

(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/. The minutes are not approved until the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting.)

**West Branch, Iowa
Council Chambers**

**City Council
Regular Meeting**

**February 7, 2022
7:00 p.m.**

Mayor Roger Laughlin called the West Branch City Council regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call: Council members present: Colton Miller, Jerry Sexton, Jodee Stoolman, Tom Dean and Nick Goodweiler. City Staff present: City Administrator Adam Kofoed, City Clerk Leslie Brick, City Engineer Dave Schechinger, City Attorney Kevin Olson and Public Works Director Matt Goodale. City Staff attending via Zoom: Parks & Recreation Director Melissa Russell, Finance Officer Heidi Van Auken, Police Chief John Hanna, and Library Director Nick Shimmin.

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Motion by Sexton, second by Goodweiler to approve the Agenda. Motion carried on a voice vote.

APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Approve Minutes from the January 18, 2022 City Council regular meeting.
Accept the resignation of Gina Heick from the Animal Control Commission.
Appoint Kim Hanna to the Parks & Recreation Commission, term expiration 12/31/2024.
Approve Gabriella Rushton as a Fire Cadet with the West Branch Volunteer Fire Department.
Approve Claims for February 7th
Review the November & December Monthly Financial Reports

EXPENDITURES	CLAIMS PAID AND NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2021 REVENUES 2/7/2022	
AERO RENTAL INC	BOOM LIFT RENTAL - LIGHTS	616.50
ALTORFER INC	SKID LOADER LIGHT	96.54
AMAZON.COM.CA., INC.	BOOTS - PD UNIFORM	124.95
AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOC	MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL	222.00
AXON ENTERPRISE, INC.	TASER PAYMENT 5	1,129.92
BMI	ANNUAL MUSIC LICENSE FEE	391.00
CEDAR COUNTY COOPERATIVE	FUEL - PW	1,281.00
ECKERMAN, RAMONA	BLDG INCENTIVE PAYMENT	111.91
GONGORA, JOSE	SAFETY CONSULTING	2,450.00
HAWKINS INC	CHEMICALS	1,581.58
HI-LINE INC	SHOP SUPPLIES	66.98
JAYME CILEK	CLEANING SERVICES	243.00
JOHNSON COUNTY REFUSE INC.	TRASH & RECYCLING JAN 2022	16,437.75
LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS	LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS	1,541.51
LYNCH'S EXCAVATING INC	MAIN BREAK REPAIR	5,379.55
MERIDITH COLEMAN	BLDG INCENTIVE PAYMENT	925.16
MOORE'S WELDING INC	REPAIRS FOR PLOW SPREADER	679.89
OLSON, KEVIN D	LEGAL SERVICES FEB 2022	1,500.00
ORIENTAL TRADING CO. INC	REC SUPPLIES	234.60
PORT 'O' JONNY INC	SERVICE-WAPSI PARK & CEMETERY	257.97
PROTECT YOUTH SPORTS	BACKGROUND CHECK	189.00
QC ANALYTICAL SERVICES LLC	LAB ANALYSIS	913.00
QUILL CORP	SUPPLIES	162.90
ROBERT PRATT & MINDY KRAUS	BLDG INCENTIVE PAYMENT	875.37
ROCK VALLEY PHYSICAL THERAPY	DRUG TESTING	43.00
STATE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS	CHEMICALS	236.00
THE HOME DEPOT PRO	JANATORIAL SUPPLIES	48.01
THOMAS HEATING & AIR LLC	FURNACE FILTERS	54.00
ULINE	CLEANING SUPPLIES	122.72
USA BLUE BOOK	CHLORINE PIPING PARTS	23.79
VEENSTRA & KIMM INC	VARIOUS PROJECTS	88,457.00
TOTAL		126,396.60
PAYROLL-WAGES, TAXES, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	1/21/2022 & 2/4/2022	109,116.64

PAID BETWEEN MEETINGS

ALLIANT ENERGY	ALLIANT ENERGY	10,861.39
AMAZON.COM	UNIFORM PANTS - PD	108.00
BOUND TREE MEDICAL LLC	REGULATORS	28.79
CJ COOPER & ASSOC	FIRE DEPT DRUG TESTING	189.20
CULLIGAN WATER TECH	WATER SOFTNER SERVICE	55.13
HEIMAN FIRE EQUIP	GLOVES	270.40
HOSPERS & BROTHER PRINTERS	PRINTING	73.67
MIDSTATES ORG CRIME INFO	MOCIC 2022 MEMBER FEES	100.00
PITNEY BOWES PURCHASE POWER	REPLENISH POSTAGE	551.75
US BANK CORPORATE CARD	CREDIT CARD PURCHASES	504.47
WAGWORKS	EMPLOYEE FLEX PLAN	84.77
UNUM LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY	LIFE INSURANCE	660.23
WELLMARK	HEALTH INSURANCE	18,968.70
TOTAL		32,456.50
GRAND TOTAL EXPENDITURES		267,969.74

FUND TOTALS

001 GENERAL FUND	73,205.14
022 CIVIC CENTER	1029.81
031 LIBRARY	12912.96
110 ROAD USE TAX	20,128.23
112 TRUST AND AGENGY	33,458.52
323 I-80 WEST, WATER MAIN REL	70
324 WW TREATMT FAC	87,450.00
326 ROUNDABOUT MAIN & CEDAR	286
327 SPONS WATER QUALITY	372
600 WATER FUND	26,021.27
610 SEWER FUND	12,951.04
950 BC/BS FLEXIBLE BENEFIT	84.77
GRAND FUND TOTAL	267,969.74

REVENUE-FISCAL YEAR 2022

FUND NOVEMBER

001 GENERAL FUND	139,037.45
022 CIVIC CENTER	1,003.20
031 LIBRARY	11,449.16
036 TORT LIABILITY	1,942.59
110 ROAD USE TAX	22,021.87
112 TRUST & AGENGY	12,638.42
119 EMERGENCY TAX FUND	1,744.56
121 LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX	69,044.19
125 TIF	31,178.83
226 DEBT SERVICE	14,866.04
300 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT RESERVE	2,568.45
302 ARPA FUND	622.11
324-WW TREATMENT FAC IMPMT	29,150.00
600 WATER FUND	61,264.14
610 SEWER FUND	65,900.16
740 STORM WATER UTILITY	5,425.94
TOTAL	469,857.11

REVENUE-FISCAL YEAR 2022

FUND DECEMBER

001 GENERAL FUND	132,822.04
022 CIVIC CENTER	1,065.26
031 LIBRARY	1,013.63
036 TORT LIABILITY	1,067.31
110 ROAD USE TAX	24,984.02
112 TRUST & AGENGY	6,943.59
119 EMERGENCY TAX FUND	958.45
121 LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX	24,614.78
125 TIF	7,918.40
226 DEBT SERVICE	7,548.13
300 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT RESERVE	1,411.18
500 CEMETERY PERPETUAL FUND	48.43
501 KROUTH PRINCIPAL FUND	43.23

502 KROUTH INTEREST FUND	19.30
600 WATER FUND	43,320.73
610 SEWER FUND	50,390.40
740 STORM WATER UTILITY	5,055.31
TOTAL	309,224.19

Miller asked if the City had been reimbursed by IDOT for the payment to Summers Excavating for the I-80 Water Main Relocation project. Schechinger said he was working with staff to provide the required documentation and that the city should receive repayment soon.

Motion by Dean second by Goodweiler to approve the Consent agenda. AYES: Dean, Goodweiler, Stoolman, Miller, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

PRESENTATIONS / COMMUNICATIONS / OPEN FORUM - NONE

Rod Ness, Cedar County Economic Development Commission (CCEDCO) attended the meeting to provide an update on the groups mission and recent activities. Ness said that CCEDCO offers a community driven approach to economic development based on a Local First orientation, focused on long-term sustainable growth by leveraging existing community assets. Ness highlighted a few of the group’s recent accomplishments during FY20-21 such as: implemented the State of Iowa Home Base Community designation, secured Iowa Great Places designation for another two years, and continues to build GrowHere.org campaign awareness. Ness added that for FY22-23, the group will work on county welcome signage, update their website and improve content, implement the Seeding Cedar Program to help communities offset tree damage to the tree canopy, provide economic support and partnership to the Hometown Pride Program and leverage the County’s Home Base Community designation to secure additional business partners.

PUBLIC HEARING / NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to set the FY2023 Budget Max Levy Public Hearing date – February 22, 2022. /Move to action. Second Reading Ordinance 790 – Amending Title “Traffic and Vehicles” Chapter 65 “Stop or Yield Required”. / Move to action.

Motion by Sexton, second by Goodweiler. AYES: Sexton, Goodweiler, Miller, Stoolman, Dean. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Second Reading Ordinance 790 – Amending Title “Traffic and Vehicles” Chapter 65 “Stop or Yield Required”. / Move to action.

Motion by Miller, second by Sexton to approve second reading of Ordinance 790. AYES: Miller, Sexton, Stoolman, Dean, Goodweiler. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Public Hearing – Proposal to rezone an approximate 7.92-acre parcel in The Meadows Subdivision, West Branch, Iowa.

Laughlin opened the public hearing at 7:19 p.m. Chris Kofoed, Meadows Development Inc. explained that the rezoning request from R-1 to R-2 would match the zoning on either side of the property on Prairie View Drive and south on Ridge View Drive. Kofoed said his engineers were still working on the plat and lot sizes as they have two developers interested in the parcel. Kofoed also stated that a detention basin may be needed due to drainage from the Greenview Subdivision. There were no other public comments. Laughlin closed the public hearing at 7:21 p.m.

First Reading Ordinance 791 – Rezoning an approximate 7.92-acre parcel from R-1 Residential District to R-2 Residential District. / Move to action.

Laughlin said his only concern with the R-2 zoning is that homes on Dawson and Prairie View Drive (on the west end) are all “starting to look alike” and that wasn’t what he envisioned for the city’s growth. Sexton agreed with Laughlin’s comments and asked if the Meadows would create a covenant to avoid further repetition. Kofoed said depending on who purchases the lots, they could be single family homes which may satisfy their concerns. There were no other comments from the Council.

Motion by Dean, second by Miller to approve first reading of Ordinance 791. AYES: Dean, Miller, Sexton, Stoolman, Goodweiler. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2022-07 –Setting a Public Hearing on the Plans, Specifications, Estimate of Cost and Form of Contract: ordering Bids and directing Notice of the same: all for the West Branch Wastewater Treatment Facility Project. / Move to action.

Motion by Miller, second by Dean to approve Resolution 2022-07. AYES: Miller, Dean, Stoolman, Goodweiler, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2022-08 –Approving various contracts for Hoover’s Hometown Days 2022 in the amount of \$15,050.00. / Move to action.

Stoolman said she struggles with approving expenses for a “party” when a tight budget year (or two) are imminent for the city. Recent budget discussions have the Council re-thinking how much the event costs tax payers and wondered where expenses could be cut in the event or how the city could re-coup some of the money spent on the event. Also, surmising that the inflatables are the second most expensive item of the event next to the fireworks. Council asked if staff had considered the idea of charging for the inflatables by selling wristbands. Russell said she had done some checking and that in order to charge an admission, the National Park Service (where the inflatable are placed) would require a special permit that would cost the city \$618 dollars. Russell said the Hoover’s Hometown Days committee would be discussing the matter further at their next meeting. She added that a community survey was done after last year’s event and inflatables were listed as one of the most popular activities for the kids. Russell said she would report back to the Council when more details were worked out. Brick added that a good share of the donations received for the event each year were for the children’s activities, stages and musical events which help off-set the total cost of those activities.

Motion by Goodweiler, second by Dean to approve Resolution 2022-08. AYES: Goodweiler, Dean, Stoolman, Miller, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2022-09–Approving a fireworks agreement with J&M Displays for Hoover’s Hometown Days 2022. /Move to action.

Two options were offered this year from the vendor due to rising cost of goods and shipping. The council decided to stick with their original budget of \$25,000 even though it meant a shorter firework show.

Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2022-09. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Miller, Stoolman, Goodweiler. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2022-10 – Amending a policy regarding the use of credit cards. / Move to action.

Van Auken explained the current process for city credit card use by employees and mentioned the challenges that brought about this requested change. She explained this new policy would provide department directors with their own city issued credit card and would be responsible for reconciling and turning in receipts to her for timely payments to the vendor. The Council questioned the meal expense when on city business. Brick clarified that currently liquor and gratuity are not reimbursable expenses according to the employee handbook. The council agreed with the policy but wanted staff to clarify the meal expense portion of the resolution to match the employee handbook.

Motion by Sexton, second by Goodweiler to approve Resolution 2022-10. AYES: Sexton, Goodweiler, Stoolman, Dean, Miller. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2022-11 – Establishing a Reserve Requirements Policy. / Move to action.

Kofoed reminded the Council of this discussion during budget work sessions and that this policy will help him and the finance officer monitor the various funds and reserves to maintain solvency. He said the purpose of the policy is to discipline this council and future council for the start of financial stability and said it would also be a policy for himself and the finance officer to report to the Council.

Motion by Goodweiler, second by Dean to approve Resolution 2022-11. AYES: Goodweiler, Dean, Miller, Stoolman, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2022-12 – Setting a date for Consultation and a date for a Public Hearing on the proposed Amendment #4 to the Amended and Restated West Branch Urban Renewal Plan. / Move to action.

Olson said this consultation and amendment #4 is for adding Dawson Plaza to the Urban Renewal Plan. Olson said there will be another amendment for other projects still under negotiation at a future date.

Motion by Goodweiler, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2022-12. AYES: Goodweiler, Sexton, Stoolman, Dean, Miller. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Discussion – Herbert Hoover Hwy / Cedar-Johnson Road Roundabout Update (Dave Schechinger)

Schechinger asked the Council for direction to proceed with Johnson County Engineers to get final costs estimates for the project which will include additional financial responsibility for the city due to the 1977 28E Agreement regarding responsibility of future improvements to Cedar-Johnson Road. While the Council was not happy that the 1977 agreement was binding, the majority of the Council felt that proceeding with the roundabout is still the safest option for that area of town with future development in The Meadows and the increased high school and middle school traffic. Four council members agreed to move forward with the project as costs continue to rise. Stoolman said ‘no’ to the project.

Discussion – Impact 7G Grant Proposal (City Administrator Adam Kofoed)

Kofoed explained that the city was in a position to be eligible for \$500,000 grant from the Iowa Finance Authority Watershed Infrastructure Fund for Watershed Protection Projects. Kofoed said the project selected is in The Meadows subdivision. Kofoed who has family ties to the developer of The Meadows, asked City Engineer Dave Schechinger explain why this property was selected. Schechinger said Impact 7G prepared a Watershed Assessment in 2021 and The Meadows was listed as one of the top three priority projects. Kofoed said the grant requires a 5% match (or \$25,000) which would come from the \$719,000 grant the City recently received for the Wapsi Creek Widening project. In addition, the application cost is \$10,000 which would be paid from by storm water utility funds. The Council agreed with Kofoed’s and Schechinger’s proposal and directed them to proceed with preparing a resolution for consideration.

Discussion - Tree Committee update (Public Works Director Matt Goodale)

Goodale said the committee revised their plan for trees sizes based on Council feedback. He said the larger trees would not impact the amount of funds they’d request from the tree budget, only that they would plant less of them on residents’ properties. Goodale said he supports the groups efforts and said that it would take some of the burden off of his staff. He also suggested that once the committee is established and priorities identified, that the committee should be added to the West Branch Code of Ordinances. The council approved of the committees revised plan.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Kofoed stated that he is closely monitoring recent legislative changes regarding the reduction of state tax and the possibility in the reduction of local option sales tax (LOST) and how that would affect the city. Kofoed said his big concern for the LOST, is that the city uses it to pay for the \$4M park improvements bond. Kofoed said he will keep monitoring the situation and keep the Council advised of any new developments.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

Olson added that the current legislature “continues its assault on cities” and felt they are trying to take away local control.

CITY ENGINEER REPORT

Schechinger reported on his recent activities with The Meadows Part 3 & 5. Part 3 bringing a new developer to town with a mix of commercial and residential property. Part 5, rezoning from R-1 to R-2. He continues to work with adjacent property owners along the Wapsi Creek/Beranek Park (creek widening), Waste Water Treatment Facility will be going out to bid soon with construction scheduled to start in the spring.

STAFF REPORTS

No reports.

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

Laughlin reported on the Community Visioning Committee had its first meeting and that community surveys would developed and would be going out soon. He said he would be attending a Lower Cedar Watershed Authority meeting this week and said the group may be requesting more funds from the city. Laughlin said currently the city gives them \$500 per year. Laughlin also said he was approached by a resident regarding contingency money left over from Cubby Park being used for the Wapsi Creek Widening project. The resident felt that those funds were for Cubby Park and that additional pickle ball courts were needed due its popularity.

Miller said he was approached by a resident who rents a storage building on N. 4th St. and was wanting to get a car dealer's license from the state in order to buy cars at an auction, fix them up and re-sell them. However, based on the current I-2 zoning of the property, car sales are not allowed. Miller asked if there was any reason the Code could be changed to allow that in that particular zone. Olson replied that he would check the state code to see if a special exception or special use permit could be granted by the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Stoolman brought up the recent fire at West Branch Roofing and was glad that the city had upgraded water mains on E. College Street with the bridge project. She added that it served as a good reminder that proper sized water mains are important for improving on the east side of town, which is a priority for this Council.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the regular meeting by Miller, second by Sexton. Motion carried on a voice vote. City Council meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Leslie Brick, City Clerk