

MINUTES
GOSHEN CITY COUNCIL
December 14, 2021 at 6:30
via Zoom and the Community Building

Call to Order: Mayor Max Poye called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

Roll Call: Paula Anderson, Colton Martin, John Vaillancourt, and Jamie VanBecelaere were present. Birch Wright and Bill Hewat were absent. Mayor Max Poye and Brian Hogue, the City Attorney were also present.

Approval of Agenda: Mayor Poye suggested changes to the agenda. He requested to move Dr. Buell's Conditional Use Permit discussion to just after the approval of the minutes. Mayor Poye also requested to delete item 'D' under 'New Business' (Jamie VanBecelaere's resignation), as Jamie VanBecelaere has decided to remain on the City Council. The Mayor asked for additional changes to the agenda. Colton Martin suggested adding end-of-year bonuses to the end of 'New Business', item, 'D'.

John Vaillancourt made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Colton Martin seconded the motion. All in favor; motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: Changes to the minutes were required. On Page 3, "Laverne Ogden" should be "Levon Ogden"; on Page 4, bottom of page, Ordinance number reads "199", and it should read "197". On Page 5, a clarification was given regarding the police vehicle purchase. Lora Nanak asked that the minutes reflect the police car was in the budget for "next year". John Vaillancourt made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Colton Martin seconded the motion. All in favor; motion carried.

New Business (Part 1 of 2)

Conditional Use Permit: Dr. Buell shared drawings of the proposed plans for the project, and discussed the coloring, building use, drainage and layout of the project. The Mayor shared feedback he has received regarding the screening around the project. Dr. Buell stated the project has a six-foot fence, and the area is surrounded with woods and brush. John Vaillancourt asked about the fence construction. Dr. Buell responded it would be wood with metal posts. The Mayor stated last week the Planning Commission recommended approval of the conditional use permit. John Vaillancourt mentioned that the storage units will not generate any sales tax for the City. Property tax is generated, but not sales tax. Dr. Buell stated the office of the storage units will generate some sales tax. Units will only generate sales tax if a vehicle is stored in them.

Citizen Chris Callahan, resident of Goshen, commented that months ago when the city approved this proposal, there was an interest in changing the usage of this property. The second point he made regarded the access point to the proposal. Specifically, how much traffic will this proposal generate in the city, with turning into the property? The Mayor stated no traffic study has been completed. Chris Callahan asked if the builder should be required to provide traffic count data. Paula Anderson stated she personally does not see that as an issue, based on her observations of traffic at other storage units. John Vaillancourt responded that at his personal storage unit, the traffic impediment is related to the direction from which you are attempting to access the unit, and the time of day. Dr. Buell stated there is more potential for traffic from retail usage. Chris Callahan recapped that he believes the developer should be responsible for setting aside funds to build a turning lane if traffic is impacted. Paula Anderson stated this is somewhat out of the control of this group, as the State of Arkansas is in control of changes and updates to Highway 45.

Mayor Poye stated that the State has a threshold that has to be met before action occurs, and the cost to the City of a traffic light was \$250,000 a year, which did not include installation. The Mayor does not personally feel that traffic into the proposed units will be a problem, as access is off of Church road.

Mike Bowen asked if this will be accessible 24 hours a day. Dr. Buell said it will probably not be 24/7.

Citizen Josh Tritt, resident of Goshen, remarked he felt this was needed in Goshen. He is in support of this, and everyone he has talked to is in support of this. His opinion was that the Council should approve this.

Colton Martin asked Josh Tritt if he lived along the proposed development area, if he would be ok with storage units going up in his backyard. Josh Tritt said if he had to look at storage units or retail, he would choose storage units, as it would be more peaceful; it would not bother him. Colton Martin said it would bother him, and he is voting against this. He would not want a storage unit in his backyard, and he doesn't believe other people would. Colton Martin stated that Dr. Buell's buildings are beautiful, but does not see the benefit to the city. Josh Tritt responded that if the residents had concerns, they would be here voicing their concerns. Dr. Buell said there were a couple of issues, but he shared with the residents he would screen it and landscape it – this proposal would be lower profile, less busy than a warehouse.

The Mayor asked what Colton Martin doesn't like about this proposal and he stated he didn't want a storage unit in his own backyard; John Vaillancourt and Jamie VanBecelaere concurred. John Vaillancourt believes that the Council was hasty, or wrong, in changing the designation to Commercial. John Vaillancourt feels the retail side of this proposal is only to appease the Council; he is voting no.

Jamie VanBecelaere stated that she agrees with Colton Martin. She has talked to people along J Street and they, like her, would not want this in their backyard – basically the center of downtown. Dr. Buell asked if she would prefer a warehouse or a hotel – or what would she like it to look like. Dr. Buell stated he is trying to make this less invasive. Jamie VanBecelaere stated the people that live there don't want this. Mayor Poye asked what about it the people nearby didn't like. Colton Martin asked the Mayor what about storage units he did like? The Mayor likes the fact they are not high traffic and can be screened.

John Vaillancourt asked why the previous Council put the ruling in place that there would be no storage units inside the city of Goshen?

Citizen Max Moore, resident of Goshen, stated if the City wants to grow, he doesn't see how adding storage units will do that, as it will not positively increase the tax base. If the city wants to grow, it needs more retail. The footprint of the retail space compared to the overall project size is small. The Mayor clarified that not all businesses need conditional use. The examples shared were Sonic and Dollar General.

Chris Callahan spoke to share that he agreed with Max Moore, and is also against the project.

Dr. Buell said that two of the people on the street shared with him they wished to rent a unit.

Citizen Matt Buell, resident of Goshen, spoke, and introduced himself as Dr. Buell's son. He is for this project. Matt Buell stated there is a long list of projects that can be built without the City's approval. He stated Goshen is going to grow. This development will create jobs and also generate income. Colton Martin stated that when the neighbors bought the properties nearby, the proposed land was not zoned as Commercial. Matt Buell stated it is now, that is not Dr. Buell's fault – that is how he bought it. John Vaillancourt stated it was not commercial when he bought it; this is a problem for the realtor. Matt Buell stated that Dr. Buell has a long-standing history of caring about the community.

Dr. Buell's architect offered that the specialty of his firm is high-end residential projects. Based on Dr. Buell's track record, they decided to work with him and elevate this project.

The Mayor asked for additional input. Dr. Buell asked what it would take to wait until the entire Council was present. City Attorney Brian Hogue stated his only option is to withdraw his application before it gets voted on. If Dr. Buell's application was voted down, a six-month wait is required to reapply. Dr. Buell asked who was absent. Recorder Michael Thompson stated Birch Wright and Bill Hewat were absent. Brian Hogue stated four yeas are required to pass. Dr. Buell asked for two minutes to consider his options.

Dr. Buell returned and stated he would withdraw his application.

Reports 2021

Police Department Report: Chief Travis presented. Report is in Council's packet.

Street Report: Mike Bowen presented. Report is in Council's packet. Mike Bowen was complimented for fixing an issue on Tuttle Road.

Building Official's Report: JD Demotte not present. Report is in Council's packet.

Financial Report: Lora Nanak reported; financial reports are in Council's packet. As of November 30, 2021 the General Fund was \$1,134,002.73. The Street Fund was \$197,987.09. The Stimulus ARPA account was \$201,165.67. The police 988 account was \$16,146.20.

Parks & Rec. Report: Ken Smith presented. Report is in Council's packet. Chuck Jacobus added that the ARDOT application will go in early next year (February). One issue was that the City did not yet own the property. John Vaillancourt shared that since the City didn't own the property in Feb/Mar of this year was a shortcoming.

Mike Bowen shared two bids were received for the parking area. One was for \$10,880; another bid was \$33,070. These are the only two bids, so far. Paula Anderson asked that the Fillmore bid be clarified with additional detail on the specifications of the work being performed.

John Vaillancourt made a motion to approve action on the parking lot, provided Fillmore provides specifics in a clear format regarding peeling back topsoil, hauling in red dirt, building a 200' x 50' gravel parking area, and constructing the road out to the entrance road. Colton Martin seconded the motion. The Mayor asked for public comment. All were in favor, and the motion carried.

Ken Smith discussed the need to put out a Request for Quote (RFQ) for a park 'master plan'. The Mayor stated he would put out the RFQ.

The Mayor congratulated the Parks team on their hard work and success.

Paula Anderson suggests that a competition for local landscape students be established.

Chris Callahan shared that the Parks Department has done a great job, and that we need a professional person managing all of this, and coordinating the effort/parties involved. Paula Anderson commented on how other parties could get involved in this process.

Arbor Board Report: Mary Smith presented. Report is in Council's packet. Jamie VanBecelaere commented on how nice it looks around the Community Building.

Volunteer Fire Department: No presentation. Report is in Council's packet.

Planning Commission: Lora Nanak presented. The Brizzolara property matter was tabled again.

Annexation Committee: Colton Martin stated no report; meeting again in January.

Old Business

Update on Purchase of Park Property: Mayor Poye reports that everything is done, with the exception of signing the papers. The City is awaiting the mortgage release on one of the properties. Information is in the Council's packet; awaiting paperwork from the bank.

Stimulus Report – Air Filtering Presentation: Alison Collins presented, from Go Rescue. Jamie VanBecelaere asked about the price of the unit. Alison Collins stated the cost is \$1,399 per unit.

Bid for Parking Lot at Park: Discussed during the Parks & Rec. report.

Approval of 2022 Budgets: Mayor Poye stated the one item didn't make it into the budget packet: Increasing money for the park by doubling the budget to \$47,000 from \$23,500. Lora Nanak asked to increase payroll software fees to incorporate direct deposit into the software. The increase is from \$2,500 to \$3,500. Paula Anderson asked about salary increase plans for next year. Lora Nanak states salary increases in the budgets are calculated at 5%. A question was asked about the interest rates listed on the budget. The interest rates for the Street Fund and General Fund are both 0.5% and the ARPA and 988 at 0.25%. Paula Anderson asked why a salary budget decrease was listed under G&A; Lora Nanak responded that she believes it is due to Mike Bowen's removal from G&A and addition into Maintenance. Another question was asked by Paula Anderson about the decrease in cell phone budgets. Lora has removed that as a budget item, as it's too much paperwork to submit on her end (as the only person with an allowance).

Chris Callahan asked if monies have been budgeted for the Park Master Plan need. He also suggested the Mayor's salary be increased, and asked if there is money in the budget to buy available land for planning and development. Mayor Poye agreed and is in favor of buying the land. In the City's favor, a lease exists on the land for the next four years. Paula Anderson stated that the discussion today is for the General Fund, not Capital Expenditures. Chris Callahan recommended that pay adjustments for the Mayor and City Council should be budgeted in over the next several years.

Citizen of the Year – Set up and Structure: The Mayor stated it hasn't been done in several years. The Mayor asks that nominations be emailed to City Hall.

New Business (part 2 of 2)

Parent Tract/Subdivision/Minor Subdivision Definition Discussion: Mayor Poye discussed that splitting a parent tract since 2000 was established to avoid repetitive lot splits inside of a short window. The Mayor suggests that the City amend the Ordinance to reflect splits to be allowed based on number of years since last split. The Planning Commission will need to hold a public hearing on the subject before it comes to the Council.

Update on old Bank Building: Mayor Poye states that the price ranges from \$650,000 - \$880,000 for the property, depending on what the City is interested in purchasing. John Vaillancourt asked about the size of the parcel, and the Mayor is not sure of the size. It was proposed that the City look into the purchase of this property.

End-of-Year Bonuses: Colton Martin made a motion that all full-time employees get an end-of-year bonus of \$2,000 and part-time employees receive a \$1,000 bonus. Bonus amounts are after taxes. The motion was seconded by Paula Anderson and John Vaillancourt. All were in favor, motion carried.

Reports/Comments by Mayor, Aldermen, City Attorney: None

Public Input: None

Adjournment: At 8:30PM John Vaillancourt made a motion to adjourn the meeting, 2nd by Colton Martin.



Michael Thompson
Recorder/Treasurer



Max Poye
Mayor