

MONONA CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
January 3, 2022

The regular meeting of the Monona City Council, via Zoom, was called to order by Mayor O'Connor at 7:05 p.m.

Present: Mayor Mary K. O'Connor, Alderpersons Kristie Goforth, Molly Grupe, Nancy Moore, Doug Wood, Jennifer Kuhr, Kathy Thomas

Also Present: City Administrator Bryan Gadow, Parks & Recreation Director Jake Anderson, Fire Chief Jeremy McMullen, Police Chief Brian Chaney Austin, Community Media Director Will Nimmow, Library Director Ryan Claringbole, and City Clerk Alene Houser

ROLL CALL AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor O'Connor noted a correction on Kurt Studt's appearance on Page 3: In favor of a one-way street from Owen Road to Maywood Road, not Owen Road to Winnequah Road.

Motion by Alder Goforth, seconded by Alder Kuhr, to approve the Minutes of the December 20, 2021 City Council meeting as amended. Motion carried.

APPEARANCES

Mayor O'Connor read a Proclamation Regarding Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – January 17, 2022.

Alder Goforth spoke for informational purposes regarding the upcoming campaign season, urging community leaders to set a good example for those who step up to be public servants and future leaders.

PUBLIC HEARING and CONSENT AGENDA

There was no Public Hearing or Consent Agenda.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no Unfinished Business.

NEW BUSINESS

G.2.a. Consideration of Ordinance 1-22-746 Amending Section 335-8 of the Code of Ordinances Prohibiting Noise Disturbing the Peace

Police Chief Chaney Austin provided a summary. Updates to the ordinance would allow the City Clerk to issue residential amplified device permits while commercial permits would go to the Public Safety Committee (PSC) so the public has the ability to weigh in with concerns or support for any commercial noise application. Language regulating light motor vehicle noise was added based on public input. Alder Wood expressed concern with commercial permits going to the Public Safety Committee, as noise complaints are currently heard by the License Review Committee (LRC) so they have familiarity of issues as they relate to liquor licensing. Discussion followed on whether these permits should go through

multiple committees and where the balance is between the public's ability to weigh in on loud live music and the burden to businesses of having to navigate through multiple committees in order to obtain a permit in a timely manner. Chief Chaney Austin also explained how the revised ordinance would give the police department the ability to determine what's considered reasonable noise and how complaints regarding light motor vehicle noise would be handled.

G.2.b. Consideration of Resolution 22-1-2529 Repudiating Racist Covenants in Local Property Records

Alder Kuhr provided background on the history of racist covenants from the 1950s and 1960s in subdivisions in Monona. Generational wealth is generally acquired through home ownership, and these covenants have created generational wealth gaps between black and white people in Wisconsin. State law doesn't allow the blanket removal of this language from current property deeds; all we can do is call attention to it and encourage homeowners to amend their property deed to remove the language unless and until state legislation is adopted to address the issue. Alder Kuhr's hope is that bringing forward this resolution will create a larger conversation around this issue and understanding why Monona's makeup looks the way it does.

G.2.c. Consideration of Resolution 22-1-2530 Amending the 2022 Capital Budget Amendment for the Purchase of a Mower in the Parks Department

Parks and Recreation Director Anderson explained that the mower that was approved in the budget won't be available until quarter 3 or 4, likely at a higher price due to supply chain issues. An in-stock alternative is available but would be \$20,000 more than the budgeted amount because it has a cab. To offset the increased cost, the current 6-foot mower would be traded in or auctioned and the Fireman's Park bike rack project could be delayed until 2023. Discussion followed with questions and suggestions about other models and brands, and other ways to finance the cost difference.

G.2.d. Consideration of Resolution 22-1-2531 Amending the 2022 Capital Budget for Parks Tree Removals and Replacements

Parks and Recreation Director Anderson explained that the capital budget was approved before he received notification that a grant to fund tree removals and replacements was not received. He would have updated the capital budget to include this item because this is an important project. This resolution was approved at Finance & Personnel with an amendment to delay the Fireman's Park bike rack project until 2023, using those funds for tree removal and the mower purchase.

G.2.e. Consideration of Resolution 22-1-2532 Allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds for Police and Fire Departments Policy Updates

Fire Chief McMullen explained that current policies and procedures are out of date, and neither department has time to undertake the extensive project of updating existing policies and adding the necessary new ones. Chiefs McMullen and Chaney Austin recommend contracting with Lexipol because it has a large legal team to apply Wisconsin case law to policy and will cater to our specific community needs when suggesting updated policies. Lexipol services more than 8,000 agencies and is a CVMIC partner. The cost of the onboarding process and a two-year service plan is approximately \$89,000, and ARPA funding would be used. The need for additional updates after two years was discussed. Administrator Gadow recommended revisiting again in six months to a year regarding additional years because the status of the ARPA funds will be better known then.

G.2.f. Consideration of Resolution 22-1-2533 Allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds for Multimedia Improvements in the Library

Library Director Claringbole summarized that the demand for virtual and hybrid meetings has highlighted the need for upgraded equipment in the Municipal and Forum Rooms. The current equipment can only be operated by the media staff, and the YouTube streaming equipment can be unreliable since it's 5-6 years old. New technology will be user-friendly, improve connectivity, and allow users to plug in and have access. Alder Thomas informed members about an amendment out of the Finance and Personnel Committee which would allow the Administrator to approve up to 10% more of the cost. Members agreed that there is no reason to wait for a second reading on this item. It is a wise investment, and since it will take a while to receive the equipment due to supply chain issues and a backlog of projects, the equipment should be ordered as soon as possible.

Motion by Alder Moore, seconded by Alder Thomas, to suspend the rules and take action on Resolution 22-1-2533 Allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds for Multimedia Improvements in the Library. Motion carried.

Motion by Alder Thomas, seconded by Alder Wood, to amend Resolution 22-1-2533 Allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds for Multimedia Improvements in the Library to include that the City Administrator is authorized to approve any cost overruns up to 10% of the cost of the project. Motion carried.

Motion by Alder Thomas, seconded by Alder Grupe to approve Resolution 22-1-2533 Allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds for Multimedia Improvements in the Library as amended. On a roll call vote, all members voted in favor of the motion.

REPORTS

1. Updates/Discussion on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Efforts

Alder Goforth thanked the Mayor and Administrator for allowing the Ho Chunk flag to fly year-round. Congratulations were also given to Chief Chaney Austin for being chosen as one of Wisconsin's 48 most influential black leaders in the state.

Administrator Gadow reported that he is finalizing slots for Council members participating in the Nehemiah's Justified Anger course this winter/spring. Members should expect an email by the middle of this week with their time slots.

Alder Moore reminded the community that Martin Luther King, Jr. day was approved as a staff holiday last year and she encouraged staff to actually take the holiday if they can. She also congratulated the Chief as well as the police department as a whole with the graduation of new recruit Julie Ribeiro, the promotion of Sara Deuman to Captain and Assistant Chief, and the hiring of Emma Gunsolus. These are all great steps forward in terms of diversity.

2. Update/Discussion on Sustainability Efforts.

There were no updates.

3. Committee Reports.

Alder Kuhr reported the annual Loud in the Library fundraiser will be virtual again this year and take place the weekend of January 28-30. The Library has partnered with Eat Streets and will get 15% from Eat Streets when the code Loud22 is used. More information is available on the Library's website.

Director Claringbole reported that Monona Library made the Library Journal's annual star library list. It's based on output and is only a fraction of what the library does, but it's a testament to the staff and community that supports the library and to the work the Council and the Library Board does. It shows our library is being used and is embraced by the community. The things that make the library unique are our staff and our community, and this is a nice honoring of what the staff has done here through the years. He appreciates that they are being recognized for the work they do.

Media Director Nimmow congratulated the Library and City Clerk Houser on her first meeting as Clerk.

Chief McMullen reported he's currently working on an annual report for the Fire Department. The Department has 12 new volunteers who started over the last month; five are women and half are City of Monona residents. He thanked the Streets Department, as the job they do allows the fire department to get where they need to go when the weather is bad, and they do a fabulous job keeping the streets clear. He also thanked the Police Department. Fire/EMS had slightly under 1,800 calls this year and the Police Department comes to all calls.

Chief Chaney Austin welcomed City Clerk Houser, congratulated the Library, and thanked everyone for the recognition of being on the list of influential black leaders. He is also excited that we're getting more women representation in Monona. He is currently working on establishing his Chief's Roundtable group. He has about 10 members signed up with diverse backgrounds and experiences. He is still looking for a young person. He will organize the first meeting in the next month or so with four meetings per year. His goal is to get thoughts, suggestions and insights on all things public safety. He reported that he has also started a department peer support program this year and is working with the new chaplain and EAP on ways the peer support officer can be better utilized to make sure staff is mentally fit to take on the next challenge. He has also instituted a wellness day for each staff member at the police department. The day will include a one-hour EAP session with an assessment to evaluate wellness followed by whatever wellness activity has been deemed good for them for the rest of the day. By encouraging wellness days and contact with the EAP, he hopes his staff will walk away with more tools on their belt.

Administrator Gadow reported that the recent surge in COVID cases has impacted every city department. Staff is trying to keep people separated, provide barriers and separation between employees, and follow all Dane County rules and regulations. Chief McMullen is sourcing as much testing equipment as possible so we can try to avoid multiple staff members being out at the same time. Administrator Gadow will bring a revised COVID leave policy to the next Council meeting.

Alder Moore echoed Chief McMullen's sentiments about our Public Works crew and Supervisor Jeff Johnson, adding that Monona streets are so much better than every other community and it's appreciated. She congratulated the Library. She also congratulated Administrator Gadow for passing his Certified Emergency Management program.

Mayor O'Connor congratulated Administrator Gadow on his program completion as well. She also informed residents that Christmas tree pick up begins on January 17. Residents should have their trees out that morning.

APPOINTMENTS

There were no Appointments.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Alder Kuhr, seconded by Alder Grupe, to adjourn. Motion carried (8:43 p.m.).

Alene Houser
City Clerk