CITIZEN VOICE
Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts
February 27, 2013

Council Present: Aldermen Mwilambwe, Fazzini, Stearns, Purcell, Fruin, Mathy, McDade, Sage, and Schmidt, and Mayor Stockton.

Staff Present: David Hales, City Manager and Tracey Covert, City Clerk.

Mayor Stockton called the meeting to order at 6:020 p.m. He made a few opening comments and welcomed those in attendance. Citizen Voice meetings provide City residents with the opportunity to communicate face to face with the City's elected officials and staff. He reviewed the guide lines. Different locations have been selected. The topic for this evening was the proposed FY 2014 Budget. The purpose of the meeting was for the elected officials and staff to listen. Citizens would be requested to complete a topic card. He planned to sort the cards by topic. Elected officials and/or staff may make a few comments if applicable.

This was the first Citizen Voice meeting in 2013. He added that citizen comments should be relevant to City government.

He introduced the Council members, David Hales, City Manager and Tracey Covert, City Clerk. He also introduced City staff present, (department heads). He encouraged those present to avoid repetition. The meeting would be limited to ninety (90) minutes.

Mayor Stockton noted that State Representative Keith Somer was present at this evening's meeting.

David Hales, City Manager, addressed the Council. A FY 2014 Budget Highlights document (four pages) had been prepared and had been made available. City staff was present to listen to the citizens and provide answers to questions. He noted that Patti-Lynn Silva, Finance Director and Tim Ervin, Budget Officer, were present to assist with technical questions. He also recognized the Luther Oaks residents who were present. The City had made tremendous progress in the last four (4) years. He noted the Council's support. City staff has had to do more with less. The City's reserves had rebounded. The City's bond rating was AA+. City staff had begun to identify long term capital needs of the City. A number of Capital Improvement Projects would be addressed. There needed to be an educational process regarding the capital needs of the City looking out at the next twenty (20) years. This process would involve the Council, City staff and the public. City operations had become more efficient, effective and productive due to the efforts of City staff.

The proposed FY 2014 Budget was $170 million. He noted the following cost breakdowns: Public Safety - $40 million; Public Works $48 million; Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts - $16 million; and Capital Improvement Program - $16 million. The financial aspects of the budget addressed City needs/concerns regarding operations and capital. Some issues will be addressed next year and others will have to wait until future years. He restated that the City had long term financial needs. The Property Tax Levy had been reduced by $400,000. He noted that the economy had impacted everyone. All of the City's sources of revenue were recovering. He cited operational cost increases. He noted gasoline fuel as an example.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Gretchen Brown, Luther Oaks, 601 Lutz Rd., Lutz Rd. Gretchen Brown, Luther Oaks' Administrator, addressed the Council. She thanked the Council for the opportunity to address them. She had been employed at Luther Oaks for five (5) years. Luther Oaks had a staff of 115 and 150 residents. Lutz Rd. was a substandard street. She requested that it be improved to a three (3) lane street. She cited delays and communications with City staff. She noted the road conditions and road safety. Alternatives were discussed such as additional asphalt plus gravel shoulders. These would be temporary improvements. She requested that Lutz Rd. be improved by being included in the City's next five (5) year budget. There had been a change in use of Lutz Rd. There was an increase to residential use. She cited vehicular safety and Luther Oaks' residents.

Luther Oaks had provided the City with a bond and paid property taxes. Luther Oaks was a revenue producing property. Luther Oaks would be expanding with the addition of a skilled care unit. This would create sixty (60) new jobs. Luther Oaks had been a good neighbor. She requested that the Council address Lutz Rd. and her safety concerns.

Tom Hankins, Luther Oaks, 601 Lutz Rd., Lutz Rd. Tom Hankins addressed the Council. He thanked them for the opportunity to address them. He noted the City's repairs. The street width was sixteen feet (16'). He believed that the City's EMS, (Emergency Medical Services), would be better able to navigate an improved Lutz Rd. There were one to two (1 – 2) EMS runs per week. He also noted truck deliveries. In addition, there was winter travel and snow removal. In the summer, there was tar build up.

Fred Breuer, Luther Oaks, 601 Lutz Rd., Lutz Rd. Safety. Fred Breuer addressed the Council. He thanked the Council for the opportunity to address them. He believed that Lutz Rd. was a safety issue. He was a retired engineer. In 2007, he had served as the President of the Luther Oaks residents association. He had sent a letter to the City. The City has made temporary improvements to the road. He noted the proposal for additional road surface, (pavement width and gravel shoulder). He believed that the shoulder should be a hard surface. This would allow people to use same. Lutz Rd. should be twenty-four feet (24') wide with a center stripe. A temporary improvement would be a band aid. The Council needed to review priorities and provide an improved Lutz Rd. which was needed.

Herm Harding, Luther Oaks, 601 Lutz Rd., Lutz Rd. Herm Harding addressed the Council. He thanked them for the opportunity to address them. He had resided in the City for over fifty (50) years. The main points had been addressed. He cited personal experiences. He complimented the City's Fire Department. EMS was prompt and professional. Lutz Rd. was crowded. The road dropped off. He estimated this at three feet (3'). He had made use of driveways. He noted traffic surveys regarding the number of vehicles per day. Lutz Rd. was said to average 300 vehicles per day. This figure was compared to other road projects with average traffic counts of 3,000 vehicles per day. He noted the number of people who lived at Luther Oaks and the number of vehicles. The issue was bigger. There were no street lights or pavement markings. It was common to make use of the gravel shoulder. An individual needed a mixture of driving abilities and skills. He believed that the road was hazardous. He expressed his concern and encouraged the Council to drive Lutz Rd.

EUCLID STREET

Susan Schafer, 1404 Steeplechase Dr., Euclid St. Susan Schafer addressed the Council. She informed the Council that her mother had been a resident at Luther Oaks for three (3) years. She affirmed the comments made regarding Lutz Rd.

She addressed pot holes and the City's plan to improve Euclid St. She addressed north/south connections on the City's west side.

EXPENSES

David Kobus, 2302 Hillsboro, Expenses, Taxes. David Kobus addressed the Council. He addressed pensions and changes made by non governmental businesses. He cited the sick pay issue and direct funds towards pensions. City employees should share in the cost of insurance. He noted the new positions contained in the proposed budget. He questioned what work would be performed and why these positions were needed. He specifically cited the Performance Auditor. He challenged each elected official to find three (3) expenses which were not needed. He cited the Japan Sister City program as an example. He addressed taxes. He cited TIF, (Tax Increment Financing). He questioned the use of special use funds.

Mayor Stockton addressed pension and benefit costs. He cited accumulated leave costs.

David Hales, City Manager, stated that the City made the required contributions. The City was not where it would like to be. The Council would be establishing a contribution policy. This had been a discussion item before the Council's Administration/Finance Committee. He hoped that a plan would be adopted this fall. There would be an impact upon property taxes. He added that Sick Leave Buy Back, (SLBB), had been granted to the City's uniformed police and fire personnel through interest arbitration. SLBB had been imposed upon the City by an arbitrator. Other cities already had this benefit. It was a fact of life in Illinois. He also addressed medical cost. City employees paid twenty-five percent (25%) of premium. City employees have a financial stake in health insurance. This was part of cost management. He viewed this change as a positive. City employees paid a higher percentage than other governmental units.

Mayor Stockton noted the cost of pensions. There were three (3) factors which impacted this cost: 1.) the number of employees; 2.) the benefit level, which was imposed by the state legislature; and 3.) the funds' investments, the rate of return was critical. He noted the recent recession. He addressed balance. The City planned to improve the funding level. The City had to pay what was owed. The question was how to distribute the cost over time.

SPENDING

Gary Lambert, 3018 E. Oakland Ave., Spending. Gary Lambert addressed the Council. He encouraged them to look at the budget. He had spent two to three (2 – 3) hours on line and viewed the budget document. He expressed his opinion that the document was not readable. He cited the Council's priority to maintain quality of life. Expenditures needed to address back to the basics. The Council needed to forgot about quality of life. The City needed to improve cost recovery. He addressed staffing levels and noted the increase in City Administration/City Clerk from seven to eleven (7 – 11) positions. *Check figures*

He noted a staff increase from thirty-four (34) to forty-two (42) positions. There had been a six percent (6%) increase in salary/benefits. He addressed the Economic Development (ED) Coordinator position. This individual had attended seven (7) conferences. He added his opposition to the Communication position.

As a side issue, Mr. Lambert addressed concealed carry. He requested that it be included in the City Code. The City needed to bring the City Code in line with state law.

Mayor Stockton addressed staffing levels and the number of employees. He acknowledged that there had been increases in staff levels over the last five (5) fiscal years.

Mr. Hales stated that four (4) years ago the City eliminated over seventy (70) positions. Some positions have been left vacant. He cited overtime costs. He noted overtime cost for the Fire Department, $1 million. City staff has been asked to do more with less. City staff has struggled with the loss of employees. There had been no change to service level expectation. The financial recovery has allowed the addition of selected positions. Five (5) of the positions were for uniformed staff in the Police and Fire Departments. He noted his concern regarding staff burn out and employee health and safety.

Mayor Stockton added that the reduction in staffing levels had saved millions of dollars. He noted that the ED Coordinator position was new.

Mr. Hales added that this position aggressively promoted the community. The goal was to expand existing businesses and attract new ones. Property taxes placed a financial burden upon homeowners. Economic development was a high priority. It provided the City with the ability to compete. He noted the report made to the Administrative/Finance Committee. The City wanted to be seen as professional and provide restricted incentives.

There were performance requirements in order to receive the City's assistance. The City partnered with the Bloomington Normal Economic Development Council. There had been tremendous progress. The City must make the effort. He noted the burden of the State of Illinois. The City wanted to be a strong player. There had been tremendous gains during this first year.

Commissioner Stockton added that economic development was an area of concern. He cited examples of lost City businesses: Funk Seeds, Steak N Shake, and Eureka Williams. Thousands of jobs had been lost. The City has relied upon State Farm Insurance. Employment dollars were infused back into the local economy. Residential homes were subsidized by local businesses. The City had options: reduce services, increase taxes or a combination of the two. He noted the recent agreement with Wirtz Beverage. This firm reached a decision to locate in Lexington, IL. The business would be located within McLean County. The City did not engage in a bidding war. Everyone should be concerned about economic development.

Bruce Meeks, 1402 Wright St., Budget. Bruce Meeks addressed the Council. He cited the planned repair to the Market St. Garage. He noted the cost to repair the Police Department's Parking Garage. The City needed to leave the parking business. Parking was not a viable business. The parking garages have not been property maintained. He questioned the life expectancy of parking garages.

The City could issue bonds for infrastructure repair. The Council needed to fix City infrastructure not just patch same. The City needed new income streams.

The City should spend money on temporary staff to complete the MUNIS project sooner. He addressed web site transparency and reduced City staff. The City's budget had been placed on the City's web site. He expressed his concern regarding page orientation. Council meetings should be televised.

Mayor Stockton summarized Mr. Meeks' concerns addressed the City's parking decks and a bond issue.

Mr. Hales addressed the Market St. Garage. Repair to same would extend this facility's life for five to ten (5 – 10) years. He cited the City's concrete consultant's opinion. The Market St. Garage was almost fully leased to Downtown businesses' employees. The estimated cost to replace this structure was $3 - $5 million. The goal was to balance and prioritize the City's infrastructure needs. The City has been encouraged to issue bonds. He noted the $10 million Locust/Colton CSO, (Combined Sewer Overflow), project. In the near future, large amounts of money would be needed for immediate needs. He cited streets, bridges, water and sewers, (storm and sanitary). The City was developing a comprehensive inventory and a twenty (20) year plan. A financial plan would be needed. The Council would have to make tough decisions. The Council will need to be realistic and a key question would be the taxpayer's willingness to fund same.

Four (4) years ago, the City borrowed funds for street projects. The proposed FY 2014 budget contained $4 million for street repairs and $2 million for new street construction projects.

Mayor Stockton noted that income stream information would be provided by Patti-Lynn Silva, Finance Director.

Rev. Dr. John Trefzger, 601 Lutz Rd., Lutz Rd. and snow yesterday. Rev. Dr. John Trefzger addressed the Council. He noted the snow fall from the day before. He cited snow plows, school buses and Luther Oaks. He described Lutz Rd. as hazardous.

Laura Baue, 601 Lutz Rd., Lutz Rd. Laure Baue addressed the Council. She currently served as President of the residents' association. She requested improvements to Lutz Rd. for safety purposes. No funds had been included in the proposed FY 2014 budget. She cited the traffic volume. The only access to Luther Oaks was Lutz Rd. She addressed the Council's focus on economic development. She cited Luther Oaks' impact upon the City. She compared Luther Oaks to a subdivision and questioned road improvements. She questioned access for Luther Oaks' employees. Luther Oaks' residents had helped to build the community. Safety was a need. Lutz Rd. should be widened with hard shoulders. She also requested street lighting and pavement markings.

There were thirty (30) Luther Oaks' residents present at the meeting. She restated her request that the Council fund the improvement of Lutz Rd. in the City's FY 2014 budget.

Aggie Hedin, 2202 Ladue Ln., Lutz Rd. Aggie Hedin addressed the Council. She thanked them for the opportunity to address them. She agreed with comments made by others regarding Lutz Rd. Economic development was needed as was outstanding infrastructure. She noted the impact of Luther Oaks on the community.

She noted that there was park as part of the budget. The City might lose a $400,000 grant. The City planned to spend $600,000 on this park plus maintenance costs. Lutz Rd. was promised in a 2006 annexation. Lutz Rd. should be at the top of the list.

Mr. Hales thanked the Luther Oaks residents for attending the meeting. They had voiced their support for Lutz Rd. An Annexation Agreement was a contractual agreement. He believed that the City agreed to build Lutz Rd. He also cited the City's obligation for Hershey Rd. In the future, the City would also consider the fiscal impact of growth. Luther Oaks was an asset. The City needed to consider present and future costs. The five (5) year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) was a staff document. It was not a comprehensive document. There were other rural roads in the City with the same needs. He restated the goal for the City to adopt a twenty (20) year CIP which would determine priorities and develop a financing plan. The City was not ignoring needs. City staff was looking at lower cost alternatives.

Jim Karch, Public Works Director, addressed the Council. He also recognized the Luther Oaks' residents who were present at the meeting. He estimated the cost to improve Lutz

Rd. at $2.5 million. He cited other competing needs. He noted Fox Creek Rd. and Bunn St., each with an estimated cost of $6 million. He stated that the ADT, (Average Daily Traffic), count for these two (2) streets was in the thousands. City staff was considering out of box ideas. He cited other access points. Lutz Rd. could be widened and a gravel shoulder added at an estimated cost of $600,000. He also addressed safety. Lutz Rd. was compliant with County standards. He restated that City staff was trying to find an alternative.

EAGLE VIEW PARK

Peggy Miles, 2213 Riverwoods Ln., Eagle View Park. Peggy Miles addressed the Council. She recognized the Luther Oaks' residents who were present. She questioned if these two (2) items were mutually exclusive. She also cited safety issues. Eagle View Park had been in the City's budget. She had been waiting for twenty-five (25) years. The park was why she moved into this neighborhood. The developers had donated land. The City had purchased additional land with an OSLAD, (Open Space Land Acquisition and Development), grant. It was time to move forward. She had attended a number of meetings. She cited the park planning process. Parks were a part of the community. She questioned how long the wait would be. The grant was ready to expire. She had faith in the Council. She requested that Eagle View Park be included in the FY 2014 budget.

Dale Straen, 2213 Riverwoods Ln., Eagle View Park. Dale Straen addressed the Council. He thanked them for the opportunity to address them. He addressed his concerns regarding Eagle View Park. He cited recommendations that a cross walk be added to Towanda Barnes Rd. He noted the cost, the terrain and the high rate of speed. He would not allow children to cross Towanda Barnes Rd.

Tony Adordo, 2208 Tyler Trail, Eagle View Park. Tony Adordo addressed the Council. He thanked them for the opportunity to address them. He had addressed the Council last year. He cited safety issues with the locations of existing parks. Eagle View Park would be built at some point. The City had a $400,000 opportunity. Economic development attracted businesses/employers. The employees have families. Parks provided safe places for children. Eagle View Park would be a fourteen (14) acre park. These were not mutually exclusive goals.

Brian Abamont, 3911 Baywood Rd., Eagle View Park. Brian Abamont addressed the Council. Eagle View Park was important. He had three (3) children. There were twenty-five (25) children on his block. There was not an accessible park. There needed to be a safe opportunity for play. The City was a place to raise children. Parks attracted people.

Alan Oester, 2209 Tyler Trail, Eagle View Park. Alan Oester addressed the Council. He thanked the Council for performing a civic duty. He planned to address Eagle View Park. He was currently employed at the Gailey Eye Clinic. Originally, he was from the south. He had resided in a number of larger cities. He visited the community. He had made an investment in self. This was a special community. The Council needed to reinvest in the City. He encouraged them to complete Eagle View Park. The Council needed to invest in the community and its citizens. Eagle View Park's design had been paid for. The grant was about to expire.

Mr. Hales addressed Eagle View Park. He had requested in writing special consideration from the IL Department of Natural Resources' (IDNR) Director. His request had been denied. The City may receive a decision to extend this grant in the fall 2013. Without progress, the IDNR may choose to not extend the grant. This item would be a part of the Council's Budget Work Session on Saturday, March 2, 2013.

Karen Green, 2707 Crooked Creek Rd., Budget/taxes. Karen Green addressed the Council. She expressed her conflict regarding the City's budget. She cited the City's bond rating and reserves. People were waiting for roads and parks. She addressed pension funding. She believed that taxes would be raised. This was a wonderful, wealthy community. She expressed her interest in the big picture.

Mr. Hales believed that during his first year as City Manager there had been an eight percent (8%) increase to the property tax levy for pensions. The tax levy has been kept flat since that time. The City has made the required contribution plus supplemental contributions to the Police and Fire Pension Funds.

Mayor Stockton closed the meeting. He noted that the major issues had been Lutz Rd. and Eagle View Park. The ideas/comments were useful to the Council. Citizen input made the Council's job easier and led to more educated decisions.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracey Covert
City Clerk

BACKGROUND: The Council Proceedings of April 8, 2013 have been reviewed and certified as correct and complete by the City Clerk.

In compliance with the Open Meetings Act, Council Proceedings must be approved within thirty (30) days after the meeting or at the Council's second subsequent regular meeting whichever is later.

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, Council Proceedings are made available for public inspection and posted to the City's web site within ten (10) days after Council approval.

COMMUNITY GROUPS/INTERESTED PERSONS CONTACTED: Not applicable.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Not applicable.

Respectfully submitted for Council consideration.

Prepared by: Tracey Covert, City Clerk

Recommended by:

David A. Hales
City Manager

Motion by Alderman Fazzini, seconded by Alderman Fruin that the reading of the minutes of the previous Council Proceedings of April 8, 2013 and Citizen Voice Meeting of February 27, 2013 be approved.

The Mayor directed the clerk to call the roll which resulted in the following:

Ayes: Aldermen Stearns, Mwilambwe, Schmidt, McDade, Mathy, Fazzini, Sage, Fruin and Purcell.

Nays: None.

Motion carried.

The following was presented:

SUBJECT: Bills and Payroll

RECOMMENDATION/MOTION: That the bills and payroll be allowed and orders drawn on the Treasurer for the various amounts as funds are available.

STRATEGIC PLAN LINK: Goal 1. Financially sound City providing quality basic services.