



**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the  
Cedar Springs City Council**

**Thursday, September 11, 2014  
Cedar Springs City Hall  
66 S. Main St.  
Cedar Springs, Michigan**

**Workshop  
6:15 p.m.**

Members Present: Ken Benham (arrived 6:40 p.m.); Ashley Bremmer, Dan Clark, Jerry Hall, Robert Truesdale, Patricia Troost, Mark Fankhauser.

Also Present: City Manager Thad Taylor, City Clerk Linda Christensen, Finance Director Deb Brunett, DPW Director Tom Stressman, Fire Chief Marty Fraser, Police Chief Chad Potts.

Members reviewed agenda items with the City Manager.

**Meeting  
7:00 p.m.**

1. The Meeting was Called to Order by Mayor **Mark Fankhauser** at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited followed by a moment of silence in remembrance of those who lost their lives on 9/11.

2. <u>ROLL CALL:</u>	Mr. Ken Benham	Present
	Mrs. Ashley Bremmer	Present
	Mr. Daniel Clark	Present
	Mr. Gerald Hall	Present
	Mr. Robert Truesdale	Present
	Mayor Pro Tem Mrs. Patricia Troost	Present
	Mayor Mr. Mark Fankhauser	Present

3. PUBLIC FORUM.

**Judy Reed**, 144 E. Ash St., Editor of Cedar Springs Post newspaper, read from a prepared statement regarding her concerns about the procedure used at the last Council in which a new contract for the City Manager had been approved.

**Steve McBride**, 139 7th St., stated the Council violated the definition of truth over and over.

**Mark Laws**, 54 S. 1st St., comments regarding what he referred to as the Ronny Merlington policy in which items were introduced at one meeting and voted upon at a subsequent meeting. He asked why a more thorough search had not been conducted in trying to locate this policy. He questioned why the City Manager had not conducted the investigation of the violation of the Open Meetings Act. He claimed residents were afraid to come to city hall for fear of retaliation. The City Council has distain for what citizens feel, he stated.

City Manager **Thad Taylor** responded that an exhaustive search was conducted regarding the so-called policy. No documentation could be found, he said. The City was not hiding anything. As far as the violation of the Open Meetings Act was concerned the Council elected not to go through with it once the complaint had been filed with the State. The City was still waiting for the results of that complaint.

**Perry Hopkins**, 95 N. Main St., stated there was going to be a public presentation on rain gardens at the Kent Theatre on September 25th.

**Kathy Bremmer**, 205 E. Maple St., said she wanted to know how Mr. Laws had received an email that had only been sent to the Council. He needed to step up and tell the truth.

**Laws** replied that there was no reason why the investigation should not have gone on and as far as the email was concerned, nobody gave it to him.

**Taylor** stated the State Police would not conduct an investigation until the city provided everything it had to the prosecutor and the prosecutor said there was reason to pursue an investigation. The city would have spent public funds doing so and it could not do that as it would have been an improper use of public funds.

**Shawn Kiphart**, 1575 21 Mile Road, said all this was coming from one person who had an agenda. There are several people out there who are proud of what you do, he told the Council.

4. There were no public hearings.
5. **Motion by Bremmer, supported by Benham, to approve the agenda with the addition of New Business, Item G, motion to approve Resolution No. 2014 – 30, a resolution to vacate a public alley associated with 95 N. Main Street.**

**VOTE: 7 – 0, Motion Carried.**

6. **Motion by Benham, supported by Bremmer, to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of the following:**
  - A. **approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 21, 2014.**
  - B. **approval of the Checks Paid Prior #s 36879 – 36943 totaling \$706,435.30; the August Accounts Payable #s 36944 – 36965 totaling \$11,841.87 and Electronic Transfers totaling \$458.47. The total of all checks and transfers was \$718,735.60.**

**VOTE: 7 – 0, Motion Carried.**

- 7. Correspondence was received from the following:
  - A. a notice from the Kent County Board of Commissioners requesting citizens to serve on County boards and commissions.
  - B. an invitation to the Unity Day reception.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

A. Mayoral Business Matters:

**Fankhauser** reported that a survey regarding police services had been sent to approximately 1,400 residents. Ninety-six had been returned, which was a seven percent turnout. Of those returned, 57 wanted to keep the CS Police Department and 41 wanted to contract with the Kent County Sheriff Department. Five were undecided. He cautioned councilors to keep these numbers in mind when considering the draft contract with Kent County. The yield was very low, he said.  
 He also provided an update on his mother. She was doing well and thanked those who had kept her in their prayers and thoughts.

9. NEW BUSINESS.

A. City Assessor **Debbie Rashid** provided an update on the financial impact to the City with the passage of Proposal 1. The City would see a net gain of \$1,149.24, she stated.

B. Request to waive sanitary sewer charges for 12 Grant St.

**Motion by Troost to deny the request.  
 No support.**

**Motion by Benham, supported by Clark, to waive the sanitary sewer charges for 12 Grant Street.**

<b>VOTE:</b>	<b>Fankhauser</b>	<b>No</b>
	<b>Truesdale</b>	<b>No</b>
	<b>Troost</b>	<b>No</b>
	<b>Benham</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>Hall</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>Clark</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>Bremmer</b>	<b>No</b>

**3 – 4, Motion denied.**

An alternative motion by **Clark** was withdrawn.

C. **Motion by Truesdale, supported by Troost, to approve a bid from Peerless Midwest to overhaul Well #5 in an amount not-to-exceed \$17,036.25.**

**VOTE : 7 – 0, Motion Carried.**

D. **Motion by Troost, supported by Clark, to approve a request from Cedar Springs Public Schools to terminate the Inter-Governmental Cooperation Agreement for Skinner Field.**

**VOTE: 6 – 1 (Hall) Motion Carried.**

E. **Motion by Troost, supported by Benham, to approve the Friends of Skinner Field draft lease and operating project plan.**

Discussion:

**Taylor** stated the Friends of Skinner Field were interested in leasing and operating Skinner Field now the School District had terminated the lease agreement it had with the City. If approved, the Friends group would operate, maintain, administer, promote and restore Skinner Field as a multi-use facility open to the public. They would be responsible for repairs and maintenance of the facility as well as scheduling events and paying for utility fees. The group had provided a copy of its bylaws, project plan and lease and operation agreement for Council review.

**Hall** asked who the Friends of Skinner Field were.

**Shawn Kiphart**, president of the group, stated the Friends were a newly formed group that formed when they heard the school wanted to terminate its lease with Skinner Field. He had originally approached the Chamber of Commerce about taking on Skinner Field as a subcommittee of the chamber; but that did not work out. The group has a seven member board comprised of individuals interested in Skinner Field and restoring it.

**Clark** said he thought this was a good idea; but he had concerns about the financial aspects of a public property under the control of a non-public entity. The public needed to be served, he said. He had questions about the bylaws of the group and said the Council would be approving the bylaws if it approved the lease agreement.

**Fankhauser** said the motion before the Council was the lease agreement and did not state the group's bylaws.

**Clark** disagreed.

**Hall** questioned the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages being allowed.

**Kiphart** stated the sale of alcohol would only be allowed with City approval; but it was not the intention of the group to offer alcoholic beverages for sale.

**Fankhauser** suggested that **Kiphart** take the concerns of the Council to his board for possible review and action.

<b>VOTE:</b>	<b>Truesdale</b>	<b>No</b>
	<b>Troost</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>Benham</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>Hall</b>	<b>No</b>
	<b>Clark</b>	<b>No</b>
	<b>Bremmer</b>	<b>Yes</b>
	<b>Fankhauser</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**4 – 3, Motion Carried.**

- F. Motion by Clark, supported by Hall, to approve the purchase of a new plow mount from Truck & Trailer in an amount not-to-exceed \$967.00.**

**VOTE: 7 – 0, Motion Carried.**

- G. Motion by Clark, supported by Troost, to approve Resolution No. 2014 – 30, a resolution to vacate a public alley associated with 95 N. Main Street.**

**VOTE: 7 – 0, Motion Carried.**

**10. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT.**

- A. General Information and Special Projects discussed included the following:**
- Because of the USDA project next spring which called for the intersection to be opened adjacent to property in which family members had approached the Council the previous month for relief in water and sewer hookup fees, there would be a substantial reduction in costs for the family to provide water and sewer to the site.
  - 128 rental registrations had been received from Cedar Springs Mobile Estates.
  - The City received a 2013 Water Fluoridation Quality Award from the Department of Community Health.
  - Deb Frederick will be on an extended medical leave.
  - A draft contract from the Kent County Sheriff's Department is expected shortly.
  - The administrative assistant and city manager have been looking into available CDBG grant funds.
  - Bids for next year's USDA project will go out in December and will be awarded in April.
  - No word yet on the Bureau of Elections complaint.
  - The City would be responsible for removal of the fuel tank at 95 N. Main St. The City Manager will be seeking bids and awarding the contract.
- B. Monthly Department Reports were offered by the following:**
1. Department of Public Works.
    - a. Infrastructure Alternative's operational & maintenance report.
  2. Police Department.
  3. Fire Department.
  4. City Clerk.
  5. Finance Officer/Treasurer.
    - a. Cash Summary Report.
    - b. Revenue/Expenditure Report.
  6. Professional Code Inspections.
    - a. Rental Registration Report.
  7. Minutes from the following boards and commissions were reviewed:
    - a. the August 18, 2014 CS Planning Commission meeting.
    - b. The August 14, 2014 CS Zoning Board of Appeals meeting.

11. COUNCIL COMMENTS.

**Troost** – wanted to let the community know that there was going to be a fund raiser for the North Kent Service Center November 16 through December 6. Thanked the Friends of Skinner Field for taking over an entity the City could not afford to do. Thanked Dave Ringler for what he was planning to do with 95 N. Main St.

**Truesdale** - appreciated Judy Reed's comments; the City needed to get back to the basics; he would not be satisfied passing over items that needed to be said.

**Clark** - thanked the DPW for making his drive to work better and sharper looking now that it had mowed city-owned property on Pine Street; thanked Dave Ringer for the entertainment with people in asbestos suits removing shingles at 95 N. Main St.

**Fankhauser** – today was the 13th anniversary of horrible events in New York City and Pennsylvania. What had happened was near and dear to his heart; any act of terrorism was an act against family and the United States of America; congratulated the DPW on its award for fluoride. A lot of discussion had taken place that evening; thanked everyone who kept his family in their thoughts and prayers.

12. The meeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m.

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Linda Christensen, City Clerk

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Mark Fankhauser, Mayor