

City of Auburn
Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 21, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Mayor Berola with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance of all present.

Mayor Berola called for the roll. Present were Mayor Berola, Clerk Warwick, Treasurer Williams, Alderman Marquis, Alderman Garrett, Alderman Royer, Alderman Hemmerle, Alderwoman Sheppard, Alderman Karhliker, Alderman Johnson, Superintendent Henson, Office Manager Ponsler, Chief Campbell, and Attorney Moredock. Absent was Alderman Powell.

Mayor Berola presented a temporary liquor permit for Benderz for a bike night in August 2022. It was recommended that police presence would be needed because of the number of participants at the event. Several items still needed to be completed by Benderz. A short discussion followed and recommended that the updates be made and that the application would be reviewed again at the April 4, 2022 council meeting.

Mayor Berola asked Superintendent Henson to update the council on the walking trail for Veterans Park. Henson reported that it would be the same material that they use at the Illinois State Fair that is ADA compliant. The trail would go in between the nursing home and the ball diamond and would extend behind the Trojan Field outfield. The material would be four inches deep, and the trail would be 4 feet wide. The cost would be approximately \$6,000.00; Mayor Berola would like to use money from the mayor's contingency fund to help pay for the trail. The trail would use parts of the existing infrastructure for the trail. It would be a quarter-mile in distance. There was no objection from the council to the idea.

Dennis Rodems of 625 West Jefferson Street was present to ask about burning Sweetgum Tree balls. He was stopped by the Auburn Police while he was burning them. He was asking the council for clarification. The current burning ban bans the burning of leaves and grass. After a short discussion, it was determined that the sweetgum tree balls are part of the tree, and they would need to be dry to burn, and wet sweetgum tree balls would be illegal to burn. Mr. Rodems has nine bags full of them to dispose of Alderman Garrett offered to pick up the bags the next day and bring them out to the city burn site at the wastewater treatment site.

Clerk Warwick presented the March 7, 2022 meeting minutes for the council's review and approval. Deputy Clerk Ponsler completed the minutes while Clerk Warwick was out of town. A motion was made by Alderman Johnson to approve the minutes, second by Alderman Karhliker.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Royer, and Sheppard
NAYES: None
PRESENT: None
ABSENT: Powell

Treasurer Williams presented the bills list from March 8, 2022, to March 21, 2022, for the council's review and approval. Alderman Royer had a concern about the pricing for the labor posters that the city is required to post for employees. After a few clarifications, Alderwoman Sheppard made a motion to approve the bills list, second by Alderman Marquis.

AYES: Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Royer, and Sheppard

NAYES: Garrett

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: Powell

Treasurer Williams presented February Cash Report for the council's review and approval. A motion was made by Alderman Royer to approve the cash report, second by Alderman Johnson.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Royer, and Sheppard

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: Powell

Treasurer Williams presented the current Budget Report, the report did not have the February payroll numbers. She also presented the Interest Rate Report and will continue to do so quarterly. Treasurer Williams last report was the February 2022 Video Gaming Report, the city's share of video gaming for February 2022 was \$11,089.40 which was \$582.91 more than the February 2021 share. The total fiscal year 2022 revenue to date is \$112,464.00.

Attorney Moredock presented the second reading of Ordinance 1511-22 an ordinance amending the liquor code to add a liquor license. The establishment is too close to a church so the liquor license could not be issued in its current location. A motion was made by Alderman Johnson to table ordinance 1511-22 indefinitely, second by Alderman Marquis.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Royer, and Sheppard

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

ABSENT: Powell

Attorney Moredock presented the first reading of Resolution 93-22 authorizing the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission on behalf of the City of Auburn to prepare the Sangamon County multi-jurisdictional natural hazards mitigation plan to be considered by the Auburn city council.

Attorney Moredock presented the first reading of Ordinance 1512-22 an ordinance approving new building permit fees.

Attorney Moredock presented the first reading of Resolution 94-22 a resolution approving an RFP for auditing services for the city. The RFP will be open for 30 days, after the RFP is closed the council can approve Resolution 94-22 with the winning RFP.

Attorney Moredock presented the first reading of Ordinance 1513-22 an ordinance revising the city's personnel code pertaining to military leave.

Attorney Moredock asked for a closed session regarding pending litigation. Mayor Berola asked for a closed session as well, there will be no action coming out of the closed session(s).

Chief Campbell reported that Officer Pierce and Grayson graduated and are fully certified. Chief Campbell wanted to recognize Officer Lavin for rescuing two children from a house fire in Thayer. He was the first person on the scene and was able to rescue the children and get them into his truck to warm them up, the outside temperature was five degrees at the time of the incident.

Superintendent Henson reported that the tank and truck that they ordered a year ago have finally come in, they will have an extra plow for any future snow events. He also reported that the burn site will be opened on April 1, 2022. Alderman Marquis has offered to work the site on Monday evenings until 6:00 PM. There was an issue with the electricity at the sewer plant, he is looking into adding a generator transfer switch for the sewer plant.

Officer Manager Ponsler will be meeting with the department heads and Alderman Johnson regarding the Fiscal Year 2023 budget in the next few weeks. Ponsler also reported that our contract is up with the current call notification system, she has researched other options and Civics Plus is the best option, it will be less than we are spending now, Chatham and Divernon currently use the system. It will allow for geofencing. Alderman Garrett is supportive of the new system; he thinks Civics Plus is the way to go instead of paying additional postage on larger monthly utility postcards. The first-year cost will be \$4,000.00, \$3,650.00 for additional years and the service has no contract. The old system has been notified of our intention to discontinue service. It was asked if this system will cover the needs of the Clerk's office, it would not, the city will need to purchase the council meeting module. Clerk Warwick gave a few of the benefits of the council meeting module, it is the most used software by municipalities in the area. Civic Plus also does website development for municipalities.

Alderwoman Sheppard asked if the new payroll system is being used. It is not being used yet because the payroll software team is working on updates, we are not paying for the software at this time.

Alderman Johnson reported that there will be an Administration committee meeting at the beginning of April. He also reported that the general fund has a \$310,000.00 surplus, our general revenue is at 103% which is attributed to video gaming. The water fund is awaiting the latest billing, it should be in the black once the latest billing comes in. The sewer fund has a \$58,000.00 surplus, and the gas fund has a \$35,000.00 debit but there is \$280,000.00 out for billing, which should bring the fund into the black. TJ is continuing to investigate the water loss. Once they have a full year of usage with the new meters to get the best picture of what our water loss is at, Henson has noticed an improvement with the new meters.

Alderman Karhliker has received the bid results for our Rebuild Illinois funds, he anticipates having those at the next council meeting. Karhliker received an update on the Divernon Road bridge project, the work will be done in Summer 2023, and planning work will be done in Summer 2022. The bridge will be widened from twenty-four feet to twenty-eight feet between the rails. They will also raise the east side of the bridge to improve the approach. We will need easements for the work to be completed. Henson will be meeting with the utilities to advise them about moving facilities during the bridgework. The bridge is estimated to be closed for between three to six months during construction.

Alderman Johnson had no report for the Public Utilities committee.

Alderwoman Sheppard had no report for the Health and Safety committee.

Alderwoman Sheppard had no report for the Health and Housing committee.

Alderman Hemmerle reported that the OSLAD grant has been delayed, Benton and Associates will be coming out to take more pictures of the parks for the OSLAD grant. Hemmerle noted that the committee will need to meet in the future to discuss projects they can start to prepare Union Park for the OSLAD grant or even if the grant is not received.

Clerk Warwick had no report for the Economic Development committee.

Alderman Royer is meeting with Sundown One on March 22, 2022, since the price of the specialized light poles has gone up significantly. Royer would like to get rid of the wishing well and add a water fountain that could also have a spigot.

Alderman Garrett had a question about the twenty-five percent of gaming revenue that was dedicated to the parks fund. If money was needed later by the city would the city be able to use the video gaming revenue that was set aside for parks. It would be placed into a park savings account that would account for the video gaming revenue set aside for parks.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Sheppard at 8:01 PM to go into executive session regarding pending litigation, second by Alderman Marquis. Taken by voice vote.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Royer, and Sheppard
NAYES: None
PRESENT: None
ABSENT: Powell

A motion to come back into regular session from the executive session was made by Alderman Garrett at 8:32 PM, second by Alderwoman Sheppard. Taken by voice vote.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Royer, and Sheppard
NAYES: None
PRESENT: None
ABSENT: Powell

Motion to adjourn was made at 8:33 PM by Alderman Garrett, second by Alderman Marquis. Taken by voice vote.

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Royer, and Sheppard
NAYES: None
PRESENT: None
ABSENT: Powell

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Warwick
City Clerk of Auburn