

**CITY OF EVART
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
May 15th, 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, Director of Public Works (DPW) Don Duncan, Chief of Police John Beam, City Attorney Jim White, City Clerk Andrea Grupido

Guests: Al Fox, Brian Rowley, Matt Biolette, Mike Fulton, Mark Sochocki

Mayor Emerick called to order Public Hearing 1 at 7:31pm.

Presentation and/or discussion:

Proposed project for improvements to the City's water distribution system. Project construction will involve improvements to the water system. Changes to the water system will include replacement of 12,300 linear feet of watermain and approximately 319 lead service line replacements.

Request for Public Comments: none

Mayor Emerick closes the public hearing at 7:40pm.

Mayor Emerick called to order Public Hearing 2 at 7:40pm.

Presentation and/or discussion:

The fiscal year 2023-2024 Budget.

Request for Public Comments: none

Lockhart is proud of the City staff for taking the initiative to learn and help create the budget. The City has come a long way in the budget process and hopefully it gets easier each year.

Mayor Emerick closes the public hearing at 7:42pm.

Mayor Emerick opens regular council meeting at 7:42pm.

Citizens' Comments: Bruggema states the City is moving in the right direction as far as blight. He is concerned that bringing chickens into the city will have a negative impact on property value. He believes that chickens should be raised in the country, not the city.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Mayor Emerick to approve the amended agenda with the addition of **K1. DDA Budget** and **K2. Resolution 2023-11**. Support by Duffy. Motion passed with all in favor.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

A. Regular Council Minutes – May 1, 2023

B. Vendor's List \$46,363.02

C. Budget Amendments

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

Unfinished Business:

D. Utilities Ordinance

Hildebrand states that the changes made are clear and provide clarification, which is what the City aims to do with their ordinances. Lockhart says that landlords have been informed of these changes. Motion by Hildebrand to approve Ordinance 2023-03 amending Evert City Code, Chapter 42 – Utilities. Support by Szeliga. Roll call vote as follows: Hildebrand – yea, Szeliga – yea, Duffy – yea, Schwab – yea, Mayor Emerick – yea.

E. Vaping Ordinance

Motion by Hildebrand to approve Ordinance 2023-04 amending Evert City Code, Chapter 28 – Offenses. Support by Duffy. Roll call vote as follows: Szeliga – yea, Duffy – yea, Schwab – yea, Mayor Emerick – yea, Hildebrand – yea.

F. Backyard Animals Ordinance

Schwab is concerned that it will put more burden on the staff and the number of complaints will increase. J. White agrees with Bruggema that we will be taking steps backwards regarding blight. Hildebrand believes there is no clear majority in favor or opposing. Duffy agrees. No motion was made to move forward.

G. Schmude Oil & Gas Lease

The parcel in consideration has increased in size to 34.15 acres to include the right of ways. After meeting with the DNR, there is a conversion tied to this property. In order to put anything on the property we will need to provide another piece of land, DNR approved, that is of the same value. Hildebrand is concerned the City does not have a piece of property that size or value to transfer. Al Fox suggested a non-development lease. Council agrees that they would like to see what that contract would look like before moving forward.

New Business:

H. Housing Commission/Purchase – Mark Sochocki

The Housing Commission's newly formed non-profit organization is trying to purchase a piece of property for rehab into a 3 unit rental. The non-profit, being new, has no assets yet. To get a loan for this project, the bank is asking for a co-signer. Sochocki is here to bring the concept of the City being the co-signer. Council has no objection, but cannot move forward until they have the final details of the loan.

I. Cemetery Policy and Procedures

Motion by Hildebrand to approve the changes to the Cemetery Policy and Procedures. Support by Mayor Emerick. Motion passed with all in favor.

J. RFP – Special Meeting

D. Duncan is proposing to schedule a special meeting to award the paving project bid. D. Duncan believes if we wait until the next regular scheduled meeting, contractors will have begun to fill their schedules for the season. Council agrees to meet May 17th at 7pm.

K. Resolution 2023-10

Motion by Duffy to approve Resolution 2023-10 adopting a final project plan for submittal to the DWSRF. Support by Hildebrand. Roll call vote as follows: Duffy – yea, Schwab – yea, Mayor Emerick – yea, Hildebrand – yea, Szeliga – yea.

K1. DDA Budget

Motion by Hildebrand to approve the 2023-2024 DDA Budget. Support by Szeliga. Motion passed with all in favor.

K2. Resolution 2023-11

Motion by Schwab to approve Resolution 2023-11 adopting the 2023-2024 fiscal year budget. Support by Duffy. Roll call vote as follows: Mayor Emerick – yea, Hildebrand – yea, Szeliga – yea, Duffy – yea, Schwab – yea.

Department/Informational Reports:

L. Accounts Payable Report (5/2/2023 – 5/15/2023)

M. Summary of Funds – April 2023

City Attorney Report/Comment:**City Clerk Report/Comment:**

Grupido spent the day at FOIA training with Teresa.

Finance Director Report/Comment:**N. Monthly Report**

J. Duncan received a \$50 donation from the VFW to help purchase cleaning supplies for the gravestones. The cemetery commission is working with Mr. Johnson's high school class with the project of cleaning the gravestones.

Department of Public Works Report/Comment:**O. Monthly Report – April 2023**

Projects completed included painting of the porches at the Depot, filling potholes, replacing signs, repairing 4 water leaks, taking down trees at the cemetery. Upcoming projects will be hydrant flushing, painting parking lines on Main Street, and repairing the pavilions.

Police Department Report/Comment:**P. Monthly Report – April 2023**

Have been working closely with the county inspector on blight. The community is seeing the progress being made.

Downtown Development Authority Report/Comment:**Q. DDA Minutes (4/11/2023) and Agenda (5/2/2023)**

The DDA received two grants, one for wayfinding signage along US 10, and the other for rehabbing the old dentist office on Main Street into another business pop-up. Juneberry Cottage has won an award from Middle Michigan and will be presented with that at their annual meeting in Mount Pleasant.

Evart Area Fire Department:**R. Evart Fire Department Minutes – April 18, 2023****City Manager Report/Comment:****S. Monthly Report****T. Pension Letter Update – FYI**

Working with the school on finishing up the Safe Routes to School, applying for the 2nd round of the Sparks Grant, and finalizing the Master Plan with Williams and Works. The airport received a CARES Grant in the amount of \$1,000. Mark Sochocki will be with the Housing Commission full time starting July 1.

Citizens' Comments:

Motion by Mayor Emerick to adjourn. Support by Hildebrand. Motion passed with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:58pm.



Andrea Grupido, City Clerk