

**City of Auburn
Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 17, 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 Karhliker, Alderman Garrett, Alderman Royer, Alderman Marquis, Alderman Johnson, Alderman Sheppard, Alderman Powell, and Alderman Hemmerle.

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

Mayor's Comments:

Mayor Berola appointed Danny Parrish to the Building Committee. Alderman Garrett made a motion to approve the appointment of Danny Parrish to the Building Committee, second by Alderman Marquis.

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

We received notice from the water commission that prices are going up. Currently it is \$5.24 per 1000 gallons and the rate will be increasing in 2023 to \$5.40 per 1000 gallons, in 2024 it will be \$5.66 per 1000 per gallons, in 2025 it will be \$5.73 per 1000 gallons, and in 2026 it will be \$5.90 per 1000 gallons.

Visitor's Comments:

Mike Starr, the Division Sales Manager for Republic was in attendance today. With him were Nate and John from the Springfield and Virden offices. Mike went over how Republic had just taken over Flowers Sanitation in 2021 and he wanted to come in to discuss the concerns over pricing questions and complaints. Alderman Garrett told them he appreciated them coming to the meeting to address the council about these concerns. His main complaint has been the inconsistency in the messages to the citizens, mainly about the trash can pickups. The mayor mentioned that he was charged \$20 for pickup and was threatened with collections if not paid. Alderman Marquis has been wondering why people are being charged different amounts for trash can pick up, some citizens have been told the pick up fee is \$40, while others have said \$20. Alderman Hemmerle said that he was told he had signed a contract when changing service, although he hadn't because he was with Flowers. He didn't pay the charge, but his trash can had yet to be picked up. Mike apologized for all of the issues, and said he would work on trying to fix the issues. He did mention that when customers call in, they are going through to a call center in different states, so they are working from a script and not specific to the City of Auburn and the changes that have occurred with Republic buying out Flowers. He confirmed that there should not be a fee charged for trash can pick up. The council thanked them for coming in and addressing the issues.

City Clerk's Report:

Clerk Sponsler presented the January 3, 2023 meeting minutes. Alderman Johnson made a motion to approve the January 3, 2023 minutes, second by Alderman Marquis.

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

NAYES: None

PRESENT: Karhliker

ABSENT: None

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Williams presented the bills list for January 2, 2023- January 17, 2023 for review and approval. Alderman Marquis inquired what a flex badge is that was on the bills list. Chief Campbell told the council they are indestructible badges for the police officers. Alderman Royer mentioned that we should itemize the Visa charges so we could know what each of the individual charges were instead of one bulk amount. TJ said that we should be able to put images of the bills into a file in Teams for review. Alderman Marquis made a motion to approve the bills list, second by Alderman Sheppard.

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

NAYES: Garrett, Royer

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: None

Treasurer Williams presented the Budget Report for the January 17, 2023 meeting for review only.

Attorney's Report

In regard to Springfield Plastics, the deadline to post a Notice of Public Hearing is approaching and must be posted 15 days prior to the hearing.

In regard to the Auburn Public Schools parcel transfer, the lawyers are working on writing the deed.

Regarding FOIA requests, they have received two FOIA requests and one subpoena request, the attorneys are in the process of working on them. Response documents should go out on Friday, Jan, 20th.

Steve delivered a release of a lien on 1513 Pine Lane to Wayde.

In regard to the Oller Letter and Lincoln Militia, Steve is working on preparing these documents.

Alderman Marquis asked Attorney Jarmer why the council was told we could not ask for a bond for the Metro fiber work. Attorney Jarmer mentioned that he was not around at the beginning of the project and that he would work on it moving forward. Alderman Marquis asked if we could pursue it now even though the project had already started. Attorney Jarmer said he would look into it. Alderman Garrett asked if Attorney Jarmer could write up a memorandum to give us a scope of what the bond might look like and what we can charge.

Department Heads

Chief Campbell:

Chief Campbell announced that Officer Zach Morgan wants to go full time. A motion as made by Alderman Marquis to hire Officer Morgan full time, second by Alderman Sheppard.

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

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: None

Chief Campbell wants to hire Chase Burk as a part-time officer. He is certified as full-time but will be part time until a full-time position opens. Alderman Marquis made a motion to hire Chase Burk as a part time officer, second by Alderman Karhliker.

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

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: None

Regarding the cease-and-desist order for Lincoln Militia, they are waiting on the Liquor Commission to get it finished.

Alderman Karhliker asked about clarification about inoperable vehicles on properties. It was determined that they can be on private property, but not public right of ways.

Superintendent Henson:

Superintendent Henson updated the council on the North Street Project. We are waiting on a 14" casing pipe. There were two bids on the pipe, one bidder bid the wrong pressure rate; the other was less than \$12,000. A notion was made by Royer to approve the purchase of the 14" casing pipe up to \$12,000, second made by Alderman Marquis.

Superintendent Henson informed the council about the GUA Mock Emergency on April 5 & 6. This will take place here in Auburn on the 5th and then TJ and John Edie are going to Waterloo on the 6th.

Mayor Berola and Superintendent Henson met to discuss a list of concerns to address with Metro and asked for Metro to come to the council meeting. Present at the meeting from Metro were Brock Read, Tristan Hendricks, and Jane Wagner (council). The list of concerns includes the following: Safety concerns (nighttime operations, lack of lights, signs, cones, or barricades), right of ways (wants reassurance for the citizens that the holes will be dealt with), hours of operation (when gas mains are being drilled around, a city employee must be present. Hours have included weekends and late nights until 8 or 9 pm, this results in overtime which affects our fiscal budget), and trespassing on private property.

Mayor Berola showed a picture of a property where a drain tile was dug up and covered. Brock said that in the underground world, there isn't a real way to know what they are going through at the moment when digging. He said that they would fix any issues that have occurred. Alderman Garrett asked how they should handle any damage in the future and Brock said that if we must have something fixed due to their work, send Metro the bill.

Alderman Hemmerle introduced Josh and Carrie Fuhman that were present. They have a pile of trash behind their house where the company has been keeping their equipment when not in use. They have found trash such as bottles and fast-food wrappers.

Alderman Royer mentioned an incident on 7th street one night. They were drilling and there were individuals in the middle of the street working without any hi-vis gear, lights, cones, or barricades. Alderman Garrett received a video with a worker digging a hole and smoking what appeared to be weed. Brock told the council the safety issues would be resolved by next week. Alderman Marquis mentioned that the company should not work until the safety issues are addressed and fixed. Superintendent Henson asked about stop times and Brock said that 6pm would be the latest time they will be working from now on.

Mayor Berola brought up a topic from past meetings, how long will it take to clean up and fix everything after the project is finished. Brock said they they will go back and seed and straw the areas that are torn up. He said we can call him about any areas that need restored, and the in-area crews will come through and fix them. Brock said they are hoping it can be fixed by May given the weather.

Alderman Karhliker asked the Metro council about a bond as he has asked about this numerous times in the past. We were told that we couldn't hold a bond for retainage. Metro's council said that a bond could be held.

Alderman Karhliker also mentioned that their fiber is being laid above our pipes and lines and the city will have to go around them or possibly hit them as they are digging. Brock said that TJ can call him if any drainage problems arise because of this.

Another concern mentioned was road patches and how they are not being filled correctly. Brock said that they will be asphalt patched at the end of the project. The council is upset about this because that is not what the road is originally made with.

Alderman Karhliker asked for a timeline and Brock said that he hopes to be done by May and that drops will happen as customers sign up for fiber service.

Office Manager Rathgeber:

Wayde let the council know that the local potential buyer of the Park Property is still waiting on a local financial institution to get back to the. They are hoping to have everything ready at the next council meeting. It was suggested that we move to a realtor if the buyer doesn't come through by the next meeting.

Committee Reports

Administration:

There was an admin meeting on January 11, 2023 where the server replacement was discussed. This discussion generated more questions which are still being answered. The committee is not ready to move forward at this point.

Public Works:

No Report

Public Utilities:

Alderman Johnson issued a clarification of the credit for the Burtle Motors water leak. This was given as a credit to his account rather than a refund check.

Alderman Johnson reminded the council that an ordinance was passed that says when the wholesale rate changes, the rate gets passed on and we do not need to take any action, but once the rate increases, Wayde needs to pass it on.

Health & Safety:

There was a meeting on Wednesday with Thayer Officials asking for coverage in Thayer in terms of police coverage. There will be another meeting on Tuesday, January 24, 2023 at 6 pm. Thayer will be invited to come at 6:30 pm.

Health & Housing:

There is a letter in the works, but there is confusion on the Oller property. Records were not matching up to notes that were taken from the past meetings. There are fee amounts of \$4500 and \$5000, and \$2100 and \$210, but the attorneys had trouble finding these amounts in minutes from the past. It was discussed going back through minutes and audio recordings to find the correct information before the attorneys can proceed.

Parks:

No Report

Economic Development:

Alderman Garrett mentioned that we got a bill for \$2000 from NextSite. He will keep the council updated about this situation.

Building Committee:

The Building Committee met on Tuesday, January 17, 2023 with building inspector Ron Appelt. They discussed which company they felt more comfortable with. The committee was unanimous about which company to choose, and Alderman Garrett will contact the companies to have them come back to the council with a choice to vote on.

Adjournment

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

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

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: None

