

MINUTES
City of Niagara
Regular City Council Meeting
Wednesday, May 27, 2020
Immediately Following the Board of Review
Niagara City Hall
1029 Roosevelt Road
Niagara, WI 54151

The meeting was called to order at 4:47 p.m. by Mayor George Bousley. Present: Aldermen Lynn Burke, Mike Darne, Dan Decker, Joe Johnston, Glenn Lantagne and Don Shampo; Police Chief Angela Moreau, Public Works Coordinator Ron Rugg and Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer Audrey Fredrick.

Also present: Police Officer Todd Rochon, City Auditor Scott Sternhagen and City Assessor Jerry Pillath.

A motion was made by Alderman Darne and seconded by Alderman Decker to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

There were no public appearances.

A motion was made by Alderman Lantagne and seconded by Alderman Darne to approve the minutes from the Reorganizational Meeting April 21, 2020, Regular City Council meeting April 21, 2020 and Special City Council meeting April 28, 2020. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Alderman Decker and seconded by Alderman Burke to pre-approve the bills for June 2020. Motion carried.

The reports were reviewed. Alderman Lantagne moved to approve the reports as presented. Alderman Decker seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Reports from department heads or elected officials:

- Police Chief Moreau:
 - Chief Moreau stated that there are extra patrols in the Highway 141 construction zone, and continuing issues with semis and non-local traffic in that area.
 - Chief Moreau applied for, and was awarded a \$3,670.00 grant from the M & M Area Community Foundation. The funds will be used for mass casualty training.

City Auditor Scott Sternhagen of CliftonLarsonAllen LLP reviewed the 2019 audit results. He stated that the audit went well. Mr. Sternhagen discussed debt, financial needs, and the potential for a decrease in shared revenue for 2021 due to the current financial situation / Covid-19 issue. He also noted that the City had a large reduction of equalized value in the Tax Incremental District (TID) #2, and will need to look at solutions for funding TID #2. Mr. Sternhagen recommended that the City increase the water utility rates, as water rates have not been increased since 2008. The utility is still operating with a deficit. Alderman Decker moved to accept the audit report as presented, and Alderman Burke seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, with all voting AYE. Motion carried.

City Assessor Jerry Pillath explained the upcoming reevaluation process. The current assessed value is less than the Department of Revenue base value, so a market adjustment by increment will be made. The millage rate will then be adjusted with a decrease, so there will be little change in taxes. Property owners will get a letter of explanation. Mr. Pillath noted that this reevaluation is

required by the Department of Revenue. Alderman Burke moved to accept the assessor's report. Alderman Johnston seconded the motion. Motion carried.

A water utility rate increase was discussed. Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer Fredrick stated that the Public Service Commission allows for a three percent (3%) increase of water charges (excluding sewer) every 18 months if the City applies for a "simplified rate increase." The amount of change would increase the fixed charge by approximately forty five cents (\$.45) per month / eighty nine cents (\$.89) per bi-monthly billing cycle. Water usage would increase by eleven cents (\$.11) per 1,000 gallons. Alderman Decker made a motion to apply for the simplified water rate increase of three percent, and Alderman Shampo seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, with Alderman Darne voting "NO" against the increase, and Aldermen Burke, Decker, Johnston, Lantagne and Shampo voting "AYE". Motion carried on a 5 – 1 vote.

A motion was made by Alderman Shampo to begin the abatement process for blighted properties that have been non-responsive to clean-up requests in support of the enforcement of Ordinance 11-6-3. Alderman Burke seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Alderman Shampo moved to create an ordinance for the main gas lines, sized one and one-half inches and larger, to be removed when abandoned. The intent of the ordinance will protect citizens and contractors. Alderman Lantagne seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Alderman Johnston moved to approve the removal and replacement of some storm sewer crossings in the zone of the Highway 141 resurfacing project. Alderman Decker seconded the motion. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Alderman Decker to establish an employee handbook review and safety policy committee. Aldermen Johnston, Lantagne and Shampo, as well as Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer Fredrick, were appointed to the committee. Alderman Burke seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Police Chief Moreau proposed the City sponsorship of a Police Officer candidate through the police academy. Chief Moreau noted the following:

- State pays for the academy, lodging and travel expenses.
- City would be responsible for paying a wage for the candidate.
- Academy is five months duration.
- Looking at the long-term health of the department; the search for qualified candidates has been challenging.

Alderman Shampo moved to interview the candidates. If a qualified applicant is selected, the City will sponsor a candidate through the academy, with a required two-to-three year commitment to the City. Alderman Burke seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, with Alderman Lantagne voting "NO" against the sponsorship, and Aldermen Burke, Darne, Decker, Johnston, and Shampo voting "AYE". Motion carried on a 5 – 1 vote.

Alderman Decker moved to recognize and thank former resident Suzy Thibert for her improvements to the cemetery reflection area. Alderman Lantagne seconded the motion. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Alderman Johnston to approve Jacob Dunlap as a Volunteer Fire Department member. Alderman Decker seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Alderman Darne moved to renew the service time block with Orbit Technologies for 20 hours. Alderman Decker seconded the motion.

A motion was made by Alderman Decker to approve Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer Fredrick to attend the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Clerks Institute. A full scholarship of \$489.00 for tuition was awarded by the Wisconsin Municipal Clerks Association. Alderman Darne seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer Fredrick presented the Administrative Report:

- The office has reopened for business following the COVID-19 emergency order; surfaces are being kept clean.
- Water utility bills were issued on May 12, 2020.
- The Community Development Block Grant award has been formally approved; however there are still requests for additional information from the State.
- The Americans with Disabilities accommodations plan is being finalized. Modifications need to be made, including the bathrooms, signage and symbols of accessibility.

Alderman Burke moved to accept the Administrative report as presented. Alderman Decker seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Public Works Coordinator Ron Rugg provided the Water and Sewer Report:

- The stainless tank at the treatment plant was cut up and placed out of site until it can be sold for scrap metal.
- Trees were removed at the treatment plant.
- One antennae needs to be removed by UP Logon from the water tower.

Alderman Decker moved to accept the Water and Sewer report as presented. Alderman Burke seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

- Public Safety:
 - Police Chief Moreau shared a letter of commendation written by a resident on behalf of Police Officer Todd Rochon.
- Beautification
 - Alderman Burke stated that five large flower pots have been ordered for placement at the waterfall area.
 - Large wooden flags were purchased and will be placed in the City.

Alderman Decker made a motion to set the next regular City Council meeting for Wednesday, June 24, 2020, at 4:45 p.m. Alderman Shampo seconded the motion. Motion carried.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Alderman Shampo and seconded by Alderman Darne to adjourn. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.