

**CITY OF EVART
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
July 26, 2022 @ 7:30PM
Community Room at the Depot, 200 S. Main Street**

Mayor Pro-Tem Sandra Szeliga 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, Matt Hildebrand, Sandra Szeliga

Absent: Mayor Chris Emerick

Present (staff): City Manager Pepper Lockhart, Finance Director/Treasurer Jennie Duncan, Chief of Police John Beam Jr., City Attorney James White, Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Director Todd Bruggema, Water/Wastewater Laborer Adam Zinger, City Clerk Kathy Fiebig

Guests: Ralph and Diane Carlson, James Custer, Alan Gingrich, Jason O'Dell, one unidentified male

Citizens' Comments:

Ralph Carlson again requested that council use the sound system. He thanked them for changing the time of meetings from 8:00pm to 7:30pm. He would like to see all outdoor burning prohibited within the city limits, and he would like to ban residential fireworks completely. Alan Gingrich is running for re-election to the Osceola County Road Commission and would appreciate support. He realizes that the Commission does not work often with the City of Evart but pointed out that Evart residents use county roads.

Jim Custer is running for re-election to the Osceola County Board of Commissioners. Due to redistricting after the 2020 census, his district now includes the City of Evart.

Approval of Agenda

Ms. Lockhart requested that the minutes for the special council meeting on July 14, 2022 be added to the consent agenda. She asked to change Item C under New Business from "Assistant City Manager" to "Economic Community Development Director". Motion by Mayor Pro-Tem Szeliga to approve the agenda with these changes. Support by Mr. Elliott. Motion passed with all in favor.

Approval of Consent Agenda

- A. Regular Council Minutes – July 5, 2022
- Special Council Minutes – July 14, 2022

- B. Vendor's List - \$226,887.61

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

Unfinished Business

New Business

- C. Economic Community Development Director

Ms. Lockhart told council that DDA Director Todd Bruggema has been working with the DDA since March. He fits in well with staff, has a great knowledge of the city and has extensive

management experience. He has professional connections that are very useful for the city. By adding Economic Community Development Director to his job title, he can serve as assistant city manager when Ms. Lockhart is not available. He will receive \$5,000 annually as compensation over and above his present salary. Motion by Mr. Hildebrand to add "Community Economic Development Director" to Mr. Bruggema's job title as Downtown Development Authority Director and to approve a \$5,000 annual salary increase. Support by Mr. Duffy. Motion passed with all in favor.

D. Paperless Council Packets

Ms. Duncan noted that the city spends a significant amount of time and money printing council packets twice a month. The average yearly cost of paper and ink is over \$1100, and this doesn't include staff time to print and deliver the packets. She recommends that the city buy tablets for each council member to avoid printing packets in the future. The cost of the tablets will be covered within the first year. Motion by Mr. Hildebrand to move to paperless council packets by purchasing tablets for each council member as needed, spending up to \$175 per tablet. Support by Mr. Elliott. Motion passed with all in favor.

E. Meter Replacement Notifications – Next Step

Ms. Lockhart informed council that the Department of Public Works (DPW) is nearing the end of the meter replacement project and noted that there are residents that staff has not been able to contact. Others have not responded to multiple attempts to schedule the replacement. The handheld reader used for the old meters is failing and it cannot be repaired; a replacement can only be found used on EBay. Per Mr. Zinger, there are 116 residential meters still to be replaced. Ms. Lockhart recommends placing door hangers at all residences with old meters to bring this matter to their attention. Motion by Mr. Hildebrand to approve a two-stage plan for door hangers: the first explains the issue and asks the resident to call city hall within 30 days for an appointment; if a second notice is needed the language should become more aggressive and note that the water will be shut off if the meter is not replaced. Support by Mayor Pro-Tem Szeliga. Motion passed with all in favor.

F. Riverside Park West – Roof Repairs

Ms. Lockhart noted that all the roofs on the pavilions and the buildings at Riverside West are in dire need of replacement. Council allocated \$200,000 to Parks and Recreation from the sale of the MacClellan Building. She presented quotes for 25-year shingles (\$7,027.52) and steel roofs (\$10,836.48), noting that DPW will do the work. Motion by Mr. Hildebrand to authorize up to \$11,000 to remove the current roofing materials and install steel roofs on the pavilions and buildings in Riverside West. Support by Mr. Duffy. Motion passed with all in favor.

Department/Informational Reports

G. Accounts Payable Report – (7/6/2022-7/26/2022)

H. Payroll Reports – (7/6/2022 – 7/26/2022)

I. Summary of Funds – June 2022

City Attorney Report/Comment

Mr. White is working with Ms. Lockhart on several issues. There has been no word yet from the Attorney General's office regarding the charter amendment to appoint city clerk. He has been going through the building code and contacting contractors about serving on the Building Board of Appeals.

City Clerk Report/Comment

J. Proposed Charter Amendment - FYI

City Manager Report/Comment

Ms. Lockhart noted that the Planning Commission has begun to update the Master Plan and has scheduled another work session for August 8. She has filled the laborer position in DPW

and interviews have begun for the DPW Director. She will meet with the Police Union on Thursday; their contract has expired and the negotiating process has been delayed due to the EMS issues with the county. All DPW trucks have gone in for undercoating and bed liners.

Finance Director Report/Comment

Ms. Duncan has finished the quarterly report and summer taxes have been sent out. She is starting on the Fire Department audit which is due in August.

Department of Public Works Report/Comment

K. Monthly Report – June 2022

Police Department Report/Comment

L. Monthly Report – June 2022

Chief Beam noted that Jessie Hyden will start at the Academy on August 8. Administrative Assistant Rose Woolsey is updating the field manual. Mr. Hyden has been working on the school response plan as it is outdated. Some area businesses would also like to have a response plan. Chief does not have the staff to do a Community Night Out, and the volunteer that has helped organize this in the past has moved from the city. The police millage renewal is on the August 2 ballot and he welcomes any questions or comments about the issue. Mr. Hyden continues to work on code violations and citations are up. Chief is planning to set up a wellness center that can be used by all city staff, not just police personnel.

Downtown Development Authority Report/Comment

M. Ice Mountain Environmental Stewardship Grant – Discussion

N. DDA Meeting Packet – June 12, 2022

Mr. Bruggema noted that the Farmers Market is doing very well this season and is averaging 25 vendors/week. The 4th of July weekend went well. Two downtown business district building owners are interested in renovating their second stories for living space.

Evart Area Fire Department

O. Minutes – June 14, 2022

Citizens' Comments:

Jason O'Dell spoke as a citizen and as the Middle School principal. He has spoken at length with Chief Beam about vaping devices coming into the schools and showed examples of devices that have been confiscated. These might contain nicotine or these might contain marijuana. He'd like to see city code changed to address the issue by allowing parents to be ticketed when their kids bring these to school. He believes this will stop the issue before it begins, keeping vaping devices out of schools and is pro-active rather than being reactive with confiscation. He mentioned that there's a ballot issue on August 2 for a Community Resource Officer (CRO) and he asked for support. He noted that a good CRO can prevent a lot of problems.

Ralph Carlson noted that Lume had provided money for a Resource Officer and questioned why those funds had not been spent. Ms. Lockhart responded that the city has the funding, as promised, but has been unable to hire a CRO. Mr. Hildebrand noted that the city had made an offer to a qualified candidate, but he chose to move out of state. A second candidate was offered a higher salary from another municipality so turned down our offer.

Motion by Mayor Pro-tem Szeliga to adjourn. Support by Mr. Hildebrand. Motion passed with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:19pm.



 Kathy Fiebig, City Clerk