

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
MAY 23, 2016 AT 5:30 PM

Mayor Horne opened the meeting by announcing that this was an open meeting of the Common Council. Notice of this meeting was given to the public at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting by forwarding the complete agenda to the official City newspaper, the New Richmond News, and to all news media who have requested the same as well as posting. Copies of the complete agenda were available for inspection at the City Clerk's office. Anyone desiring information as to forthcoming meetings should contact the City Clerk's office.

Roll call was taken.

Members Present: Mayor Horne, Alderman Zajkowski, Volkert, Montello, Kittel, Ard, and Jackson.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Alderman Ard moved to adopt the agenda as presented, seconded by Alderman Kittel and carried.

Applications for Fireworks Seller's Permit

Alderman Ard moved to approve the applications for Fireworks Seller's Permit from James Gibson and Big Bam Boom Fireworks, LLC (Joe & Debbie Morales) from June 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016, seconded by Alderman Kittel and carried.

Discussion on Presale Reports Regarding 2016 Financing Plan

Sean Lentz, from Ehlers & Associates, presented the Pre-Sale Report for the \$4,640,000 General Obligation Bonds. Sean also reviewed the current general obligation capacity and debt levy. There are two options for payments on this bonding. Option 1 is to have level payments on the tax levy portions, which would result in an estimated property tax impact of \$70 increase on a property valued at \$200,000. Option 2 is to have structured payments to reduce the tax impact, which would result in an estimated property tax impact of \$34 increase on a property valued at \$200,000. Option 2 would add approximately \$120,000 in interest expense over the life of the issue. There was discussion regarding possible future bonding and the impact that could have on the City. On June 13, 2016, the City Council may approve the Presale Report and call for the sale of the bonds. On July 11, 2016, the council can approve the sale of the bonds with closing to be on August 4, 2016. It was the consensus of the Council to proceed with Option one. Sean will put together some projections for the Council to look at.

Proposed Bonding on Behalf of Westfields Hospital, Inc.

Mike Darrow explained that we were hoping to receive specific information from Westfields today, unfortunately we did not receive it. This is the same type of pass through borrowing that ESR did recently. The maximum borrowing that the City can do in a year is \$10 million without higher interest rates. We also requested that Westfields split the borrowing with the Village of Star Prairie. A Public Hearing is scheduled for the June 13, 2016 meeting and we wanted to Council to be aware of it prior to the public hearing. Steve Massey will be at the meeting to answer any questions.

WITC Contract for Public Access Channel

Mike Darrow reviewed the contract. Alex Birkholz stated that in the past the City had budgeted \$16,000 each year, but in 2015 the budget amount was under \$12,000 due to benefit changes for WITC staff. City staff is recommending approval of another contract, however in the next year we need to look at short and long term needs. Over the last few years, we have increased our presence through social media as well as the ability to provide videos in house. We will report back on the findings prior to the contract being renewed for WITC fiscal year 17-18. Alex Birkholz explained that WITC has been providing the public access channel since 1985. It is no longer required to provide a public access channel, but many other municipalities do provide these. The equipment used at WITC was purchased in 2005 and new equipment is needed with an estimated cost of \$15,000. Discussion followed. Viewers who have high

definition televisions now watch this public access on channel 600 rather than on channel 6 for those who don't have HD. Many are unhappy about this change. Before the City invests in long-term capital equipment, we need to evaluate where things are at. Alderman Montello moved to approve the contract with WITC for one year, seconded by Alderman Ard and carried.

Fire Department Pay Scale for New Recruits

Mike Darrow explained that at this time the new recruits are paid at the same rate as existing firefighters regardless of training. Staff requested approval of the proposed pay scale for new recruits. They would start out at \$10 per hour and as they get more and more training, their pay would increase. Jim VanderWyst will come back to the Council with a more in depth pay scale program. Alderman Montello moved to accept the Staff recommendation for the new pay scale for starting fire fighters in training, seconded by Alderman Ard and carried.

Proposed Ordinance Discussion

Mike Darrow explained that Nick Vivian, City Attorney, put this ordinance together for the operation of City Cemeteries. This is the first reading. The Council will discuss the ordinance and other procedural policies at another Council meeting. Discussion followed.

Proposed Ordinance Amendment – Agricultural Uses

Jeremiah Wendt explained this ordinance. There are a number of parcels in the City that have crops planted on them. We are trying to balance the zoning ordinance and the weed ordinance. It's difficult for staff to police this. The DRC has reviewed the proposed ordinance that was drafted by Dan Licht. The ordinance puts limits on the crops permitted and allows for a permit process for the property owner. If an area is zoned for agriculture it is fine to have crops. However, if you have a few lots in a development that are empty, you would need to get a permit before planting any crops. Considerable discussion followed. Changes will be made to the ordinance and it will come back to the next work session.

Doar Trail Concept Proposal

Mike Darrow gave a review of the concept and explained that before John passed away, he gave his approval of the concept. The Doar family has expressed interest in funding this project. The Park Board will work on the design. Alderman Ard moved to approve the concept proposal for the Doar Trail, seconded by Alderman Jackson and carried.

Senior Center Proposal

Mike Darrow explained that the seniors have requested to move into Room #2 of civic center basement at this time. In order to accommodate the Senior Citizens, we would have to purchase a commercial refrigerator and a commercial dishwasher. Staff will come back to the Council with more details. Alderman Montello moved to proceed with the accommodations that are needed, seconded by Alderman Ard and carried.

CDBG/Commons Update

Mike Darrow stated that we are submitting the grant this week. Ten percent of the total cost of the grant has to be paid by the City, but will be reimbursed by the school.

First Quarter Financial Review

Mike Darrow presented the first quarter financial review and thanked staff for their diligence in sticking with the budget. Mike was impressed with the spending within all of the different departments.

Strategic Plan

Mike explained that the process is starting. Surveys have gone out to the Council. We would like to ask the community where the City's money go and send out a survey to the community to see what their thoughts are on different areas. The findings will be brought back to the work session in June.

Closed Session

Alderman Ard moved to go into Closed Session per State Statute 19.85 (1)(e)(g) to discuss TIF #6 and Litigation Update Regarding New Richmond News, seconded by Alderman Jackson and carried. Alderman Volkert voted no.

Open Session

No action was taken.

Communications & Miscellaneous

Alderman Ard asked for help with setting up for the Blues & Brews Festival.

Alderman Ard moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Alderman Zajkowski and carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Tanya Reigel
City Clerk