

**COMMUNITY SERVICES MINUTES**

**April 9th, 2024**

**In Attendance:**

***Committee Members:***

Council Chair – Ann Spencer Cole

***Council Members present:***

Council Member Ann Spencer Cole

Council Member Shane Knight

Council Member Bill Donner

Council Member Judd Hart

Council Member Steve Brown

Council Member Frank Baptist

Tom Farmer - Mayor

John Parton – Community Development Director

Bruce Thomas – Code Enforcement Supervisor

Council Chair Ann Spencer Cole declares a quorum and calls the meeting to order. Introductions are made around the room. Council Chair Cole made a motion to entertain approval of the March 12th minutes***, Alderman Judd Hart made a motion, Alderman Bill Donner seconded the motion. Motion carried.***

***Community Services Agenda:***

# NEW BUSINESS –

**CONDEMNATIONS & LIENS**

**1516 Longview Street –** Mr. Thomas stated this property is in really bad shape. He’s had people in and out of it. He stated the owner has contacted him and is in agreement and will try to get someone to tear it down. Mr. Thomas did indicate that the owner was aware of our process

**402 West Woodlawn –** This house has been vacant for some time now. The Simpson family representing this property was in attendance. Rachael Simpson came to the podium to speak. She stated that she is the second to acquire the property. She stated they have done some cleanup but had not gotten a key to look at the inside of the property until just recently. Their intentions are to tear it down she’s just requesting a little bit of time before condemnation. She’s requesting 45-60 days since she just bought the house April 2nd. Council member Judd Hart asked if they should continue proceeding with this one or allow the new buyer some time. Mr.

Thomas said if it went through the council, the earliest they would even begin anything would be early to mid-July.

**709 Yuma Street –** This property is just off Edison. It’s been empty since 2013. Mr. Thomas has not heard back from the owner on this property.

**806 N. Main -** This property is just north of the Audiology clinic on Main. It’s been empty since 2010. Code Enforcement has been in touch with the relatives and it is their intention to tear it down however, Mr. Thomas thinks it should just go ahead and go through our process.

**111 N. Olive –** This property is just of South Street behind the old Fletcher Music building. It’s in really bad shape. The owner intends to tear it down but again, Mr. Thomas says it should go through our process.

**2018 Congo** – Old Gayla’s Costume Shop. Used by BFD for training, vacant for about 15 years.

**2102 Congo** – Small residence, same owner as 2018 Congo. Vacant for about 15 years.

***Alderman Shane Knight requested to make a motion that they table the condemnation request for 402 West Woodlawn until the June committee meeting. This gives the new owners approximately 45 days without council intervention to get the property moving in the right direction. Aldermen Judd Hart seconded the motion, motion carries.***

***Council Chair Ann Spencer Cole entertained a motion to move the remaining condemnations through to the next step. Alderman Shane Knight made the motion with Alderman Judd Hart seconding the motion. Motion carries.***

# PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE EXISTING NOISE ORDINANCE

Mr. Parton stated that this would be a standing exemption to any city sponsored event*.*

***Alderman Shane Knight made the motion. Alderman Frank Baptist seconded the motion. Motion carries.***

# UPDATED DRAFT ORDINANCE ON ANNEXATION OF THE THOMAS PROPERTY TRACTS 3-10 AND POTENTIAL ENCLAVE ISLANDS

Mr. Parton indicated that tracts 1 and 2 have already been annexed. While gathering the information to annex tracts 3-10 it was noted that it would create an enclave which is not allowed or permissible by statute. Some options were looked at to bring them in. The northern most parcel belongs to a trust which the city is working on getting a petition to annex that parcel. They are having a tough time trying to figure out who owns the other parcel. Under certain conditions, the city would be able to annex property by ordinance only. ***Alderman Shane Knight made a motion, Alderman Judd Hart seconded the motion. Motion carries.***

# FIBER CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

There are 4 fiber companies doing work in the city, AT&T, Hyperfiber, Comcast/XFinity, and

Fidelity. Mr. Parton has reached out to them for updates. They will continue working through 2024 and well into 2025. Comcast/XFinity plans to be here through the summer. Council member Judd Hart asked about the “boxes” that these companies are putting in residents’ yards. He also asked if these companies are equally installing the fiber in every ward, specifically the low-income areas that need it as well. Mr. Parton addressed the second half of the question first by saying they are installing the same coverage. As far as the box design, there are many fiber designs which are required whether it be the flat or above ground.

# TRAVEL CENTER UPDATE

It has gone through the planning commission where the site and final plat were approved. There were some easement concerns but those are being worked on to make sure they are properly placed. Within the site plan, 5 variances were requested. Four of the five variances were approved, 3 had to do with landscaping. The variance for the sign was tabled due to the height of the sign. They weren’t certain of the height they were seeking or the absolute location of sign placement. They have until August to continue with their due diligence in working with the Corp of Engineers in respect to the wetlands as well as working with ARDOT.

**QUARTERLY LITIGATION REPORT**

Information is in the packets and any questions should be referred to Attorney Baxter Drennon.

# OLD BUSINESS – NONE

Gary Elrod who is the POA of Heritage Farm subdivision approached the podium with a concern regarding storage buildings. He feels like the placement of these storage buildings in this area would be detrimental to their community. Mr. Parton addressed his concern by saying the site plan was approved for that project. This was the first new storage building plan under our new ordinance which states within any storage site proposal in our jurisdiction, it has to receive conditional use approval. Mr. Parton stated we will be in touch with the developer and engineer and go through planning commission and city council for conditional use.

MEETING ADJOURNED