

**City of Auburn**  
**Monday, March 1, 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, Chris Warwick, Jason Garrett, Larry Hemmerle, Mike Marquis, Rod Johnson, Bill Karhliker, Ben Royer, Joe Powell, Tracy Sheppard and Attorney Greg Moredock.

**Present via ZOOM Teleconferencing:** Office Manager Kristy Ponsler, Chief Dave Campbell and Superintendent TJ Henson

**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 indicated that the Public Utilities Committee met on Thursday evening to discuss the gas usage and the potential cost for the month of February. To prepare to pay the usage bill the City of Auburn will need to approve Resolution 87-21 Illinois Finance Authority Debt Certificate.

Motion by Johnson second by Karhliker to approve Resolution 87-21 Illinois Finance Authority Debt Certificate. (8-0-0-0)

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

**B. Recognizing employee milestones**

Mayor Berola informed the Council that he has been working with Alderman Garrett for recognizing employees that have milestones with the City of Auburn. As of this Friday, Superintendent TJ Henson will have 20 years of service with the City of Auburn and was commended for his dedication and service.

**II. VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**A. Visitors or Visitor Comments**

Representatives from the Gold Mine Gaming was in attendance seeking a Class A License to open a gaming establishment in the Medics First Building at the Save A Lot Plaza. Gold Mine Gaming representative indicated that the company gives back to the community and is hoping to employ residents from the community. Attorney Moredock will cover the reading of Ordinance 1494-21 under his report.

**III. ZONING**

No Report

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

**A. February 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Clerk Barnhill presented the February 16, 2021 meeting minutes for the Council's review and approval.

Motion by Royer second by Marquis to approve the February 16, 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 February 17, 2021 to March 1, 2021**

City Treasurer Chris Warwick shared with the Council the Bills List February 17, 2021 to March 1, 2021 for their review and approval.

Motion by Johnson second by Sheppard to approve the Bills List February 17, 2021 to March 1, 2021. (8-0-0-0)

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

**B. January 2021 Cash Report**

City Treasurer Chris Warwick shared with the Council the January 2021 Cash Report for their review and approval.

Motion by Johnson second by Sheppard to approve the January 2021 Cash Report. (8-0-0-0)

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

**VI. ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

**A. First Reading, Ordinance 1494-21 – Ordinance Amending the City Liquor Code to Add A Class A License**

Attorney Moredock shared with the Council the first reading of Ordinance 1494-21 – Ordinance Amending the City Liquor Code to Add a Class A License for their review. Representatives from the Gold Mine Gaming are seeking a Class A liquor license to open a gaming establishment in the old Medics First Building with the Save A Lot Plaza.

**B. Covid Policy**

Attorney Moredock indicated that there was no additional information regarding the Covid Policy at this time.

**C. Discussion of Chicken Ordinance – Committee Meeting, February 17, 2021**

Attorney Moredock has shared with the Council a draft of the Chicken Ordinance for their review. Alderman Garrett had shared some input and Moredock indicated that he has included it in the draft document. Moredock indicated that if any other Council member has alternative language or suggestions to please pass them along. He did indicate that he would like to have everyone's input prior to presenting document to Zoning.

**VII. DEPARTMENT HEADS**

**Campbell**

**Resignation**

Chief Dave Campbell informed the Council that Officer Nick Todd has resigned from the Auburn Police Department effective March 10, 2021.

Motion by Sheppard second Royer to accept the resignation of Officer Nick Todd effective March 10, 2021. (8-0-0-0)

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

**Recognition**

Chief Campbell also wanted to commend Officers Lavin & Pearce on a job well done of helping diabetic patient. Campbell also commended Officer Crissey on stopping a major medical accident. Alderman Royer commended Officers Kissel and Pearce for an assist on a CPR situation.

**VOIP Phone System**

Chief Campbell shared information regarding the possibility of purchasing VOIP Phone System. Campbell indicated that he has been working with Office Manager Ponsler. Ponsler did share with the Council that apparently Frontier automatically renewed in January of 2021. Attorney Moredock ask for the Frontier contract to be forwarded to him for review. Alderman Johnson would like to hold off until the end of March due to the fact of everything the City of Auburn is dealing with on the gas situation.

### **Henson**

Superintendent TJ Henson provided an update on the facilities plan:

- Gas meters started being replaced today and it is going slow.
- 1100 water meters have been installed of the 1900

### **Ponsler**

Office Manager Kristy Ponsler provided information to the Council regarding the request from Alderman Royer to check into increasing the size of the billing postcard so additional information could be placed on it. Ponsler indicated that the size could increase to a 6x9 with the same amount of postage for only a two cent increase.

Motion by Johnson second by Royer to increase the size of the billing postcard to a 6x9 and will begin using in future months. (8-0-0-0)

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

## **VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **A. Administration – Johnson**

Alderman Johnson did not have a report. Johnson did indicate that 3 unions are seeking negotiations for the future.

### **Public Works – Karhliker**

Alderman Karhliker did not have a report.

### **Public Utilities – Johnson**

#### **Gas**

Alderman Johnson shared with the Council the discussion of the Public Utilities Committee. Discussion of the gas issue was continued, and Johnson shared that the average cost per unit was \$30. The city consumed \$882,681 and the price last month was \$138,000.

The City of Auburn is seeking low interest loan in the amount of \$750,000.

Motion by Johnson second by Garrett to approve the seeking of a low interest loan, 1% for 3 years, in the amount of \$750,000. (8-0-0-0)

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

Alderman Johnson also shared that the Public Utilities Committee is recommending that the current rate of \$10.05 for natural gas, consumed by customers, be billed for the month of February due March 30.

Motion by Johnson second by Garrett to approve the current rate of \$10.05 for natural gas, consumed by customer, be billed for the month of February due March 30.

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

Discussions continue among the Council of how to proceed with future billing for the unprecedented gas rates.

#### **Auburn IEPA Reimbursement Packet #7**

Alderman Johnson shared with the Council that he had received the IEPA reimbursement packet #7 for review and approval.

Motion by Johnson second Garret to approve the IEPA reimbursement packet #7 in the amount of \$115,686.58. (7-0-0-1)

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Karhliker

#### **Health & Safety – Sheppard**

Alderwoman Sheppard indicated that she is working with Chief Campbell and Officer Manager Ponsler on the police overtime between March 1 and December 31 refund.

#### **Health & Housing – Sheppard**

Alderwoman Sheppard indicated that she did not have a report but wanted to make sure that Pearce – 442 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Parsons residence were both on the agenda for the next meeting.

Sheppard also shared that she is working on some changes for the upcoming mowing season with citations for weeds and non-mowing.

#### **Parks – Hemmerle**

Alderman Hemmerle indicated that Timmy Stewart would begin working on the dugout repairs.

#### **Economic Development**

Economic Development Representative Chris Warwick shared with the Council that he is hoping that the Council would build into the next fiscal year budget monies for EDC. Warwick shared that maybe \$4000 to \$5000 would be a good amount. .

### **IX. OTHER BUSINESS**

Alderman Royer did ask when the power to the square might happen. Superintendent Henson did indicate that power to the square was on the backburner due to everything else going on in the city. Royer wanted to make sure the City was aware that some of the businesses on the square are planning outdoor activities for this upcoming spring/summer so we do need to start working toward getting that extra electricity box to the square.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Garrett second by Sheppard to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 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