

Mayor Robert Gross called the regular monthly meeting 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, and David Earney.

Motion by Jepsen seconded by Moham to approve the Council Proceeding minutes of the December 14, 2023 regular meeting as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Earney seconded by Mueller to approve the Special Council proceeding minutes of December 20, 2023 as presented. All members voting yes.

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

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

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None.

**UTILITIES COMMITTEE**

Chairperson Larry Grisen informed the Council that the Committee met on January 9, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. and the committee discussed the Badland Road snowplowing of the Town of Nelson's portion of Badland Road. No representatives from the Town of Nelson were present. The committee gave direction to Foreman Joe Wick and Clerk Linda Torgerson to come up with figures of costs before the Council meeting.

Linda informed the Council that the cost difference between the City of Alma's costs of snow removal versus the roadside mowing done by the Town of Nelson and the snow removal done by the Town of Nelson on Badland Road. Linda informed the Council that the difference was \$320.47. The Town of Nelson's expense being the \$320.47 over the City's costs.

Foreman Joe Wick informed the Council that for labor he used 15 minutes a trip at 35 trips per year for the Town of Nelson's portion of Badland Road. Truck use cost was based on the same amount of time as for the labor. Materials (salt/sand) were estimated at 15 yards per season.

He further informed the Council that he estimated 10 minutes for the Town of Nelson to do the portion of Spooner Road that they do in the City and 8 hours for mowing for the season.

Brad Mikkelson-Town of Nelson Chairperson and Bob Traun-Town of Nelson Superintendent were present at the Council meeting and stated that they were present at the meeting to listen.

They expressed their dissatisfaction with how they were notified, bluntly by the City Clerk, that the City of Alma no longer was going to do the snow removal.

The agreement has never been in writing and only verbal. Mayor Gross expressed his concerns regarding liability of the City and the Town for doing work in another municipality.

Discussion was held.

Attorney Seifert offered his direction of first finding out if there is an agreement, verbally or written, between the City of Alma and the Town of Nelson. He stated written is always better and to check with their insurance companies regarding liability and any increase in premiums because of the agreement. Both parties should get together to discuss the agreement.

Motion by Champeny seconded by Jepsen to send the issue of Badland Road between the City of Alma and Town of Nelson back to the Utilities Committee for resolution and to contact the insurance carrier regarding the issue of liability and costs. All members voting yes.

Chairperson Grisen informed the Council that the committee discussed the final payment to Monarch Construction who did the street projects for 2023. Monarch had requested an additional \$4,000 for work performed, however, the committee instructed Linda to send a letter that the City would honor the contract price and not the additional amount requested due to various reasons and that the check would be considered final payment. Grisen stated that Monarch has cashed the check. No verbal contact from Monarch has been received since the payment and letter were sent.

Grisen informed the Council that the committee met with a member of the Wisconsin Rural Water Association regarding actions the City can take to help with the water problem on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

Grisen asked Mike Osmond-Buffalo County Sheriff, if there was a water problem at the jail/courthouse. He informed the Council that yes, they had a period of time where the water was brown and smelly and bottled water had to be purchased for the inmates.

Loren Mueller inquired if the ownership of the retaining walls has been determined. Grisen stated that is a work in progress and he met with Lucas Teska regarding possible funding for the repair/replacement of retaining walls.

Gary Jepsen commented that the leak in the valve of the water system at 350,000 gallons per month is a lot of water. Grisen and Earney commented that is why the committee ordered that the valve get fixed immediately. Foreman Joe Wick explained to the Council that an additional valve along with the valve to be replaced have been addressed and will be forthcoming. He is working with Collins Plumbing and Jeff Hofer on the valve situation.

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

**FINANCE/TAX & LICENSE/ZONING COMMITTEE**

Chairperson Gary Jepsen informed the Council that himself, Mayor Gross and Rick Champeny met with Buffalo County Sheriff Mike Osmond regarding options of contracting with the County. At that meeting, Gary Jepsen presented a handout from that meeting that showed part-time options (which the officer would not be able to enforce local ordinances) and a full-time position offering 42 hours per week.

Jepsen suggested the possibility of sharing the full-time position with the City of Fountain City. The City of Fountain City currently contracts for 8 hours per week or 16 hours per pay period (two-week pay period). Jepsen had contacted Fountain City and had not heard back.

Mayor Gross commented that scheduling would be difficult for a shared officer.

Jepsen stated that start-up costs for an officer would be approximately \$10,000.00 and that the officer would be at an 80/20 split between the City and the County. The estimated cost for a full-time officer was \$100,000.00.

Sheriff Mike Osmond present at Council handed out a new scenario of costs if the City were to contract with the County. Total costs for an officer the first year would be \$181,769.60 with the 80% cost share to the City of Alma being \$145,415.68. The second year cost would be \$101,335.68. Osmond will work on adjusting figures for start up costs if some of the city's equipment could be used.

Description	Math	Total		Year One	Year Two
Wages	44.40 x 2184	\$96,969.60	Total	181,769.60	126,669.60
New Squad Lease	1100.00 x 12	\$13,200.00	Alma	145,415.68	101,335.68
Squad/Maint/ Fuel	500x26	\$13,000.00	Buff Co	36,353.92	25,333.92
Training		\$500.00			
Flock Camera		\$3,000.00			
		<b>\$126,669.60</b>			
<b>Initial</b>					
Officer Equipment		\$9,500.00			
Squad Equipment		\$6,800.00			
Squad Radio		\$7,800.00			
Computer / Mount		<b>\$4,000.00</b>			
Squad Camera/ Body		\$13,000.00			
Squad Cage/Lighting/Siren		\$11,000.00			
Squad Install		\$3,000.00			
Total Initial		<b>\$55,100.00</b>			

Osmond informed the Council that the County would do the hiring of the officer. All benefits paid to the officer would be done through the County. Sheriff Osmond will be the one to decide what officer is selected for the City of Alma, however, he would try to be consistent so that the City of Alma would have the same officer every time.

Sheriff Osmond explained that while the officer is on duty for the City of Alma he may be called out if mutual aid is needed. He explained that the Sheriff Deputies work a twelve hour shift. He felt that was not necessary for the City of Alma and he would make sure monthly reports are presented to the Council so that the City is well aware of what they are paying for and an activity report will be given.

Sheriff Osmond stated that he felt it would take six months before the City would have an officer if they decided to go this route. He stated that he felt a letter to the County Board or the Law Enforcement committee stating the City's interest in a full-time officer contract would be beneficial.

Gary Jepsen inquired if the City was not happy with the officer and he's not meeting the City's expectations, what recourse would the City have. Sheriff Osmond stated that his expectations exceeds the City's expectations and he would be the immediate supervisor.

The Council thanked Sheriff Osmond for attending the Council meeting and giving the information requested.

Jepsen stated that the committee worked on defining normal hours of work in the employee handbook and for the crew it would be the hours of 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and for the city hall it would be 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Over-time was discussed. The handbook stated over 40 hours per week and the amendment will read anything over the regularly scheduled work-day.

Motion by Jepsen seconded by Moham to approve the amendment to the Employee Handbook as presented. All members voting yes.

Jepsen presented the Kathy Kosidowski easement with the language amended including the retaining wall maintenance as the property owner's responsibility.

Motion by Jepsen seconded by Champeny to approve the easement to Kathy Kosidowski as presented. All members voting yes.

Mayor Gross informed the Council that he had spoken with Rebecca from USDA regarding developers that may be interested in Shawnee Estates. Mayor Gross stated that Rebecca will be unavailable due to surgery, however, will contact the City when she is able to do so.

Jepsen stated that as far as the food truck ordinance is concerned, he would like to send out a letter to the businesses regarding the proposed ordinance.

Motion by Jepsen seconded by Farl to grant a Class B Beer/Wine picnic license to Wings Over Alma. All members voting yes.

Motion by Farl seconded by Moham to approve Operator Licenses to: Chloe Evers, Jordyn Liebig, Savana Au and Roberta Sipla. All members voting yes.

Motion by Mueller seconded by Moham to approve the Audit Agreement for all city accounts for 2024 and the Sewer Audit Agreement for 2024 as submitted by Bauman Associates. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

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

Motion by Grisen seconded by Mueller to approve the appointment of the 2024 and 2025 election officials as presented: Sandra Ebert, Edith Ruff, Elizabeth Feuling, Cheri Noll, Mary Mueller, Lance Carroll and Patricia Carroll. All members voting yes.

### **SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Chairperson Richard Champeny informed the Council that the committee had met on January 8, 2024 on the following:

- Discussion with Alma Friends of Animals representatives. Residents Stacy Lewellyn and Cheri Bunker were present at the meeting. Lewellyn stated that she would like to have something in place so that a resident knows what to do with an animal that comes to a residence. Who do they call? Her and her husband Tim have been taking care of feral cats in her neighborhood. She feeds the cats, traps them and then pays for them to get spayed or neutered. They are willing to donate money to the City for this type of care. The City of Alma does have a Code Enforcement Officer that could be called. The city would then trap the animal and call the Buffalo County Humane Society. For dogs running at large the City would do the same procedure after an effort to locate the owners was done.
- Cheri Bunker expressed her concerns of the cats that are in the neighborhood. Some are not feral and they are attacking the birds. The City of Alma is a Bird City and control of cats is one of the criteria for being a Bird City.
- Fire department had no new updates.
- AED unit installations. The City has purchased AED's for the City Hall, Fire Station, City Garage and Landfill.
- Police protection update. Covered earlier this evening.
- Solid waste concerns. There were some problems with garbage being picked up. Linda put a reminder out about pickup times and regulations regarding the garbage such as the tying of the bags and the weight limits.
- Cemetery lot prices. This item was tabled.
- Landfill attendant. It was decided to readvertise.

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

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT LIAISON**

Earney stated he had not attended the meeting, however, stated that the Fire Department is doing well and has a new member.

Motion by Farl seconded by Champeny to approve the Fire Department Liaison report as presented. All members voting yes.

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