

## City of Blair Regular Council Meeting Minutes, October 4, 2021

Mayor John Rawson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Open meeting requirements verified. Attendance roll call: Mayor J. Rawson-yes, P. Syverson-yes, C. Ekern-yes, D. Stephenson-yes, T. Lisowski-yes, M. Lisowski-yes, and J. Anderson-yes. Others attending: Attorney M. Radcliffe, Treasurer/Deputy Clerk D. Fremstad. Trempealeau County Times, Kent Johnson, Brian Jahr, Kevin Lisowski, Laura Shefelbine, Brenda Shefelbine, Jay Vehrenkamp, David Mattison, Jeremy Tranberg, Brian Simmons, Travis Armitage, Ashley Kurth, David Donnelly, Tim Robertson, and Erica Anderson.

Present minutes for approval: Regular Council Meeting 9/13/2021 and Joint Review Board Meeting 8/25/2021. **Motion by J. Anderson to approve both sets of minutes as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> D. Stephenson. Discussion: none. Vote: Ayes-6, Nays-0. Motion carried.**

Public Comment: Jeremy Tranberg updated the Council on the Blair Haus rebuild. A sanitary sewer line has been found on the property. Dave Schofield from SEH suggested that it was on my dime to move it. The problem is that it would have to be moved onto Shawn Ekern's property. Jeremy doesn't need the lateral; wondering if some action can be taken? A meeting needs to be scheduled with D. Schofield, Bob Fraust, and the Water/Sewer Committee and then a Special Council Meeting.

Street Closure Permit: Ordinance 22.11 Street Closure Permit created. **Motion by C. Ekern to approve ordinance as presented with a fee of \$25, 2<sup>nd</sup> J. Anderson. Discussion: none. Vote: Ayes-6, Nays-0. Motion carried.**

Street Closure Permit request: Bullpen Sports Bar, Soul Sisters Boutique, A New Day, Pride Wellness, and Blair Online Auction to sponsor a Fall Festival on October 9, 2021. Requesting N. Gilbert Street closure from W. Broadway Street to W. Center Street. **Motion by C. Ekern to approve request, 2<sup>nd</sup> by P. Syverson. Discussion: P. Syverson-just closing off N. Gilbert, correct? Yes. Vote: Ayes-6, Nays-0. Motion carried.**

Committee Reports: Personnel Committee meeting on 9/21/2021 and 9/30/2021. Fire Board Meeting on 9/22/2021. **Motion by J. Anderson to accept minutes as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> M. Lisowski. Discussion: none. Ayes-6, Nays-0. Motion carried.**

**Motion by J. Anderson to move item #14 up in the agenda, 2<sup>nd</sup> P. Syverson. Discussion: none. Ayes-6, Nays-0. Motion carried.**

Server License Application: Attorney Radcliffe went over employment discrimination statutes. It is this Council's decision to approve or deny server licenses, not the attorney's nor the police chief's. Nicole Suchla had an OWI in 2018, which is a reason to decline, if you so choose. **Motion by P. Syverson to grant license to Nicole Suchla, 2<sup>nd</sup> M. Lisowski. Discussion: none. Ayes-6, Nays-0. Motion carried.** Ashley Kurth had an OWI in 2017, which again is a reason to decline, if you so choose. Ms. Kurth stated she did not see the OWI when she looked up her record on WI CCAP. **Motion by D. Stephenson to approve Ashley Kurth, 2<sup>nd</sup> P. Syverson. Discussion: none. Ayes-6, Nays-0. Motion carried.** Alexis Van Riper and Laura Shefelbine had no issues on their applications. **Motion by C. Ekern to approve Alexis Van Riper and Laura Shefelbine, 2<sup>nd</sup> D. Stephenson. Discussion: none. Ayes-6, Nays-0. Motion carried.**

Clerk Report: Clean Up Days went okay; smaller number of people. Randy Ekern's last day is October 10, 2021. Randy – thank you for your years of service to the City of Blair and we wish you the best. Susan on vacation this week; she thanks you for this benefit.

Broadway and Pearl Street Project: C. Ekern reported that the Street Committee met on 9/29/2021. The committee recommends the City delay the construction project to 2023 and reapply for the grant in 2022. D. Schofield will get numbers as far as cost to re-apply. This project is tabled until we get those numbers.

Fire Board 2022 budget meeting: Jay Vehrenkamp, Joint Fire Board Representative, recommends the Fire Department budget be increased by \$2500 each from the City of Blair and the Town of Preston. They are also in need of a new emergency vehicle. The truck will come out of the CIP funds and will cost around \$190,000. If ordered now, the truck would be available in the spring of 2023. This will all be looked at during the City's budget process.

Election Redistricting Map: This redistricting is done so that the election wards are evenly proportioned with voters. The County needs this map approved to go onto the next phase in which the County Board approves the redistricting. **Motion by M. Lisowski to approve the redistricting map, 2<sup>nd</sup> by D. Stephenson. Discussion: none. Ayes-6, Nays-0. Motion carried.**

American Rescue Plan funds: The Personnel Committee is recommending the ARP money be used for updated the backwashing equipment and other upgrades at the Water Treatment Plant. If any money left it could go to the dam. **Motion by C. Ekern to allocate the first \$70,000 installment of ARP money for the Water Treatment Plant upgrades, with any excess going toward the dam, 2<sup>nd</sup> M. Lisowski. Discussion: none. Roll call vote: D. Stephenson-yes, C. Ekern-yes, P. Syverson-yes, J. Anderson-yes, M. Lisowski-yes, T. Wheeler-yes. Motion carried.**

Job Description review: tabled for now.

**Motion by J. Anderson to move to #17 on the agenda, 2<sup>nd</sup> D. Stephenson. Discussion: none. Ayes-6, Nays-0. Motion carried.**

Halloween in the Park: Brenda Shefelbine explained that the trick-or-treating in the park would start at the open shelter near the Gilbert Street entrance and follow the walking path to the Schroeder shelter where food and water would be provided with a free will donation. This money would go toward the food and candy purchases and the lake dredging. This event will take place Sunday, October 31 from 5-7pm with COVID-19 standards in place. There will also be a non-perishable food donation going towards the school. GVCC residents are invited to come watch. Blair and Taylor businesses are invited. We are asking to use the Schroeder shelter for serving the food at no cost for the Halloween event. **Motion by J. Anderson to approve using Schroeder shelter at no cost for the Halloween event, 2<sup>nd</sup> C. Ekern. Discussion: none. Ayes-6, Nays-0. Motion carried.**

Add 4<sup>th</sup> Public Works employee: Personnel Committee recommends a 4<sup>th</sup> person be hired to start training with the water/sewer department to learn that job going forward. May not need part time employees if we have 4 public works employees. Need to start advertising now to have someone start at the beginning of the year. **Motion by M. Lisowski to move forward with this process, 2<sup>nd</sup> P. Syverson. Discussion: none. Ayes-6, Nays-0. Motion carried.**

Clean-Up Days credit to residents: The City put out 11 dumpsters last year. Could we do that again? The price to get rid of large items is VERY low. Curbside pickup stopped years ago; the liability was too great. Maybe we could work out a pick up fee?

**Motion by P. Syverson for the Council, pursuant to WI State Statute 19.85 (1)(c) to convene in Closed Session for the purpose of considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility, for the purpose of considering end of probation period wage increase for public employee of the City, 2<sup>nd</sup> by J. Anderson. Discussion: None. Roll call vote: D. Stephenson-yes, C. Ekern-yes, P. Syverson-yes, J. Anderson-yes, M. Lisowski-yes, T. Wheeler-yes. Motion carried.**

**Motion by D. Stephenson for Council to Reconvene in open session and take any action, if necessary, from closed session, 2<sup>nd</sup> by C. Ekern. Discussion: None. Roll call vote: D. Stephenson-yes, C. Ekern-yes, P. Syverson-yes, J. Anderson-yes, M. Lisowski-yes, T. Wheeler-yes. Motion approved.**

**Motion by D. Stephenson to approve back pay for Chief Johnson with an increase of 50 cents, effective the next pay period after his probation, 2<sup>nd</sup> by C. Ekern. Discussion: None. Roll call vote: D. Stephenson-yes, C. Ekern-yes, P. Syverson-yes, J. Anderson-yes, M. Lisowski-yes, T. Wheeler-yes. Motion carried.**

Present Vouchers for review and approval: **Motion by J. Anderson to approve the vouchers as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> by P. Syverson. Discussion: None. Roll call vote: D. Stephenson-yes, C. Ekern-yes, P. Syverson-yes, J. Anderson-yes, M. Lisowski-yes, T. Wheeler-yes. Motion carried.**

**Next Council meeting is November 8, 2021 @ 6:30 pm.**

**Motion by C. Ekern to adjourn meeting at 7:53 pm, 2<sup>nd</sup> J. Anderson. Discussion: None. Vote: Ayes-6, Nays-0. Motion approved.**

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Debra Fremstad, Treasurer/Deputy Clerk