

Rocky Ripple Town Council Meeting
March 8, 2016

Chairperson Carla Gaff Clark called the meeting to order at 7:32. Also in attendance were Mandy Redmond, Jill Morris and clerk-treasurer, Kandy Kendall.

The Town had visitors from Highland estates as well as Citizens Energy. Carla opened the floor for their presentations first.

Carla introduced visitors, Charlie and Barb Grahn from Highland estates. The residents of Highland are trying to stop development at Highland. Highland Country Club is selling twenty acres of land near the bluff of the White River overlooking Rocky Ripple. The Grahns and other residents of the area have organized to try and come up with an alternative offer and that is to partner with Central IN Land Trust and put the twenty areas into a land trust. Highland Country Club is willing to sell to the Land Trust but for the same price the developer is willing to pay; \$2.7 million. They have currently raised \$1.5 million and have until June to come up with the remainder. The Grahns' purpose for coming to Rocky Ripple was to let us know what is going on across the river from us.

Sewers

Dan Considine, manager Corporation Communications with Citizens Energy was present to discuss with the Town the update on what they are doing as a public charitable trust to address both the City's water and sewer issues.

1. Water side: Citizens Energy is addressing the issues of leaks in aging water mains by replacing the pipes as well as improving water treatment plants. They also realize the need for more water as the City continues to grow and are building a new reservoir to meet our future needs. It will be built near Geist Reservoir and called Citizens Reservoir.

2. Wastewater system (side): The City is under a consent decree with the federal government to eliminate sewer overflow into the White River by 2025. This decree only addresses the overflow of raw sewage into the White River during heavy rainfalls and does not address the elimination of septic tanks. Currently Citizens Energy is building a Dig Indy Tunnel system, which is an 18' diameter tunnel 250' below ground which will decrease sewage overflow into the river. They are also working on doubling the size of treatment plants.

3. Septic Tank Elimination Program (STEP)

Citizens is working to try and eliminate the current septic tanks in Marion County as well as trying to get the cost down \$2500 per household. Mr. Considine noted that gravity sewers are expensive and so if residents use the grinder pump system, it can significantly reduce the price of installation to both the City and the homeowner. It reduces the cost to the City because the grinder pumps do not tear up the streets during installation so the City does not need to do street repairs. The cost to Citizens Energy for the gravity system, which ties into a lift station, is about \$6000 per household. There is a lift station that Butler has installed that Rocky Ripple could tie into. The cost of the grinder pump is about \$2500 per household.

Mr. Considine could not say when sewers will come to Rocky Ripple but said that when he did know, he would inform the Board. He said that the priority is based on science; those areas with higher failure rates of tanks and the size of the lot, meaning that denser areas with a higher population will be the areas that are selected first. Again, as soon as they have something available to share, they will.

Utility Cost Increases:

Water rates have already been approved to go up \$5/month May 2016.

Sewer rates will increase \$8.50 by summer of 2016 and another \$2.50 by summer 2017. Citizens is proposing two new funds to help those with low income. There will be "crisis fund" for water customers and a "crisis fund" for sewer customers.

Citizens Questions:

1. Will there be a sewer charge on vacant lots?

Sewer hook up costs will not be charged for vacant lots but they will put a sewer connection on all lots.

2. Will Citizens Energy be evaluating how grinder pumps function given that so far there are a number of problems as well as lawsuits?

Yes. Currently Citizens Energy believes that some people are not connecting to sewers even after being brought to their neighborhood. Mr. Considine also stated that grinder pumps can last fifteen years. Citizens Energy will pay for the first grinder pump.

3. Resident John Stohler, whose business is digging trenches and repairs of broken sewers stated that in January he got a letter from Citizens Energy that said as of 2016 only grinder pumps will be allowed in Marion County.

Mr. Considine was not aware of this letter and again said that this is a trial period for grinder pumps and that they will continue to evaluate the efficiency and cost of the grinder pump versus the gravity pump.

Residents were told that there would be public meetings as things move forward and to direct their calls to Jessica Constatino at 927-4221 if they have further questions.

There will be public meetings as plans move forward.

Westfield Flood Wall

Finally, Mr. Considine addressed Citizens Energy's position on the west bank alignment of FEMA floodwall. He stated that initially Citizens Energy opposed a flood gate that would cut off water in the canal to what is referred to as the old downtown as this is the only water source for old downtown. A second intake was needed and the City has offered to help fund another intake down river. Citizens Energy feels this is in best interest of the entire City. This project will cost \$15 million and taxpayers will pay half of this and Marion Co taxpayers will pay for the other half.

Carla thanked Mr. Considine for his presentation and the floor was closed for further discussions.

Treasurer Report

Kandy reported that the bank and her executive summary matched to the penny. There was one snowplowing bill and an extra cost to have the clerk treasurer be bonded for \$30,000.00 as required by law.

Mandy moved that the treasurer's report be accepted and Jill seconded. All in favor.

Clerk Report

The minutes are no longer read during the Board meeting. Mandy moved that the minutes be accepted with changes and Jill seconded. All in favor.

Insurance Application

Mandy gave Marshal Mike more financial supporting documentation and he will add these to our application. We should be good to go.

Old Business

Carla reported on the March 6th meeting held at the town hall to discuss the City's position on the west bank alignment for flood protection.

Lots of information was exchanged.

As of today, there is no update since what was shared at Saturday's meeting.

The Board did touch base with DPW and nothing has been said as of tonight.

Residents were reminded that it is not too late to send their feed back to all involved parties.

Josh Taflinger said there is a Build the Wall for All website and encouraged everyone to go here for information and updates.

Mandy said she would send in the signed petitions that she had gathered.

New Business

Carla reported the Board is still searching for a new attorney.

The marshal contract is finished and ready to implement after Marshal Mike signs it.

Town Hall River Bank Clean Up

Kevin Hardy, organizer for the Friends of the White River had been contacted by students from the University of Missouri who were coming to Indianapolis and volunteering with cleanups around the City. FOWR contacted Dan Axler of Rocky Ripple and they were set up to clear brush and honeysuckle growing along the levee and banks of the White River. On Tuesday the 8th, FOWR, along with eight UofM students, Dan Axler, Kandy Kendall and Molly worked for six hours clearing and cleaning along the town hall as well as the riverbank behind the town hall. A lot was accomplished due to the vigor of the college students.

Mandy will contact FOWR to get a contact for the students to thank them for their time and energy.

RREM

Jill reported RREM is still trying to get twelve people to take CERT training from 9-5 for three Saturdays in April. There is no cost for the program and the information is valuable to the individual as well as to the Town of Rocky Ripple. Once you go thru

CERT training, you are qualified forever unless you are a first responder and then you must be re-certified annually.
RREM did work on an evacuation plan.

Marshal Report

IDHS has opened a new grant application and Marshal Mike will work with Andy Hazel to try and apply for a grant.

Mike also reported that there had been a police report filed for credit card fraud by a Rocky Ripple resident, for unauthorized charges to the person's credit card.

Marshal Mike explained that it was a situation where your card is used for small purchases with the assumption you will not check your statement. Marshal Mike reminded everyone to double check their credit card statements and question purchases that you do not remember making.

Mike also reported that IMPD came into Town and took an "immediate attention". This is called when someone is in danger of harming himself or herself.

Community Concerns

Sue Hyatt noted that in the latest edition of Indy Midtown magazine, there was an article suggesting Butler was retracting its support for Rocky Ripple. The Board was not aware of Butler changing its support.

The Board was thanked for writing a very succinct letter to the Broad Ripple Gazette. Mandy said she was disappointed that our letters did not get into the Star.

Carolyn Webster reported we need to replace the one-way sign on Canal Boulevard and 53rd Street. It is old and faded and hard to read. Carla asked Marshal Mike to take care of this.

Fire Station at 56th & Illinois

It was reported in the Indianapolis Star that the Fire Chief has recommended closing the fire station at 56th & Illinois. Residents asked if Rocky Ripple was going to take some action on this like Butler Tarkington Neighborhood Association is doing.

Mandy encouraged citizens to take action on their own. It was noted by our neighbor Pete Horvath, who is a fireman, that if the station moves to Broad Ripple the firemen will still be able to respond within four minutes.

Street Repairs

It appears that the City will not be tearing up the streets when sewer installations occur due to the smaller bore of the pipe. Therefore Rocky Ripple is going to be responsible for street repairs. We now need to look into the budget and take action. The streets in most dire need of repair are:

Sunset, Riverview, 53rd & Annette, 53rd Street by White Pine and Canal Boulevard. Marshal Mike will obtain quotations from street paving companies for needed repairs.

RRCA

Mandy reported the Easter egg hunt will be the last Saturday of this month and asked residents to take plastic eggs from the back table to fill. Cakes and filled eggs should be taken to Diane Householders home either Friday or early Saturday morning of the 26th.

With no further business, Jill moved that we adjourn the meeting at 9:02. Mandy seconded. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted
Kandy Kendall, Clerk Treasurer