

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS :****OF THE CITY OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS :**

Council Chambers, Peoria, Illinois, March 9, 2004, a Regular Meeting of the City Council was held this date at 6:15 P.M., at City Hall, Council Chambers, 419 Fulton Street, Mayor David P. Ransburg presiding.

**ROLL CALL**

Roll call showed the following Council Members present: Ardis, Grayeb, Gulley (Arrived at 7 :10 P.M.), Morris (Arrived at 6:20 P.M.), Nichting, Sandberg, Teplitz, Thetford, Turner, Mayor Ransburg – 10; Absent: Spears - 1.

**INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Ransburg requested a moment of silent prayer and then he led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PROCLAMATIONS, COMMENDATIONS, ETC.**

PROCLAMATION: 125<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE PEORIA ART GUILD

PROCLAMATION: ARTS IN EDUCATION SPRING CELEBRATION MONTHS – April and May, 2004

Council Member Morris arrived at 6:20 P.M.

**MINUTES**

Council Member Nichting moved to approve the minutes of the Majority of the Quorum of the Town Hall meeting held on February 26, 2004, and the Regular City Council meeting held on March 2, 2004, as printed; seconded by Council Member Turner.

Approved by roll call vote.

Yeas: Ardis, Grayeb, Morris, Nichting, Sandberg, Teplitz, Thetford, Turner, Mayor Ransburg – 9;

Nays: None.

**PETITIONS, REMONSTRANCES & COMMUNICATIONS**

**(04-083) INTRODUCTION of MR. TOM HINTZ, SUPERINTENDENT OF JUBILEE STATE PARK.**

Mayor Ransburg welcomed Mr. Tom Hintz to the City Council Meeting and, hearing no objections, granted him Privilege of the Floor.

Mr. Tom Hintz, Superintendent of Jubilee State Park, said he was newly appointed and he appreciated the opportunity to address the City Council. He said the Jubilee State Park was located on the other side of the historic park. He said he planned to expand education for the community and he was in the process of a plan to renovate the trails. He said he was looking forward to seeing Jubilee College State Park as an asset to the community for years to come. He invited citizens and groups to volunteer their services to work on habitat restoration.

Mayor Ransburg thanked Mr. Hintz for his comments.

**CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS BY OMNIBUS VOTE, for the City of Peoria, with Recommendations as Outlined:**

- (04-084) \* Communication from the City Manager and Director of Economic Development Requesting Approval for a \$70,000 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT FUND LOAN to GORDON INSTRUMENTS, INC., Secured with Collateral as Outlined in the Communication, and Requesting Authorization for the City Manager to Execute the Necessary Documents.**
- (04-085) Communication from the City Manager and Interim Director of Planning and Growth Management with Recommendation from the Neighborhood Development Commission (NDC) to Enter into a CONTRACT with S. F. PAULI BUILDERS INC. for the 2004 ADOPT-A-RAMP PROGRAM in an Amount Not to Exceed \$40,000 of Community Development Block Grant Funds.**
- (04-086) Communication from Mayor David P. Ransburg Requesting Approval to DISSOLVE the AD HOC COMMITTEE on PET OVERPOPULATION.**
- (04-087) REPORTS, with Recommendation to Receive and File:**
- A. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CITY TREASURER REGINALD A. WILLIS for the Year 2003.**

Council Member Nichting moved to approve the Consent Agenda items as outlined in the Council communications; seconded by Council Member Grayeb.

Council Member Thetford requested that Item No. 04-084 be removed from the Consent Agenda for further discussion.

Item Nos. 04-084 through 04-087 (excluding Item No. 04-084 which was removed from the Consent Agenda for further discussion) were approved by roll call vote under the Omnibus Vote Designation.

Yeas: Ardis, Grayeb, Morris, Nichting, Sandberg, Teplitz, Thetford, Turner, Mayor Ransburg - 9;

Nays: None.

- (04-084) \* Communication from the City Manager and Director of Economic Development Requesting Approval for a \$70,000 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT FUND LOAN to GORDON INSTRUMENTS, INC., Secured with Collateral as Outlined in the Communication, and Requesting Authorization for the City Manager to Execute the Necessary Documents.**

Council Member Thetford explained Gordon Instruments, Inc. had relocated to the Northside Business Park from Chillicothe, Illinois. She moved to grant Privilege of the Floor to Rich and Donna Gordon; seconded by Council Member Teplitz. No objection was heard.

Rich and Donna Gordon, 2017 N. E. Adams Street, discussed the process they had gone through to make the move from Chillicothe, and they commended members of the City Staff for their assistance. Mrs. Gordon said they would gain space and they would be able to expand their internet sales due to the move. They thanked the City for their new opportunity.

Council Member Thetford moved to approve a \$70,000 Business Development Fund Loan to Gordon Instruments, Inc., secured with collateral as outlined in the communication, and authorize the City Manager to execute the necessary documents; seconded by Council Member Teplitz.

Approved by roll call vote.

Yeas: Ardis, Grayeb, Morris, Nichting, Sandberg, Teplitz, Thetford, Turner, Mayor Ransburg - 9;

Nays: None.

**(04-088) Communication from the City Manager and the Corporation Counsel Requesting Approval of the RESOLUTION in SUPPORT of RETAINING the PEORIA ELECTION COMMISSION.**

The League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria and Citizens for and against the issue of retaining the Peoria Election Commission distributed literature to all members of the City Council.

Council Member Nichting moved to grant Privilege of the Floor to those who wished to address this issue; seconded by Council Member Grayeb.

Hearing no objections, Mayor Ransburg granted Privilege of the Floor to those who wished to address this issue.

Mr. Fred Schraeder, 6023 Imperial Drive, Apartment #130, spoke in support of retaining the Peoria Election Commission. He compared information provided in the handout presented by the League of Women Voters and information he had. He said he did not feel the opposition could justify that over \$200,000 would be saved if the Peoria Election Commission was consolidated with the County. He added the Peoria Election Commission returned \$190,000 last year to the City's treasury, and they anticipated \$175,000 to go back into the City's treasury next year. He said the Peoria Election Commission was non-partisan, unlike the County. He discussed efficiencies in the Peoria Election Commission office regarding computers and equipment leases. He expressed concern that elderly and handicapped citizens of Peoria would not have easy access to registering to vote and voting, if they increased the size of precincts as planned. He discussed the loss of property tax money to the County. He urged the Council to vote yes for the proposed Resolution and he urged the citizens to vote no on March 16, 2004, so the Peoria Election Commission would be retained.

Ms. Cheryl Budzinski, 623 W. Stratford, urged the Council to vote against the proposed Resolution and to vote for the rejection of the Peoria Election Commission. She said there would be a \$200,000 savings per year by consolidating the Peoria Election Commission with the County. She explained these savings would be in management salaries and in equipment that

was duplicated. She discussed accountability and responsibility of those elected and she pointed out those elected officials could be voted out if the public was unhappy with their performance.

Mr. Merle Widmer, 612 W. Collingwood Circle, Peoria County Board Member, said he supported the elimination of the Peoria Election Commission. He said the Election Commission's space could be used for other uses. In discussion, he indicated that there would be little room for potential fraud. He said the Election Judge and the County Clerk were both elected officials. He said, at any time, any citizen could campaign to have these persons removed, if their performance was not satisfactory. He said the City could provide some hoods for meters during Election time to assist with parking, and the County could provide free parking in the City/County Parking Deck for a half hour.

Mr. Robert Lehnhausen, Former Mayor, spoke in support of retaining the Peoria Election Commission. He discussed the last time the Peoria Election Commission was the target of elimination and he pointed out it was defeated by a two-to-one vote. He said in 1914, there was some kind of abuse of the system for the citizenry to have formed the Peoria Election Commission. He indicated he was not convinced there was \$200,000 in savings to be realized. He pointed out that the Peoria Election Commission had budgeted to spend \$438,000 to serve 93 precincts in 2004, and the County had budgeted to spend \$463,000 to serve 53 precincts in 2004. He expressed concern that the number of precincts would be reduced from 93 to 67. He said larger districts would deny some people who could not walk to the polling places the right to vote. He pointed out that not everyone owned a car who wanted to vote. He said it was important not to enlarge the precincts. He urged the Council to support the Resolution, but he urged the citizens to vote no on the ballot on March 16, 2004.

Mr. Matt Jones, 2419 Pintura, said he lived in Springfield when they merged their Election Commissions. He said there had been savings realized since that time. He said he felt the proposed elimination of the Peoria Election Commission promoted smaller, smarter government.

Council Member Nichting moved to approve the Resolution in support of retaining the Peoria Election Commission; seconded by Council Member Turner.

Council Member Nichting said a possible merger would not provide more efficient or effective government. He said everyone should be concerned about people being able to make it to the polls. He said he felt the Peoria Election Commission should be retained because they had operated in an efficient and effective manner.

Council Member Thetford said at this time, she was not convinced there would be a cost savings if the merger occurred. She discussed her work in former Attorney General Neil Hardigan's Office relating to the monitoring of fraud or potential fraud during elections. She said she was not suggesting there was any probability of inappropriate behavior, but she said she felt the bipartisan nature of a City Election Commission was a more fair way of addressing elections. She said she felt it removed the possibility of election tampering or fraud. She spoke in support of the proposed Resolution.

Council Member Gulley arrived at 7:10 P.M.

Council Member Ardis said he felt more time was needed to determine whether or not the election offices should be combined. He said he had not heard anything from Congressman LaHood's office regarding this issue, and he cautioned anyone from using the endorsement at this meeting. He explained that the Council would hopefully be voting for the Resolution, but he urged the citizens to vote no on their ballots on March 16, 2004.

Motion to approve RESOLUTION NO. 04-088 in support of retaining the Peoria Election Commission was approved by roll call vote.

Yeas: Ardis, Grayeb, Gulley, Morris, Nichting, Sandberg, Teplitz, Thetford, Turner, Mayor Ransburg - 10;

Nays: None.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **(02-348) UPDATE Regarding the STATUS of the ALLEN ROAD CONSTRUCTION PROJECT.**

In discussion with Council Member Nichting regarding the condition of Allen Road, Director of Public Works Steve Van Winkle reported the construction on Allen Road was in cooperation with Medina Township. He said the road had taken a beating due to the traffic that it had carried in terms of construction activities. He said the project was started later in the fall than had been anticipated. He added the work was stopped late in the year, but he wanted citizens in that area to know that the work was not completely finished and contractors would be returning in the next few weeks to complete the project by the end of April or early May, 2004. He said, in the mean time, drivers would need to be tolerant of some inconvenient work activities.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **COMMENTS Regarding the NEIGHBORHOOD AWARDS BANQUET**

Council Member Thetford commended those volunteers who were involved in the Neighborhood Awards Banquet. She congratulated the winners of the many awards that were presented at the Banquet.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENT Regarding the RESIGNATION of ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR DAVE DOBSON**

Council Member Teplitz said this was the last official Council Meeting for Director of Economic Development Dave Dobson. She said he had resigned his position and would be moving to El Paso, Texas. She thanked him for his work and advice on projects in the Second District, which included the Medical-Technical District.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENT Regarding MARCH MADNESS WEEKENDS and the BOYS CLASS A and AA STATE BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENTS**

Council Member Ardis reminded citizens that the weekends of March 12 and 13, and March 19 and 20, 2004, were March Madness Weekends. He said the City of Peoria was proud and privileged to host the Boys Class A and AA State Basketball Championship Tournaments. He thanked the individuals who volunteered many hours to make this event possible.

**CITIZEN REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL****(04-089) REQUEST from CITIZENS to Address the CITY COUNCIL Regarding VARIOUS ISSUES.**

Hearing no objections, Mayor Ransburg granted Privilege of the Floor to those who wished to address the Council.

Ms. Levetta Ricca, 711 S. Greenlawn, said she was proud and honored to have received the Ted Bannon Award at the Neighborhood Awards Banquet.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION****(04-090) Consideration of a Motion for the City Council to go into EXECUTIVE SESSION to Discuss 2(c)(11) Litigation, when an action against, affecting, or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that such an action is probable or imminent.**

Council Member Nichting moved that the City Council go into Executive Session to Discuss 2(c)(11) Litigation, when an action against, affecting, or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that such an action is probable or imminent; seconded by Council Member Turner.

Approved by roll call vote.

Yeas: Ardis, Grayeb, Gulley, Morris, Nichting, Sandberg, Teplitz, Thetford, Turner,  
Mayor Ransburg - 10;

Nays: None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Council Member Nichting moved to adjourn the Council Meeting; seconded by Council Member Turner.

Approved by viva voce vote.

The Council Meeting adjourned at 7:32 P.M.

---

Mary L. Haynes, MMC  
City Clerk, Peoria, IL

bb