

**444City of Auburn**  
**Monday, January 19, 2021**  
**Minutes**

Mayor Berola called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. due to some technology issues.

Clerk Barnhill called roll call.

**Present in Council Chambers:** Tom Berola, Julie Barnhill, Chris Warwick, Larry Hemmerle, Rod Johnson, Joe Powell and Ben Royer

**Present via ZOOM Teleconferencing:** Jason Garrett, Bill Karhliker, Mike Marquis, Tracy Sheppard, Chief Dave Campbell, Superintendent TJ Henson, Attorney Greg Moredock and Office Manager Kristy Ponsler

**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. Appointment of Alderman Marquis to committees**

Mayor Berola recommended to the Council for Alderman Mike Marquis to be placed on the previously held committees by former Alderman Lori Basiewicz, in which Alderman Marquis replaced. Those committees are: Health & Safety, Parks and Administration.

Motion by Hemmerle second by Powell to appoint Ward 1 Alderman Mike Marquis to the committees of Health & Safety, Parks and Administration. (8-0-0)

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

**B. Presentation of plaques for years of services**

Mayor Berola acknowledged that the City of Auburn has prepared a plaque for Alderman Lori Basiewicz, who could not attend the Council meeting tonight. Berola thanked former Alderman Basiewicz for her commitment to the City of Auburn and indicated that he would make sure former Alderman Basiewicz would receive the plaque.

Mayor Berola then presented a plaque to former City Office Manager Connie Powell for her 33 years of dedication to the City of Auburn. C. Powell never received a plaque or recognition from the City of Auburn for her service.

**C. Water Fee**

Mayor Berola addressed the concerns regarding the \$11 water fee increase that was passed by the Council and placed on the January 2021 bills. Berola indicated that the water main lines have been in the ground since 1920 and these pipes are 100 years old and need to be replaced. The City of Auburn does not charge residents any type of corporate tax and Berola indicated that the City of Auburn wants to have safe water for their residents and visitors to the City. The City is torn up all around right now as the new lines are being replaced. The infrastructure update is way overdue and is something that must be done.

**D. City Office Reopens**

Mayor Berola shared with the Council that the City Office reopened effective Tuesday, Tuesday, January 19. This reopening is allowed because of moving into Phase 4 of Restore Illinois. Masks are still required.

**II. VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENTS**

A. No visitors or visitor comments.

**III. ZONING**

Alderman Sheppard indicated no report.

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

**A. January 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Clerk Barnhill presented the January 4, 2021 meeting minutes for the Council's review and approval.

Motion by Royer second by Johnson to approve the January 4, 2021 meeting minutes. (8-0-0-0)

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

**V. TREASURER'S REPORT – WARWICK**

**A. Bills List January 5, 2021 to January 19, 2021**

City Treasurer Chris Warwick presented the Bills List for January 5, 2021 to January 19, 2021 to the Council for their review and approval.

Motion by Sheppard second by Royer to approve the Bills List for January 5, 2021 to January 19, 2021. (8-0-0-0)

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

**B. December 2020 Cash Report**

Treasurer Warwick presented the December 2020 Cash Report for the Council's review and approval.

Motion by Sheppard second by Royer to approve the December 2020 Cash Report.  
(8-0-0-0)

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

**C. Video Gaming**

Treasurer Warwick shared information regarding video gaming for October with the Council. Warwick also informed the Council that the year to date is down 11%. The Council members weren't shocked by this and realize that half of November gaming was off-line and the rest of November, all of December 2020 and most of January 2021 were the same.

**VI. ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

**A. Discussion of the Hen Ordinance for the City of Auburn**

Attorney Moredock shared with the Council a draft copy of the Hen Ordinance for the City of Auburn. Moredock indicated that the framework of this document was based on communities that currently have regulations in place allowing hens. Auburn resident Frank Muro informed the Council of the proper time to purchase hens and shared some pertinent information for having hens. Alderman Garrett indicated that by mandating the use of a "special variance" would also charge \$300 for the right of having chickens, he felt that it was unnecessary. Garrett notified the entire council that use of this variance would also require notice to all neighbors, giving them the ability to disapprove. He also stated that the framework for this document should not be from cities that their populations are so much higher than ours, Bloomington and Washington. It should be based on communities that are like Auburn Illinois. Alderman Garrett asked if the City should consider looking at what Resident Jessica Lance shared with the Council. Mayor Berola indicated that this is a work in progress and we only have on shot to getting this right so input and research are the keys. Muro indicated that he understands that it is a work in progress and doesn't feel that a fee of \$300 is necessary, he doesn't feel that the neighbor needs to be contacted, and he does understand that it is not an overnight fix for hens. Berola indicated that he will work to schedule a planning meeting announcement before the next meeting that will be open to the public.

**VII. DEPARTMENT HEADS**

**Campbell**

Chief Dave Campbell informed the Council that Officer Lavin will be on his own beginning February 1 and he has exceeded all expectations.

### Henson

Superintendent TJ Henson informed the Council that the guys are doing a great job. City employees will accompany Murphy Bros staff when going into someone's home to change out meters. Overall Henson believes the work is going smoothly. Alderman Royer commended all the efforts and hard work to everyone involved.

### Ponsler

Office Manager Kristy Ponsler indicated that they have received numerous calls regarding the \$11 fee increase and the gas increase. Ponsler is encouraging everyone to register their account online so they can see their usage. Just because you register online doesn't mean you have to pay your bill on there, it just means you can monitor all the usage. Ponsler also stated that if someone feels there might be an error, they can send someone to recheck the reading is correct.

## VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### A. Administration – Johnson

#### 1. Interest Rates

Alderman Johnson indicated after researching interest bearing accounts and what is being currently offered, the current status of our accounts are higher than any CD available. Remaining put is the best option right now.

#### 2. Executive Session

Alderman Johnson indicated that no action was taken.

#### 3. Code Enforcement Officer

Alderman Johnson indicated that no action was taken, and discussion will continue on the subject of hiring a Code Enforcement Officer.

### Public Works – Karhliker

Alderman Karhliker informed the Council that planning for receiving Rebuild Illinois Funds, (3 year, \$105,000 per year) is currently in discussion. Some ideas are:

- 1) Sidewalks around the Square Area.
- 2) Rebuild North St. from 7Th St. to Red Bud.
- 3) Sidewalks on Jackson St. from the Shopping Center to Rt. 4  
(This applies only to those streets that don't already have sidewalks on Jackson St.)

All Rebuilding Illinois Funds must be used by July 2025. These funds are not MFT funds but are similar.

### Public Utilities – Johnson

Alderman Johnson shared with the Council information regarding the Auburn IEPA Reimbursement #5.

Motion by Johnson second by Royer to approve the Auburn IEPA Reimbursement #5 in the amount of \$350,904.50 of which \$190,185.62 will be out of the loan and \$160,718.80 will be paid for from the gas meter savings account. (8-0-0-0)

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

NAYES: None  
ABSENT: None

### **Health & Safety – Sheppard**

#### **1) Radar Cart**

Alderman Sheppard shared with the Council that the Health & Safety Committee met on January 13 and is recommending that a radar cart be purchased.

Motion by Garrett second by Sheppard to purchase a Radar Cart not to exceed \$7200 to the specific requirements outlined by Chief Campbell. (8-0-0-0)

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Powell, Royer and Sheppard  
NAYES: None  
ABSENT: None

#### **2) Duty Weapons**

Chief Campbell is working on finding out the purchase dates of all weapons within the City of Auburn Police Department.

#### **3) In Car Computers**

Chief Campbell informed the Council that some of the cameras are not working in police cars; four cameras need to be replaced; software and back ups files determined by the county are slowing down computers and updated software will be necessary, and on-site storage is also an issue.

Motion by Royer second by Marquis to purchase four new cameras that need to be replaced in police cards that will not exceed \$7300. (8-0-0-0)

AYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Johnson, Karhliker, Marquis, Powell, Royer and Sheppard  
NAYES: None  
ABSENT: None

Alderman Sheppard indicated that Health & Safety will be meeting to discuss leaf burning on Wednesday, January 27, 7 p.m.

### **Health & Housing – Sheppard**

Alderman Sheppard indicated that she did not have a report at this time.

### **Parks – Hemmerle**

Alderman Hemmerle provided the Council an update from the January 13 parks committee meeting.

#### **1) East Park Planning**

Alderman Hemmerle indicated that the committee is looking into taking down the pavilion; improving the lighting and electrical, updating restrooms and placing ADA play equipment. Alderman Royer asked if the Council would be in favor of removing the pavilion and Henson indicated that he hopes that would be after the water project is complete. Royer indicated yes.

#### **2) Other Needs and Updates**

Alderman Hemmerle also indicated that they are taking a look at other parks and what the needs are for each.

Hemmerle did ask if anyone knew the status of the garbage cans that were ordered for the square. Royer indicated that he had ordered them.

**3) Willie Landers**

Willie Landers attended the January 13 meeting via zoom sharing plans for the land north of Casey's on 104 and 4. Talks will continue to Mr. Landers regarding his plans of wanting to include a park in his development.

**Economic Development**

Economic Development Representative Chris Warwick indicated that he would like to schedule a committee meeting for Wednesday, January 27, 6:30 p.m. Warwick indicated that he has reached out to Keith Morean, EDC Consultant, regarding some EDC ideas and will be attending the January 27 meeting.

**IX. OTHER BUSINESS**

Alderman Karhliker would like to correct a fact on the water system. It was installed in 1935 and is 90 years old, not 1920 and 100 years old as stated earlier in meeting.

Alderman Garrett addressed the Council asking for input regarding the sidewalk program. Garrett would like all wards to provide sidewalk requests to him regarding each respective ward.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Garrett second by Sheppard to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 p.m. Passed by voice vote. (7-1-0-0)

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

NAYES: Garrett

ABSENT: None

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Barnhill  
City Clerk