

**City of Auburn
Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, September 18, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Mayor Berola with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance of all present.

Clerk Sponsler took roll. Present were Mayor Berola, Clerk Sponsler, Treasurer Williams, Alderman Parrish, Alderman Garrett, Alderman Royer, Alderman Marquis, Alderman Johnson, Alderman Sheppard, and Alderman Hemmerle.

Also present were Office Manager Rathgeber, Chief Campbell, Superintendent Henson, and Attorney Andrew Jarmer.

Absent was Alderman Crissey.

Mayor's Comments:

Committee Assignments: Mayor Berola would like to assign Alderman Parrish to the Health and Safety, Public Works, and Parks committees. A motion was made by Alderman Johnson to approve these assignments, second by Alderman Hemmerle.

AYES: Garrett, Royer, Marquis, Sheppard, Johnson, Hemmerle, Parrish
NAYES: None
PRESENT: None
ABSENT: Crissey

Mayor Berola spoke with Auburn School District Superintendent Root and the Athletic Director about Resolution 100-23. This was to be approved at tonight's meeting, but it was forgotten on the agenda. The school district is already looking into new scoreboards and will be voting on it at the board meeting on Wednesday. Mayor Berola apologizes to the school district for it not getting approved at this meeting. It will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Visitor's Comments:

Brandy Hurley Brown is here to voice complaints about a residence at 416 W. North Street. She has spoken with Alderman Garrett and Joe Powell. She said that the residents sleep all day and play all night. There are drugs at the residence and the cars are full of stuff. The police were called out at 1 am because they were burning copper wire in the backyard. A certified nuisance letter will be sent. Also in attendance with Ms. Brown were Barb Henn and Vicky & Nick Anders.

City Clerk's Report:

Clerk Sponsler presented the September 5, 2023 meeting minutes for review and approval. Alderman Royer made a motion to approve the September 5, 2023 minutes, second by Alderman Marquis.

AYES: Garrett, Royer, Marquis, Sheppard, Johnson, Hemmerle, Parrish
NAYES: None
PRESENT: None
ABSENT: Crissey

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Williams presented the Bills List from September 5, 2023 to September 15, 2023. Alderman Johnson made a motion to approve the bills list, second was made by Alderman Marquis.

AYES: Marquis, Sheppard, Johnson, Hemmerle, Parrish

NAYES: Garrett, Royer

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: Crissey

There was a question about the purchases from Jamie's Diamond Mine. These were for purchasing the name plates and plaques. There was also a question about a payment to Bentons for engineering fees on water. Superintendent Henson said these were the last part of the North Street Project.

Treasurer Williams presented the Budget Report for the September 18, 2023 meeting for review only.

Treasurer Williams also presented the video gaming reports. The August 2023 income was \$13,567.62, which is \$1490.65 more than last year. The FY income is \$53,801.23.

Attorney's Report

Attorney Jarmer presented the First Reading of Ordinance 1535-23, An Ordinance Amending the City's Building Permit Fees for Active and Former Members of the United States Armed Services.

Alderman Garrett announced that it will be referred to as the Vincent Speranza Amendment. Alderman Marquis asked about the criteria for the discount. It was stated that we could accept any proof, but it was decided that a 214 should be published.

Attorney Jarmer presented the Second Reading of Resolution 101-23, a Resolution to Include Compensation Under IRC Section 125 Plan as IMRF Earnings. A motion was made by Alderman Johnson, second by Alderman Garrett.

AYES: Garrett, Royer, Marquis, Sheppard, Johnson, Hemmerle, Parrish

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: Crissey

Attorney Jarmer Presented the Second Reading of Resolution 102-23, a Resolution to Include Taxable Expense Allowances as IMRF Earnings. Alderman Johnson made motion to approve Resolution 102-23, second by Alderman Sheppard.

AYES: Garrett, Royer, Marquis, Sheppard, Johnson, Hemmerle, Parrish

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: Crissey

Department Heads

Chief Campbell:

Chief Campbell announced the changes in the Safety Act.

Superintendent Henson:

Superintendent Henson told the council the bid for Christmas lights for the square was in the Teams folder for them to review.

John Edie is working with Office Manager Rathgeber on FEMA funds.

The Township has contacted TJ about a spring clean-up day. It would be a joint effort between the City of Auburn and the Auburn Township. We would get 10-12 dumpsters for the community to use to dispose of things.

Office Manager Rathgeber:

Office Manager Rathgeber told the council we should have a working website link by midweek and he will pass it along as soon as he receives it.

Committee Reports

Administration-Johnson: Alderman Johnson spoke with Bill Karhliker about purchasing his City laptop. When they were purchased, it was discussed that they were expected to last two terms, or 8 years and would then need upgraded. He wanted to get the council's input on this. If it was agreed that this is ok, then it would need to be declared surplus property.

Public Works-

Public Utilities-Johnson: The utility bills that were recently mailed out include the new water rate. This month was \$20,000 more than last month. There was more water sold this month because it had been so dry, but it seems we are moving in the right direction of getting the water accounts in the black.

Health & Safety-Marquis:

1. 173 East Monroe needs to be deemed a chronic nuisance. Multiple letters have been sent and the property owners have been partially compliant as they have mowed the grass. There have been many police calls to this residence. A motion was made by Alderman Royer to deem this property a chronic nuisance, second by Alderman Sheppard.

AYES: Garrett, Royer, Marquis, Sheppard, Johnson, Hemmerle, Parrish

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: Crissey

2. 228 West Harrison needs to be deemed a chronic nuisance with multiple police calls and criminal activity. A motion was made by Alderman Royer to deem this property a chronic nuisance, second by Alderman Parrish.

AYES: Garrett, Royer, Marquis, Sheppard, Johnson, Hemmerle, Parrish

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: Crissey

Health & Housing- Royer:

1. 446 N. 7th tree trimming: It is on the owner's property. The quote received was \$300-\$400 to trim the tree. The concern with trimming the tree out of the City's right of way is that the weight would be on the side towards the house and could fall on the house. We could be held liable if we have it trimmed and it falls on the house. There was discussion about setting a precedence about trimming or cutting down trees on private property. Mayor Berola's advice was to trim what is in the right of way and the homeowner would have to deal with the rest of the tree. Alderman Royer said we should send a letter to the homeowner letting them know of the risks.

2. 514 N. 5th Street fines: The previous tenants that racked up the fines have moved out and the landlord has been there cleaning up the property. Collecting the fines will be challenging since the tenant has since moved out. Alderman Royer is asking what we want to do since new tenants could be coming in to set up new utilities. There was discussion regarding if the landlord should be responsible for the fines or not. A motion was made by Alderman Royer to assess fines in the amount of \$4100 to be paid in full within 30 days. We will not allow the new utilities to be established to a new tenant until the current fines are satisfied. Second was made by Alderman Sheppard.

AYES: Royer, Marquis, Sheppard, Johnson, Parrish

NAYES: Garrett, Hemmerle

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: Crissey

3. Alderman Royer requested an Executive Session to discuss pending litigation.

Parks-Hemmerle: No Report

Economic Development-Garrett: Alderman Garrett discussed the Leahy Property for the Springfield Plastics Annexation. Mayor Berola got a phone call from the tenant farmer, who is working to help us as well.

Building Committee-Garrett: Alderman Garrett brought up the RFQ for the new building. A letter will be published announcing that the City of Auburn will RFQ. Alderman Garrett set a Building Committee Meeting for Tuesday, September 26 at 6pm.

Other Business:

Insurance/Alcohol sales for outdoor events: This was brought to Alderman Royer's attention during the bike event. If a business has an outdoor event without outdoor alcohol, they must purchase insurance. Do the other businesses or bars that participate need to have their own insurance also.

Adjournment

Alderman Royer made a motion to adjourn regular session at 8:35 pm, second made by Alderman Sheppard. A voice vote was taken.

AYES: Garrett, Royer, Marquis, Sheppard, Johnson, Hemmerle, Parrish

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: Crissey

Alderman Royer made a motion to adjourn out of executive session at 8:40 pm, second by Alderman Marquis. A voice vote was taken.

AYES: Garrett, Royer, Marquis, Sheppard, Johnson, Hemmerle, Parrish

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: Crissey

Alderman Royer made a motion to come back to regular session at 8:41 pm, second by Alderman Sheppard. A voice vote was taken.

AYES: Garrett, Royer, Marquis, Sheppard, Johnson, Hemmerle, Parrish

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: Crissey

Alderman Garrett made a motion to adjourn from regular session at 8:42 pm, second by Alderman Marquis. A voice vote was taken.

AYES: Garrett, Royer, Marquis, Sheppard, Johnson, Hemmerle, Parrish

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: Crissey

