

**City of Blair Regular Council Meeting Minutes, April 9, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.**

Mayor Ardell Knutson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Council attending: C. Ekern, W. Cartrette, P. Syverson, J. Anderson, T. Robertson, T. Wheeler via phone, Attorney A. Robertson and S. Frederixon-Clerk/Treasurer. Blair Press and Trempealeau Co. Times also.

**Open Meeting Law Requirements Met** – posted more than 24 hours in advance and in three public places.

**Public comment:** Luke Solberg, representing the Blair/Preston Fire Department explained the Fire Department members are concerned about the condition of the Community Center, since it is in mid-repairs from flood damage and are requesting to do some minor touch ups prior to an annual fundraising event they have set for May 12, 2018. Seal the floor, attach paneling removed during inspection, paint, general clean up to make it safe and compliant for the fundraiser. Council requested Clerk add to April 17<sup>th</sup> Re-organizational meeting, since unable to take action on as not an agenda item. General support and appreciation was given by Council.

**Present minutes for approval:** Regular Council Meeting 3/5/18 and Combination Plan Commission/Special Council Meeting 3/13/18. **Motion T. Robertson to approve minutes as presented, 2nd C. Ekern. Discussion-none. Vote: Yes-6, No-0. Motion approved.**

**Aldersperson attending via phone topic:** Attorney Robertson and Clerk Frederixon had researched. Attorney Robertson and Clerk Frederixon confirmed it is legal for an Aldersperson to attend meetings and cast vote via phone.

**Blair Fireworks** representative explained that the Committee has done a bunch of background work and applications and been approved by the WI National Guard to be one of the sites that a Blackhawk Helicopter would be sent for display. Blackhawk would land in our Riverside Memorial Park ball fields, during the Blair Fireworks event. They would stay 2 hours, allow people to sit inside, crew would be available to answer questions. The timing for the exhibit, is tentatively 3pm-5pm or 2pm-4pm, and will be announced when finalized. Next step is to have the City of Blair sign an authorization letter approving this. **Motion T. Robertson to have Mayor sign approval letter/2<sup>nd</sup> W. Cartrette/J. Anderson. Discussion-none. Vote: Yes-6, No-0. Motion approved.**

**Conditional Use Permit Application:** Plan Commission Chairperson, W. Cartrette reviewed information from March City Meeting. Council members ‘tabled’ a request from Michael & Jamie Ressel, B & I Future Investments, LLC for a Conditional Use permit for property located at 114 Gilbert Street, to have ‘temperature controlled storage units, with the front section of the building used for office space for Jamie’s real estate business and a Community Event Advertising Corner’ in the B-1 Zoned City District. Ressel’s also are open to other types of businesses coming into that building, and would work with that business to provide space needed. Ressel’s expressed a plan be safety conscious with the types of items that are taken in to storage units. Plan Commission reviewed the information at a previous meeting and recommended to the Council by a split majority vote for the Council to approve the C.U.P. After some discussion, **J. Anderson made a motion to approve the C.U.P. as presented, as long as the City Ordinance relating to the front 30% of the building being left open for business was followed, 2<sup>nd</sup> P. Syverson. Discussion: C. Ekern safety concern, for a business that might be in the front of building, about types of stored items, such as motorcycles with fuel sources, etc.-Ressel’s agreed and would not plan on those types of items. T. Robertson asked City Attorney ‘if the Council approves this C.U.P. for a storage unit business in the B-1 District are they obligated to approve every other request for same type of business-Attorney Robertson said no, each request should be considered on an individual basis and can be denied or approved as City Council decides. Vote: Yes-4, No-2 (C. Ekern/T. Wheeler). Motion approved.**

**ATV use in City:** Travis Armitage explained he would like the City to consider the development of language in the current Ordinance Chapter 38: Snowmobiles & Other Vehicles that would include similar travel access to ATV/UTV vehicles. Many residents have this type of vehicle in the City for business, personal (snow plowing, etc.) and recreational, and the hope would be to have a couple of approved routes, that could be used to exit/enter the City, get to gas stations without loading on trailer. **Motion T. Robertson to send this topic to Ordinance Committee to review and make recommendation, 2<sup>nd</sup> W. Cartrette. Discussion: J. Anderson-most likely DNR rules govern licensing requirements related to ATV’s, same language in current Ordinance & general traffic rules would apply. Vote: Yes-6, No-0. Motion approved.**

**CDBG Approved loan amounts:** During the 2017 Audit process, Auditors noticed 2 CDBG resident loans went slightly above what was approved by the Council, and would like formal approval in minutes to document the new amounts. Loan #128- approved amount \$6,121.00, actual amount spent was \$6,826 and Loan #129-approved amount \$27,370.00 actual amount spent was \$28,485.00. After Clerk research, CDBG guidelines do not require them to do a change order if amounts estimated are less than \$2,000.00. **Motion W. Cartrette to approve increased amounts as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> T. Robertson. Discussion-none. Vote: Yes-6, No-0. Motion approved.**

**Countryside Coop Parcels:** Durand Coop reached out to City to check if there was any interest in discussions about purchase or land exchange related to 2 Gilbert Street parcels they own in the City. **Motion T. Robertson to have Public Property Committee enter into negotiations on the larger parcel, 2<sup>nd</sup> W. Cartrette. Discussion: smaller parcel seems to be land locked so probably not interested. Vote: Yes-6, No-0. Motion approved.**

**Blair/Preston Fire Department application for Class B retailer's license for May 12, 2018 Dance/Fundraiser: Motion C. Ekern to approve as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> W. Cartrette/P. Syverson. Discussion-none. Vote: Yes-5, No-0, Abstain 1 (T.R). Motion approved.**

**Pool Committee Meeting & Aquatic Center project updates:** W. Cartrette shared:

Confirmation of a large donation from the Wanek family, of close to \$124,000 to go toward 'esthetic upgrades/improvements' of the City Aquatic Center project. Team is working hard to implement these changes and pictures should be available soon.

Application for Payment # 4 to Wapasha construction Company, Inc. for work done on pool project in the amount of \$108,204.05. This application has been reviewed and recommended for payment by City project company Burbach Aquatics, Inc. **Motion J. Anderson to approve payment out of pool funds, as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> P. Syverson. Discussion-none. Vote: Yes-6, No-0. Motion approved.**

Deer in the Park update: Per City Clerk/Treasurer Frederixon, no deer have been located, as of yet for purchase. The original source for purchase has sold his 'fallow deer', he still has reindeer and elk, and has been working hard and will continue to research another source, but no luck so far. Brian Stenberg, Blair resident and Plan Commission member has been key in assisting on this project. Research shows that reindeer would not be comfortable in the type setting we have and elk would need a much larger setting than we can provide. **Motion W. Cartrette to send to Park Committee to research other types of animals as temporary residents in deer exhibit, 2<sup>nd</sup> P. Syverson. Discussion: Clerk continue to work on obtaining fallow deer. Vote: Yes-6, No-0. Motion approved.**

**Fire Board Committee Meeting report/C. Ekern:** meeting held on 3/7/2018 with Township. Review of document by both entities, showed approximately 16 items that needed further review. **Motion C. Ekern to send back to Fire Board Committees for further review, 2<sup>nd</sup> W. Cartrette. Discussion-none. Vote: Yes-5, No-0, Abstain 1(T.R.). Motion approved.** Fire Dept. request to do minimal upgrades to Community Center to allow for compliance needed prior to fundraising event scheduled for May 12 2018. **Motion C. Ekern to approve contingent on Township approval also, 2<sup>nd</sup> P. Syverson. Discussion-none. Vote: Yes-5, No-0, Abstain 1 (T.R.). Motion approved.**

**Personnel Committee Meeting:** held on 3/28 & 4/4/18. J. Anderson reported they are updating job descriptions and finalized drafts which were distributed to employees for review at the 4/4/18 meeting. Employee comments will be reviewed at a future Personnel Committee meeting and final drafts will be recommended to full Council for approval at the May 7, 2018 Regular Meeting.

City of Blair Police Department Drug Arrest information was shared in an effort to show progress is being made to lessen drug related crime in the City Limits.

**City Investments update:** City Clerk/Treasurer Frederixon shared arrangements are in place to invest City funds that are not needed for general budgeted items. City funds of \$652,000.00 will be split evenly between 2 C.D's, a 1 year @ 2.05 % interest rate & a 2 year @ 2.4% interest rate. Also, \$1,012,538.00 pool funds will be put in treasury bonds to mature at 3,4,5 and 6 month maturity dates as those funds will be needed fairly soon. The City is being advised by Ehler's Associates Financial planners on these decisions.

Blair/Preston Fire Department request to adapt Community Center to allow for laundry equipment installation. Luke Solberg representing Fire Department, explained fire department has purchased a washing machine and would like to remodel the shower area (not ever used) in the Community Center. They would extend the shower wall so the laundry area would be separated from the Men's bathroom with access from the fire department area. **Motion C. Ekern to approve, contingent on an approved City building permit and approval from Township, 2<sup>nd</sup> P. Syverson. Discussion-none. Vote: Yes-5, No-0, Abstain 1 (T.R.). Motion approved.**

**Large Delinquent Personal Property Tax Issue:** Clerk explained, Sand Products WI (no longer owner of this mine) is past due on \$304,150.76 of Personal Property Taxes + \$24,753.40 in interest that was due January 2018. The normal process for PP Taxes is the City is required to make the other taxing districts 'whole' by paying these past due amounts to them and then trying to collect on the delinquent amounts during the year. With no payment from Sand Products WI and no current contact information for them, Clerk/Treasurer Frederixon contacted the new owners of the mine, Source Energy Services, explained the situation and requested contact information for the previous owners. New owners, Source Energy Services discussed the issue and contacted the City, stating they did not want to see the City of Blair out this money and that during the purchase the previous owner was legally required to disclose these amounts if unpaid and they did not. The new owners, Source Energy Services had no knowledge of the outstanding PP Taxes, but are offering to pay the delinquent PP tax amount of \$304,150.76 to the City and use their legal team to try to collect from the previous owners, Sand Products WI. They are requesting that the City drop the interest amount of \$24,753.40 as they had no knowledge of this issue. Question is will the City approve this offer or attempt to collect both amounts on their own? **Motion T. Robertson to accept Source Energy offer and drop the interest amount, 2<sup>nd</sup> W. Cartrette. Discussion-none. Vote: Yes-6, No-0. Motion approved.**

**Source Energy underground slurry line update:** Clint from Source Energy, shared: We have finished the 2<sup>nd</sup> of 5 borings and will started the 3<sup>rd</sup> today. We are right on schedule, as long as cold weather doesn't hinder our progress to meeting anticipated late July/early August 2018. W. Cartrette asked estimate on trucks leaving and returning to the mine site daily. Per Clint: We are shipping between 6,500 and 8,000 tons per day, truck hold 22 tons, approximately 300-350?. W. Cartrette comment, let's get underground slurry system done.

**Building Permits:** D. Austad @ 674 E. Maple Street for a backyard fence along property line; Errol Doerr @ 231 N. Gilbert Street to go from a damaged flat roof to a pitched roof; D. Nokken @ 144 Mill Road to do interior remodeling; D. Richards @ 805 E. Broadway to replace an existing fence. **Motion P. Syverson to approve as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> T. Robertson. Discussion-none. Vote: Yes-6, No-0. Motion approved.**

**Clerk Report:** Spring Clean-up days set for Wednesday, May 2, 3 pm to 7 pm and Saturday, May 5, 9 am to 1 pm. Event has been published in Blair Press & posted; Annual 2% fire dues report has been completed for Township and City by Clerk/Treasurer Frederixon, amounts received previously range from \$2,000 - \$5,000. Good job by our Fire Dept. to keep in state required compliance, which is required to be eligible; Good job City employee Randy Ekern for coming up with the idea of how to keep frozen storm sewers open during the cold weather, saves the City \$ to have the County come & thaw and residents from possible flooding. Also good job by Jim Nyen and Randy Ekern to think to use and install a heat tape to thaw a reoccurring frozen storm sewer near Greg/Cathy Mathson home, seems to be helping avoid big flood issues for that resident. April 3<sup>rd</sup> Election went well, election handled very well by Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Debi Fremstad and skilled election workers, during the Clerk/Treasurer vacation. Congratulations to re-elected Alderpersons, Wanda Cartrette – Ward 1 & Jill Anderson-Ward 2. Ward 3 remains open after Tim Robertson decided not to run for re-election. Write in votes are being considered by Mayor and an appointment is planned for the 4/17/2018 Re-organizational meeting. Thank you very much to Alderperson Robertson for a job well done, your work was very valuable and much appreciated.

Clerk Report continued: New 2018 Dually Plow Truck was picked up March 23, 2018. Box for this truck is not expected in until 3<sup>rd</sup> week in April, when the vehicle will need to go there for installation. Then should be ready for use in the Park and City after that. When the truck is ready for use the old dually plow truck will be put out for bids/sale. City Council annual paychecks will be ready for pick up Thursday, April 12, 2018 at City Hall.

Present Vouchers: **Motion J. Anderson to approve vouchers, 2nd P. Syverson. Discussion – none. Roll Call vote- J. Anderson-yes, T. Robertson-yes, W. Cartrette-yes, C. Ekern-yes, P. Syverson-yes and T. Wheeler-yes. Motion approved.**

**Motion C. Ekern to adjourn, 2nd T. Robertson. Discussion-none. Vote: Yes-6, No-0. Motion approved.**

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Susan Frederixon-Clerk/Treasurer