



**CITY OF NEWPORT
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
NEWPORT CITY HALL
June 16, 2022**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Elliott called the City Council Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. on June 16, 2022.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

Present (5): Mayor Laurie Elliott, Council Member Kevin Chapdelaine, Council Member Tom Ingemann, Council Member Marvin Taylor, and Council Member Rozlyn Johnson.

Not Present (0): None.

4. ADOPT AGENDA

Member Chapdelaine motioned to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Member Johnson. Approved 5-0.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bill Sumner, residing at 737 21st Street, addressed the Council. Mr. Sumner stated with the extreme hot temperatures this coming weekend, he wanted to remind people of potential dangers which include heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Another concern is tick season and Mr. Sumner learned there is a new tick virus. Mr. Sumner reminded the community he is growing out his hair which he will eventually donate to be used for a wig for cancer patients. Mr. Sumner attended the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) meeting and is looking forward to an upcoming presentation on a civil war veteran that is buried at the Newport Cemetery. Mr. Sumner stated there is a disc golf park in Cottage Grove on the south end of town. He checked it out and found it to be a beautiful setting and very well attended. Mayor Elliott stated disc golf was one question on our parks survey last year. There were other park amenities that scored higher that will be addressed first.

6. ADOPT CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes-** May 19, 2022 Regular Council
- B. Minutes-** May 19, 2022 Council Workshop
- C. HPC Minutes**
- D. Park Board Minutes**
- E. Resolution No 2022-20-** Accepting Donations
- F. Resolution No 2022-21-** Appointing Election Judges
- G. List of Bills-** \$138,660.50
- H. May 2022 Financial Statements**

Mayor Elliott stated there was a request to remove Item F, which is the Resolution Appointing Election Judges.

Member Ingemann motioned to adopt the Consent Agenda as amended. Seconded by Member Chapdelaine. Approved 5-0.

Mayor Elliott stated Resolution No. 2022-21 was removed because one of our Council Members is part of the appointment list and wanted to abstain from voting on that item.

Member Chapdelaine motioned to adopt Resolution No. 2022-21 – Appointing Election Judges. Seconded by Member Ingemann. Approved 4-0-1(Johnson).

7. 2021 BUDGET AUDIT PRESENTATION (MMKR)

Jim Eichten, CPA for MMKR, presented to Council on Newport’s annual audit from 2021. Mr. Eichten stated they are required to test our internal controls over financial reporting as well as test for our compliance with laws and regulations as it relates to financial reports. There were two reportable items on segregation of duties and financial reporting. There were no findings to report. Newport saw a dramatic increase in taxable market values in 2021. Mr. Eichten issued a clean opinion on the financial statements. There were improvements to the general fund and enterprise fund financial results. Overall, the city is doing well when it comes to its financial position.

8. WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE REPORT

Washington County Sheriff’s Deputy Sergeant Bill Harrell informed Council they have Dairy Queen coupons to hand out to kids that are wearing their helmets while biking, rollerblading, and skateboarding. Sergeant Harrell handed out three coupons today.

Member Chapdelaine inquired how our parks have been now that school is out for summer break. Sergeant Harrell stated things have been quiet and not like in years past.

9. FIRE CHIEF’S REPORT

Fire Chief Steve Wiley informed Council about upcoming events for the fire department. On Saturday, they will be part of the Strawberry Fest Parade in Cottage Grove. On Sunday, they will be at the Newport Farmers Market from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. On Wednesday, June 22 they will have their first night of ticket sales at the fire station for Booya. They will be selling raffle tickets for a cash prize and a wagon load of cheer. The Booya will be held on Sunday, July 10th as a drive-through event opening at 10:00 a.m.

Mayor Elliott inquired what the fundraising money will be used for. Chief Wiley stated the money is used for buying extra gear and equipment. All the money goes back into the fire department.

10. ENGINEER’S REPORT

None.

11. SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

A. H&U Pay Request- \$195,702.42

Superintendent of Public Works Matt Yokiell stated he received pay request No. 17 for H+U Construction for the new City Hall / Public Safety Building in the amount of \$195,702.42.

Superintendent Yokiell stated the contractors for the new City Hall have been working on the epoxy flooring, ceiling tiles, carpet, front vestibule, and preparing for final paving. Next week they plan to start the rooftop AC unit which will help with the finishing work. Mayor Elliott stated she is happy for the community and excited for the new building that will serve the community for many years.

Member Ingemann motioned to approve pay request No. 17 in the amount of \$195,702.42 for H+U. Seconded by Member Chapdelaine. Approved 5-0.

Superintendent Yokiell stated well number one was reinstalled today and is back in service.

Mayor Elliott inquired if Superintendent Yokiell could give an update on the dog park. Superintendent Yokiell stated he met with the Refinery staff and discussed the concept. They took a tour of a dog park in another city for reference. They plan to meet again soon to walk the potential site and see where it would fit best.

12. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

A. Major Abatement- 1139 Tibbetts Place

Assistant to the City Administrator Travis Brierley stated at the last council meeting we held a public hearing for a major abatement at 1139 Tibbetts Place. At that time, the Council chose to table any action until tonight's meeting. Assistant Brierley stated he has reviewed the property and found the trash is cleaned up, the tires are gone, and there are no junk vehicles on the site. There are however items that still need to be addressed. There are paint cans that were left in a cart, the fence is not in conformance with the code, and there are two businesses still operating on the site. These remaining items will be addressed with the sale of the property. Staff recommends Council takes no action towards a major abatement for this site.

Member Ingemann inquired if the fence and cement company will be gone. Assistant Brierley stated the fence and cement company are not permitted under our city code uses nor do they have certificates of occupancy to be there. Assistant Brierley stated he spoke to the broker between Croix Holdings and bioLawn and have made sure to inform them they must be gone. The two companies were not addressed in the major abatement hearing as it was unconfirmed if they were operating. If the issues are not resolved upon purchase, or if the purchase falls through, staff will need to address these issues and get resolved. Mayor Elliot stated she is frustrated that because of certain laws and regulations we cannot easily verify that businesses in our community are operating within our zoning code.

Member Chapdelaine motioned to take no further action for major abatement at 1139 Tibbetts Place at this time. Seconded by Member Ingemann. Approved 5-0.

B. Ground Storage Tank Reservoir

Assistant Brierley stated the city went through eminent domain to gain access to property for a ground storage reservoir (GSR3). The deed was drafted and executed by Frederic W. Knaak, but not recorded with Washington County. Washington County stated the city needs a new deed signed prior to June 30th and needs to provide compensation to the Stewarts for paying taxes on land that belonged to the city. Assistant Brierley stated it is staff's recommendation that Council approves repayment to the Stewarts in the amount of \$1,761.30 for property taxes plus interest due to the city's clerical error.

Member Ingemann inquired if this should have done by the city's prior attorney. Assistant Brierley stated yes. Member Ingemann inquired if there is a way to recover the money. Assistant Brierley stated it would cost more money to try and go that route.

Member Ingemann motioned to approved payment to the Stewarts in the amount of \$1,761.30 for taxes and interest for GSR3. Seconded by Member Johnson. Approved 5-0.

C. Ordinance No 2022-04- Zoning Code Changes

Assistant Brierley stated the proposed Ordinance No. 2022-04 went to a public hearing at the Planning Commission meeting two days ago. Overall, these are simple changes. Two members of the community spoke to these ordinances, and both were in favor of them. The changes to the ordinances include Impervious Surface Limitations in the MRCCA, Impervious Surface Definitions, Foundation Wall Setbacks, Accessory Structure Footprint Interpretation, Front Yard Lot Line and Yard Area Definitions, and Sight Triangles.

Member Chapdelaine motioned to adopt Ordinance No. 2022-04 – Zoning Code Changes. Seconded by Member Johnson. Approved 5-0.

D. July City Council Meetings

City Administrator Deb Hill stated the next Council meeting would be on July 7th. Historically the first meeting in July is cancelled due to people being out of town for the Holiday. Mayor Elliott stated this is a long-standing tradition at Newport.

Member Chapdelaine motioned to cancel the July 7th Council Meeting. Seconded by Member Johnson. Approved 5-0.

Assistant Brierley stated he was approached by the League of Women Voters to hold a forum at our new City Hall in September. They will reach out again in August to confirm dates and times.

13. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Elliott stated the Council held a Special Meeting on June 9th where they interviewed Liza Donabauer with David Drown and Associates (DDA). Council approved the hiring of DDA for our executive recruitment for our City Administrator position. Ms. Donabauer met with Council and Staff to develop the position profile, job description, and put together advertising materials. There will be another special meeting on July 12th to review the material. Then on July 13th, they would start advertising for this position.

Mayor Elliott stated she received a letter from Census Bureau, and they have Newport's population estimate for 2021 at 3,890 people.

Mayor Elliott stated Friends in Need Food Shelf, which serves Newport, is turning thirty this year. They are hosting an open house with free ice cream on July 18th from 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. The address is 535 4th Street in Saint Paul Park.

Member Ingemann stated the Washington/Ramsey County RDF plant will be doing a pilot for the food scrap program and Newport was one of two cities selected in Washington County for this pilot program. The bags will be provided free of charge, and they will ask residents to fill the bags with food scraps.

Member Taylor stated the Primary election is on August 9th and encourages everyone to vote. Early/absentee voting starts June 24th. Residents will also be voting on the school bond referendum.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Member Johnson motioned to adjourn the City Council Meeting. Seconded by Member Chapdelaine. Approved 5-0.

The City Council Meeting was adjourned at 6:42 p.m. on June 16, 2022.

Respectfully Submitted:
Jill Thiesfeld,
Administrative Assistant II

Signed: _____
Laurie Elliott, Mayor