



MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 07, 2023 AT 6:30 PM

COUNCIL ROOM, MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 450 S. MAIN ST., RICHLAND CENTER, WI 53581 & VIRTUALLY

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Coppernoll called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Alderpersons present were Karin Tepley, Tom McCarthy, Mark Chambers, Melony Walters, Kevin Melby, Steve Downs, and Ryan Cairns. Alderperson Connie Hoppenjan was absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Alderperson Walters to approve the Common Council minutes October 3, 2023 as presented. Seconded by Chambers. Motion carried 7-0.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion by Alderperson Tepley to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by McCarthy. Motion carried 7-0.

INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION – IMPACT LIFE BLOOD SERVICES

Erica Davidson, Territory Manager with Impact Life Blood Services presented. Impact Life Blood Services is a non-profit organization that provides blood and blood products to patients in need at locations throughout Wisconsin, Iowa, and Missouri, including the Richland Hospital, Reedsburg Area Medical Center, and SSM Health in Baraboo locally. Davidson said there is currently a 3-day supply of Type O blood and the optimal level should be a 5-7 day supply. Two blood drives are coming up in Richland Center on November 28th and December 14th. Davidson noted that people can help by simply donating blood and encouraging a friend to donate blood.

INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION – COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT ON THE RECONFIGURATION PROCESS FOR THE CAMPUS

Candace Pesch, Richland County Administrator, reported that the county is in the early stages of a reconfiguration of the UW-Richland property. The county is still involved with a lease with the UW System, but it has been announced that the campus will be closing. Pesch said that the county will be engaging in an open and transparent proposal process for the property. She noted that an RFP process has taken place and the response has been very good and encouraging. A walk-through of the campus building is planned for November 30th. It's anticipated that a contractor for the reconfiguration will be selected in January.

CITY AND UTILITY DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS AND CONCERNS: Economic Development Director Jasen provided an update on various projects including the traffic study and planning on the Highway 14 corridor on the east side of the city. He noted that the DOT has decided to conduct a complete road replacement of that portion of Highway 14 in the coming years. Glasbrenner has been working with various elements of the Richland Hospital relocation project, has been engaged with Southwest Wisconsin Regional Planning on possible TIF districts and access to various grant programs. He also stated that the wayfinding signs have received the go-ahead from DOT and permits will be issued soon. The EPA consultant has provided their final draft and plan and should be finalized by the end of the year regarding Orange Street corridor. Panorama Estates building #2 & #3 projects are moving forward and Ehlers is working on financial models.

Wastewater Superintendent Todd Fischer provided an update on the recent issue related to the Richland Center Renewable Energy plant that serves the wastewater needs of the Schreiber Foods and Foremost Farms dairy

processing plants in Richland Center. Fischer stated that the RCRE facility was upset this fall and the city's wastewater facility received waste from the RCRE plant on an emergency basis. As of November 2nd, the city's facility was no longer receiving the RCRE waste. Fischer said the utility and RCRE would be working on a standby agreement should future issues arise.

Clerk/Treasurer Aaron Joyce noted that December 1st is the first opportunity candidates may circulate nomination papers for elected positions. In the City of Richland Center, the 2-year terms for mayor and Alderpersons will be decided this spring. Joyce also reported that Deputy Clerk/Treasurer-Accountant Shawn Walsh would be retiring effective December 1st.

City Administrator Ashley Oliphant said a reevaluation of the Clerk/Treasurer's office is taking place, with the positions of Clerk and Treasurer being their own positions. The Deputy Clerk/Treasurer-Administration will become an administrative assistant. In addition, Oliphant has been working with Police Chief Billy Jones on filling the vacant administrative assistant position in the police department.

Library Director Stacey Pilla reported that a part-time employee at the library was promoted to a full-time position. Pilla also said they continue to look to fill the Programming Coordinator and library assistant positions. Finally, she noted that the Library Board is looking at improving building security.

Police Chief Billy Jones reported that his department and members of Partners for Prevention recently conducted alcohol compliance checks. 17 establishments were checked and there were four failures. Jones stated that Lt. Lauren Moe is participating in a 3-week Leadership in Law Enforcement Training. The CRO position is going very well with many positive reports. Chief Jones said there were no issues that resulted from Halloween. Finally, Jones noted that there is still an open police offer position in the department and the applicant will likely have to be sponsored through the police academy.

MAYOR AND ALDERPERSONS: Mayor Coppernoll thanked everyone who organized the first ever Pumpkinfest in the city. Sheila Troxel, representing Pumpkinfest, also thanked everyone for helping make it a success including the employees with City Utilities who put the banners on the poles. Troxel said that planning for next year is already underway.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Motion by Alderperson Towns to approve the 10/31/2023 Treasurer's report as presented. Seconded by Walters. Motion carried 7-0.

PAYMENT OF BILLS: Motion by Alderperson Tepley to pay the 11/07/2023 bills as presented. Seconded by Melby. Motion carried 7-0.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION:

4. **Consider the Request of Land Division on Tax Parcel 276-1712-1000 at 1000 US Highway 14 W.**

Attorney Windle advised to adjourn this item to a later time as there is a potential issue. Motion by Alderperson McCarthy to postpone the request of Land Division on Tax Parcel 276-1712-1000 at 1000 US Highway 14 W to a later date. Seconded by Chambers. Motion carried 7-0.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION:

5. **Consider Purchase of Police Squad Vehicle and Related Equipment**

Chief Jones requested to replace chief's squad car that was repurposed and issued to the Community Resource Officer position was introduced. Chief Jones requested to use unallocated contingency funds to purchase a squad truck. Jones Chief said a truck would be

utilized to assist with extra duties like firearms training. Dealerships were contacted to inquire about availability of 2023 or 2024 vehicles. 10 sealed bids were received from three dealerships: Fillback, Jones, & Sleepy Hollow. Jones noted that the 2024 black Silverado from Jones's Chevrolet was the best fit for what he intends to use it for. The quoted cost of that vehicle was \$47,500. In addition, radio and other equipment would need to be installed, bringing the total cost of the squad truck and equipment to approximately \$55,500. Motion by Alderperson Cairns to authorize the purchase of a 2024 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 from Jones Chevrolet and related radio equipment from the unallocated contingency fund at a cost not to exceed \$56,000, with funds coming from Unallocated Contingency in the 2023 budget. Seconded by Tepley. Motion carried 7-0.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION:

6. **Status of the N/S portion East 5th Street on Parcel 276-1635-8500 and its potential use for public travel**

Attorney Windle noted that the property in question could be dedicated as a street; however, it's the common council that has the right to ultimately make that determination. What is being used as an unpaved street is maintained by the city and used for access to adjacent properties whose neighbors are requesting it be dedicated for public travel and paved. Wastewater Superintendent Todd Fischer says the street should not be paved until the utility work underneath is complete. Fischer noted that future utility developments would start at 4th and Main Street and continue up into the neighborhood in question, and any upgrades to the storm sewer beneath would require what's being requested to be paved to be torn up within the next few years. He said it's simply not worth paving the property in question right now. Attorney Windle added that there are adjoining structures in that area that may be subject to a raze order because they would be nonconforming within the right-of-way. Structures within that proximity of a private drive are not subject to the same restrictions of a street. Windle also said that designating it a public street would require the installation of curb & gutter and the city could not leave it as is. Attorney Windle requested that this item be adjourned to a future meeting. Motion by Alderperson Walters to adjourn this topic to a future meeting to allow Attorney Windle to research the obligations the city has for declaring the roadway a street. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 7-0.

7. **Report on Potential Redevelopment of Jefferson Elementary – Economic Development Director**

Jasen Glasbrenner reported that there is an attempt to redevelop Jefferson Elementary. Cary Norman has been approved by the school district to purchase the property. Norman is working with the city to allow multiple uses for the property. It will go before the Planning Commission for review and a public hearing. Action by the Common Council could be as early as January.

8. **Consider Approval of a City Donation Policy**

Attorney Windle said that this policy is needed to be defined more clearly to meet the city's needs. This donation policy would set a \$5,000 limit for department heads to accept a donation. Larger would require council action to accept to determine if it's in the best interest of the community. Any donation would need to go through the donation acceptance process outlined in the policy. Windle added that a tiered system of acceptance could also be implemented. For example, donations of \$500 or less could be accepted by the department head, \$501-\$5,000 by the city administrator, and over \$5,000 would require

council acceptance. Alderperson Tepley noted that the history room at the Brewer Library accepts many varying donations. Windle advised that donations to the library are somewhat unique and the disposition of those library donations would be subject to the library board. Alderperson Cairns asked how donations that would require maintenance and upkeep would be handled. Motion by Alderperson Chambers to adjourn this item to the next council meeting. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 7-0.

9. **Introductory Presentation by City Attorney, including Review of the Office, Initial Findings and Recommendations**

Attorney Windle provided a presentation that defined his role as city attorney. He noted that his services are available to all city representatives and he operates in the best interest of the city. Of his initial review of findings, conclusions, and recommendations, he feels there needs to be trainings for public officials and employees, and established clear areas of authority by the administrator and council. No action was taken by the council.

10. **Discussion and Possible Action in Relation to the Restructure of the Clerk/Treasurer's Office and Amendment of Applicable Ordinances**

Administrator Oliphant said that with an impending retirement in the Clerk/Treasurer's office, it allowed for an examination of the possible restructure of the department. It was determined that a separation of the current Clerk/Treasurer position into two separate positions was the preferred path forward. In addition, the Deputy Clerk/Treasurer-Administrative position would serve as a general administrative assistant to the city offices in the municipal building. Because the Clerk/Treasurer position is a Charter Ordinance, it would not take effect for 60 days after adoption. It was noted that the positions are appointed and not "hired" positions as has been done with the most recent Clerk/Treasurers. A formal appointment would need to take place for both positions. Statute allows for five options for appointment: 1. appointment by mayor, 2. appointment by the mayor subject to confirmation by council, 3. appointment by the council, 4. election by the voters, 5. selection under any of the above methods, the selection to be made from an eligible established under statutes. Mayor Coppernoll urged consistency with all appointed positions including clerk, treasurer, city attorney, and assessor. Motion by Alderperson Melby to suspend the rules, waive the readings, and adopt Chapters 43 and 44 creating the offices of City Treasurer and City Clerk and with amendments requiring 2/3 members present to approve appointment by council. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 6-1, with Alderperson Cairns dissenting.

APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS, BOARDS AND CONFIRM APPOINTMENTS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: Attorney Windle thanked the council for allowing him to serve.

ADJOURN: Motion by Alderperson Downs to adjourn. Seconded by Walters. Motion carried 7-0 at 9:34 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Aaron Joyce, City Clerk