

CITY OF HANNIBAL
OFFICIAL PUBLIC HEARING

Tuesday, August 18, 2020
6:45 p.m.
Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

It being the appointed time, Mayor Hark called the Public Hearing to order. He then turned the meeting over to Karen Burditt, Director of Finance.

KAREN BURDITT – DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
Re: 2020 Ad Valorem Property Tax Rates

Burditt advised the purpose of the Public Hearing is the 2020 Ad Valorem Property Tax rates. She advised the tax rate has increased slightly, however, the assessed values of properties have decreased. She stated the percent has increased, however, with property depreciation, bills will only appear slightly increased.

Burditt advised the Library Fund is capped at \$.30, as when it was voted in a number of years ago, it was capped and now cannot exceed that amount. She believes this is only the second time in 10 years that this has happened. All other rates are per the State's calculation. She advised being as the computational forms and tax rate information wasn't available until after the last Council meeting, she will be requesting an emergency reading to the Ordinance later this evening. The City Clerk must have the necessary documents certified and submitted to the respective counties (Marion and Ralls) to allow the State Auditor to certify, before the end of August.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Hark then requested anyone wishing to speak either for or against the 2020 Ad Valorem property tax rate to approach Council, there were none.

ADJOURNMENT

With no additional comments from Council, Mayor Hark then adjourned the Public Hearing.

City of Hannibal

OFFICIAL COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

**Tuesday, August 18, 2020
Council Chambers
7:00 p.m.**

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Hark, Council Members Bowen, Welch, McCoy, Mayor Pro Tem Dobson and Council Member Cogdal - 6

Absent: Council Member Veach – 1

CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, Mayor Hark called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION

The invocation was then given by Council Member Cogdal.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Hark then requested Mayor Pro Tem Dobson to lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

A motion was then made by Council Member McCoy to excuse Council Member Veach from the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Dobson.

Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Dobson to approve the agenda, as presented and posted. The motion was seconded by Council Member McCoy.

Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regularly Scheduled Council Meeting – August 4, 2020

A motion was made by Council Member Bowen to approve the minutes from the regularly scheduled Council meeting held August 4, 2020. The motion was seconded by Council Member Welch.

Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF PAYROLL AND CLAIMS
First Half – August 2020**

A motion was made by Council Member Welch to approve the payroll and claims for the first half of August, 2020. The motion was seconded by Council Member McCoy.

Motion carried.

**JAMES R. HARK – MAYOR
Re: Recommendation of Re-Appointments**

Mayor Hark then made the following recommendation for re-appointments for the Hannibal Convention & Visitor's Bureau:

HANNIBAL CONVENTION & VISITOR'S BUREAU

- **Beth Knight – continuation of reappointment for a term to expire September 2022**
- **Scott Ehrhardt – reappointment for a term to expire September 2025**

He stated these nominations will be considered for approval at the next regular Council meeting, to be held September 1, 2020.

**KAREN BURDITT – DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
Re: 2020 Ad Valorem Property Tax Rates
(Bill No. 20-022 – EMERGENCY READING)**

Karen Burditt, Director of Finance, then approached Council advising she is bringing forth the property tax levy for this year, 2020. There is an increase, however, the increase basically takes care of the inflation and depreciation of properties. The assessed values have decreased and the only increase in revenue the City will receive is with new constructions or home improvements. The maximum rates are set by the State.

The Library Fund amount would have been higher, however, the election in April, 1989 when this was passed, the amount was set/capped at \$.30. Burditt believes this is only the second time in 10 years the City has reached the cap amount.

She advised she did not receive the computational forms and tax rate information until the day following the last Council meeting, therefore she is asking for an emergency reading for the Ordinance. The City Clerk has to forward the information before the end of August to allow the State Auditor to certify.

EDIE GRAUPMAN – DPW MGMT ASSISTANT
Re: Presentation, Code Enforcement Software

City Manager Peck advised that Graupman would be providing a demonstration of the Code Enforcement software and that she has been meeting with the software company weekly, to implement it.

Graupman then began her presentation, advising that all permits are now accessible online. There will be three different sections; Property Maintenance, Building Inspector and Department of Public Works/Street Department. She then demonstrated how each section will work. Individuals will be able to submit weed complaints directly online, with a valid email address.

Council Member McCoy questioned if once a contractors information is input into the system, what happens. Graupman advised the department will first verify if they have a current contractor's license. She advised this program will save all documents/permits/pictures to each address, which can viewed by the department anytime.

Mayor Pro Tem Dobson questioned how the fees are collected, in which Peck advised they will be collected online, however that part of the program is still being implemented.

Graupman advised that with each permit, only questions that pertain to the type of permit will be asked. For instance, a new construction permit will have different questions than a dumpster permit. Mayor Pro Tem then asked if the "end goal" was to eliminate individuals from coming to City Hall, in which Peck advised the goal is to become as efficient and easy as possible. Individuals are still welcome to come to City Hall if they prefer. Mayor Pro Tem Dobson then asked if an individual does come to City Hall, will their information then be input by Graupman, in which Graupman advised that Council Member Bowen has suggested that a "system" be placed on her desk for them to "apply" online themselves, but in person.

All applications, once submitted, go to Graupman, who then reviews to make sure everything that is needed is included and then she sends to the designated departments. Council Member Bowen asked if a proper phone number is not input will the application still "go thru", in which Graupman stated it will not, it has to have a phone number.

Graupman advised that the program automatically figures the amount owed for the individual based on what permit they are requesting, which she reviews also. Mayor Pro Tem Dobson questioned what happens if a contractor does not have a current license, in which Graupman advised the permit is rejected until one is obtained.

Once the application has been reviewed, Graupman can then assign the task to the designated department with a due date. Once a due date is assigned, it automatically sends a daily email to the designated employee stating this job needs completed by the due date until it is signed off/marked completed. An email is also generated to the individual, showing what steps have been completed with their application so they are kept updated on the process.

Graupman advised on the Code Enforcement side, an address is input, along with pictures and a letter is automatically generated. It also sets a reminder email that in so many days, will be sent to the Code Enforcer, advising the property needs to be checked to see if the problem is resolved. If it hasn't, then the program will advise what the next step is, another letter, an inspection or

whatever it may be. On the rental inspection side, it will automatically send a reminder in three years that the property is due for an inspection.

Graupman also advised the program will generate various reports. For instance, if someone requests how much revenue the City has collected for dumpster permits, she can produce a report for them.

Mayor Pro Tem Dobson questioned if Council members receive a weed/trash complaint from a resident, does she want them to use the program as well, in which Graupman concurred. The program will automatically “link” the complaint to the specific address. He asked if that method is preferred, in which Peck advised yes, this allows the department to get everything linked and online/electronic.

Council Member McCoy questioned when the program was being built out, would it allow to eventually include other City departments, for instance the Fire Department who also has to complete occupancy permits, special event applications and will the CSO’s be able to use this software. He feels it would be beneficial for tracking purposes. In addition, City Attorney Lemon had stated previously that a lot of the times, the complainant doesn’t want to leave their phone number or e-mail, this way they would have to. Peck stated she will speak to Fire Chief Benjamin but believes it would be beneficial for at least the fire inspections to be on this program as well. Graupman advised this program does have a Fire/Water inspection portion, which has to “marked” complete for various permits, she believes they may be able to include the Fire Department for that portion.

Andy Dorian, Director of Central Services, from the audience, stated the Parks & Recreation Department is also looking at a program similar to this one. The program would allow for park/shelter house rentals online. He is hoping to have his new program implemented by next Spring/Summer.

Police Chief Davis, from the audience, stated he would like the CSO’s to continue using Lawman, the program they are currently using as, it also tracks follow-ups and citations that are issued. He would like that information to stay at his and his Lieutenant’s disposal. He believes it will be better to continue with separate systems at this time. Peck stated that the system could be built/linked so all information could be accessible for a particular address. However, Davis believes the new system will be very beneficial for the departments that will use it.

Council Member McCoy questioned if the program is “live”, in which Graupman advised it has been “live” for three weeks now.

Council Member Cogdal then discussed the inspection component of the program. She questioned the process of rental inspections; asking if the inspectors will take their IPAD on locations, so they will have the inspection check list readily available where they can check off each item during the inspection. If a property does not pass inspection, which means it cannot be rented, it will be better monitored for follow-ups. Peck advised the City is partnering with the Board of Public Works so that utilities can’t be turned on until the rental property passes inspection.

Re: Request, Set Public Hearing – Voluntary Annexation – Ben Hickman
9506 County Road 410 - A-One & Two Family,
Tuesday, September 1, 2020 – 6:45 p.m.

Graupman's next item is to request re-approval to set a Public Hearing on Tuesday, September 1, 2020 at 6:45 p.m. The Public Hearing pertains to a voluntary annexation request for property located at 9506 County Road 410 owned by Ben Hickman. This request will be heard at the Planning & Zoning meeting to be held August 20, 2020.

A motion was made by Council Member McCoy to approve the request to set a Public Hearing on Tuesday, September 1, 2020 at 6:45 p.m. for the voluntary annexation request of property located at 9506 County Road 410 owned by Ben Hickman. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Dobson.

Motion carried.

**Re: Acceptance & Acquisition of Donated Property – Settlement Agreement and Release
& General Warranty Deed**

*612 Mark Twain Avenue - Manish V. Patel
(Resolution No. 2290-20, to follow)*

Graupman's final order of business is a request for a property acquisition by the City located at 612 Mark Twain Avenue, which is a hotel. She began by advising that there was a mistake in her memo, it should have stated the property owners, Manish and Meghna Patel, do NOT have the funds to renovate/demolish the building, she apologized for the error. The Patels' have asked the City to take ownership of the property. This request has gone to the Building Commission and has been on the "watch list" for a while due to the dilapidated condition. Graupman advised the Street Department has also been to this location numerous times to board up the property. The owners have signed all necessary paperwork required by the City.

Mayor Hark stated Resolution No. 2290-20, is to follow, for approval.

Mayor Pro Tem Dobson and Council Member McCoy, both questioned what the estimate would be to tear down the building. Peck advised they do not have an estimate at this time. However, if necessary, it could be done in-house not hired outside. He then asked if there was an estimate on the value of the property, once the structure is removed. Peck advised with the structure on the property, it actually devalues the property therefore, it would be hard to get an accurate value until the structure is removed. Mayor Pro Tem Dobson was just trying to ascertain if the City would come close to "breaking even" on the value of the property versus the cost of the demolition, Peck stated she believed the City could potentially do so.

Council Member McCoy then questioned what the plan for the property is, once the building is removed. Peck advised that she felt the City would entertain a proposal from any suitable developer and will work closely with Corey Mehaffy, Hannibal Regional Economic Development Director, for the sale of the property.

Council Member Bowen stated he is aware that the City has over 500 houses currently on the demolition list, and questioned why this hotel will take priority over those. Peck advised there are not over 500 houses on the list, however, there are over 400 vacant homes that the Police Chief will address later tonight. It would be up to the Building Commission to determine if this property is a priority above the other properties currently on the demolition list. Council Member Bowen feels the cost of demolishing this building will "eat up" the budget, causing other properties to not be demolished. Peck advised she doesn't believe anyone is asking for this property to be moved to the "top of the list".

Council Member Cogdal indicated the information she was given, states the building owners were not able to remove the property as quickly as necessitated, which makes her feel this property will be moved up on the list to a priority.

Council Member Welch stated this property is an “eyesore” for the downtown area, people drive by this property, not to mention the crime that is committed there. Council Member Cogdal advised this property is in the middle of other properties that are not currently owned by the City and is a small piece of property that goes up a hill. Council Member Bowen indicated he doesn’t see why the City should be in the realty business, especially commercial properties that should be on the “citizen’s dime” not the tax payers. Council Member Welch advised that he feels this is more of a community standard. Mayor Hark advised that he agrees, the City should not be in the realty business, but we are, due to the City being taxed with the burden of the citizens who fail to maintain their properties. As it was mentioned earlier of the houses that are currently on the demolition list, the City is “stuck” with those because there are individuals who don’t properly maintain their properties and then walk away. This property is no different, the owners don’t have the funds to renovate or bring it up to code, so the City gains ownership. By the City taking ownership of the property now, it is in the hope to get the property back into a productive state and begin collecting taxes on. This was also the hope of the property known as the Old St. Elizabeth’s Hospital, however problems have arose in the last 18 months that aren’t allowing that project to move forward.

Council Member McCoy then questioned, as the property sits today, who is liable for anything that happens on the site if the City does not take ownership and if the City does, but does not “move the demolition up the list” isn’t that just a liability for the City? If the City has no intention of moving it up the list, then why take ownership today? Peck advised if the City does take possession of the property today, the Street Department will be sent to properly board up the property, protecting as much as possible.

City Attorney Lemon stated as far as who is liable, contrary to belief, someone has to be purposely negligent to be liable. However, if negligence is found, it would fall ultimately on whomever owns the property at that time. He believes the owners probably don’t have adequate insurance, if any.

Lemon advised that Council should consider if they take ownership of the property, and the current owners are allowed to walk away, they would lose the ability to get much done in court. In the case of the old hospital, there was an owner still liable and since nothing got accomplished in City court, it was taken to State Court. Ultimately the judge ordered the property owner to make repairs and bring the property up to code or fine them daily. However, in the end the City gained ownership anyway. He has seen this too many times before, the City will demolish the building, put a lien on the property, if the County taxes aren’t paid, the County “cleans it out” and the people pay the County taxes and the City loses it lien completely. The good thing about taking ownership of the property now, it would give the City the possibility to recoup a portion of the costs and when the property is transferred to someone else it, it would give the City the chance to put covenants and restrictions for the new owners. Ultimately, citizen’s look to the City to “correct” the situation so why not get in front of it before the problem is too big to correct.

LYNDELL DAVIS – CHIEF OF POLICE
Re: Presentation, Unoccupied Property List

Chief Lyndell Davis then approached Council, advising that several months ago he started vocalizing his concerns over the number of vacant properties that correlate to criminality that the department deals with. He wanted to understand how big of a problem this was so he started to collect data. He questioned the Building Inspector, Joey Burnham, and asked what makes a property inhabitable, in which Burnham advised to look at the water source. If the property doesn't have water, then it's considered inhabitable. So they reached out to the Board of Public Works and they were able to create a listing of all properties in the City that have not had water for at least two years. This produced a list of 1,134 homes/properties. Chief Davis then physically sent his Community Service Officer's out to check each one of these properties, to see if there was a structure and there were 467 properties found with structures.

After several weeks and with the help of the departments IT Manager, a map was created to show where these properties were located. He then showed a power point that also illustrated where anti-crime unit search warrants were served from May, 2018 to May 2020. This unit focuses mainly on drug manufacturing and distributing. There were a total of 50 search warrants issued in the two year timeframe.

He then used a tree, for illustration purposes, to show which crimes are mainly focused on, such as domestic violence, theft, animal abuse, etc. He stated if you really want to get to the roots of the problem, you have to get to where the root of the problems lies, otherwise you are just "trimming the branches". He feels the unoccupied structures erode the quality of life in the neighborhoods, which become "incubators" for crime. To correct this, he doesn't need 10 more officers, he needs those issues addressed and it will begin to magically reduce crime in those areas.

Mayor Pro Tem Dobson then questioned if the area he identified mirrors the same area he identified several years back, in which Chief Davis concurred, although it is just expanding in size.

Council Member Bowen asked how many of those 467 properties needed to be torn down, in which Chief Davis stated he was unsure. However, the CSO's advised there were several, his guess would be at least half. Chief Davis reminded everyone that when the list started, there were over 1100, so most of the structures have been removed. He stated this situation is not unique to Hannibal, it's a problem everywhere. Peck advised that for the first time all departments are coming together to try to resolve this issue, sharing information. Chief Davis stated this is not a problem that can be resolved overnight, it wasn't created overnight, so it will take, he guesses, two to three years to get a grasp on.

Council Member Welch then questioned Davis on his thoughts of what to do with these unoccupied structures the City is acquiring, Davis feels they need to keep focusing on the task at hand and he likes the idea of all the departments working together to resolve. He stated the roots are the feeders of the problems and until those are addressed, the crime rate will continue to rise.

City Manager Peck advised that there is some initial interest in infill development of someone who is willing to take a chance on some of the properties the City has acquired. They have suggested combining some of the smaller lots into a larger lot and even build a spec house.

Dorian had advised Peck that the City has sold more properties in the last two months than in the previous two and a half years.

Chief Davis advised Council to take this information as positive thing, the City is now focused on correcting the “problem areas” in the City. There are numerous cities that have the same problems but are not focused on correcting them, however, Hannibal is really starting to deal with the problems.

Dorian, from an audience, stated the Street Department’s goal is to demolish 30 houses per year. He believes they have demolished 15 or 16, so far this year. He is also noticing that private individuals are demolishing structures around the City, and believes the City is inspiring this. Dorian indicated there are 43 properties on the Country Trustee sale for a third offering, which will be in August. He also believes it will get worse before it gets better, but he agrees with Chief Davis that it is great to see all the departments working together.

RESOLUTION NO. 2290-20

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF HANNIBAL AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE A GENERAL WARRANTY DEED AND SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT AND RELEASE FOR THE ACCEPTANCE OF DONATED PROPERTY FROM MANISH PATEL, KNOWN AS 612 MARK TWAIN AVENUE, HANNIBAL MISSOURI

A motion was made by Council Member Welch to have the City Clerk read Resolution No. 2290-20 and call the roll for adoption. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Dobson.

ROLL CALL

Yes: Mayor Hark, Council Members Welch, McCoy and Mayor Pro Tem Dobson - 4

No: Council Members Bowen and Cogdal - 2

Absent: Council Member Veach - 1

Motion carried.

The City Clerk then read Resolution No. 2290-20.

ROLL CALL

Yes: Mayor Hark, Council Members Welch, McCoy, Mayor Pro Tem Dobson and Council Member Cogdal -5

No: Council Members Bowen - 1

Absent: Council Member Veach - 1

Motion carried.

Mayor Hark declared Resolution No. 2290-20 duly approved and adopted on this date.

BILL NO. 20-020

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF HANNIBAL ANNEXING
PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1200 CLARK STREET INTO THE CITY
OF HANNIBAL, MARION COUNTY, MISSOURI**

Second and Final Reading

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Dobson to have the City Clerk read Bill No. 20-020 and call the roll for adoption. The motion was seconded by Council Member McCoy.

ROLL CALL

Yes: Mayor Hark, Council Members Bowen, Welch, McCoy, Mayor Pro Tem Dobson and Council Member Cogdal - 6

No: - 0 -

Absent: Council Member Veach - 1

Motion carried.

Mayor Hark declared Bill No. 20-020 duly approved and adopted on this date.

BILL NO. 20-021

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF HANNIBAL ANNEXING
PROPERTY LOCATED EAST OF 1200 CLARK STREET, KNOWN
AS ROBINSON CEMETERY, INTO THE CITY OF HANNIBAL,
MARION COUNTY, MISSOURI**

Second and Final Reading

A motion was made by Council Member Bowen to have the City Clerk read Bill No. 20-021 and call the roll for adoption. The motion was seconded by Council Member Welch.

ROLL CALL

Yes: Mayor Hark, Council Members Bowen, Welch, McCoy, Mayor Pro Tem Dobson and Council Member Cogdal - 6

No: - 0 -

Absent: Council Member Veach - 1

Motion carried.

Mayor Hark declared Bill No. 20-021 duly approved and adopted on this date.

BILL NO. 20-022

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF HANNIBAL FIXING AND ADOPTING THE RATE OF TAXATION FOR THE YEAR OF 2020 AND LEVYING TAXES THEREFORE

Emergency Reading

A motion was made by Council Member Welch to have the City Clerk read Bill No. 20-022, emergency reading, and call the roll for adoption. The motion was seconded by Council Member Bowen.

ROLL CALL

Yes: Mayor Hark, Council Members Bowen, Welch, McCoy, Mayor Pro Tem Dobson and Council Member Cogdal - 6

No: - 0 -

Absent: Council Member Veach - 1

Motion carried.

Mayor Hark declared Bill No. 20-022 duly approved and adopted on this date.

CLOSED SESSION
In Accordance with RSMo. 610.021

- (1) – *Potential Litigation*
- (12) – *Contract Negotiations*

Mayor Hark then entertained a motion to enter into closed session in accordance with RSMo. 610-021, sub-paragraphs (1), potential litigation and (12), contract negotiations admitting himself, City Council Members, City Attorney James Lemon, City Manager Lisa Peck, City Clerk Angel Zerbonia and Hannibal Regional Economic Development Director Corey Mehaffy. A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Dobson to enter into closed session. The motion was seconded by Council Member Bowen.

ROLL CALL

Yes: Mayor Hark, Council Members Bowen, Welch, McCoy, Mayor Pro Tem Dobson and Council Member Cogdal - 6

No: - 0 -

Absent: Council Member Veach - 1

Motion carried.

OPEN SESSION

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Dobson to return to open session. The motion was seconded by Council Member Welch.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was then made by Mayor Pro Tem Dobson to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Council Member Welch.

Motion carried.

James R. Hark – Mayor

Angelica N. Zerbonia, MRCC, CMO - City Clerk