

**MINUTES OF THE MAJORITY OF THE QUORUM
OF THE
CITY COUNCIL OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS
AT AN
OPEN TOWN MEETING**

A Majority of the Quorum of the City Council of Peoria, Illinois attended a Town Hall Meeting that was held at Bradley Hall, Neumiller Chapel, 830 N. Glenwood, Peoria, Illinois on April 22, 2004, beginning at 6:35 P.M.

In attendance were: Mayor David P. Ransburg, Council Members Ardis, Nichting, Sandberg, Spears, Teplitz, Turner – 7. Those not in attendance were Council Members Gulley, Grayeb, Morris and Thetford - 4.

Also in attendance were City Manager Randy Oliver; Director of Planning and Growth Management, Patricia Landes; Superintendent of Police John Stenson, Lt. Phil Benne, Peoria Police Department; John Kunski, Director of Inspections; Roy Modglin, Fire Chief; Karie Friling, Assistant, Director of Economic Development; Stephen Van Winkle, Director of Public Works; Alma Brown, Public Information Officer; Kent Tomlin, Assistant Fire Chief; Tony Ardis, Fire Department; and City Clerk Mary Haynes.

Also in attendance were City Treasurer Reginald Willis, former City Council Member Camille Gibson, Host Ken Goldin, Bradley University, Michael Bryant, Chair of the Medical Technology Commission and approximately 70 interested citizens and representatives of the media.

Karla Dennhardt, President of the West Bluff Council, welcomed the people and introduced the officers from several of the West Bluff Neighborhood Associations in attendance. Mayor Ransburg then welcomed the people and stated the Council was coming to every District with the objective to communicate, to listen and to find out concerns.

Council Member Teplitz introduced the Council Members present, as well as other involved participants.

City Manager Randy Oliver gave a brief overview of the City in a slide presentation (on file in the Clerk's Office). A summary of the initial presentation followed: Mr. Oliver explained that out of the tax money on a \$100,000 house, 12% or \$316 went for City services. He added, \$231 or 9% went for Park District, the County utilized \$286 or 10%, and "other" was \$253 or 10%. He said that schools, District #150 and ICC, received 59% or \$1,554. He said that 12% provided Police, Fire, Public Works, and other City services. He said out of approximately \$97 million in operating revenue, 20% came from property tax and 39% came from sales tax. The remaining, he said, came from other sources. He added, on the expenditure side, 29% went for Police, 22% for Public Works and 20% for Fire, with the remainder for support services.

Mr. Oliver explained some of the City's strategies, such as the Enterprise Zone and the City's three-cell growth strategy. He spoke of the Medical Technology District and encouraged participation by both those in and out of the Medical Technology District. He invited those present to attend planning meetings to be held on May 19 and 20. He stated that development had to be in a logical and supportive manner and he explained the new Enterprise Zone would go down Western Avenue. He further explained the O'Brien Stadium project that leveraged \$6.5 Million for every \$1 the City contributed.

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Mr. Oliver addressed the Heart of Peoria Plan and stated it recommended connectivity to the neighborhoods and increased density downtown. He explained that the Heart of Peoria Commission had been appointed.

Mr. Oliver explained the Museum Block, the adaptive reuse and rehabilitation programs for multi-and single-family housing, and he added that strong neighborhoods occurred when the focus was block by block.

Mr. Oliver explained the new structure of City Council Meetings, whereby the Council would have regular business meetings the first and third Tuesdays in Council Chambers and would conduct study and policy sessions on the second and fourth Tuesdays in Room 404, unless the crowd necessitated going into the larger Council Chambers. He added there would be no final action, only advisory votes. Mr. Oliver stated that the City will develop partnerships to work smarter, such as having members from the Mayor's Advisory Committee for the Disabled take pictures of people parking illegally. He stated we are in the process of automating the inspection program and have partnerships with the various communities for such things as pavement marking, sealcoating and street light installation. He stated the City is pushing up traffic enforcement for public safety and revenue. He spoke about the red light camera system some cities use. He further addressed the NEAT team and POP team policing efforts the Council implemented and stated they are very effective. Mr. Oliver's PowerPoint presentation covered statistics on all city Departments and is on file in the Clerks' Office.

At 7:30 P.M. Mr. Oliver answered questions the audience had submitted on 3 x 5 cards. Some of those questions and the discussion are outlined below.

Regarding noise ordinance enforcement, Mr. Oliver stated the City needs to do a better job and there needed to be a neighborhood partnership to enforce that.

Regarding the parking on Main Street, Mr. Oliver stated that will be discussed with the Med Tech Commission and will be reviewed.

Regarding High Street, Mr. Oliver explained it had been returned to one-way after a meeting held earlier that same day (April 22).

Regarding the implementation of a new enterprise zone on Western Avenue, Mr. Oliver explained Jumer's wanted to expand and wanted to use this tool.

Regarding the bicycle trail extension, Mr. Oliver explained the rights of the operator of the railway will be extinguished soon and the next six to twelve months will be significant in terms of progress.

Regarding problems with the I-74 modifications and cut through traffic, Mr. Oliver said unfortunately some of the construction problems would increase as those modifications move along. Problems should be referred to Peoria Cares (494-2273) number and the City will attempt to address as many as the City can, but traffic patterns will definitely be disrupted, he explained.

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Regarding incentives for commercial development on Main Street, Mr. Oliver stated the City wants to work with EDC regarding a policy on incentives.

Regarding adding liquor with the sale of gasoline, Mr. Oliver explained the City Council had to balance demand and this was a fairness issue with those larger companies who could divide into two corporations and sell liquor and gasoline. Mr. Oliver explained the safeguards the Council had put in place before convenience stores or gasoline stations could secure a license.

Several questions were referred to Director of Planning, Patricia Landes, and Mr. Oliver continued by answering that there were three sites currently under consideration for locating the Navy Ship and Peoria was one of them. Regarding Fire Station 11, Mr. Oliver stated there is an analysis being done and a meeting was scheduled for Friday, April 23.

Mr. Oliver continued by stating there was no decision as of yet regarding financing the Med/Tech District or whether a TIF would be used and there was currently no property identified as being taken or condemned. He added final documents pertaining to some of the issues would not be available until the end of the year.

A discussion was held regarding the issue of unrelated people residing in the same house and Mr. Oliver stated that the City needed the neighborhood's help with identification. Mr. Oliver also discussed the BMW plant acquisition in Greenville, SC, and how the various partnerships made it happen.

Regarding the question of using licensed contractors and landlords being able to do work themselves, Mr. Oliver stated that handling this required a balancing act. He added that many neighborhood issues required coming up with a system which is not confrontational so that neighbors are not pitted against each other.

Again, regarding historic preservation in the Med/Tech District, Mr. Oliver said while historic preservation is a wonderful thing, there is a balancing act to be done. He added, sometimes structures have to be moved to provide the best solution. He said he is very supportive of historic preservation.

In answer to how to change houses back to single family, Mr. Oliver stated that the rehabilitation program is HUD related, but they would have to qualify.

Mr. Oliver stated Peoria is working on an improved City website.

Mr. Oliver acknowledged the City needs to utilize adaptive reuse to save older buildings. He added, the City tends to get the buildings when they are in need of being torn down.

Regarding the flight to the suburbs, Mr. Oliver stated we need to address neighborhood schools. He said in the case of Greenville, the City offered higher, better level of services than the outlying areas and this encouraged people to move in closer to the central area. He added, we are trying to do that in the Warehouse District.

Regarding changing the rules pertaining to sheds in the older areas, Mr. Oliver referred this to Mrs. Landes. Regarding the trash/litter problem, Mr. Oliver explained the toter program

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currently being offered. He said the City will supply 1,500 toters and Waste Management has given the City another 1,500.

Regarding the noise from the Peoria Speedway, the citizen was referred to the County.

Regarding the proposed tax on Civic Center tickets, the citizen was referred to the Civic Center Authority.

Regarding downtown restaurants, Mr. Oliver stated that we cannot control where restaurants go; however, the change to diagonal parking may provide synergy to attract them.

Regarding drugs in parking lots near Sheridan Liquor, Mr. Oliver assured the citizen he would speak to the Police Chief about that.

Regarding the shortage of parking near Main and University, Mr. Oliver assured the citizen this would be reviewed.

Regarding how to avoid a drop in population, again the Duany Plan was referred to and the return to two-way streets and diagonal parking was encouraged.

Mr. Oliver announced that he realized some people wanted to present some petitions, but advised that should be done at a regular business Council meeting. Mr. Oliver thanked everyone for coming and stated the staff would stay for questions, as well as the Council.

Mrs. Dennhardt thanked everyone and mentioned the Randolph Roanoke Tulip Festival on Saturday, beginning a 9 A.M., the Uplands garage sale on May 15, the Grand Tour of Homes, the Taste of the West Bluff at Jumers and the Moss Avenue Sale on June 19.

Seeing no one else wished to address the gathering, the meeting adjourned at 8:14 P.M.

Mary L. Haynes, MMC
City Clerk of Peoria, Illinois