

Regular Meeting of the  
Committee Of The Whole  
07/29/2013

The regular meeting of the Committee of the whole was called to order at 6:00p.m. July 29<sup>th</sup> 2013 in the Council Chambers of the City of Rock Falls. Present were Alderman Vandersnick, Alderman Snow, Alderman Kuhlemier, Alderman Schuneman, Alderman Folsom, and Alderman Watts. Absent were Aldermen Reitzel, and Hand.

Representatives from Moring Disposal distributed a color coded map indicating the proposed change to five (5) day refuse pickup in the city. The representatives explained that this change would result in less truck traffic along the city streets, because one truck would handle each day's refuse, both recycling, and garbage. Adm. Blackert confirmed with Moring that yard and bulk waste, would also be picked up on the same day. Adm. Blackert also would like to see curbside pickup only due to the fact that these trucks are destructive to the alleys. Alderman Snow stated that using a wheeled trash receptacle may make it easier to move garbage to the curb, and confirmed that this was not a truck with an automatic lifting arm for trash bins. There could be a potential starting date of September or October, and these options will be discussed at the next Public Works / Public Property Meeting. Adm. Blackert recommends that Moring draw up pamphlets and maps to help inform residents of the changes.

Building Inspector Searing presented some correspondence that has been sent to the city attorney for drafting an ordinance with regards to allowing the haying of tall grass in certain areas within the city. Alderman Snow commented that the street department could be working on roads rather than mowing, he also complimented the regulations that have been set in this proposed ordinance. Mayor Wescott remarked that there may be possible grants for prairie grass restoration in areas that are now being mowed, and places that may be difficult to mow. Adm. Blackert let the committee know that with the new riverfront, the city now spends 86 hours a week mowing.

Mayor Wescott stated that the fence on Wood Avenue (far East side of the RBW District) is dilapidated , and has many shrubs, and trees grown up around it. He asked the committee if they would like to remove the fence, and also if they would like to abandon Wood Avenue as a city street. Alderman Kuhlemier asked if we actually own the fence on the southern part of Wood Avenue. Alderman Vandersnick expressed concern that the removal of the trees may make the edge of the road unstable, and that the trees may be holding back erosion. The committee would like to keep Wood Avenue as a street until it is clear what the future RBW development is going to look like.

Mayor Wescott explained that former Mayor Blanton had started work on an ordinance to allow outdoor seating at bars and restaurants around town. The city attorney drafted an ordinance and submitted it to the city, however it is mostly pertaining to the downtown bars, and does not address restaurant tables on the sidewalks. Inspector Searing stated that outdoor seating will need to comply with the upcoming State regulations for ADA and exit codes for fire safety. The state laws will be requiring a four (4) foot wide straight path through these areas. Alderman Snow would like to make sure that any covenants or rules for fencing along sidewalks require that all of the fencing matches throughout the downtown. Alderman Kuhlemier brought up the idea of liability to the city if alcohol were to be permitted on public sidewalks. Mayor Wescott said that the burden of insurance would fall on the owner of the liquor license, and that they would be responsible for what occurs in their outdoor area. It is still unclear whether or not with the new ADA requirements if outdoor seating will work in the downtown area. Alderman Schuneman wonders why people would want to just look at traffic while eating, and Alderman Kuhlemier stated that the city should look to building wider sidewalks in the future.

The Mayor also stated that Rock Falls is one of the only municipalities around which does not allow alcohol sales at convenience stores, and gas stations. The city has drafted an ordinance to allow this, but it would place restrictions upon 24 hour businesses to not sell alcohol between 1a.m. and 6 a.m. Alderman Kuhlemier stated that the reason this was never allowed was to prevent underage drinking, Alderman Snow stated that the city loses revenue when boaters purchase gas and alcohol at one stop in neighboring towns. The Mayor asked other communities, and they have stated that there are very few problems with underage alcohol purchases from these convenience stores. Police Commander Nelson mentioned that this would not be any extra burden upon the Police Department. The new Liquor License would require a non-refundable \$6000.00 application fee, and could require \$1000.00 per year for renewal. The aldermen all expressed their personal thoughts about the proposal, and it will be taken back to the ordinance committee at their next meeting. Alderman Snow suggested that while the liquor License is on the table and being reviewed, that perhaps we should also ask the license holders to express their views about the time of operation and sales on Sunday to align Rock Falls again with surrounding communities.

Mr. Searing explained that the last remaining buildings on the RBW site have no contamination, or asbestos. Pat Burke has offered to demolish these buildings at a cost to the city of \$1000.00. This will remove the buildings, and take down the concrete walls to below grade. There is a pit in one building that will need to be filled. Alderman Kuhlemier remembered how much of a positive difference the removal of the Martini Building made along the riverfront.

With nothing else for the good of the committee the meeting adjourned at 7:37p.m.