

## **Tomah Long Range Planning Committee Minutes**

The City of Tomah Long Range Planning Committee met in regular session on Tuesday, July 25, 2017 in the council chambers at City Hall, 819 Superior Avenue, Tomah, WI.

**Call to Order/Roll Call:** Chairperson Eric Prise called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Members present: Tina Thompson, Nellie Pater, Pete Reichardt, Steve Peterson, Travis Scholze, Eric Prise and Tony Farmer. Absent: Joanne Westpfahl and Jeff Holthaus. Quorum present. Also in attendance: City Administrator Roger Gorius, Lamont Kiefer and Deputy Clerk Diane Webster.

**Review and Approval of June 27, 2017 Minutes:** Motion by Thompson, seconded by Reichardt to approve the June 27, 2017 meeting minutes. Motion passed without negative vote.

**Discussion of Ongoing Projects:** Administrator Gorius advised that Andrew Bremer is working on an online request form that applicants can fill out and submit in order to apply for funds to rehabilitate their properties within the City.

Tomah Memorial Hospital is moving forward with construction plans. The Department of Natural Resources has determined that some of the property is in wetlands so the hospital is working with DNR and Department of Transportation to resolve that issue. The owner of a piece of property near the proposed hospital site is interested in annexing to the city to sell it for future development. The City is working with the DOT regarding lighting, signage, etc. to make the property more accessible.

Heavy rainfall has increased the amount of water being released at the dam. The Public Works Department is working near Capauls' Flooring and JJ Floral to improve the natural drainage through that area.

The City is working on obtaining Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation grants to purchase two houses on Kilbourn Avenue (adjacent to the 3 Gen LLC property) to create public parking. WEDC grants are designated for improving blighted areas. Angle parking on Kilbourn Avenue and widening E. La Crosse Street are other options being considered to increase parking.

Millhaven Foods construction is ahead of schedule and should be operational by mid-September.

Chairman Prise would like to spend part of a Long Range Planning Committee meeting doing a walk through of the blighted properties in the City to help expose this issue to the public and to help identify what areas need improvement.

Steve Peterson advised that Alliant Energy has contacted him about acquiring land near Tomah. They would like to prepare it for future business park development. CGI will be filming in the Tomah area in the next few days.

There is discussion between La Crosse, Sparta and Tomah regarding a possible shared transportation system.

Chairman Prise would like the City to consider including funding in the 2018 budget to for acquiring properties for future development.

The second round of bids for the information kiosk remodel have come in again at over \$400K. HVAC and soil remediation are the largest expenses. Several options to decrease costs are being considered (such as having it open only in the summer and just having restrooms open to the public with the rest of the building used for storage).

**Administrative Updates:** Mayor Pater passed out a packet of design guidelines that Sparta uses for rehabilitating historical buildings for the committee's information. Pete Reichardt discussed a Roger Brooks webinar regarding how we can assist with resurgence of downtown areas. Tina Thompson continues to work with realtors and downtown property owners about allowing their empty storefronts to be used for pop-up businesses and is encouraging business owners to stay open in the evenings.

**Tentative Next Meeting Date.** August 29<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

**Adjourn.** Motion by Peterson second by Thompson to adjourn. Motion passed without negative vote. Meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Diane Webster, Deputy City Clerk