

*(The following is a synopsis of the minutes of the West Branch City Council meeting. A video recording is available for inspection at westbranchiowa.org. The minutes are not approved until the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting.)*

**West Branch, Iowa  
Council Chambers**

**City Council  
Budget Work Session**

**January 17, 2023  
5:30 p.m.**

Mayor Roger Laughlin called the West Branch City Council Budget Work Session to order at 5:30 p.m. Roll call: Council members present: Colton Miller, Jerry Sexton, Tom Dean and Nick Goodweiler. Jodee Stoolman arrived at 5:37 p.m. City Staff present: City Administrator Adam Kofoed, City Clerk Leslie Brick, Public Works Director Matt Goodale, Police Chief John Hanna, Fire Chief Kevin Stoolman and Library Director Nick Shimmin.

FY 2024 Budget Work Session #2

Kofoed's final budget presentation focused on determining the FY24 tax levy. Kofoed provided three scenarios; Option 1 – go conservative, increase tax levy twenty cents. Option 2 – keep levy the same, with little to no change. Option 3 – Build Capital Reserve levy (to be used for city projects) and request \$107,000 (in past the city has only requested \$60,000). The Council discussed many issues including inflation and state roll-backs and how that affects property taxes received by the city and how it affects the city budget. Council members were reluctant to raise taxes while so many other consumer goods and services are on the rise. However, after much discussion, Council agreed upon a thirty-cent tax levy increase which was a mid-range increase between all three scenarios Kofoed provided.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Miller, second by Goodweiler. Motion carried on a voice vote. City Council meeting adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

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Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Leslie Brick, City Clerk

**West Branch, Iowa  
Council Chambers**

**City Council  
Regular Meeting**

**January 17, 2023  
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, Public Works Director Matt Goodale, Police Chief John Hanna, Fire Chief Kevin Stoolman and Library Director Nick Shimmin. Staff attending via Zoom: Heidi Van Auken. Absent: City Attorney Kevin Olson and City Engineer Dave Schechinger.

**APPROVE THE AGENDA**

Motion by Miller, second by Sexton to approve the agenda. Motion carried on a voice vote.

**APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**

Approve minutes from the January 3, 2023 City Council meeting.

Approve the November Monthly Financial Report

Approve Claims for 1/17/2023

EXPENDITURES	1/17/2023	
AMAZON.COM	OFFICE SUPPLIES-P&R	34.87
BAKER & TAYLOR INC	BOOKS	419.35
CEDAR COUNTY COOP	FUEL-PW	1,953.70
CEDAR COUNTY GARAGE DOORS	CEMETERY DOOR REPAIR	230.00
CEDAR COUNTY RECORDER	RECORDING FEES	100.00
CEDAR CO TRANSFER STATION	TRASH DISPOSAL	51.00
CJ COOPER & ASSOCIATES	ANNUAL ADMIN/CLEARING FEES	365.00
GRIEBAHN INDUSTRIES INC	NAME PLATE-P&R COMMISSION	25.50
HI-LINE INC	SUPPLIES	114.94
IMWCA	IMWCA FY23 INSTALLMENT 7	2,035.00
IOWA ASSN. MUN. UTILITIES	QUARTERLY SAFETY TRAINING DUES	888.00
IOWA DNR	ROUNABOUT DNR PERMIT FEE	100.00
IOWA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION	SCHAFFER ILA DUES 2023	90.00
KANOPY	ON DEMAND VIDEO SERVICE	38.00
LINN COUNTY R.E.C.	STREET LIGHTS	202.50
LRS HOLDINGS, LLC	TRASH & RECYCLING DEC 2022	17,426.75
MENARDS	RECREATION SUPPLIES	109.39
MPEC	SHOP SUPPLIES	218.93
OASIS ELECTRIC LLC	STREET LIGHT REPAIR	165.00
OMNISITE	WIRELESS SERV-LIFT STATION	378.00
PITNEY BOWES INC	PRINTER INK-RED CITY	288.96
PROTECT YOUTH SPORTS	BACKGROUND CHECKS	81.00
STATE HYGIENIC LAB	LAB ANALYSIS	40.50
UNIFORM DEN INC	UNIFORMS-POLICE	832.42
WEST BRANCH TIMES	LEGAL PUBLICATIONS & JOB AD	560.78
WEX BANK	VEHICLE FUEL	1,241.13
TOTAL		27,990.72
PAYROLL-WAGES, TAXES, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	1/6/2023	55,585.17
PAID BETWEEN MEETINGS		
GLOBAL PAYMENTS	DECEMBER CREDIT CARD FEES	956.36
VARIOUS VENDORS	UB REFUNDS	97.73
HY-VEE	MOORE ILEA TRAINING FOOD	2,395.34
MIDWEST FRAME & AXLE	PARTS	295.37
STATE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS	CHEMICALS	981.01
IA FINANCE AUTHORITY	SRF LOANS INTEREST & FEES	16,011.38
UMB BANK	BOND FEES 2013,2015,2016A, 2016B, 2017	1,250.00
FIDELITY BANK & TRUST	CHECK STOP PAYMENT FEE	30.00
SISCO	HEALTH CLAIMS 1/9/2023	218.49
SISCO	HEALTH CLAIMS 1/3/2023	206.10
SISCO	HEALTH CLAIMS 12/27/2022	4.99
SISCO	HEALTH CLAIMS 12/12/2022	4,004.48
TOTAL		26,451.25
GRAND TOTAL EXPENDITURES		110,027.14
FUND TOTALS		
001 GENERAL FUND	52,863.29	
031 LIBRARY	6,546.66	
036 TORT LIABILITY	1,937.87	
110 ROAD USE TAX	5,520.92	
112 TRUST AND AGENCY	13,822.98	
226 DEBT SERVICE	1,250.00	
326 ROUNABOUT MAIN & CEDAR	100.00	
600 WATER FUND	5,208.57	
603 WATER SINKING FUND	2,181.25	
610 SEWER FUND	6,765.47	
611 SEWER FUNDS SPECIAL	13,830.13	
GRAND FUND TOTAL	110,027.14	

001 GENERAL FUND	125,939.11
022 CIVIC CENTER	1,906.04
031 LIBRARY	13,148.00
036 TORT LIABILITY	4,290.60
110 ROAD USE TAX	27,289.10
112 TRUST & AGENCY	21,948.24
119 EMERGENCY TAX FUND	2,462.06
125 TIF	55,827.14
226 DEBT SERVICE	18,556.58
300 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT RESERVE	3,575.43
600 WATER FUND	61,879.54
610 SEWER FUND	65,632.20
740 STORM WATER UTILITY	5,617.75
TOTAL	408,071.79

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**

Trees Forever Community Visioning Project – Nick McGrath (Trees Forever) and Kyle Martin (Martin Gardner Architecture Consultants) gave a brief overview of the year-long community visioning process. A steering committee was gathered which consisted of members of West Branch CDG, city staff, two Council members, and several residents. Through the visioning process, the committee identified goals and priorities for improving connectivity and accessibility via trails and sidewalks, enhancing downtown streetscape aesthetics, and providing more recreational activities. Based on needs and desires of the committee, a detailed inventory of community resources was developed with the following top goals. Trail connectivity to Solon and/or West Liberty, connectivity via trails or sidewalks to Cubby Park for residents living west of the creek, downtown streetscaping to make downtown ‘more welcoming’, and improving accessibility on the one hundred block of West Main Street, turning Heritage Square into a downtown plaza and removing vehicular traffic, and re-routing truck traffic out of downtown (three options were provided). Martin discussed next steps with the Council as prioritizing each project based on costs, and planning for future projects while searching and applying for grants to help make the projects happen sooner. Martin shared several funding opportunities available in the Final Report and Feasibility Study.

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

#### Resolution 2023-03 – Amending the City of West Branch Building Incentive Rebate Program. / Move to action.

The Council briefly discussed the proposed changes to the rebate process which will aid administration staff to more accurately budget the rebate expense each year. They had no objections with the proposed changes and were supportive on continuing the City’s commitment in honoring the rebate portion of the program.

Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2023-03. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Miller, Stoolman, Goodweiler. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

#### Resolution 2023-04 – Approving Pay Estimate Number 6 in the amount of \$510,181.34 to Boomerang Corp. for the Wastewater Treatment Facility Improvements Project. / Move to action.

Miller questioned a couple of items on the pay estimate regarding materials and labor. He said in the end, the City will pay the bill but wanted clarification on items 2.9 and 2.10.

Motion by Dean, second by Goodweiler to approve Resolution 2023-04. AYES: Dean, Goodweiler, Miller, Sexton. NAYS: Stoolman. Motion carried.

#### Resolution 2023-05 – Accepting Deed from Kent and Judy Kaeser for abandoned railroad right-of-way. / Move to action.

Kent Kaeser approached the City last fall about a small piece of property that he owns along the Hoover Trail that he would like to give to the

Motion by Dean, second by Miller to approve Resolution 2023-05. AYES: Dean, Miller, Sexton, Stoolman, Goodweiler. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2023-06 – Approving the revised job description for the position of Lead Water / Wastewater Operator. / Move to action.

The job description was revised to add additional responsibilities including being second in charge of Public Works when the Director is unavailable.

Motion by Goodweiler, second by Miller to approve Resolution 2023-06. AYES: Goodweiler, Miller, Stoolman, Dean, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Discussion – Parks & Recreation Director recruitment update

Kofoed reported that interviews were held on January 12<sup>th</sup> and that the City had received many qualified applicants. The interview committee had narrowed down the candidates to two and an offer has been extended. Kofoed said he was hoping to make an announcement soon.

**CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

Kofoed expressed his frustration with recent state tax changes and how they will affect the City. Kofoed said he feels that lawmakers are not talking with cities before making new legislation. The Council suggested that the Mayor or Kofoed reach out to Representative Kaufman to see if he would attend a future Council meeting to address their questions and concerns.

**CITY ATTORNEY REPORT** – Absent

**CITY ENGINEER REPORT** – Absent

**STAFF REPORTS**

City Clerk Brick announced that she had received a phone call from the City of Iowa City regarding West Branch residents using the Johnson County Landfill. The caller said West Branch residents will be turned away and will be advised to use the Cedar County Transfer Station going forward.

**COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Sexton said he had some ideas for how Public Works might be able to make certain city services less time consuming and reduce labor hours. He mentioned a new mowing robot that landscape companies are using to reduce labor hours and thought it might be worth checking into. He also suggested the City use some sort of phone app where residents could alert workers when they have yard waste to be picked up rather than city workers driving up and down every street looking for yard waste. He also had some ideas on how to improve how the city's brush pile should or could be utilized; i.e. charging only the residents who use the brush pile rather than charging a fee to all residents. The Council agreed that services should pay for themselves and that users should be the ones who pay.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Sexton, second by Miller. Motion carried on a voice vote. City Council meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

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Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Leslie Brick, City Clerk