

December 14, 2023

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

6:00 p.m.

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, Larry Farl, Loren Mueller, Gary Jepsen (zoom) and David Earney.

Motion by Farl seconded by Moham to approve the November 16, 2023 Public Hearing for the 2024 Budget as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Farl seconded by Mueller to approve the November 16, 2023 Council Proceeding minutes as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Moham seconded by Mueller to approve the November 2023 Financial Report as presented. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Motion by Earney seconded by Farl to approve the November 2023 Treasurer's Report as presented. All members voting yes.

Citizen comments.

Orlyn Hoksch addressed the Council regarding the City of Alma no longer maintaining the Town of Nelson's portion of Badland Road for snow/ice removal. Orlyn was present at the Dec. 12, 2023 Utilities meeting as well. Mayor Gross stated that he had contacted the Town of Nelson's Chairman Brad Mikkelson and invited them to attend the Jan. 9, 2024 Utilities meeting to see if there would be a way to come to an agreement. If an agreement was made it could be acted upon the January 11, 2024 Council meeting, Mayor Gross commented. The City of Alma's budget and the Town of Nelson's budget have been adopted, therefore, it would take budget amendments to resolve this issue.

FINANCE/TAX & LICENSE/ZONING COMMITTEE

Larry Farl, committee member, informed the Council that the committee had met this morning.

Dawn Schultz, with Xcel Energy, presented to the committee Xcel's wish to put a substation at the former Countryside Cooperative site. Xcel will need to submit two variances. One for not meeting setbacks and one for the substation being a non-conforming use.

Motion by Farl seconded by Moham to approve an Operator License to Nicole Auer. All members voting yes.

Motion by Farl seconded by Earney to approve the change of agent for Bill's Talk of the Town to Aldona Marie Palmer. All members voting yes.

Farl stated that since Chairperson Gary Jepsen was not present at the committee meeting, the employee handbook changes were tabled.

The food truck ordinance was tabled until next month's meeting, Farl stated.

Aarik Lackershire, part-time chief, explained to the Council that the policies were given to Gary Jepsen-Finance Chair and Rick Champeny-Services chair for review and the policies are required by the state, however, they are in the early stages of being adopted.

Dave Earney inquired if the proposed substation would affect the City's street that is adjacent to the proposed substation. Linda responded that Dawn from Xcel had stated it would not affect the city street.

Motion by Champeny seconded by Earney to approve the Dec. 14, 2023 Finance/Tax & License/Zoning committee report as presented. All members voting yes.

Larry Farl then reported on the November 29, 2023 Finance/Tax & License/Zoning committee.

Over-time after 8 hours versus only after the 40 hours was discussed by the committee and after 8 hours was approved. An amendment to the employee handbook will be needed to document the change.

Farl continued that interviews for the Chief of Police were held that day and the committee made a motion to offer the position to Chad Halvorson for the Chief of Police pending the background investigation, psychological evaluation and drug and physical tests.

Motion by Moham seconded by Earney to approve the November 29, 2023 Finance/Tax & License/Zoning committee report as presented.

UTILITIES COMMITTEE

Chairperson Larry Grisen informed the Council that the committee met on December 12, 2023. All of the Council had written minutes from the meeting and Chairperson Grisen inquired if there were any questions. None were received.

Motion by Grisen seconded by Champeny to approve the Payment Request to Visu-Sewer, Inc. in the amount of \$40,027.00 for the sewer lining project that was done in October, 2023. All members voting yes.

Motion by Champeny seconded by Farl to approve the Utilities Committee report for December 12, 2023 as presented. All members voting yes.

SERVICES COMMITTEE

Chairperson Richard Champeny informed the Council that the committee had met on November 27, 2023.

Champeny stated that one of the items was the purchase of AED equipment. The committee approved spending up to \$5,000.00 for AED equipment for the city hall/library, fire station, city garage and other needed locations. Champeny stated he will review the AED information and purchase up to the approved \$5,000.00.

The committee approved the estimate from Monarch paving in the amount of \$22,589.96 for paving around the landfill/recycling shed if the Shawnee Drive paving was done.

Motion by Earney seconded by Farl to approve the Services Committee report for Nov. 27, 2023 as presented. All members voting yes.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Chairperson Larry Farl informed the Council that the committee had met November 27, 2023.

Farl reported that Bill Hedberg, Buffalo County grant coordinator, was present at the committee meeting to offer assistance in grants available for parks, tourism, charging stations for cars, etc.

Other items discussed by the committee reported by Chairperson Farl were:

- Park bench donation
- Planting of trees/shrubs in the city parks
- Courtesy dock claim-finally complete

Mayor Gross stated that he has been trying to get in contact with the Corps of Engineers representative that specializes in trees and plantings. He will continue to pursue them.

Motion by Champeny seconded by Moham to approve the Nov. 27, 2023 Parks and Recreation committee report as presented. All members voting yes.

LIBRARY LIAISON

Motion by Moham seconded by Mueller to approve the appointment of Gary Wolf to replace Chris Hungerford on the Alma Public Library Board as presented. All members voting yes.

TOURISM COMMISSION

Motion by Farl seconded by Moham to appoint Kathy Jepsen to the Tourism Commission to fill a vacancy as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Farl seconded by Moham to approve the Tourism Commission report as presented. All members voting yes.

Upcoming meetings:

Utilities-----January 9, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.
Finance-----January 11, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.
Council-----January 11, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

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