

CITY OF BURTON
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 21, 2011, 6:00 P.M., COUNCIL CHAMBERS
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The Meeting was called to order by Councilwoman Ellen Ellenburg at 6:07 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ellenburg, Haskins and Wells.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mayor P. Zelenko, Chief D. Halstead, Attorney M. Joliat, and L.Young, Clerk's Office.

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING: Discussion and possible recommendations concerning the following:

1. Outdoor Wood Burner Ordinance

PRESENTATION:

Chief Halstead stated the City currently does not have an ordinance allowing or disallowing outdoor wood burners. He would like to see an ordinance written that bans the use of outdoor wood burners.

Mrs. Ellenburg explained that the emission of these wood burners are very high and causes problems for people with asthma. She likes the wording of Clio's ordinance.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

John Stapish, 5160 E. Atherton Rd., said he did not see a problem with outdoor wood burners and there has been no complaints, so there should not be a regulation.

Rick Fuhst, 1208 S. Genesee Rd., said he is familiar with outdoor wood burners and he has installed them before. If they are installed properly, there are no more emissions than a wood burning stove or fireplace. He does not see a reason to ban them outright.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

Mr. Wells asked Mr. Fuhst if he had installed an outdoor wood burner in the City of Burton. Mr. Fuhst replied that he had not.

Mr. Wells stated he knew someone who reduced his heating bill from \$400 to \$50.

Mrs. Ellenburg stated that outdoor wood burners must be built 300 feet from the house and 100 feet from the property line. The stack must be two feet higher than the tallest house. She expressed her concerns that people would burn treated wood. Mrs. Ellenburg explained that a gas furnace releases 5% emissions; a wood stove is less than 20% emissions, where an outdoor wood burner releases 160% emissions.

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Chief Halstead explained that emissions are higher for an outdoor wood burner because the heat given off by the fire heats the water and causes the fire to burn at a lower temperature, increasing the particulate matter. They smoke more and create more pollution. He does not have the staff to go and inspect these units. Chief Halstead also voiced his concerns that they would be prejudicial if they allowed them on certain lot sizes and not others.

Mr. Wells stated that burning wood has increased by 15% and we already have ordinances banning the burning of tires and treated wood.

Chief Halstead explained that his department goes on 622 runs a year on average and 196 of those runs are for outdoor fires and smoke investigations. These units are problematic and the City should be a comfortable place to live and without an ordinance there is no control. There are two units currently in Burton, one on Howe Rd. and one on Bristol Rd. The major cost of his department is from smoke investigations.

Mr. Wells said he has a hard time shutting something down that provides such a savings. Chief Halstead stated that it is more practical in the long run to install an indoor wood-burning stove, which are tested by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Mr. Haskins stated the use of biomass fuels has the same emissions as fossil fuels. Using an outdoor furnace would save enough fossil fuels to run a car for a year. He did not see why they should be banned outright, especially if people can save money.

Chief Halstead explained that there is a big difference in the particulate matter that is released because of the water in the outdoor wood burners. There is a big difference between these units and indoor wood burners, which burn hot.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Mr. Wells recommended that they discuss this topic further after the budget meetings are over to give them time to do research.

Mrs. Ellenburg recommended that they revisit the topic in about a month.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

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