

City of Auburn
Monday, September 21, 2020
Minutes

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

Present in Council Chambers: Tom Berola, Julie Barnhill, Chris Warwick, Lori Basiewicz, Jason Garrett, Larry Hemmerle, Rod Johnson, Bill Karhliker, Joe Powell, Ben Royer, Tracy Sheppard and Attorney Greg Moredock.

Absent: None

Department Heads in Council Chambers: Chief Dave Campbell and Superintendent TJ Henson

Department Heads Absent: None

Present via ZOOM Teleconferencing: City Office Manager Kristy Ponsler

I. Mayor's Comments

II. Visitors/Public Comments

III. Zoning

Alderswoman Sheppard informed the Council that the upcoming Zoning meeting scheduled for September 9, 2020 was once again cancelled.

IV. City Clerk's Report – Barnhill

A. September 8, 2020 Meeting Minutes

City Clerk Julie Barnhill presented the September 8, 2020 meeting minutes for the Council's review and approval. The minutes were updated prior to the meeting with Alderman Johnson's recommendation

Motion by Garrett second by Sheppard to approve the September 8, 2020 meeting minutes with the updated included from Alderman Johnson. (8-0-0-0)

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

V. City Treasurer's Report – Warwick

A. Bills List September 9, 2020 to September 21, 2020

City Treasurer Chris Warwick presented the Bills List for September 9, 2020 to September 21, 2020 to the Council for their review and approval.

Motion by Sheppard second by Basiewicz to approve the Bills List for September 9, 2020 to September 21, 2020. (8-0-0-0)

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

VI. Attorney – Moredock

A. First Reading, Ordinance 1487-20 – Amending the Liquor Code to Prohibit Occupancy of Licensed Establishments During Certain Hours

Attorney Moredock shared with the Council the First Reading, Ordinance 1487-20 – Amending the Liquor Code to Prohibit Occupancy of Licensed Establishments During Certain Hours for their review.

B. First Reading, Ordinance 1488-20 -- Amending the Liquor Code to Change the Number of Licenses Available

Attorney Moredock shared with the Council the First Reading, Ordinance 1488-20 Amending the Liquor Code to Change the Number of Licenses Available for their review.

C. Discussion of Chapter 13 Article V and VI of the Code of Ordinances as they Pertain to Buildings Damaged by Fire

Attorney Moredock discussed with the Council of the various options the Council has to deal with buildings damaged by fire. The house on North Grand that burnt almost two years ago still has walls up but no additional movement on the property has commenced. Additional follow up will be done with the property owner that will ask for further information on the status of the property and next steps. A potential invite to the next council meeting may be done in order to get more information on how best to proceed.

VII. Department Heads

A. Police Department – Campbell

Chief Campbell shared with the Council that Officer Lavin is doing well at school and is the oldest cadet in the class.

B. Public Works – Henson

1. JTPA Student Worker

Superintendent TJ Henson informed the Council that he would like to hire a JTPA Student Worker. This student is from Auburn High School and is picked by Tommy Meyer. Henson indicated that they have had JTPA students prior to this and have always been a success. After discussion the pay, City Office Manager

Ponslers indicated that he would reach out to the school to find out what portion they pay and rate portion the City is responsible for.

Motion by Royer second by Basiewicz to approve the hiring of a JTPA student worker to work at the Auburn City Garage. (8-0-0-0)

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

2. New Garage Employee

Henson indicated that they completed interviews and has one candidate that they are in the process of running background check and physical. Once that is complete, Henson will bring the candidate into the Council meeting.

3. Trojan Road Tree

Henson informed the Council that a tree on Trojan Road needs to be either cleaned up or taken down. Henson indicated that he will get bids to do either way. The Council recommended just taking the tree down.

Henson also indicated that MB Construction will start water meter replacement in December and should take approximately a month and half. Henson also informed the Council that Alderman karhliker made a good call on ordering the second storm pump because the second storm pump when out and needed to be replaced. They are checking into repairing the motor and could be approximately \$2000.

C. City Office – Ponsler

City Office Manager Kristy indicated to the Council that a flyer is being drafted for public safety awareness that will go out to all residents stating that workers will be out and about.

The Council agreed that when workers need to go into residents home, a City employee will need to be present.

VIII. Committee Reports

A. Administration – Johnson

Alderman Johnson informed the Council that they have received the new insurance rates and they did not increase. A meeting will be set up with the employee and/or union representative to determine if they will remain with current plan or if they want to pursue a new plan.

Alderman John also informed the Council that the MacAir Books are in for all the council members and he would be picking them up later in the week.

B. Public Works – Karhliker

Alderman Karhliker indicated that the ReBuild Illinois Funds are available until July 2025. The City of Auburn will receive \$104,809.22 total in 2020. They will receive in a 3 year process \$314,427.66 for MFT. Karhliker informed the Council that bonds have to be sold from the State of Illinois for the City to receive the monies. Money has to be used on roads, sidewalks and sewer. Mayor Berola also asked if the bridge work on Divernon road could be included in this process and Alderman Karhliker said yes.

C. Public Utilities – Johnson

1. RECC Franchise Agreement

Alderman Johnson indicated that REA has contacted him providing a comparison of franchise fees for Ameren and RECC. The request from RECC was for the City to re-evaluate the current franchise fee that RECC pays the city annually. The franchise fee cost per customer for the two electric providers was provided as follows:

RECC = \$4000/\$167 customers = \$24.84/customer

Ameren = \$14,780/1742 customers = \$8.48/customer

The latest Ameren franchise agreement was not determined by the city, but the city was told by Ameren what they were going to pay as the franchise fee based upon the total years determined in the agreement.

Alderman Garrett questioned why the city would consider lowering the current rates as we had spent time on two previous matters that would only raise revenues for the City. This would be taking a step backwards.

Motion by Johnson second by Karhliker to revise REA franchise fee to be in accordance with Ameren franchise fee to \$1416.91 for the next 10 years. (3-5-0-0)

AYES: Basiewicz, Johnson and Karhliker

NAYES: Garrett, Hemmerle, Powell, Royer and Sheppard

ABSENT: None

Alderman Johnson will ask a representative from REA to attend the next Council meeting to discuss since the offer was rejected.

D. Health & Safety – Sheppard

1. Hiring FT Police Officer

Alderman Sheppard indicated that they would like to hire a seventh full-time officer with the Council's approval. Chief Campbell informed the Council that there is a 33% increase in domestic abuse in Auburn. Call volumes and domestic violence are both increasing.

Motion by Basiewicz second by Sheppard to hire a full-time officer to increase the full time police officer staff by 1. Compensation will be based on the union scale. (8-0-0-0)

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

Communications/Answering System for Dispatch

Chief Campbell informed the Council that all calls now will be passed through dispatch. In the past messages could be left on the 438-3351 line but officers are so busy they don't have time to come back and check messages. It is better for it to pass through Sangamon County dispatch.

E. Health & Housing – Sheppard

Alderman Sheppard informed the Council that the Electronic Recycling Event that happened on Saturday, September 19 was very successful.

Alderman Powell indicated that there will be drive in flu shot at the firehouse on November 23, 10 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.

F. Parks – Hemmerle

Approval for additional Bricks and Pavers in city square

Alderman Hemmerle indicated that former Mayor Barb Stamer received out to the City office to inquire about additional bricks and pavers for the city square.

Hemmerle informed the Council that he would touch base with Barb to see what she is actually wanting/need and will get back to the Council.

G. Economic Development Committee – Basiewicz

Alderman Basiewicz informed the Council that Treasurer Chris Warwick reached out to Ryan McCready, Sangamon County EDC, regarding a report can provide what guides where people in Auburn spend their money and it will determine what type of businesses to pursue to come to Auburn. A meeting with Mr. McCready will be set for October.

IX. Other

X. Adjournment

Motion by Garrett second by Sheppard to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 p.m. Passed by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Barnhill
City Clerk