

CITY OF ALTOONA, WI
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
November 18, 2021

(I) Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Brendan Pratt called the meeting to order at 4:00 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, Matthew Biren, Tim Sexton, and Susan Rowe were present.

Also Present: City Attorney John Behling, City Administrator Mike Golat, City Planner Joshua Clements, Finance Director Tina Nelson, Management Analyst Roy Atkinson and City Clerk Cindy Bauer.

(IV) Citizen Participation Period

Attorney John Manydeeds, representative for Accent Finishing regarding the annexation. Manydeeds commented that Accent Finishing is not in favor of the annexation due to financial reasons and therefore does not want to be in the City of Altoona.

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

(V) Approval of minutes.

Motion by Rowe/Lima to approve the minutes of the November 11, 2021, Regular Council Meeting. **Motion carried.**

(VI) City Officers/Department Heads Report

Josh Clements announced that he accepted a City Planner position in Sun Prairie effective Dec 6, 2021 and will be leaving the City of Altoona.

City Administrator Golat mentioned that following tonight's Council Meeting, Council is invited to an Altoona Entrepreneur's Showcase at 6 p.m. at the River Prairie Center.

Management Analyst Roy Atkinson announced that the City of Altoona is the recipient of an Urban Forestry Grant from the Wisconsin DNR. The city received a \$13,500 grant for a tree inventory/management plan.

City Committee Reports – None.

(VII) Consent Agenda - None

(VIII) Unfinished Business – None.

(IX) New Business

(1) Discuss/consider approval of the 2022 special charge for recycling.

City Administrator Golat explained that as part of the City's recycling agreement with Eau Claire County, the city is required to pay its equitable share of the County's recycling and clean sweep programs. This cost is covered by adding a special charge to the annual tax bill for each property owner that owns single-family to four-plex units; the charge requires review and approval by the City Council each year.

Funding for the recycling program has remained consistent over the past few years while the cost of the program has continued to increase. To maintain the current services the program provides, including rural recycling drop-sites, household hazardous waste and electronics collections, the Eau Claire Planning and Development Committee recommended to the Eau Claire County Board an increase of \$5.00. This brings the fee from \$12.00 per year to \$17.00 per year or an increase of \$0.42 per month. The County Board has approved this special charge

as part of the 2022 county budget.

Regan Watts, Recycling & Sustainability Coordinator for Eau Claire County is asking that City Staff present this fee increase to our city council for approval. The recycling special charge has not increased since 2014. Watts was present at the Council Meeting to further explain the rationale behind the fee increase.

Motion by Rowe/Lima to approve the 2022 annual special recycling charge to increase on the tax bill from \$12 to \$17. **Motion carried.**

(IX)(2) Discuss/consider Revaluation and Maintenance Contract for City Assessor for the period of January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2024.

City Administrator Golat explained that the City of Altoona Assessor contract expires on December 31, 2021. The current contract is with Bowmar Appraisal Inc. The City of Altoona has worked with Bowmar since 1981. They have provided a great service for the City of Altoona. Staff members have no complaints on the level of service they have provided. They have been great to work with and very responsive to any questions from staff or taxpayers.

City Administrator Golat mentioned that in 2021, the City Clerk was contacted by another company, Accurate Assessor, and asked if we could meet for a short presentation on the services they provided. The City Administrator, City Clerk and Finance Director had a virtual meeting with this company and were very impressed with some of the additional services that they could provide and the advanced technology that the company uses. One example is the use of QR codes for accessing property records. They also provide software for the public to access property records that are cloud-based, with no additional costs to the contract. The software has all the property cards and detailed information and images on each parcel. The City of River Falls currently uses this company and gave them a great recommendation. Considering that the Assessor Contract was up for renewal, the City issued a Request for Proposal for Interim Market Revaluation and Assessing Services for the City for the years 2022-2024. The city received only two responses. They are as follows:

Bowmar Appraisal

2022: \$44,200; 2023: \$44,200; 2024: \$44,200; for a total of \$132,600.

Accurate Assessor

2022: \$41,000; 2023: \$41,000; 2024: \$41,000; for a total of \$123,000.

Staff has reviewed both proposals. Based on the advanced technology and lowest cost, staff recommends awarding the contract to Accurate for the total combined amount of \$123,000 for years 2022-2024.

Mike Kovacher of Bowmar Appraisal and Chris Plamann of Accurate Appraisal were available to discuss their proposals with the Council.

Motion by Sexton/Lima to approve staff's recommendation and award the Assessor contract to Accurate Assessor for a combined three-year total of \$123,000 for the period of January 1, 2022- December 31, 2024. Discussion followed. Roll call vote, 3-ayes, Lima, Guzman, Sexton, 3-nays, Stuber, Biren, Rowe, Mayor broke the tie with a nay vote. **Motion failed 4-3.**

Motion by Sexton/Lima to go out for additional RFPs for the Revaluation and Maintenance Contract for City Assessor. **Motion carried.**

(IX)(3) Discuss/consider convening in closed session pursuant to Wis. Stats 19.85 (1)(g)

A. Presentation by city attorney regarding potential boundary agreement with the Town of Washington.

Motion by Lima/Rowe to convene in closed session at 4:56 p.m. pursuant to Wis. Stats 19.85 (1)(g) Roll call vote, 6-ayes, Sexton, Biren, Rowe, Stuber, Guzman, Lima, 0-nays. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mike Golat left the meeting at 5:32 p.m.

(IX)(4) Motion to reconvene to Open Session.

Motion by Biren/Lima to reconvene in open session at 5:37 p.m. Roll call vote, 6-ayes, Biren, Stuber, Lima, Sexton, Guzman, Rowe, 0-nays. **Motion carried 6-0.**

No action taken out of closed session. Continue negotiations regarding a potential boundary agreement with the Town of Washington.

(X) Miscellaneous Business and Communication.

City Clerk Bauer mentioned that December 1, 2021 is the first day to circulate nomination papers for the April 5, 2022 Spring Election. The offices up for re-election is the mayor, and Aldermanic Districts 1, 2, and 3. More information can be found on the city's website.

(XI) Adjournment.

Motion by Sexton/Lima to adjourn at 5:38 p.m. **Motion carried.**

Minutes submitted by Cindy Bauer, City Clerk