

**COMMON COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY OF LADYSMITH**  
November 13, 2017 6:30 p.m. Council Chamber

**Roll Call.** Members present: A. Hraban, M. Hraban, R. Moore, B. Morgan, J. Pearson, M. Platteter, M. Reynolds, B. Stoneberg. Absent: none.

Others present: R. Carlson, A. Christianson, R. Freeman, M. Gardom and neighbor, K. Gorsegner, H. Helmecci, K. Julien, A. Kenyon, L. Klink, T. Verdegan.

**Call to Order:**

Mayor Reynolds called the meeting to order and presided.

**Pledge of Allegiance:**

New Police Chief Kevin Julien led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes:**

Motion was made by Moore, seconded by A. Hraban and carried by voice vote to approve the minutes of the October 23, 2017, Council meeting.

**Agenda:**

Motion was made by M. Hraban, seconded by A. Hraban and carried by voice vote to approve the evening's agenda.

**Hearings and Appearances:**

Budget Hearing

Mayor Reynolds convened a Public Hearing on the 2018 general operations budget, the 2017 real estate tax levy, and on increasing commercial trash fees.

Finance Committee Chair Moore provided an overview of the 2018 budget prefacing that by indicating he doesn't like to raise taxes or to borrow money, but noting both will be necessary to provide the services residents expect in 2018. He noted the anticipated tax increase will cost the owner of property valued at \$100,000 an additional \$50 annually. It was explained that a referendum foreseen for 2018 would be a one-time tax increase for the sole purpose of providing \$500,000 annually for street work.

Comptroller Verdegan responded to a question by indicating that the fund balance was \$1,069,755 as of 12/31/16. A \$1,036,171 reserve would represent 27% of the budget. A \$958,548 reserve would represent 25% of the budget.

Mayor Reynolds advocated taking the approximately \$68,000 tax increase proposed from the general fund balance instead of levying taxes for it. He stated that with a public referendum planned for next year, increasing taxes this year may generate more opposition to such referendum as a second increase in two years. The Mayor went on to say that an undesignated fund balance of about \$1,000,000, that would remain after application of about \$68,000 to the 2018 budget, should be adequate.

The Mayor also commended the Finance and Public Works Committees for finding ways to get considerable street work done the past three years, acknowledged that much remains to be done, and encouraged these committees to continue to find ways, like grants and TIF, to stretch what dollars are available.

Mr. M. Hraban observed that, in the past couple years, some \$1,100,000 has been taken out of the operating reserve and that a balance of at least 25% of the annual budget is recommended to be kept on hand. It was clarified that while auditors recommend keeping a fund balance of 25-30% and while lenders might charge more interest if they feel the balance is too thin, what is kept on hand is a Council decision. The balance on hand following the 2002 tornado was certainly well below even 25%. Mr. Hraban enumerated components of \$625,900 of expected borrowing.

A comment was made that if small tax increases had been made over the years the need to catch up now wouldn't be so pronounced.

Ron Freeman asked a handful of questions including about net new construction, upcoming borrowing plans, and components of anticipated 2018 borrowing. He seemed to accept answers provided by Comptroller Verdegan and others.

Mr. Morgan stated he doesn't feel the Public Works Dept. needs a new pickup, tractor or two riding mowers provided for in the budget plan. When asked his thoughts DPW Gorsegner stated he feels these acquisitions are all justifiable adding that the City's very old equipment needs to be replaced on a routine basis.

Mr. Pohlman asked the Council to keep in mind that, in addition to what the City spends to rebuild streets, that taxpayers have to cover, that many of these taxpayers also have to pay large special assessments for related underground work.

Mayor Reynolds closed the hearing at 7:14 p.m.

#### Feral Cats

Mildred Gardom appeared, along with her neighbor, in regard to a continuing effort to deal with feral cats in their neighborhood. She stated her observation has been that stray dogs are dealt with immediately, but not cats. Mrs. Gardom was assured that the Council's Legal Affairs Committee is looking into this, having met earlier in the day with another meeting planned for Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Stoneberg advised that she had spoken with animal shelter manager Karen Welke who advised that operation is willing to trap cats but that, if they don't find these cats to be friendly enough to work with or adopt out, will need to euthanize them.

Mr. Moore told of seeing five cats exit a garage through a broken window in just a few minutes the previous week.

This discussion ended at 7:21 p.m.

### Corbett Lake

Mr. Carlson appeared to request approval of Corbett Lake Management File #2, Folder #16 pertaining to acquisition of land around the Lake. Motion was made by A. Hraban, seconded by M. Hraban and carried by voice vote to approve. The file will be forwarded to both WDNR and to SEH, and be posted on the City website.

### **Resolutions and Ordinances:**

Motion was made by M. Hraban and seconded by Morgan to adopt Ordinance #2017-06 amending fees for collection and disposal of garbage and refuse. Roll call vote: Platteter-yes; Morgan-yes; M. Hraban-yes; Moore-yes; Stoneberg-yes; A. Hraban-yes; Pearson-yes. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Moore and seconded by M. Hraban to adopt Resolution #2017-18 approving the 2018 general operations budget for the City and setting the 2017 real estate tax levy. Roll call vote: Morgan-no; M. Hraban-yes; Moore-yes; Stoneberg-yes; A. Hraban-yes; Pearson-yes; Platteter-yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Reynolds announced that action on Ordinance #2017-07 would be held over for a future meeting to allow for a couple minor changes to be made.

### **District and Committee Reports:**

#### **District One, Mr. Platteter:**

Mr. Platteter advised that the Library Board will meet at 5 p.m. on Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### **District Two, Mr. B. Morgan:**

Mr. Morgan asked who is going to install holiday lights on Old Smoky and on the Falge Park footbridge. At one point volunteers were going to do these lights. Mr. Gorsegner replied that the crew is already putting up decorations and will do those mentioned as time permits.

Mr. Carlson stated that he cancelled \$3,800 of rail display work some time back so those monies would be available to install new siding on the boxcar. The weather subsequently deteriorated so that work did not get done. It is his intention to use some or all of those dollars yet this year to buy materials ahead so that the cancelled work can be completed in 2018. Nobody stated any objections to his doing so.

Mrs. Stoneberg, who kept minutes for the Nov. 7, Personnel meeting, advised that the entire meeting was in closed session.

#### **District Three, Mr. M. Hraban:**

Mr. Hraban advised that the Joint Management Committee will likely meet in about one week. He also noted that Ted East will attend a future City meeting to review the status of ambulance planning.

**District Four, Mr. R. Moore:**

Mr. Moore called attention to minutes of the Nov. 6 All Committees meeting and that the Tourism Committee met last Wednesday. Members of the Council were provided with copies of the new tourism guide distributed at the latter meeting.

**District Five, Mrs. B. Stoneberg:**

Mrs. Stoneberg advised that the Legal Affairs Committee met on both Nov. 6 and earlier today. She reviewed the subjects considered at both meetings.

**District Six, Mr. A. Hraban:**

Mr. Hraban had nothing to report.

**District Seven, Mrs. J. Pearson:**

Mrs. Pearson advised that the Park Board will meet Nov. 14<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m. and that the P&FC will meet Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m.

**Police and Fire Dept. Reports, K. Julien:**

Chief Julien had nothing to report.

**Public Works Dept. Report, Mr. K. Gorsegner:**

DPW Gorsegner advised that, earlier today, a leaking valve on the east side of the College Ave. rail crossing was dug up and replaced owing to concerns that it might present an icing problem all winter long.

The DPW advised that Mc Cabe Const. will be on site Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> to ready streets that firm is working on for winter travel.

Motion was made by M. Hraban and seconded by A. Hraban to approve payment of \$20,726 to MSA for management of the 2016 CDBG assisted E. 8<sup>th</sup> St./Pederson Ave./Center Ave. project. Roll call vote: M. Hraban-yes; Moore-yes; Stoneberg-yes; A. Hraban-yes; Pearson-yes; Platteter-yes; Morgan-no. Motion carried.

Motion was made by M. Hraban and seconded by A. Hraban to approve payment of \$5,604.39 to MSA for management of the SDWLP assisted project to rebuild a portion of W. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. N. Roll call vote: Moore-yes; Stoneberg-yes; A. Hraban-yes; Pearson-yes; Platteter-yes; Morgan-no; M. Hraban-yes. Motion carried.

Attention was called to bids received for the 1982 bucket truck which had a 1969 boom. The high bid was \$3,150. Motion was made by M. Hraban, seconded by Stoneberg and carried by voice vote to accept this high bid.

A question was raised who owns barricades in use of the three 2016 CDBG project sites. These belong to McCabe Const., which will store them by the Quonset over winter.

DPW Gorsegner asked Public Works Comm. Chair A. Hraban to slate a meeting to consider authorizing Morgan and Parmley to proceed to apply for grant assistance to rebuild portions of Fritz or Worden Avenues.

**Administrative Report, Mr. A. Christianson:**

Adm. Christianson requested action to write off an uncollectible special assessment in the amount of \$1,901.38. Motion was made by M. Hraban, seconded by Pearson and carried by voice vote to do so.

**Attorney's Report, Mr. A. Kenyon:**

Nothing to report.

**Mayor's Forum, Mr. M. Reynolds:**

Mayor Reynolds advised that his earlier announcement that he will not seek re-election had nothing to do with his feelings about the 2018 budget. He then noted that he will be gone the next three weeks visiting his children.

**Licenses and Permits:**

Motion was made by Moore, seconded by A. Hraban and carried by voice vote to grant tavern operator's licenses to the following, all pending LPD approval: Skye Neiderman, Tawn Lundgren and Jennifer Heaving for DJ's American Pizza.

Motion was made by Moore, seconded by Stoneberg and carried by voice vote to approve a Street Use Permit for Dahlton and Altey Quinn who will run horse drawn wagon rides in conjunction with Winter Magic on December 2, from 12:30-4 p.m., along a downtown loop. A Certificate of Liability Insurance will be provided. This approval includes closure of Miner Ave. between 1<sup>st</sup> St. and W. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. between the times noted.

Information was provided on the route of the Gobble Wobble Fun Run to be held at 8:30 a.m. Thanksgiving morning.

**Closed Session:**

At 8 p.m. motion was made by Stoneberg and seconded by A. Hraban to go into Closed Session under authority cited in the Meeting Notice. Roll call vote: Stoneberg-yes; A. Hraban-yes; Pearson-yes; Platteter-yes; Morgan-yes; M. Hraban-yes; Moore-yes. Motion carried.

**Adjourn:**

The meeting was adjourned from Closed Session at 8:05 p.m.

**Recorded by:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Alan Christianson  
Adm.-Deputy Clerk

**Publication:**  
Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_