

City of Blair Regular Council Meeting Minutes, March 2, 2020 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 March 2, 2020. 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, C. Ekern, M. Lisowski, Clerk/Treasurer S. Frederixon, Attorney A. Robertson, Trempealeau County Times. Absent: P. Syverson.

Amendment to March 2, 2020 agenda: **Motion by W. Cartrette to amend agenda to include a request that came in today, from the Fire Department for approval to set aside our 'no open burning' ordinance for a day of training, where the department wants to do a 'controlled burn' of a structure on Schansberg Road, within the City boundaries, 2nd by T. Wheeler. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 5, No 0. Motion approved.**

Fire department request for Ordinance on no open burning to be set aside for controlled burn/training @ N318372 Schansberg Road. Per: Fire department member Nick Frederixon: Reasons are related to the valuable training that can be gained by current volunteer members who have no 'hands on' experience. All asbestos would have to be taken out by current owners prior to burn. Shooting for April 4th if possible, or early in season while ground still damp. They would be assisted by CVTC and owners to be sure all DNR/Fire department approvals and guidelines are in place first. **Motion by W. Cartrette to set aside 'no burning ordinance' for this training exercise contingent on approval of fire department process being completed, 2nd by T. Wheeler. Discussion: Neighbors will be notified by fire department; R. Jenson, acting Police Chief will assist as need also. Vote: Yes 5, No 0. Motion approved.**

Public Comment: David Mattison, representing the Blair Cheese Festival shared updates about the new electronic sign they have been working hard on. This sign will be replacing the Community sign @ the entrance of City on Hwy. 95 across from Grand View Care Center.

Present minutes for approval: Regular Council Meeting 2/3/20 & Special Meeting 2/12/20. **Motion W. Cartrette to approve both 2/3 and 2/12 meeting minutes as presented, 2nd by T. Wheeler. Discussion: request typo change to 2/12/20 minutes. Vote: Yes 5, No 0. Motion approved.**

Ehlers Financial Management Planning: Brian Reilly reviewed the Long Term Financial Management Plan proposal of Blair's current financial position, policies & practices. They will assist in identifying policy issues to be discussed & establish framework for policy discussions; aggregate & outline all future capital needs & program requests; evaluate impact of tax base changes; create FMP Base Model showing impact of CIP request; analyze future sand mine revenues; analyze options like when to do projects, changing policy or modeling alternative revenue sources. They will prepare a 10 year comprehensive financial plan that will help City responsibly achieve goals. Benefits: Aligns financial management with desired plan outcomes, builds consensus for projects, integrates operating & capital budgets and streamlines budget process. **Motion by M. Lisowski to move forward with this plan, funds coming out of CIP budget contingency fund, 2nd C. Ekern. Discussion: length of plan was discussed with 7-10 years being recommended. Ehlers will attend regular meetings to get direction from Council. Vote: Yes 5, No 0. Motion approved.**

S.E.H. engineering report: Duane Kowalczyk presented: CDBG Main/Immell/Oak Street Infrastructure grant project: Gerke Excavating has submitted Final pay request # 3 for \$73,325.44. Even with change orders we are still about \$19,000 under Gerke original accepted BID. Infiltration will be significantly approved due to this project. S.E.H./City will plan for a walk through in summer to check for any needed restoration, cracked sidewalks due to frost, etc. 1 year warranty will start on date of final payment. So we feel the City has a pretty good product. S.E.H. has reviewed and recommend approval. **Motion by W. Cartrette to approve as presented, 2nd by C. Ekern. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 5, No 0. Motion approved.**

Resolution # 3-2-2020: Consider Adoption of Trempealeau County Multi-Hazards Mitigation Plan 2020 – 2023. Dan Schreiner, Trempealeau Co. Emergency Management Director recommends approval of this plan. Blair participated in the past plan for period 2016-2020. This plan describes the hazards that occur in our County and lists strategies, goals and projects, that will eliminate/minimize loss of life and damages caused by all natural hazards, i.e. tornadoes, hail, severe winds, flooding, extreme heat/cold, drought, snow storms, etc. **Motion by W. Cartrette to approve as presented with correction on date to ‘2020-2023, 2nd M. Lisowski. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 5, No 0. Motion approved.**

Review current liquor license charges: Clerk Frederixon explained the current set rates for liquor licenses in Blair and asked Council review and see if any changes might be warranted. Examples: Class A/B Beer License - retail stores are charged \$10/Taverns charged \$100. -Dept. of Revenue guidelines state ‘any amount set by licensing authority for Stores and \$100 maximum for Taverns. Class A/B intoxicating Liquor Licenses in Blair: Retail stores are charged \$ 100/Taverns charged \$500. D.O.R. guidelines are for both retail & taverns is ‘minimum of \$50, maximum \$500.’ **Motion by W. Cartrette to table this until more research can be gathered from other municipalities on how they handle, 2nd J. Anderson. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 5, No 0. Motion approved.**

Reports: Blair Police Department February 2020 report by Randy Jenson (interim Chief): 82 calls, 3 where there was no officer available and County had to handle. 3 animal, 7 assist other agencies, 1 papers served, hit & run, property damage, littering, suspicious vehicle, threat, 2 disorderly conduct, misc. traffic, welfare checks, EMS calls, 46 traffic stops, 4- 911 calls, 1 visit to ball game. Records show theft complaints are up 200 % from last year this time. Fraud and sex complaints are down. Traffic accidents are down. Other accident complaints are up 50%. Juvenile run-aways are same. Alarms are same. Busiest time is Sunday and quietest time is Tuesday. Question from Mayor, resident complained to him about officer using binoculars while sitting in squad across from Kwik Trip. Chief Jenson explained that is a common, very good tool used by Police. It is less intrusive than making contact with a person. Easy to check if license and registration is up to date, see if driving rules are being followed without interfering with a person. Police squad is due to be replaced this year: has 90,000 miles on it, water pump out again, cost \$400, needed to use County squad. Research is being done for pricing and trade in and will be reported through an Equipment Committee meeting in future. Randy also has concern on computer system in Police department as it is Windows 7. Clerk will check with ‘IT’ company for recommendations on upgrading and bring back to council. Cheese Festival police coverage: Chief Jenson said by festival time with new employee and possible new part timers it should be ok. Hopefully have at least 6 officers to allow for 2 sets of officers walking and 1 on patrol. David Mattison/Cheese Festival Committee was in attendance; issue will be monitored and taken up closer to September festival.

Park/Lake Committee Meeting 2/4/20/Chairperson W. Cartrette reported still discussion revolves around Lake Capital fundraising campaign. A very nice tri-fold pamphlet went out explaining the project and requesting support to all area residents and businesses. Funds/Donations received spreadsheet has been developed and dollars are starting to come in. Oakridge engineering company presented 2019 Dam inspection required repairs and possible grant funds availability. Special Council meeting was held 3/10/20 to consider/approve grant application as deadline was March 30, 2020. Lake Facebook page has been created, may be combined with future Blair Facebook page which is being considered by Community Development Committee. Rita Borreson will be supplying more information related to memorial flag/raised flower bed donation to Park at next Park meeting. Discussions are ongoing on fawn, trying to set up long term arrangement with interested party.

Police/Ordinance Committee Meeting on 2/5/2020 Chairperson C. Ekern reported on Mark Spaeth exit interview. Thanked him for service. **Police chief wage was approved as what was published in ads \$22.00-\$26.01 depending on experience, with \$19.00 Police Officer wage.** Discussions to hire Chief position first and wait on

officer. Street level apartment discussion with plans to table that until property owners can attend upcoming Community Dev. Meetings. Tim Wheeler said he did not wish for a picture of him for his retirement, he was ok with a published notice and liked the plaque for 20 years' service.

Blair Business Committee met on 2/11/and 2/25/2020 C. Ekern reported: 2/11/20: established a formal lead committee to oversee the CONNECT COMMUNITY program, set agendas & meetings, etc. Chris Ekern is a member of that committee and liaison to City Council. This meeting was used to complete the 'Connect Communities' application so it could be sent in. This allows us to partner with other community's and WEDC to move improvements along for our downtown upgrades. 2/25/20: Review of 2/24/20 Police-Ordinance & City Business & Development meeting. Reviewed S.W.A.T. analysis, code enforcement topics, Blair Business Committee Facebook page, which will be a 'controlled' page. Oversight by BBC board members, downtown store front improvement, how flood plain might affect planning, comprehensive plan was review and vision statement discussed. **Committee set regular meeting dates each month for the 3rd Thursday @ 6:30 pm.**

Combination Business & Economic Development & Police-Ordinance Committees meeting on 2/24/2020 Chairperson C. Ekern reported: Discussions related to Ordinance pertaining to the conditional use of 'street level' apartments in the City's downtown district. Property owners and WEDC were invited. Explanations were given on why this is being looked at related to downtown district improvements, the group is working with Wisconsin Economic Development to use best practices on improvement/revitalization of our downtown business district, and residential property's need to be carefully considered on how they fit in that plan.

Ordinance Chapter 44-Trespass review of 1st draft to change to encompass the entire Section 943.13, WI. STAT: Attorney Robertson explained the current Ordinance only partially mentions this State Statute which was not sufficient to be successful in a recent court challenge of a municipal citation. Recommends change to include entire statute which will eliminate loop holes in future. Interim Police Chief Jenson commented on the fine section of this Ordinance, that it should be increase and be standardized to cover court costs and be uniform to County/State and other municipalities, specifically increase it to \$263.50, would simplify process for officers and City. **Motion by M. Lisowski to send back to Attorney Robertson to change section 44.04, with penalties to make it standard with the WI State bond book guidelines and adjust per any future changes to bond book, and bring back to Council, 2nd by W. Cartrette. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 5, No 0.**

Randy Obieglo was not able to make this meeting.

Clerk report: Clerk/Treasurer Frederixon reported City annual Audit went well was done in 3 days. Baker Tilly auditors are great to work with the office working hard to prepare documents the week prior to audit week to expedite process. We actually keep the audit in mind all year, Debi has developed spreadsheets to keep track of things monthly for audit and I also keep audit in mind in council minutes, which calculates into \$ saved by the City in Audit costs which are substantial; City recorded 70 voters for the 2/18/20 election with 3 Supreme Court Justices on ballot; Blair Preston Fire department called City with compliment for our snow plowing and hydrant clearing work...we know homeowners are responsible for hydrants on/near their property, but our Public Works staff keep track of those and clears when needed for safety or residents (J. Anderson mentioned seeing flag type mechanisms identifying hydrants in another city-Frederixon shared our fire department is working to get those in Blair also). W. Cartrette commented that she has had calls our streets are not cleared close enough to curb/Frederixon said they used the lighter weight truck to do East end/other streets and will plan to go around City and widen street the next day or two; we have had 3 Chief applications & 3 Officer applications; Council iPads are here, we are waiting for covers, hope to be using for next meeting.

Page 4, March 2, 2020 Regular Council Meeting minutes

Building Permits: No building permits submitted.

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

Next Council meeting is April 13, 2020 @ 7:00 pm

Motion C. Ekern to adjourn meeting, 2nd W. Cartrette. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes 5, No 0. Motion approved1

Susan Frederixon-Clerk/Treasurer