

(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
Regular Meeting**

**February 21, 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, Library Director Nick Shimmin and City Engineer Dave Schechinger. Staff attending via Zoom: Heidi Van Auken. Absent: Police John Hanna and City Attorney Kevin Olson.

APPROVE THE AGENDA

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

APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Approve minutes from the February 6, 2023 City Council meeting.

Approve a Class C Retail Alcohol License, with outdoor service for Eldr, LLC (dba Little Lights on the Lane), 2 Ember Lane, West Branch

Approve Fire Department staffing changes as of 2/9/2023

Approve Claims for 2/21/2023

EXPENDITURES	2/21/2023	
AE OUTDOOR POWER	MOWER BLADES	94.14
AMAZON.COM	SUPPLIES	138.15
BAKER & TAYLOR	BOOKS	304.50
BARRON MOTOR SUPPLY	ABSORBANT	183.60
BROWN'S WEST BRANCH FORD	2022 FORD EXPLORER MAINT SERVICE	121.30
CAPITAL ONE	VARIOUS ITEMS-LIBRARY	54.71
CARRIE A HOURIGAN	CLEANING SERVICES-LIBRARY	345.00
CEDAR COUNTY COOP	FUEL - SHOP BARREL	1,312.17
CEDAR COUNTY RECORDER	RECORDING FEES	31.00
CEDAR COUNTY TRANSFER STATION	TRASH DISPOSAL	51.00
ELECTRIC PUMP	LIFT STATION RAILING	777.25
HAWKINS	CHEMICALS	1,542.61
HI-LINE	SAFETY GLASSES	199.08
INTERSTATE POWER SYSTEMS	GENERATOR INSPECTION-LIFT STN	1,048.50
KANOPI	ON DEMAND VIDEO SERVICE	48.00
LYNCH GARRETT H	BLDG INCENTIVE PAYMENT	1,138.64
MACQUEEN EQUIPMENT	LEAF VAC HOSE	2,336.08
MIDWEST FRAME & AXLE	STERLING REPAIRS-PW	2,001.98
MONICA TYLEE	CLEANING SERVICES-TH	227.50
MOORE'S WELDING	REPAIR OF SNOW PLOW	75.00
MPEC	STATE TRUCK PART	175.32
OVERDRIVE	DIGITAL & AUDIO BOOKS	454.96
PROTECT YOUTH SPORTS	BACKGROUND CHECK	13.50
PYRAMID SERVICES	TRIMMER, MOWER, SAW PARTS	379.80
QC ANALYTICAL SERVICES	LAB ANALYSIS	959.75
STATE HYGIENIC LAB	LAB ANALYSIS	40.50
UNIFORM DEN	UNIFORM TAGS	19.50
VEENSTRA & KIMM	MEADOWS PT 5 REVIEW	199.00
WERLING ABSTRACT COMPANY	NEW ABSTRACT LOT S BLK 13	1,500.00
WEST BRANCH CDG	FY23 CDG DUES	10,000.00
WEST BRANCH COMM SCHOOL	YOUTH BASKETBALL GYM RENTAL	290.00
WEST BRANCH PTO	TOWN HALL REFUND FEE	25.00
WEST BRANCH TIMES	LEGAL PUBLICATIONS	741.63
TOTAL		26,829.17
PAYROLL-WAGES, TAXES, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	2/17/2023	51,263.76

PAID BETWEEN MEETINGS

IOWA INSURANCE DIVISION	CEMETERY REPORT FILING FEE	191.00
ALLIANT ENERGY	ALLIANT ENERGY	12,877.37
AMAZON.COM	VARIOUS ITEMS	270.46
AT&T MOBILITY	WIRELESS SERVICE	364.72
CULLIGAN WATER TECH	WATER SOFTNER SERVICE	13.75
DAN'S OVERHEAD DOORS	DOOR REPAIR - FIRE	2,232.69
LEAF CAPITAL FUNDING	COPIER LEASE - LIBRARY	142.02
LINN COUNTY REC	STREET LIGHTS	202.50
LRS HOLDINGS	TRASH & RECYCLING JAN 2023	17,482.25
PITNEY BOWES PURCHASE POWER	REPLENISH POSTAGE-LIBRARY	200.00
WEX BANK	VEHICLE FUEL	1,450.70
GLOBAL PAYMENTS	JANUARY CREDIT CARD FEES	1,022.41
VARIOUS VENDORS	UB REFUNDS	37.66
TOTAL		36,487.53
GRAND TOTAL EXPENDITURES		114,580.46
FUND TOTALS		
001 GENERAL FUND	61,565.82	
022 CIVIC CENTER	1063.3	
031 LIBRARY	9,067.84	
110 ROAD USE TAX	11,596.95	
112 TRUST AND AGENCY	11,857.51	
312 DOWNTOWN EAST REDEVELOPME	1,500.00	
600 WATER FUND	9,948.57	
610 SEWER FUND	7,980.47	
GRAND FUND TOTAL	114,580.46	

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

PRESENTATIONS / COMMUNICATIONS / OPEN FORUM

Introduction – Matt Condon, Parks & Recreation Director – the Council welcomed Condon the City. Condon said he is excited to hit the ground running and is anxious for spring and summer programming to begin.

Sara Mizejewski, 30 Greenview Circle addressed the Council with a request for a partial sewer charge reduction due to an outside water faucet being turned on without her knowledge. Mizejewski said she completed a Request for Administrative Review form and submitted it to the City Office on Friday, February 17, 2023. City Clerk Brick reminded the Council that the City has a policy for such requests and that Mizejewski's request had not yet been reviewed by staff. The Council advised Mizejewski to await staff review and then determine next steps.

PUBLIC HEARING / NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Public Hearing –Setting the Maximum Property Tax Levy for Fiscal Year 2024.

Laughlin opened the public hearing at 7:10 p.m. There was no one in attendance to make public comments. However, Kofoed said he received one comment from resident Kathy Krug, 31 Greenview Drive who opposed the tax increase noting that many West Branch residents cannot afford taxes increases. Laughlin closed the public hearing at 7:12 p.m.

Resolution 2023-14 –Approving the Maximum Property Tax Levy for Fiscal Year 2024 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024). / Move to action.

Kofoed stated that the maximum property tax levy is a 'dollar amount' over what was asked for in the last fiscal year, (which is now required by State law). Kofoed said the increase is approximately ten percent more than last year's ask which has been the norm for the past few years. Stoolman asked if the tax increase that is being proposed takes into consideration charging for some services that the city currently provides at no charge. Kofoed said a charge for service would be separate discussion and that the Council will have to decide what services the City should charge for, which is not part of the budget or the proposed tax increase.

Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2023-14. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Miller, Stoolman, Goodweiler. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2023-15 – Approving a Park & Recreation Management Software-as-a Service (SaaS) Agreement with RecDesk LLC. / Move to action.

Kofoed described the current process for recreation activities has some online registrations but that the information has to be tracked on a spreadsheet and does not tie into the city’s financial software, so in essence double work for staff to verify who has registered and who has paid. Kofoed said he is confident that the software will improve productivity and have better financial reporting on department activities. The Council asked a few questions and was a little surprised at the cost, but decided it was worth moving forward with.

Motion by Miller, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2023-15. AYES: Miller, Sexton, Stoolman, Dean, Goodweiler. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Discussion regarding Eastside Water Main Replacement Project and proposed timeline.

City Engineer, Dave Schechinger presented the plans for the project and said it would be done in two phases. The first phase includes replacing the water mains on North Sixth Street and a section of storm sewer along the west side of the street which is in bad condition. Schechinger made the Council aware that many mature trees would need to be removed in the right-of-way as part of the project. Schechinger said he consulted with Public Works Director Goodale, and many of those trees are old and would need to come down eventually, but stated that they were trying to be sensitive regarding the subject. Other sections of Phase One includes a short section on East Main Street between 4th and 5th Street and South 1st Street. Phase One of the project would be funded by a General Obligation (GO) bond and engineer’s estimated cost for this phase is \$1.1 million dollars. Phase Two, which would include water main upgrades on Cedar St., S. 2nd St., Water St., S. 5th St., N. 4th St., and E. College St. Phase Two would start in 2024, with an estimated cost of \$1.2 million and be funded by an SRF loan and paid for by water rates. The Council agreed the project should move forward and directed City Engineer to proceed with the bidding process.

Resolution 2023-16 – Ordering construction of certain public improvements, approving preliminary plans, and fixing a date for hearing thereon and taking of bids for improvements known as the East Side Water Main Replacement Project. / Move to action

Motion by Miller, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2023-16. AYES: Miller, Sexton, Goodweiler, Dean, Stoolman. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Discussion – Traffic cameras for Interstate 80 and giving direction for Police Chief to investigate

Kofoed said he received information late today regarding new legislation being discussed currently at the State House to ban traffic cameras. Kofoed said he discussed the matter with the City Attorney and the attorney said this subject comes up every year and it wouldn’t hurt for the Chief to do some investigation on the pros and cons of traffic cameras. Miller said the public message (from the Council) should be for considering speed cameras is that it will “increase public safety (for a very treacherous section of I-80), reduce accidents, and help keep our resident’s and emergency personnel safe”.

Discussion – Update on possible future annexation

Kofoed eluded to a possible annexation request to come to the Council in the next 30 days. Kofoed said he has been approached by the seller and buyer outside of the city limits and preliminary negotiations have started. Sexton said his concerns regarding the project is that if the city is committing to pay for a part of the infrastructure, how will that be accomplished with all of the other projects the Council has already committed to. Kofoed said he would need to research further with the city’s financial advisor for direction and feasibility. Miller said he would want to be assured that the layout of infrastructure would tie in easily with future development expansion. Laughlin stated that he would want the developer to complete required trails rather than just grading for them as was done in the past.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Kofoed thanked Monica Tylee for her temporary cleaning services of Town Hall while the city searches for a new cleaning service.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT – Absent

CITY ENGINEER REPORT

Schechinger reported on various projects and no concerns with their progress.

STAFF REPORTS - None

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

Sexton thanked Public Works for the great job keeping the streets clear during the last two snow events. Despite some chatter on social media, the Council agreed the department does a good job to keep our residents safe.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Dean, second by Miller. Motion carried on a voice vote. City Council meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Leslie Brick, City Clerk