

Special Council Meeting
of the City of Greenville
held in the Council Chambers
on Thursday, March 6, 2014

Call to Order: A special meeting of the Greenville City Council was called to order on Thursday, March 6, 2014 at 7:08 p.m. by Mayor Pro Tem Hampton.

Roll Call: Present: Mayor Pro Tem Kenny Hampton, Councilman John Gillard, Councilman Mike Heath, and Councilman Roger Sanders. Mayor Alan Gaffner attended via teleconference.

Also Present: City Manager Dave Willey and City Clerk Sue Ann Nelson.

Pledge: The pledge of allegiance to the United States flag was recited.

Remote Attendance: Mayor Gaffner was unable to attend the meeting in person due to being out of town for work. With a quorum being confirmed, motion made by Sanders, seconded by Gillard, to allow remote participation by Mayor Gaffner. Since Mayor Gaffner is not physically present, Mayor Pro Tem Hampton will lead the meeting.

Ayes: Sanders, Gillard, Hampton, Heath

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Notice of Meeting: Notice of the special meeting having been given notice as provided by law, said meeting was called for consideration of the following agenda:

- 1) Roll Call
- 2) Pledge of Allegiance
- 3) Public Comment
- 4) Leaf Burning Discussion
- 5) Executive Session: Purchase of Real Estate, Section 2 (c)(5); Sale of Real Estate, Section 2 (c)(6); Personnel, Section 2 (c)(1); and Pending Litigation, Section 2 (c)(11) of the Open Meetings Act

Public Comment: With no comments being expressed, public input was closed.

Leaf Burning Discussion: Mayor Pro Tem Hampton welcomed the crowd and reviewed the procedures that would be followed for the public meeting. City Clerk

Nelson provide background information on the leaf burning issue, dating back to when the first partial ban was passed in 2000, amended in 2007 and retained following a public survey in 2010. In response to a petition that was submitted in late 2013, the current public meeting was called. Mayor Pro Tem opened up the floor for public comment (see attached). Following input by many residents, Mayor Pro Tem indicated that the issue will be on the March 11, 2014 regular council meeting agenda for council consideration.

Arrival of Mayor:

While having participated via teleconference, Mayor Gaffner arrived at the Municipal Building to join the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Recess to Executive Session and Adjournment:

At 9:05 p.m., moved by Gillard, seconded by Gaffner, to recess to executive session for Purchase of Real Estate, Section 2 (c) (5); Sale of Real Estate, Section 2 (c) (6); Pending Litigation, Section 2 (c) (11); Personnel, Section 2 (c) (1) of the Open Meetings Act. The meeting was adjourned at 10:12 p.m. at the close of the executive session.

Ayes: Gillard, Gaffner, Hampton, Heath, Sanders

Nays: None

Motion carried.

City Clerk

Leaf Burning Public Comment

Ann Zahniser, 806 Pecan: Addressed the dangers of smoke to individuals with respiratory problems and young children. Ms. Zahniser is in favor of a complete ban of leaf burning and burning for disposal. Ms. Zahniser provided information in support of leaf burning ban from the American Lung Association.

David Ulmer, 404 LaDue: Stated that leaf burning is a health hazard and unnecessary. He contends that there is not a need for leaf burning with the current leaf vacuuming service provided by the city.

Jim Wilson, 502 Shannon: Stated he was in favor to ban leaf burning.

Karen McFarland, 801 Vine: Asked if the city provided the vacuum service in the spring. City Manager indicated that the city did offer the service.

Bill Johnston, 734 E Main: Stated he is in favor of leaf burning. He cited the survey that was completed in 2010 when 70% of the residents responded that they did not want a leaf burning ban. Mr. Johnston expressed that he was in favor of less restrictions and would like to burn leaves at any time.

John Sales, 1210 E College: While he has stopped burning leaves, he still wants the ability to burn sticks. Mr. Sales indicated he was not in favor of a ban on leaf burning.

Dr. Tracy Hall: Expressed concern about how smoke affects health, as she sees first hand as a physician. Dr. Hall commented that there is an increase of respiratory illness during the leaf burning season, and that she believes there is a correlation between leaf burning and hospital or doctor visits. She expressed concern about the medical cost for those who need to seek treatment for respiratory problems as the result of leaf burning. Dr. Hall cordially answered several audience and council inquiries.

Don Schmollinger, 834 E Oak: Mr. Schmollinger spoke of his own respiratory problems, and despite his health issues he wants to retain his right to burn leaves if he so chooses. He suggested that the council consider purchasing a smaller leaf vac that could access alleys.

Craig Boyd, 303 Steven: As an ethics professor, Mr. Boyd addressed the issue from an ethical perspective. Is the event (leaf burning) harmful or offensive, and concluded that leaf burning is harmful.

City Manger Willey provided some clarification that the discussion includes leaf burning, but

would not limit wood burning in fireplaces, wood burning furnaces, fire pits, or BBQ pits.

Ron Richards, Savannah Way: Mr. Richards stated that while he was an asthma sufferer, he did not experience significant burning in his neighborhood. He added that the product of burning depends on the conditions of burning.

Ann Zahniser, Linder Avenue: Ms. Zahniser spoke about study from the American Lung Association which does provide a connection between leaf burning season and respiratory illness.

Judy Cox, 304 N Fourth: Ms. Cox read aloud a letter on behalf of Theresa Holden which outlined the medical impact of smoke from leaf burning on her family members who suffer from asthma. Ms. Cox also commented that a ban on leaf burning is part of being a good neighbor.

Dr. Charlotte Seago: Dr. Seago stated that she is a retired pediatric physician and reiterated that pollution from smoke is harmful to babies and small children.

City Manager Willey read aloud an email received from Ardith Wylie, 907 Durley, in favor of a total ban of leaf burning.

Brad Shaw, 847 N Elm: Expressed his support of a total ban on leaf burning.

Holland Anthony, 801 Linder: Mr. Anthony questioned concern over where to place leaves due to the configuration of his property. Mr. Anthony expressed the desire to have solutions to problems and not just a ban on leaf burning. Due to the size and location of his lot, Mr. Anthony expends considerable time and money to rake leaves.

Pat Bond, Linder: Ms. Bond touched on the history of the issue. She said that she has studies that do not support a correlation between smoke and respiratory illness. Ms. Bond also stated that unrestricted burning would provide less problems because the smoke would not be as concentrated. Ms. Bond pointed out that EPA does not regulate leaf burning. Ms. Bond reported on what surrounding communities are doing; Vandalia offers leaf burning 8am – 5pm/all year, Hillsboro offers leaf burning sunrise to sunset/all year but not near church or school that is in session, Carlyle offers leaf burning noon to dusk/all year, and Alton has a plan similar to Greenville for Wednesday and Saturdays 10 am – 6pm/ Oct-Dec and Apr-May. Ms. Bond is in favor of leaf burning, and is a proponent to extend the leaf vacuuming season and have an open window for leaf burning.

Charles Morris, 114 E Main: Pointed out that both sides had made valid points, but that those who want to continue leaf burning have made an attempt to make accommodations.

Councilman Sanders asked Ms. Zahniser if she had approached the Bond County Board about a leaf burning ban in the county, to which she had not. Mayor Gaffner inquired if for residents that live near the city limits, if the burning is isolated to city residents or is burning in the county contributing to the issue.