

Mayor Charles "Skip" Lee called a meeting of the Sterling City Council to order at 6:30 pm on Monday, January 19, 2015. Roll call. Present: Aldermen Barry Cox, Retha Elston, Joe Martin, Chris Schuchard, and John Stauter. Absent: Lou Sotelo.

Also present were City Attorney Ron Coplan, City Manager Scott Shumard, City Management Intern Kevin Smith, Superintendent of Building and Zoning Amanda Schmidt, Fire Chief Gary Cook, Police Chief Ron Potthoff, and City Clerk Marie Rombouts.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mayor Lee asked for public comment. Before Rod Kleckler began to speak, Mayor Lee stated that the City is aware of his opposition to the Rental Program. Mayor Lee stated that when the program is presented for action, everyone will be given a chance to speak in more depth on the subject. Several people were upset because they were not allowed to speak. Mayor Lee asked Superintendent Schmidt when the program would be presented for action. Schmidt stated the matter is at a standstill right now.

Alderman Cox made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

- A) City Council Minutes of January 5, 2015
- B) Bills and Payroll totaling \$516,657.99

The motion was seconded by Alderman Martin. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Cox, Elston, Martin, Schuchard, and Stauter. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Mayor Lee asked for comment from Manager Shumard on the Local Option Sales Tax Referendum. Manager Shumard explained this is similar to the 2004 request for streets. Non-Home Rule Municipalities can seek an additional ½% for infrastructure. In this instance, the City is seeking ½% for stormwater management. The question will be placed on the ballot on April 7, 2015 for voters to decide.

Alderman Cox verified the current sales tax rate is 6.75%, and the schools will add 1%. Our .50% will make the sales tax at 8.25%. Cox believes we will drive citizens to shop elsewhere. Citizens feel like they have holes in their pockets.

Mayor Lee agrees with Cox but reminded him that the Council did not like two other alternatives: to do nothing, or the stormwater utility tax.

Alderman Elston believes this is the best route to let the citizens choose.

Alderman Stauter stated that something has to be done. Stauter prefers the sales tax to property taxes.

Alderman Martin stated that property taxes have never been proposed to address the stormwater issues. Martin reminded the Council that the longer this is kicked down the road, the more expenses that will be incurred. With a cost of approximately \$14.5 million, the cost increases approximately \$400,000 annually.

Manager Shumard stated that Strand Engineering prepared the stormwater study in 2004.

Alderman Schuchard stated that he prefers the sales tax versus property tax and believes the voters should have input on this issue.

Alderman Martin stated the City has a good record. When we enacted the ½% sales tax in 2004, 15 to 20 block of streets have been reconstructed.

Alderman Martin made a motion to approve **Ordinance No. 2015-1-1 to place the referendum question for an additional ½% sales tax on the ballot for April 7, 2015**; seconded by Alderman Stauter. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Martin, Schuchard, and Stauter. Nays – Alderman Cox. Motion carried.

Manager Shumard reminded Council members of the Chamber Dinner on Thursday evening. There is an upcoming meeting with Rock Island Growth regarding the Lawrence Building and another on Health Insurance. The architects will be studying the Coliseum in the next couple days. There is an upcoming meeting on the Riverfront including a pre-bid meeting for the slab demolition.

Alderman Stauter asked the status on Thomas Park. Manager Shumard stated the attorneys are working on it.

Alderman Elston asked when study sessions will start. Manager Shumard stated departments are working on budgets, so study sessions will probably start in February.

Alderman Martin thanked Clerk Rombouts and IT Dennis Fellows for getting him set up and running with his Chrome Book for the paperless agenda.

Mayor Lee thanked Alderman Martin for stepping up at the last meeting while he was under the weather.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 6:48 pm.

Marie Rombouts, City Clerk