

City of Corunna
Regular Council Meeting
Wednesday, January 3, 2001

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

Absent: Bendall.

Guests: Lisa Hitchcock, City Manager; Larry LeCureux; Gene Sanderson; Dick Sanderson; Jackie Leone, The Argus Press; Chief Mark Hetfield, Police Department; Officer Paul Richardson, Police Department; Jeremy Boyd, Treasurer; Tim Crawford, Superintendent of Public Works; Terry Hayes; Clark Long; Stephanie Wuttke, The Independent; Fred & Betty Bates; Judy Horton; 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 SPECIAL MEETING: Hornus moved, Dumond seconded to approve the minutes of the special meeting.

Roll call vote:

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

No: None.

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

Roll call vote:

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

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

AGENDA APPROVAL: Hornus moved, Dumond seconded to approve the agenda as presented.

Roll call vote:

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

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

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

Roll call vote:

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

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CALL TO AUDIENCE: Gene Sanderson asked if there was any chance the city would change its attitude about using prisoners to clean around the fire hydrants, the corner crosswalks, and the sewer covers so the city can be prepared if there is a quick thaw. He further stated he walked downtown the other day and no sidewalks were shoveled and the corners were a mess. Tim Crawford advised the prisoners cannot be left alone so there would have to be one department of public works employee with them at all times. Mr. Sanderson suggested appointing a temporary employee to watch the prisoners. Mayor Billis reminded those in the audience to address any questions to him or the city council. He stated the fire hydrants are still covered and removing the snow around them should be a priority. Mr. Sanderson stated removing snow from around the fire hydrants should be a priority in case there is a fire. Mayor Billis stated it is the job of the mayor and the city council to listen to the city residents and act on their requests. Mr. Sanderson asked if anything would be done. Councilperson Ockerman stated the department of public works has had a personnel shortage, and the residents were asked in the last newsletter to keep the fire hydrants clear. He further stated he was not trying to make excuses, but the snow keeps coming down. He asked if it was the owner's responsibility to clear the snow from around the fire hydrant if it is located on their property. Ms. Hitchcock advised it always has been the owner's responsibility, but there is nothing anybody can do if the snow is not cleared from around the hydrant. She further advised most cities ask the property owner to clear the snow from around the fire hydrant. Councilperson Ockerman asked how many fire hydrants the city has. Ms. Hitchcock advised approximately 150. Councilperson Ockerman stated the snow could be cleared by some of the city's less qualified labor. Ms. Hitchcock advised the city currently has one part-time employee. Mr. Sanderson stated this should be something that should be looked into and suggested getting volunteers to watch over the prisoners. He further stated he would be watching. Dick Sanderson stated the department of public works were picking up Christmas trees today and asked what was more important, picking up trees or clearing snow around the fire hydrants. Mayor Billis stated council was in agreement that clearing snow around the fire hydrants is a priority.

CONSIDER COMMERCIAL BUILDING LEASE: Councilperson Dumond advised council that

Terry Hayes, a representative from the Home Builders Association, was present to answer any questions. Councilperson Dumond stated council has read in the newspaper that the Home Builders Association was participating with the chamber of commerce in their home show, and at the same time, council received a commercial building lease to consider. He asked what the overall long-term intent was. Mr. Hayes advised the association's intent is to come back to Corunna. He explained the association had received notice from the person who was going to run the home show this year that the person could not do it. The association tried to find someone to run the home show, but they could not find anyone. He further explained a decision was made to contact the chamber of commerce instead of dropping the home show completely. Mayor Billis asked how many years the home show has been held in Corunna. Mr. Hayes advised approximately eight years. Mayor Billis asked Mr. Hayes if he was aware of any reason why the chamber of commerce could not have worked out a reasonable situation where Corunna could be utilized. Mr. Hayes advised the association did mention the situation

to the chamber of commerce, but the association could not afford to do that. He further advised the home show is held to fund a scholarship program, and the chamber of commerce is guaranteeing the association \$2,000 to join with them this year. Councilperson Ockerman asked if the purpose of the chamber of commerce was to drive the association their way. Mr. Hayes stated the Home Builder's Association has always had a home show. Councilperson Ockerman stated it sounds like the chamber of commerce is trying to move the home show out of and exclude Corunna. He further stated it does not sound like being good neighbors to him. He asked who wanted a 25-year lease. Mr. Hayes advised a 25-year lease was discussed about a year ago. He further advised the association felt it would benefit both parties to extend the lease. Councilperson Ockerman asked why the lease could not be extended 10 years. Mr. Hayes advised he could not answer that. The association felt a 25-year lease would protect their interest after they put \$17,000 into the building. He further advised the association wants some kind of assurance that the lease will not stop. Councilperson Ockerman stated the council has been told the commercial building needs a new roof and asked how close the association was in putting a roof on the building. Mr. Hayes advised two years ago. Councilperson Ockerman asked how much it would cost the city to put on a new roof. Mr. Hayes advised he could not answer that question. Councilperson Ockerman asked Mr. Hayes if he could come up with an estimate within \$10,000. Mr. Hayes advised it would probably cost \$15,000 to \$18,000 if the association installed the roof. Councilperson Bayless advised that estimate was for materials only. Councilperson Ockerman stated council came up with a figure of \$40,000 for material and labor. He further stated council made some changes to the lease agreement. The city charter calls for city council approval so item number one and four should include the wording "with city council approval" so the association cannot sublet or make improvements to the building without city council approval. He also stated allowing the association to use the commercial building has been a good deal for both the city and the association, but he was disappointed the home show is being driven out of Corunna. Councilperson Runyan stated the city council does not have anything in writing of what improvements will be made to the building. Councilperson Hornus stated the association's record speaks for itself of what they have done. Ms. Hitchcock advised there has to be something in writing from the association on what improvements will be made to the commercial building before the association can use it. Ockerman moved, Hornus seconded to approve the commercial building lease with the Home Builder's Association of Shiawassee County for a 25-year duration as stated in the proposed lease agreement.

Roll call vote:

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

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK LIABILITY COVERAGE: Councilperson Ockerman stated the issue came to council about a year ago. Ms. Hitchcock advised the insurance issue has never come before council. Councilperson Ockerman stated the issue of whether to keep the storage tanks or not did come before council. He asked what the consensus was. Ms. Hitchcock advised she believed it has been approximately two years

since the monitoring equipment was installed. At that point, everything was fine, but now, the state has come up with stronger regulations. She further advised the city now has to have liability coverage on the tanks until they are removed or the city will be fined \$5,000 per day. Councilperson Ockerman suggested addressing the situation at the next budget workshop meeting because the costs are getting completely out of hand. Ms. Hitchcock advised Mr. Crawford is checking to see what it would cost to remove the tanks. Councilperson Ockerman asked how much longer the tanks have to be insured. Mr. Crawford stated the tanks have to be insured until they are removed. Councilperson Ockerman asked how much the liability coverage would cost. Ms. Hitchcock advised \$1,035. She further advised the cost to remove the tanks might be more than the cost to insure them. Dumond moved, Hornus seconded to take out underground storage tank liability insurance for a one-year period in the amount of \$1,035 with Zurich in order to meet state guidelines. Councilperson Bayless asked if the city would receive a rebate if the underground tanks were removed before the insurance policy expires. Ms. Hitchcock advised she believed so.

Roll call vote:

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

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER RE-APPOINTMENTS AND APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND

COMMISSIONS: Hornus moved, Bayless seconded to re-appoint the following as presented: Keith Johnson and Jonie Mitts to the Board of Appeals, terms to expire December 31, 2003; Millie Schultz to the Board of Review, term to expire December 31, 2003; Cal Hornus to the Building Authority, term to expire December 31, 2005; Robert Volek to the Cemetery Board, term to expire December 31, 2005; William Graham, Joe Sawyer and Francis Spaniola to the Downtown Development Authority, terms to expire December 31, 2004; Jim Lockwood to the Economic Development Fund Board, term to expire December 31, 2003; Gary Schooley to the Forest Management Commission, term to expire December 31, 2003; Marlinda Thorpe, Robert Buschman, Angie Fernette, and Terry Hayes to the Fourth of July Commission, terms to expire December 31, 2003; Connie Austin, Renee Essenburg, Merilee Lawson, and Carol Spaniola to the Historical Commission, terms to expire December 31, 2003; Cindy Long to the Library Board, term to expire December 31, 2005; Don Butcher as the Planning Commission Representative-Alternate, Joe DeCaire as Member-at-Large (Non-City Resident), Judy Horton as the Historical Commission Representative, Merilee Lawson as the Historical Commission Representative-Alternate, and Jan Scott as the Planning Commission Representative to the Parks and Recreation Commission, terms to expire December 31, 2003; Donald Mehig to the Planning Commission, term to expire December 31, 2003; William Graham, Dave Harvey and Chris Taute to the Softball Commission, terms to expire December 31, 2003.

Roll call vote:

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

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

Mayor Billis submitted the name of Steve Corey as the mayor's appointment to the Board of Review. Ockerman moved, Hornus seconded to approve the appointment of Steve Corey to the Board of Review to replace Jack Gerhold, term to expire December 31, 2003.

Roll call vote:

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

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

Mayor Billis submitted the name of Kent Trochelman as the mayor's appointment to the Planning Commission. Dumond moved, Runyan seconded to approve the appointment of Kent Trochelman to the Planning Commission to replace Jack Gerhold, term to expire December 31, 2001;

Roll call vote:

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

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

Councilperson Bayless stated he would like to see the Roller Hockey Association have a voting representative on the Parks and Recreation Commission.

CONSIDER SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS' CONTRACT: Ockerman moved, Hornus seconded to make the superintendent of public works' new contract at an annual salary of \$37,000 retroactive to March 15, 2000. Councilperson Ockerman commended Tim Crawford for the job he has done. Councilperson Ockerman stated he has been an advocate of Mr. Crawford for some time. He further stated Mr. Crawford's salary was still well below many of the superintendent's salary comparable with a city of this size.

Roll call vote:

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

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER CITY CLERK'S CONTRACT: Dumond moved, Bayless seconded to make the city

clerk's new contract at an annual salary of \$40,883 retroactive to July 1, 2000.

Councilperson Ockerman stated he could not agree with the motion. In the past, he has voted for a big pay raise for the city clerk. He further stated in 1994 the city clerk had an annual salary of \$22,500. As of last year, the salary went to \$39,500, which works out to be 12 percent a year. He also stated he felt the city has treated Ms. Long real well.

Councilperson Ockerman advised a mid-point salary for a city clerk is \$36,853. The city needs to spend money in some places, but he did not feel this was the place.

Councilperson Dumond stated Ms. Long has completed her education and should be compensated for it. Councilperson Bayless stated his recommendation was to give Ms. Long an \$800 merit award, which does not change the base salary. He further stated awarding someone for educational improvement is an important factor. Councilperson Ockerman stated the city's health insurance went up nearly 30 percent this year, and

when it comes to the city clerk's percentage, it is well over two percent of her salary. Mayor Billis asked Ms. Long how much time she has spent going to school. Ms. Long advised since she has been city clerk. Ms. Hitchcock advised Ms. Long is also a certified municipal clerk, which is a three-year program that takes into account previous education as well as the clerk's institute program. Mayor Billis asked if the certification was paid for by the city. Ms. Hitchcock advised yes.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Bayless, Dumond.

No: Runyan, Hornus, Ockerman.

Motion DEFEATED

Bayless moved, Hornus seconded to approve an \$800 merit award for the city clerk, which would not raise the base pay or impact the insurance rate. Councilperson Dumond asked if the merit award was a one-time award. Councilperson Bayless advised yes. The merit award would reward her for her educational advancement and for the hard work she puts in. Councilperson Ockerman stated he hated for council to go down this road and was totally against the bonus.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Dumond, Hornus, Bayless.

No: Ockerman, Runyan.

Motion DEFEATED

Ockerman moved, Hornus seconded to approve the city clerk's contract at the current salary.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Ockerman, Hornus, Runyan, Bayless (under protest).

No: Dumond.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER POLICE CHIEF'S CONTRACT: Ockerman moved, Runyan seconded to renew the

police chief's contract at \$42,000. Councilperson Ockerman stated the police chief's salary is actually \$42,000 and not \$39,500 as originally stated. He further stated the current salary falls within the range in the classification/compensation study. He also stated the police chief's contract has increased \$9,000 since 1994 and while it is not as significant as the city clerk, it still averages about five percent a year. Councilperson Ockerman advised he feels the city has been fair. Councilperson Bayless asked how many years Mr. Hetfield has been in the police department and how many years he has been police chief. Chief Hetfield advised he has been the police chief since 1994 and has been in law enforcement since 1979. Councilperson Ockerman stated Mr. Hetfield has stated that longevity was taken away from him in 1997 and asked what that did plus or minus for the individual. Ms. Hitchcock advised longevity was a percentage of pay that was based on the number of years of employment an individual had with the city. Mr. Hetfield advised he would have made \$6,843 in longevity during the years 1997, 1998, and 1999. Instead, he received a raise in the amount of \$1,806, which saved the city \$5,037. Councilperson Ockerman asked if longevity was taken away from the union

workers. Ms. Hitchcock advised no. Councilperson Ockerman asked why the city council took longevity away. Ms. Hitchcock advised he would have to ask the previous council that question. The union contracts have fixed rates now instead of a percentage.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Runyan, Ockerman.

No: Bayless, Dumond, Hornus.

Motion DEFEATED

Councilperson Dumond stated it was obvious that council took money away from three of the city's employees but they have been compensated with benefits. Ockerman moved, Bayless seconded to increase the police chief's salary to \$43,000 retroactive to July 1, 2000.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Runyan, Ockerman, Bayless, Hornus.

No: Dumond.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER CITY TREASURER'S CONTRACT: Ockerman moved, Hornus seconded to increase the city treasurer's annual salary to \$30,000 retroactive to July 19, 2000.

Councilperson Ockerman stated this was the same situation as the superintendent of public works. The city hired someone with no experience or education. He further stated Mr. Boyd is doing a good job, and he deserves the raise. He also stated the city is happy to have Mr. Boyd and he hopes Mr. Boyd is happy with the city.

Roll call vote:

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

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER CITY MANAGER'S CONTRACT: Ockerman moved, Runyan seconded to increase the city manager's annual salary to \$49,000 retroactive to August 15, 2000.

Councilperson Ockerman stated the increased salary is near the minimum of the salary range, but the city has the finest retirement program anywhere, the health insurance is as good as a person can get and she is also given a car allowance that amounts to approximately \$2,000 per year. He further stated Ms. Hitchcock could retire at age 50 and that is pretty good.

Roll call vote:

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

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER LETTER OF RESIGNATION: Ockerman moved, Runyan seconded with regrets to accept the letter of resignation from Councilperson Deborah Bendall.

Roll call vote:

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

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

Councilperson Ockerman stated he would like to have discussion on finding a replacement. He further stated Ms. Hitchcock mentioned in her manager's report that the city council has two months to fill the position. He knows of some people who are interested, and he does not see why the city council should take two months to fill the position. Councilperson Ockerman suggested setting a time frame of two to four weeks and posting the position to get applicants. He stated he would like to see a deadline set. Ms. Hitchcock advised the position could be filled at the first meeting in February. Councilperson Ockerman suggested setting a deadline of January 31, 2001 at 4:30 p.m. to accept the names of applicants who are interested in the vacancy.

ADJOURN: Hornus moved to adjourn.

Roll call vote:

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

No: None.

Motion CARRIED Time was 8:35 p.m.

DR. JAMES BILLIS, MAYOR

YVONNE F. LONG, CITY CLERK