**City Council Meeting**

**Minutes**

**02/2/2021**

Pledge of allegiance was led by Mayor Schoonover.

Meeting started at 7:05PM in person and on Zoom. Mayor Schoonover, Councilman Tyler, and City Administrator were in person. Councilman Becker, Councilman Klos, Councilwoman Abel, Council President Dauner, and City Attorney Miller were present online ZOOM.

Sheriff Jacobs was absent.

Health Director Nancy Marihugh.

No active cases as of today. There were 29 active cases in January. The Home Health Nurse resigned recently leaving the Health Department short of staff. Heath Department is vaccinating with 40 of the first round of Maderna vaccines phase 1 and 20 second doses given so far. 100 doses of Maderna were received and the priorities are the Elderly, Fire Department, Food Service, City Staff, and retail supply.

Rex Boley, Superintendent of Schools thanked the City for helping clean the school parking lots. Kudos to the staff!

Kevin Cowan from Gilmore and Bell Law Firm addressed the Mayor and Council regarding bonding for the upcoming water project. He said that a General Obligation bond is the best since it has incredibly low interest rates over 40 years. Kevin said that he will expect there will be a letter of conditions and funds from USDA when the loan is approved. He said that he will work through the letter of conditions, easements, and rights of way. He said it was imperative to implement interim financing and publicly offer sale of the notes. USDA will want to work with several items. Permanent Bond documents up first. Kevin said USDA will help us through the process. All transcripts of the bond proceedings must go through the Attorney General’s Office. Kevin wants to see the commitment from USDA. Kevin suggests going ahead with the authorization of a resolution to reimburse on a tax-exempt basis. Attorney Miller said the hospital obtained similar financing. Kevin said the disadvantage of this type financing are the levels of bureaucracy. Kevin said go through local banks when possible. Attorney Miller said this is an opportunity for our local banks to do interim financing. Kevin agreed this makes it much easier. Council President Dauner suggested we should be able to start the project right away with local interim financing. Attorney Miller asked Kevin if Gilmore and Bell would like to work with us? Kevin said yes. Attorney Miller said we will need a resolution to hire Gilmore and Bell.

Monte Dakan from Johnson Service Company briefed the council on the condition of our currently inspected sewer lines. Monte said that they do need future maintenance and lining and suggested we continue to inspect and clean. If we wait and do $20,000 sections of the city each year it could take a couple years. Councilman Klos asked how long it takes to grow roots back when removed from the sewer lines. Monte said it depends on conditions, however, it could be within six months. Monte suggests we clean as much as possible if plans are to line them in the future. Council informed Monte they will have an answer in the March Council Meeting or sooner of how to proceed.

Consent agenda was motioned for approval by Councilman Tyler and Councilman Becker seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

**Old Business:**

Councilwoman Abel updated the council on the blocked driveways and intersections. She said she sat at the sale barn for several hours watching the trucks and the parking on the street. She did not see one driveway or intersection blocked. She also said the sale barn has done some improvements and has made it better for unloading and loading. Councilwoman Abel believes signs are not needed.

Attorney Miller said the 0.75 sales tax from the Community Center was good to go. There is no expiration.

Council suggested the City increase sales tax an additional 1% to help with infrastructure such as roads and facilities. Attorney Miller said that it will need to come to a vote in November and be designated as a general sales tax. Attorney Miller suggested we develop a comprehensive plan for the sales tax. Administrator will develop a draft for the City Attorney and Councils review and recommendations.

Councilman Klos suggested we cash in some of our reserve funding to get some much-needed projects completed. Streets are a major issue for the city. Council informed the Administrator the City will need a street and replacement plan very soon. Councilman Tyler agreed the reserve funds are for exactly what we are discussing. Council President Dauner asked if there were a minimum and maximum on reserve funds. Administrator will find out and let the council know at the March meeting.

Councilman Klos suggested we use reserve funds and match with our infrastructure funds.

Attorney Miller said when the weather breaks, we can proceed with the auction for Jewell Grocery.

Delinquent utility bills discussed. Attorney Miller said the Governors orders not to shut off utilities has been terminated. Attorney Miller suggested sending a letter to the active accounts that are delinquent and a civil lawsuit for the inactive accounts. In the meantime, Attorney Miller will be working on possibly using a collection agency to target the delinquent accounts.

The council suggested placing our electronic billboard east of Sweden Crème on highway 36 or the south end of the lumber yard. Staff will place it in those areas once the weather clears.

Councilwoman Abel discussed the RLF Program. She said that Jenny Russell did not set up a meeting with council prior to holding a meeting with the RLF Committee. The question asked who sets the rates of interest for these loans? Administrator will have an answer at the next council meeting.

City Administrator requested a 1% cost of living adjustment for city staff. Councilwoman Abel motioned to approve a 1% cost of living adjustment. Councilman Klos seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Councilwoman Abel updated Council on the Landbank. The lot owned by Karen Holmes needs to be filed under the Landbank. The next meeting is 17 February.

Attorney Miller updated council on the Rural Water Contract. Attorney Miller said there were not enough officers present for a quorum at the last Water Board meeting. Council President asked for a Rural Water Policy. Attorney Miller will bring one to the next meeting and the Water Board will vote at their next meeting.

City Administrator presented a new John Deere Skid Steer Lease from Carrico Implement Company in Beloit to the council. The current skid steers lease has run out. Councilwoman Abel motioned to approve the lease and Councilman Tyler seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Administrator suggested we ask for a grant to put a gym in the basement of the old YMCA building. Council asked the administrator to do a cost analysis and then present to the council at a future date.

Administrator asked council to approve the Housing Application. Councilwoman Abel motioned to approve, and Councilman Tyler seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45PM

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Justin Schoonover Barry K. Parsons

Mayor City Administrator