

City of Blair Regular Council Meeting Minutes, February 7, 2022

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. Wheeler-yes, M. Lisowski-yes, and J. Anderson-yes. Others attending: Attorney M. Radcliffe, Clerk S. Frederixon. Trempealeau County Times, Members of the public: Kevin Lisowski, David Donnelly, Joshua Greenwold, Pastor Paul Sannerud.

Present minutes for approval: Regular Council 1/3/22 & Special Council 1/24/22 Meetings. **Motion by D. Stephenson to approve 1/3/22 & 1/24/22 minutes, 2nd P. Syverson. Discussion: none. Vote: Yes-6, No-0. Motion carried.**

Public Comment: None

Discuss/Take Action: S.E.H. request to close Lake Henry Dredge agreement: David Schofield explained the design and permitting for this project was completed in June 2019. Since then the City has placed the project on hold as it works through fundraising and easement acquisition in the face of headwinds including the current pandemic and reduced sand mine operations. The only remaining part of this contract is the preparation of bidding documents, selection of construction dates and completing easement acquisitions (\$16,200.68) which are held up for the same reasons. The project has been on hold for 31 months (June of 2019 to present) and S.E.H. accounting department has suggested it is appropriate to close it. The approved WisDNR dredging permit expires June 2029, but can be extended for an additional 10 years by request. All items already completed can be used when the City is ready to proceed, if project remains the same. **Motion by D. Stephenson to close the current Lake Henry Dredging contract with S.E.H. as described by David Schofield, with the intent of requesting a new contract when the City is ready to move forward with the Lake Dredging project, with the remaining items included in the new contract, 2nd by P. Syverson. Discussion: Kevin Lisowski said the Lake/Park Committee is beginning discussions on working again on a fundraising plan and if S.E.H. would be willing to assist upon request. S.E.H would be happy to assist if able. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

Discuss/Take Action: S.E.H. Supplemental Letter Agreement for 2022 Road Use Agreement Condition Assessment of roads within the Source Energy Preston road agreement language, requested by Council at the January meeting. Assessment will include, obtainment of past and current PASER road reports and traffic counts from WisDOT, historical aerial images, site visit, coordination with City, attend 1 meeting, collect video and photo documenting existing conditions of Bunyan Road (USH 53 to terminus), Helmers Road (Snake Coulee Road to terminus), Snake Coulee Road (Helmers Road to Schansberg Raod), Carpenter Bridge Road (Schansberg Road to USH 53), prepare summary current condition, recommend updates to current PASER report and next steps for distressed areas. Lump sum fee of \$6,500 including expenses and equipment. Ice would have to be off the roads prior to assessment work being done. Question from Attorney Radcliffe: Are there any possible conflicts of interest where S.E.H. might have working relationships with this particular Source Energy Services mine and if so is S.E.H. still working for them? David S. said he thinks S.E.H. has done some 'erosion control' plans for them, but nothing related to road assessments. David S. said he would have to check with S.E.H. to be able to completely answer that question. Radcliffe needs to know if City would be able to call on S.E.H. as an 'expert witness' if issues with the Road Agreement and road assessment came to a court case in a couple years. Dave S. said yes as the work being done now is to obtain a 'baseline' condition of the roads and he personally has not ever worked for S.E.S. David S. said he would research if S.E.H. has any current contracts with S.E.S. and report back to City. Radcliffe recommended any motion made include the requirement that David S. would be able to be an expert witness in a court case if needed. **Motion by J. Anderson to approve the 2022 Road Use Agreement Condition Assessment with S.E.H. contingent on confirmation that David Schofield/S.E.H. could be an expert witness for the City in a court case about future road conditions, 2nd by C. Ekern. Discussion: Jill Anderson & Terry Wheeler stated the City has had good relationships with both sand mine companies and doesn't wish to do anything to jeopardize that. Roll Call Vote: D. Stephenson-yes, C. Ekern-yes, P. Syverson-yes, J. Anderson-yes, M. Lisowski-yes and T. Wheeler-yes. Motion approved.**

Discuss/Take Action: Resolution #02-07-2022, setting a fee of \$25.00 for Blair Code of Ordinances 22.11 Street Closure Permits: Motion by M. Lisowski to approve Resolution #02-07-2022 setting a fee of \$25 for 22.11 Street Closure Permits, 2nd by D. Stephenson. Discussion: None. Roll Call Vote: D. Stephenson-yes, C. Ekern-yes, P. Syverson-yes, J. Anderson-yes, M. Lisowski-yes and T. Wheeler-yes. Motion approved.

Discuss/Take Action: Temporary Street Closure Permit Application, David Donnelly-Barnyard Tavern: Request to close W. Broadway Street from Urberg Avenue to Dover Street (both Urberg and Dover will remain open to travel during this event) on Saturday, February 19, 2022 from 11 am to Sunday morning, February 20, 2022. Also request to waive the Blair Code Ordinances 41 Public Consumption only in the area approved for Street Closure, from 11:00 am to 2:30 am on the mentioned dates. Motion by P. Syverson to approve Street Closure as presented on February 19, 2022 and ‘waiving’ of BCO 41 Public Consumption only within the street closure area on February 19, 2022 from 11 am to 2:30 am February 20, 2022, 2nd by J. Anderson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.

Discuss/Take Action on Fire department request for Temporary Class B Liquor License for Dance on May 7, 2022 and Street Closure Permit for same event and request ‘waiving’ of BCO 41 Public Consumption during the event. Street Closure request is for closing Gilbert Street from Broadway Street to Center Street including the entire City Parking Lot on Saturday, May 7th from 8:00 am to Sunday May 8th 8:00 am. This is the same as last year and worked well for all. Waiving of BCO 41 would be during the event until 2:30 am Sunday, May 8th, 2022. Motion by J. Anderson to approve to approve Class B Temporary Liquor License, Road Closure Permit and waiving of BCO 41 Public Consumption during this event as described in the packet paperwork and discussion, 2nd by D. Stephenson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.

Discuss/Take Action on Committee Meeting minutes previously distributed to Council members and Mayor: Motion by J. Anderson to approve and place on file minutes in the Council iPad and paper packets for Park Commission on 1/12 and 1/19/2022, Police & Ordinance Committee on 1/25/2022 and City Business & Economic Development Committee on 1/25/2022 as presented, 2nd by C. Ekern. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.

Discuss/Take Action: Blair Business & Economic Development Group requesting direction from City: Pastor Paul Sannerud explained they are at a standstill, it is a volunteer group, and they need a ‘purpose’ and clear expectations, at this point we don’t feel we have any of that. Hoping the City Council can provide that for us. Alderperson Ekern said many of the goals set originally with help from WEDC have been accomplished, a nuisance abatement Ordinance and other Ordinances related specifically to our Downtown B-1 district have been improved to assist that district. Ekern also shared the City Development Committee is discussing using funds to launch a signage improvement fund for businesses, to help our downtown looking more businesslike than residential. Another thought would be to request Mark Tallman/WEDC visit again to help both groups with new goals and energy and plans and hopefully become active and energized again. Connect-Community program should be reviewed to see if that might also assist both groups. Ekern reminded us that there has been people that were part of the Community group that have purchased and renovated or currently are renovating 5 or more buildings in our B-1 district. Currently we have a couple low interest loan/grant type programs as well as TID programs that can assist eligible property owners, not anything at this time to assist business owners who do not own the property, but the City Business and Economic Development Committee is considering that for the future. On a State level there may be grants or other assistance to be researched by the perspective business owner. The Council is hoping the Community group can stay active so the Community Connect program can still be utilized. Pastor Paul said the next meeting for the Community Business Development Group is February 17, 2022.

Discuss/Take Action: Park Commission recommendations: Commission Chairperson J. Anderson explained after the meetings with Trempealeau Valley League & Taylor Park Board we are recommending: 1) \$20 deposit charge to coaches for a Taylor Gym Fab, for access to the gym for practices. They will receive that \$20 back when they return the fab. 2) City of Blair pay ½ of Taylor gym utilities during the program months (estimated Nov. thru March). Anderson thinks Taylor would pay through the program and send invoice to City at end for our 50% share. 3) Program Director Lauren Kidd is recommending a registration fee of \$30 per child/not to exceed \$100 per family for T-ball and Rookie ball and \$40 per child/not to exceed \$100 per family for 3rd to 8th grade participants. Because it has been difficult to find volunteers to work in the concession stand, Director Kidd is requesting a \$30 fee per child/not to exceed \$100 per family, to cover if unable to volunteer in the concession stand during the seasons. If they do work in the concession stand they would receive that money back. Director Kidd is planning a ‘registration day’ on February 20th here at the community center. M. Lisowski had real concerns about some kids being unable to participate because of the costs and hopes there is some sort of avenue for those children to apply for some sort of scholarship or some way to help them afford the program costs and be able to participate. Lisowski asked what other Cities are doing, Anderson said most are already doing this and seems to be working ok. Attorney Radcliffe shared the Mel-Min’s program is \$55 for a kindergartener and \$85 for a 3rd grader to play summer baseball. Anderson said she would talk with Director Kidd about a scholarship application being available. **Motion by M. Lisowski to approve the \$20 fab deposit charge to coaches for entrance to the Taylor gym facility, with that money returned when fab is returned, the City pay utility expenses at 50% during program season and the registration and concession stand fees as described in the report by J. Anderson, 2nd by C. Ekern. Discussion: None. Roll Call Vote: D. Stephenson-yes, C. Ekern-yes, P. Syverson-yes, J. Anderson-yes, M. Lisowski-yes and T. Wheeler-yes. Motion approved.**

Discuss/Take Action: Certified Survey Map: Tim & Michelle Grandy requesting approval to combine contiguous lots. Their home is at 909 E. Olson Street and they also own the empty lot next to them. They want to build an addition to their home and by having the 2 lots surveyed and combined into 1 larger lot they would be able to build the addition and be in compliance with the BCO ‘set-back’ requirement. This is allowed by the City Ordinance 49.10. The Certified Survey Map for this project was completed by a professional consulting company, has been reviewed by Attorney Radcliffe and now is here for Council review and approval to be passed to Plan Commission for review as part of the required Ordinance process. Attorney Radcliffe said the CSM is in order and recommends council approval. **Motion by C. Ekern to approve the CSM combining of Lot 5 & Lot 6, Eastern Meadows Addition SE ¼ - SW ¼, Section 15, T21N-R7W City of Blair, Trempealeau County, Wis, to be moved to a Plan Commission agenda for review and recommendation back to this Council to include review by City Attorney, 2nd by P. Syverson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.**

J. Anderson, Personnel Committee Chairperson informed Council, Officer Potts and Officer Kokott have completed their probationary periods. The 1st full pay period in January 2022 will be at a wage of \$23.63 per hour.

Discuss/Take Action: Request from Officer Potts for Leave of Absence: Officer Potts approved FML will expire during the 2/6/2022 pay period. She has provided the Council with a written request for a Leave of Absence for the months of February and March 2022. The City Personnel Policy allows for the City to approve a L.O.A. if it is beneficial for both the employee and the City. Policy also states no salary will be given from the City and no benefits will accrue during the L.O.A. **Motion by J. Anderson to approve Officer Potts Leave of Absence request for months of February and March 2022 with February 2022 Health Insurance City portion paid as FML ran in to February, no Health insurance will be paid for March 2022 if still on L.O.A. remaining of policy will be followed, 2nd by P. Syverson. Discussion: None. Roll Call Vote: D. Stephenson-yes, C. Ekern-yes, P. Syverson-yes, J. Anderson-yes, M. Lisowski-yes and T. Wheeler-yes. Motion Approved.**

Server License Applications: Crystal Moen application, Attorney Radcliffe said he saw nothing alcohol related under this applications background check that would prevent the Council from approval & recommends approval.

Motion by P. Syverson to approve as presented, 2nd by J. Anderson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 6, No 0. Motion approved.

Building Permit report from General Engineering Company with December 2021 permits included on handout was distributed for Council knowledge. No action required.

Clerk Report: Thank you to R.A. Hoffer, a local hydro-graphics business donated his expertise, time and resources to repaint one of the Park toy cars. Cars were originally donated by Ally Solberg and at least one of them was in need of a new paint job which I understand has been completed. Very nice☺ City office has received 2 compliments on the work Andy Graff and City Public Works staff are doing to keep roads passable during/after snowfalls. One from resident on Mill Road, Dawn Perry and one from Dale Olson who is employed by Tri City Sanitation and visits every Monday for trash collection and needs to travel every street every week, he said our city is the best, right up there with Arcadia who also does as super job of snow clearing. Thank you Andy and guys. Andy continues to learn from every snowfall and willingly accepts constructive comments to improve. The City's annual audit is scheduled for the week of February 14th. Lots of information requested ahead of time by the auditors, saves the City money. Information from Kleven Property Assessment, LLC has been posted in the bank, post office, City hall entrance and office, also published on cityofblair.org website, that there is a Maintenance Assessment of all Real and Personal Property for the Municipality from November 28, 2021 through April 30, 2022. I am planning a vacation February 25 and the 1st week in March. We will be done with our audit by then. But I am asking for cooperation to have the March 7th Council meeting agenda and packets ready by the last week in February, as I will not be here to change/adapt things after that. Debi is capable, but will be plenty business alone in the office. City office has received both annual amounts from our Sand Mine Businesses: Source Energy Services USLP: minimum amount is \$100,000 and we received \$154,840.73. Hi Crush Blair, LLC: 3rd annual payment to City of \$300,000. To my knowledge this money has not been designated for anything and we will look at investing it with Ameritrade as we have with other large undesignated funds. Point of interest is that \$100,000 S.E.S. royalty was set aside for repayment of the pool project debt service annually until complete.

Discuss/Take Action: C. Ekern & Blair Business & Economic Development Committee request consideration for \$50,000 or more of the sand mine annual amounts for their Committees work to offer assistance to local business to improve our Hwy and B-1 Business Districts. The program City CDA program is being used and is limited, may be depleted soon, with all great projects and TID funds are also limited. These dollars might help allow the Community and City Economic Development Groups to become energized again to help make some additional improvements to local businesses with some small grants, etc. Request the Finance Committee consider this request after audit is completed on where City is at with the \$1,000,000 pledge to the Lake Henry Dredge project. Finance Committee will plan to do that.

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

Next Council meeting is March 7, 2022 @ 6:30 pm.

Motion by M. Lisowski to adjourn, 2nd C. Ekern. Vote: Ayes-6, Nays-0. Motion approved. Time 7:52 p.m.

Susan Frederixon, City Clerk/Deputy Treasurer