

City of Prairie City  
City Council Minutes  
August 9, 2023 6:00 pm

CALL MEETING TO ORDER: The City Council of Prairie City, Jasper County, Iowa met on August 9, 2023, at City Hall and via Zoom. Mayor Chad Alleger called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

ROLL CALL: Present: Mayor Chad Alleger, Councilors Joe Disney, Derek Ingle, Phil Holland, Emily Simmons, Deb Townsend. Also present: City Administrator Jerry Moore; Police Officer William Sickels; Public Works Superintendent Carl Van Der Kamp; Library Director Sue Ponder.

AGENDA APPROVAL: Townsend moved to approve the Agenda. Seconded by Simmons. Motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA: Townsend moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion seconded by Holland. Motion carried unanimously.

a) June Financials b) July Claims c) Resolution 98-9-23 Approving Bills and Transfers d) City Council Meeting Minutes from July 12, 2023 e) Special City Council Meeting Minutes from July 20, 2023 f) Park Board Meeting Minutes from June 19, 2023 g) Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes from June 27, 2023 h) Amy Witte Reimbursement of Expenses of \$25.17 for Prairie Days i) Annual Examination Quote of \$4595 from Faller, Kincheloe, & Co, PLC k) Statement of Final Completion and Acceptance of Alley Project Work l) Quote from Sneller Plumbing, Heating and Electric Inc for \$445.95 for Replacing Outdoor Light Fixture at Community Building m) Quote from RK Dixon for \$2002.13 for Hewlett Packard Technical Care Service for City Hall Computer Server n) Second Bill Payment of \$69,520.73 to Accurate Commercial for Library Project o) Carl VanderKamp, Public Works Department Annual Pay Increase

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a) Preston was not able to attend the meeting – If anyone has any questions, let Jerry know and he will reach out to him for an update.
- b) Public Works Update (Carl V) – Public Works had a busy month. They made it through Prairie Days. There is a new sinkhole in the street north of the water tower. They had the camera check the sewer line for holes. None were found. The guys dug it out and filled it with rock and are going to watch it. There was a water leak on W 8<sup>th</sup> Street. It was by the shut off valve in the new copper tubing. VanRysWyk's came and dug it up. They worked with a plumber for a repair on another line. Also working on laying out how the new water line from the well in Colfax and where it will cross the gas line. They must have the natural gas line "potholed" before the water main location will be decided. Installed meters on new houses on the south end of town and installed a few radio reads at other locations. Carl has been on vacation for the last two weeks. Ryan's last day was August 4 and Jake Nolin's last day is next August 14. When Marshall Street was redone the old service line was not capped off, so the contractor had to dig up the street to do that and to tie on to the new 4-inch line that was put in.
- c) Police Update (Officer Sickels) – Officer Sickels had to step out to handle something, so this item was moved to after the City Administrator Update.
- d) City Administrator Update (Jerry Moore) – Items to City Council include, letter from person that received a speeding ticket, permit report, water usage report, copy of the Home Serve Agreement. Jake Nolin resigned effective next Monday, and we wish him well. We are now looking to hire two public works employees. With the new job descriptions, we are looking to hire entry-level positions. People with certifications will be considered, but we are posting them as entry-level. Christie is home recovering from her procedure but did come in to do the financials and payroll. Jim Thompson from IEDA did approve the extension for the Catalyst grant with Mr. DeVries through June of 2024. We have two big items to consider tonight. The first is the Employee Handbook. A lot of work was put into it by the Policy and Admin teams and staff also reviewed it. Sarah and Jenna from MSA are here to talk about the second big item we will be considering tonight, which is the Comprehensive Plan. The library project is progressing. Site work is progressing. We met with the contractors again today and the projected completion date is the end of this year, which is ahead of what we expected. Property purchase closing documents were approved at the last meeting for the water well property. MSA is working with public works to figure out the design for the water line placement. MGA is working on the interior design of the Fire/EMS building project. When that is complete, MSA will begin work on the site plan. Alley project is complete and feel the project went well. There was a reduction in the total cost, which was

nice to see. Sent 5-6 letters to owners of nuisance properties. Problems included weeds, junk, and even a sidewalk that was being constructed without a permit.

- c) Police Update (Officer Sickels) – Officer Sickels returned to the meeting and provided an update. The department had 201 service calls with 15 citations and 30 warnings issued. Speed camera recorded 2680 violations, the number is down with the adjustment of the speed camera tickets being issued at 11 mph over the limit instead of 10. There were still numerous citations written for 80+ mph. 5 Fire/EMS assists and 77 vehicle inspections. While still an issue, animal complaints are down. Speed trailer has been collecting data at multiple locations including State St, W North St and E 2<sup>nd</sup> St. Speed camera usage eastbound on 163 is being evaluated. Emily asked if he knew anything about the PR info BLS was going to provide. Chad shared that Kevin has been working with them on some documents. Chad said he and the Chief are working on the dog/animal control issue.
- e) Public Hearing on Ordinance No.397 Regulating Chickens in Residential Areas of the City – Townsend moved to open the hearing. Second by Simmons. Motion passed. Public Comment – none. Simmons made a motion to close the public hearing. Disney seconded. Motion passed.
- f) Discussion and Action on 3<sup>rd</sup> and Final Consideration of Ordinance No. 397 Regulating Chickens in Residential Areas of the City – Simmons moved to Approve Ordinance No 397. Ingle seconded. Motion passed without objection and will become effective upon publication.
- g) Public Hearing for General Public Input on the Comprehensive Plan – Townsend motioned to open the public hearing. Simmons seconded. Motion passed. Public Comment – Steve Zimmerman 407 Kayla Lane – Thanked the City Council, City Committees and MSA for the work on the Comprehensive Plan. Simmons made the motion to close the public hearing. Holland seconded. Motion passed.
- h) Discussion and Possible Action on Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map and Implementation Matrix – Sarah from MSA discussed these items. She shared that they met with the staff from the Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge to discuss their growth plan and it made sense to change the southwest corner of the intersection to Conservation from Business Flex. Simmons made the motion to accept the Future Land Use Map and Implementation Matrix. Ingle seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- i) Discussion and Possible Action on Adoption of Comprehensive Plan – Simmons made the motion to approve. Holland seconded. Motion carried.
- j) Discussion and Consideration of Requesting City Staff to Seek RFPs for Grand Administration Services for a CDBG for the Phase 2 & 3 Water Main Project – Jerry explained they would like to work with a consultant to submit the CDBG grant application and assist with the administration of the grant. Staff worked with MSA to put together an RFP for this, they sent it to a representative at the State for review and they are waiting for feedback. Townsend moved to approve the request. Ingle seconded. Motion carried.
- k) Discussion and Possible Consideration of HomeServe Program – The City Attorney recommended removing the section of the agreement stating the City would provide contact information of the residents and add language allowing the residents to opt out of mailings. Simmons moved to approve the agreement. Holland seconded. Motion carried.
- l) Discussion and Consideration of City's Summer Recreation Program – Moore provided a recap of the summer's rec program. We had 66 participants this year. They offered about 10 different games this year. Moore reached out to the directors for feedback. They said the kids and parents are happy with the program and that we should make sure the flyer includes the fact that the program is free and that they don't have to attend every session. No action taken.
- m) Discussion and Possible consideration for Geotechnical Services Proposals for EMS/Fire Building Project – The two bids were within \$100 of each other. MSA's recommendation is Terracon based on the timing. Simmons made the motion to approve the bid from Terracon for \$5950. Disney seconded. Motion carried.

#### NEW BUSINESS –

- a) Discussion of Possible City Contribution to Development of Future Subdivision Located South of Rolling Prairie Estates Phase 3 & 4 – Mayor Alleger explained he spoke with the developer, and they asked if the City would consider paying for putting in the streets for the subdivision. If the developer must do it, the cost of the new lots will be in the \$100,000 - \$120,000 range. They are estimating the cost to put the streets in would be around \$500,000.

Townsend stated that the land use map shows a lot of potential options for future residential development. Simmons said she felt that if the city put that much money paying for the new streets, the residents with streets that need repaired would not be happy. Mayor explained he told the developer he would bring it to the Council for consideration. No action taken.

- b) Discussion and Possible Action on Special Event for Car Show September 24<sup>th</sup> for Prairie City Fire and Rescue Association – Chief VanderKamp and his group put together the submittal. The event is planned for September 24<sup>th</sup>. Expecting 300+ cars and 5,000+ spectators. Public works said they usually provide a dumpster for the volunteers. Included a map and a copy of the vendor application. They still need to contact Kelly at the grocery store, the Co-Op and Scott DeVries. Townsend suggested a list of events should be put together so people don't have to revisit the businesses for each event. Bids were included for the portable toilets. It was not clear who usually paid that cost, whether it's the City or the Prairie City Fire and Rescue Association. Disney said he would find out. Ingle stated that when the kybo is placed on the corner by Coffee & Carnations, customers sitting in front under the awning will smell it and requested it be relocated. Townsend moved to approve the application. Simmons seconded. Motion passed.
- c) Discussion and Consideration of Heather Wenhe Utility Bill Credit or Reimbursement Request – Moore said the emails regarding the situation are in the packet. She has a pool she has filled up over the last couple of years. She stated previous administration indicated there were no options from having to pay for the sewer fees when filling her pool. Since there is a sewer charge on all the water used, she is asking for partial reimbursement. Her bill was close to \$500. They are typically less than \$150. After discussing, it was decided that this would set precedence when there is an option for an irrigation meter in the City's Ordinance. The City doesn't charge sewer fees on the water that goes through the irrigation meter, but there is a minimum monthly charge. No motion was made.
- d) Discussion on Draft of City's Employee Manual and Request City Attorney to Review and Provide Recommendation – Simmons made some suggestions for edits making the wording for the library staff consistent and add in the Vision insurance. Townsend also indicated that the incremental increase in the cost of dependents was not included. Simmons said that the incremental increases were not included in the last motion on benefits, so that would need to be included in the benefit discussion next year. Simmons moved to send the Employee Manual to the City Attorney with the edits for review. Ingle seconded. Motion passed.
- e) Discussion and Possible Action on Special Event August 26 for PTO Color Run at Elementary School – Townsend moved to approve. Public Works suggests the school have volunteers monitor participants crossing S State Street from the Community Building Parking lot. Simmons seconded. Motion carried.

Mayor Alleger shared that election petitions for Council/Mayor positions may be picked up starting August 28<sup>th</sup> and are due with the affidavit on September 21<sup>st</sup> at 5:00 pm. The affidavit must be notarized. Anyone wanting to be considered for a council position will need to also indicate whether they are running to fill an appointment for 2 years or for the full 4-year position.

ADJOURNMENT: Simmons moved to adjourn. Ingle seconded. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:11 pm.

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Chad Alleger, Mayor

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Submitted by Sue Ponder