

CITY OF MUSCATINE  
IN-DEPTH CITY COUNCIL MINUTES  
Council Chambers – 7:00 p.m. – September 12, 2013

Mayor DeWayne Hopkins called the In-Depth City Council meeting for Thursday, September 12, 2013, to order at 7 p.m. Councilmembers present were LeRette, Fitzgerald, Natvig, Shihadeh, Bynum, and Phillips. Also present were City Administrator Gregg Mandsager, Public Works Director Randy Hill, CVB Coordinator Hannah Wilke, Parks & Recreation Director Rich Klimes, City Engineer Jon Lutz, and MAGIC GIS Systems Analyst Mark Yerington.

The first item on the agenda was a presentation on a small park being proposed for the empty lot located at the corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Cedar streets.

Parks & Recreation Director Rich Klimes went over the map of the proposed Veterans Memorial Park. He stated the park would consist of a public art display and an 86' walkway composed of Purrington Pavers. He stated that a bench and ten monuments will be placed behind the walkway and that trees will be added to the site.

Councilmembers Phillips and Bynum both asked who would maintain the park.

City Administrator Gregg Mandsager stated it will be maintained by the city as it is presently with the memorials taken care of by the veteran's group.

Councilmember Shihadeh asked if Duncan Park had been considered and was told it was not being considered at this time.

Councilmember Fitzgerald stated he feels this is a good usage of the lot located at the 8<sup>th</sup> and Cedar intersection and that there should be minimal maintenance required. He stated that Duncan Park is kept in case there is another need for it.

Councilmember LeRette asked what the timetable was. The park should be completed before Veteran's Day.

It was pointed out that the Art Center will be involved in this project as well.

Councilmember Natvig asked if there was lighting included. He was told there was not.

Councilmember Phillips asked if it was a buildable lot and was told it was not.

Councilmember Bynum stated he feels something needs to be done with Duncan Park. He also stated the American Legion and VFW should be contacted concerning this project.

Councilmember Shihadeh stated he feels the consensus is that the proposed park is a good idea.

Next on the agenda was an update on CVB activities. Hannah Wilke, the new CVB Coordinator, introduced herself. She stated she began working as the CVB Coordinator on July 16, 2013 and since that time has seen significant milestones including the start of a new website ([www.visitmuscatine.com](http://www.visitmuscatine.com)), a new visitor's guide, an active Marketing Committee, and an active Volunteer Engagement Committee with the United Way. She stated the CVB has been reaching out to the county and other attractions which include, but are not limited to:

- Muscatine County Fair
- Hoover Nature Trail
- West Liberty Saturday night car races
- Wilton Founder's Day
- Durant Polkafest
- Ardon Creek Winery
- Wild Cat Den
- Wilton Candy Kitchen
- Pine Creek Grist Mill
- Farmer's Market (farmers are county residents)

Ms. Wilke then asked for input from City Council.

Councilmember Shihadeh stated seeing young talent returning to Muscatine is like a breath of fresh air. He commended Ms. Wilke for her goals both long and short.

Mayor Hopkins asked how many visitors the website is seeing.

Ms. Wilke stated that during the past month the website has had 1,000+ new visits.

Branding was briefly discussed as was the Meeker's riverboat. Council was told that only private cruises are taking place at this time.

The final item on the agenda for discussion was the implementation of a proposed sidewalk policy.

City Administrator Mandsager and Public Works Director Randy Hill reviewed the information City Council had on their desks.

Public Works Director Hill stated that currently sidewalks are addressed on a complaint basis and that the systematic inspection program ended 10 years ago. He stated it is now time to update sidewalk standards, create a policy, and determine the best way to implement the policy.

Mr. Hill stated the purpose of a new policy would be to provide a pedestrian friendly community. He stated that sidewalk issues will be handled by a three-pronged approach which would include sidewalk inspection and repairs, new sidewalks, and an ADA assessment and repairs.

Mr. Hill listed three existing infrastructure issues that include elevated water stop boxes, broken sidewalks, and tripping hazards. He stated that new infrastructures will be looked at as well.

Mr. Hill stated it is staff's goal to implement a Complete Streets Policy which is a Blue Zone action item and is identified in the city's proposed Comprehensive Plan. He stated the policy will include current projects and opportunities, safe routes to school, and federal and state mandates.

Mr. Hill stated that public support is in the proposed comprehensive plan, as part of the Blue Zones Initiative, and is within the pedestrian and bike master plans that are forthcoming.

City Engineer Jon Lutz and MAGIC GIS Systems Analyst Mark Yerington gave a power point presentation entitled "City of Muscatine Sidewalk and ADA Ramp Inventory". The power point showed how sidewalk issues had been handled in the past which was manually intensive and how the city engineer is working toward automating the process. Mr. Lutz and Mr. Yerington talked about the ADA ramp collection and iPad benefits. They talked about the future uses of the ADA inventory and the proposed sidewalk inspection program. The presentation ended with a sample of a sidewalk notification letter tool that could be utilized.

City Administrator Mandsager and Public Works Director Hill then discussed the process of creating the policy and implementing it. They stated the question that needs to be answered is how this can be done. Does the city contract with an outside firm at a cost of approximately \$30,000 per year plus implementation, complete the project in-house in cooperation with Bi-State, and hire a project manager to coordinate and implement the sidewalk program? Not only will a project manager handle sidewalk-related issues but this position will allow the city engineer to focus on city project design, increase output, and save contracted engineering dollars.

City Administrator Mandsager reviewed some of the added duties and costs for the proposed project manager position.

There was discussion from Council concerning the identification of problem areas, the lengthy sidewalk inspection process, and the benefit of having an application available through MAGIC to address the sidewalk issue and the need for a sidewalk policy and comprehensive program.

Councilmember Fitzgerald stated he feels areas that have been developed without sidewalks should be addressed as well.

City Administrator Mandsager stated staff would bring forward an action item at the October 3, 2013 City Council meeting.

#22637. Councilmember Shihadeh moved the meeting be adjourned at 8:13 p.m. Seconded by Councilmember Fitzgerald. All ayes; motion carried.

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Gregg Mandsager, City Administrator