

**City of Auburn**  
**Monday, February 16, 2021**  
**Minutes**

Mayor Berola called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Clerk Barnhill called roll call.

**Present in Council Chambers:** Tom Berola, Julie Barnhill, Jason Garrett, , Rod Johnson, Bill Karhliker, Ben Royer, Joe Powell, Tracy Sheppard and Superintendent TJ Henson.

**Present via ZOOM Teleconferencing:** Larry Hemmerle, Mike Marquis (arrival 7:27 pm), Office Manager Kristy Ponsler and Attorney Greg Moredock.

**Absent:** None

**I. Mayor's Comments**

The Mayor indicated that tonight's meeting will happen via ZOOM Teleconferencing due to statewide COVID-19 pandemic

**A. Gas Information**

Mayor Berola informed the Council that with the rising gas prices over the weekend, he asked Lindsay Enloe to attend the meeting and share his thoughts on the issue. Enloe did indicated that pricing came down that morning hoping for \$160 per dth. He also indicated that the weather is getting better and usage will decrease. In the meantime, Governor Pritzker has issued an Executive Declaration of Disaster and is looking into price gouging and fixing. Representative Mike Murphy was in attendance and shared his thoughts on addressing this above and beyond from the State and how citizens have been affected by this disaster. Murphy is hoping that a federal grant or long-term low interest loan will be available. Representative Murphy encourages all to call him with questions.

Mayor Berola indicated that the City might not be able to make payment for the city's gas bill let alone our customers. Enloe indicated that this will continue to be looked into even once the prices go back down. The Public Utilities Committee will meet separately to discuss options for citizens for their gas bills.

**B. Accept Resignation of Wayde Rathgeber on Zoning Board**

Mayor Berola informed the Council that Zoning Board Member Wayde Rathgeber has submitted his resignation effective immediately. Berola read the letter of resignation to the Council for their approval.

Motion by Johnson second by Karhliker to approve the resignation of Wayde Rathgeber from the Zoning Board effective immediately. (8-0-0-0)

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Powell, Royer and Sheppard

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

**C. Hen Ordinance Meeting – February 17, 2021 at 7 p.m.**

Mayor Berola reminded Council members and the public that there will be a public Hen Ordinance discussion via ZOOM ON February 17 at 7 p.m. for the public to address their concerns.

**II. VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**A. Visitors or Visitor Comments**

No public comments.

**III. ZONING**

Alderman Sheppard informed the Council that the Zoning Board met on February 10.

**A)** *Williams Landers* participated via Zoom and shared his plans for the 67.32 acres that he would like to develop north of Casey's on Rt 4 and Rt 104. The Zoning Board informed Landers that engineering and all needs to be completed prior to seeking approval at the Zoning Board.

**B) Zoning Requirements for Marijuana**

The Zoning Board started discussions regarding the sale of, and cultivation in city limits and will continue to discuss at the next meeting. No action was taken.

**C) Recorder**

Alderman Sheppard request that the Council consider ordering a recorder for Zoning Board minutes.

Motion by Royer second by Sheppard to approve the purchase of a recorder for the Zoning Board not to exceed \$150. (8-0-0-0)

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Powell, Royer and Sheppard

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

**IV. CITY CLERK'S REPORT – BARNHILL**

**A. February 1, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Clerk Barnhill presented the February 1, 2021 meeting minutes for the Council's review and approval.

Motion by Royer second by Garrett to approve the February 1, 2021 meeting minutes. (8-0-0-0)

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Powell, Royer and Sheppard

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

**B. Biannual Review of Closed Session Minutes**

Clerk Barnhill shared that the Council met for the Biannual Review of Closed Session Minutes before tonight's Council meeting and no action was taken.

**V. TREASURER'S REPORT – WARWICK**

**A. Bills List January 20, 2021 to February 16, 2021**

City Treasurer Chris Warwick shared with the Council the Bills List January 20, 2021 to February 16, 2021 for their review and approval.

Motion by Sheppard second by Powell to approve the Bills List January 20, 2021 to February 16, 2021. (8-0-0-0)

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Powell, Royer and Sheppard

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

**VI. ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

**A. Second Reading, Ordinance 1492-21 – An Ordinance Approving a Loan Agreement in the Principal Amount of \$1,832,013.39 with IEPA and Authorizing and Providing for the Issue of Waterworks Revenue Bonds in a Like Principal Amount of the City of Auburn, Sangamon County, Illinois for the Purpose of Defraying Cost of Extending and Improving the Waterworks System of Said City**

Attorney Moredock shared with the Council the Second Reading, Ordinance 1492-21 – An Ordinance Approving a Loan Agreement in the Principal Amount of \$1,832,013.39 with IEPA and Authorizing and Providing for the Issue of Waterworks Revenue Bonds in a Like Principal Amount of the City of Auburn, Sangamon County, Illinois for the Purpose of Defraying Cost of Extending and Improving the Waterworks System of Said City for their review and approval.

Motion by Johnson second by Powell to approve Ordinance 1492-21 – An Ordinance Approving a Loan Agreement in the Principal Amount of \$1,832,013.39 with IEPA and Authorizing and Providing for the Issue of Waterworks Revenue Bonds in a Like Principal Amount of the City of Auburn, Sangamon County, Illinois for the Purpose of Defraying Cost of Extending and Improving the Waterworks System of Said City. (8-0-0-0)

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Powell, Royer and Sheppard

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

**B. Second Reading, Ordinance 1493-21 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 30 of the City Code Regarding Cannabis Business Establishments**

Attorney Moredock indicated that no action would be taken on Ordinance 1493-21 tonight as it is still with Zoning in the discussion phase.

**VII. DEPARTMENT HEADS**

**Campbell**

Chief Dave Campbell informed the Council that Officer Straube has resigned from the Auburn Police Department effective January 31, 2021. Campbell did present to the Council that he would like to hire John Pearce as a full-time officer.

Motion by Royer second Sheppard to approve hiring John Pearce as a full-time police officer within the City of Auburn Police Department at the rate dictated by union contract and effective February 13, 2021. (8-0-0-0)

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Powell, Royer and Sheppard

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

**Henson**

Superintendent TJ Henson thanked the staff of the garage with all the water main breaks and the infrastructure update project. Henson also thanked the citizens of Auburn for their patience and the coffee and items brought to the workers in the middle of night.

**Ponsler**

Office Manager Kristy Ponsler did not have a report.

**VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**A. Administration – Johnson**

Alderman Johnson provided an update on the Covid Policy revision that the Administration Committee discussed. Covid-19 Policy will be added to the next Council meeting agenda.

Alderman Royer would like to see the billing postcard size increased to allow for additional information to be placed on it. Royer is working with Office Manager Ponsler to pursue options for a larger size media.

**Public Works – Karhliker**

Alderman Karhliker informed the Council that he is working on bids for tree removal.

**Public Utilities – Johnson**

Alderman Johnson indicated that he did not have a report.

**Health & Safety – Sheppard**

Alderwoman Sheppard indicated that she did not have a report.

**Health & Housing – Sheppard**

Alderwoman Sheppard indicated that she did not have a report.

**Parks – Hemmerle**

Alderman Hemmerle indicated that he did not have a report.

**Economic Development**

Economic Development Representative Chris Warwick shared with the Council that he is working with the group out of Springfield that works with Ameren and retail establishments. .

**IX. OTHER BUSINESS**

Alderman Garrett shared with the Council that he is working with Office Manager Ponsler to offer an option for the citizens of Auburn to be able to receive text messages instead of phone calls when emergency situations arise. Garrett stated that after having put an informal Facebook post in the field, an over whelming number of citizens preferred receiving texts messages as opposed to an “all-call.” Garrett stated there would still be an option for those wish to receive both e-mails and phone available by choice. Garrett went on to report that the price for this service was less than half of the current service. Additionally, Clerk Barnhill mentioned that the vendor in this case offered software for the clerk that was compatible with a new version of Clerk software that had been looked into previously.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Garrett second by Sheppard to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 p.m. Passed by voice vote. (8-0-0-0)

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Powell, Royer and Sheppard

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Barnhill  
City Clerk