



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

April 28, 2020

Mayor Dan Toland called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in a virtual meeting format due to the Covid 19 pandemic. The City Council Chambers was open for public to attend.

City Council Members Present: Todd Bjerstedt, Sean Downing, Christopher Gagne, Scott Morrisette, Diane Odeen, Ben Plunkett, Hal Watson

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: City Administrator Scot Simpson; City Attorney Chris Gierhart; IT Manager Mike Reardon, Finance Director Sarah Karlsson, others

Others Present: Sean Lentz, Terri and Conrad Bekkum

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

March 24, 2020, Regular and Closed Session Meeting Minutes

MS Morrisette/Watson approve minutes. The Mayor announced there would be a roll call vote on every item. **The roll call vote passed 6-0 with all voting in favor. Alderperson Plunkett abstained.**

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Bills: April 14 \$2,233,169.51 and April 28 \$1,144,032.24

MS Odeen/Watson move to approve bills subject to the comptroller. The roll call vote passed 7-0 with all voting in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT, PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

Terri and Conrad Bekkum, 505 Kennedy Street – came out of concern about development at Cemetery and Sixth Streets. They have talked to neighbors who are also concerned. She wanted to address City communications, rentals versus home ownership, population density, land use, the integrity of the Collegeview Addition, traffic and safety concerns.

Bekkum thought the City would contact the neighborhood about the development. She suggested a senior or single-family development would be a better match for the neighborhood.

She asked the developers and City to be thoughtful about land use, population density, and light pollution. Bekkum asked the City to consider that there will be multiplexes on each side of the neighborhood and the result would be an increase in traffic. She said the greatest concern was the one main entry/exit onto Kennedy Street. She asked about the consequences in added traffic and safety. Bekkum requested increased communications from the City as the project moves forward. She thanked Council for its time. Bekkum would provide the names of other neighbors who are concerned if the Council wished.

There were no other public comments.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Resolution Approving 2020 Fee Schedule → → *pulled by Downing*

Resolution No. 6466 Referring Sterling Pond 2nd Addition Final Plat to Plan Commission for 30 Days

Resolution No. 6467 Referring Sterling Pond Cottages Final Plat to Plan Commission for 30 Days

MS Watson/Odeen move to approve the remainder of the Consent Agenda. The Mayor asked for comments/questions.

Aldersperson Gagne was concerned with other boards not meeting – specifically the Plan Commission – which could result in delays for upcoming projects. He would like to streamline some of these projects so they could be done quicker.

With no other comments, the Mayor asked for a roll call vote. It passed 7-0 with all voting in favor.

Resolution No. 6468 Approving 2020 Fee Schedule

Aldersperson Downing asked about the removal of the damage deposit for using rooms at the library. Aldersperson Odeen, who is on the Library Board, explained that was seen as unnecessary as a payment is received for use of the spaces, and if there is a problem, we know how to reach them. Downing asked if there was any recent history of damage. Odeen said there was not.

MS Downing/ Morrissette move to approve resolution. The Mayor asked for other comments/questions. Aldersperson Plunkett asked about the old shelter at Glen Park. Will it remain or be removed? Aldersperson Watson said the old shelter is being converted to house equipment for the park.

With no other comments, the Mayor asked for a vote. It passed 7-0 with all voting in favor.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution No. 6469 to Amend 2019 TW Equities, LLC Development Agreement

MS Morrissette/Gagne move to approve resolution. The Mayor asked for comments/questions.

Aldersperson Morrissette doesn't have a problem with the amendment. If the City has other requests for deferrals in the future, his suggestion is that the principal is deferred and have them pay the interest. It keeps everyone involved and is a give from the City and a give from the requestor.

With no other comments, the Mayor asked for a roll call vote. The roll call vote passed 7-0 with all voting in favor.

Resolution No. 6470 Ratifying Chief of Police Proclamations

MS Odeen/Downing move to approve resolution. The Mayor asked for questions/comments.

Aldersperson Gagne noted number 8 which says that all board meetings are suspended. He would like the City to relook at the Plan Commission or anything that has to do with livelihoods of essential businesses. He is in favor of moving quicker and having a board meeting virtually.

City Administrator Simpson noted a local emergency has been declared as well as a national and state emergency. The actions of the persons designated to act on behalf of the Council are not unchecked. This is the opportunity for the Council to review the actions that they have authorized the Police Chief, City Administrator, and Mayor to make. He wanted to clarify that there is a legislative check. Council feedback will be considered as we move forward.

Aldersperson Morrissette asked if we wanted to move forward with finding an interim solution for the Plan Commission to keep things moving at a quicker pace that this would be the time to do it?

Simpson talked about options. Morrissette would like staff to explore putting together a Plan Commission meeting to move the projects forward. Simpson noted that some of the boards would start meeting again in July and provided further information about timelines and projects. There was more discussion.

City Attorney Gierhart confirmed that this was the time for Council to review the summation of the Police Chief. The Council could suggest that the Plan Commission meeting be held to expedite these types of items. There was further discussion from Council including referrals of plats from the Plan Commission.

With no other comments, the Mayor asked for a roll call vote. The roll call vote passed 7-0 with all voting in favor.

Initial Resolution No. 6471 Authorizing General Obligation Bonds in an Amount Not to Exceed \$3,085,000 for a Police Facility

Sean Lentz, from Ehlers, provided a presentation for Council. He said the proposal was to put together four different purposes into a single general obligation corporate purpose bond issue in the amount of \$6,250,000. Lentz showed the financing over 20 years and provided detailed information on the amounts and purposes of the financing. Lentz is looking for feedback from the Council.

Morrisette asked if we were blending amortizations. Lentz said yes. Morrisette would be more comfortable paying the fire truck off in 15 years rather than 20. He also asked about the replacement schedule for fire vehicles. The Mayor asked about the reason for a longer payback period on the fire truck. Finance Director Karlsson noted that the current fire truck is 31 years old and thought 20 years would be okay to spread payments over as the truck had a longer life than 20 years.

Alderson Odeen appreciates that the City usually pays off fire trucks in 10 years, but she feels that being a little more liquid and stretching this out may make sense due to the current environment. She assumes the City could pay it off sooner. Lentz provided details on the payoff.

Alderson Plunkett asked about the interest. Lentz explained how the amount was determined.

City Administrator Simpson provided an answer to Morrisette's question regarding fire department vehicle replacement. Morrisette feels strongly that the City should have the fire truck paid off in 15 years.

Lentz continued his presentation and talked about the City's borrowing capacity, total debt levy, the effect of the refunding on the debt service, and the next steps in the process. Upon conclusion of the presentation, the Mayor asked for questions.

Alderson Watson asked Finance Director Karlsson if she had looked at the City's debt in regard to the guidelines Council set previously. Simpson explained that the Council had passed a debt management policy a few years ago. Finance Director Karlsson believed that we were complying but would review again.

Alderson Gagne asked about the City's bond rating. Lentz explained it was an AA2 and gave details.

MS Morrisette/Odeen move to approve resolution. The roll call vote passed 7-0 with all voting in favor.

Initial Resolution No. 6472 Authorizing General Obligation Bonds in An Amount Not to Exceed \$665,000 for a Fire Engine

MS Morrisette/Bjerstedt move to approve resolution. MS Morrisette/Odeen move to amend the amortization from 20 to 15 years. The Mayor asked for questions.

Alderson Gagne asked about the interest savings. Karlsson explained we would pay more off the principal and there would be interest savings. Lentz said interest savings over five years would be approximately \$28,000.

With no other questions, the Mayor asked for a vote on the amendment. The roll call vote passed 7-0 with all voting in favor.

The Mayor asked for a vote on the original motion. The roll call vote passed 7-0 with all voting in favor.

Initial Resolution No. 6473 Authorizing \$2,500,000 General Obligation Refunding Bonds

MS Morrissette/Gagne move to approve resolution. The roll call vote passed 7-0 with all voting in favor.

Resolution No. 6474 Directing Publication of Notice to Electors Relating to Bond Issue

MS Watson/Bjerstedt move to approve resolution. The roll call vote passed 7-0 with all voting in favor.

Resolution No. 6475 Providing for the Sale of \$6,250,000 General Obligation Corporate Purpose Bonds, Series 2020A

MS Morrissette/Gagne move to approve resolution. The roll call vote passed 7-0 with all voting in favor.

REPORTS:

COVID-19 Fiscal Impact on the City

Finance Director Karlsson provided a presentation for Council. She talked about the financial health of the City. The City has strong financial health with 54 percent of the undesignated fund balance in the general fund as of December 31, 2019. She talked about figures regarding revenue decline depending on the impact of the pandemic. Karlsson talked about identified expense reductions which the staff are implementing. She explained there would be a decline in revenue in the utility fund and listed the reasons for the decline. She talked about expense reductions for the utility fund. Karlsson closed by talking about the path forward.

Aldersperson Morrissette asked if we are going to be able to maintain the 50 percent of undesignated fund balance with the pandemic. Karlsson noted these are estimates but believed that the City could maintain that ratio. Morrissette also asked about the City's hiring freeze. City Administrator Simpson provided an answer.

Aldersperson Gagne asked about Police Officer field training and how long it took to complete. Police Chief Young talked about scenarios.

Aldersperson Plunkett asked about our accounting for ongoing health issues due to the Coronavirus. Karlsson said that has not been factored in because there is so much uncertainty.

Administrator's Report

City Administrator Simpson thanked the Mayor and City Council for being adaptable. He talked about staff being adaptable and exceeding expectations. He talked about technology challenges for the virtual meetings and about supporting the community and rolling out guidelines.

Comptroller's Report for March 2020

Comptroller Odeen read the following: General Fund revenues through the end of March were \$3,478,539 or 32% of total budgeted revenues for the year. Revenues in March include \$121,114 from the School Resource Officer program as well as delinquent personal property tax collections of \$46,085. Year to date expenditures through the end of March were \$2,237,747 or 21% of total budget expenditures for the year. Year to date revenues in excess of expenditures are \$1,240,792.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Police Appreciation Week Proclamation

Aldersperson Bjerstedt read the proclamation.

Clerk Week Proclamation

Aldersperson Morrissette read the proclamation.

Public Works Week Proclamation

Aldersperson Odeen read the proclamation.

Arbor Day Proclamation

Aldersperson Watson read the proclamation.

MSC Bjerstedt/Downing move to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristi McKahan, Deputy Clerk