

JENNINGS CITY COUNCIL – DECEMBER 19, 2016

The two thousand three hundred fifty second meeting of the Jennings City Council was held on Monday, December 19, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall. Present were Mayor Pro Tem Dugger, and councilmembers Allan Stichnote, Miranda Jones, Yolonda Fortson, Phyllis Anderson, Nicole Cook, Rodney Epps and Carol Epps. Also present were City Attorney Carla Allen and City Clerk Cheryl Balke.

The meeting began with a public hearing, called to hear comments in favor of, or opposed to, a request for resubdivision of Lot 2 at Plaza on the Boulevard, 8021 W. Florissant, into Lot 2A and 2B, requested by Earl Graham of Grimes Consulting for TCB Plaza, LLC. This property is the parcel on which DaVita Dialysis will be built. Speaking in favor of the request was Earl Graham, surveyor of record. In response to a question from Councilman Epps, Mr. Graham stated that the parcel was being subdivided for tax purposes. There were no other comments in favor of, or opposed to, the request and the public hearing was closed.

The regular meeting was called to order and the agenda was approved on a motion by Councilman Epps, second by Councilwoman Jones. The minutes of the previous meetings of November 7 and November 21, 2016 were approved on a motion by Councilman Epps, second by Councilwoman Jones.

Next were councilmember's reports. Councilman Stichnote noted that our former St. Louis County Police commander, Capt. Jeff Fuesting, had recently been hired as Chief of Police for the city of Effingham, Illinois. He also reported that January 23, 2017 would be the 30th anniversary of the death, in the line of duty, of Jennings Police Sgt. Ken Koeller, and that a memorial plaque would be presented to Mrs. Koeller at the council meeting that evening. He also noted that crime continues to decrease. He announced that City Clerk Cheryl Balke would be retiring January 20th after 24 years with the city.

Councilwoman Jones noted that there would not be a Ward 1 meeting in January. She thanked Public Works for clearing the streets after the recent ice. She also thanked Percillia Jones for coordinating the Neighborhood Watch Christmas Party. She reported that Better Family Life was partnering with other agencies to open a de-escalating center in North County to help reduce violence, and noted that a wellness and neighborhood resource center was opening on West Florissant. She wished everyone happy holidays.

Councilwoman Epps thanked those in attendance and wished everyone a merry Christmas.

Councilman Epps also wished everyone a merry Christmas and said that he was sad that City Clerk Cheryl Balke was leaving, that he had depended on her and thought she was the best City Clerk in the state. He also noted that retired Finance Director Beverly Roche was in the hospital. He spoke about the Jennings High School JETS program and their adoption of West Florissant to clean up trash, asking that a sign be placed acknowledging their work. He spoke about the "WE" program, with resources for educators and students. He thanked Percillia Jones for her work on the Neighborhood Watch Christmas Party, and announced Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve parties at the Epps's barber shop. He thanked those who attended and wished everyone a blessed new year.

Councilwoman Fortson noted attending coffee with the commander, the clergy coalition meeting, and the Neighborhood Watch Christmas party. She thanked Percillia Jones and her committee for their hard work getting the party together, and wished everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Councilwoman Anderson thanked those in attendance. She noted that she was working with teachers, students and businesses to help Jennings students get jobs. She thanked Percillia Jones for putting together the Neighborhood Watch Christmas party and wished everyone a merry Christmas and happy new year.

Councilwoman Cook announced a Ward 3 meeting for January 18th at 5:30

Councilwoman Dugger reported that Phase 2 of Jennings Place was under construction and stated that she had noticed vandalism and called the police, who responded immediately. For the Mayor's report, she noted that the city now owned the properties at 8716 and 8730 Jennings Station Road and that a Brownfields assessment would be done. She reported that the city would go out for bid in January for the demolition of 16 condemned homes and that more demolitions would follow. She stated that DaVita Dialysis would open within the month and that the STAR Residences had recently opened. She also stated that Ruler Foods had not cancelled their plans to build in Jennings but that the store would not be built before 2018. She also reported on a Clergy Coalition meeting to encourage churches to pool their resources to help the community. She wished everyone a happy holiday. She also reported that there

were several businesses in Jennings that had not had a business license for a long time and that the city was going to shut them down.

Monthly departmental reports were approved on a motion by Councilwoman Anderson, second by Councilman Epps.

Reporting for their committees, Mayor Pro Tem Dugger reported that Ways and Means was meeting weekly to prepare the budget for next year. At their meeting earlier this evening, they discussed and recommended approval of a budget amendment in the amount of \$83,000 from 756-35-02 to 702-50-02. The money was saved on a parking lot repair and will be used to purchase grass cutting equipment for next year. This was approved on a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Dugger, second by Councilman Epps.

For the Public Works Committee, Councilwoman Fortson reported on a meeting held on December 14th at which they discussed grass cutting plans for the upcoming year. It is recommended that grass cutting be done by city employees and temps rather than being contracted out. Initially, the grass crews will cut the grass on all the vacant lots and abandoned houses in one ward before moving on to the next ward. Councilmembers Jones, Epps and Stichnote questioned whether it would not be better to split the crews up than to cut only in one ward at a time. Mayor Pro Tem Dugger stated that all of the lots were being prepped for cutting now and that doing a blitz of cuts in one ward at a time should go quickly.

For the Park Committee, Councilwoman Jones reported on a meeting where the status of the park grant work was discussed and noted that work will begin soon. The new playground equipment has been purchased and will be stored until spring. Also discussed was the possibility of changing the procedures for reserving the park; Interim Recreation Director Earl Green will bring a proposal to the committee. They discussed the status of the bus grant and noted that the city's Title VI policy had been updated to meet a requirement of the grant. Councilwoman Jones asked who was overseeing grants for the city and Mayor Pro Tem Dugger suggested that Public Works Director Kim Smith be assigned that responsibility. The Councilman Epps also discussed visiting a new park in Wellston, the donation of new basketball hoops by the St. Louis County Police, and moving the concerts in the park back to Koenenman Park. Plans for future park improvements will be discussed at the next meeting.

For the Municipal League, the next meeting on January 12th was announced.

For the Plan Commission, Mayor Pro Tem Dugger reported that the commission had met to discuss the request for resubdivision that was on tonight's agenda.

For the Policy Committee, Councilwoman Fortson reported that the committee was recommending changes to the sick leave policy for city employees and that the new policy was on the agenda for approval tonight. Councilwoman Fortson and Councilman Epps explained some of the changes in the new policy, such as accumulation of sick days and a reduction in long term sick leave. The new policy was approved to take effect on January 1, 2017, on a motion by Councilwoman Fortson, second by Councilwoman Anderson.

For the Solid Waste Committee, Councilwoman Epps reported on a meeting held on November 30th regarding the upcoming expiration of the contract for trash service. The committee discussed either extending the present contract for one more year or going out for bid, and the committee recommended that the city go out for bid using the same details of service as are currently in effect.

Next was public comment. George Robnett of the Community Action Agency of St. Louis County spoke about the programs offered by the agency including family development, utility assistance and housing. He noted that \$70,000 had been set aside for home repairs and weatherization in Jennings. Mayor Pro Tem Dugger stated that he had mentioned the city partnering with them and asked what that meant. Mr. Robnett replied that partnering would mean that the city and the agency would apply together for additional home improvement fund and an affordable housing grant. Mayor Pro Tem Dugger asked him to provide additional information so the city could consider it.

Percillia Jones of 5516 Janet noted that she hated to see City Clerk Cheryl Balke retire, and that she was always respectful and treated people right. She thanked everyone who participated in the Neighborhood Watch Christmas party and noted her appreciation for the Epps's.

Allen McDonnell of 9314 Scottdale congratulated City Clerk Cheryl Balke on her retirement and thanked Councilwoman Fortson for her Public Works report. He wished everyone a merry Christmas and happy new year.

Robert Cotton of 78119 Garesche thanked the Street Department and spoke about a problem with barricades being torn down in Ward 4. He spoke about the Solid Waste Committee and wished everyone a happy holiday.

John Schlereth wished everyone happy holidays and said that he was glad to hear that Ruler Foods still planned to build a store in Jennings. He noted his appreciation at being on the Plan Commission.

Under legal business, Bill #2486, authorizing the resubdivision of Lot 2 at Plaza on the Boulevard, 8021 W. Florissant, into Lot 2A and 2B, was given its first reading on a motion by Councilwoman Fortson, second by Councilwoman Cook. The second reading was done on a motion by Councilman Epps, second by Councilwoman Fortson. The bill was approved to become Ordinance #2433 by the following roll call vote: voting in favor were Councilmembers Stichnote, Jones, Dugger, Fortson, Anderson, Cook, R. Epps and C. Epps; no one voting against or abstaining.

Under new business, the council reviewed a proposed policy for the purchase of city-owned real estate.

On a motion by Councilwoman Jones, second by Councilwoman Cook, the council appointed Beverly Roche as a resident-member of the Police and Firemen's Pension Board.

Bills as submitted were approved for payment on a motion by Councilwoman Fortson, second by Councilwoman Jones.

On a motion by Councilwoman Jones, second by Councilwoman Anderson, the council approved holding a closed session for legal business, real estate and personnel (RSMO 610:021 1, 2 and 3) by the following roll call vote: voting in favor were Councilmembers Stichnote, Jones, Dugger, Fortson, Anderson, Cook, R. Epps and C. Epps; no one voting against or abstaining.

For the Mayor's closing remarks, Mayor Pro Tem Dugger noted that the city newsletter would be out in the mail in two weeks, and that this issue would be delivered to everyone but future issues would only be available on the website. She told everyone to enjoy their holidays, be safe and warm, and have a merry Christmas.

After a brief recess, the council met in closed session. On a motion by Councilman Epps, second by Councilwoman Jones, the following individuals were approved for hire as part-time employees in the Recreation Department as concession stand workers and site monitors: Kylir Dorsey, Kievonn Monger, Daron Wilson, Nicholas Haily, Jabari Ireland, Victoya Frost and Cory Johnson. This was approved by the following roll call vote: voting in favor were Councilmembers Stichnote, Jones, Dugger, Fortson, Anderson, Cook, R. Epps and C. Epps; no one voting against or abstaining.

Next discussed was the performance of correctional officer Chaunte Smith. On recommendation of Mayor Pro Tem Dugger and on a motion by Councilman Epps, second by Councilwoman Fortson, the council approved the immediate termination of Chaunte Smith's employment by the following roll call vote: voting in favor were Councilmembers Stichnote, Jones, Dugger, Fortson, Anderson, Cook, R. Epps and C. Epps; no one voting against or abstaining.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Councilwoman Fortson, second by Councilwoman Jones.

MAYOR PRO TEM FRANCINE DUGGER

ATTEST:

CHERYL BALKE, CITY CLERK