

CITY OF WEST LAFAYETTE
COMMON COUNCIL
PRE-COUNCIL MINUTES
JULY 28, 2011

The Common Council of the City of West Lafayette, Indiana, met in the Lower Level Conference Room at City Hall on July 28, 2011, at the hour of 4:30 p.m.

Mayor Dennis called the meeting to order and presided.

Present: Burch, Hunt, Keen, Thomas, and VanBogaert.

Absent: Bunder and Dietrich.

Also present were City Attorney Burns, Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes, City Engineer Buck, Police Chief Dombkowski, Street Commissioner Downey, Fire Chief Drew, WWTU Director Henderson, Parks Superintendent Payne, and Director of Development Poole.

Mayor Dennis reviewed the agenda with the Council. Councilor Burch noted that there was an error in the recording of the vote for Resolution 10-11 in the July 5 minutes. All the Councilors voted in favor of the resolution. The chart showing the votes will be corrected.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Resolution No. 12-11 A Resolution To Amend The Comprehensive Plan For Tippecanoe County To Include A New Housing Plan Element (Submitted by Area Plan Commission)

APC Executive Director Fahey was present and, at Councilor Hunt's request, summarized Resolution No. 12-11, the Housing Plan Element of the Comprehensive Plan for Tippecanoe County. She directed the Council to the policy statements, which have the major effect for West Lafayette. In January, there was a work session for elected officials and the Plan Commission, which many of the West Lafayette elected officials attended. In March, APC Assistant Director Ryan O'Gara spoke to the West Lafayette Council, as a precursor to the Planning Commission hearing. At the Planning Commission hearing, there were public comments that caused the Plan Commission to decide to take a closer look at the policy statements. A smaller working group of the APC Ordinance Committee, including Councilor Keen, met several times to discuss policies about which citizens had raised questions. Policy 9 and Policy 13 were revised because of those reviews. Policy 19 was completely rewritten. Proposal for a rental housing inspection program within Tippecanoe County in Policy 21 was eliminated. Policy 27 was revised, particularly dealing with neighborhood planning and involvement of neighborhood associations. The work group spent a lot of time on Policy 28, which encourages continuing diversity of neighborhoods. Policy 30 was revised, with the addition of the last sentence, which encourages "private sector redevelopment of existing mobile home communities with affordable housing in a neighborhood setting." Councilor Hunt asked what property owner associations were. APC Executive Director Fahey said that it could be condominium associations or subdivision associations, which may or may not be a part of the overall neighborhood association. Councilor Hunt asked if landlord associations were included. APC Executive Director Fahey said that it did. Councilor VanBogaert asked for clarification that what is being considered is the policy amendments and not the analysis that is the report. APC Executive Director Fahey clarified that the Council would be considering adopting the entire document, but

West Lafayette will probably most rely on the policy documents in the future. Councilor VanBogaert responded that the policy statements hinge on analysis elsewhere in the document. Councilor VanBogaert said that he had reservations with the analysis dealing with student-oriented apartments on pages 53 and 54, namely use of the term “kiddie condos,” and the speculation that demand will hinge on decrease in Purdue enrollment as children of the baby boomers, the “echo boomers,” graduate. The University’s statements and planning do not reflect a decline in enrollment. Councilor VanBogaert offered to participate in review of this section. He said that he was not comfortable in voting for this resolution with the current analysis.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Ordinance No. 16-11 An Ordinance Establishing The Rental Housing Inspection Fund And Appropriations (Prepared by the Clerk-Treasurer)

Mayor Dennis read Ordinance No. 16-11 by title and called on Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes for explanation of the ordinance.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes stated that this is a request to establish a new fund in response to a legislative mandate that was effective May 10, 2011. The mandate requires the City to receipt all fees related to rental housing into a fund, from which expenses are paid. As a result, both Ordinance 16-11 and Ordinance No. 17-11 accomplish this new special revenue fund. The net result on the 2011 budget is zero. No expenditures have been reduced. The Department of Development determined the appropriate allocation between rental housing inspections and related activities, and other activities in the department in making the additional appropriations and reductions in the two ordinances. The fees from the inspections do not cover the expense of the services. Councilor Hunt asked what the impact is. Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes answered that the legislation was meant to satisfy landlords that the fees imposed were reasonable. In West Lafayette, the expenses are nearly double the revenue from fees. Mayor Dennis said that the original proposed legislation would have tied the City’s hands. Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes said that the City certainly met the test, that revenues are not in excess of need. Her recommendation is that the City transfer funds from the General Fund to support the new fund for payroll. It is not feasible to live off the irregular stream of housing inspection fees. Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes asked the Council to raise concerns now, as there may be issues that affect all the departmental budgets and the ad to be published on August 10. Once the advertising is done, the City is cannot increase the amount of the budget.

There was no further discussion.

Ordinance No. 17-11 An Ordinance To Revise The 2011 Budget For The General Fund And The Economic Development Income Tax Fund (Prepared by the Clerk-Treasurer)

Mayor Dennis read Ordinance No. 17-11 by title and said that Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes’ comments for Ordinance No. 16-11 covered this ordinance as well.

There was no further discussion.

Ordinance No. 18-11 An Ordinance Setting The 2012 City Budget And Setting The 2012 Tax Levy On Property And Tax Rate (Prepared by the Clerk-Treasurer)

Ordinance No. 19-11 An Ordinance To Fix The Salaries Of Appointed Officers, Employees, And Members Of The Police And Fire Departments Of The City Of West Lafayette, Indiana, For The Year 2012 (Prepared by the Clerk-Treasurer)

Ordinance No. 20-11 An Ordinance To Fix The 2012 Wastewater Treatment Utility Salary Schedule As Submitted By The Board Of Public Works And Safety For Approval By The Common Council Of The City Of West Lafayette, Indiana (Presented by the Board of Public Works and Safety)

Ordinance No. 21-11 An Ordinance To Set The Salaries Of The Elected Officials, City Of West Lafayette, Indiana, For The Year 2012 (Prepared by the Clerk-Treasurer)

Mayor Dennis read Ordinance Nos. 18-11, 19-11, 20-11, and 21-11 by title. He provided an overview of the 2012 spending plan, which is 1.2% less than the 2011 budget. Salaries will increase for City, sworn, and Wastewater employees, pending approval by the Council. Increases will be 1.5% plus \$500 for full-time employees, and 1.5% for part-time employees. Salary increases are possible because of the belt-tightening of the department heads. No positions have been cut or added. Mayor Dennis said that he was proud of the department heads, who have looked at their budgets and changed their culture, how they view government spending. That has been critical.

Councilor Thomas asked when employees last received increases. Mayor Dennis answered that there has not been one. Last year, each employee was given \$500. Before that, there were 3% raises, but those were taken with the PERF increase. This is the first actual cash flow increase for employees since Mayor Dennis was elected.

Councilor Hunt asked how health care costs would increase. Mayor Dennis responded that the budget is for 12%, but it is difficult to know now. Insurance companies will not finish their calculations until closer to October. The 12% is an educated best guess. Councilor Hunt asked if the employees would pay more for their insurance coverage. Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes answered that that is not known at this time, depending on the plan structure and the options.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes reported that the State implemented a new budget system this year, which does not permit using the accounting system for budgeting. She provided revised Form 4Bs to the Council, calling attention to the annotated columns of the property tax funds, because that should help Councilors go from the budget ordinance to the advertised version to what funds should be available. Each year, Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes said she is cautious about what the certified assessed valuation will be, and this year is 90% of the current AV. There are additional amounts included in operating balances, so that the levy can be adjusted among the funds, depending on how the DLGF works the budget. DLGF has urged clerk-treasurers to continue to follow this advertising practice.

There was no further discussion.

Resolution No. 11-11 A Resolution Appropriating The Necessary Funds Resulting From The 2011 Community Development Application Of The City Of West Lafayette Under Title I Of The Housing And Community Development Act Of 1974, As Amended (Submitted by Department of Development)

Mayor Dennis read Resolution No. 11-11 by title and asked for comments or questions.

Councilor Hunt asked Director of Development Poole if the amounts were what were discussed at the hearings with the social service agencies, and if there were a breakdown of the allocation. Mr. Poole distributed a sheet showing the program allocation. He noted that the amount the City will receive is 16% less than last year.

There was no further discussion.

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business at this time, Councilor Burch moved for adjournment and Mayor Dennis adjourned the meeting, the time being 5:00 p.m.