calls from landlords. There was the concern that renters would leave if pushed too hard with increased deposits.

Joy Thompson was not able to attend the Park Board because she wasn't feeling well. She talked to the Building Inspector Gene Grossman about the Mark Welch's property at DD and Elk. Welch was paying the tickets but not removing the junk.

Adjournment

No further business to discuss. Council adjourned at 8:55 p.m. on a motion by Vernon Townsend and seconded by Don Dillman. Motion carried on 4 yes votes.

Dave Ingersoll, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Beth Kar, City Clerk