

*(The following is a synopsis of the minutes of the West Branch City Council meeting. A video recording is available for inspection on the City of West Branch Website at [westbranchiowa.org/city-of-west-branch/mayor-city-council/meetings/](http://westbranchiowa.org/city-of-west-branch/mayor-city-council/meetings/). The minutes are not approved until the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting.)*

**West Branch, Iowa  
Council Chambers**

**City Council  
Regular Meeting**

**January 19, 2021  
7:00 p.m.**

*An Electronic Meeting (pursuant to Iowa Code Section 21.8) of the City Council of the City of West Branch, Cedar County, IA was held on Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. because a meeting in person was impossible or impractical due to concerns for the health and safety of Council Members, Staff and the Public presented by COVID-19.*

*Until further notice, all of our Council Meetings will be held electronically. Persons may still attend, observe and participate in the meeting at the Council Chambers, City Office, 110 N. Poplar St, West Branch, Iowa. Social distancing practices shall be observed for any persons attending the meeting in person at City Hall.*

Mayor Roger Laughlin called the West Branch City Council regular meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Roll call: Council members: Colton Miller, Jodee Stoolman, Jerry Sexton, Tom Dean and Nick Goodweiler were present. City Staff present: City Administrator Redmond Jones II, Deputy Clerk Leslie Brick and Finance Officer Gordon Edgar. City Staff attending via Zoom: Police Chief John Hanna, Public Works Director Matt Goodale, Park & Recreation Director Melissa Russell, Library/IT Director Nick Shimmin and City Engineer Dave Schechinger.

### **GUEST SPEAKER PRESENTATIONS**

#### Fire Chief Stoolman – Fire Department Budget Presentation.

Stoolman presented his budget noting a six thousand dollar increase request. Stoolman requested additional dollars for utility services (\$1000), equipment (\$3000) and medical supplies (\$2000). Stoolman reported that revenues are expected to remain the same. Stoolman said that the volunteer department responded to 536 calls in 2020 and the annual report would be completed soon and presented to the Council at a future meeting.

#### Matt Goodale – Department Budget Presentation for Public Works.

Goodale reviewed his budget highlights with increases in salaries and wages due to the addition of the FY20 new employee hired in December and two temporary employees to be hired for mowing this summer. Goodale requested additional dollars in the areas of vehicle repair and maintenance, minor equipment, vehicle set aside, and capital improvement projects. Goodale listed some of the projects to be completed based on the Council's goals and priorities such as: chloride removal at 348 Cookson Street (\$20,000), Greenview Drive water main installation – north loop (\$70,000), purchase of a 2021 F550 (\$68,000), purchase of a 2021 lawn tractor (\$21,000), street patches (\$30,000), seal coat street patching (\$40,000), and concrete a portion of the parking lot at the city shop (\$10,000).

#### Redmond Jones II, Leslie Brick, Gordon Edgar: Administration – Online Utility Billing Presentation, Fund Balance Health Presentation, and Department Budget Summary.

Brick presented the online payments feature for the Council. Brick said this was a goal of the Council for FY21 and said that the project is now complete. Brick demonstrated how residents could pay their water bill online through the new system (via the city website) along with registering their utility account to gain other features such as scheduling payments, signing up for billing alerts and emails. Brick said the new system has been live for just over three weeks and sixty residents had registered their accounts and more than one hundred paid their bill online.

Jones gave a short reminder on the budget and finance process and definitions used when discussing fund balance health.

Edgar presented the clerk's report and reviewed what makes up the current bank balance to provide the Council a clearer picture of how money is distributed within the revenue sources. Edgar added that the City received additional revenues in 2020 that were unexpected such as; \$70,000 building permit (from the school project), \$59,000 from the Iowa Cares Act due to COVID-19, \$80,000 in the sale of city property, \$34,000 in additional LOST dollars and \$68,000 from the State of Iowa for the College Street Bridge project. Edgar said that those extra revenues will help fund some upcoming projects. In closing, Edgar stated that the overall bank balance is currently approximately one million dollars more than it was at this time last year.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

**Motion to Approve** Meeting Minutes for City Council Meeting January 4, 2021.

**Resolution 1973** – A Resolution Adopting a Policy Authorizing the City Clerk or Deputy City Clerk to Pay Certain Bills Prior to the City Council's Approval.

**Motion to Accept** the Police Department Calendar Year End Report.

**Motion to Set a Public Hearing** on February 1, 2021, Considering the Maximum Tax Dollars from Certain Levies to be certified in the Proposed Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget.

**Motion to Set a Public Hearing** on February 1, 2021 for a Public Hearing Regarding the I-80 Water Main Relocation.

**Motion to Set a Bid Date** on February 10, 2021 for Bidding Plans, Specifications, Form of Contract, and Estimated Cost Regarding the I-80 Water Main Relocation.

**Motion to Approve** a Class E Liquor License for AJ's Jack & Jill, Located at 115 W. Main Street, West Branch, Iowa

**Motion to Approve** the LL Pelling Seal Coat Unit Pricing for 2021.

**Motion to Approve** the Claims Report.

January Claims and December Revenues

EXPENDITURES	1/19/2021	
ALLIANT ENERGY	ALLIANT ENERGY	9,736.11
ALTORFER INC	VEHICLE MAINTENANCE & SUPPLIES	292.49
AMAZON	BOOKS	822.15
AMAZON.COM.CA.,INC.	SUPPLIES	37.98
ASCAP	ANNUAL LICENSE FEE	367.00
AT & T MOBILITY	WIRELESS SERVICE	369.93
BAKER & TAYLOR INC.	BOOKS	516.18
BEAN & BEAN	GRAVE OPENINGS	1,650.00
BMI	ANNUAL MUSIC LICENSE FEE	368.00
CEDAR COUNTY RECORDER	RECORDING FEES	35.00
CI COOPER & ASSOCIATES	PREEMPLOYMENT SERVICES	35.00
CULLIGAN WATER TECHNOLOGIES	WATER SOFTENER SERVICE	23.20
ELDON C STUTSMAN INC	SUPPLIES	732.32
F&B COMMUNICATIONS INC	HOSTING SERVICE	179.70
GALLS, LLC	SUPPLIES	95.92
HAWKINS INC	AZONE	356.99
HI-LINE ELECTRIC COMPANY INC	HI-LINE ELECTRIC COMPANY INC	85.05
HOTSY CLEANING SYSTEMS	EQUIPMENT REPAIR	626.52
ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION	PROGRAM SUPPLIES	216.10
IMWCA	IMWCA	2,345.00
IOWA ASSN. MUN. UTILITIES	SAFETY TRAINING	733.51
IOWA LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY	ADMINISTRATIVE FEE	125.00
IOWA ONE CALL	UTILITY LOCATION SERVICE	61.20
JOHNSON COUNTY REFUSE INC.	RECYCLING & TRASH - DEC 2020	15,576.50
KANOPI	VIDEO RENTALS	34.00
LINN COUNTY R.E.C.	STREET LIGHTS	185.40
LYNCH'S PLUMBING INC	LYNCH'S PLUMBING INC	81.10
MERCY IOWA CITY PHYSICIAN & CLINIC SERVICES	PHYSICAL - CILEK	137.00
MESADYNE CORPORATION	SUPPLIES	66.50
MIDWEST FRAME & AXLE	VEHICLE REPAIR	3,431.60
DEBORAH RAMSEY	REFUND	10.00
OVERDRIVE INC	EBOOK	3.49
PITNEY BOWES INC	POSTAGE METER RENTAL	59.49
PORT 'O' JONNY INC.	SERVICE-WAPSI PARK	228.00
QUILL CORP	OFFICE SUPPLIES	16.26
RIVER PRODUCTS COMPANY INC	ROAD ROCK	1,231.47
STATE HYGIENIC LAB	LAB ANALYSIS	27.00
US BANK EQUIPMENT FINANCE	COPIER MACHINE LEASE	106.25
WALMART COMMUNITY/RFCS LLC	SUPPLIES	204.58
WEST BRANCH TIMES	LEGAL PUBLICATIONS	489.64
WEX BANK	VEHICLE FUEL	1,169.68
TOTAL		42,868.31
PAYROLL	1/8/2021	48,023.70
PAID BETWEEN MEETINGS		
UMB	INTEREST-BANK FEES	1,250.00
WAGeworks	EMPLOYEE FLEX PLAN	31.96
GLOBAL PAYMENTS INTEGRATED	CREDIT CARD FEES	38.22
CEDAR COUNTY COOPERATIVE	VEHICLE FUEL	658.74
MELISSA RUSSELL	HAND SANITIZER	180.45
TOTAL		2,159.37
GRAND TOTAL EXPENDITURES		93,051.38
FUND TOTALS		
001 GENERAL FUND	42,778.30	
022 CIVIC CENTER	532.17	
031 LIBRARY	7,675.41	
036 TORT LIABILITY	2,164.30	
110 ROAD USE TAX	13,131.87	
112 TRUST AND AGENCY	4,932.24	
226 DEBT SERVICE	1,250.00	
600 WATER FUND	11,535.02	
610 SEWER FUND	9,020.11	
950 FLEXIBLE BENEFITS	31.96	
GRAND TOTAL	93,051.38	

001 GENERAL FUND	107,127.52
022 CIVIC CENTER	524.38
031 LIBRARY	527.69
036 TORT LIABILITY	1,212.30
110 ROAD USE TAX	28,476.77
112 TRUST & AGENCY	7,684.88
119 EMERGENCY TAX FUND	1,058.83
121 LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX	20,470.41
125 TIF	6,752.43
226 DEBT SERVICE	9,404.21
310 COLLEGE ST BRIDGE REPLACEMENT	34,072.07
500 CEMETERY PERPETUAL FUND	420.00
501 KROUTH PRINCIPAL FUND	234.87
502 KROUTH INTEREST FUND	62.89
600 WATER FUND	53,605.84
610 SEWER FUND	48,389.67
740 STORM WATER UTILITY	5,340.75
TOTAL	325,365.51

Stoolman questioned the LL Pelling quote and said she thought it was higher than previous years. Goodale confirmed that the price quoted this year was in fact higher and said he could solicit quotes from other companies. The Council thought that was acceptable and directed Goodale to obtain other quotes.

Motion by Miller, second by Goodweiler to table the LL Pelling quote. AYES: Miller, Goodweiler, Dean, Stoolman, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Miller, second by Goodweiler approve agenda/consent agenda approve remaining items. AYES: Miller, Goodweiler, Sexton, Stoolman, Dean. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

## **PUBLIC HEARING / NON-CONSENT AGENDA**

### Resolution 1974 – Consider Amending the Recreation Facility, Park & Sport Field Use and Fee Policy. /Move to action.

Sexton stated that he felt the non-resident fees may be a little low for field reservations and asked Russell how she determined them. Russell responded that other surrounding community's fees were reviewed and said that these fees were in line with those. Russell said she didn't want to over price the fields to encourage use and felt that concession stand sales would generate the most revenue. Russell said these fees can be reviewed annually to see if adjustments are needed.

Motion by Dean, second by Goodweiler to approve Resolution 1974. AYES: Dean, Goodweiler, Sexton, Miller, Stoolman. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

### Discussion: Merit Pay Proposal.

The proposal, originally designed by Councilperson Dean had been reviewed and modified after many discussions with the other council members, mayor and staff. While the Council admitted it was a good idea, more fact gathering is needed before fully implementing the merit pay proposal. The structure has been laid out, but more information is needed to determine job classifications (levels), appropriate pay ranges, performance evaluation training for supervisors and managers and a competitive market place analysis. This proposal would include an annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) for all employees.

### Discussion: Tentative Employee Pay Plan Starting Estimates.

Jones asked the Council to provide clear direction on FY22 employee salary adjustments. Jones said that this year's COLA is set at 1.38% but said that he felt comfortable with increasing that percentage up to 2.75. Stoolman felt that 1.38 % was adequate citing that employees were just given additional employee benefits in July. The council decided to anonymously submit their suggested employee increase based on the budget and not individual performance for FY22 until a merit pay system was implemented.

### Discussion: General Fund Departmental Non-Salary Expenditures.

Jones said that a new server for the city office was needed to ensure meeting the technology needs of staff to operate efficiently. Jones said there were no other major expenses planned for FY22.

### Discussion: East Side Five Year Capital Improvement Plan.

Jones said Goodale created a timeline for the east side water main improvements project. The five year plan lays out sections of streets to be addressed each year. Sexton suggested that the City try to tackle the whole project in three years rather than five. He said construction costs typically increase five percent each year which would just increase the project costs but by doing more sooner, the city may see some savings. Jones said he would discuss the recommendation with Goodale and determine how that could be accomplished.

### Discussion: Capital Improvement 5 year Outlook.

Jones laid out the five years Capital Improvements Plan and the projects the Council set as priorities. Jones reviewed the City's current debt capacity and said he would continue to look into possible funding sources for the projects for FY22.

## **CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

No report.

**CITY ATTORNEY REPORT**

Absent.

**STAFF REPORTS**

No reports.

**COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Laughlin reported that he attended a Cedar County EMA meeting recently and the subject of radios again came up. The County is still having issues with the current system and is leaning toward purchasing a brand new system in the future. Laughlin said that all cities in the County would have to chip in toward the purchase price and is something to keep on the radar.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn the regular meeting by Goodweiler, second by Miller. Motion carried on a voice vote. City Council meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

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Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

Leslie Brick, Deputy City Clerk