

City Council Meeting
Of the City of Palos Hills
Held Thursday, February 19, 2009
City Hall Council Chambers
10335 S. Roberts Road
Palos Hills, Illinois 60465

- 1) **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Bennett called the City Council Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- 2) **PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:** Mayor Bennett led everyone in the Pledge to the Flag.
- 3) **ROLL CALL:** Upon roll call the following Aldermen responded as present: Knox, Hanson, Marrotta, Schultz, Kleefisch, Stratton, Pasek, Williams

ABSENT: Brachman, Moore

- 4) **QUORUM:** Mayor Bennett, declared a quorum was present.

- 5) **READING OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:**

Ald. Kleefisch, I MOVE to approve the City Council Meeting Minutes dated February 5, 2009 as presented. SECONDED by Ald. Williams. Upon roll call the following Ald. voted:

AYE: Marrotta, Schultz, Kleefisch, Pasek, Williams, Knox

ABSTAIN: Hanson, Stratton

ABSENT: Brachman, Moore

NAY: None

MOTION CARRIED.

- 6) **CITIZENS PETITION:** None.
- 7) **CITIZENS HEARING:** None.
- 8) **REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS FROM MAYOR AND OTHER CITY OFFICIALS:**
 - A. **CITY CLERK:** No report.

B. **CITY ATTORNEY:** No report.

C. **MAYOR:**

Mayor Bennett, I put into your mailboxes from C-map the proposed Federal Stimulus Package and I think as I have indicated to the Council that it appears in the area of transportation dollars that all of it is going to go directly to the State of Illinois.

What they are going to do in April is they have a series of projects that are Project

Ready, a lot of it is road resurfacing and bridge projects. They are going to go out to bid on those projects with probably with an estimated six hundred million dollars.

Part two of it will be money that will go to the so-called locals, but that local is actually the Federal Transportation Projects that go on now through our (inaudible) want to come to you for a project, lighting and sidewalks and all that kind of stuff where we get Federal money. So it is going to go through that same system, meaning that probably only those towns that are on the docket right now that have projects ready will probably receive that money.

We have no other federal projects going on right now in town other than the Cook County 88th Avenue project which is a County project not a Federal project. There is a possibility although they are looking for total projects to fund; we have a lighting aspect of that which we do receive federal dollars on; just a small portion that we have to pay. But they might not accept that as a semi project. They are looking for full complete projects; shovel ready.

So it appears that the highway transportation portion of that stimulus package is not going to be what I think a lot of towns thought and that's local roads, resurfacing which is our responsibility total.

I think I indicated to you last week that the State of Illinois is considering a gasoline tax. Gasoline taxes do go to Motor Fuel Tax funds and under the current formula the State gets a portion and we get a portion of Motor Fuel Tax funds every year.

When I went down state last year the bill as written right now all that money would go to the State and none to locals, and we told them there is no way we would even come close to supporting that bill unless they use the same formula as they did in the past where part goes to the State, part goes to local.

So if that tax does pass and they do continue with the same formula we would receive some extra money, Motor Fuel Tax money for local roads.

The other aspects of that bill if you saw it, there are some areas in housing, environmental, some sewer and water things. Towns like Oak Lawn for example who are proposing to upgrade their entire water system probably would benefit from something like this, which hopefully would be a benefit to us because if they can get either funding to support that expansion and improvement of their system that means they won't tag that cost on to us, which they are proposing. Everybody that receives water from Oak Lawn would be part of this surcharge that could come on down the road.

In fact tonight Frank has a Resolution that they are asking for support that their project would meet the criteria standards received from some of that Federal money to offset the cost of that project, it is huge, two hundred and fifty million. They are talking about sharing that cost with everybody in the system, which is another topic down the road.

There is a possibility, we've looked at a couple of small areas, in fact on the 88th Avenue Project, we are talking about increasing the size of the storm sewer, which we are going to have to pick up, the County won't do that. We are going to check to see if that project could be eligible for Federal Stimulus money because that project is ready to go.

In fact the good news is the County informed us that they maybe sending the documents next week to move forward on the project, they may go to bid finally this summer on the project and maybe by fall we will finally get the last major project in town off and running; the 88th Avenue Re-hab Project.

Any other areas we are going to check out, there is some money available in some environmental things; the Fed & State are still not clear as to procedures on how to go about and what is the eligibility and the criteria for all that stuff. Any way I gave this to you, it is an overview of what is coming to the State of Illinois and how it applies to local government.

The second item I want to talk to you about briefly; there is a bill pending down state it is called the Illinois Vacant & Abandoned Property Act, which would assist local governments in, number one being notified immediately if a foreclosure takes place in our community, which we don't know now.

It also talks about things that a municipality maybe able to do which we've already started part of that and that is on the maintenance aspect of it, being able to lien properties and collect those fees for cleaning up the property.

The third part of it is where it may allow a municipality to purchase property as a first right of purchase on the property if we choose to do that. But it is a bill being supported by the Mayor's in the region and we think it is a good bill; it's going to help governments find out real quick about abandoned properties.

Which get me to part two of that in our town; Gene I think it's a great opportunity for us when we find out about these abandon properties, especially those that are not up to city standards or codes. We still have a few left in town that are don't even come close to meeting codes, that if those properties are purchased, we need to have the opportunity to I think before or when somebody buys it and attempts to rehab it that we take great consideration in whether or not those properties in fact should come down because of the condition of it, not meeting any basic standards of city code. I think it is an opportunity for us to (inaudible) if a lot of these do come on the market or if there is only a few, for us clean up these properties and bring them all up to city code. There are still some out there that are still sitting on cinder blocks without even foundations.

What I don't want to see happen is somebody pick up that property and try to do a quick rehab on it and turn it without meeting standards of what we require, foundation. We went through that with one property in town, we need to be vigilant on these types of properties, foreclosures that come in Gene. Or if somebody inquires about purchasing it and their intent of what they are going to do with it; a lot of them will check with the city

to see if it is up to city codes and we need to get out there and review that property and let them know its not. I am asking the Building Department to maintain a little vigilance on that aspect.

Finally, I was contacted today by a potential buyer of the Racquet Ball Club; it's a local resident and he is talking about making it into a restaurant. He may not use all of it as a restaurant; he may use the pool and some other things as his own private use. But I had a long talk with him and he would meet the standards of the zoning for that property and he is talking about making it into a very nice place. He still has to check with the building department on a couple of aspects of it

9) PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, RESOLUTIONS, ORDERS AND ORDINANCES BY ALDERMEN:

A. BUILDING & LICENSES: No report.

B. CITY ADMINISTRATION/GOLF: No report.

C. COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

Ald. Schultz presented and read a proclamation "It's In Our Hands", 2010 Census Partner Proclamation and Now, therefore, the City of Palos Hills is committed to partnering with the U.S. Census Bureau to help ensure a full and accurate count in 2010. Signed this 19th day of February, in the year 2009.

D. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: No report.

E. FINANCE:

Ald. Pasek, you all have before you a Vendor Warrant dated February 19, 2009 in the amount of \$211,057.65. I MOVE to authorize the expenditure of same. SECONDED by Ald. Williams. Upon roll call the following Ald. voted:

AYE: Hanson, Marrotta, Schultz, Kleefisch, Stratton, Pasek, Williams, Knox

ABSENT: Moore, Brachman

NAY: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Ald. Pasek gave a coyote update: the last official sighting of a coyote around Oak Ridge School was on February 13th. Ald. Pasek thanked Wendy from Animal Control and the Police Dept. for doing do diligence and the School District for cutting down some of its natural growth and weeds. Wendy from Animal Control will continue to monitor the area.

F. LEGISLATION & ORDINANCE: No report.

G. PARKS:

Ald. Stratton stated Comm. Vincent and the Resource & Recreation Staff is working

with Jay to host a Glow Golf Outing this summer. The event will bring a glow to your game. Glow Golf is played beginning at dusk with glow in the dark golf balls. Tees, golf carts, players, hazards, and holes are illuminated with glow products.

We hope to target with this event people who find it hard to fit a golf outing into their daytime schedule and players who would like to avoid the daytime heat. If you have any suggestions for this event please call Ed at the Community Center.

H. PLANNING & ZONING:

Ald. Hanson passed around a reminder of a Plan Commission hearing scheduled for February 23, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. for property is located at 7205 W. 103rd Street and the request is for a Special Use for a Cigar Lounge (tobacco sales) & Internet Café. The petitioner is Sam Suhail.

Mayor Bennett, Bill the only thing I would ask and Gene if could supply our Plan Commission Members with a copy of the State Statute regarding smoking the provisions that are ---- they are allowed but there are certain provisions and it is put on record as to what those restrictions are. So down the road they are reminded of what those restrictions are.

I. PUBLIC SAFETY:

Ald. Kleefisch stated a check was received from Dorothy Brown, Clerk of the Circuit Court in the amount \$300.00. Also the payments collected by RedSpeed for the month of January 2009 were \$17,100.00 and the amount due to the municipality was \$9,138.37 and the outstanding amount due the municipality is \$20,900.00.

Ald. Kleefisch stated the Senior Citizen Crime Prevention Breakfast is slated for March 24th at 9:00 a.m. at Belvedere Château and the tentative speaker is Lisa Madigan.

J. PUBLIC WORKS/SEWER & WATER:

Ald. Williams presented a Resolution of the City of Palos Hills, Cook County, Illinois, in support of the Southwest Water System Expansion and Rehabilitation Project.

Mayor Bennett asked the City Clerk to assign a number.

City Clerk Mulderink assigned number 550 to that Resolution.

After the reading of Resolution 550, Ald. Williams MOVED for its adoption as presented and read. SECONDED by Ald. Schultz. Upon roll call the following Ald. voted:

AYE: Stratton, Pasek, Williams, Knox, Hanson, Marrotta, Schultz, Kleefisch

ABSENT: Moore, Brachman

NAY: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Ald. Williams, I also have a Bill Dunnett Parkway sign dedicating the parkway going

into the Little League Baseball Field. We will be setting up a date and time for that dedication.

Mayor Bennett, I am hoping we can do that the same day they do their baseball Parade; I think that will be appropriate with all the families there for their opening day.

10) REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES: None.

11) UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Ald. Knox stated she has invitations for everyone for the Palos Hills Baseball Dinner at Ciao Restaurant on Feb. 23rd; everyone is invited and everyone is encouraged to attend.

12) MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

Ald. Marrotta, what does shovel ready exactly mean?

Mayor Bennett, that literally means that all the engineering has been completed and the project is literally on a list waiting to go out to bid. That is an absolute shovel ready (inaudible).

Ald. Marrotta, so 99th Street is nowhere near that obviously.

Mayor Bennett, the final problem that we have expressed to the State of Illinois because it is all I.D.O.T. controlled is even the local projects as we know have to go through a series of engineering and I.D.O.T. review and whether or not I.D.O.T. is ready for their own Staff to do the necessary reviews.

That type of project we would first have to authorize Phase I engineering, Phase II engineering and trust me with the way I.D.O.T. is even going on review of projects now, that is sometime down the road.

As I indicated I put it on the books as a possible project down the road, and we will see.

Ald. Schultz, Mary you mentioned that RedSpeed owes us \$20,900.00; do you know when we are going to get that money.

Ald. Kleefisch, as soon as they go to collections on it; Chief do you have the time line for that?

Chief Madigan, it is a legal process that they have to go through as far as notifications (inaudible). Just like the P-tickets it is a long involved process.

Mayor Bennett, Alderman what happens is at the beginning of the month for the prior month all prepays (inaudible) come to us, that money. The second part of that is those that have been charged and don't prepay have a right to go to local court and all those may not show up to local court, so the number they put out there is an estimate based upon the number of tickets and potential fines.

Then beyond that if those who show up, as what happened last time, everyone of them were found guilty; those who don't show up then they also go into the collection portion of the third part of it which is to chase them on collection for the fine.

So there are 3 parts; one is prepay, second is in day court and the third part somebody just blows it off and goes to collection notification and again as we have found out it has been effective now through collections because the ability of the city to go to the Secretary of States Office and possibly get their license suspended.

Ald. Pasek, I recommend showing up for that. I've been to two of them now; very interesting, you get to see how they set up and people come up and say Oh I stopped and (inaudible) they are not stopped. Every one of them not even close to stopping.

Mayor Bennett, plus they have a right to go on line and view it for themselves instead of waiting to go to court.

Just a note to that the Village of Schaumburg; I don't know what intersection it was but it is one of their major intersections and they put in RedLight and I don't know if they did it at all 4 intersections, but over a one or two month period they had almost a million dollars in fines. In fact the Village stopped it to take a re-look at that as to whether or not that was really taking place. But I guess it was one of their worse intersections in town.

13) ADJOURNMENT:

No further business, Mayor Bennett entertained a motion to adjourn. SO MOVED by Ald. Stratton. SECONDED by Ald. Pasek. By voice vote, all voted AYE.

The Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Submitted by

Rudy A. Mulderink
City Clerk
City of Palos Hills