

**SPECIAL COMMON COUNCIL PROCEEDING OF
THE CITY OF LADYSMITH**

Monday, June 3rd, 2024

5:15pm

Ladysmith Fire Hall

Members Present: Mayor Robert Grotzinger, Richard Ostenso, Nathan Johnson, Mike Hraban, Al Christianson, Randy Lovely, John Hoover, Steve Weiss.

Others Present: Admn. A. Christianson, S. Nelson, P. Rowe, Chief K. Julien, D. Parker, K. Gorsegner, John Pohlman III, John Kenyon, Luke Klink, Jerry Wojcik, Sheriff J. Wallace, Kurt Brinier.

Call to Order: Mayor Grotzinger called the meeting to order at 5:15pm.

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

Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Mr. Ostenso.

Minutes and Agenda: Motion by N. Johnson; seconded by R. Lovely to approve May 28th, 2024 Common Council Minutes and this evening's agenda. Motion passed by voice vote. 7-yes. 0-no.

Introduction of Guest, Public Hearings, Comments:

Marty Reynolds addressed the Council regarding the W 2nd Street change order and spoke against the project. DPW Gorsegner reported there is a 2inch water main that they do not know where it ends, assuming it ties into the 8-inch located on Lake Ave. DPW Gorsegner reported this 2-inch water main has broken and been repaired once in the last several years. DPW Gorsegner explained during the reconstruction process they cannot always predict these types of issues that will arise. Mr. Reynolds spoke about concerns regarding condition of sidewalks that would be replaced upon approval of change order.

John Pohlman III who is located in District 3 addressed the Council regarding the jail project. Mr. Pohlman III spoke against closing Miner Ave to build the new jail. Mr. Pohlman III is opposed to the location of the project and would like to see other options explored.

Marty Reynolds spoke about the jail project and exploring other possible alternatives.

Kent Ohlfs addressed the Council regarding the jail project. Mr. Ohlfs stated their family has lived on Miner Ave for about 60years. Mr. Ohlfs stated he is not in favor of closing Miner Ave.

Dawn Ohlfs addressed the Council and spoke against closing Miner Ave for the jail project.

District One – R. Ostenso: Nothing to report.

District Two – N. Johnson: Nothing to report.

District Three – M. Hraban: M. Hraban spoke about the numerous people in the community who are opposed to the closure of Miner Ave.

District Four – A. Christianson: Nothing to report.

District Five – S. Weiss: Dr. Weiss reported that last week while returning to the City of Ladysmith he was able to view the new billboard located by Colonial Nursery. Dr. Weiss noted he was excited to see the slogan “Come to Play, Plan to Stay” and have it promote the recreational opportunities offered in this area.

District Six – R. Lovely: Nothing to report.

District Seven – J. Hoover: Nothing to report.

Public Works Report:

W 2nd Street Change Order. DPW Gorsegner reported the change order from HAAS Inc is in the amount of \$175,022.75. DPW Gorsegner reported every avenue was explored and it was determined and noted on change order that “Patch repair on concrete will cost more than new.” Admn Christianson reported on the funding that is available for the project. DPW Grotzinger reported that the unit cost is the same as the Miner Ave project. Marty Reynolds inquired about special assessments. DPW Gorsegner reported the special assessment process would occur and that would be a decision of the Council.

M. Hraban spoke in favor of completing the project. S. Weiss inquired about financial cost to the business owners located on that section of the street. Mayor Grotzinger spoke in favor of the change order. Motion by M. Hraban; seconded by N. Johnson to approve change order from HAAS, Inc in the amount of \$175,022.75 for W 2nd St. R. Ostenso-yes. N. Johnson-yes. M. Hraban-yes. A. Christianson-no. S. Weiss-no. R. Lovely-yes. J. Hoover-no. Motion passed by roll call vote. 4-yes. 3-no.

A. Christianson noted that during roll call vote other avenues including rating condition of sidewalk for benefited property for special assessments should be explored, noting this could result in additional work.

R. Lovely inquired about a letter he received regarding his yard. Chief K. Julien reported that no citations have been issued in regards to length of grass. DPW Gorsegner reported that the City of Ladysmith’s ordinance states that grass length cannot exceed 8 inches. DPW Gorsegner reported letters are sent out typically before Memorial Day to get the City’s appearance neatened up. DPW Gorsegner reported some properties are vacant, noting that they would still need to be mowed; all properties potentially violating ordinance would receive notice – no property would be excluded.

Administrators Report:

Discussion and possible action to approve Security Financial Bank as lender of up to \$2,902,500 as interim financing for the Miner Avenue Reconstruction Project. Admin reported this was discussed prior to the project beginning last year. Admin Christianson reported grants received work on a reimbursement process, resulting in need for interim financing. Motion by S. Weiss; seconded by R. Lovely to approve Security Financial Bank as lender of up to \$2,902,500 as interim financing for the Miner Avenue Reconstruction Project. Motion passed by voice vote. 7-yes. 0-no.

Mayor’s Forum:

Discussion and possible action on Rusk County letter requesting consideration of closure of Miner Avenue for County jail project. Mayor Grotzinger presented the Council with a handout of the timeline regarding this project. Mayor Grotzinger reported the last time they addressed the Council they were told they would need a formal letter from the County Board requesting to vacate property. On October 24th, 2023 the County Board voted to send formal request and the agenda item failed. Mayor Grotzinger reported he received request on

6.3.24 Special Common Council Minutes

May 7th, 2024 to add item to City Council Agenda. Mayor Grotzinger stated that no formal request from County Board has been received, denying action would be taken. On May 24th, 2024 the County Board voted to send formal request and agenda item passed. Mayor Grotzinger received formal request on May 28th, 2024.

Motion by A. Christianson; seconded by N. Johnson to deny request to close one (1) block of Miner Avenue for Rusk County Jail project.

A. Christianson read a personal statement containing various concerns regarding practices of Rusk County in relation to: violating terms of a joint Federal Grant Agreement for Gates Ave property meant to create jobs not to be used for storage; ignore pleas from the City in regards to creating workforce/veterans/elderly housing with former hospital building that has since been tore down; charges collected by Rusk County to house City of Ladysmith Police Department, but unwilling to pay ambulance storage provided by the City of Ladysmith. A. Christianson stated other options need to be explored.

S. Weiss spoke about concerns regarding lack of exploration of other options. Inquired about scope of consultants used to complete project.

M. Hraban asked Mayor if roll call vote could occur with motion.

Admn Christianson inquired if they did any numbers from last discussion in front of Council with regards to additional response time to the Elementary School from both the police department and the fire department if Miner Ave was closed. They reported they did not compete the calculations.

Motion passed by roll call vote. N. Johson-yes. M. Hraban-yes. A. Christianson-yes. S. Weiss-yes. R. Lovely-yes. J. Hoover-yes. R. Ostenso-yes. 7-yes. 0-no.

Mayor Grotzinger reminded Council of Ribbon Cuttings at Rusk Co. Farmers Market (11am) and Rusk Co. Historical Society Museum (1pm) on Saturday, June 8, 2024.

Adjourn: Motion by N. Johnson; seconded by R. Lovely to adjourn at 6:05pm. Motion passed by voice vote. 7-yes. 0-no.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Nelson, City Clerk