

**CITY OF ALTOONA, WI**  
**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**December 2, 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, Matthew Biren, Tim Sexton, and Susan Rowe were present.

Also Present: Attorney Sam Bach-Hanson, City Administrator Mike Golat, City Planner Joshua Clements, Finance Director Tina Nelson, Police Chief Kelly Bakken, Fire Chief Mark Renderman, Public Works Superintendent Scott Kwick, Management Analyst Roy Atkinson, City Engineer/Director of Public Works (CE/DPW) David Walter, and City Clerk Cindy Bauer.

**(IV) Citizen Participation Period**

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

**(V) Approval of minutes.**

Motion by Stuber/Lima to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2021, Regular Council Meeting. **Motion carried.**

**(VI) City Officers/Department Heads Report**

City Administrator Golat mentioned that there will be a farewell party for Josh Clements from noon to 2:00 p.m. at the Fish House. Clements has taken another position in Sun Prairie and is leaving the City of Altoona.

Police Chief Kelly Bakken reported on activities within the Altoona Police Department. Bakken reported that there have been increases on calls for services, accident reports, ordinance violations and crashes compared to 2020 statistics. Bakken mentioned that Alyssa Sonnentag will be filling the part time administrative assistant position in the Altoona Police and Fire Department that was vacated by Shoua Bauer.

Fire Chief Mark Renderman reported on activities within the Altoona Fire Department. Renderman reported that there have been a total of 1056 fire-related and/or EMS calls in 2021 compared to 957 in 2020. There have been an additional 8 new recruits so far who will be listed on the roster in mid December.

**City Committee Reports – None.**

**(VII) Consent Agenda - None**

**(VIII) Unfinished Business – None.**

**(IX) New Business**

**(1) Public Hearing and Presentation of the 2022 City of Altoona Budget at 6:00 p.m.**

Mayor Pratt opened the public hearing at 6:05 p.m.

Finance Director Tina Nelson explained that the 2022 budget requires a public hearing prior to action by the Council. The Budget Committee met prior to the Council Meeting and recommended that the Council approve the 2022 Budget. Nelson said the 2022 budget was discussed at several budget committee meetings during August, September, October and November. At the December 2, 2021 budget committee meeting, prior to the Council Meeting, the committee recommended that Council approve the budget as proposed. Finance Director Nelson summarized the 2022 Budget. Nelson noted that a full presentation as listed below was given at the Budget

Meeting held prior to the Council Meeting at 4:30 p.m.

The 2022 budget for governmental purposes (General Fund, Library, Capital Projects and Debt Service) includes over \$14.08 million in expenditures, with approximately \$10.17 million in non-tax revenues, requiring a property tax levy of \$3,904,500.

The proposed *General Fund* budget represents \$7.04 million in general operations, which includes a property tax levy of \$2,420,000 which represents 61.98% of the total levy.

The *library* budget represents \$659,838 in operations, which includes a property tax levy of \$370,000, representing 9.48% of the levy.

The *Capital Projects Fund* budget is \$3,026,762, which includes a property tax levy of \$100,775, representing 2.58% of the levy. Other Sources of funds for the projects include \$45,000 equipment trade-in, a \$60,000 transfer from reserves, \$332,522 from Grants, \$273,000 of previously borrowed funds and a Veteran’s Donation of \$322,522. This leaves a balance of 1,892,943 in bonding. The City has the capacity to borrow, and the financing will be structured to maintain a total equalized levy of \$6.35.

The allocation of the projects by fund is as follows:

Water	\$	1,343,593
Sanitary Sewer	\$	280,997
Storm Water	\$	188,565
TID #3	\$	113,000
TID #4	\$	2,034,000
General Fund	\$	3,026,762

The *Debt Service Fund* requires \$3.34 million in principal and interest payments for 2022. \$2,333,065 is due by the Tax Increment Districts. The remaining \$1,013,725 will be obtained through the property tax levy; this represents 25.96% of the total levy.

The *Water Utility* budget for 2022 reflects no rate increase.

The budget for the *Sewer Utility* budget reflects the same rates in 2022 as in 2021.

The *Storm Water Utility* budget for 2021 reflects no increase over 2021 rates.

City Administrator Golat noted that the 2022 proposed budgets are based on the City of Altoona’s strategic planning priorities. The following are some of the priorities included in the 2022 Budgets:

1. **Repairing or replacing aging infrastructure-** by continuing with the Pavement Replacement and Preservation Program and the Daniels Ave- Division Street & S. Willson to 10th Street Projects. Annual Curb & Gutter/Valve Hydrant Contract.
2. **Hiring additional personnel to keep pace with growth-** Adding an additional full-time police officer and additional full-time parks and recreation employee in 2022.
3. **Investing in quality-of-life amenities and opportunities-** Prairie View Ridge Playground & simple pavilion along with the Veteran’s trail & installing park irrigation.
4. **Evaluating technical needs and implementing solutions-** Website Updates & AMI meter reading technology. SCADA technology for the Cities Utilities. Adding Surveillance Cameras.
5. **Identify the next opportunity for economic growth-** Utilities along Hwy 12
6. **Focusing Efforts on Long Range Planning-** New Well & Windsor Forest Cluster Neighborhood Plan.
7. **Assuring Financial House is in order-** Planning for the Tax Increment District closures and one-year extensions for promoting affordable housing.
8. **Sustainability-** Climate Action Plan/Energy Plan
9. **Implement an active Forestry Program-** Continued work on emerald ash borer mitigation & urban tree planting as well as the purchase of equipment to be able to complete some of this work by city employees.

Jim Kroehn, 2544 Daniels Avenue, asked if there will be additional meetings to discuss the Daniels Avenue project.

Motion by Sexton/Lima to close the public hearing at 6:16 p.m. **Motion carried.**

**(IX)(2) Discuss/consider approval of Resolution 12A-21, a resolution approving the 2022 City of Altoona Budget.**

Finance Director Nelson recommended Council approve Resolution 12A-21, a resolution approving the 2022 City of Altoona budget.

Motion by Lima/Biren to approve Resolution 12A-21, a Resolution adopting the 2022 budget for the City of Altoona. **Motion carried.**

**(IX)(3) Discuss/consider approval of Ordinance 12A-21, an Ordinance amending Chapter 5.24, Specifically Section 5.24.030 “Classes of licenses and fees”, regarding operator (bartender) licenses and change of agent.**

City Clerk Bauer explained that as part of the review of fees, clerk staff and the Police Chief have explored the feasibility of changing the bartender (operator) licenses to a two-year term instead of the current one-year term. In order to achieve this, Chapter 5.24, specifically Section 5.24.030 “Classes of licenses and fees” needs to be amended to officially change the operator licenses to being issued for two years instead of one year. The purpose of changing the term is to improve the efficiency of the process for both the applicants and city staff. Clerk Bauer noted that the City of Eau Claire has been issuing two-year licenses for some time and have been satisfied with the process.

Clerk Bauer further explained that the other amendments under Chapter 5.24 are housekeeping issues; the first being to specify that successor agents of a corporation or LLC are subject to a \$10 transfer agent fee; this fee will be added in our addendum of fees as well. The last amendment is to specify that the Reserve “Class B” Initial Issuance fee under this chapter is \$10,000. The fee schedule will be brought forward at the next meeting to include the 2022 fee schedule. Clerk Bauer asked that the Council approve amending Chapter 5.24, specifically Section 5.24.030 “Classes of licenses and fees”, as presented.

Motion by Stuber/Lima to approve Ordinance 12A-21, an ordinance amending Chapter 5.24, Section 5.24.030. **Motion carried.**

**(IX)(4) Discuss/consider approval of a Reserve “Class B” Retailers’ Liquor License to sell intoxicating liquor and a Class “B” Beer license to sell fermented malt beverages in the City of Altoona to Hart in the Park, LLC, DBA Somewhere Pub, Elizabeth Ann Hart, Agent, 1485 Front Porch Place, Altoona, WI.**

Clerk Bauer made aware that Justin Held, owner of Somewhere Pub is in the process of leasing the building at 1485 Front Porch Place. Therefore, because a liquor license cannot be transferred, the new tenants need to apply for a “Class B” Retailers’ Reserve License to sell intoxicating liquor and a Class “B” Beer license to serve fermented malt beverages in their establishment. Attached for Council consideration is a “Class B” Retailers’ Reserve License to sell intoxicating liquor and a Class “B” Beer license to sell fermented malt beverages at Somewhere Pub effective December 1, 2021. If approved, Justin Held, the current owner of Somewhere Pub, will be required to surrender their existing license to the City of Altoona. Staff has received a letter from Justin Held, surrendering his liquor license contingent upon approval of the “Class B” Retailer’s License to Hart in the Park, LLC. Police Chief Kelly Bakken has reviewed the application and recommends approval.

Clerk Bauer noted that it has been brought to her attention by Elizabeth Hart, that they will be changing the trade name to “The Island Parkside” instead of “Somewhere Pub”. The Corporation Name will remain the same, but the trade name will be changed. Clerk Bauer asked that if Council approve the license, they approve as amended reflecting the trade name as “The Island Parkside”. Elizabeth Hart was present to speak to the Council to explain her plans for the establishment.

Motion by Rowe/Lima to approve a Reserve “Class B” Retailers’ License to sell intoxicating liquor and a Class “B” Beer license to sell fermented malt beverages in the City of Altoona as amended to Hart in the Park, LLC, D.B.A. The Island Parkside”, Elizabeth Ann Hart, Agt, 1485 Front Porch Place, Altoona. **Motion carried.**

**(IX)(5) Discuss/consider amending the City Personnel Manual Section 19 “Vacation Leave” regarding vacation accrual.**

City Administrator Golat explained that staff is recommending that the current vacation accrual schedule be revised to reflect current comparable market standards as a measure to retain employees in a tight labor market. Specifically, staff is recommending that the schedule be amended to provide 120 hours of vacation after five years of service rather than seven years of service; currently City employees receive 80 hours of vacation at five years of service. An identical proposal was presented to the Personnel Committee in 2015 for consideration, but no changes were approved at that time.

City Administrator Golat mentioned that recently, staff surveyed vacation accrual policies from other municipal and county governments within the state, and received twenty-two responses. Of the twenty-two jurisdictions that responded, eight provide their leave as paid-time-off or PTO (combined vacation and sick), while fourteen provide traditional vacation and sick leave separately. Overall, on average, the twenty-two jurisdictions provide 138.7 hours of leave at five years of service. If, however, only the eight jurisdictions that provide paid-time-off are considered, the average increases to 195.7 hours. Jurisdictions similar to Altoona on the other hand, that provide traditional vacation leave, average 108.2 hours of vacation per year after five years of service compared to Altoona’s 80 hours. Golat noted that City of Altoona employees receive 96 hours of sick leave per year.

City Administrator Golat mentioned that when all the jurisdictions were analyzed as a whole, the survey revealed that the average number of years of service required for employees to receive 120 hours of leave is 3.86 years. For those jurisdictions with PTO policies the average years of service required to receive 120 hours of leave is 1.3 years, while those jurisdictions with traditional vacation and sick leave provide 120 hours of vacation leave at 5.58 years of service.

Golat is suggesting the standard vacation accrual schedule be amended so that an employee accrues 40 hours of vacation after their first six months of service, 40 hours after their first year of service, **120 hours after five years** of service and 160 hours after fifteen years of service. This would bring the City’s vacation accrual schedule more in line with the comparable presented.

If approved, the Personnel Manual would be amended to read as follows:

*Vacation leave is earned as follows:*

- 40 hours after 6 months of employment
- 40 hours after 1 year of employment
- 80 hours after 2 years of employment
- 120 hours after **5 years** of employment
- 160 hours after 15 years of employment

The proposed changes would be beneficial for employee attraction and retention. Taking vacation can reduce stress, help prevent burnout and promote work-life balance by allowing for more time to be spent with family, significant others and friends and having fun.

The Personnel Committee met at 2:30 p.m. on December 2 and recommended that Council approve the amendment as presented.

Motion by Lima/Rowe to approve amending the City Personnel Manual Section 19 “Vacation Leave” regarding vacation accrual. **Motion carried.**

**(IX)(6) Discuss/consider approval of annual application for Manufactured Homes/Manufactured Home Communities license for 2022 submitted by Hillcrest Estates LLC for Hillcrest Estates.**

City Administrator Golat explained that this is an application for Manufactured Homes/Manufactured Home Communities licenses for 2022 submitted by Hillcrest Estates LLC for Hillcrest Estates. This is an annual license to operate and maintain a Manufactured Homes Community in the City of Altoona in accordance with Chapter 17 of the Altoona Municipal Code.

Jae Cho, of Hillcrest Estates LLC submitted the 2022 License application. The application provided was based on the number of buildable “spaces” in the park as referred to in Section 17.04.090 of the Altoona Municipal

Code. As you recall Mr. Cho reviewed all the vacant lots in the spring of 2019. Upon inspection, they realized that many of the lots are unusable due to various reasons; that being slope, size, lack of utilities, etc. They would need very significant improvements or are not usable at all. The total billable lots for 2020 and 2021 was 443. The amount to be paid for 2022 has not changed; that amount being \$900.00 (\$100 for each 50 spaces or fraction thereof - 443 spaces).

Motion by Biren/Guzman to approve the Manufactured Homes/Manufactured Home Communities licenses for 2022 submitted by Hillcrest Estates LLC for Hillcrest Estates. **Motion carried.**

**(IX)(7) Discuss/consider convening in closed session pursuant to Wis. Stats 19.85 (1)(e)**

**A. Contract for Planning Services between the City of Altoona and Josh Clements.**

Motion by Lima/Stuber to convene in closed session at 6:33 p.m. pursuant to Wis. Stats 19.85 (1)(e) Roll call vote, 6-ayes, Stuber, Rowe, Biren, Lima, Sexton, Guzman, 0-nays. **Motion carried 6-0.**

**(IX)(8) Motion to reconvene to Open Session.**

Motion by Rowe/Lima to reconvene in open session at 6:46 p.m. Roll call vote, 6-ayes, Biren, Rowe, Stuber, Sexton, Lima, Guzman, 0-nays. **Motion carried 6-0.**

City Administrator Golat explained that in closed session, Council discussed a contract for Planning Services between the City of Altoona and Josh Clements until a City Planner is hired.

Motion by Lima/Biren to approve the contract for Planning Services between the City of Altoona and Josh Clements. **Motion carried.**

**(X) Miscellaneous Business and Communication.**

Sunday evening tree lighting ceremony at River Prairie Park from 5:30-6:30 p.m.

**(XI) Adjournment.**

Motion by Lima/Guzman to adjourn at 6:50 p.m. **Motion carried.**

Minutes submitted by Cindy Bauer, City Clerk