

**City of Franklin
COMMON COUNCIL**

**City Council Chambers
70 E. Monroe St.
Franklin, Indiana 46131**

Monday, December 5, 2011 @ 6:30 p.m.

Presiding Officer: Mayor Fred Paris

Members Present: Dr. William T. Murphy, President
Mr. Joseph Abban
Mr. Joseph Ault
Mr. Kenneth W. Austin
Mr. Stephen D. Barnett
Mr. Stephen D. Hougland

Members Absent: Mrs. Ann Gordon

Also Present: City Attorney Robert H. Schafstall, Clerk Treasurer Janet Alexander and
Clerk Treasurer's Assistant Kathy Cragen

Mayor Paris opened the meeting and asked the Clerk-Treasurer to call the roll. Dr. Murphy offered the invocation, which was followed by a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Paris presented the consent agenda for approval.

- o Approval of the November 21, 2011 Common Council Minutes

Dr. Murphy, seconded by Mr. Abban, made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion carried and the consent agenda was approved.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to come before the Council.

NEW BUSINESS

Introductions

Common Council Ordinance 11-10 - An Ordinance Establishing a One-time City Wide Longevity Compensation in the amount of \$1,800.00 per Qualified Full-time Employee

The proposed ordinance was presented and a discussion was held. Mr. Ault made a motion to strike item A-iii from the ordinance. Dr. Murphy seconded the motion to amend. A voice vote was taken with all members stating Aye. No members stating Nay. The motion carried. This matter will be set for public hearing at the next regular meeting.

Common Council Ordinance 11-09 - An Ordinance Providing for a Clothing and Equipment Allowance and Repealing and Replacing Ordinance 09-01 Relative to Same

The proposed ordinance was introduced and a discussion was held. The Clerk Treasurer explained that this new version was prepared at the request of the Fire Chief to allow the payment of a \$400.00 yearly clothing

allowance for the civilian fire/building inspector. This matter will be set for public hearing at the next meeting.

Request Approval of Proposed Purchase Agreement for Former Fire Station - Mike Wood

Mayor Paris stated the Board of Works approved the sale of the former fire station building to Mike Wood. But that the building is valued above \$50,000 and the Council's approval is required for the sale to take place. A discussion was held. Councilman Barnett asked Mr. Wood about his plans for the use of this building. Mr. Wood stated that it would be used as a garage / storage area. Dr. Murphy made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Abban. A voice vote was taken with all members stating Aye. No members stating Nay. The motion carried.

Common Council Resolution 11-09 - A Resolution Requesting an Extension for Repayment of Loan from Rainy Day Fund for Flood Acquisition Project

Senior Planner Joanna Myers came forward and explained that this loan is usually required to be paid back at the end of the calendar year. A discussion was held. Dr. Murphy made a motion to read the resolution aloud by title only, seconded by Mr. Austin. Mayor Paris read the title and asked for questions. No questions were asked. Mr. Austin made a motion to approve, seconded by Dr. Murphy. A voice vote was taken with all members stating Aye. No members stating Nay. The motion carried.

Council Budgetary Resolution 11-05 - A Budgetary Resolution Authorizing a Transfer Between Major Series MVH Fund from 400 series to 200 & 300 series

Street Commissioner Steve Compton came forward and explained that that the money in the transfer will be used for repairs on trucks and other equipment. Mr. Abban made a motion to read by title only, seconded by Mr. Austin. Mayor Paris read the title. A discussion was held. Mr. Austin made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Abban. A voice vote was taken with all members stating Aye. No members stating Nay. The motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Barnett asked Mayor Paris for an update on the status of the hotel by I-65 that is to be demolished. Mayor Paris stated that they had ordered fencing to secure the area around the hotel. He also said that a private company has expressed an interest in purchasing the property, including the demolition. Senior Planner Joanna Myers came forward and stated that fencing has been ordered and should be installed next week.

Mr. Barnett provided each member of the Council present with a copy of a memorandum titled FDC Strategic Outlook Memorandum written by the Franklin Development Corporation's (FDC) President and CEO Craig Wells addressed to Larry Koenes, Chairman of the FDC, which was forwarded by Mr. Wells via e-mail to the members of the Common Council at the direction of his board. Mr. Barnett read aloud from the original memorandum and then read his written response aloud. Mr. Barnett asked that his written comments be included in the minutes of this meeting.

"Speaking for myself, Steve Barnett, as I feel I was asked for my opinion on this as a council member:
Option #1 – Self Sustainability:

The FDC would have to be given the GC Murphy building and the old City Hall. They have already been given \$5 million. They would use the income generated from these properties for operating expenses. I do not believe we should be in the rental business with tax dollars. When this first came out in the paper there were many community members that attended the next FDC meeting that were against it as well. I also do not think any money that was given to the FDC to be used for direct investment should be used for operating expenses to buy any more time. The organization has had close to three years to become self sustaining.

Option #2 – Valued Partnership

The FDC proposes to be lead agency on the Stellar Communities grant application. The city has to be the applicant and is ultimately responsible for the grant dollars. Mr. Wells states that the next administration does not believe that redevelopment is the business of the city. That is just not true. I am for responsible redevelopment that takes into consideration input from the community.

Option #3 – Sunset Option:

Going out with a bang is just irresponsible spending and a waste of taxpayer dollars. I am suggesting that the remaining money the FDC has be returned to the City of Franklin Redevelopment Commission instead. The RDC can then decide what it should be spent on through public meetings and with their own staff. The programs should keep going. The low interest loan fund, façade grants, and direct investments are all very important programs for the community to continue. They can be administered through the RDC and their staff. The FDC isn't doing anything the RDC can't do with their own staff, and at a much lower cost. I propose reorganizing the Planning Department to take on the responsibilities of the RDC and these programs. It would lessen the confusion between the two boards and the duplication of board members. After looking through the FDC's budget they have over \$180,000 per year in operating expenses. I believe the City can run these programs and provide existing staff to the RDC and save \$170,000 per year.

A discussion was held. Mayor Paris stated that there were several grants and loans that a city cannot qualify for on their own. Mayor Paris stated that there are several people on the Redevelopment Commission and the FDC Boards that would be able to weigh in on these issues.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Council Member - Elect Rob Henderson came forward and stated: "Good evening. I'm Rob Henderson. I attended the FDC meeting on Wednesday, November 23rd. Unfortunately, there were only three of us in attendance that day other than the FDC Board members, which were Mr. Grossnickle, Mr. Koenes, Mr. Ditmars, and Mr. Hougland, their legal counsel was there, and Craig was there. There was a really active discussion about this memo, and I left there with the distinct impression that they want, or have solicited, or want to solicit feedback from those that they call the crucial partners to include the City Council. Unfortunately, I don't think Craig's memo...well, Craig's memo summarized the conversation as the three options they discussed that day. I think it failed to ask for a direct response or how to get that and I'm here to say that I heard those discussions, and they want our input. They want the City Council input, but they did not leave a defined avenue to go about getting that. They did ask for input from newly elected officials, so I'm here to go on record, to go in front of whoever is here today, unfortunately no one outside of Mr. Hougland from the FDC is here, to say that I would support some element of the Sunset Option. I do believe that while all good intentions were evident or were on the front end of the FDC, I think it has largely become an inefficient entity, unfortunately. I don't know that it's beyond repair as it exists today with its current board, and/or its current leadership. So I am in full favor of a public conversation about the future of the Franklin Development Corporation, and its assets as they are. I believe that there are other organizations in our community; Discover Downtown Franklin for example, could take over the asset of the marketing element of the Franklin Development Corporation, and maybe in conjunction with the Franklin Chamber. I think the façade renovation and the residential program could find proper infrastructure and support within Franklin Heritage and also Discover Downtown Franklin. I don't believe that there needs to be an entity that is utilizing T.I.F. dollars to the tune of about \$181,000 annually. That's their expenses through the end of October, annualized. There's a better way to go about it, and I've challenged them to do so, and they largely have not listened. They have chosen not to listen. In my opinion, their meetings are very closed and it is very challenging to get comments heard from the public. I think when you are talking about T.I.F. dollars and the amount that's sitting in the accounts, there needs to be more open and public input. I would encourage each of you to give thought to it as

Common Council Minutes
December 5, 2011

you so choose. Provide input if they're not going to ask for it directly. Or have a sit down. I urge you to respond to them individually. Mr. Barnett, largely, I would concur with his comments, a lot of them tonight, regarding this matter, and hope that we hear from each of you as well. Thank you."

Resident Fran Leeper came forward and asked about several empty buildings along Highway 31 and downtown and asked why someone doesn't do anything about these empty buildings.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion and a second were made to adjourn. As there was no further business to come before the Common Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m. The next regular meeting will be held Monday, December 19, 2011 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet P. Alexander, Clerk-Treasurer

Enrolled: 12/16/2011

Approved by Common Council: 12/19/11