

**City of Auburn**  
**Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, March 7, 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 asked Clerk Warwick to call roll. Present were Mayor Berola, Clerk Warwick, Alderman Powell, Alderman Marquis, Alderman Garrett, Alderman Hemmerle, Alderwoman Sheppard, Alderman Karhliker, Alderman Johnson, Chief Campbell, Superintendent Henson, Attorney Moredock.

Absent were Treasurer Williams, Alderman Royer, Office Manager Ponsler.

Mayor Berola recommended obtaining signs at the entrances of Auburn to honor two high school wrestling athletes for their accomplishments at their weight classes for their placement at state. Ruzic won 1<sup>st</sup> place at state and Grimm placed 3<sup>rd</sup>. They are both the first state champions. A motion was made by Alderman Marquis to approve the signs and direct Superintendent Henson to work with IDOT to obtain them, second by Alderman Karhliker.

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

NAYES: None

PRESENT: None

Absent: Royer

Mayor Berola requested the building permit fees to be on the next agenda as it would have to be approved through Ordinance. Alderman Johnson requested an Administration Committee Meeting to be scheduled for Monday, March 21, 2022, at 6:30 pm to discuss the fees and potential increases.

A copy of the current building permit fees was available for the council review in the Microsoft Teams folder.

**Visitors/Public Comments**

Rebecca Moore was in attendance to discuss her ordinance violation for dog barking. She stated she has an outside dog who is left within their gated yard during the day but is brought in at night. The police officer came to their home on 3/4/22 and wrote a ticket for the dog barking.

Chief Campbell stated that Auburn police officers have been to the residence on 9 separate calls for service for the same issue: 5 were unfounded, 3 officers made contact with owner, and the 9<sup>th</sup> time a ticket was received.

Ms. Moore believes she is being the target of harassment as there are other dogs in the area that are barking with no calls or police presence at their residence. She is concerned she no longer can take her dog outside without being visited by the police.

There was no further discussion from the council on the fines or consideration to waive the fines. Ms. Moore paid her ticket and exited the meeting. The fine paid will be placed in the city office for processing.

Clerk Warwick presented the February 22, 2022, meeting minutes for the council's review and approval. A motion was made by Alderwoman Sheppard to approve the minutes, second by Alderman Marquis.

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

Clerk Warwick presented the bills list from February 22, 2022, to March 7, 2022, for the council's review and approval. Alderman Marquis stated that he felt there were bills listed in duplicate and wanted clarification that those bills were not paid twice. Clerk Warwick stated there were different numbers associated A motion was made by Alderwoman Garrett to approve the bills list, second by Alderman Johnson.

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

Clerk Warwick also presented a budget report that was in Microsoft Teams for the council review only.

Clerk Warwick provided to the council (3) separate quotes that were received for auditing services for fiscal year 2021 to 2022. The firms in which supplied a quote for services included KEB, Eck, Shafer and Punke and Sikich. Alderman Johnson did not wish to take any action on the three quotes currently.

Alderman Johnson wished to submit an RFP, with the assistance from Attorney Moredock, on the language for audit services based on the costs associated with these services and considering they were significantly higher than what has been charged in the past.

Attorney Moredock presented the second reading of Resolution 92-22, A resolution approving an easement with Ben Royer at 511 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street. It allows him to run electric conduit under the city alley way at approximately 2 inches in width to adjacent property. A motion was made by Alderman Johnson to approve Resolution 92-22, second by Alderman Hemmerle.

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

Attorney Moredock presented the first reading of Ordinance 1511-22 Ordinance Amending Liquor Code. We received an application for a Class A Tavern from Giochi, LLC (407 West Madison). This will add an additional tavern license for the liquor commissioner to review and approve. The location of the establishment is going in where One Call Realty used to be. Mayor Berola thought this may pose a problem to approve as it may be too close to an adjacent church.

Alderman Hemmerle inquired about Pearl's license as to whether it is one that is just outstanding with the establishment closing. Alderman Powell stated Pearl's is up for auction and new owners may continue to run as a bar and would need a license moving forward.

Attorney Moredock will further research the proximity of the Giochi, LLC establishment before proceeding with the approval or denial of the liquor application.

The last item Attorney Moredock requested was an executive session regarding pending litigation that could take place at the end of the meeting.

Chief Campbell stated the officers have started their Transition Class this week and will be gone for two weeks.

Alderman Garrett stated he had a conversation with Kincaid this week and they got a dog as it was a desire of the community to have a dog. Alderman Garrett inquired with Chief Campbell regarding the potential to have a dog within the Auburn Police Department.

Chief Campbell stated there has been discussion in the past on this subject but given the extra training and time with an officer, vet bills, and insurance, it may not be the best time to add this to the force at this time. However, if a dog was obtained for the department, Chief Campbell did not want a bite dog and preferred more of a tracking dog to assist with runaways and drug confiscation.

Superintendent Henson discussed opening the sewer plant in April. There have been some recent warm days and calls coming into the city office regarding the potential of opening that site. Superintendent Henson still plans to keep the opening of the site in April 2022 with the hours of 8:00 am to 2:30 pm with no weekends unless there are volunteers available to be onsite.

Alderman Johnson asked about burning and what was allowed to be burned as he had received a question from a neighbor. Alderman Hemmerle inquired about gumballs and how they are classified and whether they could be burned or would need to be collected and disposed of out at the sewer plant. No decision made at the classification on these items that fall from the trees.

There will be a Mock Natural Disaster Training on March 31, 2022, at the city garage in coordination with GUA. There will be 25-30 communities in attendance and simulate a mass outage. There will be two sites being utilized at the north (Gilmore Road) and south (Divernon Road and Kennedy) ends of town. There will be road closures during this time, but Superintendent Henson will coordinate to keep the public aware and will post notices through various forms of the media.

Superintendent Henson stated that Petersburg Plumbing will more than likely ask for an extension. They were slated to be done in April, but with delay in pipe, has caused a delay in the project.

There is a plan to close 7<sup>th</sup> and North Street over the school spring break.

Office Manager Ponsler was absent, and no report given.

Alderman Johnson had no report but just needs a brief executive session to discuss personnel. There will also be an administration committee meeting on Monday, March 21st to discuss building permit fees.

Alderman Karhliker stated that at the next meeting he will have prices for the North Street corridor upgrades. Benton's has their first bid opening soon for something similar and they want to see costs and how much items may be.

Alderman Karhliker received a phone call pertaining to a residence at 5251 Hogan Road. The property has 15 vehicles at the property. The notion has been that the property owner sells these vehicles online. Of the 15 he has 4 inside the fence that is potentially scrapped out. There are also (2) box trailers. Alderman Karhliker thought former Chief Centko spoke with the property owners, and it was believed Secretary of State was also involved.

Alderman Powell believe that this shows it is a business being run out of a residential zoned property due to the number of cars at this location. The city could possibly work with Secretary of State on this matter.

Alderman Johnson presented Auburn Phase II – Reimbursement Packet. The breakdown includes engineering fees in the amount of 12,029.92 and construction fees totaling 84,198.81. A motion was made by Alderman Johnson to approve Reimbursement Request #6, second by Alderwoman Sheppard.

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

NAYES: None

Present: None

ABSENT: Royer

Alderman Johnson would like to schedule a Public Utilities committee meeting to discuss the budget and specifically the water fund but will plan to schedule that after the next council meeting.

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

Alderwoman Sheppard had a report for 212 E. Adams. This property had 50-60 bags of garbage sitting out in the front yard for a few weeks. Since the weekend, all bags have been placed within a dumpster. They do still have a vehicle that is inoperable, and they are still working on it. Alderwoman Sheppard made a motion to declare the vehicle a nuisance and if the vehicle is not taken care of by March 31, 2022, fines will be assessed, second by Alderman Powell.

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

NAYES: None

Present: None

ABSENT: Royer

Alderman Hemmerle reported there was a Parks committee meeting on March 2, 2022.

- 1.) There is still no update on the grant submitted for the East Park upgrades.
  - a. Additional Funding: The parks committee is requesting from the council 25% of the gaming funds to be deposited into the park funds to assist with now and going forward to make improvements and maintain parks. The committee would also like to request the funds received from cash rent on the city farm ground to also assist with improvements and maintenance of the parks.

Alderman Hemmerle made a motion for 25% of the gaming funds to be moved into park funds starting with next budget year.

Alderman Garrett inquired as to the amount of park tax funds that are received each year as well as the amount that is spent improving and/or maintaining the parks. Alderman Hemmerle stated that the parks tax received around 42,000 per year and there is approximately at or around 200,000 currently in the parks savings. Even if the grant for improvements to east park are received, the parks funds is still short of its portion needed for the city portion.

Alderman Hemmerle discussed items to move forward on with park improvements should the grant not be received and that included:

- 1.) Electrical upgrades
- 2.) Installation of pickle ball courts
- 3.) Redoing pavement on basketball court
- 4.) Upgraded bathrooms

Alderman Garrett stated the need to address the ADA components of the city's current playground equipment and the inability of those to utilize the equipment without upgrades.

A clarification was made that 10% had been allocated already for Christmas decorations from the video gaming funds. 25% is now being requested for the park funds, leaving 65% of video gaming to stay in the general fund.

Alderman Johnson requested that this current fiscal year, 25% could be scheduled because the council knows what has been taken in and it could be moved to the park funds, however, each year the amount could be evaluated based upon the actual figures from the budget.

The motion was amended by Alderman Hemmerle for 25% of the video gaming funds to move to park funds in the given fiscal year, to be renewed yearly by the council, second by Alderman Marquis.

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

Motion was made by Alderman Hemmerle to move all cash rent from the farm ground to be moved to the park funds and review on an annual basis, second by Alderwoman Sheppard.

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

Alderman Hemmerle addressed other park needs which included:

- 1.) Baseball fields and playground equipment – one panel on the upper level of the equipment is missing and a piece of wood has been used to replace the missing panel. This will need to be looked at to ensure children cannot fall through any part of that equipment.
- 2.) City Square – price of lights has increased as well as price of wiring. Alderman Royer will continue to look at other avenues for possible upgrades to the square.
- 3.) Pond behind Trojan Field: Alderman Marquis would like to do more with the pond behind the ballfields. Kids ride bikes and go fish in the pond, and he would like to see the pond being dredged out a bit and getting it stocked for fishing. It was mentioned to possibly contact the

school to inquire about donating the land they have adjacent to the pond. More information will continue to be collected and reported back to the council on any further plans.

- 4.) Mr. Melton was at the Parks meeting and inquired as to why the city does not just sell the farmland and use the money for park improvements. He also asked about the Adopt of Park program as he is getting ready to retire and would like to find ways to help the city make improvements. The Adopt a Park has not been as successful as first envisioned and Alderman Royer brought forth the recommendation of possibly changing to "Adopt a Task Program." When he has something that needs done, he has requested assistance from the public and work has been completed.

Clerk Warwick had no report for Economic Development.

Alderman Royer's report on the Sound System on the Square will be added to the next agenda.

A motion was made by Alderman Johnson to go into executive session at 8:26 p.m. regarding personnel and pending litigation, second by Alderwoman Sheppard. Taken by voice vote.

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Royer

A motion to come back into regular session from the executive session was made Alderman Garrett at 8:41 p.m. Taken by voice vote.

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Royer

Motion to adjourn was made at 8:46 PM by Alderman Garrett, second by Alderwoman Johnson. Taken by voice vote.

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Royer

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Ponsler  
Deputy Clerk