

March 20, 2017

The regular meeting of the Decorah City Council was called to order by Mayor Don Arendt at 5:45 p.m.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members present: Randy Schissel, Andy Carlson, Steve Luse, Charles Lore, Dan Bellrichard, Gary Rustad. Absent: Kirk Johnson

Motion by Lore, second by Bellrichard, to approve the agenda as presented. Roll call vote. All voting aye. Motion carried.

Bob Irons, 1502 Locust Road, submitted pictures of the water flowing through his property on Locust Road. He questioned City Manager Bird regarding the size of the pipe and if it was the right size when installed in 1970. City Manager Bird responded saying he didn't know.

Mr. Irons indicated he had spoken with Meg Eden, Continental Western Insurance Company. He stated Ms Eden questioned why the pipe is so small and when was it put in.

Lindsay Erdman, Engineer, stated this is more than a 1 pipe solution. It is more complex than just a larger pipe. He further commented drainage will be addressed when designing the Locust Road Improvement Project

Carson Egglund, Helping Services for Youth and Families, thanked the council for their continued support of the Holiday Light Magical Nights Event and their yearly monetary support which is used to help fund the mentoring program.

Craig Clefish, Alliant Energy, reviewed the 2016 Community Partnership Assessment.

James Kaufman, 206 North St. spoke again regarding unnecessary noise from car stereos and illegal exhaust systems. He is still affected by this and wonders if any progress is being made to control this.

Motion by Luse, second by Carlson, to approve the consent agenda with the following correction – The motion of the March 6 meeting regarding Solidarity with Muslims should have read “Motion to adopt the statement as presented and to put on the Home Page of the website.”

- a. Minutes of the March 6, 2017 meeting
- b. Claims
- c. Consider C-3 Commercial Design Review re: 111 Winnebago Street, Wildcrafted Acupuncture & Herbs – signs
- d. Renewal Class C Liquor License for Roscoes including Sunday Sales
- e. Renewal Class C Liquor License for Haymarket including Sunday sales
- f. Renewal Class C Liquor License for T-Bocks including Sunday Sales and outdoor service area
- g. Renewal Class C Beer Permit for Casey's General Store, 401 College Dr., including Sunday Sales and Class B Native Wine Permit privileges
- h. Renewal Class C Liquor License for Elks Club including Sunday Sales and Outdoor Service Area
- i. Special Event Application for Holiday Lights/Magical Nights Nov. 22 – Dec. 25, 2017

Roll call vote. Voting aye: Luse, Carlson, Bellrichard, Schissel, Rustad. Voting nay: Lore. Motion carried.

Motion by Rustad, second by Carlson, to appoint Steve Luse as the council liaison to the Decorah Power Committee. Roll call vote. All voting aye. Motion carried.

Discussion was held on the Alliant Energy Franchise Agreement renewal and support of a feasibility study to consider a public electric utility.

Scott Kirkeberg, 29-year Alliant Energy employee, serving as Line Foreman, noted a few significant improvements Alliant Energy has made in Decorah as follows:

- Electric wires were moved underground throughout North Alley in partnering with the City during the Hotel Winneshiek renovation which was a huge improvement for the hotel
- \$1.2 million was put into the affordable housing unit in the old Decorah Tire Building
- During the 2008 flood event, when a major pole went down cutting off power to Freeport and other areas, within 3 hours Alliant had a portable substation in place restoring power to the affected area
- In August 2016, approximately 2000 residents were out of power resulting from a straight-line wind storm. Alliant had the resources to bring in additional staff restoring power to all but 100 by morning.

He stated Alliant is a large company which has varied resources to draw upon in times of emergency.

Brad Morgan, Director of Operations, spoke of the considerable improvements made in the last 5 years to bring safe, reliable service to Decorah. They have spent \$2.3 million in energy efficient projects in the last 5 years and have a strong, diverse mix of renewable energy.

He noted they are vested here locally employing 16 people from Decorah and surrounding area and 21 retirees.

Andy Nelson, Attorney for Decorah Power, requested a moratorium be placed on discussions regarding renewal of the franchise agreement until after Dec. 31, 2017 giving Decorah Power time to complete a feasibility study to develop our own electric utility.

Decorah Power is further requesting support to complete a feasibility study to be completely funded by private donations.

Councilperson Schissel questioned why a franchise agreement with 5 yr. windows couldn't be put in place.

Motion by Bellrichard, second by Luse to place a moratorium on renewal of a franchise agreement with Alliant until 12/31/2017 to allow time for a feasibility study to be completed. Roll call vote. Voting aye: Bellrichard, Luse, Carlson, Lore, Rustad. Voting nay: Schissel. Motion carried.

Motion by Bellrichard, second by Luse to approve completion of a feasibility study with no financial support from the City. Roll call vote. All voting aye. Motion carried.

Ordinance 1198 amending Section 10.36.030 Load Restrictions upon vehicles using certain city streets was introduced and read for the second time. Motion by Rustad, second by Carlson to approve the second reading. Roll call vote. Voting aye: Luse, Bellrichard, Schissel, Lore, Carlson, Rustad. Motion carried.

Motion by Luse to waive the third and final reading. Motion died for lack of second.

Resolution 2783 establishing thru-truck traffic restrictions within the city was opened for discussion.

Kevin Lee, 2526 173rd Ave., stated studies have shown vibrations induced by construction traffic and large vehicles has an impact on historic buildings.

Andy Bonnett, 117 W. Water, encouraged support of the resolution. Having a business on Water Street and now living above the business for 9 months he has seen unnecessary truck traffic. Believes it is a safety concern. For the well-being of his family and others living downtown he encouraged support.

Mike Bockman 315 Pershing, agreed with Mr. Bonnett saying a lot of large vehicles go thru town that don't need to. Believes it has a detrimental effect on outdoor dining.

John Hegg, 1755 Valdres Rd., spoke of the farmers coming to the city's aid with tractors/pumps during the 2008 Flood Event and now we are considering prohibiting them from town. He suggested another road be paved so they don't need to go through town.

Darrell Seegmiller, 3121 Locust Road, stated many delivery drivers don't know the area like residents do making it difficult for drivers. He pointed out ag commerce is only busy several times per year.

Darrel Hovden, 2861 Clay Hill Road, stated you can't always get to some destinations without going through town. No one wants to go through town but sometimes you don't have a choice. He stressed farmers do business in town and they want to be good neighbors but don't want to be treated this way.

Tim Wagner, 505 Franklin St., stated this is an important public health issue, being problematic for those with respiratory issues. We have air quality problems now – don't wait until it's worse.

LeRoy McClintock, 902 Ridge Road, stated he works with the farming community and urged the council to remember food comes from farmers – not Fareway or Quillins. We need farmers.

Keith Hemesath, 2692 Clay Hill Road, a multi-generation farmer, supported the previous comments made. He stated sometimes conditions necessitate going through town. The council should use common sense and work with everyone.

Arnold Weiss, 3335 Locust Rd., grain deliverer, doesn't go through town unless necessary. There are no alternatives right now.

Mitch Hemesath, 2589 Quarry Hill Rd., stated all trucks must meet emission standards. Most trucks are more up to date than a lot of cars. He doesn't enjoy going through town but options are limited.

Steve McCargar, 2749 Hidden Falls Rd, stated it's a matter of balancing competing issues and priorities. Suggested Meadow View should be paved. He is concerned with comments stating if the city does this they will no longer support downtown. He believes dust and bacteria are issues with livestock trucks.

Mark Gavle, 1538 Big Canoe Road, livestock hauler, stated there is no disease being spread when livestock trucks go through town. Doesn't believe enough people appreciate what trucking does for the community.

Motion by Luse, second by Rustad, to table for further discussion. Roll call vote. All voting aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Carlson, second by Schissel to approve the Winneshiek County Debris Management Plan. Roll call vote. All voting aye. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned on motion.



Wanda Hemesath, MMC
City Clerk, Tr.