

City of Braidwood

Agenda

Special Meeting of the City Council

May 1, 2015 @ 7:30 pm

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENTS

MAYOR

Seeking a Motion to Approve the Appointment of City Attorney

Seeking a Motion to Approve the Appointment of City Clerk

Seeking a Motion to Approve the Appointment of Police Chief

Seeking a Motion to Approve the Appointment of City Administrator

Seeking a Motion to Approve the Appointment of City Engineer

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

CITY OF BRAIDWOOD
Minutes
City Council Regular Meeting
Friday, May 1, 2015
City Council Chambers

Call to Order

Mayor Jim Vehrs called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor requested a member of the Armed Forces to lead us in The Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Elected Officials present: Mayor Vehrs, Commissioner of Public Property Jim Hutton, Commissioner of Streets and Public Improvements Fay Smith, Commissioner of Public Health and Safety Eric Tessler, and Commissioner of Accounts and Finances Elena Hibler.

Appointed officials present: Acting Clerk Lisa Glisson.

Public Comment

No one addressed the council. Public comment closed at 7:31 pm.

Appointments

*Mayor Vehrs requested a motion to approve the appointment of City Attorney, Kavanagh, Grumley & Gorbald. Comm. Hutton made the motion, seconded by Comm. Smith. **Discussion:** Comm. Tessler asked how much will it cost the City? Mayor advised right now they are at \$195.00 an hour. Tessler: we have an adjudication system that our other lawyer set up is that going to continue? Mayor advised yes. Tessler: They were the attorneys from a few years back? Mayor yes. Tessler: Is there any relationship to them? Mayor no. Tessler: Anyone's personal law firm. Mayor advised no. The motion was approved with 5 ayes (Hibler, Hutton, Tessler, Smith, Vehrs) 0 nays.*

*Mayor Vehrs requested a motion to approve the appointment of City Clerk Sue Grygiel. Comm. Smith made the motion, seconded by Comm. Tessler. **Discussion:** Comm. Tessler asked what is her wage/salary. Mayor advised she will be coming in at the previous clerks salary. Tessler stated approximately 42 thousand. Mayor advised yes. Tessler advised to move the city forward we will need trust in that office, how will the relationship work between Sue and Andy if they both get appointed when Sue fired Andy? They are two very, prideful people, so I am worried they will not be able to put their differences aside. Mayor advised, going back a year ago when I decided to run for Mayor, I had Andy and Sue together, they got through their differences. We all came together as a whole. We had a discussion with the girls in the office, they all agreed they can work with Sue Grygiel, so I kept my appointment as City Clerk as Sue Grygiel. Tessler: The question isn't the girls working with Sue, I have faith in Sue as a clerk. I have no issue with Sue as a clerk and I don't think the women do. My fear is the relationship with Sue and Andy. Andy might not have direct contact with Sue, but they are going to be in a small office and they will have contact and interaction. I remember sitting in those seats when Sue was Mayor at the end of her term. I remember Andy making a mockery of the meetings because he could not take the fact that he got fired. Mayor advised, I think they all looked and that is in the past. They agreed now we are moving forward for the future. We had lunch together today, and they agreed. Tessler: Have they*

agreed now because you have given them jobs? Mayor advised, they agreed a year ago that they would work with me no matter what it took. Tessler: Because you are giving them jobs? Mayor advised, no do what it takes, not because I'm giving them jobs. Tessler: Because you're giving them a wage? Mayor advised, I had a different administrator all picked out, besides Andy Galatte, but when he came back to me and said he wanted 75 thousand a year, I knew the City couldn't afford a City Administrator. Mayor, what I'm saying Eric, is I don't see a problem with Sue and Andy working together. Comm. Smith advised I know both of them and they are looking forward to go forward, and there not be no talk. Tessler advised he would hold both of them to that. Comm. Smith stated, I'm not going down there to public works and kicking and no argument. Tessler advised I'm not talking about public works right now, I'm talking about this relationship and I don't want to make this meeting any longer then it has to be. Smith, I don't think it will be. Tessler advised I will hold you guys to that, I hope they can work together. Smith, I don't know where they are gonna be, but I don't think you're dealing with that kind of people. But if it is, I think this council can take care of the problem. The motion was approved with 5 ayes (Hibler, Hutton, Tessler, Smith, Vehrs) 0 nays.

Mayor Vehrs requested a motion to approve the appointment of Nick Ficarello to Police Chief. Comm. Tessler made the motion, seconded by Comm. Smith. **Discussion:** Comm. Tessler: What is his wage going to be? Mayor advised 60 thousand a year. Tessler: Full time? Mayor: yes. Tessler: Insurance? Mayor: no. Tessler: Vehicle? Mayor: Whatever you decide Eric. Tessler: Why Nick? Mayor: I looked at his resume. I think he is highly qualified. He meets all the criteria of being Chief of Police. Tessler: Did you interview any current Sergeants or officers within the department? Mayor: I looked at one yes. Tessler: Looked at one or interviewed one? Mayor: Interviewed one. Tessler: You know there are two other very qualified. I think I know the one you're talking about, but there are a few other qualified ones, why go outside the department? Mayor: I think it would be better for the community to be outside the police department. There would be a better relationship. They don't know him, he doesn't know them. They will have to learn to trust him and he will have to learn to trust his department and I know with the way Nick worked with the Will County Sheriff Office and brought his department together, I don't see no problem with him working with our department. Tessler: No you don't see it as a problem or you don't think the citizens will think it's an issue by giving a man 60 thousand a year to show up at start time and leave at quitting time and he doesn't spend any of his money in town, some might say he doesn't see the decisions he makes, he doesn't see because he doesn't live here? Mayor: I don't think Nick is that way. I think Nick will be spending money in town. I think Nick is looking, if this works out coming down to Braidwood. He lives in Manhattan right now. He is looking to possible moving into Braidwood into this area. I talked to Nick one time before and right now, he said let me get comfortable, let me see what this is all about, let me get your police department together and start working with them, get them on track and then we will make a determination on him moving into Braidwood. Tessler: Now the 60 thousand dollars is that for 1 year, a 1 year contract? Mayor: Yes, 1 year contract. Tessler: Most people know my criteria, which some people think, my criteria doesn't matter but one of my criteria is geology. Jim Hutton, I believe shares the same, because Jim told me, on the phone before the election, that geology is a big issue here and having a Chief live in town is a big issue. I think, I don't know how much settling needs to happen, but you're the Mayor and it is your appointment with our approval, so I just hope this isn't a lot of lip service, now saying he will move to town eventually, if he likes the situation. He probably will move to town when his wage increases from 60 grand, because he is very qualified and I just don't see a man that qualified working for 60 grand for 4 years. I just hope that commissioners that tell me their opinions, stick to them, don't get bullied, be your own person. Comm. Hutton stated I'd like to see the Chief live in town, but I agree with Jimmy also, it may be time to get an outside Chief, start everything fresh and new and see how everything works out. If it doesn't work out and he wants to leave, he don't like what he is doing, we replace him. That is another reason I'd be leery of buying a house, it's a big investment. Tessler: We're making a big investment, he is going to be the face of our police department and there are a lot of people in this room right now, believe that our police department is basically weak and dismal and not worth anything. So we're making a huge investment, yeah the 60 thousand is cheaper than our previous Chief, but reputation is a lot more than 60 thousand in my opinion. I think we're making a bigger gamble than he is. Comm. Hutton stated it would be hard, if you sell your house and move in town in the first year. Tessler: Yeah, it would be, but you do have

qualified sergeants and officers in place now. So, I don't know, it doesn't make sense to me, take a vote if you want. The motion was approved with 3 ayes (Hutton, Smith, Vehrs) 2 nays (Hibler, Tessler).

Mayor Vehrs requested a motion to approve the appointment of City Administrator Andy Galatte. Comm. Tessler made the motion, seconded by Comm. Hutton. **Discussion:** Comm. Tessler asked wage? Mayor 30 thousand. Tessler: Insurance? Mayor: No. Tessler: Vehicle? Mayor: No, not at this time. I would like to find a vehicle that the City Administrator and the Commissioners to use around town. I can't see people wearing their vehicles out on city business and putting their insurance at risk. Do we have a vehicle that we can use Eric? I haven't researched if there is anything available. Tessler: At this time all the vehicles we have for the police department have to be used for police department services. It is mandated through the seizures so any of those vehicles we can't use. I know we did make the Prius surplus property and the city can put a bid on it, with however else who wants to. I understand you don't want to put wear and tear on our vehicle, but it's not a very big town. I understand a vehicle to go out of town for conference and things like that but around town it's more volunteer. Mayor advised community service. Comm. Hibler stated that Mr. Galatte was the city administrator when the union block buildings were torn down, some of the oldest buildings we had in Braidwood. When you look around at Morris, Wilmington and Dwight and Pontiac, they don't tear down their old buildings they protect them. The buildings were torn down, they should not have been torn down until the new buildings had been built. The owner of Kevin's Tap was told, you can stay in your building until the new building is built and then you just go across the alley into your new building. As far as the law goes, his attorney told him, he could still be sitting there because he has a written contract stating he can stay in his building until the new building was built. I just think that was a bad decision to make and that is why I don't think Mr. Galatte should be City Administrator. Tessler: I just don't think it looks good to have your representative for the city to talk to businesses when he's sued the city twice? Three times? If you want the City to grow so much and you want to be so much a part of it and you want to be helpful to the City, suing the City is not helping the City. He could say I came and complained and it fell on deaf ears. He never came and talked to me, last time I checked I had a vote the last 4 years. I just don't think it is good PR. I think the best thing to do, is un-tap some of the City's potential. What is wrong with taking applications, get someone fresh and new. You want fresh and new, we got a new police chief, you got it. We're going to an old deterrent and disease. I believe that is what Andy is to this town. You're talking out of both sides of your mouth. You want fresh and new great, but we're bring old, deterrent and disease, it makes no sense to me. Mayor advised being with Andy for the last couple of years and knowing his background on development and the people that he knows, he has a developer that wants to come in right away. I think this will be beneficial for the City. Tessler: Who is the developer? Mayor asked Andy if he would like to make a comment. Andy advised no, I'm not going to disclose that now. I think Mr. Hutton and Fay knows, we have a developer. I would like to address one thing about downtown. The paperwork for downtown regarding the structure of those buildings is in city hall. Jim Hutton and Fay were both here while we had those discussions. The engineer firm said those buildings, those 7 buildings, were unsound, unsafe and there was nothing we could do with them. I do hope as the administrator to clear that BS up. I'm gonna do it with Mr. Rozak's help because that has been a vicious rumor for the last 4 years. Hibler stated I beg to differ, because when they tore down Kevinagains tap, they could hardly get it down because it was so sturdy, because of the brick walls in-between. It was a good standing building. Tessler: What is his role going to be, is he going to be Administrator, City Manager, what are his duties going to entail? Mayor stated his duties will entail bringing development into the City of Braidwood, also working with the council as Administrator if we have a problem, he'll be the mediator. Tessler: Now who is going to be working under him, if anyone? Mayor: Ms. Glisson. Tessler: So we as Commissioners are under you or equal to you? Mayor: Yes. Hutton advised Chuck Shane tore those buildings down, when the wrecking ball hit the back wall of that building, the hole wall fell in. They were not structurally sound. They were built on limestone foundations, not concrete, not anything stationary. He asked if people were using these buildings? I said yes, up until a couple of months ago. He said the brink deteriorated. Tessler: Was the reason we demolished these buildings because they were decrepit and unsafe or was it because we thought we had a developer? Hutton advised the realtor told us point blank that if the buildings were still standing, we would never sell the property. So we took them down so people could see the property and what they can build on, see the visual. Tessler: the realtor took you guys for a ride. Smith stated I crawled underneath those buildings and

it was all black mold. Tessler asked if they had ever heard of a plot plan? Here's the plot plan, that's how big it is, that is how you sell property. Hutton stated it was in the office, it isn't there now, but it was. Mayor asked if there was any other discussion. The motion was approved with 3 ayes (Hutton, Smith, Vehrs) 2 nays (Hibler, Tessler).

Mayor Vehrs requested a motion to approve the appointment of City Engineer MG2A. Comm. Hutton made the motion, seconded by Comm. Smith. **Discussion:** Comm. Tessler: Cost? Mayor: Right now we are working on the same or less than Hamilton. Mayor requested Mr. Gingerich to come up and explain to the council and residents what the cost will be. Mike Gingerich introduced himself and explained they will be in a consulting role and they will bill the City for time and material or an agreed to fixed fee for each project. We will provide the village with a schedule of prices for the various people we have working in the firm and we will also provide a budget for any work we will do. To have us work for the City there is no monthly cost, it is an as needed basis for the projects the village has. An example would be your MFT, that has to be submitted to IDOT. If the Mayor and council would like us to attend a meeting, we would see how they wanted to arrange the financing for that. Tessler: I saw the letter that was sent to Hamilton about fresh and new ideas, or fresh ideas, that's why you decided to go with MG2A, last time I checked fresh equals new and MG2A has already been here. What's new about them? I know that Jim sat in a meeting, Elena sat in a meeting, I sat in a meeting, executive session about 2 ½ years ago with Strand and MG2A and we all come to the conclusion, the Commissioners did that Strand and MG2A were incompetent with the WWTP. So, I get that all these people have qualifications, I get this, but all the things you are talking are contradictory. You want new, you want to move this town forward, but we are going back to the old stuff, why? You have a perfect opportunity to start something new, fresh, and exciting in this town. It is a perfect time to be aggressive, the perfect time to do your thing Jimmy, going back to the old stuff, it seems like all these things that are happening tonight are basically return favors for people that helped you get elected and it is a shame, and it is, and it is. It is a shame. Mayor stated well the reason that I brought Mr. Galatte and Sue Grygiel, Wayne Saltzman, Gingerich back, with talking to them, they seen, they been through it, they seen what happened, they have had 3 or 4 years to look back and say this is where I messed up, this is where we could go forward. I talked to these people, sure I'm gonna make mistakes, I'm new to this, but I want the best of the best behind me. I think they are, I think they are. Tessler stated we as the Commissioners don't know the best of the best because we have never tried to tap this Cities potential. I know you are concerned with the elderly in this town, as is everyone, they are the majority in this town. But the reason why they are the majority population in this town is because no one gives a crap about the younger generation. You're not giving the opportunity to younger people, that is why they walk away and go somewhere else. Mayor advised the problem is the city does not have the funds. I told you that Eric. I had a City Administrator out of Naperville, he wanted 75 thousand a year. Can the City afford 75 thousand a year, where are we going to find people when we don't have the money to pay for the high? Eric stated we don't know what is out there, we haven't interviewed anyone, because we haven't taken applications, we have no idea what's out there. Mayor advised if we have a savings to the City from the past/current people working for the city and we're gonna save money and generate a savings there and re-coup some money, then maybe later down the road if some don't work out, we can move. It has happened in the past, they have gotten rid of engineers in the past. Then you start over. I decided when I talked to Hamilton and Mr. Gingerich the other day, we are gonna have everything continue on. We have a problem with the SCADA system, they are well aware of it, we have been talking about it for a month. Eric, we don't have the money to have someone come back in and re-engineer things. I got confidence in these people. If they have to re-engineer something they will probably donated back to the City because they know what our funds ours. Tessler: Well they didn't do that before, if they do that now that would be great. Mayor: They are already working on a large project in town for the school. Tessler: I just hope, if they are not well versed in something, as we found out in the WWTP, be honest, we will give help as much as we can. Mayor: They agreed to that. We all need help at some time. There is a talent in everyone. I'm sure there is someone in the audience that may be able to help out. That's why I'll open the floor up to public comment, later on, if anyone has a better idea out there than the way were going with something, we'll listen to them. Let's not close the doors to the residents of Braidwood, leave the door open. I have confidence that the people we picked tonight will do a great job for the City of Braidwood and help us move forward. I got that. I mean if it doesn't work out, you guys can hang me out there on the street. I got that

much confidence in these people. Tessler stated I hope your right. Smith advised he would like to say something. We were just talking about going out and do this and doing that. Now the people you appointed tonight now that this water bill shouldn't have doubled because we had that there all lined up and it can be proved, but they took that 8 million dollars and moved it and raised the water bill. Mayor: Fay we aren't looking at the past we're going forward. Fay stated we can't go back, you and me and this council has got to pull us through. Hutton advised the one thing everyone has to remember is anytime in the next four years that we aren't happy with anybody that has been appointed, they can be replaced. Mayor and Fay stated right. Hutton: If the production isn't out there, it is time to make a change, that is the only option we got. Hopefully we'll have more money. The motion was approved with 3 ayes (Hutton, Smith, Vehrs) 2 nays (Hibler, Tessler).

Mayor requested the new appointees to come up and take their seats.

New Business

Comm. Tessler asked about the roof on the food pantry. Comm. Hutton advised they are working on it. Comm. Hutton advised we got the cooler we looked at for the food pantry. Comm. Smith thanked everyone. He advised the attorney, he made the motion 8 years ago to hire them. He welcomed the Clerk back and advised the Chief that he was sure he had his work cut out for him and he would leave it to them, he wants people to come through town instead of going around. Fay advised Andy he had his work cut out for him. I believe that you will look at the best with everyone involved and look out for the City. To the engineer we have had you before so I know you know where all the pot holes are. I will do my best to not hurt you but to do my best. I know about the car. I spent gas money for 8 years. I'm retired from GM. I could be in Florida or Tennessee but I like Braidwood, it sticks to you. Fay said thank you and God bless you all.

Mayor advised this is the new council for the next four years, at any time if you have questions, any concerns, please come see us, talk to us, we will do our best for your needs.

Adjournment

Mayor Vehrs asked for a motion to adjourn. Comm. Hutton that motion, seconded by Comm. Smith. The motion was approved with 5 ayes (Hibler, Hutton, Tessler, Smith, Vehrs) 0 nays.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:09 pm.

Approved this 12th day of May 2015

Jan Adams Mayor
Shirley Grogan City Clerk

