



MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 05, 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 6:33 PM. Alderpersons present were Connie Hoppenjan, Karin Tepley, Tom McCarthy, Mark Chambers, Melony Walters, Kevin Melby, Steve Downs, and Ryan Cairns.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Alderperson Melby to approve the Common Council Minutes of November 7, 2023 as presented. Seconded by McCarthy. Motion carried 8-0.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: It was noted that the 2022 city audit presentation would not take place because of scheduling issues. Motion by Alderperson Tepley to approve the agenda with the 2022 city audit presentation removed. Seconded by Walters. Motion carried 8-0.

INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION – MSA HWY 14 TRAFFIC STUDY: Economic Development Director Jasen Glasbrenner introduced Andy Zimmer and Eric Frailing from MSA Professional Services regarding the Highway 14 traffic study. It was noted that the study will be examined more in depth at the next Planning Commission meeting. Frailing said the draft report is currently under review. There are 1.1 miles between Starlight Lane and Jelland Drive that were examined. Traffic counts were conducted to help build background analysis for the project. 42 traffic crashes have occurred along that stretch of corridor in the last five years, mostly resulting in property damage and some minor injuries. Crash rates were lower than statewide averages for similar corridors. The Wisconsin DOT is proposing upgrades to the County O intersection. The city requested MSA look at frontage and backage roads in that area. MSA recommends moving forward with a frontage road for potential hospital development. The study also examined the Pine River Trail intersection with motor vehicle crossings and found no reported incidents at motor vehicle crossings.

CITY AND UTILITY DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS AND CONCERNS: Library Director Stacy Pilla reported that the library has filled the full-time library position and still has a part-time position open. Pilla also noted the library board will meet at 5:00 PM on the regular scheduled evenings. Police Chief Billy Jones reported that Sarah Mulry has started as the department's new Administrative Assistant. Economic Development Director Jasen Glasbrenner noted that he will be providing regular reports to the Finance Committee and the latest report is in the current Finance Committee meeting packet. City Clerk Aaron Joyce reported that anyone interested in taking out nomination papers for city elected positions can do so now. All paperwork is due to the clerk's office by 5:00 PM on Tuesday, January 2nd. Attorney Michael Windle stated that he is continuing to work on providing educational materials for the council. City Administrator Ashley Oliphant stated that the city's holiday party is scheduled for Thursday, December 14th from 4:00 – 6:00 PM at the Community Center. The Municipal Building will close early that day. Oliphant also noted that a special Common Council meeting will be held on Thursday, December 7th for the purpose of approving the 2024 budget and 2023 tax levy.

MAYOR AND ALDERPERSONS: Alderperson Walters reported that the Street Department is now staffed with four full-time employees following the most recent hire. She asked the community to have grace with the Street Department staff this winter as there are several new individuals in the department. Walters also noted that the positions of Zoning Administrator and Director of Public Works are open. Alderperson Tepley thanked Stacy Pilla for being present and reporting on the library happenings. Tepley also reported that there will be a new travel guide that will be printed and available in the spring. Mayor Coppernoll noted that the early reviews of the Rotary Lights in the Park have been very positive in 2023.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Motion by Alderperson Tepley to approve the 11/30/2023 Treasurer's Report as presented. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 8-0.

PAYMENT OF BILLS: Motion by Alderperson Downs to pay the 12/5/2023 bills as presented. Seconded by Melby. Motion carried 8-0.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION:

5. **Appointment of City Clerk**

Mayor Coppernoll nominated Aaron Joyce for an indefinite term as City Clerk. Joyce has been serving as City Clerk/Treasurer since being hired for the position in June 2021, however due to an oversight was never formally appointed to the position. Motion by Alderperson Chambers to appoint Aaron Joyce to the position of City Clerk. Seconded by Hoppenjan. Motion carried 8-0.

6. **Appointment of Acting City Treasurer**

Mayor Coppernoll noted that there must be an Acting Treasurer in place to collect the 2023 taxes. The position of City Treasurer is still in the process of being filled. Coppernoll nominated Aaron Joyce to serve as acting Treasurer. Motion by Alderperson Tepley to appoint Aaron Joyce to serve as Acting Treasurer until the position can be filled. Seconded by Chambers. Motion carried 8-0.

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

This item was postponed from the last council meeting. Attorney Windle looked into the potential impacts and continued to find more concerns. He noted that the city would likely have to inquire with an engineer to make the street viable. Windle said he could not recommend the council take the action of dedicating that portion of East 5th Street for public travel. Mayor Copperoll noted that Wastewater Superintendent Todd Fischer was at the last meeting and noted future utility improvements in that area and it didn't make sense to pave the roadway at this time. Coppernoll asked if it's possible to designate the roadway an alleyway or private drive? Windle couldn't advise one way or another. Coppernoll also stated that making the road a private drive would have to be agreeable by the property owners, which could happen. Adjacent property owner Charles Aber was in attendance. Mayor Coppernoll asked Aber if there are additional concerns beyond just having the road paved. Aber said he's not sure a cul de sac is a possibility for that portion of road considering the rest of the property is privately owned. He said the property owners in that

area feel the paved roadway would be an improvement and he struggles with the concerns that have been brought up by the city in making the roadway street dedicated for public travel. Coppernoll would like to informally talk with neighbors to discuss what could be done with that portion of roadway in the future. Coppernoll would like to get a timeframe of when the utility work under that roadway will be done to come up with a plan moving forward whether that's a private drive, alley, or street because all have different meanings and ramifications. No formal action regarding this item was taken by the common council.

8. 2024 Shared Ride Taxi Operating Contract

This is the 5th year of the 5-year contract with Running, Inc. The language in the contract remains the same as previous years. The hours remain the same. The rate for 2024 is changed. The maximum amount of funding for this contract shall be \$359,701.86 based on 10,213 hours of service at a rate of \$35.22 per hour. Motion by Alderperson Walters to approve the 2024 shared ride taxi operating contract with Running, Inc. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 8-0.

9. Election Workers for 2024-2025 Election Cycle

It was noted that the political parties had to submit their list of potential poll workers for every 2-year cycle. Clerk Joyce noted that just one political party provided a list. Motion by Alderperson Melby to approve the list of election workers for the 2024-2025 election cycle as presented. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 8-0.

10. Continued Presentation by City Attorney, including Review of the Office, Initial Findings and Recommendations

Attorney Windle had nothing new to share for this meeting.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION:

11. Consider the Request for Land Division at 26425 USH 14 E

This property is commonly known as the former Koch Tractor lot on the east side of the city where the proposed new hospital will be constructed. The Plan Commission recommended to Council the approval of the land division. Motion by Alderperson Tepley to approve the land division request of the Richland Hospital for their property located at 26425 US Highway 14 E with tax parcel number 022-2634-1000. Seconded by Melby. Motion carried 8-0.

12. Consider the Request for Land Division on Tax Parcel 276-1712-1000 at 1000 US Highway 14 W.

This item was postponed from the last council meeting. This property is commonly known as the East Hall property at the UW-Platteville Richland campus. The Plan Commission recommended to Council the approval of the land division. The school is in close proximity to the American Legion where the legion has tested rifles on the property. There is an existing agreement in place to allow that activity and there is also an exemption in state law that allows rifles. There is no objection to moving forward with the request. Motion by Alderperson Melby to approve the land division request on tax parcel 276-1712-1000 at 1000 US Highway 14 W. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 7-0, with Alderperson Chambers abstaining.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION:

13. **Symons Deficiency Appropriation Request**

Alderson Walters noted that there was a deficiency at Symons from 2020-2022 totaling \$135,535.67 – \$67,767.84 of which is the city's share. There was an overpayment of Economic Development expenses earlier in 2023 resulting in the city owing the county a net \$27,747.47. Motion by Alderson Walters to authorize payment of the remaining balance of \$27,747.47 for the Symons deficiency from 2020-2022, with funds coming from the unallocated contingency fund, and request the city/county ad hoc committee reformulate the Symons Recreation agreement. Seconded by Tepley. Motion carried 8-0.

14. **Consider request from Symons Recreation Complex to purchase a new pool vacuum**

Alderson Walters reported that the Symons pool vacuum is not operational and needs to be replaced. The cost is \$2,500 for a new vacuum from Midwest Pool Supply. Funds would come from the Symons maintenance and repair line item. The purchase will be made after the county board also approves the expense. Motion by Alderson Walters to approve the purchase of a new pool vacuum for Symons Recreation Complex at a cost of \$2,500 from Midwest Pool Supply. Seconded by Chambers. Motion carried 8-0.

15. **Consider request from Symons Recreation Complex to purchase two new on demand water heaters**

It was noted that Symons currently has two on-demand water heaters. Heater #1 is the primary water heater and is no longer functioning and both heaters are at the end of life. Three bids were received for the project with the lowest bid from Jelinek Plumbing & Heating for \$5,700.00. Motion by Alderson Walters to purchase two new on-demand water heaters from Jelinek Plumbing & Heating not to exceed \$5,700, with funds coming from the Maintenance and Repair line item. Seconded by Hoppenjan. Motion carried 8-0.

PERSONNEL & INSURANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION:

16. **Amending Policy 206 Holidays to Reflect Alternate Work Schedules**

The Personnel Committee has discussed holidays being paid for the regular day's work based on the employee's normal schedule. This is a factor because some departments work a flexible schedule. Therefore, those employees would be paid for their individual schedule. Motion by Walters to amend the employee handbook Personnel Policy 206 Holidays to change the wording that full-time employees shall receive their normal compensation at the employee's regular rate of pay as determined by the individual employee's regular schedule for the holiday's listed in the Personnel Policy. Seconded by Melby. Motion carried 8-0.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION:

17. **2024 Municipal Taxi Licenses**

Motion by Alderson Melby to approve the 2024 Taxi License applications from Towne Taxi and Running, Inc. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 8-0.

18. **Class B Picnic License from Richland County Performing Arts Council for December 16, 2023**

Motion made by Alderson Melby to approve the Class B Picnic License application from Richland County Performing Arts Council for the Swing into Christmas Holiday Jazz Show on Saturday, December 16, 2023. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 8-0.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT: Sharon Schmitz and Rod Perry wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

CLOSED SESSION

19. **The Chair may entertain a motion to enter into closed session pursuant to Wis. Stat, Sec 19.85(1)(g) to confer with legal counsel for the governmental body who is rendering oral or written advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the body with respect to litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved. The purpose is to discuss ongoing litigation and request for expenditure of funds on an expert witness.**

Motion by Alderperson Chambers to enter into closed session pursuant to Wis. Stat, Sec 19.85(1)(g) to confer with legal counsel for the governmental body who is rendering oral or written advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the body with respect to litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved. Seconded by Melby. Motion carried 8-0 at 7:44 PM.

20. **Consider motion to reconvene into open session pursuant to Wisconsin Stat, Sec 19.85(2) to discuss and/or vote on matters discussed during closed session. Roll call vote if motion is not unanimous.**

Motion by Alderperson Tepley to reconvene into open session to discuss and/or vote on matters discussed during closed session. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 8-0 at 8:10 PM.

Motion by Alderperson Downs to approve Resolution 2023-5, Authorizing the hiring of an expert witness. Seconded by Tepley. Motion carried 8-0.

ADJOURN: Motion by Alderperson Downs to adjourn. Seconded by Tepley. Motion carried 8-0 at 8:11 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Aaron Joyce, City Clerk