



3RD WARD MEETING MINUTES – ALDERMAN DENISE RODD

May 20, 2015

AGENDA

- Economic Development

GUESTS

Michael Bartholomew, City Manager

WELCOME

Thank you for coming. Michael Bartholomew, City Manager joins us to answer questions and update us on citywide economic development.

STATE OF DES PLAINES

Budget this year will be challenging with not knowing what to anticipate the State of Illinois' budget will look like and how it will affect the City of Des Plaines.

- Capital Investment: \$60M with every year investing more into our City.
- Financial Balance (saving account) City has been building up account, which we are now using towards projects.
- Debt will be \$37M by end of 2015 – was \$102M.
- Bond Rating is AA2.

City is looking to hire an Economic Coordinator and Special Events Coordinator. Individuals will be responsible to look for new business by being a “knocker of doors” and creating a re-purpose to the Economic Commission. (Economic Commission consists of 12 to 15 members that would work alongside the Economic Coordinator.)

Special Events Coordinator will assist in creating a city wide calendar of events, combining with school districts. Maybe even create an events that is unique to the City of Des Plaines.

Incentives are provided by the city to bring in new business as well as to prevent current businesses from leaving. There are different reasons businesses leave Des Plaines and not all are related to the City.

Offering 6bs to fill vacant space. 6bs do work when used appropriately, a 6B was offered to Warehouse Direct, which is a \$650K a year sales tax. Where 6bs should not be used are on TIFs.

City reviewed the construction codes, reducing and adapting the codes to a standardized national code. In so doing, saved Des Plaines a 30% of cost. We want to tell potential businesses that it is “cheaper” to build in Des Plaines and make it also easier to build in Des Plaines.

Some of the changes:

- Combining Fire Prevention Bureau and Building Inspectors. Since both bureaus do similar work and located on the same floor, they can actually communicate with each other and share inspections.
- Waste Hauling Contract: Citizens were happy with current carrier, even though we didn't want to change waste carriers, City went out to bid. We were able to maintain present waste company, at a lower bid and add additional trash services. WIN-WIN
- Senior Vehicle Stickers: Improved what we had by allowing a 2 senior driver family with 2 cars to both be eligible for the senior discount. WIN WIN
- Policy on vehicles was reviewed and found we can cut back on fleet and save the city money.
- Reviewed the 911 center, saving money with change of Dispatch Centers for Police and Fire.
- Audit of data lines and phone lines saving the City money.
- Business Licenses can now be done online or both new and renewal of licenses. Saving the business time and City money. (City is moving towards a virtual city hall.)
- Evaluating city owned properties to make a decision what to do with properties.

- Created one source for office supplies. Before, each department ordered own letterhead and office supplies. This will save the City money by centralizing supplies.
- City Attorneys: We made the right decision with a one Law Firm of many specialized attorneys instead with one City Attorney. The Firm has been a beneficial resource no matter the issue, (be it a litigation, lawsuits, or contract) Firm has an attorney that specializes in the field.

CONSTRUCTION BUDGET

2012 - \$30M
 2013 - \$30M
 2014 - \$93M

TIF UPDATE

- TIF 3 is in an Industrial Park.
- TIF 4 is located at 5-corners and underperforming and being re-evaluated.
- Divided TIF 6 at Mannheim and Higgins in half. Making it a TIF 6 and a TIF 7.
- TIF 7 is a zero (0) value owing no money on because of it being split from TIF6; and making it more profitable to the city when developed.
 - Recently City of Des Plaines attended a Shopping Center Event at Navy Pier, where in purchasing a booth to advertise Des Plaines' Brand. City came away from the event with contacts and a proposed interest in TIF 7.

FUN THINGS AROUND TOWN

- Des Plaines wants to create a "buzz" and research what would bring people to live, visit and shop within Des Plaines ". Special Events Coordinator would be assisting in the creation of the "buzz".
 - Branding and Marketing our City to change our image. A discussion is scheduled for June on the subject of Des Plaines' Brand.
 - Casino - \$8.8M a year. This could change if the Illinois Gaming Laws change...

QUESTIONS FOR CITY MANAGER

- New sidewalk and brick way: Bricks that are dislodging around Metropolitan Square, is anything to be done? City is aware of this problem and we do have a 1 year maintenance/ guarantee with the construction company. We are going to continue to monitor and have all the loose bricks replaced at one time...at no cost to the city.
- Brick ways are 90% completed. Delay came when discovered that the bricks laid were breaking, which was due to inferior made bricks the construction company received and found. Brick Company is responsible and replacing bricks at no charge.
- Pearson and River: Any remodeling of the area close to Sims Bowl? Down the road.
- METROPOLITAN SQUARE
- Majority of Franchises are for food at Metropolitan Square but not all vacancies are conducive to food venues due to no way to vent cooking smoke/steam with apartments above.
- What about a clothing store or women's shops? These stores would have to have merchandise priced at a higher cost due to the lease. Question comes up if consumers would pay the price when they can go to a big box store and get the same item at a lower cost. Therefore no women's clothes stores in the Square would be profitable..
- Gym and Fitness Center is doing well.
- Frozen Yogurt store moved in to vacant space. Mural of Des Plaines is on their wall.
- Has the McDonald's Corporation considered moving the McDonalds Museum to Metropolitan Square and make it a functioning McDonalds? That is up to the McDonald's Corporation. Besides, the present location of the Museum is the actual location of the first McDonalds.

CITYWIDE ISSUES

- Park District is going ahead with the Pocket Park. No detail on how it will look.
- Open Forum May 21 was held at Train Station. All were welcome.
- Timeline of Water in late 2016. Contract and Agreement in place, waiting now for approval and permits. New Water Line will save the City of Des Plaines \$10K a day. When will the citizens see the savings? With the many water main breaks that causes the loss of gallons of water, water and sewer funds are in a negative situation. The money saved with the new water commission can go back into city to continue rebuilding infrastructure. Remember -- \$10k a day is a lot and does add up over time.
- Water Main -- project is presently being done at Lee and Miner. Project is boring under the railroad tracks.
- When looking at road repairs City considers the water mains underneath and handle both constructions at once. The curbs along Thacker had the cement poured before a heavy rain last year. This is causing the cement curbs to crumble. These will be replaced.

- Road re-surfacing in the Villas. Arborist has evaluated there are dead trees in the Villas to be cut down.
- Dams: Dams are starting to be torn out, 2 north of Des Plaines done. Cook Count Forrest Preserve is handling the project. City not given a timeline by Cook County.
- Movie Theatre: Owner is not keeping up with repairs only alternative is for the City to take away, which is not going to happen. There have been interested buyers, but current owner will not sell. There is a small amount of property tax collected by the City.
- Caputos: Plans approved, not sure why construction hasn't started in the old Dominick's store
- Signal to be installed by Aldi's? Yes
- Ozinga: Denise checked and Ozinga will sign a contract that will permit and pay for a crossing guard to be back along the railroad crossing. Contract is really with Meyer Material, since they still own the property and Ozinga is renting. The crossing guard will be back in place by next school year (2015/2016). City will pay to have a crossing guard at that post for the remainder of this school year.
- August 4 is National Night Out at Maine West.

NEXT MEETING

Date June 10, 2015 -- Prairie Lakes

Submitted by Ruth Bethscheider, volunteer

TO CONTACT DENISE

- Phone Number: 847.514.6318. Please call Denise at this number with issues, questions and concerns.
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