

City of Blair Regular Council Meeting Minutes, October 7, 2019 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 October 7, 2019. 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, P. Syverson, C. Ekern, M. Lisowski, Clerk/Treasurer S. Frederixon, Attorney A. Robertson, Trempealeau County Times.

Mayor allowed amendment: Motion by W. Cartrette to add to the agenda a 'request from Blair Chamber of Commerce to request Ordinance Chapter 41 on Public Consumption be set aside during their upcoming Norwegian Day event 11/2/2019.' 2nd by C. Ekern. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6 No 0. Motion approved. Mayor placed this item after # 5 on current agenda.

Public Comment: David Mattison/Blair thanked Council for work they do. Also, talked about & showed 2 samples of 'Welcome to Blair', electronic sign that Cheese Fest committee is working on. David said with that beautiful sign that takes a lot of effort and money he has concern over the many properties in the City messy and in poor condition, causing what he believes is a public nuisance, he also said he is in full support of what Allyn Johnson is going to share with in the agenda topics.

Allyn Johnson/City of Blair/Shared many concerns about properties in Blair he thinks are not being kept up to Ordinance Code. Examples given were clutter in yards, multiple vehicles that appear to him unfit for travel, 'for sale' signs on items in yards, weeds not trimmed, pieces of fascia ready to fall off, the trailer park near the Park is a mess, many of the downtown buildings are in bad shape, landlords are responsible for tenants, etc. Mr. Johnson called for the City to use the Ordinances, Police department and City office to monitor these items and put fines on these people of a high enough amount that it hurts! Johnson said his motivation is to clean up the City and make it a good place to visit and live again, like it was when he was growing up. Johnson feels like his property has been devalued due to neighbors that he believes haven't kept their properties up to Ordinance Code, making it difficult for him to sell his property. Mayor Knutson said there has been work done on these types of things and it is ongoing. Alderperson Lisowski, said we have the Ordinances in place we need to do more enforcing. Clerk Frederixon said she has approximately 100 contacts per year related to these Ordinances and believes the Police have at least half if not more. In 2017 the Police department initiated with Council approval a 'beautification' letter that went out to all residents in the City explaining the wish to do exactly what Allyn is proposing, with approximately 150 residents getting \$150 citations to clean up, many cleaned up, avoided the fine and there is still more to do. Council agreed this is an area to continue and step up our efforts in. **Motion by C. Ekern to the Police department to monitor this on a daily basis fine, follow up and fine again and work with office/landlords to arrange abatement/eviction if needed; 2nd by M. Lisowski. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Present minutes for approval: Regular Council Meeting 9/9/2019. **Motion J. Anderson to approve 9/9/19 minutes as presented, 2nd by W. Cartrette. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Chamber request to have Ordinance Chapter 41 on Public Consumption set aside for their Norwegian Day event on 11/2/2019/**Motion by J. Anderson to approve as presented, 2nd by W. Cartrette. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Bids for Tappen Coulee Creek Clean out opened and awarded: 2 bids were received. Trinity Fars Excavating/Aaron Kidd - \$8,200/Hegg Contractors, Inc. \$23,175.00. **Motion by C. Ekern to approve low bid from Trinity Farms of \$8,200, without removal of Auction building fence and proper insurance documents. Money to come out of storm sewer maintenance general budget; 2nd M. Lisowski. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

S.E.H. Reports: Per David Schofield-2019 Street/Utility project: contractor is mostly done, punch list being done Tuesday with final pay request expected next month. 2020 Drainage Improvement project update: 2 other spots yet to be considered for improvement. Ditch regraded, deepened and widened from Webster to extension of Hickory to corner of field. Next part, existing culvert on Olson Street replaced with concrete, improve ditch from Olson down to field. CAN NOT get water from this location down to Hwy S., there is not enough drop. Used to run across property on Olson and there must have been some changes that caused drainage to be interrupted. There will still be standing water in the field.

All of this will need to be maintained, it will accumulate sediment, and we would also need 2 easements. **Motion by C. Ekern to approve finalization of 2020 Drainage Improvement project & put together bid documents for next Spring/2nd by M. Lisowski. Discussion: Andy Kindschy asked why we can't dig ditch along fence line. Per engineer, not enough drop in elevation. Andy Kindschy asked if there is enough elevation to drain if there was a ditch across Anderegg property. Per engineer...yes. If in future would still be able to add the Anderegg property on if he agreed. Engineer: yes. /Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Reports: Streets, Equipment Committee Meeting on 9-7-2019: P. Syverson/Chairperson, reported Committee recommending a loading and unloading space at the corner of Broadway & Gilbert. Not handicap, but painted blue and designated as loading and unloading. **Motion by P. Syverson to designate loading/unloading space as presented above, 2nd by T. Wheeler. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.** Loader/snow blower equipment discussed but still under review. 2019 Street utility project close to complete. U W. Madison Snow management training discussed but declined, will do in house training with plans to develop snow and ice control protocols yet this fall. Water Superintendent use of vehicle when on call hours, discussion ended in Council declining this request.

Tax, Finance & Personnel Meeting 9-18-19: J. Anderson/Chairperson reported A New Day Adult Services Development agreement was reviewed with changes including payment terms and the possible requirement of a mortgage document to secure the loan, to include default information. **Motion by C. Ekern to approve as presented, 2nd by T. Wheeler. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.** City financial support to Lake Dredge Project: Committee plans to overall recommend \$1,000,000.00 same as the pool project. Breakdown of where that will come from is \$220,000 in LGIP now; \$150,000 in CIP fund, looking at SPW mine royalties due to City January 2020 of estimated \$200,000, hope to add \$75,000 to CIP for 2020 budget year. Request by Clerk to consider extension of time to use 2019 vacation time, which has been more difficult to use since new policy of accrual of began 1/1/2019, which caused double amounts of vacation during in 2019 only. Committee recommending to pay \$50 per day for any unused vacation this year only. **Motion by W. Cartrette to approve \$50 pay out for any unused vacation year in 2019 only/2nd by C. Ekern. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Business & Economic Development Committee meeting on 9-25-2019: C. Ekern/Chairperson reported – Hoping to connect with Industrial Development member to gain information, maybe partner with them going forward. Discussions included pop-up business opportunities in the City, Committee wants to investigate possible ownership of some of the empty buildings; City ‘presence’ was discussed including possibility of some advertising, improve look, theme or statement; discussions to check if school has audio/visual programs, use of Facebook, you tube, TCC TV, etc., that might promote the City; Committee wishes to change current Ordinance to allow no downtown street level apartments; talked about City sponsored business grants using the annual budgeted amount for this committee. Next Committee meeting they plan to lay out a 6 month to year plan. Next meeting will be 10-10-2019 to brainstorm for the Chamber meeting on 10-28-19 with this Committee and the Regional Director of WI Community Development.

Public Property & Building Committee Meeting on 10-3-2019: M. Lisowski/Chairperson reported Flood prevention concrete upgrade to Community Center was discussed. In order to help understanding & discussion Simmons Construction estimated the work to cost \$26,680. Since this is above the \$25,000 limit which requires us to advertise for bids it was tabled at this time by the committee. Community Center bathroom upgrade project bid of \$16,480 to be split 50 % with Township was recommended by Committee for approval/**Motion by P. Syverson to approve as presented with \$ to come from \$2,500 from Lions Club donation, approximately \$3,000 Community Center repair/maintenance budget and balance to come from general fund/2nd by J. Anderson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.** Community Center concrete apron on front of Fire Station building bid of \$14,562.00-Committee approves to move forward, township has already approved and would like to have done this year. **Motion by P. Syverson to approve as presented with funds to come from \$3,500 current Street repair general budget and balance from CIP Street budget fund/2nd by T. Wheeler. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.** New Park shed heater bid of \$2,635.00 was discussed and recommended by the Committee for installation. **Motion by J. Anderson to approve as presented with money coming out of Park CIP fund/2nd by P. Syverson. Discussion: Is the building insulated? Yes it is/Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.** Park shed automatic door openers were considered, but Committee recommends waiting a year to see how the shed is used and check on if freezing under the doors would affect openers. City Farm Land lease with Quarne Farms was discussed and recommended to stay the same and be renewed as is until 2022 next review. **Motion by J. Anderson to approve as presented and leave as is until next review in 2022, 2nd by T. Wheeler. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.** Trusted contractor discussion and thoughts to develop a list for emergent/maintenance type issues – collect hourly wage information from our local trusted contractors so we could do maintenance type issue through the City office, Public Works, Building & Property Committee. Public Property Committee could develop the policy for this. More efficient, possibility for more projects to be done and be able to take care of immediate/emergent needs as needed.

Park Committee Meeting on 10-2-2019: W. Cartrette/Chairperson reported Park Ash Tree Bids from 2018 were reviewed and the Park Committee is recommending to accept the lowest bid to include stump removal from Carpenter Tree Service, BRF with a bid of \$28,117.50. Committee wants the company to be asked where they would dispose of brush, as we cannot handle that much brush at our site. **Motion by C. Ekern to approve as presented with money to be taken from Park CIP funds, 2nd by M. Lisowski. Discussion: Trees would be available for firewood for the local person the Council had tried to call as long as waiver was signed & Carpenter tree service was ok with this. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.** Aquatic Center Director Cathy Mathson had a list of 21 items related to the past season's pros & con's, there wasn't enough time to finish and this will be revisited. Lake Dredge project update, has been informed of the City's intention to support \$800,000 toward the project and the group in in the Capital Campaign fundraising mode.

Park Shed Collapse Insurance recovery update/City Clerk-Treasurer Frederixon reported the 'contents' portion of the claim has been finalized. A list of items that insurance covered as destroyed during that building collapse was distributed, the total amount covered for contents was \$21,015.05.

Clerk report: thank you VERY much to the Blair Lions Club for the generous \$2,500 donation toward the Community Center bathroom upgrades, which are planned to be done yet this year; City liability, property and workers compensation insurances expected to stay the same for 2020 while it is estimated the Health Insurance may be a 13 % increase for 2020; Clean-up day was attended well with many taking advantage to clean up property...it was a great benefit to have the Blair Lutheran Church Confirmation students and advisors help bring items to the City shop for those that needed assistance. As has been done the last couple of years the Clerk asks to keep one dumpster for an extra week and reminds residents to take advantage if they have items that could be considered a public nuisance.

Clerk report continued: Welcome to new Blair Police Officer, Mr. Jordan Pride who started this week riding with Chief Wheeler and Officer Spaeth. Thank you also to the Township of Preston for offering to pay 50% on all items related to building upkeep for the Community Center, Fire Station and Ambulance shed rather than the agreement amount which tends to be lower for them...super nice. Budget meetings have been set for October 15th and 22nd by the Finance Committee.

Broadway Bar update: per Clerk/Treasurer Frederixon they have had their initial inspection, with quite a few items that need to be taken care of, which they have every intention of doing. They will have a follow up inspection prior to the November 4 meeting.

2021 WI Department of Transportation intersection of 53/95 work update: City office received a letter 9/24/19 from WI Dept. of Transportation explaining the improvements they intend to make and asking for help identifying any other concerns. The letter states the work is set for 2021 and they expect the Highway to stay open through construction.

Building Permits: Maynard Dahl @ 630 Taft Street for new concrete driveway and garage floor, no size changes to either project; Clayton Lloyd @ 705 Pumphouse Road for a 'lean to on to his current shed; Danielle Getter @ 128 Broadway Street for a 'lean to on existing shed to replace one damaged by snow load. **Motion by J. Anderson to approve all permits as presented with requirement that both 'lean to' shed additions need to match primary home color/siding/2nd by T. Wheeler. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Motion by J. Anderson to move into 'Closed Session' per agenda language/2nd by T. Wheeler. Discussion: None/Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.

Motion by P. Syverson to reconvene in to 'Open Session', 2nd by J. Anderson. Motion by J. Anderson to allow an \$8,000 reserve limit on the City lift station generator and to stay with the Blair Online Auction Center/2nd by W. Cartrette. Discussion: None. Vote Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved. No other motions were made as a result of the Closed Session.

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

Next Council meeting is November 4, 2019 @ 7:00 pm

Motion J. Anderson to adjourn meeting, 2nd P. Syverson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.

Susan Frederixon-Clerk/Treasurer