

City of Auburn
Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 18, 2022

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

Mayor Berola called for the roll. Present were Mayor Berola, Clerk Warwick, Treasurer Williams, Alderman Powell, Alderman Marquis, Alderman Garrett, Alderman Hemmerle, Alderman Karhliker, Alderwoman Sheppard, and Alderman Johnson. Also present were Office Manager Ponsler, Chief Campbell, and Attorney Justin Onken for Attorney Moredock. Absent were Alderman Royer, on an ambulance call, and Superintendent Henson for COVID-19 protocols.

Mayor Berola read a letter from a former city employee Mike Heren who worked for the city on a part-time basis as a dispatcher and later as a police officer from the mid-1980s to 2003. In June 2021 he was made aware that the IMRF retirement rules were different back when he was employed by the city, only needing 600 hours per year to qualify for benefits. Mike believes that he has met that requirement, he is asking the city to review the previous timecards so he can apply for benefits. It was noted that previously when a part-time employee neared 600 hours of part-time work it required City Council approval. Office Manager Ponsler noted that IMRF did not have a record of Mike Heren paying into the IMRF system for the city. She also noted that if we can verify the hours then there is a form that can be submitted to IMRF to add his service, Mike Heren and the City would pay in their contributions. The city has also looked for the timecards but has not been able to locate them although they are continuing to search. The mayor will follow up with Mike Heren.

The 3ZX phone system is up and running, the mayor requested set up instructions for the council so they can make use of the system. The mayor also asked for a status on the electronic time clock for employees, Office Manager Ponsler reported that the system is still being tested and they hope to start using it in February, the holdup is on the vendor side. The council voiced their displeasure with the vendor delays.

Mike Canny from Canny Accounting presented the FY2021 draft audit results to the council. This year included a single audit and a yellow book audit. The yellow book audit is required because of the government loans received for the water main project. We have an unmodified opinion on the audit which is the best opinion that we can receive. The IMRF and general funds look good. Our net pension liability is \$621,000.00, our position improved because of investment performance, we are funded at a 91.92% funded ratio, we should expect future improvement. Our governmental funds are in a good financial position. Canny noted that all the fund balances looked good, although the water fund balance was lower. The interest rate returns are worth watching, a change in the percentage could create a surplus in our IMRF funding. The yellow book had three findings regarding internal controls 1) we do not produce our financial statement, this is the finding, but given the size of our municipality it is not uncommon, a city like Springfield would have its internal CPA to help produce the financial statement, the city could hire someone to produce a financial statement if we wanted to remove this finding, but it is not required. 2) the journal entries had findings, there was a \$20,000.00 sales tax payment that was double entered, it was caught in the audit. The ending cash bank reconciliation was over by \$44,000.00

because the water payment was made in April but posted in May. The recommendation is to more thoroughly look at the financial statements, Treasurer Williams will look over the statements as well. 3) the quantity of the journal entries done during the audit process is higher than it should be, there were approximately forty journal entries during the audit. The last two findings are easily corrected, the first finding could be improved by more training for Office Manager Ponsler in financial processes. There were no findings during the single audit. Mike Canny regretfully reported to the council that he can no longer keep the city as a client because of staffing at his office and changes in his business, he is reducing the number of clients to ensure he offers the best services. There was a question about quarterly audits, if quarterly audits were made it would remove the objectivity of the auditors. There were questions on whether our software package covers what we need, Mike said it does. The council was very appreciative of the work that Mike has done for the city over the last nine years.

The agenda item of vacating the alley for Ben Royer will be tabled to the next meeting when Attorney Moredock, Superintendent Henson, and Ben Royer are present.

Alderwoman Sheppard reported that the Zoning Board met on January 12, 2022, regarding an ordinance that had already been passed. The Zoning Board requested updated zoning books, the books have not been fully updated in quite a while, there are multiple supplements, but there is not one cohesive book. Alderwoman Sheppard would like to explore a different ordinance system than Municode, several council members felt is the ease of use and search capabilities were lacking.

Clerk Warwick presented the January 3, 2022 meeting minutes for the council's review and approval. A motion was made by Alderman Garrett to approve the minutes, second by Alderwoman Sheppard.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Marquis, Powell, and Sheppard

NAYES: None

PRESENT: Karhliker

ABSENT: Royer

Treasurer Williams presented the bills list from January 4, 2022, to January 18, 2022, for the council's review and approval. A motion was made by Alderman Karhliker to approve the bills list, second by Alderman Powell.

AYES: Hemmerle, Johnson, Marquis, Powell, Karhliker, and Sheppard

NAYES: Garrett

ABSENT: Royer

Treasurer Williams reported on the December 2021 revenues for Video Gaming, the city's share was \$12,136.91 compared to November 2021 which was \$9,114.62 even though there were four fewer terminals in December 2021. To date for the Fiscal Year 2022, May 2021 to December 2021 the city's share for Video Gaming has been \$91,890.07.

Attorney Onken presented the second reading of Ordinance 1507-22 an ordinance amending the liquor code. There were two questions regarding the changes, the limit on special permits has been removed. Alderman Garrett spoke with all the liquor establishment owners, and they were pleased with the updates. Alderman Garrett made a motion to approve Ordinance 1597-22, second by Alderwoman Sheppard.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Marquis, Powell, Karhliker, and Sheppard
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Royer

Chief Campbell reported that both officers have received waivers to go to the full-time transition course from March 7, 2022, through March 17, 2022.

Mayor Berola reported that Superintendent Henson wanted to mention the EPA requirements regarding phosphorous levels from water treatment plants. Our water plant feeds into Sugar Creek which feeds into Lake Springfield. Alderman Johnson will hold a meeting to discuss how we can upgrade our water treatment plant to comply with the EPA guidelines. There was a consensus that the EPA rules are unrealistic.

Office Manager, Ponsler's report is under the Administration Committee.

A motion was made by Alderman Johnson to go into executive session regarding personnel with action to be taken after an executive session at 8:13 PM, second by Alderman Garrett. Taken by voice vote.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Marquis, Powell, Karhliker, and Sheppard
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Royer

A motion to come back into regular session from the executive session was made by Alderman Garrett at 8:38 PM, second by Alderman Johnson. Taken by voice vote.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Marquis, Powell, Karhliker, and Sheppard
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Royer

A motion was made by Alderman Johnson to approve the hiring of Lori Wilson for part-time office help effective January 24, 2022, at a rate of \$18.00 per hour, second by Alderman Marquis.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Marquis, Powell, Karhliker, and Sheppard
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Royer

Alderman Karhliker had no report for the Public Works committee.

Alderman Johnson will hold a Public Utilities committee meeting on January 26, 2022, at 7:00 PM. Agenda items for the meeting will include EPA release requirements, Western Acres lift station, and possible annexation of Springfield Plastics.

Alderwoman Sheppard reported that the Health & Safety committee met before the council meeting. Chief Campbell reported that he needed replacements for the in-vehicle laptops, they need to replace seven laptops, his preferred bid was for Matrix at \$31,000.00. A motion was made by Alderwoman Sheppard to approve the purchase of seven laptops and accessories at a price not to exceed \$31,000.00, second by Alderman Garrett.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Marquis, Powell, Karhliker, and Sheppard
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Royer

Chief Campbell reported that he had a bid from Axion for five tasers plus replacement cartridges, the tasers will stay at the station and be given to officers when they go on shift. The bid was for \$18,000.00 or \$3,600.00 a year for five years. A motion was made by Alderman Garrett to approve the purchase from Axion at a price not to exceed \$18,000.00, second by Alderwoman Sheppard.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Marquis, Powell, Karhliker, and Sheppard
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Royer

Chief Campbell reported that it is time to update the firearms for the police officers, the current handguns are .45 caliber, he is recommending 9mm Glock 17. The price would be \$409.00 per gun, we would replace ten guns. He is looking to surplus the current handguns. A motion was made by Alderman Marquis to approve the purchase of ten Glock 17 9mm handguns at a price not to exceed \$4,100.00, second by Alderman Garrett.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Marquis, Powell, Karhliker, and Sheppard
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Royer

Alderwoman Sheppard reported to the Health & Housing committee that the property at 514 North 5th Street (Oller) has been brought into compliance. Alderman Hemmerle asked about the Pierce property on South 6th Street. He noted that there are still stacks of pallets and equipment. Attorney Moredock has been working through the court to remedy the issue.

Alderman Hemmerle had no report to the Parks Committee.

Clerk Warwick had no report for the Economic Development committee.

Alderman Garrett reported that he had a bid from Emmons Tree Service to remove three trees for an amount of \$5,150.00, the amount includes haul away and stump grinding. He made a motion to accept the bid, second by Alderwoman Sheppard.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Marquis, Powell, Karhliker, and Sheppard
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Royer

Alderman Royer was not present to report on the sound system for the square.

Alderman Garrett reported that he has spoken with fourteen communities regarding a building inspector. He will be compiling his data and will have a report at the next meeting. He indicated that Rochester and Chatham use the County to do electrical, structural, and occupancy permits. Mayor

Berola had someone contact him regarding the building inspector. In the interim, Ricky Lavin could cover the inspections.

Motion to adjourn was made at 8:59 PM by Alderman Garrett, second by Alderwoman Sheppard. Taken by voice vote.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Marquis, Powell, Karhliker, and Sheppard

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Royer

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Warwick
City Clerk of Auburn