

PRAIRIE CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

6:30 P.M. WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2023

CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The City Council of Prairie City, Jasper County, Iowa, met on April 8, 2023, at the Prairie City Council Chambers at City Hall and via Zoom. Mayor Chad Alleger called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

ROLL CALL: Members present and absent as follows Present: Mayor Chad Alleger; Councilors Holland, Ingle, Laidig, Simmons, Townsend Absent: None Also present: City Administrator, Jerry Moore; Library Director, Sue Ponder; Police Chief Kevin Gott, Public Works Superintendent Carl Van Der Kamp; City Engineers, Andrew Inhelder and Preston Moon; several citizens

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Steve Zimmerman, 407 E Kayla Lane, stated his objection to the letter from Dorothy D. Sloma that was included in the Consent Agenda.

OLD BUSINESS:

MSA Update – Andrew was present to answer questions. None were asked.

Public Works Update – Just finished the cleaning of the south well. It was a three-day process. He passed around a bag of rust deposits to show what was in the pump; it shows the importance of cleaning the well.

They've been busy at the Rec Complex and at Entryway Park preparing it for the season and they feel it's fairly safe to turn the water on in the bathrooms. They will be doing additional work on the security lighting. They have worked on the storm siren. It did not go off when it should have due to a bad battery. He shared the reminder that it is an outdoor warning device. Emily asked if they could be tested on a regular basis. Carl explained it used to go off every day at noon, but that was stopped after complaints were received. The County then set it up to test the first Wednesday of every month at 10 am, but that is also no longer done. Emily asked if a council action could be made to request regular testing resume. Carl said the test must be initiated at the County office, he wasn't sure if they would. Jerry said he would check with the County and see if that's possible.

The seasonal mower employees started on Monday. The mowers have not all been serviced yet so they are working on those. They are cleaning up a lot of storm damage from straight-line winds, including some glass block windows that are now being bricked up. There is a lot of yard waste being dumped out at the collection site. The large pieces from downed trees present an issue. Laidig inquired about burning it and Carl responded it can't be burned where it is because of the power lines. He didn't feel it would be a good thing for the city to burn it when we don't allow burning in town. He also didn't know how the DNR would feel about it. Carl was working with Andrew and Preston on the alleyway project and the library project.

Police Department Update – Chief Gott reported they had 283 calls for service, 22 citations and 35 warnings in March. There was a GTSB project around St. Patrick's Day with 13 citations and 5 warnings. There is another project next week focusing on distracted driving. Fire/EMS assists were up, 13 last month with a few assists to other communities. They performed 92 vehicle inspections in March. The increase was mostly due to the Colfax Chief being out of work last week. The speed trailer is functioning and back out. It is just for information only and generates speed data and traffic statistics. If someone would like it in their neighborhood, they can submit a request to the PD. Chief Gott also shared that he has a contractor working on some estimates for additional cameras on the square.

City Administrator Update – Jerry gave a shout out to Christie, who was hospitalized and will be out of the office for a few days. She is definitely missed. He touched on the items in the packet. Letters from people that have received speeding tickets, the BLS report, a letter from Martin Marietta, the report of Building Permits, Water Usage Report, proposal for a schedule from the two individuals that handled Summer Rec the past few years, Celebration Committee – Jerry said he, Phil, Carl and Kevin attended the Celebration Committee meeting. He said it was good opportunity to discuss Prairie Days in regard to parking, alcohol use/sales, solid waste disposal, dumpster location, lighting and barricades. Details are in the Celebration Committee minutes. We greatly appreciated the councilpersons that attended training/tours at the water and wastewater facilities and public works facilities. Good discussion took place. Jerry participated with Deb and Sue in the volunteer clean-up of the town square and City Hall. Another date is being planned. The Comprehensive Plan open house will be 5/4/2023 from 5-7 pm which will give people opportunities to give feedback on the Comp Plan Draft.

Wanted to give a shout out to Scott Steenhoek for the work he has done on Rec Desk program. This will allow the reservation and payment of city facilities (sports complex, community building, etc.) on-line. Jerry wanted to

thank Sue for her help with the packet and tonight's meeting while Christie was out. Policy and Admin Committee members are working on the Personnel Handbook. Chad said he wanted to take the opportunity to congratulate Sue on a recent grant award given to the library project. He asked her to share details. Sue said that she attended the Enhance Iowa Board meeting and listened to them discuss all the applications. They voted to award the entire \$200,000 requested. IEDA does require their funds be the last money in on every project, so they need to raise an the last \$34,525 by July 5th. She is working with the Library Board and Friends of the Library on fundraisers.

Public Hearing to Hear Comments from the General Public on Possible Ordinance Regulating Chickens in Residential Areas of Prairie City – Mayor Alleger stated this was the time for the public hearing regarding change to the city ordinance that regulates chickens in the residential areas of Prairie City. Laidig moved to open the public hearing, Townsend seconded, motion passed all ayes. Mayor Alleger opened the hearing at 6:53 pm. Justin Kruckenberg, 510 Park St – spoke in favor of allowing chickens. He stated he had checked with other communities and looked at their ordinances and thought they could be regulated.

Pam Group 505 S Main St – Pam spoke in favor of allowing chickens. She shared many facts about chickens. Hens are about the same decibel as human conversation. A 40 pound dog produces more waste per day than 10 chickens, plus chicken waste is used in gardens and compost. She would like chickens to allow for the kids in 4-H to have chickens.

Dianne Taylor – 202 W McMurray – Dianne spoke in opposition to chickens in Prairie City. She shared that Pam's family lives across the street so the issues she shares are not regarding their family, that they are very responsible people. Dianne shared that the lot their house is on is very large and would not be a nuisance to their neighbors. She shared her concerns regarding those that have smaller yards and that they would put their coop along the edge of their yard near their neighbor's house. She also thinks there would be issues with enforcement because we have issues enforcing other animal ordinances. Also, the disposal of the waste might present an issue.

Beth James 406 E Jefferson – she spoke in favor of chickens. She would like to have a coop in her backyard. She has a petition with her and her husband's signatures along with six others that couldn't be here. She spoke about the dogs in her neighborhood and feels that chickens would be a lot less of a nuisance than most dogs.

Amber Holland – 307 S Marshall – Amber spoke in favor of chickens in Prairie City. She feels the would be a good 4-H project.

Discussion included that it might be a good idea to require the coops be positioned away from neighbors properties a certain distance and maybe suggest training on caring for chickens.

Motion to close the public hearing made by Ingle. Seconded by Laidig. Motion passed without objection. Public hearing closed at 7:05 pm.

Discussion and Possible Consideration Directing City Administrator to work with City Attorney to Draft an Ordinance for Chickens in Residential Areas of the City – After discussion, Ingle made the motion to have Jerry work on a proposed ordinance allowing chickens in Prairie City. Laidig seconded. Motion passed all ayes. Feedback that council would like to see included, needs to be sent to Jerry by May 21st.

Discussion and Possible Action on the revised contract for Joe's Old-Fashioned Fun, LLC for Prairie Days – After discussion regarding the restriction of home-owned eat and drink stands mentioned in #5. Holland moved to approve the contract with Joe's Old-Fashioned Fun LLC for Prairie Days after striking all words in #5 following the word "engagement" leaving #5 to read "Operator shall be the exclusive vendor of rides, inflatables and photo booths for this engagement." Laidig seconded. Motion passed without objection.

Discussion and Consideration of Information to Businesses for the Prairie Days Celebration – Katherine McClure Photography and Mound Prairie Ventures were not included.

Discussion and Possible Action on Bob's Septic Quote for Prairie Days Celebration – Deb asked if handwashing stations would be included. No information available. Motion by Townsend to approve the quote from Bob's Septic minus the taxes, for a total of \$1530. Ingle seconded. Motion passed without objection.

Resolution 4-12-23-3 Directing City Clerk/Finance Officer to pay for the Real Estate Purchase of 3.4 Acre Property Located near City's Water Well and Water Main Project – Motion by Simmons to approve Resolution 4-12-3-23-3 as written. Seconded by Ingle. Motion passed without objection.

Discussion and Possible Action on MSA Task Order #24 for Water Main Project Design and Administration –

Andrew presented the proposal for the design and admin of the project. Depending on start dates, the project could potentially be done by end of year, but most likely spring of 2024. Mayor Alleger did want to state for the record that he had a conversation with the property owner, and he would really like to have the project done this calendar year. Andrew said they would do what they could, but there are things like timing of DNR permitting that are out of his control. Townsend moved to approve Task Order #24 for Water Main Project Design and Administration. Laidig seconded. Motion passed without objection.

Resolution 4-12-23-4 Discussion and Possible action Approving the Contract and Performance, Payment and Maintenance Bonds for the Alley Reconstruction Project Located South of City Hall -

Andrew explained the contractor is hoping to start on the 24th. He will be coordinating with the contractor on library project. If the Library expansion doesn't occur before June, they will do the entire alley. Otherwise, they will do it as bid, in halves. Jerry shared that the attorney has reviewed the contract. Motion by Holland to Approve Resolution 4-12-23-4. Ingle seconded. Motion passed without objection.

Discussion and Possible Action on MSA Task Order #27 for Alleyway Reconstruction, Administration and Observation located South of City Hall -

Resolution 4-12-23-5 Discussion and Possible Action on Reestablishing/Hiring One (1) Full-time Public Works Staff

- This was tabled from 2/8. There are currently three Public Works staff, one is on medical leave and don't know how long he will be out or his abilities once he returns and Carl will be retiring at the end of the year. Jerry and the Public Works staff worked together on this plan and came up with ten measures they are 100% united on. Carl has indicated that upon retirement, he's willing to go to contract employee status. Deb talked with Jerry about IPERS 4-month restriction on reemployment, part-time or as a contractor, indicating we would need to contract with a company to cover that time. Two employees are working on certifications and Jake has passed all certifications for water and the first for wastewater. He will continue to work towards the second and third wastewater certifications. They will be working through the project list, but it will be challenging to finish all 24 projects on the list with two public works employees. They are proposing to match up a public works employee with a city facility to make sure issues are taken care of and reported to Jerry and Carl. The goal is to stay ahead of issues before the citizens report them. They are working on staggering work times where feasible to hopefully eliminate some overtime and cover meetings, conferences, and training, allowing Carl more time to train the other employees. They would like to work on a right-of-way design manual for utilities to apply for a project, so everyone is aware and can work together. It may also provide some revenue for the city. The Capital Improvement Plan – we need to make sure everything is included that needs to be, like the siren issue. Chris asked Carl if he had given official notice of his retirement. He said he has not, this discussion just started the other day. He needs to meet with Social Security. Derek asked how the additional employee will be paid for and Jerry explained that it's in the budget with Carl retiring and dropping benefits. Mayor Alleger shared that he felt that they hired Jerry for his experience and that he puts a lot of weight on the advice he is providing the council. Deb agreed but she feels the wording regarding employing Carl on a contract basis needs to be struck from the resolution and try to hire someone with those certifications. Jerry said we have been fortunate to have employees that have different certifications in case something happens, but it is good to have them branch out. Deb said she understood but that part of the reason we have gotten behind is we've had two guys taking every class they possibly could and were gone for training. Chris asked about the possibility of a part-time person, after looking at other communities our size. Derek shared that he liked the idea of part-time. Phil countered that not many certified people want to work part-time. Jerry explained we still would have 3 full-time employees because Carl is retiring, and one is on leave. Phil stated that the tour really opened his eyes to what they do every day. Emily said that she would be willing to hire the 4th public works employee if we had a commitment from Carl that he is retiring at the end of the year. Jerry stated that if something happened and Carl didn't retire, it would be on him to figure that out. Carl assured them his intention was to retire at the end of the year. Holland moved to approve Resolution 4-12-23-5, Ingle seconded the motion. Motion passed 3 - 2 with Simmons, Ingle and Holland voting Aye, Townsend and Laidig voting Nay.

NEW BUSINESS –

Public Hearing on FY2023/2024 Budget– Holland made the motion to open the Public Hearing on FY2023/2024 Budget, Ingle Seconded. Motion passed without objection. Mayor Alleger opened the Public Hear at 8:13 pm. No public comment was made. No correspondence received. Ingle moved to close the public hearing.

Townsend seconded the motion. Motion passed without objection. Public hearing closed at 8:14 pm.

Resolution 4-12-23-6 Discussion and Possible Action on FY2023-2024 Budget – Townsend asked about the Jefferson Street Project is not on the budget. She thought it was supposed to be since we did the survey. Jerry explained it is not included in the plan for next fiscal year. Deb asked about the results of the LMI survey. We don't have the results yet. Deb and Chris asked about the rate increases. Jerry stated that the increases are water 5%, wastewater 2%, solid waste 3.5% and recycling 5%. Chris thought we were going to look at the rates for the different usage levels. Jerry explained that all updates were sent out, and the only thing we can change tonight is the tax levy. Townsend made the motion to accept the budget. Laidig seconded the motion. Motion passed without objection.

Resolution 4-12-23-7 Setting Public Hearing to Amend Current FY2022-2023 Budget - Ingle made the motion to set the public hearing to amend the current FY22/23 budget for Monday, May 10, 2023 at 6:30 pm and via Zoom. Townsend seconded the motion. Motion passed without objection.

Resolution 4-12-23-8 Setting Public Hearing for Amendment to Code of Ordinance Increasing Water, Wastewater, Solid Waste and Recycling Rates - Townsend moved to set the public hearing for the public hearing to amend the Code of Ordinances Increasing Water, Wastewater, Solid Waste and Recycling Rates for Wednesday, May 10, 2023 at 6:30 pm and via Zoom. Holland seconded the motion. Motion passed without objection.

Resolution 4-12-23-9 Discussion and Possible Action to Rehiring Two (2) Part-Time Summer Recreation Staff – Motion by Townsend to hire Alyssa Grier and Jennifer Cline, subject to background checks, to return at the sum of \$1500 each for the Summer Recreation Program. Second by Laidig. Motion passed without objection.

Resolution 4-12-23-10 Discussion and Consideration of Changes to the City's Fee Schedule – Jerry stated we needed to amend our fee schedule to remain in-line with Jasper County Community Develop Department. Townsend asked about the no-transport fee that shows no fee. She asked if volunteers are being paid for those calls. The Mayor confirmed they are. Townsend stated she thinks we need to charge something. Carl explained a lot of those calls are DOAs or when someone calls an ambulance for someone that refuses transport. He thinks it's a show of goodwill. Ingle moved to approve the updated City Fee Schedule. Holland seconded. Motion passed without objection.

Discussion and Possible Action on Contract for Maguire Iron, Inc for Water Tower Washout Inspection Service Agreement – Townsend asked if we got more than one bid. Carl said he couldn't get more than one contractor to respond. He said he asked this company for a 5-year contract quote. It's \$2,650/year for 5 years totaling \$13,250 clarifying everything is included and what they consider a half day. Townsend moved to approve the contract. Ingle seconded. Motion passed without objection.

Discussion and Possible Action on PCM Request for Donation for After Prom Bask on April 22, 2023 – Discussion about it not being appropriate since the money we are spending is tax dollars. No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT –

Townsend made the motion to adjourn. Seconded by Holland. Motion passed without objection. Meeting adjourned at 8:41 pm.

Chad Alleger, Mayor

Attested To: _____
Sue Ponder