

City of Blair Council Meeting Minutes, Combination Regular May 4, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

A meeting of the Common Council of the City of Blair, Trempealeau County, Wisconsin, was duly called, noticed, held and conducted in the manner required by the Common Council and the pertinent Wisconsin Statutes on May 4, 2020. Due to COVID-19 this meeting was held both in person at 122 S. Urberg Avenue observing 'social distance rules' and via Zoom on-line meeting attendance. The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following members were present: Mayor A. Knutson; Alderpersons-W. Cartrette, T. Wheeler, J. Anderson, M. Lisowski, P. Syverson, C. Ekern, Clerk/Treasurer S. Frederixon, Attorney A. Robertson, Trempealeau County Times, S.E.H. Michael Nied/City Zoning Administrator, R. Jensen, Acting Police Chief, J. Behling & N. Stobb of Source Energy Services, Nate Dahl.

Public Comment: None

Combination Regular Council & Re-Organizational Meeting 4/21/20, minutes were not ready for review at this time.

Nate Dahl/resident & business owner requesting Council to consider supporting the recent proposal from a State Representative for City to amend outdoor conditional use permits to include seating and serving outside of permitted premises, as a way to comply with 'social distancing' requirements. Currently our Ordinance does not allow outside consumption. Request is for City to immediately consider an email or similar communication from a Class B license holder as a valid and complete Conditional Use permit application for purpose of using parking lot, patio or deck as extension of service area for food & alcohol sales. Clerk Frederixon reported information from the League of Municipalities that the Governor's current orders supersedes any local decision we might make, so we are not allowed with the current State COVID-19 restrictions able to act on this request. Our Ordinances do currently allow for food/beverage sales consumption on the deck areas that are included in your Liquor License, some of you have an area attached with in your license and that would be permitted. Mr. Dahl understood information. City Council is willing to call emergency meeting if something changes and they can act on to help businesses.

Present annual Liquor Licenses for review/publication: **Class A** – Dollar General/Express Mart/Kwik Trip. **Class B** – Bullpen Sports Bar/Farmers Escape, LLC/Broadway Bar, LLC/Blair Haus Bar & Grill, LLC. **Motion by C. Ekern to approve for publication, 2nd M. Lisowski. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

S.E.H. engineering report: per David Schofield, on 2020 Drainage Improvements project: Contractor graded, seeded and matted main swale last week. Materials for Hickory Street storm sewer extension and Olson Street culvert replacement will be delivered & installed next week, pending weather. Expect to be able to close out contract by June meeting.

Source Energy Service Financial Assurance review: Clerk/Treasurer Frederixon reported, March 6th City zoning administrator, Michael Nied/S.E.H. emailed annual 2020 Financial Assurance reports to Source Energy & City. The difference this year is he included a cumulative rate of inflation (2014 to 2020) (estimated of 9% for SPW mine and (2013 to 2020) (estimated 10.7 % for Preston Mine. S.E.S., request explanation for inflation adjustments from City Zoning Administrator. Explanation: Reclamation costs are based on 2013 & 2014 cost estimates, because inflation exists an adjustment for inflation is necessary and allowed under NR135.40 (12) referenced with in the City Ordinance. At S.E.S request City Public Property Committee met 4/8/20 with Source Energy Services and City Zoning Administrator to consider S.E.S. request consider a lower percentage or adjustment. Committee tabled and told S.E.S. to research current costs of reclamation and if they can show the amount suggested could be lowered and still cover reclamation needs they would consider. Committee reported to full Council at 4/21 meeting, but the new inflation amount research had not been completed yet, but needed to be on the May 4 agenda. Michael Nied/City Zoning administrator explained, at the time the report was initially completed the inflation rates were valid and should look at new cost estimates, but now with the onset of the

COVID 19 issues, they have seen things have drastically changed construction estimates have been deflating and with the research he and S.E.H. has done, they believe for 2020 the inflation amounts should be rescinded for Source Energy Blair and Preston mines and revisited at next year's reporting. **Motion by P. Syverson to withdraw inflation amounts for S.E.S. for 2020 and revisit inflation information for 2021 reporting, so SPW mine Financial Assurance would be at \$2,070,110 & Preston mine at \$2,590,459 with no inflation amount for 2020, 2nd by W.C. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Hi Crush Notice of Change in Operations: Notice informed City they are permanently laying off staff at facility located at 11203 South River Road, Taylor WI. Layoff is due to unforeseen business circumstances related to downturn in oil & gas prices driven by Saudi/Russia oil price war & impacts of COVID-19 on demand for sand product. This was unavoidable and if circumstances necessitate a permanent closing of facility, we will notify City in writing. W. Cartrette question if financial assurance is in place for all mines in City, per Michael Nied yes things are in place and have just been updated in March for 2020. Frederixon shared that a HiCrush represented told her it is expected to take 6 month minimum to recovery, but they do expect to be able to ride out the storm and come back to facility. Council is hoping for updates from Hi Crush every couple of months.

Ordinance drafts for consideration: Chapter 4.08(2) At Re Organizational meeting Council voted to change regular meeting time from 7 pm to 6:30 pm. The draft for review today has taken out the start time of meetings from the Ordinance. Motion by M. Lisowski to change the Ordinance as presented to no longer include a set time for regular meetings. 2nd by J. Anderson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved. **Motion by M. Lisowski to change 2020/2021 regular meeting times to reflect the vote made on 4/21/20 of meeting times to change from 7 pm to 6:30 pm, 2nd by J. Anderson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 3, Jill, Mike, Paul, No Terry, Wanda & Chris, Mayor Breaks tie and votes yes ok to change to 6:30 pm for 2020/2021 times.**

Consider 2020 Graduation sign from City, in an effort to do something to uplift the 2020 graduating seniors of BTSD since COVID-19 has affected their senior year so negatively. After much discussion, **Motion by W. Cartrette to have City purchase a double sided sign, congratulating BTSD seniors that would go over Broadway street, no year so can be used again, budget of \$500, 2nd by C. Ekern. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Librarian Kris McNamer is requesting compensation for training during the COVID-19 Library closure for her 2 part time aides. Compensation specifically for online training that can be completed from their homes. Currently each aide is approve for 6-12 hours when library is open and would like approval for them to use that time for training and be compensated. Clerk Frederixon reported last week one of the aide completed 6.25 hours of training or work hours @ 10.20 per hour. McNamer reported the Library Board was supportive of this. **Motion by W. Cartrette to allow library aides to use this time to complete training or curb side pickup or actual worked hours and be compensated for hours documented on timesheet during COVID-19 closure, 2nd J. Anderson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Municipal Dam Grant Application update: Clerk Frederixon reported, letter from WDNR letting us know they received our grant application but needed more information on following topics: Past & present use of mill building, additional documentation indicating City has right, title & interest in principal spillway of dam, Memorandum of Understanding between WDOT & City that allows City access to dam for construction, operations, and maintenance, proof of ownership for parcel located immediately on downstream side of dam. Also letting us know that WI Admin. Code requires grant recipients need to bring dam into compliance with WI Admin. Code, Ch. NR 333. WDNR has preliminary concerns with our ability to bring Blair Dam into complete compliance and DNR Dam Safety and Floodplain staff will contact us soon to provide more detail. Frederixon

explained this is proving very difficult to provide WDNR what they need with the records available to us in the City office. Most of these I feel I can accomplish, by the deadline, but the compliance issue for NR 335.07(2) (e) I am finding out may not be achievable by May 22, 2020 for grant consideration. Our application is still being considered but without this information our chance for grant may be negatively affected.

Resident request for Council to consider 'Open container allowed on streets' in City, current Ordinance does not allow for that. Jeremy Tranberg was asking for a couple of reasons and would be like to attend a meeting for discussion, difficult to do anything at this time when with COVID-19 closings, but maybe after Cheese Festival try a test month? After some discussion, **Motion by W. C. to table and send to Ordinance Committee for review and recommendation, 2nd by J. Anderson. Discussion: No. Vote: Yes 6, No. Motion approved.**

Reports: Blair Police Department April 2020 report by Randy Jenson (interim Chief): 44 calls, 5 where there was no officer available and County had to handle. 4 welfare checks, 3 animal, 5 parking, 1 harassment, 1 assault, 8 illegal burning, including the city shouldn't be burning, NEED TO CHECK WITH SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT PRIOR TO BURNING FOR A WHILE, 5 traffic stops only 1 of those citation, 8- 911 calls, 1 alarm at business, 1 Community service-birthday parade. Records show 10 % down on calls overall for same time last year. Police squad is still having mechanical problems, the new one is 6 weeks out.

Hen License-New request from Lannie Howe @ 320 S. Peterson Avenue/**Motion by P. Syverson to approve as presented, 2nd by W. Cartrette. Discussion: None. Motion approved.**

Pool final checklist update: Wapasha is working on repairing shrinkage cracks in pool, relocating backstroke flag, and repairing gate next to desk. Also working with Jim to replace thermometer & chemical feed tubing issue. The painter will be back to make repairs to pool paint & apply anti-graffiti coating in early May. This is part of final checklist and yes there will be a final walk through which I have asked Wanda Cartrette to be a part of. Shrinkage cracks are expected and were noted in our original contract, to be repaired by contractor. They do many things during the construction process to prevent cracks but they do still happen. W. Cartrette checked with other pools on cracks and it is normal to have surface shrinkage cracks.

2020 Park Shelter, Campground, Pool & Summer Recreation Program COVID-19 season plan update: After much discussion. **Motion by W. Cartrette to have Park Committee review information and work on recommendation for full Council, 2nd P. Syverson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Clerk shared resident request to allow graduates free shelter related to COVID-19 issues/Council felt that would fall under the donation category and are not able to allow that.

Clean up event re-visited: After much discussion, **Motion by C. Ekern to allow clean-up days, May 13, 16, 20 & 23-two Wednesdays & 2 Saturdays and the 1st \$100 for free per household (ONE TIME ONLY) to help with COVID-19 loss of revenue to residents and lesson contact by employees, to make an impact on our wish to Clean up the City program, 2nd by M. Lisowski/W. Cartrette. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Building Permits: Building permits: Dillon Sylla @ 138 E. Broadway Street for a fence, has been given and filled in on the Ordinance for fences and agreed to follow them; no county permit is required. Craig & Nicole Nyen @ 1100 Pine Street for concrete retaining walls & landscape sidewalk near the home, setbacks appear to be appropriate and hiring a licensed contractor-no county permit required;

Nathan & Mara Lambright @ 518 E. Olson Street for repairing and adding to current cement driveway, they are closer than 5 feet to lot line and have included an approval from neighbor to build as presented, hiring KLonecki Concrete company, no county permit required for this permit. Danny Austad @ 674 E. Maple St. for a front deck, setbacks seem to be in order, county permit would have to be obtained. **Motion by J. Anderson to approve as presented, with the Austad permit requiring a County permit, 2nd by W. Cartrette. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Clerk report: Clerk Report:

Open Book for City was April 20, where residents/business owners can talk with assessor about assessments, Eric Kleven our assessor talked with 2 people I think and was able to sort things out without the need for any further action.

B.O.R. for City was April 28th where residents and business owners can appear to debate and request changes to assessments. Mayor Ardell, Alderpersons Wanda and Terry attended with myself and Eric Kleven our City Assessor. We reviewed the many homes that were sold in the City (20?) most selling at higher than what they were assessed at. He did say we went 'out of compliance' this year by a small amount and will need to think about a 'revaluation' in approximately 4 years.

Office closed has been going well, very busy with phone call assistance to people, but going well.

Ash tree removal in Park update: Have done about 50 % have some other responsibilities and plan to be back week of May 11 and then stay until done, weather permitting.

Seasonal Part time staff: have called back Brian Stenberg to mow, but haven't needed Mark Hanson.

Present Vouchers for review and approval: **Motion W. Cartrette to approve the vouchers as presented, 2nd by P. Lisowski. Discussion: None. Vote: J. Anderson-Yes, T. Wheeler-Yes, W. Cartrette-Yes, M. Lisowski-Yes, P. Syverson-Yes & C. Ekern Yes. Motion approved.**

Next Council meeting is May 4, 2020 @ 7:00 pm

Motion W. Cartrette to adjourn meeting, 2nd T. Wheeler Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.

Susan Frederixon-Clerk/Treasurer