

## Board of Public Works and Safety

Monday, July 23, 2012

Berne City Hall 6:30 pm

### Minutes

Present Board; members Curtis Wurster, Ron Dull and Mayor McKean, along with Secretary of Record Becky Sprunger and City Attorney Jim Beitler. Others present; Berne citizen Bobbi Betts, Council President Gregg Sprunger, Clerk Treasurer Gwen Maller and city employees Kurt Dailey, Gary Nussbaum and Shannon Smitley; representatives from Swiss Village; Tammy Seffernick and Michelle McIntosh. Also present, Adams County Township Trustees; Monroe, Gerald Walker; Jefferson, Dennis Caffee; Hartford, Kerry Steiner; French, Steve Affolder and wife Judy; Wabash, Jeanenne Neuenschwander and husband Mark.

Mayor McKean called the meeting to order and verified a quorum.

**Approval of Minutes** On a motion by R. Dull and a second by C. Wurster, the minutes of June 25, 2012 were unanimously approved as written.

**Swiss Village 5K Run Route Request** Tammy Seffernick and Michelle McIntosh approached the board with a request that a portion of County Road 150 W and Emmental Drive be closed to traffic on April 13, 2013 for a 5 K race which will be part of the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the existence of Swiss Village Retirement Center. The race is also planned to be part of the annual Adams County Challenge. Michelle reported that they have worked with Berne Police Chief Police Tim Taylor and Adams County Sheriff Shane Rekeweg and have received approval from the County Commissioners to use county roads included in the route. The run will begin and end at the Arthur and Gloria Wellness Center and the request is to have the route closed between the hours of 8:45-10:30 am. On a motion by R. Dull and a second by C. Wurster, the board unanimously recommended that the Common Council approve the request to use city streets that are on the route for a 5 K race to be held on April 13, 2013.

**Emergency 4 Way Stop Signage Information** Mayor McKean shared a presentation prepared by Bobbi Betts in which she expressed her concern and potential actions the city could take when there is a power outage and traffic signals are out. This was the case in the recent widespread power outage due to a storm. The Mayor thanked Ms. Betts for a tremendous and in depth presentation. The board's discussion included whether we had the authority to place emergency signage on county and federal highways. The board agreed that the ideas in the presentation were good ones and the board supports investigating further. Mayor McKean thanked Bobbi for her concern and her presentation.

**2013 Township Fire Contracts** Jeanene Neuenschwander approached the board with a prepared statement from the township trustees:

"July 23, 2012

To the City of Berne Council Members:

Greetings from the southern six townships of Adams County, French, Monroe, Bluecreek,

Hartford, Wabash and Jefferson. Having met earlier this month to discuss the annual fire protection contracts between the City of Berne and each respective township, the Trustees of these townships are requesting consideration to enter negotiable fire contracts. The fire protection contracts have annually increased 5% until the last 3 years or so, when the increase was reduced to 3.5%. This growth quotient has been decreased annually as you know from 5% to 3.5% to 2.9% and now 2.8% in 2012. The contract increase has annually been above the growth quotient amount, and the trustees have generally been receiving less than estimated in their annual budgets. Currently each township is running extremely close in their fire fighting funds. As mentioned earlier, we have met and collectively determined that for 2013, there would be no increase in the contracts signed with the City of Berne and Berne Fire Department. If the Berne Fire Department will accept contracts for the same amounts that were paid to the department by these townships in 2012, these six townships would welcome contracting with the Berne Fire Department in 2013. The difference between the city proposed contract and the amount that the trustees have determined to pay would be approximately \$1751. If this proposal is not satisfactory to the City Council, the townships are prepared to explore other options for fire protection in 2013. This is of course a last resort. Our intent is to fulfil our law-bound duty to provide fire protection for our respective townships while being fiscally responsible and budgetarily conservative all the while preserving a good working relationship with the City of Berne and the Berne Fire Department. Our hope is to continue the working relationship that we have all enjoyed in the past. Thank you for your consideration”.

Mayor McKean stated that he is not sure from the statement if the Trustees wish to negotiate or are asking to hold the contracts to the 2012 cost. Several trustees spoke about the townships having a consistent drop in their growth quotient and that that the revenues are just not there for the new fire contract increase.

Mayor McKean noted that of the 56 fire runs last year, they were evenly divided between rural and city runs and even with the 3.5 % council approved township contracts, the townships are paying less than 50% of the cost.

Berne Fire Chief John Crider spoke of the measures his department is taking to help keep costs down including not counting a run in the townships if it is less than 30 minutes and is a false alarm or a small grass fire etc. John stated that his department also raises money for extra equipment thru their pancake breakfasts and Swiss Days fundraisers because of budget constraints.

The trustees have not approached Monroe or Geneva with their request for contracts to reflect the same dollar amount as last year. Mayor McKean stated that he would be willing to approach the council to consider a reduction in the contract from the council approved 3.5% to 2.8%.

The board expressed their empathy with the trustees as budget cuts have affected all government entities. The board suggested that the trustees approach both Geneva and Monroe about their proposal and meet with the city again if necessary. Mayor McKean added that this needs to be resolved soon because of the need to submit budgets, but cautioned that he will not ask the citizens of Berne to subsidize the cost for township fire protection.

No formal action was taken on the trustees request, but it was agreed that after they have approached the Town Councils of Monroe and Geneva, they bring this issue back to the Board of Works. A special meeting can be called if necessary.

**Mayor's Comments** Mayor McKean reported that he has received a request to have two handicap parking spaces on Jefferson Street at the corner of Jefferson and Water. A couple has recently purchased the former Pizza King building for their residence and need the designated parking. Curtis asked if they were aware that parking spots cannot be reserved. Discussion was held about potential conflicts for nearby merchants. City Attorney Jim Beitler recommended that the request be studied and what the impact could be on adjoining businesses and the implications as far as ADA Transition Compliance issues

On a motion by R. Dull and a second by C. Wurster the board unanimously approved having the city attorney and the ADA Transition Compliance plan committee research this and bring back their recommendations.

**Board Comments** None

On a motion by C. Wurster and a second by R. Dull the meeting was adjourned.