The Common Council of the City of Kokomo, Indiana met Monday June 24th, 2019 at 6:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers for the purpose of a Public Hearing on Ordinance #6933.

Present: Wyant, Young, Haworth, Kennedy, Hayes, Johnson, Sanders, Miklik

Absent: Cameron

President Hayes called for any comments from the audience.

Jeremy Dodd, City Hall Kokomo, Ind. states, I am the President of the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 78. I am here to express to the Council, a concern. This Council is about to approve an additional $19 Million Dollars above the already approved budget for projects thru-out the City. These projects are seemly more important than Public Safety. Currently the City budgeted for more Officers then we have by an alarming number. That money which is not spent under this Administration has gone back to the General Fund to be spent at the excretion of the Mayor, and the Council. In 2006 when I was hired, there were approximately 106 Kokomo Police Officers. Today we have 77. We are asking the Council to consider their priorities.

Tom Trine 1226 W. County Road 350 N. Kokomo, Ind., 46901 states, my question is around the $6.5 Million Dollars that is being requested for Parking Garage. My understanding is the Parking Garage is based on the new Hotel Event Center that is planned for downtown. If the Parking Garage does not happen will the project building the Hotel Event Center still take place?
President Hayes states, it is my understanding that the Parking Garage is just not for the Convention Center or the Hotel it can also be used for Baseball Games downtown. We have a lot of congested areas up, and down Main, and Union. These people would be able to use that parking as well. To answer your question, of course it would be affected. It wouldn’t be able to operate in an efficient manner without a Parking Garage.

Tom Trine ask, if that is the case why wasn’t that taken into consideration; when the Plan was first presented to the Public? The Local Government is not going to invest more in this project then the private investors going to.

Councilwoman Sanders states, I talked to Jenny in the Department of Development. I asked her one of those questions that had to do with that; as you know the other Development Company decided that they did not want to go thru with it. I think they could see that it was more feasible, and it would not be good for them to do what they’re doing. They could see that there were not enough parking places. That is the best answer I can give you.

Councilman Miklik states, the parking garage is a number of parking spaces, and retail spaces that are planned for below. They are separate from the Hotel; but it will complement the Hotel. One doesn’t necessarily have to follow the other. The Hotel, the Parking, and surface parking is not enough to support the volume of people, to come to the Conference. Downtown also needs more Parking, and where this Plan is located also facilitates the growth downtown. This Parking Garage is for the benefit of the Community. When you say government, and government taxes that is a pretty broad statement.
Cont. Public Hearing.
When you look at the financing of it the Convention, and tourist bureau, and the in-keepers tax is going to fund that Hotel Convention Center. It is not going to be tax from individuals, and the people in the City per-say. It will be those visitors, and that’s the plan to help fund that piece of it along with the developer. The only piece of this whole discussion that is going to come-out of it, is going to be the money for the Parking Garage. That will come from the City. This appropriation is approved by the State.

Tom Trine states, just for clarity the Hotel would not work if we didn’t have the Parking Garage. Tax is a Tax. This is being funded by people that are staying here. It’s not the taxpayers; but the reality is it is the taxpayers. It may-not be he taxpayers of Howard County; but it is the taxpayers. It’s tax. When did it become right to take funds from one taxpaying entente, and give it to another taxpaying entente to compete against the one you are taking it from in the first place. That is truly, and clearly what is happening. The Government is assisting a for-profit entente to build a Hotel that is going to compete against the other Hotels in the City who are for-profit also; and pay property taxes; and the City is going to build an Event Center that is going to allow that Hotel operator to use it at we don’t know what cost, and we don’t know what the lease agreement is.

We don’t know if they’re going to pay zero or if they are going to pay million dollars a year. We don’t know who is going to manage it. We don’t know who is going to maintain it; but we do know that the City is going to build it. I know that’s going to compete against my business; and it’s not going to cost that business one single cent to compete against me. I appreciate you allowing me to speak. I am not asking you to vote no; simply to vote I don’t know because I think there are many questions that need to asked, and answered.
Cont. Public Hearing.

Vernon Graves 4510 Lakeshore Dr. Kokomo, Ind. states, I just want to know what happen to free enterprise. I am a small business man. My family owns the Event Center, and the La Quinta Inn & Suites. I am getting hit twice with this project. I have an Event Center. It has 550 plus parking spaces already; so I am definitely against the City putting in another $6.5 Million Dollars. I came to Greg Sheline 3 ½ years ago wanting to get a permit to build a Hotel with my Event Center. I was turned down flat; he said I would have to talk to the Mayor. That’s not free enterprise. Your taking business from people that has paid for their own Hotel; and let this guy have the property free. I pay approximately $200,000 worth of property tax alone on my businesses in Kokomo. This is not free enterprise. I thought America was. Thank you.

Charlie Hackett 115 East Jefferson Street Kokomo, Ind. states, why don’t we take some money that has been taken away from Public Safety designated by you folks; and put it back in Public Safety, and re-hire the number of Officers we had before we increased the size of our community; and spend that money in a good place. I have heard a lot people say they are afraid to set on their front porch; because there may-not be an Officer there when they need them. What are you going to do about Fire Protection? Fire Protection is less than it was years ago. I would appreciate if you guys would just fought for some of this spending that you are doing; and give some thought to Public Safety here in Kokomo.

Councilman Kennedy states, at the Budget Hearing I didn’t look up the Fire Department Budget; but Police Budget was $12 ½ Million Dollars. At that time that was what was requested to this Council. We approved every penny. If there was more money that needed to be requested, it should have been done at that time.
Cont. Public Hearing.
I don’t’ think that all that money has been spent; but we do not spend that money. We appropriate money. There is a difference between actually spending it or appropriating. I can only say this that if there was more money needed if they came to this Council, and asked for more money I am almost positive that this Council would approve.

Charlie Hackett states, why don’t you listen to your constituents, and they will tell you what they want.

Councilman Kennedy states, we don’t hire them, and we don’t fire them. This has nothing to do with that.

Charlie Hackett states, if the administration says this is how many Police Officers we need. This is how much money we need to do it.

Councilman Kennedy states, we would approve the money if they said that. We don’t appropriate money unless it is asked for.

President Hayes states, I am almost positive every person up here, would vote for additional funding if it was asked.

Charlie Hackett states, but you can for a parking garage?

Councilman Kennedy states, its being asked of this Council; that’s why we are here.

Jeremy Dodd states, all we are asking is that you re-consider spending $19,000,000 if we have that kind of money available.
Cont. Public Hearing.
President Hayes states, we will be approaching the budget process. This is your opportunity now between when we have budget hearings to make your voice be known; that there is not enough money in there.

Jeremy Dodd states, that is what my constituents have asked me to say. If there is money put it where it is needed. Thank you.

Councilwoman Sanders states, when-ever we do budget hearings; some of my questions are, do you need any-more Fire or Police cars. How old are they. We ask questions, do you have what you need? We try to be involved what the concerns are about.

Jack Dodd 2215 Westdale Ct. Kokomo Ind. states, the Council does appropriate. You guys don’t spend a dime; so thank you for pointing that out. My only concern is exactly what has been expressed here tonight. I think it has been expressed very well. I hope it has been heard very well. I would just say this when you are in those budget hearings just make sure your asking the right questions; what is truly needed; so that you will know what needs to be appropriated.

President Hayes states, we are going to adjourned this Public Hearing Meeting.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
June 24th, 2019

The Common Council of the City of Kokomo, Indiana met Monday June 24th, 2019 at 6:00 P.M. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

The meeting was called to order by President Hayes.
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President Hayes states, those who wish to stand may stand, or you may remain seated.

Invocation was offered by Pastor Steve Allen from Chapel Hill Christian Church.

Pledge:

Present: Wyant, Young, Haworth, Kennedy, Hayes, Johnson, Sanders, Miklik

Absent: Cameron

The minutes of the Council Meeting June 10th, 2019 were declared approved as presented.

There were no communications given at this regular meeting.

There were no committee reports given at this regular meeting.

ORDINANCE 6933: Additional Appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of $18,000,000

Additional Appropriation from the Park Fund in the amount of $990,000

Second reading

Ordinance 6933 was read by the Clerk by title only. Councilman Kennedy moved for passage on ordinance #6933 on second reading; seconded by Councilwoman Sanders.
Cont. Ordinance #6933.
Councilman Kennedy states, this is appropriated money from the General Fund of $6,500,000 for Infrastructure improvements for (Parking Garage) $9.4 Million Dollars for Infrastructure for (Creek Enhancement/Flood Mitigation), $1.9 Million Dollars for (Street Resurfacing), $120,000 for (Building Rehabs). That total is $18,000,000. In addition, from Park Fund will be moving money to the (Park Improvements, and Upgrades) in the amount of $400,000, (Recreation Building of UCT) $90,000, $135,000 will be for (Mechanical Room Improvements), and $365,000 for (Pool Features), at the swimming pool. That total is $990,000. The two together makes $18,990,000.

Several Citizens spoke on this ordinance: Jeremy Dodd, Tom Trine, Vernon Graves, Charles Hackett, Jack Dodd, David Trine.

Randy Morris Controller, City of Kokomo states, I would just like to speak on the Hotel Conference Center. This is a four-part involvement from several different ententes. One of those entente is in the audience; and is in vast support of this. Howard County Government is also contributing to this project; so it is not solely on you of the City Council to support this parking garage; that is being spoken of. It does have overwhelming support from the Developer, County, CVB, and City. This is not the City is taking on the entire financing of the entire project.

President Hayes states, I would also like to put out the Greater Kokomo Economic Development Alliance supports this as well; and that is made up of business men, and women from diverse backgrounds.
Cont. Ordinance #6933.
Councilman Miklik states, your point is well taken. Mr. Graves, Mr. Trine. I hear every word you are saying. I am very sensitive about that; and then I think I have around 57,000 people included that I have to represent also. Tonight’s ordinance speaks to the appropriations; not the Hotel Convention Center at all, just the $19,000,000 for the Parking Garage. The Convention Center is separate. Why we didn’t hear more Mr. Graves, Mr. Trine, when a permit was denied or when the Convention Center came-up I don’t know. I don’t see that this appropriation is directly tied to that. I am asking the question of myself. What’s tomorrow look like, what’s next year look like, and what’s five years from now look like. Do I want to be living in Kokomo tomorrow, next year, five years, ten years?

We can stay where we are today. No problem. We can stay with what we have built; but at the end of the day why are we here. If we are not here to build a since of community, and to challenge ourselves to be a better community, and to draw people from the out-side, we don’t have a tax base. The only tax base we have are the people that live here. The people that want to live here, and the people that move in here. I have traveled the world to 35 Countries. Every hotel I have been in has a tax; and I mean 8% is cheap. I paid as much as 20%; and you know where that money goes to develop the community. When the time comes we need to build that since of community.

We need to provide those amenities; and we need to provide them in a manner that grows our community. This appropriation talks about pools, and flood mitigation. The only thing on this ordinance that has raised any kind of visibility is a parking garage. If your down here during the day that parking garage is valuable. We are trying to grow the Downtown; and get people to come eat, socialize. That is why we have a YMCA. That is why we have done some of these things; so from my perspective I will support this.
Cont. Ordinance #6933.
Paul Wyman 211 Sandy Ct. Kokomo, Ind. states, part of your ordinance this evening does deal with the parking garage. Its legitimate that the Hotel Conference Center comes into play on that; because it will support the Conference Center. I also agree that it will support many other things that are happening in Downtown Kokomo. The parking garage will serve two purposes. I think its important to note that since it will support the Conference Center its fair legitimate discussion pertaining to this ordinance. One of the things I am proudest of in our community, especially as an Elected Official. When we looked at the project, we realize it was good for us. Republicans, and Democrats came together unanimously.

You can go back, and look in our history as a community. You won’t find very many times where Republicans, and Democrats unanimously came together in public meetings to have this very discussion. The entire City Council, Republican, and Democrat the entirely Board of Commissioners, the entire Howard County Council Republican, and Democrat, CVB Board, Greater Kokomo Economic Development Alliance Board, all voted in favor of going to the State Legislature, to get an increase in-keepers tax to, fund this project. It was an incredibly public process. Open Meetings, dialogue this is why we are going after this money; and at that time we received overwhelming support from the public as well. Communities that are growing, and that are on the move thru public private partnerships every single day. This is the right project for our community. This is the right move to pass this ordinance tonight. I fully support it. Thank you.

Councilwoman Young states, this ordinance includes some important items here; Infrastructure for Creek Enhancement, Flood Mitigation, Street Resurface, and the cost associated with Building Rehab. All of this is in this ordinance. It is very important to Kokomo, and the growth, and to all of us that lives here.
Cont. Ordinance #6933.
David Trine 1113 South Locke Kokomo, Ind. states, my only comment is about timing. I have a business on Markland Ave. that has been effected for over year now on a project. I have called every week to the Engineers office asking for end date; and every time I have called I get the same response which is indefinite. They have no answer. My thing is not to start anymore projects until the projects that you have going on are complete. My business is affected by that. If this idea spending $19,000,000 is a great idea today, it’s still going to be a great idea six months down the road. Thank you.

Vote for passage follows:
Aye: All
Nay: None
The vote was 8 to 0 for passage on second reading.

**ORDINANCE 6934:**
Rezoning: OC to M2
Location: 3109 West Sycamore St.
Petitioner: Paul Wyman
First reading

Ordinance 6934 was read by the Clerk by title only. Councilwoman Young moved for suspension of the rules, and pass ordinance #6934 on first, and second reading; seconded by Councilman Wyant
Vote for suspension of the rules:
Aye: All
Nay: None
The vote was 8 to 0 for suspension of the rules.
Councilwoman Young states, I moved for passage on ordinance #6934 on second reading; seconded by Councilman Kennedy.
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Cont. Ordinance #6934.
Councilwoman Young states, Paul Wyman of the Wyman Group are requesting change in zone classification from OC (Office Commercial) to M2 (Multifamily Residential) for property located at 3109 West Sycamore Street. It is going to include about 4 ½ acres. The area will be located for Senior Living Facility. This facility will have 20 rooms, and it will be a shared living facility. The Plan Commission voted a favorable recommendation to this ordinance.

Paul Wyman states, we are here tonight seeking a rezoning of this property. This is the former Herbst Pharmacy out on West Sycamore. It is about 4 ½ acres. It is a very beautiful lot; surrounded by trees which makes for a very enticing atmosphere for the type of Senior Living Facility that we are proposing.

This is one where people will come, and go; and it literally is a Senior Living Facility for people up to the first stages of assisted living. The beauty of this location for our seniors is the proximate to the Hospital, Medical Care, Restaurants, Retail, and all the services that are provided here in the Northwest part of Kokomo. This area already has senior living.

There is a tremendous amount of this type of zoning already in the area. We are looking at about $2 ½ Million Dollar private investment. It will be about 15 plus or minus employees. There will be 20 units. The room themselves are not full blown to where their full blown apartments. There smaller apartments, and the living is actual more communal. The living space the kitchen, and all of that is utilized by all the residents together as if it was a big family type atmosphere. It is a very exciting project. Were excited that the developers bring in here to Kokomo, and Howard County. I would ask for your approval for this rezoning.
Cont. Ordinance #6934.
Vote for passage:
Aye: All
Nay: None
The vote was 8 to 0 for passage on first, and second reading.

President Hayes states, this marks the end of this Council Meeting, and our next Council Meeting will be July 8th, 2019; with an Informational Meeting at 5:30 P.M. in the Louks Room; and Council Meeting at 6:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers.

Adjourned at 7:10 P.M.

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ATTEST:                     Presiding Officer
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City Clerk