

Mayor Robert Gross 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 Robert Gross, Richard Champeny, Larry Grisen, Monica Moham (zoom), Larry Farl, Loren Mueller, Gary Jepsen, and David Earney.

Motion by Champeny seconded by Mueller to approve the June 8, 2023 Council Proceeding minutes as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Moham seconded by Champeny to approve the June 13, 2023 Special Council minutes as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Jepsen seconded by Farl to approve the Financial Report for June 2023 as presented. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Motion by Jepsen seconded by Earney to approve the Treasurer’s Report for June 2023 as presented. All members voting yes.

Citizen comments. None present.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Chairman Larry Farl went over the minutes of the June 29, 2023 committee meeting. All Council members had printed copies.

Farl went over the following highlights of the meeting:

- Rieck’s Lake Park—the committee will be developing a plan with the forester regarding tree replanting.
- Tennis/pickleball courts. Larry Farl will be contacting the company that resurfaced the courts regarding cracks in the surface. New nets will be installed at the courts.
- Orange Street. A memorial plaque and plant will be installed in memory of Nancy Johnson.
- Donation for parks. A new bench was ordered for Buena Vista Park with funds coming from a donation. Concrete will be installed with enough space so that an additional bench can be placed at the same site, Farl commented.
- Additional signs will be ordered and placed at the marina for parking of vehicles and trailers.
- Striping of the parking lots at the boat landings and parks will be done.
- The committee did a walking tour of the parks and landings and made a list of things to be done.

Gary Jepsen mentioned that someone had notified him that the beach area was unkept. Foreman Wick stated that he began work at the beach in the spring and continues to spend time at the beach area. Mayor Gross stated that he has observed the beach area and it is in much better shape than in the past.

Cards were received from the students at the school thanking the city for funding the swimming lessons held in Wabasha.

Motion by Champeny seconded by Grisen to approve the Parks and Recreation committee report as presented. All members voting yes.

SERVICES COMMITTEE

Chairperson Richard Champeny went over the committee minutes of July 7, 2023. All Council members had printed copies of the minutes.

Champeny stated that the main portion of the meeting addressed the Code Enforcement Officer. Ken Passow, Code Enforcement Officer, was present. Gary Jepsen had informed the committee that Ken will be working approximately 10 to 15 hours per week and will receive training from Chief Aarik Lackershire who was also present at the meeting.

Jepsen informed the committee that the Mayor had spoken with the Mayor of Fountain City regarding the possibility of a shared officer. Discussion was held.

A motion was passed authorizing the Mayor and Council President Gary Jepsen to meet with the Mayor of Fountain City regarding the shared officer.

The Code Enforcement Officer will use a city vehicle, however, if needed to use his own, he will be paid the standard mileage rate.

Cemetery concerns. There has been interest in purchasing the upper lots at Memorial Cemetery. The current policy is that the lower lots have to be sold prior to selling the upper lots. Discussion was held and the committee recommended leaving this policy in place at this time.

The committee requested that a comparison of cemetery lot prices with neighboring communities be obtained and report back next month.

Ben Schams from the fire department was present at the meeting stating that the fire department, in order to keep in budget, had to order the fire truck from another company. This company is out of Marshfield and the department is looking at more options for the truck. Discussion was held.

A motion was made and carried to authorize the fire department and mayor to choose options for the fire truck as long as the adjustments do not exceed \$5,000.00.

Earney thanked Gary Jepsen for all the work he had done with the Code Enforcement Officer and Rick Champeny for the writing of the train noise letter. Earney stated that the train noise has lessened.

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

Richard Champeny introduced Madison Eppen, the new owner along with her husband of the Danzinger Winery.

Madison Eppen spoke a little bit about herself and her husband and plans for the winery and the fact that they are happy to be a part of the City of Alma.

Mayor Gross and Council thanked Madison for coming.

UTILITIES COMMITTEE

Chairman Larry Grisen went over the minutes of the June 13, 2023 committee meeting. Council members had received printed copies of the minutes.

Motion by Jepsen seconded by Champeny to approve the estimate submitted by Brad LaDuke for sidewalk work in the amount of \$18,165.00. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Mayor Gross informed the Council that he was notified by Paul Schultz regarding the sinking of his driveway. Collins Plumbing will be televising the storm sewer to see if that is the cause of the problem.

Motion by Grisen seconded by Earney to approve the June 13, 2023 Utilities Committee report as presented. All members voting yes.

Chairman Larry Grisen went over the minutes of the July 11, 2023 committee meeting. Council members had received printed copies of the minutes.

Grisen went over the proposal from Davy Engineering regarding the replacement and relocation of Lift Station #4, constructed in 1930 and has outlived its service life. Grisen stated that the City has to become more proactive with the utilities and not wait until a dangerous situation arises. He further stated that a rotation schedule is needed to keep the utilities in decent shape. The proposal is for the design phase of the project in the amount of \$48,000.00, Grisen stated.

Motion by Earney seconded by Farl to approve the proposal from Davy Engineering for the design phase of Lift Station #4 in the amount of \$48,000.00. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Earney commented that it is good to have a “shelf ready” project so that it is ready should funding become available.

Grisen stated that Davy Engineering is researching possible grants for the sewer projects and the City will be researching grants as well.

Linda stated that the auditors will be working with Mark Davy of Davy Engineering regarding the sewer rates and the repayment to the General Fund from the sewer funds.

Motion by Champeny seconded by Farl to approve the Utilities Committee report for July 11, 2023 as presented. All members voting yes.

FINANCE/TAX & LICENSE/ZONING COMMITTEE

Chairman Gary Jepsen informed the Council that the committee met on July 13, 2023. Council members had printed copies of the minutes of the meeting.

Vouchers, bills, and receipts for the month of June were approved.

Building permit applications were approved for Mark Noll for a farm shed, Paul Eppen for enclosure of the shelter and the addition of two decks at the winery and Gary Heim for a connection from the garage to the house. Jepsen informed the Council that the committee discussed the sewer ordinance requiring a separate sewer lateral for each dwelling on one property. This matter was turned over to the Utilities Committee for review and recommendation.

Motion by Jepsen seconded by Farl to approve Operator Licenses to: Billy Thetford, Kyrie Zastrow and Cole Stevens. All members voting yes.

Jepsen informed the Council that the Revised Employee Handbook that includes social media will be presented to the Council next month.

Motion by Grisen seconded by Farl to convene into CLOSED SESSION under exemptions set under Wis. Stats. 19.85 (1) (c) considering employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility. The council will reconvene into open session. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

CLOSED SESSION.

Motion by Farl seconded by Grisen to reconvene into OPEN SESSION. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Motion by Champeny seconded by Mueller to approve the Finance/Tax & License/Zoning Committee report as presented. All members voting yes.

LIBRARY LIAISON

Jepsen informed the Council that he attended the Library Board meeting on July 11, 2023. Everything is going well at the Library and circulation has increased, Jepsen stated.

Earney stated that he did not attend the fire meeting so there is no report.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Utilities-----Tuesday, August 8, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

Finance-----Thursday, August 10, 2023 at 8:30 a.m.

Council-----Thursday, August 10, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

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