

## City of Blair Regular Council Meeting Minutes, November 12, 2018 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 November 12, 2018. 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, Blair Press and Trempealeau County Times, Police Chief Wheeler, Officer Spaeth and a few Community members

Public Comment: None

Present minutes for approval: Regular Council Meeting 10/08/2018. **Motion by J. Anderson to approve minutes as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> by W. Cartrette. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

**Motion by C. Ekern to open the City of Blair 2019 Budget Public Hearing/2<sup>nd</sup> by P. Syverson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No. Motion approved.**

Blair Cheese Festival Committee met 10/31/18 and approved to continue moving forward on partial funding, preparations and installation of a new Community digital sign on the same site as the current sign on Hwy 95 across from GVCC which is maintained by the MNC Club. MNC Club has approved of upgrading to a digital sign. Request to have the City update the current easement, which has already been begun by Attorney Robertson and Clerk/Treasurer Frederixon. Fest Committee thanked the City of Blair, Blair Lions Club & Blair Sportsman's Club for the generous donations of \$10,000, \$2,500 and \$500 respectively, toward the new sign. The Committee will continue to fundraise for the sign. Hopeful to be able to install new sign in spring 2019. Fest Committee also approved complete funding to replace and upgrade new concrete approaches around the Large Shelter near the new Aquatic Center, the quote for work from Simmon's Construction for \$4,864.00 was approved by the Fest Committee and needs approval from Council to move forward in spring of 2019. Motion by W. Cartrette to approve as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> by T. Wheeler. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved. Festival Committee also approved \$3,000 to the Fire Department for new Jaws of Life equipment.

S.E.H. City Zoning Administrator report on Source Energy mine compliance issues: Nathan Stobb from S.E.H. reported that most of the 6 items to do from the October 3<sup>rd</sup> inspection have been completed. Those completed are: Washout areas & offsite sediment in farmer's field have been removed; Storm water best management practices have been put in place; contractor has been hired to remove offsite sediment in wetland in coordination with WDNR; sediment has been removed in Ponds 1 & 2 so capacity of ponds is not compromised; stormwater pond 15 has been constructed. The only items pending are construction of pond 3, which is almost done and still waiting for final approval from gas company for construction of pond between overburden fill pad and plant. Michael Nied of S.E.H. reported there is an inspection set for 11/15/18 to verify and inspect all items of C.U.P. compliance, with a report to City Council to follow. This will be the last inspection of this year as the things will be on pause over the winter months.

Deer in Park update: Residents Brian Stenberg and Fred Stendahl reported they have researched and worked with local deer farm expert Jeff Fritz to locate a set of 'fallow' deer the City can purchase, 1 young doe and 1 young buck. These deer would come from a certified owner in Minnesota. Jeff Fritz and the current deer owner have verbally agreed to assist the City with vaccinations and proper paperwork when required. Brian and Fred have offered to transport the deer via approved methods to the Park enclosure if approved. Clerk/Treasurer Frederixon reported she has checked on liability insurance, proper licensing through the State, veterinarian of record, and Park Superintendent Jim Nyen for enclosure preparation and care and all are in place and ready for deer. The one consideration from the USDA inspector was proper testing and transport across State borders. Stenberg reported that will all be done.

Deer in Park continued: Concern was voiced related to moving the deer in winter, Brian said the deer owners thought it was ok as the deer are outside currently. **Motion by C. Ekern to approve purchase of deer as presented contingent on proper testing and paperwork completion per State regulations, 2<sup>nd</sup> by P. Syverson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Source Energy underground slurry status: N. Stobbs reported, line is operational and they are transporting all the washed sand from the wet plant to the dry plant via the slurry line. We will still continue to have a few trucks on the road to transport waste sand from the dry plant back to the mine site for reclamation.

Arcade Pumping Company request variance for Bio-Fuel Business: Mr. Feyen was unable to attend and will possibly request to be on agenda at a later date.

Community Center increased rent, etc. proposal: Now that both the Town of Preston and City of Blair have invested in upgrading our Community Center it has been suggested, that rent amounts may need to be increased to cover possible damage from use. The suggestion is to increase the rent from \$50 to \$100 with no increase in the \$50 returnable security deposit. The other consideration is if there might be a need to require the \$50 returnable security deposit from 'non-profit' organizations that use the Center for no charge, also requirement to complete and sign a user agreement form as is customary normal rental. **Motion by C. Ekern to approve increase on rent as presented & non-profit users items as presented, contingent on Town of Preston approval as the same, effective 1/1/2019, 2<sup>nd</sup> by M. Lisowski. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Old Community Center chairs & tables: Fire Department and Sportsman's Club have expressed interest in having the chairs that were replaced by new ones from the Center. Approximately 75 chairs. **Motion by C. Ekern to donate the old chairs to both organizations allow them to work together to decide on distribution. Tables will be donated to the Fire department for training so the new tables and chairs can remain in the Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> by T. Wheeler. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Consider City Credit Card limit increased from \$3,000 to \$5,000: Clerk reported that 3 times this year the City was unable to make a purchase due to \$3,000 limit; one being the new Community Center chair/table donation from the Lion's club. The cost was \$3029.00, of which entire amount was to be reimbursed to City from Lion's but in order to pickup it would have been easiest to use the card. Request to increase limit, which needs approval from this Council, minutes to the Union Bank of Blair and signatures from Mayor Knutson, Council President Syverson and Clerk/Treasurer Frederixon. **Motion by M. Lisowski to approve \$5,000 City credit card limit, 2<sup>nd</sup> by W. Cartrette. Discussion: J. Anderson verified that anything over \$5,000 requires Council approval- Yes per Frederixon. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

2019 Snow hauling Bids considered: Two bids were received: Hegg Contractors \$95 per hour/Nelson Diesel & Dozing LLC \$90 per hour. **Motion by J. Anderson to accept the low bid of \$90 per hour from Nelson Diesel & Dozing LLC, with approval to use Hegg if additional hauling is needed and Nelson unable to supply, 2<sup>nd</sup> P. Syverson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Building Permit: Kwik Trip Inc. @ 511 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street for upgrades to the current sign. No changes to the base structure and all setbacks would remain same, so no other permits required. **Motion by W. Cartrette to approve as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> by C. Ekern. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Clerk Report: We are getting ready for tax bill season, with plans to insert note informing of new 'fire pit permit' ordinance change; Thank you VERY much to the Blair Lions Club for the giant donation of over \$3000.00 to cover entire cost of new tables and chairs for the Community Center; Good job compliments from community members to our employees: City received thank you notes from Shelvie Nelson about Randy Ekern going above and beyond to help her with overgrown trees keeping her from installation of Direct TV and also from Romell Subra who wanted the City to know they are VERY thankful to have Randy and Donna Ekern as neighbors. Randy gave them his work phone number if they needed anything from the City. She said it was 1 year since they moved to town from the farm and good neighbors and City staff have made it much easier. Police department received 2 such compliments and a thank you from Community members for helping with a seriously impaired person found on side of road. The compliment stated the officers showed kindness, understanding and went the extra mile to assist the person to safety. Also, was stated that because of the Officer's good deeds and shared information on help programs, this person plans to get help with his addictions and try to get better. Countryside Co-op Mondovi land parcels on Gilbert Street update: City received response from Mr. Brenner/CEO with information on legal descriptions on 2 parcels and also information from the Co-op Board, they would not be interested in donating the parcels, but would be interested in selling them. He is still working on information about access to the parcels. They have a Board meeting scheduled for November 28<sup>th</sup> and can have on agenda any information from the City. City is requesting a selling price from the Co-op. Thank you was sent to Carol Ekern for offer to donate a pair of peacocks to the City Park.

Annual D.O.R. TID reporting Joint Review Board Meeting on 10/10/18; Clerk/Treasurer Frederixon reported representatives from the Blair Taylor School District, Trempealeau County Board, City and a 'member at large' from the City, Brian Reilly of Ehlers' & Associates (City Financial advisor) and Clerk Treasurer Frederixon, attended the meeting (WTC representative unable to attend). This meeting is required by the WI Department of Revenue to give the City an opportunity to review the current TID's with the taxing districts. It was reported that the City currently has TID's # 4, 5, 6 & 7 and all are healthy and doing well. There was also a question and answer time and the meeting went well.

Park Committee Meeting held on 10/16/18 report: Chairperson W. Cartrette reported: Lake Project update: S.E.H.-DNR approved the Wetland Delineation submission. All 4 artificial wetland exemption determination requests (3 former whey pond sites and former dredge spoil area) were approved. Currently working on dredge plan & hauling/disposal plans to be discussed at the December Committee meeting. Working hard to stay within budget and Committee direction of project. Next steps to discuss minimum depth of main body of lake and potential partners for constructing & replacing cribbing. Hopeful involvement of potential haul route landowners at the December meeting. Pool pay application # 11 from Wapasha Construction Company, Inc. for work done up to 10/31/18 for \$241,882.35.00, which has been reviewed and approved as valid for payment by Burbach Aquatics. **Motion by P. Syverson to approve Wapasha pay request # 11 as presented for \$241,882.35, 2<sup>nd</sup> by C. Ekern. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.** Discussion about Pool contractor missing deadlines and consideration of the City assessing penalties: Weather was not kind to our project, also with the wonderful donation offered to the project by Joyce & Ron Wanek of Arcadia, the contractor was effected and unable to meet deadlines. **REMINDER THAT ALL UPGRADES TO THE NEW AQUATIC CENTER WERE NOT IN THE ORIGINAL PLAN. THE POOL WAS SET TO BE VERY NICE BUT VERY PLAIN...JOYCE & RON WANEK OF ARCADIA STEPPED IN AND OFFERED APPROXIMATELY \$140,000 + OF ESTECTIC IMPROVEMENTS TO OUR POOL, WHICH WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL FOR AND WILL BE ENJOYING THOSE UPGRADES FOR THE LIFE OF OUR NEW AQUATIC CENTER. THOSE UPGRADES COST THE CITY OF BLAIR NOTHING.** Keeping that in mind the City will not be assessing penalties at this time, but direct Burbach Aquatics to keep track of the missed deadlines to be revisited in the spring if the opening of the pool does not take place as contract directs.

**Motion by P. Syverson not to assess missed deadline penalties to Wapasha Construction at this time, but revisit in spring 2019, 2<sup>nd</sup> by W. Cartrette. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.** General Park 2019 budget items: J. Anderson, Park Committee reported, planning is to resurface both ballfields in our Park. We received 2 Bids, one for \$18,000 and 1 for \$2,000, so we have some more investigating to do, but that is high on the list of improvements. After checking found out there is no agreement in place for the Blair/Taylor school district to assist with field upkeep, but Mr. Eide will check if any funding might be available. Park Committee will need to develop a 'specification sheet' for a good bidding process. Other items to be upgraded with the 2019 budget are 'new break-away bases', safety fence installed on inside of baseball dug outs to protect players from foul balls and looking to remove or upgrade old electrical shed near softball field. **Motion by C. Ekern to allow Park Committee @ there 11/13/18 meeting, to pursue more information on the ballfield upgrades with the option to post for bids if they believe that is the correct action, 2<sup>nd</sup> by P. Syverson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Police & Ordinance Meeting on 11/1/18: Chairperson C. Ekern reported, Agenda item to allow more input from Community members, related to some local residents and business owners previous concern over perception of Blair being over policed and causing people to avoid our City. The Council chambers was filled with local business owners, residents, current full and part time police officers, a couple of current County officers and correctional institution officers, and other local community members. Chairperson required signup sheet for organized discussion. Approximately 12-15 individuals commented on this topic and every comment was in support of the current police department and the way they conduct their work. General comments were: if you are not breaking any laws you should not have any worries about visiting the City, feeling our businesses and residents are protected and that the criminal element actively seeks out small towns like ours that do not have a police presence. Chief Wheeler explained all the data from his department shows only valid stops and interactions and the numbers of tickets to warnings and arrests are lower than local and state averages. The officer's intention is to not 'nitpick', but to make valid stops and interactions and during those interactions to treat people with respect and dignity in all cases. One Council member questioned the need to be parked at the entrances of the City, and that might deter people from visiting or attending events. One audience member thought that was ok, and might be better than hiding. As far as fundraising events it is encouraged to use designated drivers and still be able to enjoy all the festivities. Chief Wheeler knows that negative 'perception' is out there, but the Blair Police department IS NOT participating in putting it out there and would like to work with the public, Council and business owners in a positive way to improve that perception. They are open to any thoughts on how to do so. Agenda item related to use of P.T. officers to assist with schedule during medical leave in department: **Motion by T. Wheeler to approve use of part time officers during medical leave, 2<sup>nd</sup> by W. Cartrette. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Tax, Finance & Personnel Committee Budget Meeting on 11/16 & 11/18/18: Chairperson J. Anderson reported, Committee, Mayor, Deputy & Clerk/Treasurer met to review 2018 budget status and prepare 2019 budget. Draft budget included 'proposed' Revenues of \$1,378,988.00 and 'proposed' Expenses of the same; leaving an excess amount of \$199,621.00 for distribution in to the Capital Projects Fund categories of Pool, Law Enforcement, Fire Protection, Highway Equipment, Highway & Streets, Lake, Park and Contingency. Generally this proposed budget would plan to consider the change of % related to valuation amounts for City with areas shared with Town of Preston. That % increased from 50% to 59.5% for the City for 2019. Projects looked at included: sidewalk upgrades, 10 year dam inspection; 3% increase for employees; 3.9 % increase on employee health insurance; Park shelter bathroom upgrades, ball field upgrades, continued saving toward newer Street Sweeper, Ash tree removal, replacement of very old public works power washer; planning for Olson & Pearl Street culvert replacement, CDBG Main, Immell & Urberg alley infrastructure project; 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Street storm water improvement project and

Hwy 95 ditch clean out projects and also a \$22,498 left in a contingency line of the CIP budget for things that might come up.

Finance Committee member P. Syverson commented the general property taxes for the City went down slightly. Total levy went down .26/\$1,000 of value.

Mayor asked if there were any other public comments for this Budget Public Hearing; hearing none he called for a motion to close the public hearing. **Motion by J. Anderson to close the Public Budget Hearing, 2<sup>nd</sup> by P. Syverson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.** Mayor Knutson called for a motion to approve staff wage changes and 2019 budget as presented. **Motion by W. Cartrette to approve staff wages by a 3% increase for all current employees to include Public Works Department current full time & permanent part time if return, City office: Current City Clerk and Deputy Clerk Treasurer, Police department: current full and part time employees, Library: current Librarian & part time Crystal Moen, 2<sup>nd</sup> by C. Ekern. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.** **Motion by W. Cartrette to approve general 2019 budget for the City of Blair and Capital Improvement Fund budgets as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> by C. Ekern. Discussion: J. Anderson thanked all Committee members, Mayor, Debi and Susan for work done to prepare this budget. Roll call Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Agenda item number 9, Arcade Pumping was not present for this meeting, therefore no discussion or action taken.

Present Vouchers for review & approval: **Motion by W. Cartrette to approve vouchers as presented, with note that \$10,000 Cheese Festival Community sign amount be returned if sign does not get installed, 2<sup>nd</sup> by J. Anderson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

**Motion by W. Cartrette to enter into Closed Session per agenda language, 2<sup>nd</sup> by C. Ekern. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

**Motion by W. Cartrette to return to open session, 2<sup>nd</sup> by P. Syverson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

**Motion by W. Cartrette to proceed with the 3 person panel related to the city Personnel issue and State Statute 62.13, 2<sup>nd</sup> J. Anderson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

**Motion by C. Ekern to adjourn, 2<sup>nd</sup> by P. Syverson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Next Council meeting is December 3, 2018 @ 7:00 pm

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Susan Frederixon-Clerk/Treasurer