

(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**

**April 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 Administration Adam Kofoed, City Clerk Leslie Brick, Police Chief John Hanna, Parks & Recreation Director Matt Condon and City Attorney Kevin Olson. Staff attending via Zoom: Finance Officer Heidi Van Auken and Library Director Becky Knoche. Absent: Public Works Director Matt Goodale.

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Motion by Miller, second by Sexton to approve the agenda.

APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Approve minutes from the April 3, 2023 City Council meeting
Approve the February Monthly Financial Report
Approve Claims for 4/17/2023

EXPENDITURES	4/17/2023	
AMAZON.COM	VARIOUS ITEMS	96.20
BAKER & TAYLOR INC.	BOOKS	443.56
CEDAR COUNTY COOPERATIVE	FUEL-PW	944.72
CEDAR COUNTY RECORDER	RECORDING FEES	21.00
COMPASS MINERALS AMERICA	ROAD SALT	4,471.24
DONAHUES CARPET	CARPET CLEANING - LIBRARY	551.08
FINNEGAN, JEANETTE	BLDG INCENTIVE PAYMENT	820.90
HAWKINS	CHEMICALS	2,924.17
HEIDI VAN AUKEN	MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT	22.93
KANOPI	ON DEMAND VIDEO SERVICE	28.00
LRS HOLDINGS	TRASH & RECYCLING MARCH 2023	17,482.25
MPEC	SHOP SUPPLIES- OIL	119.89
OLSON, KEVIN D	LEGAL SERVICES APRIL 2023	1,500.00
OVERDRIVE	DIGITAL & AUDIO BOOKS	479.79
QC ANALYTICAL SERVICES	LAB ANALYSIS	797.75
RALLY APPRAISAL	GASKILL CONDEMN TESTIMONY	1,000.00
SCOTT ALLEN STUELAND	STUMP GRINDING	3,200.00
STATE HYGIENIC LAB	LAB ANALYSIS	40.50
STEFANIE & ANTHONY ARNAMAN	BLDG INCENTIVE PAYMENT	1,039.37
WEIS BAILEY & KEARNEY MICHELE	BLDG INCENTIVE PAYMENT	2,017.17
WEST BRANCH TIMES	SUBSCRIPTION LIBRARY	44.00
TOTAL		38,044.52
PAYROLL-WAGES, TAXES, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	4/14/2023	48,924.77
PAID BETWEEN MEETINGS		
ALLIANT ENERGY	ALLIANT ENERGY	12,152.33
AMAZON.COM	VARIOUS ITEMS	202.88
DEMCO	PATRON ID CARDS	784.64
KOCH OFFICE GROUP	COPIER MAINTENANCE	202.98
LINN COUNTY REC	STREET LIGHTS	202.50
RIVER PRODUCTS	ROCK FOR RESURFACING	870.45
GLOBAL PAYMENTS	MARCH CREDIT CARD FEES	1,039.26
SISCO	HEALTH CLAIMS 4/3/2023	11.41
SISCO	HEALTH CLAIMS 4/10/2023	489.54
AT&T MOBILITY	WIRELESS SERVICE	364.72
DEERE & COMPANY	SIDEWALK TRACTOR	18,915.16
PROTECT YOUTH SPORTS	BACKGROUND CHECKS	445.50
QUILL CORP	OFFICE SUPPLIES	223.93
USA BLUE Book	TABLETS FOR HYDRANT FLUSHING	1,343.96
WEX	VEHICLE FUEL	1,208.42

GASKILL, KATHARINE	LAND CONDEMNATION COMP	12,000.00
TOTAL		50,457.68
GRAND TOTAL EXPENDITURES		137,426.97
FUND TOTALS		
001 GENERAL FUND	61,654.08	
022 CIVIC CENTER	572.29	
031 LIBRARY	9,512.25	
110 ROAD USE TAX	12,276.19	
112 TRUST AND AGENCY	9,397.86	
321 WIDENING WAPSI CREEK	13,000.00	
600 WATER FUND	18,178.97	
610 SEWER FUND	12,835.33	
GRAND FUND TOTAL	137,426.97	

REVENUE-FISCAL YEAR 2023
FUND FEBRUARY

001 GENERAL FUND	35,159.03
022 CIVIC CENTER	406.21
031 LIBRARY	74.45
036 TORT LIABILITY	394.10
110 ROAD USE TAX	28,688.06
112 TRUST & AGENCY	2,504.90
119 EMERGENCY TAX FUND	82.39
121 LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX	28,677.61
125 TIF	561.97
226 DEBT SERVICE	865.28
300 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT RESERVE	119.63
600 WATER FUND	44,657.28
610 SEWER FUND	70,265.15
740 STORM WATER UTILITY	5,348.48
TOTAL	217,804.54

Sexton questioned the dollar amounts of the Building Incentive Program and why they were over one thousand dollars. Kofoed reminded the Council that changes to the program which includes limiting the rebate to one thousand dollars each year goes into effect on July 1, 2023. Stoolman questioned the amount of a recent purchase by Public Works in the amount of \$18,915.16 for a sidewalk tractor. Van Auken explained that the tractor was purchased last fiscal year but that the city was not billed until this fiscal year. She also said that the cost included other attachments for the tractor.

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

PRESENTATIONS / COMMUNICATIONS / OPEN FORUM

Maggie Burger, Speer Financial presented the estimated projects costs for three city projects in progress or set to begin in 2023 to be \$3,040,000. Burger provided the breakdown of costs and how the projects would be funded which includes TIF, water and sewer fees, and Debt Service. Burger said the estimate project costs may be lower if engineering fees have already been paid and that she is still reviewing all of the numbers. Burger said that the Council will need to set a date for Public Hearing at the May 1st meeting for May 15th to start the ball rolling for the General Obligation Corporate Purpose Bond the city will need to bond for later this summer to fund the upcoming projects. Burger went on to explain that the new debt is expected to have a 4.5% interest rate with a seventeen-year maturity date. Burger went on to state that water rates will need to be increased to help fund the East Side Water Main project as well and that she hoped the City could start the ordinance process for the rates to be in effect no later than this fall.

PUBLIC HEARING / NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Second Reading of Ordinance 801 – Vacating an Unused Portion of Green Street on the former Croell Site to BBCO, LLC. / Move to action.

There were no comments.

Motion by Sexton, second by Miller to approve second reading of Ordinance 801. AYES: Sexton, Miller, Stoolman, Dean, Goodweiler. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2023-35 – Setting time and place for a Public Hearing for the Purpose of Soliciting Written and Oral Comments on the City’s Proposed Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget Amendment. / Move to action.

Motion by Miller, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2023-35. AYES: Miller, Sexton, Goodweiler, Dean, Stoolman. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2023-36 – Approving the purchase of a Titan Pro Leaf Vacuum in the amount of \$75,525.00. /Move to action.

Sexton stated that he would like to see Public Works cut additional labor costs for providing the service going forward. He suggested fewer pick-ups and a using larger hopper to collect the leaves which would lessen the number of trips to empty. Goodale was not available for comment. Miller clarified that the city would be using the insurance proceeds in the amount of \$39,000 from the old leaf vac toward the purchase price of the new one. Kofoed confirmed that was the fact.

Motion by Sexton, second by Goodweiler to approve Resolution 2023-36. AYES: Sexton, Goodweiler, Miller Dean. NAYS: Stoolman. Motion carried.

Resolution 2023-37 – Approving a (REVISED) Site Plan for Lot 1, Heritage Hill, West Branch, Iowa. / Move to action.

Laughlin summarized the changes to the Site Plan which now includes more green space between the dwellings, reconfiguration of the dwellings, covered parking for the two twelve-unit buildings on the north end of the property and revised pond grading to the detention basin. The Council had no additional comments or questions.

Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2023-37. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Miller, Stoolman, Goodweiler. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2023-38 – Approving an Information Technology Support Contract with Mainstay Systems of Iowa LLC. / Move to action.

Kofoed briefly explained the differences between the quotes received and the needs of the city and how the decision was arrived to go with Mainstay Systems of Iowa. The Council had no additional comments or questions.

Motion by Dean, second by Miller to approve Resolution 2023-38. AYES: Dean, Miller, Sexton, Stoolman, Goodweiler. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Motion to approve a request for a partial sewer fee abatement for 30 Greenview Circle. / Move to action.

The resident’s original request for a partial sewer fee abatement was denied on March 3, 2023 by city staff after information received on the excess water and sewer billing in February was reviewed. Kofoed added that staff receives these types of requests often. He cautioned the Council that if they start waiving fees for individual residents, then the remaining tax payers pay for it in the end. He added that while the city is sympathetic to financial burdens water leaks create, that staff makes every effort to help the citizen by offering payment arrangements and to avoid disconnection of services. The Council debated this issue as well as past ones for several minutes. Brick reminded the Council that at their request in 2020, the city adopt a policy to handle these types of requests. Several cities were asked for their policies and the results showed that other city policies ranged from partial forgiveness to no forgiveness. The purpose of adopting the policy was to encourage fairness regardless of ability to pay or who asked. Brick added that prior practices of the Council were inconsistent on who was given forgiveness and who wasn’t. Stoolman argued that if the city allowed forgiveness to people who used landscape meters, then this situation should be forgiven too. Goodweiler questioned based on the current policy, when would the city ever grant forgiveness. Brick said no situation has been requested yet that she felt qualified for forgiveness as most of the issues were “property maintenance” related and the responsibility of the homeowner and not every other taxpayer.

Motion by Goodweiler, second by Sexton to approve the request. AYES: Stoolman, Goodweiler. NAYS: Sexton, Miller, Dean. Motion FAILED.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Kofoed remind the Council that ICS (Incident Command System) training will be held in the Council Chambers on May 1, 2023 starting at 1:00 p.m. This training is mandatory for all city staff and City Council members if you have not already completed it yet and received a certificate of completion.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

Olson reported that the owner of the nuisance property on East Green Street has been located and served foreclosure paperwork by their bank and that the issue is moving forward.

CITY ENGINEER REPORT

Schechinger reported progress on city projects and noted no major issues.

STAFF REPORTS

Condon reported that the Park & Recreation survey results have been tabulated and that he would be sharing the results with the Park & Recreation Commission to determine which areas of interest could be pursued.

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

Laughlin said he attended MainStreet West Branch Sweet's for Success Fundraiser and said it was another successful event which raised more than \$36,000. Dean asked when signage would be added on Herbert Hoover Road at I-80 to alert driver's that there is no access to West Branch. Schechinger said he would make a follow-up with Johnson County's project manager.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Sexton, second by Miller. Motion carried on a voice vote. City Council meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Leslie Brick, City Clerk