**February 6, 2023**

The Independence City Council met in regular session on Monday, February 6, 2023 at 6:15pm in the Council Room of the City Hall.

Mayor Baecker presided. Roll call was taken as follows Deb Marsolek, Jason Ekern, Cleo Skroch and Rich Theisen. Also Present were Tim Lambrecht and Ronald Rogness, Hi-Crush, Pat Casper, Attorney Michalak, City Clerk Lenice Pronschinske and Julie Dick from the Trempealeau County Times.

**Public Notice was given.**

**Approval of Agenda** Motion by Theisen and seconded by Ekern to approve agenda. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes** Motion by Marsolek and seconded by Skroch to approve the minutes of the January 2, 2023 City Council meeting. Motion carried.

**Public Comments**

Jason Ekern has been asked why we are no longer doing Zoom meetings. No one was logging into the Zoom meetings so the council decided not to continue with them unless there is a need then we will reconsider.

**Old Business:**

**Lake Project Update**

The plans for re-dredging Bugle Lake and the sediment trap have been submitted to the DNR for approval.

**Nature Energy Update**

Nothing this month.

**Parsons Energy Group Update**

Attorney Michalak has sent a letter to Parsons and is requesting that they be present at the March meeting.

**Firefighter, EMT and 1st Responder Service Program**

Paperwork was given to the Council for review and will be put back on the next agenda.

**New Business:**

**Public Hearing – Hi Crush Request to Change Financial Assurance from a Letter of Credit to a Surety Bond**

Motion by Theisen and seconded by Ekern to open the Public Hearing for the Hi-Crush request to change their financial assurance from a letter of credit to a surety bond. Motion carried.

Motion by Skroch and seconded by Marsolek to amend Hi-Crushes Conditional Use Permit from a Letter of Credit to a Surety Bond. Motion carried with Jason Ekern, Cleo Skroch and Deb Marsolek voting aye. Rich Theisen voted nay.

**Appointment of 2nd Ward Alderman**

Jason Ekern made a motion to appoint Pat Casper to replace Conrad Marsolek as an alderman in the 2nd Ward of the City of Independence. Motion was seconded by Deb Marsolek and carried with Cleo Skroch, Rich Theisen, Deb Marsolek and Jason Ekern voting aye.

**Discussion/Possible Action on Board Compensation**

Comparisons from neighboring municipalities was handed out for review. This will be put on the March agenda for discussion and possible action.

**Discussion/Possible Action on ARPA Fun**

We will put this back on next month’s agenda along with a breakdown of where we are sitting with the expenditures so far.

**Repairs to City Hall Basement**

Motion by Theisen and seconded by Ekern to approve the bid for materials and labor to repair the hallway in the old portion for the City Hall leading to the Historical Society Room in the amount of $1200.00. Motion carried with Rich Theisen, Pat Casper, Deb Marsolek, Jason Ekern and Cleo Skroch voting aye.

**Snow Removal Ordinance Discussion/Penalties**

The next time there are issues with putting snow out in the streets, a warning letter will be written by the clerk’s office and hand delivered to the resident by the Police Department. Second Offense will be a citation from the police department.

**FTO Compensation for Independence Part-time Officer(s)**

Chief Halvorson has approached the Law Enforcement and Personnel Committee asking if they would be willing to compensate our part-time officers $1.00 per hour for doing FTO Training with new officers. Motion by Theisen and seconded by Marsolek to approve the compensation to Independence Part-time officers as long as they are FTO Certified per the recommendation of the LEP Committee. Motion carried with Pat Casper, Deb Marsolek, Jason Ekern, Cleo Skroch and Rich Theisen voting aye.

**License & Permits:**

**Building Permit** - The following building permit application was presented to the council for approval.

**William Baxa – 35788 Chestnut Street**

**Addition of a 3-Car Garage and Breezeway**

Motion by Skroch and seconded by Theisen to approve the above applications and grant the permit as long as he complies with the city zoning. Motion carried.

**Committee Reports**

* **Street Committee –** The Street Committee met and are waiting on a price to mill and resurface Maple Street.The estimate was $54,000.00 and they are anticipating an additional 10%. Future projects are Silver Court and blade patching Lafayette Street. We are waiting on bids for seal coating. Eli is getting prices on trading one of the End loaders, estimates cost of a new one is $180,000.00 with about a 2 to 3 year wait. The Committee met with the property owners abutting the Block 1 Alley and are going to have SEH shoot the alley grade and come up with some options for repairs.
* **Water & Sewer –** They are working on finalizing their budgets. Waiting on getting prices for new chemical pumps and still have 6 water valves to replace. SEH will be at the next meeting to go over sewer plant updates, funding and setting a public hearing.
* **Law Enforcement/Personnel –** The LEPhas meet a couple times in the last month. Daily logs have been getting done and submitted. Natalie is progressing and starting Firearms Training. She will be done sometime in May. Chad is currently taking the squad car home and it is costing the city an additional $90 to $95 per month in fuel costs. This will be reviewed in May when we have another full-time officer. We are now getting monthly schedules with officer start times.

**Approval of Invoices & Payroll** Motion by Skroch seconded by Ekern to approve the bills as presented. Motion carried with Deb Marsolek, Jason Ekern, Cleo Skroch, Pat Casper and Rich Theisen voting aye.

**Correspondence**

The city received a certified letter from Barbara Peterlin, 36156 Aspen Court stating that she is making a claim with the Department of Revenue for in the amount of $2613.17 for charging back of her 2022 taxes due to significant errors.

The Council was given a packet from Legacy-Trees with a tree planting proposal for the city that will be paid for through the Wanek Foundation.

**Items for next Agenda**

Lake District

Nature Energy

Parsons Energy Group

Firefighter Retirement

Board Compensation

ARPA Funds

Block 1 Alley

**Future Meetings**

City Council meeting Monday, March 6, 2023 at 6:15 pm.

**Adjournment** Meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Lenice Pronschinske

City Clerk