



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

March 8, 2022

Mayor Dan Toland called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at City Hall.

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

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: City Administrator Scot Simpson; City Attorney Chris Gierhart; IT Specialist Jon Smits, IT Specialist Sterling Hackney; Utility Director Kevin Westhuis; Deputy Chief Matt Kennett; City Clerk Amy White; Community Development Director Amy Peterson; Assistant City Administrator Jason Stroud; City Engineer Todd Nickleski; Finance Director Josh Solinger; Public Works Director Mike Stifter

Others Present: Russ Korpela, others

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Approval of Minutes – February 22, 2022, Regular, Workshop, and Closed Session Minutes

MSC Morrissette/Bjerstedt move to approve minutes. Unanimous.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Bills: \$1,798,084.93

MSC Carow/Downing move to approve bills. Unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENT, PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

Aldersperson Mueller noted today was 2022 International Women’s Day. The theme is gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow. She wanted to thank all the women in her life and women (Odeen) on Council and take a moment to recognize that.

Aldersperson Downing is working to form a committee, Bee City USA. Bee City USA affiliates make commitments to conserve native pollinators which is laid out in a resolution adopted by the local City Council. City staff and community members work together to carry out the commitments and make the City a better place for pollinators. Downing invited community members who had experience in this type of work to contact him via his email (sdowning@rfcity.org).

Presentation by Russ Korpela on River Falls Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau’s 2022 Events

Russ Korpela, Executive Director of the River Falls Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau, provided a presentation on the 2022 events.

He talked about a successful grant application for a digital passport. The grant allowed the Chamber to do a digital marketing campaign. A second successful grant application was written to fund a reboot for the bluegrass festival. He provided information about the festival including the dates, bands, and number of tickets sold.

Korpela talked about River Falls Days which will have live parade and three nights of music. Bacon Bash is also receiving a reboot with a goal of getting food truck numbers back up to pre-Covid numbers and also finding a

way to cook a large amount of bacon to create a flight. The event will be moved to later in September in hopes of avoiding summer like temperatures.

Korpela talked about partnering with the Community Arts Base to bring to larger mid-week concert performances and hopefully, enhance hotel stays midweek. He concluded by talking about hotel occupancy rates and expressing appreciation for the City's support. Korpela stood for questions.

Alderson Downing thanked Korpela for adjusting the schedule for the bluegrass event and other events so to allow residents to attend so the weather doesn't impact them enjoying the events and timing is not a factor.

Alderson Mueller asked about River Falls Days fireworks and the University's Tuesdays in the Park concert series. Korpela said there will be fireworks during River Falls Days. He believed the University's concert series was affected by Covid. He is hoping the series will come back. He offered to look into it and get back to her.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Ordinance 2022-01 – Ordinance Amending the Traffic Control Map Adding a Stop Sign on Hamilton Drive at Washington Street and expanding Westside Elementary School Zone to 296 Sylla Street – Second Reading and Disposition

At 6:46 p.m., Mayor Toland recessed into a Public Hearing. With no comments, the Mayor moved back into Open Session. MSC Morrissette/Odeen move to approve the ordinance. Unanimous.

Ordinance 2022-02 - Ordinance Amending Official Parking Control Map Creating No Parking Zone at 403 N. Eighth Street – Second Reading and Disposition

At 6:47 p.m., Mayor Toland recessed into a Public Hearing. With no comments, the Mayor moved back into Open Session. MS Downing/Bjerstedt move to approve the ordinance.

Alderson Plunkett asked for the reasoning on this ordinance as he missed it. Alderson Morrissette provided details saying a car in the way was hit by a bus. **With no other comments, the Mayor asked for a vote. The ordinance passed unanimously.**

CONSENT AGENDA:

Resolution No. 6656 - Approving Request for City Support for the River Falls Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau's 2022 Events

Resolution No. 6657 - Approving Amendment to the River Falls Baseball Council Lease Agreement

MSC Morrissette/Odeen move to approve the Consent Agenda. Unanimous.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution No. 6658 - Approving Budget Adjustments

MS Bjerstedt/Mueller move to approve resolution. The Mayor asked for a roll call vote. The vote passed unanimously 7-0.

REPORTS:

Administrator's Report

City Administrator Simpson provided updates on elections, recreation and library programs, Focus on River Falls, and the firefighter of the year.

Following the report, the Mayor read a proclamation recognizing Tommy Thompson who served as the Interim President of the University of Wisconsin System from 2020-2022.

CLOSED SESSION:

At 6:56 p.m., MS Morrissette/Odeen move to recess into Closed Session per Wisconsin State Statutes §19.85(1)(e) for the following purposes:

“deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session, to wit: purchase of property in Mann Valley”.

City Administrator Simpson indicated that most likely there would be action taken coming out of Closed Session other than adjournment.

The roll call vote to move into Closed Session passed 7-0 with all voting in favor.

MS Morrissette/Downing move to reconvene into Open Session at 7:15 p.m. Unanimous.

MS Odeen/Bjerstedt move to approve the purchase of Cernohous/Evan property and that the City Administrator and City Attorney finalize the purchase. The Mayor asked for a roll call vote. The vote passed 7-0.

MSC Bjerstedt/Morrissette move to adjourn at 7:16 p.m. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristi McKahan, Deputy Clerk