

**COMMISSION ON PUBLIC WORKS/UTILITIES
COUNCIL ROOM, CITY HALL
JULY 23, 2024
6:45 P.M.**

The Commission on Public Works/Utilities met in regular session, Chair Clough presiding. On roll call: all members present.

The minutes of the previous meeting were declared approved.

Director of Public Works Friemoth reported on three burials at the Cemetery, mowing and weed trimming, dragging ball diamonds, set up and take down of Heritage Days, hauling brush and compost, painting parking lines and crosswalks, cleaning ditches, cleaning catch basins, street sweeping, Water Department-daily testing and well rounds, installing meters and radio reads, fire hydrant repair, cleaning up trees and mowing around wells and booster station, replaced air relief valves on filter vessels, Sewer Department-daily testing and lift station rounds, lift station maintenance, serviced generators at E. Twelfth Street and US Hwy 10 lift stations, troubleshooting UV light issues (light banks not communicating with the control panel), installed a new pump at the Black River Road lift station, looking into options to stop inflow and infiltration, the State Hwy 73/Hewett Street DOT project for 2027 has been cancelled (due to DOT policy change the two-inch milling and overlay in now considered maintenance and no longer a capital project and their funding will not cover it).

Discussion on the columbarium at the Cemetery.

Motin Neville, second Poeschel, that Water Bills Nos. 188 to 216 in the amount of \$98,311.31 and Sewer Bills Nos. 119 to 139 in the amount of \$86,412.50 be paid. All Aye.

Motion Poeschel, second Rochester, to adjourn. All Aye.

Daniel M. Clough, Chair

Rex R. Roehl, Clerk

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**COMMON COUNCIL
COUNCIL ROOM
JULY 23, 2024
7:00 P.M.**

The Common Council met in regular session, Mayor Poeschel presiding. On roll call: all members present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The minutes of the previous meetings were declared approved.

Mayor Poeschel presented the July 10, 2024 meeting of the Police and Fire Commission regarding: 1) a closed session to interview candidates for firefighter positions, 2) reconvening into open session to hire Kevin Mikos, Bryce Backaus, Brandon Wampole and Logan Erickson as firefighters subject to completion of successful background checks, 3) discussion on and adoption of by-laws and 4) discussion on and adoption of Policies and Procedures.

Council Member Neville presented the July 16, 2024 meeting of the Library Board regarding: 1) librarians’ reports, 2) exterior painting project completed, 3) discussion on concrete repairs, 4) update on Town Square Farmer’s Market Manager duties, 5) discussion on tree stump removal near the East parking lot, 6) discussion on Clark County Library Aid, 7) Election of Officers-Graeme Williams-President, Logan Grap-Vice President and Maggie Gelhaus-Secretary, 8) all committee assignments remain the same, 9) discussion on donation

policy, 10) discussion on memorial flower planter, 11) payment of bills and 12) updates on donations and carryover funds.

Council Member Clough reported on the July 17, 2024 meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission regarding: 1) discussion on the 2024 Historic Preservation Commission action plan-current list of properties, brochures, forms, website, steps for submission of the Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant in the Spring of 2025, finalizing the self-guided (QR Code) Cemetery tour and contractor list, 2) WI Historic Preservation Conference in Appleton and 3) discussion on historic preservation property roof repairs.

Mayor Poeschel reported on the July 23, 2024 Personnel Committee regarding: 1) discussion on and recommendation to approve the Employee Handbook update with changes made and 2) a closed session regarding discussion on contract negotiations with the Neillsville Police Association.

Council Member Clough reported on the July 23, 2024 meeting of the Commission on Public Works/Utilities regarding: 1) current activities and 2) payment of bills.

Mayor Poeschel declared all reports filed as presented with the City Clerk.

Jerilyn St. Amand stated that it is good that the Council Members are checking their wards, she has a concern about the homeless population, overflowing dumpsters creating a health concern and someone complaining about her Crime Stopper sign.

Mayor Poeschel asked if there were any questions on the Personnel Committee item (1).

Motion Neville, second Clough, to accept the recommendation to approve the Employee Handbook update with changes made.

Council Member Petkovsek offered a friendly amendment effective January 1, 2025.

Both Council Members Neville and Clough agreed to the amendment.

Mayor Poeschel called the vote. All Aye.

City Clerk Roehl reported receiving a \$1,092.72 donation from the Friends of the Black River, Inc. for improvements to the Neillsville Trout Pond.

Motion Clough, second Counsell, to accept and appropriate \$1,092.72 to Account No. 57620 Parks Outlay and to thank the Friends of the Black River, Inc. for its donation. All Aye.

City Clerk Roehl reported on receiving a \$5,000.00 donation from Unity Bank for the Listeman Park expansion project.

Motion Petkovsek, second Rochester, to accept and appropriate \$5,000.00 to Account No. 57620 Parks Outlay and to thank Unity Bank for its donation. All Aye.

City Clerk Roehl reported on receiving a \$12,000.00 donation from the Tews Family for Gazebo restoration.

Motion Petkovsek, second Counsell, to accept and appropriate \$12,000.00 to Account No. 57620 Parks Outlay and to thank the Tews Family for their donation. All Aye.

City Clerk Roehl stated the Beautification Committee has collected \$1,900.00 in donations for hanging baskets/decorations from area businesses and individuals.

Motion Clough, second Neville, to accept and appropriate \$1,900.00 in donations for hanging baskets/decorations to Account No. 55340 Celebration and to thank the businesses and individuals for helping beautify our City. All Aye.

City Clerk Roehl presented the Security Health Insurance contract renewal for 2024-2025. The Family active plan premium is remaining the same at \$1,961.17 per month-0.0% increase, Single active plan premium is remaining the same at \$905.06 per month-0.0% increase. The current deductibles are \$6,000 family and \$3,000 single. Minor changes to hearing aid batteries and some digital therapies.

Motion Counsell, second Rochester, to accept the health insurance contract renewal with Security Health for 2024-2025. All Aye.

Mayor Poeschel presented a request from the Neillsville Area Chamber of Commerce for use of the Heritage Days tent, tables and chairs for a “Business After 5” event on Tuesday, August 20, 2024 in the Industrial Park to showcase our Industrial Park businesses.

Director of Public Works Friemoth stated the tent has been used by a handful of people, now it is becoming more, it takes a lot of time for set up and take down involving two days, which takes workers away from other work, holes will have to be drilled to set up the tent.

Discussion followed on six or seven people to set up the tent, taking 3 to 4 hours, drilling holes-does Mayville Engineering Company (MEC) know this, industrial park businesses give a lot back to the community, possibly setting the tent up on the lawn instead of the blacktop, could they rent a tent instead, needing to support our industrial park businesses-promote them.

Motion Petkovsek, second Counsell, to table the request for more information. All Aye.

Mayor Poeschel and Director of Public Works Friemoth will meet with those involved.

Mayor Poeschel stated that we all know we have a homeless situation throughout the City.

Chief of Police Mankowski stated that there are two types of homeless: 1) those that are unsheltered (we have about six people) and 2) people who go from place to place.

Discussion on being a County Seat problem, having them in public places with children walking past, lacking restroom facilities, the City can’t set up a City Shelter-lack of funding and legal concerns, the root cause of the problem is people being released from probation or incarceration with no place to go, trying to figure out a way to work with the Department of Corrections (DOC) and Department of Justice (DOJ), we don’t have squatters, panhandling going on, if these people had a place you would know where they are, homeless are moving around with no fixed place, out by the hockey rink is too far for them to walk to Kwik Trip or fairground showers, someone stole a homeless person’s tent (that is not right and if caught will be charged).

Discussion continued on Winter time-they bundle up, hang out at the Library or in the laundromat, if you set something up are you enabling them, what is happening with the Senior Center building, we are seeing it more often people get out of jail-your free to go-you have no place to go.

Mayor Poeschel asked everyone to give it some thought, research, we need to come up with a solution.

Karen Hurd, State Representative introduced herself-she is running for the 69th Assembly District.

Hurd stated that with the new legislative districts the 69th Assembly District became open as Representative Rozar was drawn out of district. Hurd moved from Fall Creek into the district to run here.

Hurd talked about homelessness, the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) paperwork all municipalities have to file for maintaining the service levels for police, fire and EMS personnel, the State bailing Milwaukee out of bankruptcy, the Milwaukee pension fund going broke because of borrowing funds and risky investments, all their new employees have to become part of the Wisconsin Retirement System and the old Milwaukee Retirement System will fade away, Milwaukee was allowed to have a sales tax which is now 9% total.

Council Member Petkovsek asked Hurd about the municipal levy limits we have been living under for many years. The limits should be removed-let the City Councils and County Boards handle their own.

Fire Chief Meyer reported on Second Quarter 2024 activities. Attending a Police and Fire Commission meeting, assisting the Clark County Sheriff’s Department in cutting apart a

vehicle, conducted the semi-annual hose test, attending a Clark County Emergency Services meeting in Curtiss, changing the Smokey Bear sign for fire conditions, conducted a 38 acre controlled burn in the Town of Hewett, attending the groundbreaking for the new Chili Fire Station/Community Center, provided a truck and crew for the Rock Crawlers event at the Fairgrounds, burnt three brush fires, escort and traffic control for the Highground Motorcycle ride, fire inspections, two trucks and equipment for June Dairy breakfast display, filled four pools, attended Community Fire Hall and Rural Fire Board meetings, attended a Personnel Committee meeting, conducted a home inspection for a foster home and lit the 4th of July fireworks at the Fairgrounds and Highground freedom event.

Fire Chief Meyer reported on responding to 30 calls this quarter (16-Rural and 14-City). The Rural had four brush/wildland/grass fires, one vehicle fire, three motorcycle accidents, one ATV accident, one two-car accident, one one-car accident, three down power lines, one cancel enroute to a down power line and one cancelled enroute to a Greenwood mutual aid call; the City had one electrical receptacle fire, one car fire, one lawnmower fire, one smoke odor, one truck fallen off jack stand onto a person, three down power lines, one carbon monoxide alarm, one faulty heat/fire alarm, three lift assists to the Ambulance service and one Coroner assist.

Fire Chief Meyer reports all equipment is in working order, the City Engine is needing service, the new Engine build was started on June 28th, they will be going over for an inspection in August with completion around the end of September. Firefighter interviews were held and four new firefighters will be starting on August 5th.

Library Director Janay Ziebell gave an update on the Summer reading program with 137 children signed up for reading goals, a sneak peak on new materials, book club and an author coming in October.

City Clerk Roehl presented the Clark County Clean Sweep on September 6, 2024 at the Neillsville Fairgrounds flyer and a reminder that the August 13, 2024 Council meeting has been moved to August 6, 2024 because of the Partisan Primary Election.

Temporary Class “B” Retailer’s License (Beer Only) Application:
Neillsville Lions Club, Robert R. Petkovsek, Agent, for Fountain Park, 805 Hewett Street, for August 16, 2024-Opelt Park and Rails to Trails Ribbon cutting

Motin Neville, second Rochester, to grant. All Aye.

Soda Water License Application:
Neillsville Lions Club, Tom Opelt, Agent, for Fountain Park, 805 Hewett Street, for August 16, 2024-Opelt Park and Rails to Trail Ribbon cutting

Motion Rochester, second Neville, to grant. All Aye.

Tavern Operator’s License Applications:
Connie R. McDonald, Diamond L. Spain, Melissa J. Boon Strangfeld, Lisa A. Turnquist and Amelia M. Warren

Motion, Counsell second Rochester, to grant all the listed licenses. All Aye.

Motion Counsell, second Rochester, that City Bills Nos. 668 to 714 in the amount of \$188,812.57 be paid. All Aye.

Motion Neville, second Rochester, to adjourn. All Aye.

Duane G. Poeschel, Mayor

Rex R. Roehl, Clerk