

COMMON COUNCIL PROCEEDING OF THE CITY OF LADYSMITH

Monday, July 10th, 2023

5:15PM

Ladysmith Council Chambers

Members Present: Mayor Grotzinger, Richard Ostenso, Nathan Johnson, Gordon Pedersen, Al Christianson, Dr. Steve Weiss, Allen Hraban, John Hoover.

Others Present: Terry Carter, D. Parker, K. Gorsegner, S. Nelson, A. Kenyon, Luke Klink, A. Christianson, John Pohlman III, John Pohlman II.

Call to order. Mayor Grotzinger called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

Roll Call. Deputy Clerk Nelson took roll call and a quorum was present.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Mr. Ostenso.

Minutes and Agenda. Correction to the June 26th, 2023 Common Council Minutes-change “No” vote under Licenses and Permits from Hoover to Weiss. Motion by A. Hraban, seconded by N. Johnson to approve the June 26th, 2023 council minutes with correction along with this evening’s agenda. Motion passed by voice vote 7-yes, 0-no.

Introduction of Guests, Public Hearings, Comments.

John Pohlman III asked if the brush/yard waste collection was back on its normal schedule after the storm cleanup. K. Gorsegner reported that after two rounds over the entire city and three rounds in some areas; the brush/yard waste collection is back on its regular schedule; which is the last Monday of the month.

John Pohlman II thanked the Public Works crew and Camp Flambeau for doing a good job. K. Gorsegner reported there have been approximately 900 man hours from both City workers and Camp Flambeau clocked for the brush cleanup so far this year.

Ordinance 2023-02 Landmarks and Historic Preservation Ordinance. Motion by A Christianson, seconded by N. Johnson to adopt Ordinance 2023-02 Landmarks and Historic Preservation. Motion passed by roll call vote. 7-yes, 0-No. N. Johnson -yes G. Pedersen-yes A. Christianson-yes Dr. Weiss-yes A. Hraban-yes J. Hoover-yes R. Ostenso-yes

District One, Ostenso. Nothing to report.

District Two, Johnson. Mr Johnson stated there was nothing to report. D. Parker reported there will be a Park Board meeting on Wednesday, July 12th, at the Memorial Park.

District Three, Pedersen. Nothing to report.

District Four, Christianson.

Assist with ADA improvements at Rusk County Historical Society Museum. A. Christianson provided an illustration of the new walkways; currently visitors have to walk over lawn areas to gain access to some of the buildings; that can be problematic. J. Hoover questioned the size of the sidewalk being four feet wide when the City generally has sidewalks being five feet wide. K. Gorsegner clarified that the corners must be a five foot by five foot square to make enough room for a wheelchair to make the turn, the actual straight runs do not need to be that wide. This sidewalk will be level with the grass so there will not be a drop off from the sidewalk. Motion by N. Johnson to approve a bid from D.C. Crete, INC in the amount of \$11,872 with possible additional work done as needed at seven dollars a square foot with funds being used from TIF#8 to assist with ADA improvements at the Rusk County Historical Society Museum, seconded by A. Hraban. Motion passed with roll call vote. 7-yes, 0-no. G. Pedersen-yes, A. Christianson-yes, S. Weiss-yes, A. Hraban-yes, J. Hoover-yes, R. Ostenso-yes, N. Johnson-yes.

Changes to Business Renovation Program to include properties designated under possible future historic preservation ordinance. A. Christianson motions to amend the current Business Renovation Program by expanding the current facade program which currently only includes the main street area to any property located in the City of Ladysmith whether or not it's designated under the historic preservation ordinance. Eventually a commission will be created to identify properties that could be included; given the ordinance was modified to require property participant's consent. This would make the program available for use on any designated properties. A. Kenyon reported that for owners of an appropriately designated historic property; a tax credit is available at both a federal and state level for any improvements that are made. G. Pedersen stated that he was originally against the historical ordinance, but after reviewing, he feels differently and that this will help the people. Motion by A. Christianson to change the current Business Renovation Program to include properties designated under possible future historic preservation ordinance seconded by A. Hraban. Motion passed by voice vote. 7-yes, 0-no.

Garbage receptacles for downtown business district. Admn Christianson addressed concerns about the increase in litter in the downtown area regarding Ordinance 11-4-1 Outside Consumption being passed, one way to combat this is to have extra garbage receptacles for the public to use. Initial discussion also included possible downtown benches. This will be discussed further in a Community Development meeting.

Review and possible recommendation on area marketing material including signage, print media, radio and digital. Admn Christianson reported that the committee reviewed a few different ideas. One idea was creating a slogan. Admn Christianson asked Dr. Weiss to share his idea. Dr. Weiss stated that his slogan idea is "Come to play, plan to stay!". Dr. Weiss reported that he sent Admn Christianson pictures taken here in Rusk County that are displayed at the Marshfield Clinic. Admn Christianson stated that he would forward those on and also print them so they are available. Admn Christianson reported that they were discussing different ways to promote the area reviewing what was used in the past via radio ads, print ads, digital magazine and TV ads; using the increase in room tax to possibly help fund the cost of additional marketing. He stated that there will be more discussions and meetings to follow. Dr. Weiss would like to see a nice billboard in the main areas that people are coming into the City of Ladysmith with an imagine of something not necessarily directly here in the City of Ladysmith, but possibly in Rusk County, he would contribute \$500 personally towards this billboard and encouraged others to get behind the project.

District Five, Weiss. Nothing further to report.

District Six, Hraban. A. Hraban reported that there was a Public Works meeting on Thursday, June 29th where they discussed the status of the street projects. K. Gorsegner reported that they did a binder coat on Flambeau Ave, except for at the intersection of 5th Street because the sewer and water work still has to be completed on 5th Street. Skid Steer Enterprises is due back here this week to begin work on 5th Street. First, they need to verify how big of pumps he will need to bring in to pump the water table down to be able to complete the sewer work. K. Gorsegner reported that they completed the striping at the Industrial Park so they are basically completed with that project as it has been paved, shouldered and striped. He also reported due to the poor soil, wet conditions and settling of the asphalt located at the Summit Ave cul-de-sac; they did come in, cut some sections out and repaved; they will be restriping that as well. K. Gorsegner commented that since most of the binder coat has been put down on Flambeau Ave that should help to cut the dust down.

District Seven, Hoover.

Review and possible action to approve quote from Anderson Landscaping in the amount of \$1,200 to install semaphore at rail display. Motion by A. Christianson to approve quote from Anderson Landscaping in the amount of \$1,200 to install a semaphore at the rail display, seconded by G. Pedersen. Motion passed with roll call vote, 7-yes, 0-no, A. Hraban-yes, J. Hoover-yes, R. Ostenso-yes, N. Johnson-yes, G. Pedersen-yes, A. Christensen-yes, S. Weiss-yes.

Review and possible action to approve installing a new landscape wall around Old Smoky. No action taken.

Police and Fire Report. Absent.

Public Works Report. Nothing further to report.

Administrator's Report.

Review and possible action to approve LP buyout of \$428.58 on City purchased home. Admn Christianson reported that the home was bought via land contract located on Barnett Road, the old tenant moved out several months ago, leaving a credit balance on a prepaid LP contract. A. Christianson motioned to approve LP buyout in the amount of \$428.58 on City purchased home, seconded by R. Ostenso. Motion passed with roll call vote, 7-yes, 0-no. R. Ostenso-yes, N. Johnson-yes, G. Pedersen-yes, A. Christianson-yes, S. Weiss-yes, A. Hraban-yes, J. Hoover-yes.

Review and possible action to approve bid from Russ Thompson Excavating for demo of downtown building. Admn Christianson reported that this building was once Barb's Flowerland, located next to Reisner Dental. The City took ownership about a year ago with the intent to demo the building, offer the parcel and put out an RFP to see if anyone was interested in putting anything up there. G. Pedersen asked if that was located in a TIF district. Admin Christianson stated that it is located in TID#15; that is where the cost of the demo would come from, which would be recouped in future tax revenues. J. Hoover asked if there were any additional bids received. Admn Christianson stated there were not. Motion by A. Christianson to approve bid from Russ Thompson Excavating in the amount of \$29,500 for demo of downtown building, seconded by N. Johnson. Motion passed with roll call vote, 7-yes, 0-no. N. Johnson-yes, G. Pedersen-yes, A. Christianson-yes, S. Weiss-yes, A. Hraban-yes, J. Hoover-yes, R. Ostenso-yes.

Overview of City TIF Districts and TIF use statewide with discussion.

Admin Christianson went over the attached packet regarding TIF Districts within the City of Ladysmith currently.

Admin Christianson made the following additional points:

- ❖ Cannot have more than 12% of your value in TIF districts.
- ❖ Regarding the old Elementary School located in TID 12 - they are hoping that by the end of August they will be closing on a sale of the property to a housing developer with ground breaking to start by the end of this fall potentially.
- ❖ A. Christianson wanted to clarify that just because a TID district has a termination date far out into the future, it does not mean that it has to last that long. Once it meets its obligation it can be terminated.
- ❖ TID 14 is currently helping fund part of the City's match on the EDA project that includes the water main being brought under the river, also helping to get the roads repaved in the Industrial Park. Lastly, it could help with utility work to help redevelop the old animal shelter site for workforce housing.
- ❖ Looking at TID use across the state; the City of Medford had a single TID district that was producing over \$600,000, they did terminate that district and create another that was geared towards workforce housing. He also commented that the City of Eau Claire has a TID district accounting for a little over 5 million dollars in revenue alone compared to the City of Ladysmith having a total of 1.4 million dollars in property taxes. Atty. Kenyon wanted to point out that when speaking of potential development areas he is using the term "workforce", not "low income" housing.

Lastly, Admn Christianson reported on the Wisconsin National Guard Army Band that had played at the Memorial Park, there was beautiful weather with a great turnout. The band played for about an hour, the event was free of charge to the City. He also wanted to acknowledge that the Drop Zone Bar and Grill provided a free meal to the band prior to their performance and extend a big thank you to Bob & Becky Lincoln for organizing that. Lastly, he wanted to make note of the upcoming Mardi Gras event in ten days and encourage people to come out and support the event. There is lots of work that goes into putting the event on from many different organizations, businesses and the Public Works crew that brings in a couple million dollars in spending power into the area over a four day period according to a recent study. Additionally, he stated that we should all take pride in the event and do our best to keep it going.

Attorney's Report.

Atty. Kenyon reported that he read an article in the Wisconsin Realtor magazine about the percentage of homes that were two story vs. one story. When we think of new houses we think of them as being one story homes when the actual percentage is closer to 52% one story and 48% two story.

Licenses and Permits.

Motion by A. Hraban, seconded by N. Johnson, to approve operator license for Dale Krings. Motion passed by voice vote. 7-yes 0-no.

Motion by N. Johnson, seconded by A. Hraban to approve independent operator license for Chris Keach. Motion passed by voice vote. 7-yes 0-no.

Motion by A. Hraban, seconded by N. Johnson to approve temporary operator licenses for David Scott and Bruce Anderson. Motion passed by voice vote. 7-yes 0-no.

Terry Carter addressed the council about the requirements to hold a liquor license; asking if a structure was required. Atty. Kenyon reported that was a requirement. Terry Carter addressed the council's decision to rescind their previous decision regarding revoking a liquor license.

Mayor's forum. Mayor Grotzinger reported that the Wisconsin National Guard Army Band was impressed with the venue and he welcomed them back at any time. He then stated the latest music on Miner had great weather; stating it was nice to see all the families out having fun. Lastly, this past weekend he took a 4 hour float down the Chippewa River and commented on how beautiful the scenery is, how much Rusk County has to offer and how important it is to promote this area.

Closed Session. District #4 A. Christianson. Postponed the session for a future meeting.

Adjourn. Motion by A. Hraban, seconded by N. Johnson to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Motion passed by voice vote. 7-yes, 0-no.

Respectfully submitted by:

Sara Nelson
Deputy Clerk