

**MINUTES OF MEETING
COMMON COUNCIL
CITY OF MONTICELLO
MONDAY NOVEMBER 2, 2020**

The regular meeting of the Common Council, of the City of Monticello, Indiana, was held on November 2, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Cathy Gross called the meeting to order and all present said the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was conducted virtually using the Zoom platform.

Roll call, by Clerk Treasurer Jim Mann, was answered by Councilors Bill Cheever, Kim Kramer, Ralph Widmer, Ken Houston and Doug Pepple. City Attorney George Loy was also present.

Minutes-Ken Houston made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 19, 2020 meeting of the Council as presented. Ralph Widmer seconded the motion. All ayes except Doug Pepple who abstained, motion carried.

Additions & Deletions-None

Citizen Participation-None

Department Head Reports-None

Committee Reports-None

Old Business-

New Business-

1. **Consideration of Water Utility Rate Increase**-Mayor Gross outlined a financial review provided by Baker Tilly which recommended a 25% increase to our rates. Our past discussions led to a decision to increase the rates by 12.5% on March 1, 2020 and to consider a 12.5% increase to rates for 2021. Council member Ken Houston expressed concern about the increase in rates as it will land on the backs of our utility customers. He also pointed out the improvements we are making to the utilities are unfunded mandates. He commented that the City should continue discussing these concerns with State and Federal officials with the hope that new sources of funding for cities can be realized. Mayor Gross indicated the City has received a grant from OCRA for a project in the RCA area of the City. She recommended the formation of a committee to study and discuss the future for our utilities. Water Superintendent Rod Pool reported on the Harrison-Railroad Streets project as well as the South Main Street water main replacement project. The expenses to do these projects with the costs of today will save the City over the long run. Council Member Doug Pepple suggested the City should consider incremental increases to our utility rates. Council member Ralph Widmer expressed concern about the likelihood of receiving grants and that we need to manage matters ourselves. Council member Bill Cheever asked if the increase was to help develop a new well field. Rod Pool said funds are to be saved annually for this reason.

Council member Kim Kramer expressed gratitude that the City has been able to make improvements over the years. Ken Houston made a motion to move forward with the 12.5% increase in water rates as presented and discussed. Ralph Widmer seconded the motion. All ayes, motion carried.

2. **Street Department Building Addition (Added to the Agenda)**-Street Department Superintendent Frank Arthur presented some background on this matter. Frank indicated the current building has been braced up over the years. He would like to demolish this building and add on to the current street garage building. Bids were received by the Board of Works on October 19 with the lowest one being \$358,244.00. Frank indicated he set \$200,000.00 in the 2021 budget, but will need an additional appropriation of \$160,000.00. Frank said the contractor would be able to start this year if we gave them the go ahead. He would like the Council's blessing that the \$160,000.00 would be approved in 2021. Frank stated the funds would be taken from MVH. Ralph Widmer asked what other project(s) may be impacted by the use of MVH funds. Frank said the 2021 projects would go on as planned. Ken Houston pointed out that recent Community Crossings projects helped limit the use of MVH funds because there was a 25% local match with 75% coming from INDOT. City Attorney George Loy indicated that the Board of Works will have to approve the contract for the addition and the Council will have to approve the funds. The Council agreed to appropriate an additional \$160,000.00 in 2021 to go along with the \$200,000.00 Frank has budgeted in 2021 for the building addition.

Miscellaneous and all other matters-Mayor Gross reported that the coronavirus numbers have been increasing and that all departments should continue their diligence by following procedures we set in motion.

Adjournment-There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

James D Mann
Clerk Treasurer
City of Monticello