

October 10, 2024

PUBLIC HEARING

5:30 p.m.

Mayor Richard Champeny opened the public hearing to the public regarding proposed Ordinance 24-07, An ordinance amending the room tax ordinance #09-10-01 in Chapter 113 of the City of Alma's Code of Ordinances.

No public gave testimony in favor of the proposed ordinance.

Jarrad Fluekiger, lodging owner, spoke against the ordinance which would increase the room tax from 5% to 6%. He felt the increase would hurt businesses.

Jennifer Griffith, lodging owner, spoke against the ordinance as it was written. She stated that the penalties and fees were outrageous.

Jon Wisneski, lodging owner, was against the increase in the room tax.

Hearing no further testimony for or against the proposed ordinance, Mayor Champeny closed the public hearing.

October 10, 2024

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

6:00 p.m.

Mayor Richard Champeny 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 Richard Champeny, Davie Meier, Larry Grisen, Randy Brommer, Loren Mueller, Gary Jepsen, and David Earney. Absent: Larry Farl.

Motion by Grisen seconded by Earney to approve the September 12, 2024 Public Hearing minutes regarding Ordinance 24-08, allowing two-hour parking in front of the Castlerock Museum-402 S. 2nd St. as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Earney seconded by Meier to approve the September 12, 2024 Council Proceeding minutes as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Jepsen seconded by Brommer to approve the September 23, 2024 Special Council meeting minutes as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Jepsen seconded by Earney to approve the October 8, 2024 Special Council Meeting minutes as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Brommer seconded by Mueller to approve the September 2024 Financial Report as presented. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Motion by Jepsen seconded by Earney to approve the September 2024 Treasurer's Report as presented. All members voting yes.

Prior to holding citizens comments, Mayor Champeny read the following:

Yesterday, October 9, 2024, the City of Alma was notified that Xcel Energy has filed a suit in Civil Court involving the City.

Therefore, the City of Alma and the Board of Appeals are not allowed to take any further action or discussion on the Xcel Energy Substation construction until directed by the court system to do so.

So, at this time I will open the floor for any other citizen's comments for items that are not listed on tonight's agenda.

Attorney Jon Seifert spoke on the appeals process and the matter of litigation.

Jennifer Griffith, 809 N. Main St., wanted to inform the Council that she is concerned about the high rate of speed that vehicles are traveling in her area.

Jerri Schreiber, daughter of Janis Schreiber, spoke on the same issue of the rate of speed vehicles traveling on the south end of town where her mother lives.

UTILITIES COMMITTEE

Chairperson Larry Grisen went over the committee minutes of September 16, 2024 of which all Council had received copies.

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

SERVICES COMMITTEE

Chairperson Loren Mueller went over the minutes of the September 16, 2024 committee meeting. All the council had received copies.

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

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Chairperson Davie Meier went over the September 17, 2024 committee minutes. All the Council have received copies.

Motion by Mueller seconded by Brommer to approve the Parks and Recreation Committee minutes as presented. All members voting yes.

FINANCE/TAX & LICENSE/ZONING COMMITTEE

Chairperson Jepsen acknowledged his appreciation of the comments that were received at the Public Hearing this evening regarding the amendment to the Room Tax Ordinance.

Motion by Grisen seconded by Mueller to table the amendment to the Room Tax Ordinance and give Gary Jepsen authority to meet with interested lodging owners to discuss the amendment to the room tax ordinance and report back. All members voting yes.

SERVICES COMMITTEE

Chairperson Loren Mueller went over the minutes of the October 8, 2024 committee meeting.

Jepsen stated he will work on a goat ordinance for next month's meeting.

Jepsen informed the Council that in regard to the Law Enforcement contract with Buffalo County, they are asking for a termination time period of one year instead of the five-year as previously discussed.

Motion by Jepsen seconded by Grisen to amend the Law Enforcement contract with Buffalo County for a five year period following by a one-year option. All members voting yes.

Motion by Earney seconded by Meier to approve the Services committee report of October 8, 2024 as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Grisen seconded by Earney to table the Board of Appeals appointments. All members voting yes.

Agenda Item #8: 2025 Proposed Employee wages.

Motion by Mueller seconded by Meier to approve the 2025 Employee Wages as presented. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Agenda Item #9: Health Insurance for 2025.

Jepsen informed the Council that the committee recommended staying with the current health insurance carrier and plan for 2025 at a 17% increase. He stated that this was the best option for the city.

Motion by Jepsen seconded by Earney to approve the employee's existing health insurance company Quartz Platinum P503 POS plan for 2025. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Agenda Item #10: Andrew Bisek Easement – for Cedar St. at 209 N. 2nd St.

The property currently has structures on the portion of Cedar Street next to the home at 209 N. 2nd St. The new owners would like an easement for this portion of Cedar St.

Motion by Jepsen seconded by Earney to table the Bisek Easement until next month. All members voting yes.

Agenda Item 11: Borrowing Resolution for a \$200,000.00 additional operational loan.

Motion by Earney seconded by Jepsen to approve the \$200,000.00 borrowing resolution with the Bank of Alma for an additional operational loan as presented. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Agenda Item 13: Discuss broadband to industrial lots and Shawnee Estates update.

Jepsen informed the Council that the County will not fund the ARPA monies they have for broadband to the City of Alma. Gary Jepsen stated he will contact CCT to see if they could provide additional funding.

Agenda Item 15: Library grant update.

Mayor Richard Champeny announced that the City of Alma did receive the 4.25 million dollars grant for a new library to be located at the school property to the south. Construction needs to be completed in 2026.

Agenda Item #12: Letter of Intent to purchase Riverland Energy property.

Mayor Champeny stated that he has been in contact with Riverland Energy regarding obtaining their property to house a fire station, city hall, and city street equipment. He stated on October 22, 2024 there will be an inspection of the building by William Boettcher, structural engineer with Lien & Peterson. He will provide the City with recommendations and his report.

Motion by Earney seconded by Jepsen to rescind the motion of October 8, 2024 special council meeting stating that Jurowski would be doing the building inspection at Riverland Energy to Lien and Peterson at a rate of \$5,000.00. All members voted yes.

Motion by Jepsen seconded by Earney to appropriate up to \$5,000.00 for William Boettcher, Lien & Peterson, to do an appraisal and examination of the Riverland Energy building. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Tom Brakke, fire chief, informed the Council that the fire department is excited about being a part of this project with the opportunity to move the fire department to the Riverland Energy building. Currently, to get out one vehicle needed for a fire, others have to be moved out first, all taking time. The existing bays would then allow the ambulance to be stored there which better suits the size of the ambulance.

Agenda Item 16: Class B Beer/Wine one-day license for Enhance Alma for November 1, 2024.

Motion by Mueller seconded by Jepsen to approve a one-day Class B Beer/Wine license to Enhance Alma for Nov. 1, 2024. All members voting yes.

Agenda Item 12: Letter of Intent to purchase Riverland Energy property.

Motion by Earney seconded by Meier to approve the Letter of Intent to purchase the Riverland Energy property. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

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

Upcoming meetings:

Council November 14, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. with a public hearing prior for the 2025 budget at 5:30 p.m.

Utilities-----November 12, 2024 at 8:30 a.m.

Finance-----November 12, 2024 at 10:30 a.m.

Services-----November 12, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.

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