



**CITY OF RIVER FALLS, WISCONSIN
COMMON COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS**

January 10, 2023

Mayor Dan Toland called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

City Council Members Present: Todd Bjerstedt, Jeff Bjork, Nick Carow, Sean Downing, Scott Morrissette, Alyssa Mueller, Diane Odeen

Members Absent: none

Staff Present: City Administrator Scot Simpson; City Attorney Chris Gierhart; IT Specialist Jonathan Thoen; Police Chief Gordon Young; Community Services Director/Clerk Amy White; City Engineer Todd Nickleski; Fire Chief Steven Cash; IT Manager Mike Reardon; Management Analyst Ellen Massey

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 13, 2022, Minutes

MSC Morrissette/Odeen move to approve minutes. Unanimous.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Bills: \$316,024.36

Aldersperson Bjork apologized indicating that he could not approve the bills because he did not fully review them and had a couple of questions. City Administrator Simpson explained someone else could move to approve the bills or staff could answer Bjork's questions.

Bjork had a question on an item for Tattersall and bonus dollars for staff. Simpson said anything related to salaries are charged to each of the employee's budgets. Bjork had further questions which Simpson answered. Bjork asked about Tattersall. Simpson asked for more time to find the item and provide an answer.

PUBLIC COMMENT, PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

Dana Linscott, 11395 County Road M – read a statement regarding homeless persons in River Falls.

With no other public comments, Mayor Toland asked City Administrator Simpson if he had an answer regarding Tattersall. Simpson said yes, saying it appeared to be a design assistance award for energy efficiency that the city does for new construction. **MSC Bjork/Mueller move to approve bills subject to the Comptroller. Unanimous.**

Aldersperson Downing asked Simpson if there were any homeless people who requested aid during the emergency cold. Aldersperson Morrissette asked for a point of order saying the topic was not on the agenda and didn't feel it was appropriate to discuss in public comment. Downing said he would talk about his experience saying he asked Simpson a week ago and was told there was nobody who requested aid from the city then - that was his experience.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Ordinance 2023-01 Repealing and Recreating Section 12.12.010-Street Excavations – First Reading
At 6:44 p.m., Mayor Toland moved into a public hearing. With no public comments, the mayor closed the public hearing and moved into Open Session and asked if council had questions.

Bjork asked for more information on the two ordinances. Simpson said it was a cleanup and modification on the cable franchise ordinance and related utility installation. City Attorney Gerhardt did the lion's share of work on the ordinances. Simpson said this is largely due to increasing interest in broadband internet installations in the city's right of ways. Sections of the cable franchise ordinance aren't relevant based on statewide franchise changes in laws. We are clarifying charges for installers, processes they need to follow, repair and restoration. Simpson asked Gerhardt if he had anything to add.

Gerhardt said the idea was to give the city more control and more uniformity with respect to regulating right of ways. He said the existing ordinance didn't have mechanism in place for permitting, bonding, and restoration that it should have. This is a modernization of the existing ordinance. Bjork thanked Gerhardt.

Ordinance 2023-02 Repealing and Recreating Title 18 Cable Franchise Ordinance – First Reading
At 6:46 p.m., Mayor Toland moved into a public hearing. With no public comments, the mayor closed the public hearing at 6:47 p.m. and moved into Open Session and asked if council had questions. There were no questions.

CONSENT AGENDA

Change of Agent for Walgreens→→***pulled by Morrisette***

Change of Agent for Kwik Trip 453, 1238 N. Main Street→→***pulled by Morrisette***

Resolution No. 6733 to Accept Public Improvements for Sterling 3rd and 4th Additions

MSC Odeen/Downing move to approve remainder of Consent Agenda. Unanimous.

Morrisette asked for the two agents to come to the podium to answer questions. He asked new agent Robert Slate if he understood the role of an agent, if he understood that if an alcohol related violation occurs when he is not present, he is responsible, and if he had passed his responsible server's course. Slate answered yes to all.

Because Brandyn Ruesink was a current agent, Morrisette asked Ruesink to reaffirm the three questions that were asked to Slate that he still understands his role as an agent. Ruesink said yes, he did.

MSC Morrisette/Bjork move to accept change of agents for Walgreen's and Kwik Trip Store #453. Unanimous.

REPORTS:

Administrator's Report

City Administrator Simpson reminded council that they have received a copy of the city's approach to homelessness in the community. He believes that the police department is extremely lawful in their individualized and compassionate approach. Simpson noted there are too many inaccuracies in certain public comments to even begin to correct them.

Bjork asked the mayor if landfill fees could be put on a future agenda. He thought they received a great letter about it but wanted more information. The mayor thought staff could put together information to send to council. Simpson clarified the request asking if the council would like to have an agenda item on the report about the environmental fee fund. The mayor said the report would be okay to start with then we can look at if we need to put on the agenda. Simpson asked if the report that was submitted was okay to start with. Bjork said yes. Simpson said there wouldn't be a problem presenting at the next council meeting. He usually would want two meetings to be prepared but the research has already been done.

Aldersperson Odeen said she was out of town for most of the snow but knows how hard the public works staff work to address weather events. Their work is appreciated. Morrisette agreed and said he receives a lot of very complimentary comments about how the city removes snow. He is very much appreciative of staff. Bjork also noted fixing of the power lines that went down with the heavy snow. He said the city has an outstanding utility department and public works department. It's something we should be proud of.

MSC Bjerstedt/Bjork move to adjourn at 6:52 p.m. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristi McKahan, Deputy Clerk