City of Girard

Year in Review

Celebrating another successful year!

With input from local stakeholders, the City adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 2018. As many will recall, the capital improvement plan component was thought by some to be too ambitious but we are still on track to complete every project. In order to meet these goals – and to satisfy likely new federal regulations – the City has design engineered infrastructure improvements and has had them approved by regulatory agencies. City officials have ensured that they will be ready for the influxes of federal grant opportunities and regulations by preparing designs and plans and making necessary changes to be as financially prepared as possible.

Financially, in 2021, the City finished the year with a cash balance that was $2,423,268 higher than 2017 and reserve fund balances that were $457,630 higher. At the end of the year in 2017, the City’s debt balance was $8,912,179. At end of the year in 2021, the City’s debt balance was $6,615,485. Financial numbers for 2022 will be available after the audit process in 2023, but preliminary forecasting looks like we will end the year with an over $900,000 increase to the cash balance, another reduction in debt and an additional $1,000,000 in reserve funds. This is imperative if the City is to achieve its ambitious capital improvement plan which will involve a large investment of City funds and – likely – a combination of debt and grant funding.

The City has also prioritized supporting local businesses. After receiving an award from CDBG-CV in the amount of $167,000 in 2020 for small business grants and a food program for the community; the City was blessed to receive another grant to help local businesses. This year, the City and the Chamber worked together to create an organization focused on revitalizing the Girard square and was able to provide grant funding to three businesses for building renovations. A generous donation from GNBank has made future grant cycles possible and new applications will be release in Spring 2023!

We are very grateful to those organizations and agencies that have invested in our community and made projects possible with very minimal mill rate increases and no increases to electric rates! In the past couple of years, the City has been able to invest over $2,200,000 in our local community without tapping the local tax base. This is addition to a $1,100,000 project on highway 47 that was funded entirely by grants in 2018.

$150,000 from GNBank for We <3 Square

$50,000 grant from T-Mobile for We <3 Square

$509,000 from County ARPA for booster station and/or line project and lift stations

$600,000 CDBG for lift stations and lagoon headworks

$404,000 from ARPA for lift stations, premium pay

$388,686 from KDOT CLINK for Hwy 7

$2,330 from GACF for PickleBall nets

$75,000 from Pathways for design engineering of sidewalk project

$4,500 from SEK Comm Foundation for disc golf course

$4,000 from Girard Area Comm Foundation for disc golf course

$10,000 from Girard Area Community Foundation for splash pad

$10,000 from the Pritchett Trust for splash pad

$18,000 from local foundations for skate park resurfacing

Here’s to looking forward to another great year! We hope to complete another interior street project (the third since 2018) and upgrades to both the water and wastewater systems. Additionally, we have been working with the state, the SEK Regional Planning Commission and KHRC to propose another housing project. We have also requested a quote from HCC for a slide at the pool! The special parks and recreation fund is funded by the alcoholic liquor tax and has a balance of $18,000 which is statutorily required to be used towards parks and recreation. The City will continue working with KMEA to develop a solar project which will help us keep electric rates at current levels and to be prepared for the release of grant funds for rural green generation through the federal government’s Inflation Reduction Act which was signed into law this year.

As always thank you to our wonderful employees, elected officials, Land Bank board volunteers, Golf Course Committee volunteers, Industrial and Business Development Board members, Fire Department volunteers, our auto aid partners District 4 Fire and the community who have supported this community throughout the year. With your help and support we will continue to make the much needed and critical infrastructure upgrades.

Regarding the use of executive sessions at City Council meetings:

Unlike many municipal governments, the City of Girard does not give the Administrator the ability to unilaterally hire new employees or terminate or suspend current employees. The City Council is involved in each of these decisions. Discussions regarding hiring, disciplining, terminating, promoting and evaluating employees are done in executive session. Motions to hire, terminate or promote an employee are made during open discussion or included on the Consent Agenda.

Individuals seeking employment with the City and current employees have a right to privacy. This is why these discussions are held in executive session. The vast majority of executive sessions are to discuss these issues. In 2022, a total of 26 executive sessions were held. Of the total, 20 were related to the aforementioned issues related to nonelected personnel.

The remaining 6 executive sessions were attorney client privilege or data relating to financial affairs or trade secrets of corporations, partnerships, trusts, and individual proprietorships. Data relating to financial affairs of other companies was an issue when the City was awarding grant funds to local businesses as eligibility criteria included an income requirement and each applicant’s financial records were reviewed. With attorney-client privilege, Council in executive session may discuss contractual negotiations/obligations/breaches. However, no decisions are made in executive session. All motions are made in open and public session. And contracts can be reviewed by the public.

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| 2022 YTD Executive Sessions | | |
|  | No. | Percentage |
| Non-Elected Personnel | 20 | 77% |
| Other | 6 | 23% |
| TOTAL | 26 | 100% |