

OTTAWA PORT DISTRICT  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 21, 2016

ROLL CALL

Keith Conrad called a regular meeting of the Port District to order at City Hall on October 21, 2016 at 8:00 a.m. with the following board members present: Keith Conrad, William Franklin, Jr., Charles Sheridan, John Stone and Thomas Haeberle. Also present were Boyd Palmer, Reed Wilson, David Noble and Rich Burton.

MINUTES

Minutes from September 19, 2016 meeting were presented and approved by unanimous vote following a motion by John Stone and second by Charles Sheridan.

TREASURERS REPORT

Bank statements and account balances were provided. The financial report was approved on motion of William Franklin, Jr., second by Charles Sheridan and a unanimous oral vote.

COMMUNICATIONS

A \$295.00 invoice from Diane Stelken was presented for fourth quarter 2016 work and additional updates of biographies and minutes. Such invoice was approved for payment by motion of Charles Sheridan, second by William Franklin, Jr. and unanimous oral vote.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Boyd spoke about retail space within Ottawa and noted an occupancy survey was recently completed, the first since 2014. In 2014 there were twenty four vacant storefronts downtown for lease. Currently there are only six available. Boyd further spoke about placing retention calls with major industries. Since 2014, there has only been one true retention call. Several new plant managers will be in attendance at the November 9 Rotary meeting. There is a conference call with Family Video upcoming about the needs for their new location. Commercial development is anticipated in the Columbus Street corridor going North from US Route 6 towards the hill.

Reed spoke about progress with the new owners of the Carson building. The Ditto's space was leased and will open soon as a nutrition store. The Cora Pope Home is subject to a sale contract. The new bookstore opened.

The wine and art walk is upcoming with fourteen stops and ending at Tangled Roots. The Kris Kingle market will take place for the first time on December 10 and 11 and will include traditional market huts selling items.

Reed also spoke about a steamboat company based out of St. Louis offering Illinois River tours with an end stop in Ottawa. Such would be day trips and the boat with hold 166 passengers and dock on the south side.

## MEMBER REPORTS

Keith spoke about being contacted by Jeff Heimsoth and Boyd Palmer to revisit the dry stack building project and possible involvement of the port district. The location and dimensions of the potential building remains the same. Discussion following regarding NCICG being previously involved and the possibility of them getting involved again. Boyd and Keith will follow up Jeff about the project suggesting that Jeff meet with Andy Hamilton about possible financing. Andy Hamilton also has new company that does financing.

## NEW BUSINESS

Keith Conrad introduced a discussion regarding railroads and switching yards for the railroads in the Ottawa area. Dave Noble circulated a map that highlighted all crossings within the city. There are twenty Railnet crossings and seven CSX crossings within city limits. A question arose regarding which railroad tracks are causing complaints. In follow up to citizen research, it was determined that the Railnet tracks were responsible for the trains running in the middle of the night with horns. Discussion ensued regarding the need for a quiet zone within a portion of the city which would entail making the crossings within such zone safer with more restrictive gates and sensors in the tracts so that the road is fully blocked from traffic and no horn would be needed when a train passed through it. An engineering firm could come and market their services for such proposed quiet zone. One main concern would be funding as it would need to be 100% locally funded and an engineering study could run \$100,000.00-\$200,000.00 with installation being around \$500,000.00 per crossing.

David led discussion regarding possible re-location of the Railnet switchyard. We had before discussed the option of a switching yard going towards Dayton which has about a 2 mile stretch for a switching area. Dave opened discussion of a new option resulting from his discussion with Tom Murphy of Railnet. Perhaps a better location for a switching yard is on property of US Silica property. David suggested that multiple people will need to be involved in such a project including Illinois Commerce Commission, representatives of Omnitrax and representatives from IDOT. Dave will follow up with Tom Murphy, who was going to touch base with his engineering department and report back to Dave.

## ADJOURN

There being no further reports or business, the meeting was adjourned at about 9:30 a.m. upon motion of Thomas Haeberle and second by Charles Sheridan and unanimous oral vote. The next regular meeting of the district will be November 18, 2016.