**April 3, 2023**

The Independence City Council met in regular session on Monday, April 3, 2023 at 6:15 p.m. in the Council Room of the City Hall.

Mayor Baecker presided. Roll call was taken as follows: Rich Theisen, Jason Ekern and Cleo Skroch. Also Present were Scott Weaver, Kevin Werlien, Barb Peterlin, Jim Guza. Patti Kulig, Shari Zilla, Elaine Conrad, Attorney Michalak, City Clerk Lenice Pronschinske and Julie Dick from the Trempealeau County Times. Deb Marsolek and Rick Parsons via zoom.

**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 March 6, 2023 City Council meeting. Motion carried.

**Public Comments**

Barbara Peterlin – She has concerns on how the assessor is handling the over-assessment/taxes on her property.

Elaine Conrad – Complaints on the garbage from the neighbors abutting property.

Shari Zilla – Concerns with unsightly properties infesting the neighborhood.

Patti Kulig- Concerns regarding Parson’s Energy Group and outstanding payments due to the city.

**Old Business:**

**Lake Project Update**

Nothing – put back on the next agenda.

**Nature Energy Update**

Nothing this month.

**Parsons Energy Group Update**

Motion to move Parson’s Energy discussion to later in the agenda.

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

Motion by Marsolek and seconded by Skroch to table this until further notice. Motion carried.

**Discussion/Possible Action on Board Compensation**

Motion by Theisen and seconded by Ekern to raise the pay to $100.00 per meeting, following the 2024 Spring election. Motion carried with Deb Marsolek, Jason Ekern and Rich Theisen voting aye. Cleo Skroch voted nay.

Motion by Theisen and seconded by Skroch to raise the mayor pay to $100.00 per meeting following the 2024 Spring election. Motion carried with Jason Ekern, Cleo Skroch and Deb Marsolek voting aye. Rich Theisen voted nay.

**New Business:**

**Open Public Hearing Regarding Revocation of CUP Issued to Cameron Rail (and previously approved for transfer to Parsons Energy)**

Motion by Ekern and seconded by Theisen to open the Public Hearing Regarding Revocation of CUP Issued to Cameron Rail (and previously approved for transfer to Parsons Energy). Motion carried.

**Close Public Hearing and Act on Status of CUP**

Motion by Theisen and seconded by Ekern to close the public hearing. Motion carried.

Motion by Marsolek and seconded by Ekern to table action on the request to extend the Conditional Use Permit to the April 18th Council meeting in anticipation of full payment of monies owed the city by midnight, April 17th. Motion carried.

**Legion Green Space Project**

A Committee has been formed and we are moving forward with this project.

**Discussion/Review of Tri-City Sanitation Service Project**

Motion by Theisen and seconded by Skroch to approve the final draft of the Tri-City Sanitation contract, as revised. Motion carried.

**2023 Street Projects (Block 1 Alley and Maple Street)**

Motion by Ekern and seconded by Marsolek to approve having Duane from SEH shoot the grade and find the lot pins of the Block 1 alley for an estimated cost of $1,400.00 to $1,800.00. Motion carried with Cleo Skroch, Rich Theisen, Deb Marsolek and Jason Ekern voting aye.

Maple Street – Neal Olson, Trempealeau Counties new Highway Commissioner suggested that we mill and leave the blacktop on Maple Street and do a 2 ½” overlay.

**Trempealeau County Fair Project Donation**

Attorney Michalak has checked out the possibility of the city donating to the Trempealeau County Fair Project and informed the council that under State law, City funds may not be donated to this project.

**Use of Old Fire Station for Kids Fishing Contest**

Motion by Skroch and seconded by Theisen to allow the Elk Rod & Gun Club the use of the old fire station for the kids fishing contest. Motion carried.

**Wages for Election Workers**

Motion by Skroch and seconded by Marsolek to raise the pay for our election workers to $12.00 per hour. Motion carried with Rich Theisen, Deb Marsolek, Jason Ekern and Cleo Skroch voting aye.

**License & Permits:**

**Picnic License:** The following Picnic License Applications were presented to the council for approval.

***Independence KC’s***

Independence Days – June 10th & 11th, 2022

Motion by Theisen and seconded by Skroch to approve the above application and grant the license. Motion carried.

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Independence Days – June 10th & 11th, 2022

Motion by Theisen and seconded by Skroch to approve the above application and grant the license. Motion carried.

**Liquor Licenses:**

The following application for a Class “B” Licenses was presented to the Council for Approval:

***Welcome Bar*** – Erica Bauer

Motion by Marsolek and seconded by Ekern to approve the application. Motion carried.

**Committee Reports**

* **Ambulance –** They are getting their accounting straightened out with a new system. The new ambulance should be here in August, which is ahead of schedule and was paid for through grants.
* **LEP –** Natalie has completed phase 1 of 3.
* Chad has asked to attend Firearms training in Rothchild from May 9th thru 11th. The cost is $300.00 for the training and $90.00 a night for the hotel. This is not on the agenda so it will be put on the April 18th agenda for action.
* **Ordinance Changes –** This will be put on the April 18th agenda.
* **W/S –** SEH was at the last utility meeting to answer questions and discuss where we are on the Facility Plan. They are also checking to see if there is any CDBG funding.
* They have approved hiring Vivi-Sewer to repair sewer main lines on Hwy. 121.
* New probes need to be purchased for the digestor at a cost of $6,3080.00.
* They talked about the possibility of starting a vehicle fund.
* Joe will be gone next week Wednesday thru Friday to the water conference.

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

**Closed session per Section 19.85.85(1) (c) Wis Statutes to consider employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility.**

Motion by Ekern and seconded by Theisen to move to closed session per Section 19.85.85(1) (c) Wis Statutes to consider employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility. Motion carried with Jason Ekern, Cleo Skroch, Rich Theisen and Deb Marsolek voting aye.

**Return to Open Session**

Motion by Theisen and seconded by Ekern to return to open session. Motion carried.

**Items for next Agenda (March 18th)**

Parsons Energy Group

Claim for Real Estate Property Tax Refund

Adoption of Ordinance Updates

Approval of Police Training

**Future Meetings**

Reorganization – April 18th @ 6:15

City Council meeting Monday, May 1, 2023 at 6:15 pm.

**Adjournment** Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Lenice Pronschinske

City Clerk