

**CITY OF EVART**  
**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**  
**August 9, 2022 @ 7:30PM**  
**Community Room at the Depot, 200 S. Main Street**

Mayor Chris Emerick called the meeting to order at 7:30pm, then led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Present (via roll call):** Sean Duffy, Dan Elliott, Chris Emerick, Matt Hildebrand, Sandra Szeliga

**Present (staff):** City Manager Pepper Lockhart, Finance Director/Treasurer Jennie Duncan, Downtown Development Authority Director Todd Bruggema, Downtown Development Authority, Chief of Police John Beam, Lead Water/Wastewater Operator Patrick Muczynski, Water/Wastewater Laborer Adam Zinger, DPW Executive Assistant Chris Mulkerns

**Absent (staff):** City Clerk Kathy Fiebig

**Guests:** Kevin Beemer, Don Duncan

**Citizens' Comments:** Kevin Beemer, owner of Beemer Adult Care Business located at 502 W. Fifth St, suggested that city office staff should understand what they can and cannot authorize regarding zoning issues and felt that having to wait for planning commission meetings is a problem. Also felt that all office staff should be cross trained. Mr. Beemer also questioned what the police millage funds supported. Also made comments about the weeds growing in the gutters of the city's streets. Suggested a community reinvestment funding mechanism.

**Approval of Agenda**

Motion by Mayor Emerick to approve the agenda with the addition of Item F – O'Reilly Site Plan approval and removal of the Ferric Chloride Pump from Item E. Support by Mr. Elliott. Motion passed with all in favor.

**Approval of Consent Agenda**

A. Regular Council Minutes – July 26,2022, with the correction to Finance Director Report/comment: "She is starting on the Fire Department *audit*" not *report*.

B. Vendor's List - \$119,892.63

Motion by Mr. Hildebrand to approve the consent agenda as presented. Support by Mayor Emerick. Motion passed with all in favor.

**Unfinished Business**

**New Business**

C. Department of Public Works (DPW) Director

Ms. Lockhart noted that the contract had previously been sent to Labor Relations and the City Attorney prior to negotiating with Mr. Duncan. She also noted that Mr. Duncan brings 20 years management experience to this position. She asked for approval of the contract which amounts to a 3% increase each year. The start date will be August 22nd. She pointed out that Mr. Duncan did come to the meeting tonight in case there were any questions. Mr. Duffy

commented that he heard that Mr. Duncan had pursued some additional training in regard to public works prior to being hired.

Mr. Duncan commented that he has lived here all his life and agreed with earlier citizen comment. The cosmetic issues around the city are important. He stated he would like to see more community involvement from the citizens we all work for, and he would like to learn from other communities like Evart, to see how they manage these issues. He is looking forward to working towards making the city better. Motion by Mr. Duffy to approve the DPW Director contract as presented. Support by Mr. Elliott. Motion passed with all in favor.

#### **D. Water/Sewer Rates**

Ms. Duncan stated that the proposed water rate increase would be 17 cents per 1,000 gallons not 23 cents. The water rate increase, if approved would be 3.5% and the sewer rate would be an increase of 2%. The 5/8" to 1" Water Ready to Serve fee would increase to \$6.96, with no increase to the Sewer Ready to Serve fee. She commented that a family of 4 would see an increase of roughly \$3.00 a month on the average 7,500 gallon bill. Mr. Duffy asked if there was an idea of anticipated revenue from this increase. Mr. Hildebrand noted a \$22,600 potential annual revenue increase ( $\$3 \times 600 \times 12 \text{ mos}$ ). Ms. Duncan stated that the FY 2022/2023 budget was based on this increase in fees. Motion by Mr. Elliott to approve the rate increase as presented, noting that he did not want to go back to the situation the city was in a few years ago. Ms. Duncan requested he include the resolution in his motion. Mr. Elliott amended his motion to approve Resolution 2022-12. Support by Mr. Hildebrand. Mr. Elliott, Mr. Hildebrand, and Ms. Szeliga voted aye. Mr. Duffy and Mayor Emerick were opposed, none were absent, and none abstained. Motion passed.

#### **E. Aerators**

Ms. Lockhart commented that in April 2021, the City applied for a CDGB grant that included the aerators. After reapplying for the grant OHM advised against including aerators in the second application and council discussed purchasing the aerators outside of that grant. She noted that an amount had been budgeted out of sewer this budget year for this type of purchase. She also noted that the quotes in the packet included installation. Ms. Lockhart commented that even if the purchase is approved this evening it will take some time to get them, due to supply issues, and may not get installed until Spring 2023. Mr. Hildebrand commented that prices are only going up. Motion by Mayor Emerick to approve the purchase of aerators and cabling as presented. Support by Mr. Hildebrand. Motion passed with all in favor.

Ms. Lockhart stated that the Ferric Chloride pump request would be brought back to Council when the quotes are made available.

#### **F. O'Reilly Site Plan**

Ms. Lockhart informed Council that the Planning Committee met on Monday, August 8<sup>th</sup> with O'Reilly representatives attending via Zoom. The planning commission had a lot of questions of the O'Reilly group. Planning Commission recommends that Council approve the site plan contingent upon the inclusion of sidewalks. Pepper noted that City Ordinance allows the council to make businesses put in a sidewalk in their plan if it is a well-travelled area. There was discussion about safety due to the shared driveway with Family Dollar, ordinances regarding sidewalks that maybe got missed when Family Dollar went in. There was also discussion regarding delivery trucks ingress and egress. Councilman Duffy wanted to make sure that O'Reilly's comply with the barrier free width on the sidewalks. Motion by Mayor Emerick to

approve the site plan contingent upon the inclusion of sidewalks. Support by Mr. Hildebrand. Motion passed with all in favor.

**Department/Informational Reports**

G. Accounts Payable Report (July 27, 2022 – August 9, 2022)  
H. Payroll Reports (July 27, 2022 – August 9, 2022)

**City Attorney Report/Comment:**

Mr. White worked on contractual issues and HR issues this month. Also announced that an appeals board is in place (3 people agreed to be on the board) for City building/zoning matters.

**City Clerk Report/Comment:**

None

**City Manager Report/Comment:**

Ms. Lockhart is working on the CDBG grant, currently due Friday and met with OHM today.

**Finance Director Report/Comment:**

Ongoing Police Union contract meetings, with another one on Thursday. Waiting on chart of accounts confirmation. The primary elections went well. Total of 299 voters (walk ins and absentee ballots). Laptops for council did come in; will be working with IT Right to get them set up. Fire Department audit is still ongoing.

**Department of Public Works Report/Comment**

None.

**Police Department Report/Comment**

Mr. Hyden is in week one of the academy. Chief noted he has someone who is very experienced considering the CRO position. Speed radar signs came in Friday.

**City Assessor**

I. Board of Review – July 19, 2022  
J. Amar Corrective Action/State Response

**Downtown Development Authority Report/Comment:**

Ms. Lockhart spoke on Mr. Bruggema's behalf: Making some progress on the way finding signage. Working on lots of items starting with – Michigan Main Street grant opportunity. Waiting to hear back from MEDC for the rehab of the building on Main Street. Two buildings being donated – City will be taking over the Kane Building - DDA to begin rehabbing and use as their main building once the pop-up building sale closes. The old jewelry store – DDA to take over to get it buttoned up, broken windows, etc.

**Evart Area Fire Department**

K. Minutes – July 19, 2022

**Evart Housing Commission:** None.

**Citizens' Comments:** None.

Motion by Mayor Emerick to adjourn. Support by Mr. Hildebrand. Motion passed with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.



Chris Mulkerns, DPW Executive Assistant