

Nov. 15, 2018

PUBLIC HEARING

5:30 P.M.

Mayor Jim Wilkie opened the public hearing to the public to hear citizens comments regarding the 2019 Proposed Budget for the City of Alma.

No public attended.

Hearing no testimony for or against the 2019 Proposed Budget, Mayor Wilkie closed the hearing.

Nov. 15, 2018

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

6:00 P.M.

Mayor Jim Wilkie called the regular monthly meeting of the Common Council of the City of Alma to order.

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Clerk Linda Torgerson took roll call with the following members present: Mayor Jim Wilkie, Richard Champeny, Gary Ruff, Monica Moham, Larry Farl, Ron Geiselhart and David Earney. Absent: Mary Johnson.

Motion by Ruff seconded by Farl to approve the 5:15 p.m. Oct. 18, 2018 Public Hearing minutes regarding a Conditional Use Permit submitted by Ali Rud as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Farl seconded by Ruff to approve the 5:30 p.m. Oct. 18, 2018 Public Hearing minutes regarding the proposed no parking ordinance in front of 120 S. Main St. as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Ruff seconded by Geiselhart to approve the 5:45 p.m. Oct. 18, 2018 Public Hearing minutes regarding the motorcycle only proposed ordinance in front of 603 N. Main St. as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Moham seconded by Earney to approve the October 18, 2018 Council Proceeding minutes as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Ruff seconded by Champeny to approve the October 2018 Financial Report as presented. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Motion by Farl seconded by Ruff to approve the October 2018 Treasurer's Report as presented. All members voting yes.

Citizen Comments.

Kevin Cassidy, resident at 301 N 2nd Street, addressed the Council regarding his concern for citizens of Alma ultimately being taxed out of living in the City of Alma.

Cassidy made the following statements:

- Big doesn't mean wealth. Cassidy stated that he felt those with bigger homes and that took care of their property pay more than others who do not and feels this is not fair.
- Alma residents are mainly on fixed incomes
- Alma is not a bedroom community, it is a small community

Cassidy suggested that the City of Alma investigate other communities who have frozen their budgets so that people can continue living here.

Mayor Wilkie referred Cassidy's concerns to the Finance Committee for discussion and recommendations.

UTILITIES COMMITTEE

Acting Chairman David Earney went over the committee minutes from Nov. 7, 2018 at which he chaired the meeting in the absence of Chairman Ron Geiselhart.

The following is the minutes of the Utilities meeting.

Agenda Item 1: Shawn Welte – Sewer.

David Earney went over the correspondence he received from Shawn Welte, Davy Engineer who is assisting the City of Alma regarding renewing the City's WPDES permit and the upcoming Phosphorus Limits. Earney stated that the biggest concern is the funding for what the DNR will be requiring of the City of Alma's sewer system operations and that grants should be sought.

Clerk Torgerson told Earney to have Shawn Welte research the City's grant options since he is the city engineer for this project and would have the most up-to-date knowledge regarding available grants.

David Earney reviewed in detail the possible options for complying with the phosphorus limits. One of them would be co-sharing with the county. Cal Loewenhagen concurred that he had spoken with Shawn Welte and that would be a possibility.

Cal Loewenhagen informed the committee that during this phosphorus compliance requirement that more sludge will be produced and storage for the sludge would need to be a part of the rehabilitation of the treatment plant.

David Earney informed the committee that common household items such as lawn fertilizer puts phosphorus into the groundwater. Earney stated that in his previous position as a wastewater operator at Foremost Farms, being upfront with the DNR was critical whenever a situation would arise.

David Earney finally stated that as far as the city's schedule goes, we are awaiting word from the DNR to proceed to the next step.

Agenda Item 2: Block corner survey update.

David Earney, who was absent when the company to do the block corners was hired, inquired whom was chosen and why. The committee informed Earney that Johnson Surveying was hired, and they have an office in Wabasha, MN. The committee further informed Earney that the cost was almost 50% less than Burt Surveying. Mayor Wilkie is coordinating the work schedule for the block corners with Johnson Surveying.

Agenda Item 3: Hwy-crushed rock-grading-agreement with Town of Nelson and snowplowing.

David Earney inquired if the City of Alma was receiving equal benefits from the Town of Nelson for the snowplowing the City of Alma does for them on Badland Road. Joe Wick stated yes.

Agenda Item 4: Garden tractor purchase-pickup.

Joe Wick informed the committee that the tractor was purchased and has arrived.

Joe Wick informed the committee of the status of the city's equipment and vehicles. He further informed them of repairs that have been done to the equipment and vehicles. Joe stated that some of the vehicles, especially the 2006, has had substantial repairs, however, this vehicle is critical to the operations of the city.

Agenda Item 5: Winter preparedness.

Joe Wick informed the committee of the winter preparation to the equipment and all is ready to go.

Dave Earney inquired of Joe Wick if the City had enough manpower. Joe Wick stated he believed the city did.

Agenda Item 6: Cedar St/2nd Street Resurfacing.

Joe Wick informed the committee that this project will be done in the spring when weather permits. Linda informed the committee that Oium Blacktop will honor the bid they gave the city this fall. She further informed them that the line painting will be done in the spring as well with the same price from Oium's line painters.

Agenda Item 7: Lower Swift Street.

Joe Wick informed the committee that he has received complaints weekly from the residents on lower Swift Street, Clive and Yolanda Pace, regarding the condition of Swift Street. Joe Wick informed the committee that the street is in bad shape and has no base.

Motion by Champeny seconded by Earney that lower Swift Street be placed on the 2019 street resurfacing schedule and that a proposal be obtained from Oium Blacktop for 2 – 2" lifts of asphalt. All members voting yes.

Agenda Item 8: SCADA computer/treatment plant.

Cal Loewenhagen informed the committee the SCADA computer needs to be replaced. He further informed the committee that a new computer support company needs to be hired. The current one is not providing timely, if at all, support for this critical computer operating system. The committee instructed Cal to contact Shawn Welte-Davy engineering and others for recommendations for a new software support company. Joe Wick recommended that L.W. Allen be contacted as well.

Dave Earney did not know what block north of Laue Street was doing on the agenda and Joe Wick could not think of anything regarding a block north of Laue Street. This matter, if any, will be addressed at a later date.

Motion by Ruff seconded by Champeny to adjourn. All members voting yes. Meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Mayor Wilkie commented that the cost for the sewer plant improvements needed to meet the phosphorus limits will cost more than double of our current sewer debt.

Monica Moham inquired about the co-sharing of phosphorus limits with Buffalo County as stated in the minutes. David Earney explained this sharing of the phosphorus limits.

Ron Geiselhart informed the Council that a semi had driven down Swift Street and damaged the street, railings and steps. Discussion was held.

Motion by Moham seconded by Earney to erect the appropriate signage regarding semi traffic on city streets with the discretion of acting foreman Joe Wick. All members voting yes.

David Earney informed the Council that there are problems on Alley Street to Orange Street and that the City needs to monitor the street as advised by Ayres and Associates when the Alley Street project was done.

Joe Wick informed the Council that he has spoken to Brad LaDuke, contractor, regarding what can be done for the Alley Street issues and will report back.

Motion by Geiselhart seconded by Farl to approve the Utilities Committee report as presented. All members voting yes.

FINANCE/TAX & LICENSE/ZONING COMMITTEE

Chairman Gary Ruff informed the Council that the Joint Review Board for TIF District 1 held their annual meeting on October 23rd with the school, vo-tech and county representatives. The Joint Review Board did pass the annual resolution for TIF District 1.

Chairman Gary Ruff informed the Council that the Finance committee had met this morning and reviewed and approved all vouchers, bills and receipts.

Motion by Ruff seconded by Champeny to approve an Operators License to Darlene Pickering. All members voting yes.

Chairman Gary Ruff informed the Council that under building permit violations, the property at 411 S. Main was discussed and advice from the City Attorney to be sought.

Mayor Wilkie read to the Council the response from Attorney Seifert regarding the City's options for remediation of the condition of this property.

Motion by Moham seconded by Farl to instruct the City Attorney to draft a letter to the property owner at 411 S. Main Street as recommended in his response. All members voting yes.

Chairman Ruff informed the Council that the Ambulance Board had met Tuesday, Nov. 13, 2018 to hire a Secretary/Treasurer/Director for the Ambulance Service. Diane Mikelson, current Secretary/Treasurer/Director will be retiring at the end of this year and without one the ambulance service could not operate. The Ambulance Board hired Justin Sass as the new Secretary/Treasurer/Director for the Western Buffalo County Ambulance Service.

Chairman Gary Ruff informed the Council that the committee recommended approval of the 2019 budget as presented.

Motion by Ruff seconded by Earney to adopt the proposed 2019 budget as presented. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Motion by Farl seconded by Moham to approve the Finance/Tax & License/Zoning committee report as presented. All members voting yes.

Police Chief Mike Johnson informed the Council that he received notification from the dealership that retains the state bids for the police squad (Tahoe) that the body shape will be changing in 2020 and our current equipment from our existing squad will not transfer over. Johnson wanted the Council to be aware of this information.

Upcoming meetings:

Mayor Jim Wilkie informed the Council that a Conditional Use Permit for 901 S 2nd Street has come in and will need action by the Planning Commission, a public hearing held and final Council action in December.

Finance Tax & License-----Dec. 13, 2018 at 8:30 a.m.
Planning Commission-----Dec. 13, 2018 at 5:30 p.m.
Public Hearing-----Dec. 13, 2018 at 5:45 p.m.
Council-----Dec. 13, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

Motion by Champeny seconded by Earney to adjourn. All members voting yes.