

**CITY OF OCONTO FALLS
COMMON COUNCIL**

Council Chambers – Municipal Building
500 N. Chestnut Avenue - Oconto Falls, WI 54154

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2020 - 7:00 PM
MINUTES**

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM by Mayor Brad Rice

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Present: Mayor Brad Rice, Aldermen: Devin Wirtz, Jeff McDonald, Marty Coopman, Mathew McDermid, Kevin Rusch, and Tim Holman

Also present: City Attorney Larry Jeske, Deputy Clerk Nancy Brye, Police Chief Brad Olsen, Deputy Treasurer Eve Wallace, Street Superintendent Terry Magnin, Street Foreman Gerry Lemirande, Fire Chief Tim Magnin, and Utility Manager Greg Kuhn (arriving at 7:12 pm)

Excused: Administrator Vicki Roberts

Others: Samantha Doney, Ashley Bahrke, Debbie Arndt, Stephanie Holman, Barbara Salscheider, Kevin Sutrick, and Mark Krumrei

Approval of Minutes – Common Council Meeting on November 10, 2020.

MOTION: Holman / Wirtz

Motion to approve the minutes as presented for the Common Council Meeting on November 10, 2020.

Voice Vote: All present voting aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

Treasurer's Report – October

MOTION: McDermid / Holman

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented for October and place on file.

Voice Vote: All present voting aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

Bills Payable – November

MOTION: Rusch / Wirtz

Motion to approve the Bills Payable as presented for November.

Voice Vote: All present voting aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

Reports: written reports submitted

- ✓ Administrator Report
- ✓ Police Department Report
- ✓ Municipal Court Report
- ✓ Fire Department Report – verbal report only

Fire Chief informed the fire station server failed last Thursday. Jason from Wisconsin Computers is working on a solution and hopes to have the computers back up and running this week. The department took 20 calls in November and 3 already in December. There was a large fire at the end of November on County CC. The resident made it out okay but the home was a total loss. Multiple area fire departments were called in to assist through the MABAS system. It took over 88,900 gallons of water and 7 ½ hours to put out the fire.

- ✓ Street Department Report

Holman asked when the garbage cans and tables would be put out at the sledding hill. At this time there is no snow on the ground so Street Superintendent reassured that garbage cans, tables, and portable toilets would be in place as soon as we get snow. It was also mentioned that the Utility would get the tow rope running.

- ✓ Building Inspector Report

Wirtz asked about the dilapidated house at 210 S. Maple Avenue. City Attorney explained that the City was proceeding on three fronts; 1) a private sale; 2) County Tax Deed; 3) Circuit Court raze order. He said he would come back to Council for permission if the third alternative is needed.

- ✓ Utility Commission Report/Minutes

MOTION: Wirtz / Coopman

Motion to place monthly reports on file.

Voice Vote: All present voting aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL – Nothing to be addressed.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON ANY OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

Old Business:

- A. 2014 Kubota zero turn lawnmower.

Rusch tried working with Kubota regarding the 2014 zero turn lawnmower motor, but they have denied any help to repair or give any compensation. We will continue the search to see if a motor can be found before spring.

ITEM TABLED

New Business:

- A. Request for flea market in 2021.

Kevin Sutrick came before Council to see if he would be able to start up a flea market within the city in 2021. The first order of business in his planning is to find a suitable site. He originally thought the old Jefferson School site on the west side would be the ideal place but later found that the City only owns a small portion of the area; while Oconto Falls Area Heritage Center owns the rest. Another possible site was BP – Riverview Quick Mart parking lot, but Sutrick felt this area may be too small. He asked if it would be possible to use the Memorial Field Park for the potential site. Council discussed this option and thought it would be the better site. Sutrick was informed there is a rental fee of \$60 per day which will allow access to the restrooms. He would be responsible to make sure the park grounds are in order and garbage is picked up after each event. Sutrick said he is interested in having the flea market on Sundays during the months of May through September. He has about 21 vendors so far showing interest in setting up a booth. Sutrick was asked to come back before Council as his planning takes shape to report a more definite plan.

ITEM TABLED – No action taken at this time – Sutrick to report back

- B. City of Oconto Falls Main Street Planning Project – proposal for Project Services Agreement.

Ashley Bahrke explained the Main Street Committee met and reviewed submitted proposals after the city went out for service proposals on the Main Street Planning Project. The committee unanimously recommends that Council approve the proposal submitted by Redevelopment Resources as presented in the packet. The project is contingent on receiving grant approval.

MOTION: Rusch / McDonald

Motion to accept the recommendation of the Main Street Committee to approve the Project Services Agreement proposal submitted by Redevelopment Resources as presented for the Main Street Planning Project; contingent on receiving grant approval for the project.

Roll Call Vote: Rusch-yes, McDonald-yes, Coopman-yes, Wirtz-yes, McDermid-yes, Holman-yes; - **MOTION CARRIED**

- C. Senior Center Project – proposal for Architectural and Engineering Services for design and construction.

This project is also contingent on receiving grant approval. The city went out for proposals for architectural and engineering services for the design and construction on the Senior Center Project. Submitted proposals were reviewed and a recommendation was made to approve Ayres Associates proposal as presented in the packet. Although initial upgrades will be done using grant funds; Wirtz was concerned as to maintenance costs down the road with such a large project. The fact was reiterated that if we do not use the grant funds, we will lose them and there are very specific rules to what funds can be used on. Hopefully with the upgrades and vast improvements of the facility, it will be used more by the public and generate additional rental revenues. It was also pointed out that the only maintenance the city has done in the past to the Senior Center was to the parking lot and some drainage issues.

MOTION: Wirtz / Rusch

Motion to approve Ayres Associates Inc. proposal for architectural and engineering services for the design and construction on the Senior Center Project; and to come back with a design for final approval all contingent on receiving grant approval for the project.

Roll Call Vote: Wirtz-yes, Rusch-yes, McDonald-yes, Coopman-yes, McDermid-yes, Holman-yes; - **MOTION CARRIED**

D. Winter snow removal.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the Street Department's procedure for removing snow on Main Street. Currently the department does not use overtime to clear snow off of Main Street; they remove snow on Monday when the crew is on regular time. It has been practice for the last 20 years or more for the Mayor and City Administrator to make the decision if the Street Department is to work overtime or not on snow removal. Many practices were questioned and ideas were presented. A comment was made that Main Street is a state highway and difficult when semi-trailers meet on the roadway when there are snow piles in the way. A few would like to see Main Street cleared sooner rather than later for better access to businesses. It was suggested to at least remove the larger piles to clear some access. Street Superintendent Magnin and Street Foreman Lemirande commented that may cause issues with businesses; as some would complain that piles were removed in front other businesses and not theirs. They explained the crews come in very early Monday morning to remove snow from Main Street. Crews have to quit when the traffic picks up around 7 am because drivers do not detour to use side streets and it is too hard to work around the traffic. Police Chief Olsen added that if able, his department will direct traffic on occasions to enable the crew to finishing clearing snow. Complaints have been received that crews are clearing snow too early in the morning and this wakes people up. No matter what is done, there will be complaints and they can only do the best they can. Barb Salscheider owns a tavern on Main Street and was asked for her opinion. She had no complaints to the current procedures and said that she can use her own resources if needed. She also suggested possibly putting the snow piles in front of businesses that are not open on weekends. Lemirande said the street crews are not the ones making the piles on Main Street; it is done by whoever the businesses hire to remove snow from sidewalks. Lemirande stated that if crews are done earlier with snow plowing, they will remove Main Street piles if able to do so. They don't want the piles left there any longer than anyone else does. Lemirande explained how the dump truck used for hauling snow is also the truck used for salting. It was questioned as to how the City of Gillett gets their Main Street cleaned right away. The answer was that they do it on overtime. Years ago, the Finance Committee decided to cut down on overtime to trim the budget. There are exceptions to every rule. Currently there is no overtime figured into the budget for snow removal. For now we are just evaluating each snow fall case by case with the final decision being made by the Mayor and City Administrator. It was agreed that the Mayor, City Administrator, Police Chief, and Street Superintendent discuss this issue when the City Administrator returns from medical leave to see if they can come up with a better solution.

DISCUSSION ONLY – No action taken

E. Fire Department update.

Fire Chief Tim Magnin spoke of a 5 year goal plan for the Fire Department. There has been a recent change in the Assistant Fire Chief position and currently have an interim assistant.

Computer service was lost two times and we are in the process of fixing these issues. Call volume has increased this year with an approximate number of calls to be at 140 so far. Fire Chief has been spending more time on inspections and violations. There is a lot going on in the department and this all takes time. The department rating this year and next year is a Class 4. The goal is to try to get to a Class 3 in the next few years. This will require additional drills and training. More duties will be delegated to the lieutenant. There has been past discussion with surrounding communities to form a co-op but with COVID we did not move forward with large group meetings and things were put on hold. Gillett and Underhill are in automatic aid with other departments around us, but Magnin warned to be careful getting involved with this. He would like to meet with Council, City officials, and firefighters at a special meeting to form a long range planning committee to help better plan for budgeting purposes.

It was mentioned that the premise for hiring a full-time Fire Chief was to get the house in order and get discussion started with surrounding area fire department to form a co-op. Council would like to see these conversations started up again to see if there is any value with forming a co-op.

DISCUSSION ONLY – No action taken

F. Resolution 20-010; a resolution authorizing salary increases for employees.

This is a standard annual resolution discussed by the Finance Committee and has been put into the 2021 budget.

MOTION: Rusch / Coopman

Motion to approve Resolution 20-010; a resolution authorizing salary increases for employees as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Rusch-yes, Coopman-yes, Wirtz-yes, McDonald-yes, McDerimid-yes, Holman-yes; - **MOTION CARRIED**

G. Resolution 20-011; 2021 Utility Commission Budget Resolution.

Utility Manager Kuhn briefed the Council on the Utility Commission Budget:

- The Electric Utility is expecting power costs to drop slightly over the course of 2021. The Water and Sewer Utilities income and operational costs are projected to remain consistent for 2021.
- There is one shared cost project for the Water and Electric Utilities; the cost to install a new roof and fix the moldy insulation inside the utility building.
- There are two main projects for the Electric Utility: 1) to replace parking lot lights at city hall and replace street lights in Pleasant View, W. Highland Drive, and Ridge Road with fiberglass poles and new LED fixtures; 2) to complete the replacement of meter pedestals along Hillside Avenue and Mead Avenue. The total cost for these projects is approximately \$109,000. These costs have been allocated to the correct accounts within the Electric Budget.
- The major project for the Water Budget will be the Well 3 rehab. This is currently being reviewed for RFP and will be out before years end so the project can start in early 2021. The amount budgeted for this project is \$80,000.

- The major purchase for Sewer Utility will be a standby generator for the lift stations. This was budgeted for in 2020 but we had limited success in finding a quality used unit to meet our needs. \$20,000 was included in the budget for the purchase of a used generator.
- A 2 % wage increase was included in the budget for all employees in 2021.

MOTION: Rusch / Coopman

Motion to approve Resolution 20-011; 2021 Utility Commission Budget Resolution as presented.

Voice Vote: All present voting aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

H. Municipal Levy Limit Worksheet for 2021.

Deputy Treasurer informed the 2020 levy limit before adjustments was \$1,153,911. We are taking the same adjustment for general obligation debt authorized after July 1, 2005 as last year which is \$235,385; for a 2020 payable - 2021 allowable levy of \$1,389,296.

MOTION: Rusch / Wirtz

Motion to approve the Municipal Levy Limit Worksheet for 2021 as presented.

Voice Vote: All present voting aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

I. 2021 Proposed Budget.

Everyone here was also in attendance of the Public Hearing held at 6:45 pm this evening. The only changes made to the budget were basically a wash reflected from the cable revenue:

- Rent Revenue (line 218) increased by \$12,000 due to cable rent revenue; bringing this line to \$52,255.
- General Fund Balance (line 229) reduced to reflect the change made above; bringing this line to \$104,838.

MOTION: McDermid / McDonald

Motion to approve the 2021 Proposed Budget as presented with the amended changes to the Rent Revenue and General Fund Balance lines.

Roll Call Vote: McDermid-yes, McDonald-yes, Rusch-yes, Coopman-yes, Wirtz-yes, Holman-yes; - **MOTION CARRIED**

J. 2021 Proposed Fee Schedule.

Two changes were made from the 2020 Fee Schedule:

- 1) Update garbage bag fees to reflect pack quantity. There was not an increase in the per bag fee, just the number of bags in a pack changed with the new vendor.
- 2) Eliminated the snowmobile registration fee.

MOTION: McDermid / Wirtz

Motion to approve the 2021 Proposed Fee Schedule as presented.

Voice Vote: All present voting aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

K. Extension on Wild Rivers Forestry Timber Contract on city land.

Mayor Rice explained Wild Rivers Forestry was unable to harvest the timber due to weather conditions this past year. They are asking for an additional year extension on their contract.

MOTION: Rusch / McDonald

Motion to approve the requested one (1) year extension on the timber contract with Wild River Forestry as presented.

Voice Vote: All present voting aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

L. Operator's License Applications: One year: Kelly S. Berkovitz.

The applicant has completed the Beverage Server Class and filed proper application with the City to obtain an operator's license. Chief Olsen completed a background check and has signed off on the application.

MOTION: Rusch / Wirtz

Motion to approve the operator's license application for Kelly S. Berkovitz as presented.

Voice Vote: All present voting aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

M. Adjournment.

Mayor Rice asked if there was any further business before the meeting is adjourned. Having no further business, he declared the meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.

City Administrator Vicki A. Roberts