

Village of Concord Council Minutes

The Village Council of Concord met on October 24, 2017 at 7:00 pm in the Village Office.

Council Members Present: Jeremiah Bush, Tom Norris, Jeff Jackson, Jason Mockeridge, Tim Casey, M. Lovitt and Ashley Meeks.

Council Members Absent: None

Public Present: K. Wyatt, A. Losey, K. Mills, H. England, DPW Director J. Blossom, and Village Clerk J. Lefere.

For their review, Councilmembers were e-mailed or given: Bills to be Paid in Amount of \$75,808.01; MDEQ Scrap Tire Cleanup Cooperation with Pulaski and Concord Townships Email; Concord Library Branch Use of Community Center During Opera House Renovations Email; Kyle George-511 Jenks Street Paving Email; 10/10/2017 Village Council Meeting Proposed Minutes; 10/24/2017 Council Meeting Agenda.

Motioned by A. Meeks, seconded by J. Jackson, to accept the minutes from the 10/10/2017 meeting, as presented. The motion was approved by all.

Public Comments:

H. England asked about L. Jacobson handing out parking tickets. J. Bush stated that this is still in the process stage and will begin soon. She also asked about a speed limit 25 ahead sign on Pulaski road just before entering the village. J. Blossom informed her that this was a project that would be done in the winter. She also asked about plans for Village limits signs coming into town and Blossom stated he didn't want to get plain green and white signs made by the County and instead wanted to explore getting different more ornate Welcome to Concord signs. Blossom also stated he was in discussions with landowners on M-60 who would be willing to allow the Village to put Welcome to Concord signs on their property as the State of Michigan has strict rules against signage in the median of State Highways such as M60.

K. Wyatt asked if there are any updates on Shannon's or the old gas station. J. Blossom informed him that he had spoken with the new owner of the old gas station earlier in the day and he will begin renovating the building soon with a log cabin siding, interior improvement, new gas tanks and plans to open in the Spring of 18'. Wyatt also asked for an update on the Town Clock Fund. J. Lefere informed him that there is over \$4000.00 in the account.

K. Mills asked if there is anything that can be done about all the big trucks traffic on Main St and Hanover St. J. Bush and J. Blossom informed her that since these became classified by the State as Class A roads it opened them up to this traffic. Bush noted due to them being Class A roads they are eligible for Rural Task Fund Grants and this is how the Village has been able to partner with matching funds from the State to pave from the School to the Village limits on S. Main St. and from M60 to the Village limits on N. Main St.

A. Losey mentioned how nice the downtown businesses were looking with the recent improvements. J. Bush on behalf of the entire Council wanted to publically give kudos to several downtown business owners for their recent exterior improvements to their downtown business buildings: Lloyd Mosher for the former Tanning Salon building, Tony and Thad Brooks for the Cadet Tavern, The Smith Family for the former Variety Store building, and Kathy Palon and Kara DeChalk for their building.

The Payment of Bills in the amount of \$75,808.01 was presented. Motioned by A. Meeks, seconded by J. Jackson, to approve the payment of bills in the amount of \$75,808.01. Motion approved by all.

J. Blossom mentioned that he met with John from Rural Water last week to go over the Asset Management Plan. J. Bush, J. Mockeridge, John and Blossom plan to meet to go over the plan on 11/14/2017. John will be attending the Council meeting on 11/28/2017 to present the plan. J. Blossom also stated that leaf pickup has begun and will continue until Nov 15th or until they need to remove the leaf cage and put the snow plow on the truck. He also mentioned that Jack Ripstra of Ripstra & Scheppelman was out looking at the front of the office to give a cost estimate to replace the cracked and

crumbling front steps, ramp, sidewalk, curb, and out of code railing, Ripstra estimated the cost for all improvements would be under \$30,000.00. J. Mockeridge noted that he would like to try to fit this project into the 2018 budget.

J. Bush mentioned his working with Bob Jones Pulaski Township Supervisor and Al Cavasin Concord Township Supervisor to have the Jackson County Conservation District write a grant for the MDEQ Scrap Tire Cleanup. The grant will allow Pulaski Township, Concord Township and Village of Concord residents the opportunity to get rid of scrap tires and will likely take place in the late spring/early summer of 2018 at Gottschalk Park

Council Comments:

T. Casey commented on how great it was to drive through downtown and see people out painting and improving the business district. He also asked how much money had been donated to the Holiday Lights Fund. J. Lefere informed him that currently there was \$135.00 in donations. T. Casey and his wife had agreed to match dollar for dollar in donations up to \$500.00. J. Bush stated that he will donate the difference to bring the donations to the \$500.00 mark.

A. Meeks asked if the resident on Jenks St was okay with the paving of Jenks St. after he reached out to the Council and spoke with J. Bush. J. Bush informed the Council that he spoke with the resident and explained the process, the time frame involved, and thought he had alleviated his concerns.

M. Lovitt asked the Council to begin a discussion and possibly explore the Village becoming a City, as he is interested in exploring it. J. Bush stated he had looked into the process of becoming a City in the past and had some information on the process. In the past J. Mockeridge also had explored the process and had previously found representatives of other nearby municipalities who recently transitioned into becoming cities offer to come out and talk to the Council and Community about the process. J. Bush, Mockeridge, and Lovitt discussed their initial understanding of the pros and cons of the Village becoming a City. Bush started by stating the new City and the Township could still share certain services such as police and fire services if this was to occur. Bush noted the main pro of the Village becoming a City is Villagers would no longer pay Township taxes. They noted some of the cons were the Village would be responsible for upkeep of Maple Grove Cemetery; we would have to conduct our own elections; and taking that much of the tax base from the Township would be financially detrimental to the Township. Mockeridge noted as Village Council members our responsibility is to do what is best for the Village and the concerns for the Township should be secondary. Mockeridge stated if the Village was to become a City the Township would likely have an easier time getting the votes necessary to raise their taxes, as Villager's often vote "no" on Township tax increases because Villagers receive very little from the Township for our taxes. Another potential con mentioned by Bush was the Township would possibly have to move their offices out of the Village and into the Township which would mean one more empty building in the Village but would also allow the Township to break a costly and lengthy lease the previous administration agreed to which the current administration may not agree with. They noted that the Village Council couldn't lead the process to become a City but would have to appoint a committee of Village residents to serve and complete the process. Bush noted this would be a two to three year process in which at the end an election would occur and if fifty one percent of Village residents were in favor the Village would become a City. Bush stated this was just a preliminary understanding of the pros, cons, and process but much more research was needed as well as possibly contacting the Village's lawyer for clarification about what role the Council could play. Mockeridge stated he still had much of information he compiled from his previous exploration of the topic and would forward this information on to the Council as well as reach out to the nearby new city representatives who previously were interested in coming and speaking to the Council.

J. Bush discussed an article in the Brooklyn Exponent about who pays the most taxes. Concord Village is right about in the median range.

With no other business to discuss, it was motioned by A. Meeks, seconded by J. Mockeridge, to adjourn at 7:50 pm. Motion approved by all.


Approved by Jeremiah Bush, Village President

11/14/17
Date