

CITY OF ALTOONA, WI
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
January 28, 2021

(I) Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Brendan Pratt called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Regular Council Meeting was held via Zoom Teleconference/Video conference due to Coronavirus COVID-19.

(II) Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Pratt led the Common Council and others in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

(III) Roll Call

City Clerk Cindy Bauer called the roll. Mayor Brendan Pratt, Council Members Dale Stuber, Timothy Lima, Maria Guzman, Matt Biren, Tim Sexton, were present. Susan Rowe arrived at 6:05 p.m. Also Present: City Attorney John Behling, City Administrator Michael Golat, City Planner Joshua Clements, Police Chief Kelly Bakken, Director of Public Works/City Engineer (DPW/CE) David Walter, Finance Director Tina Nelson, Recreation Manager Debra Goldbach, Recreation Coordinator Erin Turner, Management Analyst Roy Atkinson, and City Clerk Cindy Bauer.

(IV) Citizen Participation Period

Motion by Biren/Lima to close the Citizen Participation Period. **Motion carried.**

(V) Approval of minutes.

Motion by Lima/Stuber to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2021 Regular Council Meeting. **Motion carried.**

(VI) City Officers/Department Heads Report

Debra Goldbach reported that the Parks and Recreation Association awarded the City of Altoona with a park design award for River Prairie.

City Administrator Golat reported that a Crokicurl Rink (a Canadian Game) was installed in River Prairie Park. The Frosty Fund Series activity will be taking place again this winter. Golat commented on potential workshops that will be held at 5 p.m. prior to a Council Meeting. The purpose of these workshops will be to discuss issues with the Council and input from the public. One in particular will be to discuss the feasibility of one garbage hauler. The workshop will be held via Zoom on February 11, 2021 at 5 p.m. prior to the Council Meeting.

Police Chief Kelly Bakken reported on cases that the Altoona Police Department have been involved with recently.

City Committee Reports – None.

(VII) Consent Agenda.

(1) Discuss/consider approval of a GIS Services Agreement with the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

The proposed agreement between the City and the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (RPC) provides technical assistance for city staff in planning, engineering and public works to maintain the city's geospatial information and generation of maps and analysis for small projects or tasks. Given the existing and anticipated workload of city staff and specialized expertise of RPC staff, this agreement will provide value in improving the city's GIS capacities and citizen services while also improving outputs. The agreement is structured as a one-year agreement with an hourly rate, to respond to needs as they arise. The agreement is expected to be evaluated for possible renewal late in the year.

(VII)(2) Discuss/consider Resolution 1C-21 Proclaiming February 4, 2021 as Transit Equity Day

The enclosed Resolution recognizes Transit Equity Day as February 4, 2021, a day to remember the life and service of Rosa Parks, and the role public transportation plays in the functioning of an equitable and sustainable community.

Motion by Biren/Sexton to approve Consent Agenda Items 1 and 2. **Motion carried.**

(VIII) Unfinished Business – None.

(IX) New Business

(1) Discuss/consider Resolution 1B-21, A Resolution authorizing the issuance and Sale of \$5,860,000 Tax Increment Revenue Refunding Bonds (TID No. 3) Series 2021A.

Sean Lentz, Financial Advisor for Ehlers Associates, was present to explain Resolution 1B-21. The resolution accepts the best bid for the Tax Increment Refunding Revenue Bonds, Series 2021A and secures the proposed terms for closing on the bonds. The Bonds are being issued to provide refinancing for the State Trust Fund Loans 2015A and 2015B. Lentz summarized the Sale Day Report for \$5,860,000 Tax Increment Revenue Refunding Bonds (TID No. 3), Series 2021A.

Motion by Lima/Rowe to approve Resolution 1B-21 a resolution authorizing the issuance and sale of a \$5,860,000 Tax Increment Revenue Refunding Bonds (TID No. 3), series 2021A. **Motion carried.**

(IX)(3) Presentation on 2021 Parks and Recreation Programming and City events for spring/summer 2021. Possible action to follow.

City Administrator Golat explained that Staff is beginning to receive inquiries regarding the City's plans for park use, field use, recreation programming and events for spring and summer 2021 given what is known and anticipated related to COVID 19. Some of the specific activities' stakeholders are asking about include:

- Youth baseball and softball
- High school baseball and softball
- Recreation programming--sports and classes
- Recreation centers
- Events--Cinder City Days, Rock'n on the River, Kick'n it Country, River Prairie Festival, etc.

City Administrator Golat recalled that staff requested direction from City Council on use of the fields for softball and baseball, and all recreation programs were canceled. Staff is once again requesting input from Council as we contemplated events and programs this spring, summer and fall. Recreation staff has consulted with other area municipal recreation programs, and has found that they are all struggling with the same questions. The highest profile and public issue recently have been related to allowing spectators at Hobbs Eau Claire hockey games. Some considerations in determining the best course of action for this year include:

- COVID 19 continues to infect many people in the Chippewa Valley with 252 cases reported in Eau Claire County over the past week. There are currently 339 active cases in Eau Claire County. In total there have been 10,233 positive cases of COVID-19 in Eau Claire County, 322 hospitalizations and 95 confirmed deaths related to COVID-19.
- We have learned a lot more about the transmission of COVID-19 over the past year, and the consensus is that the disease does not spread nearly as rapidly in an outdoor setting compared to an indoor setting.
- While children are vulnerable to the COVID 19 infection, they generally are not as inclined to become symptomatic compared to adults. However, there have been several cases of children becoming very ill or

dying from COVID-19, and the long-term effects of COVID on children and others are still largely unknown.

- There are diverse and passionate perspectives in our community related to COVID 19 and what protections should be taken to prevent the spread of the disease and what role, if any, government agencies should play in requiring protective measures.
- There are many recent examples of professional and amateur sports leagues, games and tournaments that have been played successfully, both indoors and outdoors. Frequently, sports seasons have been interrupted by COVID outbreaks and adjustments were required for safety. Notably, high school basketball, volleyball and hockey seasons have continued at Altoona High School.
- COVID-19 is taking its toll on everyone's mental health and people are growing more and more weary leading to what has been coined "COVID fatigue." Children, in particular, have been significantly impacted by alterations to their school and activity schedules.
- We now have viable vaccines that are being dispensed across the country and in our area. However, it is going to take significant time to immunize enough people to attain herd immunity. This is likely to not happen until fall 2021 if all goes well.
- Many businesses continue to struggle to deal with the impact of COVID-19. The continued viability of many food and entertainment businesses remains uncertain.
- Regionally it would be beneficial to have a unified approach, to the extent possible, to how we will deal with events and activities this year.

Staff is not looking for a definitive answer on this issue given we know we will have more and better information to base our decisions on as we get closer to spring. However, Staff would like Council to weigh in on how they are generally feeling about planning for the noted events and activities as staff is beginning to receive many inquiries about our plans, and other organizations are asking whether Altoona facilities will be available this spring and summer. Staff are also receiving many inquiries about music in the park as people really missed that last summer.

City Administrator Golat mentioned that Staff met with the Eau Claire County Health Department on the afternoon of 1/22/2021 to help inform the Council. Jeff Robb of the Eau Claire City/County Health Department was present to answer any questions Council Members had regarding the COVID guidelines.

Recreation Manager Debra Goldbach commented on programs that they are hoping to hold this summer with protocols set in place.

Trevor Bohland, representing Cowboy Jacks commented on this past year experience with guidelines/adjustments their business had to put in place because of COVID.

No action.

(IX)(2) Presentation of 2020 City of Altoona Development Report

City Planner Joshua Clements explained that Altoona continues to experience historic levels of residential growth and investment, a general trend that is anticipated to continue for at least the current year. Permits for **264** dwelling units were issued in 2020, bringing the City's total to approximately 4,247. This shattered the previous record of 182 dwelling permits issued in 2019. The next largest figures since 2000 are 158 in 2016 and 149 in 2014. Many of the structures permitted in 2020 are in the construction process and not yet occupied. Notably, over 35 percent of permitted dwelling units in the City have been initiated since 2010, and population projections have increased an estimated 20.8 percent during that same period (the measurement periods are not precisely consistent; household sizes are getting smaller; lag between permit and occupancy). The enclosed Staff Report 20-01A briefly

describes recent development trends with focus on residential uses, and corresponding changes in population and equalized property value.

The current historic rate of residential development activity carried on despite Covid-19. Staff have been working primarily remotely since March 17, 2020. Building Inspector Matt Flatland implemented virtual inspection and electronic documentation for certain types of inspections to avoid entering homes or job sites when possible. Pre-development meetings have largely occurred virtually rather than in-person. The housing crisis carries on despite constraints on labor, and the general consensus is that housing challenges are anticipated to deepen and change due to massive layoffs in certain sectors of the economy (hospitality, restaurants, entertainment) creating income insecurity and inequity; most employment sectors are little affected and some are doing well continuing to drive demand; and anticipated changes in the market due to increasing work-from-home situations, which are expected to persist in some form. No action; presentation only.

(IX)(4) Discuss/consider setting the public hearing date to rezone six parcels located between 1419 and 1311 Glades Drive from R-1 One Family Dwelling District to R-2 One- and Two-Family Dwelling District and to refer the petition to the Plan Commission for its recommendation prior to the Public Hearing.

City Planner Clements explained that six properties located between 1311 and 1427 Glades Drive were constructed and are currently used as two-dwelling structures. The current zoning for the properties is R1 One Family Dwelling District. This means that each structure is considered “legal non-conforming”, meaning it does not conform to current zoning.

City Planner Clements said this matter was brought to the attention of staff by the owner of one of the properties who is considering selling their property. Due to this legal non-conforming condition of each of the six properties, staff determined it is appropriate to resolve this issue through City-initiated rezoning to R2 One- and Two-Family Dwelling District for this group of properties for which this condition exists. Those parcels are identified as Parcel numbers: 201224001000, 201224002000, 201224003000, 201224004000, 201224005000, 201224006000

Motion by Rowe/Lima to refer the appeal for rezoning to the Plan Commission and recommend the public hearing date of February 25, 2021. **Motion carried.**

(IX)(5) Discuss/consider convening in closed session pursuant to Wis. Stats 19.85 (1)(e)

- A. Proposed use for Lot 2 of CSM 3047 in River Prairie Development.
- B. Proposed Use for Cinder City Park.
- C. Altoona Youth Softball and Baseball Association contract.
- D. Botsford Avenue Property Parcel #201105209160

Motion by Rowe/Lima to convene in closed session at 7:25 p.m. pursuant to Wis. Stats 19.85 (1)(e) Roll call vote, 6-ayes, Lima, Rowe, Biren, Sexton, Guzman, Stuber, 0-nays. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Council Member Maria Guzman left the meeting during Closed Session.

Mayor Pratt recused himself from Closed Session pertaining to item D. Botsford Avenue Property.

(IX)(6) Motion to reconvene to Open Session.

Motion by Biren/Stuber to reconvene in open session at 8:26 p.m. Roll call vote, 5-ayes, Biren, Stuber, Rowe, Sexton, Lima. 0-nays. **Motion carried 5-0.**

City Administrator Golat explained that Council discussed four items in closed session. One item that required action tonight. That being an offer to purchase lot parcel #201-1052-09-160 located at the end of 11th Street and Botsford that the City of Altoona currently owns.

Motion by Lima/Rowe to accept the WB-13 Vacant Land Offer to Purchase a lot on Parcel 201-1052-09-160 to Holzinger Homes for \$29,000. **Motion carried.**

Mayor Pratt returned to the meeting.

(X) Miscellaneous Business and Communication.

(XI) Adjournment.

Motion by Rowe/Lima to adjourn at 8:32 p.m. **Motion carried.**

Minutes submitted by Cindy Bauer, City Clerk