

The Mayor called the question and on roll call, the vote was as follows:

Yea: Weaver, Jaszewski, Zook  
Nay: Marsters, Tornquist, Nelson  
(Motion failed.)

**28. Weaver – Water Tower Ideas:**

The following communication had been submitted by Council Member Weaver regarding approval for the Council to receive public input and to initiate discussions with Kraft Plant Manager John Michel regarding possibilities relating to the water tower and a Jell-O festival;

(As submitted: Water Tower Ideas)

Council Member Weaver stated he received an email from Council Member Tornquist wanting to know what initiative the City was taking to ideas from the community for decorating the new water tower and that led him to thinking about naming rights. He stated Corporate America was buying access to have the naming rights of different things, including water towers and described a conversation he had with the Mason City Kraft Plant Manager John Michel. He stated it was going to cost the City roughly two hundred thousand dollars to paint the water tower which was a fairly substantial amount of money but, if Kraft or someone else was interested in putting their company logo on the Water Tower, he thought it would be good for Mason City. He further stated Mr. Michel had said if there was Council interest and it was received warmly in the community, he (Michel) would be willing to explore the idea with the corporate company. Weaver also mentioned that next summer was the 20th anniversary of Jell-O snack pudding and Jell-O in the refrigerated container and discussed the possibilities of a Jello Festival stating the City had just invested almost a million in Central Park and he suggested putting it to good use adding everyone was doing something except Mason City and referred to examples of other festivals in surrounding communities.

**It was moved by Weaver and seconded by Jaszewski that the Council support discussions with John Michel of Kraft regarding naming rights and the festival and to also take public comment/input.**

Council Member Weaver stated there was no need to form a committee, the public could just send their ideas to the City Clerk's office and staff/Council could smoke things out.

Council Member Nelson stated he personally thought it was extremely inappropriate to place any specific name/logo of a private business or company on a public water tower advising he has traveled across the country and on very few occasions had he ever seen anything other than the community's name on a water tower. He stated his suggestion would be to paint the water tower so that it was consistent with the other water towers visible from the Avenue of the Saints and to place Mason City on the water tower, light or not light it (Council could decide) and use the Mr. Toot logo (if the majority of the Council found that acceptable). He also pointed out that if the Council wanted to talk about a logo advertising a certain company in the community they should discuss the cement plants, both of which had been in Mason City eighty five to one hundred years, as well as Curries (fifty years), and the YMCA (one hundred and fourteen years). Regarding citizens input he would solicit, value, and encourage the citizens to become involved in the decision making process however, some decisions such as the new water tower were decisions to be left up to the elected officials. He advised if the Council wanted to make a game out of it, or a contest, that was fine but the citizens should know the final decision was up to the Council. Regarding a festival he would support that one hundred percent since it was another activity that would bring people to

Mason City, however, he would encourage the festival, if it became a reality, and that the Kraft Food officials and Council Member Weaver work closely with the Mason City Chamber, Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Park Board on the promotion and site location emphasizing he sincerely looked forward to reading and hearing more about the suggested Kraft Jell-O Festival in the near future but he would not support any tax dollars to conduct a Jell-O festival with the exception of use of a City park and security.

Council Member Tornquist stated he thought the concept of a Jell-O festival was a great idea however, he had some of the same reservations Nelson had with putting a company logo on a public water tower adding that because of its proximity to the Avenue of the Saints, this water tower, more than any other, needed to represent the heart and soul of the community and so it needed to be non-controversial and represent Mason City rather than a good company in Mason City. He further stated he would hope the City could get some input from the public on how the Council might best represent the community and if nothing else the City could use the logo that was on it's business cards and letterhead reiterating he was very interested in getting public input prior to making a decision because it was his hope that it could be a decision that everyone in the community would be pleased and excited about.

Council Member Jaszewski stated he thought the Jell-O festival was a great idea and should be pursued further and as far as what the water tower should look like he was very open to the idea of public input acknowledging however, that the Council had the final say. As far as the naming rights, there were public stadiums all over the country that had corporate sponsors on them and most were built with public tax dollars which helped defray the cost. He stated the Council should at least explore the idea and see what comes of it.

Council Member Marsters stated with all the priorities and issues in the community it was amazing just how much effort and discussion the Council has put into the painting of the water tower. He stated the Council had talked about this for six months and it was hardly going to make any difference whether it was painted with a logo or not adding he has traveled from coast to coast several times and had been in all but two states, and with the exception with some very few, special, water towers, typically at factories, they were all the same, painted with different colors but bearing the City's name.

Mayor Bang asked the status of public input with City Engineer Wilfong stating at the time when this was put together, the previous City Administrator had directed staff to match the paint to the most recently painted tower which was the South Kentucky tower.

Mayor Bang asked who the public should contact at City Hall with Administrator Meyer stating they could contact the Administrator's office.

Council Member Marsters stated at the last meeting he had requested a figure on how much it would cost to paint the water tower exactly like the last water tower that was painted and he would like to have that information prior to making any decision with City Engineer Wilfong stating he would get that information.

Council Member Zook thought the festival idea was a great advising he has worked on the Band Festival for the past ten years and would be chairing another festival on July 14<sup>th</sup> of next year, so as long as it wasn't on July 14<sup>th</sup> he thought it was a great thing to do. He referred to Marster's and Nelson's comments regarding their travels and how they had seen very few specialized water towers and he would like to say that was precisely the reason the City should look at it, especially

if the City could get a sponsor like Kraft that would put some money toward it because that was money the taxpayers did not have to come up with and he would urge support of both ideas.

Council Member Nelson stated until Kraft Foods said “yes” they would do it for \$200,000 it wasn’t even worth discussing. He reflected on the water tower stating it was not economic development, it wasn't jobs, it did not make people pull off the interstate, shop, stay in motels or eat in our restaurants in Mason City emphasizing the Council/City was spending a lot of time on something that wasn’t that important to the community and suggested getting confirmation from Kraft and than going from there.

Council Member Zook stated for Kraft it would be advertising and corporations spent millions of dollars a year on advertising with the idea that if someone goes to buy groceries and sees the water tower they might think about buying Jell-O in the refrigeration section and if that happens they might sell more, and if they sell more, that might entail expansion and more jobs on 12<sup>th</sup> Street so he did think it was economic development.

City Engineer Wilfong stated the goal was to have a decision made by the middle of November so that staff had time to work with a contractor and get a price.

The Mayor called the question and on roll call, the vote was as follows:

Yea: Weaver, Jaszewski, Zook, Tornquist  
Nay: Marsters, Nelson  
(Motion was declared carried.)

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Council Member Nelson provided an update on the volunteer Park Watch stating there had been 23 calls to the Police Department regarding violations in the park. They currently had 19 volunteers and were still recruiting and if anyone was interested they should contact the City’s volunteer office at 421-3372. Council Member Marsters added that of all the calls made to the Police Department there was actually one that resulted in the capture of a person who had outstanding warrant.

Council Member Jaszewski reminded the public that the first Listening Post would be next Tuesday starting at 7:00 p.m. in the Newman School Cafeteria.

Council Member Weaver thanked the Council for supporting the motion he brought forward at the last meeting regarding hiring a Police Chief prior to hiring a City Administrator.

### **ADJOURN**

**It was moved by Marsters and seconded by Jaszewski that the meeting adjourn at 8: P.M.**

Yea: Marsters, Jaszewski, Nelson, Weaver, Tornquist, Zook  
(Motion was declared carried.)

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Roger Bang, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Tom Meyer, Interim City Clerk