

City of Corunna  
Regular Council Meeting  
Monday, April 3, 2000

Present: Billis, Bayless, Bendall, Hornus, Ockerman, Runyan.

Absent: Dumond (excused).

Guests: Lisa Hitchcock, City Manager; Dick Sanderson; Gene Sanderson; Doug Albrant; Jackie Leone, The Argus Press; Judy Horton; Officers Kevin Clark and Craig Lawson, Police Department; Fred & Betty Bates; Don Runyon; Larry LeCureux; Stephanie Wuttke, The Independent; and other concerned citizens.

The meeting was called to order in the City Council Chambers by Mayor Billis at 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS REGULAR MEETING: Hornus moved, Bayless seconded to approve the minutes of the previous regular meeting as presented.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Ockerman, Hornus, Runyan, Bayless, Bendall.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING: Hornus moved, Bayless seconded to approve the minutes

of the special meeting as presented.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Hornus, Bendall, Bayless, Ockerman, Runyan.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

AGENDA APPROVAL: Runyan moved, Hornus seconded to approve the agenda as presented with the addition of Item No. 2) Discuss Fourth of July Fireworks and Item No. 3) Discuss State and Federal Legislation Update.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Bayless, Runyan, Bendall, Ockerman, Hornus.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

APPROVAL OF VENDOR DISBURSEMENTS: Hornus moved, Bendall seconded to approve the vendor disbursements as presented.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Runyan, Ockerman, Bayless, Hornus, Bendall.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CALL TO AUDIENCE: Don Runyon, 563 Cary Street, stated he had a complaint about the street sweeper. It puts debris into the middle of the street. Ms. Hitchcock advised there is a lot of debris on the street in the spring.

Gene Sanderson, 609 S. Shiawassee Street, stated he agreed with Mr. Runyon about the street sweeper. The sweeper turned west onto Corunna Avenue from Shiawassee Street and dragged all of the debris into the street. Mr. Sanderson asked if the employee could get out of the machine, sweep it up, and run the sweeper over it again. All of the streets looked like crap after they were swept. Mayor Billis asked if the sweeper could have been full. Ms. Hitchcock advised the sweeper is emptied on a regular basis. Mayor Billis asked if the sweeper had been inspected to see if it is functioning properly. Ms. Hitchcock advised yes. Mayor Billis asked when the streets would be swept again. Ms. Hitchcock advised she did not have a copy of the schedule. Councilperson Runyan asked if it would be a waste of time to sweep the streets on a day when the leaves and everything else are wet. Ms. Hitchcock advised no, the sweeper works better when things are damp.

SET PUBLIC HEARING FOR MAY 1, 2000 AT 7:15 P.M. TO CONSIDER ORDINANCE 2000-02 AMENDING CHAPTER 78 – UTILITIES, BY ADDING ARTICLE VII – ELECTRICITY, SECTION 78-282, NON-EXCLUSIVE REVOCABLE ELECTRIC FRANCHISE TO NORDIC ELECTRIC, L.L.C.: Bendall moved, Hornus seconded to set a public hearing for May 1, 2000 at 7:15 p.m. to consider Ordinance 2000-02 Amending Chapter 78 – Utilities, by adding Article VII – Electricity, Section 78-282, Non-Exclusive Revocable Electric Franchise to Nordic Electric, L.L.C. Mayor Billis asked how the franchise would affect the city. Ms. Hitchcock advised it would allow a customer to purchase gas or electricity from any company. Councilperson Runyan asked if any additional lines would be placed. Ms. Hitchcock advised no. Mayor Billis asked if a customer would have the option to purchase gas or electricity through Consumers Energy. Ms. Hitchcock advised yes. The intent of the restructuring is to give a consumer the right to purchase gas or electricity from whomever they want in order to get the best rate. Mayor Billis asked if the rates from Consumers Energy are considered high. Ms. Hitchcock advised a comparison was shown at the Michigan Legislative Conference and Consumers Energy was lower than Detroit Edison. Councilperson Hornus stated it is good to have competition. Mayor Billis asked if any other company besides Nordic Electric, L.L.C. would have the same opportunity. Ms. Hitchcock advised any company who wants to provide this type of service has to be licensed through the Department of Energy and has to have a franchise from the municipality. Mayor Billis stated he has read the information in the packet and state legislation. If he had voting rights, he would not be able to vote on the issue because he does not feel comfortable with the knowledge he has. He further stated by getting the packet on a Friday evening instead of Thursday, it did not allow him enough time to check out the things he wanted to check out. He also stated he felt the issue required a little more thought and if council approves the ordinance, there might be a possibility that he might veto the ordinance prior to the next meeting. Councilperson Bendall advised council would not be voting on the issue. Council was only setting a public hearing, which will give council a month to study the issue. Ms. Hitchcock advised the wording in the ordinance could be changed during the

public hearing. Councilperson Runyan referred to the last question and answer on page 21 and asked if Nordic Electric had applied to the Michigan Public Service Commission for a certificate. He further asked if the city has received a certificate. Ms. Hitchcock advised no, she believes the company has to have a franchise from the city before they can apply for the certificate. Councilperson Runyan advised according to what he read that was correct. Councilperson Bayless asked if a representative from Nordic Electric would be present at the public hearing. Ms. Hitchcock advised they could be invited if council wants a representative present. Mayor Billis suggested having a representative from Consumers Energy present at the public hearing. Ms. Hitchcock advised she would contact each company.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Bendall, Bayless, Runyan, Hornus, Ockerman.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

DISCUSS FOURTH OF JULY FIREWORKS: Mayor Billis stated it was his understanding the fireworks would cost \$10,000. He further stated after reading previous minutes, the mayor and council have sold raffle tickets to raise money for the fireworks and he has read that it has been difficult to accomplish this. He also stated he read that Meijers and the Argus Press sponsored the fireworks during the last two years. Mayor Billis stated he would do what he can and if he sees he is running into a problem in acquiring the funds then he will come to council to come up with some creative ideas. Councilperson Hornus suggested to Mayor Billis that he contact Meijers and the Argus Press to see if they want to continue to sponsor the fireworks. Ms. Hitchcock advised she has heard they do want to sponsor them. Mayor Billis stated he has contacted Meijers. Mayor Billis advised he would have an answer by the next council meeting on what he can do.

DISCUSS STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION UPDATE: Mayor Billis discussed the state

and federal legislation update information he received from Ms. Hitchcock. He advised the audience the Michigan constitution gave the citizens the ability to govern themselves as they see fit by the Home Rule Act. He further advised the Home Rule Act gives the people in a city the right to establish a charter, which they agree to be governed by. He also advised the state legislators have passed some bills that infringe on the city's charter. These freedoms were given to the people by the Michigan constitution and they are freedoms that he holds dear. Mayor Billis stated he never tries to speak for anybody but himself. He further stated it appears the state legislators have no concern about the Michigan constitution and questioned whether they have even read it. Mayor Billis mentioned several items the state legislature is infringing on. He advised there is a petition drive to stop this activity by requiring a two-third vote to change anything on the Home Rule Act. He further advised a city should have the right to govern itself. He also advised he has heard there are financial benefits to pass a bill. Mayor Billis stated he wants to send the legislators a message. His freedom nor is the freedom of any city resident in Corunna

for sale by special interest groups. He further stated he is not interested in any benefits, which will cost him the freedom to govern himself. Mayor Billis urged council to read the information that was given to them and stated he might bring the resolution to the next council meeting for council to approve.

CALL TO AUDIENCE: Don Runyon stated the new seatbelt law is something that should be his

option. He further stated the residency law in Genesee County is something the state says you cannot do. Mayor Billis advised the residency law is an issue, which infringes on the Home Rule Act. Mr. Runyon stated he does not understand how the state can do stuff like that. Mayor Billis stated the argument is who gave the state the right to change a city law. Mr.

Runyon stated seatbelts have been in cars since 1947 but does that mean someone has to use one just because it is there. Mayor Billis advised there is a proposed bill that would infringe on the city's planning and zoning, which would allow the state to tell a city what they can or cannot do. He further advised the state's planning and zoning would supercede a city's zoning rights.

Larry LeCureux asked when the chairs would be fixed for the audience to sit on. Ms. Hitchcock advised the chairs would be fixed when indoor work is needed. In the spring, outside work is done first. Mr. LeCureux stated he was told last week that his street was going to be fixed. Councilperson Ockerman advised the street would be fixed this year during the King/Kingsley/McArthur Construction project. The grade and elevation will be fixed so the water will not lie on the sidewalk. Mr. LeCureux stated he has been told this so many times it is not funny. Mayor Billis stated it would take time to fix the problem.

Gene Sanderson asked Ms. Hitchcock how she made out with Consumers Energy and if they are going to put up a light at the south end of Corunna. Ms. Hitchcock advised she did not have a chance to talk to Consumers Energy, but it was on her list.

ADJOURN: Bendall moved to adjourn.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Bayless, Runyan, Bendall, Ockerman, Hornus.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED Time was 9:12 p.m.

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DR. JAMES BILLIS, MAYOR

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LINDA M. LECUREUX, DEPUTY CLERK