

**City of Auburn
Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 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.

Clerk Sponsler took roll. Present were Mayor Berola, Clerk Sponsler, Treasurer Williams, Alderman Garrett, Alderman Johnson, Alderman Karhliker, Alderman Marquis, Alderman Powell, Alderman Royer, Alderwoman Sheppard.

Also present were Superintendent Henson, Chief Campbell, and Attorney Hedinger.

Mayor Berola presented Attorney Moredock a plaque in appreciation for his time serving as the City's Attorney.

Mayor Berola recognized the members of the City Council and employees of the City of Auburn that have served in the Armed Forces including Alderman Marquis, Alderman Powell, Scott Sheppard, Officers Zach Pierce, Jared Leake, Michael McDermid, Paul Carpenter, Zach Morgan, Jeff Hart and thanked them for their services in the Armed Forces. The members of the Council mentioned that Mayor Berola was forgetting someone, himself, and he was thanked for his service as well.

Mayor Berola asked for a motion to appoint Office Manager Rathgeber as the city's FOIA officer, but he is not quite finished with his training, so Mayor Berola asked for a motion to appoint Steve Hedinger as FOIA Officer until Office Manager Rathgeber is fully trained. Alderwoman Sheppard made the motion to appoint Attorney Steve Hedinger as the FOIA Officer, second by Alderman Marquis.

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

Visitors/Public Comments:

Jessica Lance from Bewitching Botanicals was present at the meeting to discuss past events, Witches Night Out and Trunk or Treat. Jessica wanted to know if the Council had any questions or concerns. The closure of 5th street along the square was discussed. It had been closed in the past and Mrs. Lance asked if there were any reasons 5th street could not be closed for her events. The closure of 5th Street is avoided for most events so the flow of traffic is not interrupted. Mrs. Lance brought up the Mistletoe Market in December and wanted to make sure that we could close the horseshoe along the square for this event. Last year's event had about 750 people, and if this event follows the trends from the previous two events, the number of people will more than likely increase.

Mrs. Lance also inquired about the Economic Development Committee and if citizens could be on the committee as well. She mentioned that Alex from Slaughterhouse and the Library would like to be on the committee as well. Alderman Royer said that it is a position that is appointed by the Mayor. It is not on the agenda for tonight's meeting, but it will be added to the next meeting's agenda.

Mrs. Lance inquired about city sponsored events and if there was any money in the budget for the city to put on events or sponsor events. These events would need to be included in the budget and that is finalized in May.

An employee from the library was also in attendance to discuss the notice the Library received about the City declining to pay the Personal Property Replacement Tax moving forward. She mentioned that this was against the law. She stated that the payment comes from the State to the City and the City passes the money to the Library. There has been confusion about these funds since the Library formed its own Library district back in 1978. The City Attorney is in the process of researching this situation and we will come up with a resolution.

City Clerk's Report:

Clerk Sponsler presented the October 17, 2022 meeting minutes for review and approval. Alderman Karhliker pointed out a mistake in the minutes with the police officer names being switched around and incorrect. Alderman Garrett made a motion to approve the amended minutes, second by Alderman Karhliker. The minutes were amended by Clerk Sponsler

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

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Williams presented the bills list from October 18, 2022- November 4, 2022 for review and approval. A motion was made by Alderwoman Sheppard to approve the bills list, second by Alderman Marquis.

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

Treasurer Williams presented the October 2022 Cash Report for review and approval. A motion was made by Alderman Royer, second by Alderwoman Sheppard.

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

Treasurer Williams presented the October Budget Report for review.

Attorney's Report

Attorney Hedinger presented the first reading of Annexation of 5495 Hogan Road Ordinance 1523-22.

Mayor Berola asked for a motion to declare the Redbud Park property as surplus property, Resolution 91-22. Alderman Garrett made a motion to approve Resolution 91-22 Declaration of Surplus Property commonly known as Redbud Park, second by Alderman Marquis.

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

Department Heads

Chief Campbell:

Officer Flesch passed the state test. Officer Leake passed his tests, starts class on Saturday.

Superintendent Henson:

Superintendent Henson provided an update on the North Street Water Project. He plans to start in March. He got a bid for the bulk of supplies from Core and Main in the amount of \$139,855. He asked for approval from the council to accept the bid. A motion was made by Alderman Powell, second by Alderman Johnson.

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

Superintendent Henson reached out to Hallelujah Holiday Lighting in Athens in regard to decorating the square for Christmas lights. He presented a bid from the company in the amount of \$19,651. It is an a la carte type of bid where he can pick and choose what we want. It was discussed that 10% of the gaming money would go towards decorating the square, which would be between 12-14K. Superintendent Henson said he would contact them again and try to scale the price back down to between 12-14K. The council was concerned about vandalism that we have encountered in the past and the company is fully insured and will take care of installation and take down.

Mayor Berola asked for a motion to make it official. Alderman made a motion that TJ has the authority to enter into an agreement with Hallelujah Holiday Lighting for the 10% of gaming revenue that was previously agreed on for Christmas Lights.

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

Superintendent Henson mentioned the struggles with one of the fiber crews lately. They were working on 7th street after dark with no hi-vis apparel and no lights. We have no authority to give them a time they need to stop at night. There are concerns with the safety and exhaustion of our workers.

Office Manager

The Community Center is being well used; it is being rented quite often. Office Rathgeber said that it has been a mess lately and that there is money in the budget to hire a cleaning company to clean the community center occasionally. Part-time office employee did a deep clean of the community center before the Election Officials occupied it. There was discussion about the deposits being held if the property is not cleaned and put back together appropriately. There was also discussion about raising the rates of the rental fee vs raising the deposit or imposing fees for not cleaning it after use.

There was a citizen that asked if it was allowed to sell her crafts out of the community center and it was not allowed to basically run a business out of the city owned property.

Committee Reports

Administration:

There will be a committee meeting on Wednesday, November 9th at 6:30 pm to discuss server needs and requirements. There will also be a discussion on the insurance for employees.

Public Works:

The Divernon Road bridge is on schedule. They are going to get bids in July.

Public Utilities:

There was a Committee Meeting with Springfield Plastics on Tuesday, October 25th. It is still on-going, and no decisions had been made yet.

Health & Safety:

No report.

Health & Housing:

No report.

Parks:

No report.

Economic Development:

Alderman Garrett reached out to Charles Branch about the possible business development. He was told they were still working on it and he has not gotten an answer.

Alderman Garrett and Superintendent Henson had lunch with Abby Powell from the Sangamon County Growth Alliance. They think that they can help the city with growth to the west and they can help Springfield Plastics with growth as well.

Alderman Royer made a motion to exit regular session and move to executive session at 8:46pm, second by Alderman Marquis. A voice vote was taken.

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

A motion was made to exit executive session at 9:25 pm by Alderman Garrett, second by Alderwoman Sheppard. A voice vote was taken.

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

A motion was made to come back to regular session from executive session at 9:26 pm by Alderman Royer, second by Alderwoman Sheppard. A voice vote was taken.

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

Alderman Garrett made the motion to authorize Mayor Berola to purchase the property at 722 W. Jackson and the accompanying lot across the street in the amount of \$70,000 plus closing costs, second by Alderman Royer.

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

Alderwoman Sheppard made a motion to adjourn meeting at 9:30 pm, second by Alderman Garrett. A voice vote was taken.

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

