

City of Auburn
Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 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, Alderwoman Sheppard, Alderman Karhliker, and Alderman Johnson. Also present were Superintendent Henson, Office Manager Ponsler, Chief Campbell, and Attorney Moredock.

Absent: Alderman Royer

Mayor Berola provided details in his mayor's comments regarding an individual on Adams Street who had applied for a building permit and our building inspector helped him locate one of his pins, but they were not able to locate all pins. The building inspector informed the property owner that they needed to expose all pins before the fence was approved to make sure it met all setback requirements. The building inspector was later informed the fence posts were up and the entire fence erected without an approved building permit. The city did send a follow up letter to the homeowner asking them to stop with any further action with the fence and to contact the building inspector to acquire full approval. The nearest that can be determined now is the fence is over the property line onto a neighboring property.

Attorney Moredock advised that the homeowner need to be notified that they are in violation, and they will need to take down the portion of the fence over the property line and construct in a way that meets our setbacks and approval process. Another building permit will need to be completed to specify where the fence will be to show the correct area of the fence.

Alderman Garrett recommended that the mayor and city attorney draft a letter that provides a certain number of days to remove the part of the fence over the property line before assessing fines. Attorney Moredock will draft a letter allowing 7 days to take part of the fence down, but also re-apply for a building permit for that portion of the fence that will be erected in appropriate place on property.

Alderwoman Sheppard provided an update on the Zoning Board Meeting that was held on April 13, 2022.

A variance request was made at 309 N. Lily Lane (Rebecca Brown), reduction in setback from 25' to 8' to construct a garage. With no opposition from any neighbors or adjoining properties, the zoning board recommended approval. Motion made by Alderwoman Sheppard to approve the variance request at 309 N. Lily Lane for a reduction in setback from 25' to 8' for the construction of a garage, second by Alderman Johnson.

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

NAYES: None
PRESENT: None
ABSENT: Royer

Ernie Burtle of Burtle Motors also attended the zoning meeting. He is seeking to split his property and make three lots. The zoning board advised they did not believe the needed to be involved as all the lots meet minimum lot sizes, there is no re-zoning, (all zoned commercial), and no entrances being requested. Greene and Bradford will file all necessary paperwork with the county to split the property. No further action needed at this time.

Clerk Warwick presented the April 4, 2022, meeting minutes for the council's review and approval. A motion was made by Alderwoman Sheppard to approve the minutes, second by Alderman Powell.

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

Clerk Warwick reminded the city council members that all statements of economic interest are due May 1st to avoid a penalty with late filing.

Treasurer Williams presented the bills list from April 5, 2022, to April 18, 2022, for the council's review and approval. Alderman Karhliker inquired about the invoice for the phones and the iPad. Office Manager Ponsler and Superintendent Henson stated that was a monthly fee for all city related phones and/or devices. Approximately 4 of the iPad devices will be removed soon as new ones have been ordered to replace the outdated models. Just need to update all SIM information to get them fully functioning. A motion was made by Alderman Karhliker to approve the bills list, second by Alderwoman Sheppard.

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

There was no budget report in the Teams folder for review, so no action was needed.

Treasurer Williams reported on the March video gaming report. The city revenue was 13,598.99 which is 701.41 less than a year ago. The total video gaming revenue for this fiscal year is 126,062.99.

Attorney Moredock requested an Executive Session regarding pending litigation.

Chief Campbell reported that Officer Kissel is instructing all officers on the tasers as he is certified instructor. Secretary of State is further investigating properties on Hogan Road and 4th Street and expecting a report back on their findings.

Chief Campbell presented a resignation from Officer Grayson effective May 1, 2022. Motion to approve resignation of Officer Grayson made by Alderwoman Sheppard, second by Alderman Powell

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

Superintendent Henson stated that the city garage has been flushing hydrants the past two weeks. An all call will be generated to alert residents of this, and that water may be disturbed during this period and that dirty water may be rinsed through lines through this process.

Superintendent Henson also has surplus property he would like to bring forward to the council for approval to be removed and/or sold at auction. Those items will be placed on the next agenda and reviewed and approved by the council.

Office Manager Ponsler informed the council that they will be attended administrator training for CivicPlus. A list of our current contacts has been provided to them to at least start the initial download. A post to all city social media accounts will be done to inform the public of what is coming and what the roll out will be to sign up for the new all call/alert system.

Alderman Johnson provided an update from a committee meeting that was held on April 12, 2022, to discuss end of fiscal year purchases as well as review the proposed budget for FY23. Based on the current budget reporting, general fund is slated to potentially have a 300,000 surplus, water fund may have a slight surplus but break even, sewer with an approximate surplus of 100,000 and gas with an approximate surplus of 200,000.

Superintendent Henson requested the purchase of a CAT 309 Excavator based on the garage equipment schedule Alderman Johnson made the motion to approve the purchase of the CAT 309 Excavator out of gas surplus/gas checking not to exceed 139,000, second Alderman Garrett.

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

Alderman Johnson forgot to include items including tables and chairs at the community center as well as new chairs for the council chambers. An amount was not set at the committee meeting and Office Manager Ponsler is working with additional vendors on a price quote and will present those prices at the May 2, 2022, council meeting.

Alderman Garrett went over to the community center to view the current items. There are currently 74 metal chairs at that location. The thought was to at least replace the chairs at the community center and bring newer chairs to the council chambers to replace older chairs as well.

Another item discussed at the committee meeting was the need to replace the current city council chairs in the council chambers. Further research and pricing with vendors are being done to finalize that purchase.

Another item discussed with the purchase of a large screen TV in which to project items from city council and committee meetings, project items from CivicPlus and pertinent meeting information.

The cost of purchasing chairs and TV is well within the spending limit of the Office Manager. The mayor has already directed the Office Manager in the purchase of the TV and the council chairs will also be below the spending limits and can proceed once all final costs have been obtained.

Alderman Johnson stated a need made by Office Manager Ponsler to redesign the city website to be fully functioning but also to better coordinate with the new alert system and the need for the site to function for residents to sign up for alerts. Alderman Johnson made a motion to approve the proposal for the redesign of the city website with e-Websmart not to exceed 3,600.00, second by Alderman Marquis.

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

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: Royer

Alderman Johnson spoke about the FY23 budget and specifically the fiscal year projections. General fund to be increased by 14.5%, Water to decrease by 7%, Sewer to decrease 25%, and gas budget by 12%. April 19, 2022, will be the second meeting to discuss the budget before a final review and approval.

Alderman Johnson did ask for an executive session regarding personnel at the end of the meeting.

Alderman Karhliker scheduled a Public Works meeting on May 16, 2022, at 6: 30 pm with Benton and Associates to discuss North Street project. Project would be done no later than September 2024 to close out by 2025.

Alderman Johnson reported there would be a Public Utilities Meeting on April 19, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.

Alderwoman Sheppard reported on a Health and Safety Committee meeting that took place on April 12, 2022.

- 1.) Thayer Police – Chief Campbell is getting a meeting together to see if feasible to assume the responsibilities of that department under the umbrella of the Auburn Police Department. The Auburn Police have already answered over 100 calls to Thayer just this year alone.
- 2.) Building – Additional room needed to accommodate for storage and just office space in general. The committee felt the Chief could explore the current building and see what could be done to either add on or build up to accommodate his needs. Alderman Karhliker proposed just exploring the idea of a new building and has been speaking with an individual on some potential land that could be used.
- 3.) Dog – Chief Campbell exploring the possibility of a K-9 non-bite dog. Chief is going to put together a proposal to the Gary Sinise Foundation to potentially assist with funding this project. Further information will be provided back to the council soon.
- 4.) PT Police Officer – Chief Campbell introduced Zach Morgan. Mr. Morgan has been a police officer with the city before and expressed interest in returning as a part time officer. Alderwoman Sheppard made the motion to hire Zach Morgan as a part time police officer at the rate of pay currently allowed for part time officers, second by Alderman Marquis.
- 5.) AYES: Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Powell, Garrett, and Sheppard
- 6.) NAYES: None
- 7.) PRESENT: None
- 8.) ABSENT: Royer

Alderwoman Sheppard asked for an executive session at the end of the meeting.

Alderwoman Sheppard had no report for Health and Housing but did remind the council that on Saturday, April 23, 2022, from 9 am to 12 pm there will be an electronic recycling event at the firehouse on Route 104/Jackson Street for anyone interested.

Alderman Hemmerle had no report for the Parks Committee.

Alderman Powell reminded the council about a Food Truck that was parked on the square over the weekend. He wanted clarification on permitting it/not permitting it. He thought the matter was addressed some time ok and that it was allowed to be on private property, but when it was on city property, there was some sort of permit required a fee to be paid. This truck was on the square and plugged into he power supply.

Superintendent Henson stated that he had previously had communication with Attorney Moredock on this, but nothing had been finalized on any paperwork.

Alderwoman Sheppard recalled meetings being held on the matter, but nothing ever finalized. Office Manager Ponsler will send to Attorney Moredock to review and provide further information to the council.

Clerk Warwick loaded all NextSite files into the Teams folder for the council to review moving forward regarding future development and asked the mayor to consider a new appointment as the Chair of the committee moving forward.

Sidewalks was on the agenda, but no further information was presented.

A motion was made by Alderman Garrett to go into executive session at 7:56 PM, second by Alderwoman Sheppard. Taken by voice vote.

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

A motion to come back into regular session from the executive session was made by Alderman Garrett at 8:43 PM, second by Alderwoman Sheppard. Taken by voice vote.

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

Alderman Garrett inquired as to whether fees were assessed to the 8 or 9 vendors who came to the park for the event held. Alderman Powell did not believe that anything had been charged. The main issues addressed seemed to be just consistency amongst the events and whether it is a local event and/or whether it is a business that comes to town making a profit.

Mayor Berola provided information to the council but thought it could be heard specifically by the Parks committee. Concern came from Joyce Ferguson, resident of Auburn, inquiring about why the city could not put in a water park like Chatham has done. She has grandkids and due to her inability to drive, she

requested something additional being brought in or developed for young kids to do here in town. She also requested newer equipment potentially added as she believes the current equipment to be very dated. She also requested consideration for smaller equipment for younger children to be able to climb on as current equipment is oversized for younger children. No further action was taken.

Motion to adjourn was made at 8:44 PM by Alderman Garrett, second by Alderman Marquis. Taken by voice vote.

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

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: Royer

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Ponsler
Deputy Clerk of Auburn