

**CITY OF EVART
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
March 20th, 2023 @ 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, Jim Schwab, Mayor Emerick, Matt Hildebrand, Sandy Szeliga

Present (staff): City Manager Pepper Lockhart, Finance Director/Treasurer Jennie Duncan, Downtown Development Director (DDA) Todd Bruggema, City Attorney Jim White, Director of Public Works (DPW) Don Duncan, Chief of Police John Beam, City Clerk Andrea Grupido

Guests: Mike Fulton, Kati Mora, Jim McBryde, Alton Brown, Al Fox, Ryan Keathley, Travis Douglas, Katelyn Vanapple, Mark Fuller, Ken Wirth

Citizens' Comments: Mike Fulton expressed his concerns (smell and noise), on the proposed Schmude Oil and Gas Lease. Alton Brown stated he thought it inappropriate for a council member to post on the Evart Facebook page voicing their stance on allowing chickens in the city.

Approval of Agenda

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

Approval of Consent Agenda

- A. Pre-Council Work Session Minutes – *March 6, 2023*
- B. Regular Council Minutes – *March 6, 2023*
- C. Vendor's List \$75,897.84
- D. Budget Amendments

Motion by Hildebrand to approve the consent agenda. Support by Szeliga. Motion passed with all in favor.

Unfinished Business

E. Backyard Animals

Motion by Hildebrand to move the Backyard Animal Ordinance with the changes discussed in the work session onto the public hearing. Support by Schwab. Motion passed with all in favor. Szeliga responded to the citizen's comment stating that she was only trying to put information out on Facebook to get feedback from the residents on this issue.

F. Schmude Oil and Gas Lease

Ryan Keathley addressed the citizen's comments on the issues of noise and smell. Inspectors come out weekly to make sure everything is up to code. The only noise anyone should hear is through the drilling process, which takes approximately 7 days. The only smell should be when the flare is initially lit. The city manager will get the final approval as to whether or not there are any restrictions on the property and bring that back to council.

New Business

G. Kati Mora – Middle Michigan Development Corporation, Osceola County Updates (discussion) The mission of MMDC is to grow the economy with services designed to retain, expand and attract businesses in Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, and Osceola counties. The goal is to foster economic vitality and resilience in our region. MMDC administered the Match on Main grant locally to Juneberry Cottage in December 2022. They hope to bring new opportunities to more businesses with each round and will work with companies throughout the grant application process. The City of Evart has been added to the MMDC website and has its own dashboard. This is helpful for business site selectors who are looking for spaces to see what is available in Evart. MMDC will be holding an event Wednesday, April 19th, from 8am-9am at the Reed City Depot. Special guest, Chad Benson from MSHDA, will be at this event talking about Housing in Rural Michigan.

H. Joshua Prusick – MEDC-Michigan Main Street/Property Redevelopment Information (discussion) Mr. Prusick tells us that as part of the Main Street Program, Evart can apply for one consulting service a year which is covered by the program. Bruce Johnston owns a consulting firm called Revitalize LLC. He will work as a intermediary between the property developer, MEDC and other incentive programs in order to guide projects through getting their best value. On April 25th at 5:30pm, Mr. Prusick and Mr. Johnston along with a few other members of the MEDC team, will hold a meeting at the Depot. This meeting is for property owners to learn about the incentives available and how to apply for those incentives. On April 26th, Bruce will be doing walk throughs with property owners in the downtown district who are interested in redeveloping their property. He will give them insight on what their buildings can support in terms of space, help them see the potential of a building, and provide an idea of the cost it would take to redevelop.

I. CDBG Grant – Project Budget Amendment

The bids for this project came in over the estimate. After reviewing potential cost saving measures, two changes are proposed to save the project and not lose the grant. Reduce the amount of rapid discharge piping to be replaced at the plant to the 40% that is not operational. Also, reduce the paving quantity on S. Oak Street to replace only what is necessary for excavating of the sanitary sewer trench. These project reductions will result in an increase cost of \$3,310.50 over the estimate. Hildebrand moves to amend the project budget for the CDBG Grant to increase by \$3,310.50. Support by Duffy. Motion passed with all in favor.

J. Resolution Amendment

Hildebrand moves to approve Resolution 2023-05 amending the CDBG project budget. Support by Szeliga. Roll call vote as follows: Hildebrand – yea, Szeliga – yea, Duffy – yea, Schwab – yea, Mayor Emerick – yea.

K. CDBG Contract Award

Duffy moves to award contract #1 to Crawford Contracting, Inc. and contract #2 to Ranck Electric, Inc. Support by Mayor Emerick. Motion passed with all in favor.

L. Appointment of Rental Housing Board

After many discussions regarding a creation of this board, and talking with several people in the community, it is proposed that the following people be appointed to the Rental Housing Board: Mark Sochocki, Dave Foster, Bill Cooper, Onnaly Drouse, and Todd Bruggema. Lockhart recommends this diverse mix because of the areas of experience each one has. Hildebrand suggests the number of board members be extended to 7, leaving it open for tenants to serve. Mayor Emerick states that Travis Douglas showed interest in serving on this board and suggests appointing him as the 6th member. There is discussion of making this board temporary for one year. Hildebrand moves to appoint the 6 members listed with one vacancy to the temporary Rental Housing Board for one year. Support by Mayor Emerick. Motion passed with all in favor.

Department/Informational Reports

M. Accounts Payable Report (3/7/2023-3/20/2023)

N. Summary of Funds – (February 2023)

O. Revenue and Expense Report (through March 16, 2023)

City Attorney Report/Comment

P. Monthly Report

Mr. White informs the council of his vacation plans. He will not be at the meetings next month.

City Clerk Report/Comment

Grupido thanked everyone for giving her the ability to go to the conference last week. She was excited for the networking opportunity it provided, as well as the great information she received from the various speakers.

Finance Director Report/Comment

Q. Monthly Report

R. March 2023 Board of Review Minutes

J. Duncan informed the board that the city received \$51,959.00 for the annual distribution to municipalities that have adult-use marijuana facilities. The tax values are going up 2%.

Department of Public Works Report/Comment

S. Monthly Report

Finished the meter installs that could be done. There are 9 remaining, and those will be replaced once the water to those houses is turned back on. Continuing to work on refurbishing the picnic tables. MDOT contracts with an external company to clean out the storm water drains along US10. That contract has expired and MDOT does not have a source right now to perform that service. D. Duncan wants permission to pursue working with MDOT to contract our DPW to clean the drains themselves. This work would then be billed to MDOT. D. Duncan will look into the equipment needed if this were to happen. Council agrees. Mayor Emerick commends the DPW stating it has been at least 3 months since she has received an email from a resident with a complaint.

Police Department Report/Comment

T. Monthly Report

Chief is looking to pursue Community Policing Development (CPD) grant funds for accreditation. Accreditation is a proactive and ongoing "health check" of the organization's defined processes. Internal and external reviews by outside parties increases trust and transparency with those you serve and your team. These reviews will identify areas of professional excellence and where organizational growth is needed. Chief is seeking council's blessing to go forward with the grant process. Council approves. Officer Hyden's training is complete, and he is solo now. Chief has been working together with a seasoned officer in teaching him the budgeting process. This will be helpful when the time comes for Chief's retirement.

Downtown Development Authority Report/Comment

U. DDA Agenda 3.14.2023 and Minutes 2.14.2023

Bruggema will be attending the National Main Street Conference next week.

Fire Department Report/Comment

V. Fire Board Minutes February 21, 2023

City Manager Report/Comment

W. Monthly Report

X. 2022 NCCISMA Report – FYI

Upcoming public hearings most likely April 17th for the clean water (CWSRF), and May 15th for the drinking water (DWSRF). If the drinking water isn't done in time for the May 15th meeting, a special meeting on May 22nd would need to be held.

Citizens' Comments: Duffy relays a message received by his brother to let Lisa Newsome know she was very helpful and thanks her very much.

Adjournment: Motion by Mayor Emerick to adjourn. Support by Duffy. Motion passed with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:33pm.



Andrea Grupido, City Clerk

FINAL