

MARENGO CITY COUNCIL
Regular Meeting Minutes
Marengo Council Chambers
132 E. Prairie St.
Marengo, IL 60152
June 14, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Donald Lockhart called the Regular Meeting of the Marengo City Council to order at 7:19 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Donald Lockhart led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present for this meeting were Mayor Donald Lockhart; Aldermen: Carole Bartman, Michael Smith, Steve DiMaria, Mike Secor, and Todd Hall. Also present were City Administrator Deborah Nier, City Attorney Carlos Arevalo, Deputy Chief Joseph Hallman, Building Commissioner Jayson Shull, Superintendent of Public Works Jim Craney, Assistant to the City Administrator Joshua Blakemore, and City Engineer David Johanson. Absent this evening were Aldermen: Corey Brackmann, Pat Signore, and Eric DeBoer.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Brian Kelly, 8909 Wildrose Lane, Marengo. “I’ve got some prepared remarks here regarding my participation as a member of the Economic Restructuring Committee for your Main Street organization. I’m here tonight to address the City Council on three (3) issues. First, I am asking you as a City Council to back and support the city ordinances as they relate to Chapter 16 of the Marengo Municipal Code, dealing with signs specifically in the downtown district. These ordinances are enforceable rules and not just guidelines. Second, I am asking you to review your practice of approving the majority of variance requests for signs. The Council should allow variances only after critical review -a demonstration of extreme hardship – and a thought out assessment of what short and long-term impact the variance will have. Approval of a variance should be carefully limited and considered the exception and not the rule. Consideration should include potential precedent or trend-setting decisions that may derail comprehensive and long-range plans, and the overall image you want the downtown district to have. I ask you to view your sign ordinances as tools created by and for the community to insure everyone follows an acceptable standard, which would provide an appealing appearance and continuity toward a viable business district. Finally, third, I would ask the Council to back and support the staff’s ability and responsibility to apply and enforce those ordinances as they currently are written. I appreciate your desire to be seen as a business friendly community. But, once a knowing or intentional disregard for the standards is apparent, firm, fair and reasonable enforcement must be applied to insure compliance. Any enforcement should be supported by the Council. Thank you.”

Pam Gida, 718 Ridge Drive, Marengo. “Anyone who has ever been on a job interview knows the importance of dressing correctly. No one would ever go to a job interview for

a vice president's position with a major corporation wearing shorts and flip-flops. First impressions are crucial. It is the same with a business. The appearance of a business sends a signal to customers before they ever walk in the door or speaks to the owner; they have formed opinions about that company based on what they see. If a 19th century business is covered with signs that are not in keeping with the integrity of the structure, it sends a mixed message to the customer. If they ignore the neighborhood around them, what else are they going to ignore. Are they going to treat me right? Thoughts like this are not friendly to any business. A 140-year-old business district is a special place, and it needs special rules if it is going to retain the look that makes it special. These special rules don't have to put an undue burden on business-owners. Re-facing an internally lit plastic sign costs the same as a similarly sized wall sign such as the one on the Marengo Sign storefront, which is in keeping with both the age of our downtown and the ordinances already on our books. Plastic signs have no place on a 19th century building, and there are plenty of alternate materials available that will fit the district perfectly. As you consider the sign request before you tonight, please follow the recommendations of the Marengo Historic Preservation Commission and urge the petitioner to help us maintain the character of our downtown through the installation of appropriate signage. Thank you."

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Alderman Todd Hall corrected the wording on the minutes of page 2 – change the wording “this amendment” to read “the appropriations ordinance.”

Alderman Mike Secor made a motion, seconded by Alderman Carole Bartman, to accept the minutes as corrected. The motion passed with an aye vote by Aldermen: Secor, Hall, DiMaria, Bartman, and Smith.

CONSENT AGENDA

- a. **List of bills**
- b. **Ordinance Establishing Prevailing Wages for 2010/2011**
- c. **Agreement with SEC Group, Inc for Engineering Services**
- d. **Resolution Closing Route 23 for Settlers Days Parade**
- e. **Resolution in Support of Amtrak Station in Marengo**
- f. **Commission Appointments**

Questions were asked on (1) bill from SEC for services on the Metra Station plan (2) agreement with SEC on their billing (3) Amtrak agreement on the amended document (4) appointments correction on one name for the police commission – Ryman not Ryan (5) balance shown on the general corporate fund. All were answered satisfactorily.

Alderman Carole Bartman made a motion, seconded by Alderman Steve DiMaria, to approve the consent agenda items with changes noted. The motion passed with an aye vote by Aldermen: Smith, DiMaria, Bartman, Hall, and Secor.

NEW BUSINESS

McHenry County Groundwater Resource Coordinator Presentation

Cassandra McKinney, Manager, gave a presentation on the McHenry County Groundwater Resource program. Handouts were also given to all the Aldermen.

Marengo Main Street Farmer's Market Request.

Bob Levin, President of Marengo Main Street submitted a request to the City Council to move the Farmer's Market from City Lot #2 – to City Lot #1. The reason for the change in location is better visibility for the market. The market will be in the northwest corner of the lot.

Alderman Steve DiMaria made a motion, seconded by Alderman Mike Secor, to approve the request. The motion passed with an aye vote by Aldermen: Hall, DiMaria, Smith, Secor, and Bartman.

Marengo Main Street Savin' A Rainy Day Project Request.

Lucia Matlock, Executive Director of Marengo Main Street, explained the project to the City Council. There are currently 9 rain barrels promised, and the hope is to have a total of 20 in the downtown area.

Alderman Michael Smith made a motion, seconded by Alderman Mike Secor, to approve the request. The motion passed with an aye vote by Aldermen: DiMaria, Secor, Bartman, Hall and Smith.

100 West Washington Street – Harris Bank, Sign Variation Request.

Jessica Heath-Bowden, with ICON Identity Solutions – the sign company hired by Harris Bank to prepare the proposal for the Harris Bank signage stated that Harris will be replacing the awning, wall signs, plaque that has the bank hours, and the corner sign (at Washington and State Street). Alderman Todd Hall recommended that the company meet with the Historic Preservation Committee to discuss options and materials that could be used in keeping with the image the Committee is trying to present. Plastic signage is not an option at this time. ICON Identity Solutions have agreed to meet with the HPC.

Memorandum of Understanding with McHenry county Regarding Pace Dial-A-Ride Service Extension

Joshua Blakemore explained the memorandum which extends the hours of use.

Alderman Michael Smith made a motion, seconded by Alderman Mike Secor to approve the Memorandum of Understanding. The motion passed with an aye vote by Aldermen: Bartman, Hall, Smith, Secor, and DiMaria.

Railroad Crossing Upgrade Agreement

Deborah Nier explained the Agreement being presented to the Council this evening. This agreement will provide for upgrading two railroad crossings – one at East Street and the other at Thorne Road. Normal participation on the part of the City of Marengo would be 10% of the project, but Deborah Nier sent IDOT a hardship letter requesting a reduction in the percentage. The percentage was reduced to 2.9% -- for a total on the part of the City of Marengo of \$5,400. This amount is included in the 2010/2011 Budget.

Alderman Michael Smith made a motion, seconded by Alderman Mike Secor, to (1) authorize the Mayor to execute the agreement and (2) adopt the resolution (which is

Exhibit B) authorizing an agent of the City of Marengo to do what is needed for purposes of administration.

The motion passed with an aye vote by Aldermen: Hall, DiMaria, Secor, Smith, and Bartman.

IDOT Resolution of Intent

The City of Marengo received a letter from the IDOT confirming that the City of Marengo may use Motor Fuel Tax funds for the purpose of debt service on the bonds that were sold.

Alderman Carole Bartman made a motion, seconded by Alderman Todd Hall, to approve the IDOT Resolution of Intent. The motion passed with an aye vote by Aldermen: Hall, DiMaria, Secor, Smith, and Bartman.

OLD BUSINESS

Appointment of Dispatch Committee Chair and Report

Mayor Lockhart asked Carole Bartman to be the Chairman of the newly formed Dispatch Committee. She accepted the appointment. She reported that the Committee will be meeting on July 6th (Tuesday night), and that a letter has been sent to all entities the City of Marengo provides dispatch service for so they can plan to be in attendance.

MAYOR'S STATEMENTS AND REPORTS

Mayor Lockhart reiterated the current financial situation that the City of Marengo is in, with the State of Illinois owing the City \$286,000 (of income tax) at the present time.

DEPARTMENT HEAD AND STAFF REPORTS

Jayson Shull, Building Commissioner. Report previously given to all Aldermen. He wanted to let the Council members know that he is still issuing building permits to City residents.

Jim Craney, Superintendent of Public Works. The street projects are done. Brought the Council up to date on various items.

Joshua Blakemore, Assistant to the City Administrator. TIF update – Ehlers is still working on this. The downtown portion of the project is complete. The east side project is on hold at the current time, while a landowner determines how they want to proceed with their specific property. Regarding the Seven Oaks / Volkening Project, working on these with some changes to the property sizes originally given.

Joseph Hallman, Deputy Chief. On Wednesday June 23, 2010, Sgt. Fritz will be putting on a “Fatal Vision” demonstration. The times of this are 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., and then from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. This will be held at the Marengo High School.

David Johanson, City Engineer. ERP Project went very smoothly. Everything is paved and the punch list items are complete. Met today with Staff on the continuing flooding issues in the area of Kishwaukee Street, Stevenson Street and Page Street. Looking at ways to tackle this problem.

Deborah Nier, City Administrator. The City of Marengo has received a notice from the County that there will be a public presentation of the final 2030 Plan. She will get the information to all Aldermen.

Donald Lockhart, Mayor. Added that there is currently half a billion dollars owed to the Cities and Counties in the State of Illinois – by the State of Illinois.

Carlo Arevalo, City Attorney. No report.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Donald Lockhart advised that there was no need to go into Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to come before the meeting. Alderman Steve DiMaria made a motion, seconded by Alderman Michael Smith, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with a voice vote by all Aldermen present. The meeting officially adjourned at 8:56 p.m..

Respectfully submitted,

Constance J. Boxleitner
City Clerk