

COMMON COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY OF LADYSMITH
August 5, 2019 5:15 p.m. Council Chamber

Roll Call.

Members present: A. Christianson 2, J. Fields, B. Groothousen, A. Hraban, B. Morgan, M. Reynolds. Absent: M. Platteter, B. Stoneberg.

Others present: R. Carlson, A. Christianson 1, K. Gorsegner, A. Kelsey, A. Kenyon, L. Klink, J. Krell, S. Moore, D. Parker.

Call to Order:

Mayor Christianson called the meeting to order and served as chair.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Mr. Hraban led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes:

No action was taken to approve the minutes of the July 22, 2019, Council meeting.

Agenda:

Motion was made by Groothousen, seconded by Hraban and carried by voice vote to approve the evening's agenda.

Hearings and Appearances:

At 5:20 p.m. Mayor Christianson opened a required second Public Hearing on the 2018 CDBG (award PF 18-17) assisted project to rebuild portions of Fritz and Worden Avenues. Amy Kelsey, who is administering the assistance on the City's behalf, provided a comprehensive review of both the CDBG program purposes and rules and the specific Worden and Fritz Avenue street reconstruction project it is being used to undertake here. There were no public appearances. The Hearing was closed at 5:34 p.m.

Mr. Carlson distributed copies of a revised rail display budget for 2019. He is seeking to have this approved at the next All Committee meeting.

Licenses and Permits:

Motion was made by Hraban, seconded by Groothousen and carried by voice vote, with Fields abstaining, to approve tavern operator's licenses for the following, contingent upon LPD approval:

- Melanie Fischer and Shelly Summerfield for Tee A Way Golf and Supper Club.
- Andrew D. Strom as an Independent.

Resolutions and Ordinances:

Motion was made by Groothousen and seconded by Morgan to approve Resolution #2019-14, a resolution authorizing sale of City owned real estate on the SW corner of W. 3rd St. and Pederson Ave. Roll call vote: Platteter-absent; Morgan-yes; Groothousen-yes; Fields-yes; Stoneberg-absent; Hraban-yes; Reynolds-yes. Motion carried.

After brief mention was made of Resolution #2019-15 also authorizing sale of City-owned real estate, in this case along E. 2nd St. between Miner and Worden Avenues, Adm. Christianson's request to hold off for now on action was granted.

District and Committee Reports:

District One, Mr. Platteter:

Mr. Platteter was absent.

District Two, Mr. B. Morgan:

Mr. Morgan updated those present on a recent fire inside a (former B&O RR) rail passenger car the City had sold to Eric Thompson of Iron Horse Railway, which car has been stored near the E. 6th St. crossing. The fire was started by someone sleeping in the car. Mr. Morgan reported that he encouraged Thompson to make plans soon and move it before the City has to repossess it. The City has some railroad ties it has promised Thompson and the latter needs to deliver a crane to the City to complete a previously approved equipment swap. It is Mr. Morgan's feeling that Thompson has had ample time to move the car and that he should be required to do so within 60 days. Adm. Christianson will talk with Chief Julien on next steps with this.

District Three, Mr. B. Groothusen:

Mr. Groothusen asked for approval of mural siting agreements with owners of Ace Hardware and Ladysmith DQ, copies of which were distributed for review. Motion was made by Groothusen and seconded by Fields to approve. Roll call vote: Groothusen-yes; Fields-yes; Stoneberg-absent; Hraban-yes; Reynolds-yes; Platteter-absent; Morgan-yes. Motion carried.

District Four, Mr. J. Fields:

Mr. Morgan questioned circulation in and around the proposed Gateway Pavilion. Adm. Christianson stated he will seek a copy of the construction plan from Designer Bob Parmley so Mr. Morgan can review it.

District Five, Mrs. B. Stoneberg:

It was noted that Mrs. Stoneberg has plans for an August 12, Legal Affairs meeting.

District Six, Mr. A. Hraban:

Mr. Hraban made a motion and Morgan seconded to approve a quote of \$1,637.40 from A-1 Excavating to pulverize portions of E. 5th St. S. and E. 10th St. N. This will be a cost to the 2019 street budget. Roll call vote: Fields-yes; Stoneberg-absent; Hraban-yes; Reynolds-yes; Platteter-absent; Morgan-yes; Groothusen-yes. Motion carried.

Mr. Hraban made a motion and Groothusen seconded to approve expenditure of an additional \$44,396.18 from TIFD #11 to rebuild rather than simply repave E. 16th St. N. between Edgewood and Menasha Avenues. This will bring the new estimated total cost to \$102,144. Mr. Morgan asked why the increase. DPW Gorsegner replied that the original

estimate was to pulverize and repave only. After looking at it closer Morgan & Parmley recommends that some ditching, grade alterations and similar additional work be done to provide a better and longer lasting result. Roll call vote: Stoneberg-absent; Hraban-yes; Reynolds-yes; Platteter-absent; Morgan-yes; Groothousen-yes; Fields-yes. Motion carried.

Attention was called to a quote of \$4,501.23 from Xcel Energy to install a street light in the middle of the 200 E. block of Worden Ave. Motion was made by Hraban and seconded by Morgan to approve. Roll call vote: Reynolds-yes; Platteter-absent; Morgan-yes; Groothousen-yes; Fields-yes; Stoneberg-absent; Hraban-yes. Motion carried.

District Seven, Mr. M. Reynolds:

Mr. Reynold had nothing to report.

Police and Fire Dept. Reports:

None.

Public Works Dept. Report, Mr. K. Gorsegner:

The DPW requested approval of two Haas Sons invoices relating to street reconstruction projects currently underway.

Motion was made by Groothousen and seconded by Morgan to approve Pay Request No. 3, in the amount of \$107,747.08, for work completed on the Worden/Fritz Ave. project. Roll call vote: Platteter-absent; Morgan-yes; Groothousen-yes; Fields-yes; Stoneberg-absent; Hraban-yes; Reynolds-yes. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Morgan and seconded by Groothousen to approve Pay Request No. 3, in the amount of \$184,937.16, for work completed on the Summit Ave. project. Roll call vote: Groothousen-yes; Fields-yes; Stoneberg-absent; Hraban-yes; Reynolds-yes; Platteter-absent; Morgan-yes. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Morgan and seconded by Groothousen to approve a Morgan & Parmley invoice in the amount of \$17,375 for work on the Worden/Fritz Ave. project. Roll call vote: Fields-yes; Stoneberg-absent; Hraban-yes; Reynolds-yes; Platteter-absent; Morgan-yes; Groothousen-yes. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Groothousen and seconded by Morgan to approve a Morgan & Parmley invoice in the amount of \$5,790.10 for work on the Summit Ave. project. Roll call vote: Stoneberg-absent; Hraban-yes; Reynolds-yes; Platteter-absent; Morgan-yes; Groothousen-yes; Fields-yes. Motion carried.

DPW Gorsegner reported that, although other work remains to be completed, the new pumps are in service in the Doughty Rd. lift station. It was also reported that the new pavement and blacktop heaters are in service, with crew members having been trained in their use. The DPW advised that his 2020 budget request will include staffing so this equipment can be used regularly going forward to extend pavement life. He noted that it

takes about 10 minutes to heat up the next location during which time the one done before it is being filled and tamped. Some rakes and other accessories for these heaters are still needed.

Administrative Report, Mr. A. Christianson:

Adm. Christianson asked if the Council is ready to have Barrientos Associates develop construction plans for converting the former armory into the City's main PW garage. The fee could be advanced from fund balance and then repaid from future borrowing. There was no feedback except as to the advancing of funds.

The Council was asked their thoughts on renewing their commitment to the Main Street Program for three years from July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2022, as a \$20,000 annual cost to TIFD #8. As Director of Ladysmith Main Street, Mayor Christianson exited the room before discussion began. Adm. Christianson distributed copies of WI Dept. of Revenue reports indicating healthy growth in 2017-2018 values of TIFD #8 (46%), where the Main Street Program operates and TIFD # 11 (41%), which may donate funds to TIFD #8. It was noted that these increases should reflect growth in values owing to a combination of higher than taxable value sales prices and recognition of recent upgrades to properties such as the following: Certified Auto, Lake Ave. Rail Display, Sticks and Stones, the True Apartments, 113 and 115 Worden Ave. E. He cited these as an upward trend then also left the room as an immediate family member of the Main Street Director. A lengthy discussion ensued. Motion was made by Groothousen and seconded by Fields to approve a commitment of \$20,000 annually from TIFD #8 to continuing participation in the Wisconsin Main Street program for three years: July 1, 2019-June 30, 2022. Roll call vote: Morgan-no; Groothousen-yes; Fields-yes; Stoneberg-absent; Hraban-yes; Reynolds-yes; Platteter-absent. Motion carried.

Attorney's Report, Mr. A. Kenyon:

Atty. Kenyon reported on the status of properties being considered for condemnation:

- A long vacant house on E. 14th St. N. off Menasha Ave.
- A dwelling along E. 4th St. S., where the lawn has been mowed and where it appears effort has been made to close up a broken window.
- A garage along W. 9th St. N. whose owner is making arrangements to have it razed.
- A garage along Miner Ave. E.

It was noted that the purpose of these actions is to keep the community looking presentable.

Noting positives, Atty. Kenyon reported he is aware that tickets to this coming weekend's Rusk County Rodeo have been mailed to a party in France.

Mayor's Forum, Mr. Christianson:

Not to be outdone on references to European visitors, Mayor Christianson reported he had occasion to meet visitors from Ipswich, England at last weekend's Music on Miner. These folks have followed downtown Ladysmith happenings on Facebook. Other members of the same family enjoyed the former elementary school playground. He went

on to note that the crowd at Music on Miner was likely the best ever with attendance of 200-250.

Also, like Atty. Kenyon, the Mayor also called attention to the Rodeo and Junior Fair to be held this coming weekend.

Mrs. Moore also commented on the bicyclists who headquartered here over the weekend, which they do annually. She adjusts her Village Parlor open schedule to accommodate them, which provides an example of how to earn return business.

The Mayor also politely refuted last week's Ladysmith News Editorial wherein its premise was that the City was only just now feeling the pinch of declining revenues that private businesses have felt for years, in the form of difficulty filling an open position at City Hall. He cited the following as evidence:

- Public Works crew is 2 people below its peak; City Hall staffing is permanently down 1, and temporarily down 2; while LPD is down 3 from its peak level.
- He has been at IDC and other meetings where plant managers explained why they didn't move into the City; some asserting that was due to a lack or perceived lack of amenities such as bike trails, museums, a wider variety of organized activities for kids, farmer's markets, special events, other entertainment and more housing options. That attempting to provide these "by giving away money" has been a goal ever since. And that much of this money was from State or Federal agencies which provide it to be used solely for these purposes.
- The City recently reduced the rent to get a lease renewal from one of its largest employers in order to preserve the hundreds of jobs of those who work there for at least six more years [even though 70% of them live outside the City limits in towns and villages that don't contribute at all to providing such places on employment].

He concluded by saying that, if anyone has issues with the City, they belong on his shoulders, as Mayor, and on the City Council's as the policy and decision makers; not on City employees.

Closed Session:

At 7:03 p.m. motion was made by Hraban and seconded by Fields to go into Closed Session under authority cited in item 21) on this evening's meeting agenda. Roll call vote: Reynolds-yes; Platteter-absent; Morgan-yes; Groothusen-yes; Fields-yes; Stoneberg-absent; Hraban-yes. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Fields and seconded by Hraban to accept the Personnel Committee's recommendation by granting pay adjustments of \$2/hour to previously paid rates paid to the Clerk, Treasurer and Asst. DPW, effective immediately; to set a pay rate of \$22/hour for the newly recreated position of Deputy Clerk-Treasurer; and, to require review of all these positions at 3, 6, and 12 month intervals to see if job responsibilities have or should be shifted. Roll call vote: Platteter-absent; Morgan-yes; Groothusen-yes; Fields-yes; Stoneberg-absent; Hraban-yes; Reynolds-yes. Motion carried.

After a brief discussion of interviews and the Personnel Committee's recommendation, motion was made by Reynolds and seconded by Hraban to offer the open position of Deputy Clerk-Treasurer to Tony Devine. Roll call vote: Reynolds-yes; Platteter-absent; Morgan-yes; Groothousen-yes; Fields-yes; Stoneberg-absent; Hraban-yes. Motion carried.

At 7:21 motion was made by Hraban, seconded by Groothousen and carried by voice vote to return to Open Session.

At 7:25 p.m. motion was made by Hraban and seconded by Fields to go into Closed Session under authority cited in item 23) on this evening's agenda. Roll call vote: Groothousen-yes; Fields-yes; Stoneberg-absent; Hraban-yes; Reynolds-yes; Platteter-absent; Morgan-yes. Motion carried. No action was taken during this Closed Session.

Motion was made by Reynolds, seconded by Fields and carried by voice vote to return to Open Session.

At 7:45 p.m. motion was made by Reynolds and seconded by Hraban to go into Closed Session under authority cited in item 25) on this evening's agenda. Roll call vote: Fields-yes; Stoneberg-absent; Hraban-yes; Reynolds-yes; Platteter-absent; Morgan-yes; Groothousen-yes. Motion carried.

In Closed Session motion was made, seconded and carried by to authorize Atty. Kenyon to do what he deems in the best interests of the City relative to a Claim filed by Ditech relating to property located on the NW corner of E. 6th and Worden.

Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned from Closed Session at 8:08 p.m.

Recorded by: _____
Alan Christianson
Adm.-Deputy Clerk

Publication:
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