

The Independence City Council met in regular session in the council chambers at 5:00 p.m., on Monday, April 22, 2024.

OPENING/ROLL CALL

Mayor Bleichner opened the meeting by calling the meeting to order with Council Members Weber, Huston, Hanna, Moore, Prusator, O’Loughlin, and Jensen in attendance.

This meeting was available for public attendance. The meeting was also broadcast on the local access channel.

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Motion by Council Member O’Loughlin, second by Council Member Prusator to approve the agenda as presented for the regular meeting held April 22, 2024. Ayes: All.

PUBLIC COMMENT

John Kurtz and Daniel Walter, spoke about the Ambulance Essential Service Task Force and the work being done to get the County EMS levy on the ballot for November 2024.

Mark Crawford, Crawford Engineering, presented updates on the 2nd Street SW Bridge and 8th Avenue SW Pedestrian Bridge Rehabilitation Project and the 2024 Street Rehabilitation Project.

Mayor Bleichner read a proclamation declaring May 5 - 11, 2024, as Municipal Clerks Week.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Council Member Jensen, second by Council Member Moore to accept and approve the consent agenda that approves the following: 1) The minutes of the April 8, 2024, Special Meeting. 2) The minutes of the April 8, 2024, Regular Meeting. 3) The Crowbar Class C Retail Alcohol license renewal that includes outdoor service effective May 15, 2024, through May 14, 2025. 4) Allerton Brewing Company Class C Retail Alcohol license amendment for ownership updates. 5) Independence Park & Recreation (Complex) Class C Retail Alcohol license application effective May 11, 2024, through May 10, 2025. Ayes: All.

FINANCIALS

Motion by Council Member Prusator, second by Council Member Jensen to approve the following bills for payment. Ayes: All.

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| ADVANCE AUTO PARTS | VEH REPAIR-PD | \$ 12.86 |
| AHERN | SERVICES-PR | \$ 339.00 |
| ALLEN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH | SERVICES-B,PD | \$ 356.00 |
| AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES | SUPPLIES-B,CH,L | \$ 2,632.41 |
| ASSURITY LIFE INSURANCE | ASSUR CRIT ILL | \$ 461.34 |
| BEAM INSURANCE ADMIN LLC | VISION PRETAX | \$ 471.57 |
| BERNARD, AIDAN | UMPIRE-PR | \$ 20.00 |
| BLACKSTONE PUBLISHING | SUPPLIES-L | \$ 183.58 |
| BODENSTEINER IMPLEMENT 01 | VEH REPAIR-ST | \$ 116.59 |
| BOLTON & MENK, INC. | SERVICES-A | \$ 316.50 |
| BRODART CO | SUPPLIES-L | \$ 583.33 |
| BROWN-LANE INSURANCE | INSUR-A | \$ 6,588.00 |
| BUCHANAN COUNTY HEALTH CE | SERVICES-CH | \$ 11,271.00 |
| BURCO SALES | EQUIP-PR | \$ 8,700.00 |
| CARD SERVICES-LIBRARY | MISC EXP-L | \$ 707.56 |
| CARD SERVICES-VISA | MISC EXP-PR,PD,F | \$ 4,006.00 |
| CASS LASER ENGRAVING | SUPPLIES-PD | \$ 192.00 |
| CENGAGE LEARNING | BOOKS-L | \$ 52.48 |
| CHARLES CITY BASEBALL CLB | TOURNEY FEES-PR | \$ 300.00 |
| CONSOLIDATED ENERGY CO | FUEL-ALL | \$ 6,878.59 |
| CY & CHARLEY'S FIRESTONE | SERVICES-PD | \$ 477.58 |
| DELTA DENTAL OF IOWA | DENTAL BENEFIT | \$ 4,294.98 |
| DEMCO | SUPPLIES-L | \$ 216.98 |

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| DIRT DIAMOND DIVAS | REFUND-PR | \$ 300.00 |
| EAST-CENTRAL IOWA R.E.C. | UTILITY-A,PR,ST,W,CH | \$ 3,021.27 |
| EASTERN IOWA EXCAVATING | SERVICES-A | \$ 15,679.75 |
| EMPLOYEE BENEFIT SYSTEMS | SAFE-T FUND-ALL | \$ 3,708.16 |
| FIRE SERVICE TRAINING BUR | TRAINING-FD | \$ 50.00 |
| GALLS INC | UNIFORM-PD | \$ 193.88 |
| HAWKEYE COMMUNITY COLLEGE | TRAINING-PD | \$ 485.00 |
| HAWKEYE FIRE & SAFETY COM | SERVICES-L | \$ 36.00 |
| IA DEPT OF PUBLIC HEALTH | FEES-PR | \$ 105.00 |
| IA DEPT OF REVENUE | SALES TAX-PR,W | \$ 8,691.05 |
| IA POLICE CHIEFS ASSOC. | TRAINING-PD | \$ 300.00 |
| ICMA | DUES-CH | \$ 655.20 |
| IIMC | DUES-CH | \$ 150.00 |
| INDEPENDENCE LIGHT & POWE | UTILITIES-ALL | \$ 25,523.74 |
| INDEPENDENCE PLUMBING HEA | SERVICES-PR | \$ 310.23 |
| INDEPENDENCE ROTARY CLUB | DUES-L | \$ 143.00 |
| INGRAM LIBRARY SERVICES | BOOKS-L | \$ 269.78 |
| INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE | FED/FICA TAX | \$ 25,974.76 |
| INTERSTATE ALL BATTERY CE | MISC EXP-F,W | \$ 187.50 |
| IPERS | IPERS-PROTECTIV | \$ 33,512.58 |
| JASPER CONSTRUCTION SERV | SERVICES-ST | \$ 137,058.40 |
| LAKE, DAN | REIMBURSE-L | \$ 40.60 |
| LEGALSHIELD | FAM LEG & IDENT | \$ 138.65 |
| LYNCH DALLAS, PC | LEGAL EXP-CH | \$ 1,216.36 |
| MAVERICK POWERSPORTS | REPAIR-W | \$ 12.95 |
| METLIFE | MET ER LIFEAD&D | \$ 1,048.85 |
| MIDAMERICAN ENERGY COMPAN | UTILITY-CH,L,ST,W | \$ 2,863.82 |
| MIDSTATES EQUIP & SUPPLY | EQUIP MAINT-ST | \$ 4,027.48 |
| MURPHY TRACTOR & EQUIPMEN | VEH REPAIR-ST | \$ 1,286.40 |
| NORTHWAY WELL AND PUMP CO | EQUIP REPAIR-W | \$ 45,432.91 |
| OELWEIN PUBLISHING COMPAN | PUBLICAT-CH,W | \$ 249.38 |
| OFFICE EXPRESS OFFICE PRD | SUPPLIES-L | \$ 304.78 |
| OFFICE TOWNE INC | SUPPLIES-CH,PR | \$ 829.18 |
| P & N CORPORATION | FUEL PROFITS-A | \$ 247.24 |
| PAYROLL CHECKS | TOTAL PAYROLL CHECKS | \$ 81,042.77 |
| PORTOLITE PITCHING MOUNDS | EQUIPMENT-PR | \$ 17,490.00 |
| PRINT EXPRESS | SUPPLIES-PR | \$ 150.00 |
| PURCHASE POWER | POSTAGE-B,CH,W | \$ 270.99 |
| S & K COLLECTIBLES | SHIPPING-W | \$ 16.26 |
| SHONK, SHERI | BOOKS-L | \$ 12.00 |
| STATE HYGIENIC LABORATORY | LAB ANALYSIS-W | \$ 529.00 |
| STATE STREET BANK & TRUST | ICMA-RC \$ PRE | \$ 5,584.64 |
| STENGER, CARMEN | REFUND-PR | \$ 125.00 |
| STRAND ASSOCIATES | SERVICES-W | \$ 193,530.00 |
| SUPERB CLEANING SERVICES | BLDG MAINT-L | \$ 1,850.00 |
| TASC | FLEX MEDICAL | \$ 1,356.71 |
| TREASURER-STATE OF IOWA | STATE TAX | \$ 7,558.67 |
| US CELLULAR | PHONE-B,L,PD | \$ 854.37 |
| USA BLUE BOOK | SUPPLIES-W | \$ 232.12 |
| VERIZON WIRELESS | PHONE-CH,PD,PR,F | \$ 172.74 |
| WALMART COMMUNITY | SUPPLIES-L | \$ 193.80 |
| WASTE MANAGEMENT | GARBAGE-A,PR,W | \$ 1,825.04 |
| WELLMARK BCBS | HEALTH BENEFIT | \$ 44,777.32 |
| WESTERN DUBUQUE YOUTH BAE | TOURNEY FEES-PR | \$ 300.00 |
| WICKS CONSTRUCTION, INC. | SERVICES-A | \$ 653.12 |

CLAIMS TOTAL \$721,756.80; General Fund \$185,554.37; Library \$26,420.83; Streets Dept-Road Use \$33,867.37; Employee Benefits 4800.21; Cap Project-Bridges \$137,058.40; Parks & Rec Projects \$17,490.00; Cap Project-Airport \$16,649.37; Cap Outlay Savings/LOST \$9,034.51; Water Fund \$63,559.67; Sewer Utility Fund \$227,613.91; Self Insurance \$3,700.16; Self Insurance-Enterprise \$8.00.

REVENUES MONTH TO DATE TOTAL \$2,301,366.40; General Fund \$804,062.20; Library \$35,300.91; Streets Dept-Road Use \$69,369.36; Employee Benefits \$398,005.13; Emergency Levy \$21,310.75; Tax Increment Financing \$327,645.72; Economic Development \$15,844.00; Debt Service \$280,391.75; Debt-Special Assessments \$2,184.00; Park & Rec Projects \$4,600.00; Cap Outlay Savings/LOST \$10,655.37; Cap Project-Highway 150 \$162,850.31; Water Fund \$33,978.75; Water Revenue Bond \$7,824.59; Sewer Utility \$62,025.10; Sewer SRF Sinking Fund \$7,996.66; Sewer Sinking Revenue Bond \$42,422.66; Storm Water \$5,449.24; Self Insurance \$9,396.95; Self Insurance-Enterprise \$52.95.

The April 2024 budgeted monthly transfers and the revenues and expenses by department to date were available for council review and discussion.

HEARINGS & ORDINANCES

Council Member Jensen with a motion to set May 13, 2024, at 5:00 pm as a Public Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Amendment #2, second by Council Member Moore. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: Huston, Hanna, Moore, Prusator, O'Loughlin, Jensen, and Weber.

RESOLUTIONS

Mayor Bleichner stated at the April 8th meeting, Council passed a resolution authorizing a 3% increase for the City Manager which was the same amount as other City employees. He was not pleased with how that went and did not sign the resolution on April 9th. He felt that more consideration needed to be given to this. He discussed with the City Attorney how to proceed without vetoing the resolution and came to the conclusion of reconsidering the resolution. Mayor Bleichner spoke of City Manager Schmitz's work performance. Council Member Huston with a motion to reconsider the previously approved Resolution 2024-22 be considered, second by Council Member Moore. Mayor Bleichner stated two items need to happen for this to proceed. Council must first approve the reconsideration and then if that passes, Council will then have a separate motion to approve the revised resolution. Council Member Moore is in favor of the reconsideration because when he was on the committee to compile the City Manager's evaluation, City Manager Schmitz exceeded expectations and should be rewarded. Council Member Jensen asked if a merit-based increase had been looked at for all City employees. City Manager Schmitz stated it is a long-term goal of his to do that. He had wanted to do that for Fiscal Year 2025, but with budget constraints that was removed. Council Member Jensen stated that would be a good direction for the City to move towards. Council Member Moore feels that all department heads should be evaluated on a merit-based system. Council Member Hanna asked if the merit-based system should be done at the same time for all the department heads. Council Member Moore would be interested in seeing if re-evaluations could be done for department heads wages for Fiscal Year 2025. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: Moore, Prusator, O'Loughlin, Jensen, and Huston. Nays: Hanna and Weber

Council Member Moore with a motion to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the attached resolution No. 2024-22A, approving a salary increase of 4% effective, July 1, 2024, for the City Manager, second by Council Member Huston. Council Member Hanna asked what this would do to the morale of department heads if this happens? Mayor Bleichner said Council can discuss department head morale, but the City Manager's morale is also important. She said he does a good job and is getting paid well for it. She received a phone call from a resident saying if she votes no for this, then it could mean she is not in favor of him. That is not the reason for her to change her mind on this. She feels it should be done for all the department heads. Council Member Jensen stated how she is looking at this is that when she is a work, she is able to go above her position to get help with an issue. That person then has to deal with the issue. Council Member O'Loughlin said that is why he changed his vote as well because City Manager Schmitz has to deal with issues. Council Member Weber stated that all the comments made could be applied to the department heads. He feels that the merit increase should be done for all department heads but feels that City Manger Schmitz should be held at the 3% increase since the merit increase couldn't be done for department heads for Fiscal Year 2025. Council Member Prusator said that chain of command is something that the City pushes to be followed, then it will be on City Manager Schmitz's shoulders to implement the merit-based increase for department heads. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: Moore, Prusator, O'Loughlin, Jensen, and Huston. Nays: Weber and Hanna.

Resolution adopted and upon approval by Mayor assigned No. 2024-22A in the Official Book of Resolutions.

Council Member Prusator with a motion to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the resolution that accepts the work covering the Airport Taxiway & Apron Expansion project and to authorize the City Manager to sign the Certificate of Substantial Completion, second by Council Member Jensen. Airport Manager Soukup said the project is finished, but there had been areas of reseeding done last fall that they are waiting to make sure the grass takes

hold. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: Prusator, O'Loughlin, Jensen, Weber, Huston, Hanna, and Moore.

Resolution adopted and upon approval by Mayor assigned No. 2024-31 in the Official Book of Resolutions.

Council Member Prusator with a motion to set May 13, 2024, at 5:00 pm as a Public Hearing on the proposal to enter into a Sewer Revenue Loan and Disbursement Agreement and to borrow money thereunder in a principal amount not to exceed \$2,178,000, second by Council Member Moore. Council Member O'Loughlin asked if the interest rate was 0%? City Manager Schmitz said this is for the planning and design portion of the project and it will be at 0% interest until it gets rolled over into the construction loan and then interest will start. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: O'Loughlin, Jensen, Weber, Huston, Hanna, Moore, and Prusator.

Resolution adopted and upon approval by Mayor assigned No. 2024-32 in the Official Book of Resolutions.

Council Member Huston with a motion to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the resolution that authorizes the City Manager to sign a Contract for Services with the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments for completion of an income verification process for the City of Independence, second by Council Member Jensen. Mayor Bleichner reported this is related to Low and Moderate Income and there is a \$350 application fee per application submitted. Council Member O'Loughlin asked if this was a grant match the City is applying for? City Manager Schmitz said this is the income verification piece for the home rehabilitation or down payment assistance program the City offers residents when funds are available. Council Member Hanna asked when this would be advertised? City Manager Schmitz said more information will be available within the next few months. City Clerk/Treasurer Lampe said an update can be done at the May 6th work session as she is working on details still. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: Jensen, Weber, Huston, Hanna, Moore, Prusator, and O'Loughlin.

Resolution adopted and upon approval by Mayor assigned No. 2024-33 in the Official Book of Resolutions.

OTHER BUSINESS

Council Member Moore with a motion to approve Change Order #3 for the Airport Taxiway & Apron Expansion Project with a decrease to the contract in the amount of \$16,719.80 and to authorize the City Manager to sign the Change Order, second by Council Member Weber. City Manager Schmitz acknowledged Airport Manager Soukup's efforts in paying attention to detail as that resulted in this change order. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: Weber, Huston, Hanna, Moore, Prusator, O'Loughlin, and Jensen.

Council Member Moore with a motion to approve Change Order #1 for the Baseball/Softball Complex Field Turf Project with an increase to the contract in the amount of \$26,000.00 and to authorize the City Manager to sign the Change Order, second by Council Member Jensen. Park & Recreation Director Beatty explained this change order will allow for sod to be used instead of seeding on the fields. The amount of sod in the change order may not all be used but wanted to err on the side of caution. If less is used, then there will be a future change order to reflect the unused portion. Council Member Moore asked if the sod would have enough time to take root? Park & Recreation Director Beatty said that sod takes hold in approximately two weeks where grass seed would take 21 days to sprout. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: Huston, Hanna, Moore, Prusator, O'Loughlin, Jensen, and Weber.

REPORTS

The following comments were heard from Council and Staff: Weber – He had an individual reach out to him about the golf cart ordinance addressing 4 wheels versus 3 wheels. City Clerk- Replied that it would best be answered by the Police Department as they inspect golf carts and register them. Police Department – Had spoken to Council Member Weber about golf carts earlier. He would not be opposed to looking at purposed ordinance amendment language to address the number of wheels a golf cart has. Huston – Still waiting to hear from Caitlin Clark to respond on being the grand marshal for the 4th of July parade. Other than that, he is pleased as punch. Hanna – She was asked about the boat dock down at the river and that it is in bad condition. She made the comment that some yards are starting to look bad and asked if the code enforcement will be stepped up to address this or if it will be contracted out? Parks & Recreation – He was hoping that the new boat dock would have replaced the old one, but the new one was placed elsewhere. He would have to see if there are grants available to help fund repairs. Parks mowers have just started this week. The contractor for the inclusive park will be here the week of April 29th and hopes to have it open mid to late May. Moore – There will be another cemetery meeting this Wednesday at 7:00 pm at the Falcon Civic Center. Jensen – Thanked the Police Department for following up about that traffic concern. Mayor – Gave an overview of the quarterly meeting with AMR. There will be an update about the childcare study at the May 6th work session which will be at the Library. May is Mental Health Awareness Month and there will be a proclamation at the first meeting in May. He finished his "Minute with Mayor" article and that should be in Wednesday's Bulletin Journal. City Manager – Council could change the golf cart ordinance if they wish. Regarding contracted mowing

services, it has not been looked at yet due to other job demands. The new Building Official is now on board and he can start to work on this. He has not heard from any Council Members about getting a vehicle for the Building Official and encouraged Council to reach out to him again. Independence Premium Foods has started third shift operations and are now starting to make actual product. There are currently 94 employees.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Council Member Moore, second by Council Member Prusator to adjourn. Ayes: All.

Whereupon Mayor Bleichner declared the meeting adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

Brad Bleichner, Mayor of the City of Independence, Iowa

ATTEST:

Susi Lampe, IaCMC, IaCFO, City Clerk/Treasurer of the City of Independence, Iowa

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