

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Monday, April 29, 2019

On Monday, April 29, 2019, the City Council of the City of Decatur, Illinois, met in Regular Meeting at 5:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers, One Gary K. Anderson Plaza, Decatur, Illinois.

Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe presided, together with her being Council members Dana Ray, Bill Faber, Lisa Gregory, David Horn, Chuck Kuhle and Pat McDaniel. Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe declared a quorum present.

City Manager Scot Wrighton attended the meeting as well.

Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe thanked Councilwoman Dana Ray for her dedication and commitment to the Decatur City Council. Mayor Moore Wolfe presented Councilwoman Dana Ray with a plaque.

Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe recognized Councilman elect Rodney Walker who was in attendance at the City Council meeting. Councilman elect Rodney Walker will be sworn in on May 6th.

Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe called for a Study Session on the following item: Preparing for the 2020 Census: Annexation Policies, Eliminating Double Taxation and Improving Tax/Service Equity.

City Manager Wrighton presented a PowerPoint presentation to council. City Manager Wrighton explained that surrounded parcels should be annexed for continuity and parcels connected to city water/sewer should be annexed for continuity and service equity. Parcels located a long distance from existing city boundaries and/or roads & utilities should only be annexed if the capital cost is not too great, the annexation accrues some other benefit to the city, and the city has sufficient capacity to absorb the additional residents, tracts and service demand. There are 446 potential annexations out of 738 properties outside Decatur city limits with water.

City Manager Wrighton discussed the following strategies for fair taxation in annexation: verify that the boundaries of the Decatur Sanitary District are extended only where newly annexed properties are connected to, or wish connection to, sanitary sewers, city to take action to end double taxation for fire services and allow multiple library districts in the city and extend the Decatur Library levy only where there is no other library district in place.

Council indicated that they are in support of moving forward with annexations, taking the necessary steps to make sure all Decatur residents are counted in 2020, and to begin gradually eliminating dual fire response.

Mr. Ron Janes, speaking on behalf of residents in the Boiling Springs area, voiced that real estate taxes are going to increase 35-40% in the areas being annexed and no additional services will be provided such as curbing or gutters, new streetlights or sidewalks.

Mr. Wrighton responded that once an area is annexed into the city, the area will be evaluated for street, draining and lighting improvements just like any other area in the city and water bills will be reduced by half.

Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe called for a Study Session on the following item: Management of the Lake Decatur Watershed: Strategies to Improve Water Quality, and Lake Stewardship Options Concerning Water Recreation, Reduction of Agricultural Pollution, and Siltation Control.

Mr. Wrighton presented a PowerPoint presentation and brought forth the following five categories for discussion: Silt in the Lake, Lake Water Quality, Lake Recreation Funding, Fuel Sales on the Lake, and Regulatory Reform.

Mr. Steve John, Agricultural Watershed Institute provided history of the Agricultural Watershed Institute and discussed a 10-20 year siltation removal plan.

Councilman Horn would like to see a Natural Resource Management Plan for Lake Decatur and he would like for Council to set goals for what they want to see in terms of sediment and nitrate reduction. Once the goals are set, Councilman Horn believes Council should be in a better position to address which of the agencies are going to be able to help best meet the goals.

Water Production Manager Keith Alexander reported that the city has done smaller natural resource management plans for Lake Decatur but not one large comprehensive plan that covers the entire lake. Mr. Alexander believes that one large comprehensive plan will require a lot of outside expertise.

Mr. Alexander reported that the Soil and Water Conservation District provides an annual report to Council which discusses how funds the city provides to them reduces sediment in the lake.

Mr. Wrighton suggested combining the following categories: Silt Reduction, Regulatory Strategies and Phosphorus and Nitrate into one category and staff will bring back the most effective strategies.

The Funding Equity issue was discussed, and Council indicated that they were in favor of reducing the amount of the Water Fund subsidy. Council will defer how fast and how much to budget deliberations.

Councilman Horn and Councilman Kuhle would like to see what other communities charge before considering any adjustments.

Council indicated that they were in favor of continuing an arrangement with the Decatur Park District whereby any profit or loss from fuel sales is shared.

Mr. Dan Sebok spoke in favor of fuel sales on the lake.

Dave Carr, Soil and Water Conservation District and Dave Bowman, Agriculture Watershed Institute presented Council with handouts on the history and mission of the Macon County Soil and Water Conservation District and Building Illinois Bioeconomy Consortium programs.

City Manager Wrighton announced that the next City Council Study Session will be on Monday, May 13th at 5:30pm at MacArthur High School to discuss Neighborhood Revitalization.

Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe called for adjournment. Councilman Pat McDaniel moved the Council meeting be adjourned; seconded by Councilwoman Lisa Gregory, and on call of the roll, Dana Ray, Bill Faber, Lisa Gregory, David Horn, Chuck Kuhle, Pat McDaniel and Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe voted aye. Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe declared the motion carried.

Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe declared the Council meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Approved May 20, 2019
Kim Althoff
City Clerk