# **HOOPESTON CITY COUNCIL**

# **SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

MEETING DATE: Thursday, November 2, 2023 6:00 PM

1. **Call meeting to Order:** Mayor Wise called meeting to order at 6:01 pm
2. **Roll Call:** Mayor Wise, Alderpersons Porth, Eyrich, K. Ferrell, and Lawson along with City Attorney Miller were present.
3. **Amendment or Approval of Agenda:** Porth Made motion to approve agenda and Lawson seconded. Agenda was approved by ayes.
4. **Discussion with downtown building owners of properties adjacent to properties on demolition list and Question/Answer - Public Comment:**

Alex Houmes asked council to explain what their plans were for downtown demolition. Alderperson Ferrell gave summary of the lowest bid. Ken Lee Demolition and Silver Brothers bid together and Snider Excavating and Bob Brown Trucking bid together. Ken Lee Demolition and Silver Brothers had lowest bid at $424,900 for demolition of 215-229 E Main, 209-213 S Market, 308 E Main, and 210 E Penn and alternate bids for siding on adjacent buildings at G-1 (211 E Main) $35,500, G-2 (310 E Main) $36,000, G-3 (222 E Main), G-4 (218 E Main) $15,000, and Demolition on G-5 (220 E Main) $48,500. City would agree to pay half the cost of the siding to the adjacent buildings while building owners would be responsible for half.

Dick Doyle - owner of 211 E Main St. - spoke about not being consulted on how to finish walls of adjacent buildings. Talked about small towns in his travels that have walls that attract people to the community. Mayor said they went with the recommendation of the architect for metal siding and followed the precedence set by previous council to pay half the cost of the walls after demolition. Doyle mentioned most owners would not be able to afford half the cost of the wall repairs and his building was not worth the amount of the cost of the repair bid for his building. The city stated they would not pay any of the cost to side the adjacent buildings if the owners did not agree to pay half but would still seal the walls and owner can decide what to do and fund it on their own.

Alex Houmes - Lorraine Foundation President-(Lorraine Foundation owns 222 E Main) asked if bids have been voted on yet and where money was coming from for the demolition. The council has not voted to accept bids. That will be done at the council meeting on Tuesday, November 7, 2023. Alderman Porth stated the funds will come from TIF and the money was available for the project.

Gail Lane - owner of 310 E Main St. - spoke about the renovations and upkeep she has been doing to her building and that she has 3 businesses currently operating out of her building. She talked about not being able to afford half the cost to repair/side the wall to her building after demolition of 308 E Main and this was not an expected event of her own doing and believes the city should take care of those who take care of their buildings.

Jim Richards – Vice President Lorraine Foundation – Talked about what the council decides to do with this project effects all of downtown. Hoopeston is in a growth period downtown with several new businesses opening. What happens if damage to walls once demolished? There could be lots of damage. Not fair business practices to put this cost onto businesses that are trying to grow the community. This is hurting the businesses. Lorraine is nonprofit and has picked up many businesses that have been on tax sales to help improve the downtown. Example: Wildon building was purchased and remodeled by Lorraine and is now owned by Sculpt Fitness and viable business. City’s responsibility to pay to fix the walls. Council needs vision and plan for downtown moving forward bringing more businesses, people, and tax dollars to community.

David Haggler – 222 E Main St. – purchased building in August of 2023. Thanked council to be invited to meeting and community for being received as a new business so well. What is the council pursuing, aesthetics or preserving buildings that remain? Deeply concerned about cost.

Alderperson Eyrich state the city is also nonprofit and asked where the money would come from if the city took on the entire cost.

Alderman Porth stated the city is not responsible to pay or do anything for the adjacent buildings according to law. Everyone complained about the damaged downtown buildings and the city is trying to do something about them.

Architect Gary Burgett mentioned they would make another assessment and review (further inspection and evaluation) the walls of the adjacent buildings after demolition. The siding was the starting point for cost and building owners will be contacted after demolition and assessment. There will be a written agreement at the time of decision.

Alderperson Ferrell asked anyone interested in the lots to send a business proposal to the council.

1. Comments by Mayor:
2. Comments by Attorney:
3. Adjourn: K. Ferrell made motion to adjourn, seconded by Lawson at 6:51 pm

Dawn Layden,

Acting Clerk