

October 6, 2014

The regular meeting of the Decorah City Council was called to order by Mayor Don Arendt at 5:45 p.m.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members present: Randy Schissel, Jody Niess, Gary Rustad, Charles Lore, Tade Kerndt, Bill Wagner, Paul Wanless

Motion by Niess, second by Rustad to approve the agenda as presented. Roll call vote. All voting aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Rustad, second by Kerndt, to approve items on the consent agenda as follows:

- a. Minutes of the September 15, 2014 meeting
- b. Claims
- c. Renewal Class E Liquor License for Quillins including Class B Wine, Class C Beer and Sunday Sales privileges
- d. Renewal Class E Liquor License for Decorah Mart including Class B Wine, Class C Beer and Sunday Sales privileges
- e. Pay Estimate #3 - \$8,537.11 2014 Street and Alley Improvement Project

Roll call vote. All voting aye. Motion carried.

This being the date and time for a public hearing on the proposed Urban Revitalization Plan/Residential Housing Incentive Program the hearing was called to order.

City Manager Bird read recently received written correspondence from Julie Fischer, Darrel Jenson and Laurie Worchester. Fischer voiced concerns about the process with Jenson and Worchester being opposed to the proposal.

Tony Larson, 502 E. Broadway, questioned where the money needed to pay bills will come from. He would be in favor of assisting low income but not others.

Keith Christianson, 810 Linden, spoke in favor saying this program has been proven to work. We have the opportunity to see expansion and growth through this program.

Cal Anderson, 719 Ridge Road, spoke in opposition. 29 homes have been built in the last 3 years. This program does cost in loss of tax dollars.

Craig Spilde, 807 Iowa Ave., has reservations on the reality of the outcome and has concerns about the following claims made in support of the program.

1. Proposed abatement will not increase taxes for other residents – he believes this is true only if there is absolutely no growth or increased spending
2. No cost to City – again only if there is no growth or increased spending
3. No risk to City – Where there is investment there is risk
4. Lack of documentation available for public review leading up to this proposal.

Russel Novak, 1924 Ballroom Rd., spoke in favor. Believes we have a housing issue this could resolve.

Willard Hanson, 1006 College Drive, has concerns this will affect the value of his home and the ability to sell it.

The public hearing was closed.

Motion by Schissel, second by Kerndt, to approve Resolution 2618 stating intentions with regard to the designation of the 2014 Decorah Housing Urban Revitalization Area and approving the proposed plan therefor.

Councilperson Wanless stated he has been supportive in the past of assistance to encourage economic growth. He agrees with the multi-family and improvement to existing homes portion of the proposal but not for single family homes. Feels there are better ways to encourage residential development.

Councilperson Lore is against the proposal. Should not do this just because other communities are. He believes it will take potential revenue from the school which will also affect county residents.

Councilperson Rustad spoke in favor saying the city has done abatements for commercial projects and he is excited to help residential growth. Would like the Council to establish a goal for number of new homes built.

Councilperson Wanless confirmed any abatement stays with the property.

Councilperson Niess stressed we are all passionate about Decorah and hopes this abatement program will help.

Councilperson Kerndt spoke in favor.

The Mayor called for the vote. Voting aye: Schissel, Kerndt, Niess, Rustad. Voting nay: Wagner, Wanless, Lore. Motion carried.

Ordinance 1170 approving the Urban Revitalization Plan/Residential Housing Incentive Program was introduced and read for the first time. Motion by Schissel, second by Kerndt, to approve the first reading.

Roll call vote. Voting aye: Schissel, Kerndt, Niess, Rustad. Voting nay: Wagner, Wanless, Lore.  
Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned on motion.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wanda Hemesath".

Wanda Hemesath, MMC  
City Clerk, Tr.