

MONONA CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
March 1, 2021

The regular meeting of the Monona City Council, via Zoom, was called to order by Mayor O'Connor at 7:00 p.m.

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

Also Present: City Administrator Bryan Gadow, Public Works Director Dan Stephany, Recreation Director Jake Anderson, Erik Elmer and Brian Conger from B-Cycle, Finance Director Marc Houtakker, Acting Police Chief Sara Deuman, Operations Lieutenant Curt Wiegel, and City Clerk Joan Andrusz

ROLL CALL AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Alder Goforth wanted to make note that she went around the table and all Community Media Committee members were comfortable with the recording of their meetings.

A motion by Alder Wood, seconded by Alder Grupe to approve the Minutes of the February 15, 2021 City Council meeting, was carried.

APPEARANCES

The following individuals appeared before the Council and spoke in support of the Ad Hoc Workgroup on Diversity and Equity Issues:

- Josh Peterson, 5704 Midmoor Road
- Heidi Duss, 4906 Schofield Street
- Jason Chung, 504 McKenna Road

The following individuals appeared before the Council and spoke against the Stone Bridge Park project:

- Randal Smith, 4224 Winnequah Road
- Patricia Smith, 4224 Winnequah Road

Bob Wickhem, 5724 Winnequah Trail introduced himself and provided information on the Monona in Motion Committee.

The following individuals registered their support of the Ad Hoc Workgroup on Diversity and Equity Issues via email:

- Sue Carr, 4209 Winnequah Road
- Maggie Jakubczak, 201 Stone Terrance
- Mary Anne Reed, 5602 Winnequah Road, also in support of reauthorization of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grants

Becky Alexander, 4807 Wallace Avenue registered via email against the Stone Bridge Park project and installation of B-Cycle stations at Grand Crossing and Schluter Parks.

Georgian Springen, 6211 Bridge Road registered via email in support of making Monona City Council meetings available on YouTube. Mayor O'Connor noted these meetings currently are available on YouTube and that will continue.

PUBLIC HEARING and CONSENT AGENDA

There was no Public Hearing or Consent Agenda.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Public Works Director Stephany reported R.G. Huston was the low bid on the following project. Work will begin this year with one lane open at all times. Once started, they have 90 days to complete Phase 1, with a final due date of November 19, 2021. Phase 2 is asphalt work, which will be completed by May 13, 2022. They may try to get the whole project done this year, but can't work from March 1 to June 15 due to DNR water restrictions.

A motion by Alder Kuhr, seconded by Alder Moore to approve Resolution 21-2-2463 Award of Contract for the Pirate Island Bridge Replacement Project. On a roll call vote, all members voted in favor of the motion.

A motion by Alder Kuhr, seconded by Alder Grupe to amend Resolution 21-2-2465 A Resolution in Support of the Reauthorization of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant to \$70,000, was carried.

Alder Kuhr reported the Governor's budget has tripled the amount available to local governments. She reviewed past park purchases; access for all is provided. Natural areas enhance the quality of life and economic development of a community.

A motion by Alder Kuhr, seconded by Alder Moore to amend Resolution 21-2-2465 A Resolution in Support of the Reauthorization of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant as amended, was carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A motion by Alder Thomas, seconded by Alder Goforth to suspend the rules and take action on Resolution 21-3-2469 Approval of a 3-Month Police School Resource Officer Agreement Between the City of Monona, the Monona Grove School District, and the Village of Cottage Grove, was carried. Alder Grupe voted against the motion.

City Administrator Gadow reported the School Board wanted to do a shorter extension to the end of the school year to allow evaluation of the position for long-term status. They will ask for advice from Monona and Cottage Grove Councils. Alder Thomas reported the needs of People of Color are under review and they are involved in the discussions. The SRO will be included in staff diversity training. There is concern about use for disciplinary purposes. The Public Safety Committee recommended approval but in the future officers will get training from the national organization. There are many positive comments about the SRO from staff and students. Alder Moore reported it was indicated that the new MOU represents best practices on a national level. She is comfortable revisiting this in 3 months to

allow the School District to evaluate and review. Alder Kuhr is glad use of the SRO for discipline has been removed.

Alder Wood stated he is not completely in favor of having Police Officers in schools and questioned how the position would be budgeted. Mayor O'Connor reported a position is being held open in the Department; one is being filled but not the other. The Officer will be back on patrol in the summer. Alder Grupe stated she doesn't believe the Police Department belongs in schools, especially Middle School. The City should work harder on restructuring public schools, which are designed to be spaces to accommodate White students, to accommodate Black students more successfully. Alder Goforth questioned who pays for training. City Administrator Gadow responded the special training would be paid by the School District if they go forward with the position.

A motion by Alder Thomas, seconded by Alder Moore to approve Resolution 21-3-2469 Approval of a 3-Month Police School Resource Officer Agreement Between the City of Monona, the Monona Grove School District, and the Village of Cottage Grove. Alder Grupe voted against the motion.

Mayor O'Connor reported the following item does not require immediate action. Recreation Director Anderson provided information on Resolution 21-3-2471 Amending the Capital Budget for the Installation of B-Cycle Stations at Grand Crossing and Schluter Parks. This was in the 2020 Capital Budget for Grand Crossing Park but the pandemic interrupted discussions. Private business partners will fund annual operations there. The Parks & Recreation Board worked toward acquiring a better deal.

Mr. Elmer and Mr. Conger introduced themselves, projected a slide presentation, and provided information. Trek owns the program; B-Cycle owns and operates all Bike Share sites in Madison. Data was provided on current use in Monona. Environmental and health benefits were highlighted. Costs of a 3-year contract were reviewed. Alder Grupe reported this was discussed at length by the Parks & Recreation Board and unanimously approved. The bicycles work for all abilities; the batteries are long-lasting and are recyclable.

Alder Moore stated this was in the park's original plan. She questioned whether corporate sponsor logos would be on the docking stations. Recreation Director Anderson responded advertisements are on the baskets and the kiosks would be branded as well. If approved, he will contact sponsors and pursue business support. He has \$4,000 already and needs \$3,000 more.

Alder Wood reported two years ago it was more expensive for a more limited program. Having two sites is key to making this work for resident access. He bicycles a lot and sees increased B-Cycle use. E-cycles open up use to more people. Alder Kuhr questioned whether this could use tourism funds as it is close to the Avid Hotel. Recreation Director Anderson responded that was discussed and requests could be made but COVID-19 reduced room tax funds. It could be looked at after a three-year period.

Alder Goforth loves the program; it is a great asset and opens access to a community. But she is concerned about the expenditure with no tourism funding available. The number of bicycles would be double Madison's per capita. Her bicycle drive program had an overwhelming number donated. She would like to see data on recreational use versus commuters. Recreation Director Anderson stated there should be business sponsors as they are aware the bicycles go across the region. Alder Goforth questioned whether the Parks & Recreation Board is aware of the \$1 million property tax delinquency this year. Finance Director Houtakker stated that as of February 2nd, \$1.5 million was outstanding. However, people had until February 5th to pay and the City's largest payer hadn't paid yet. Anything paid from the end of February 2nd through the 5th is collected and delivered to Dane County. Those payments are considered delinquent even though they were on time, so that figure is misleading. It is fairly average for

this time of year, except for the large payer. Alder Goforth questioned whether this program was needed, wanted, and affordable and suggested more study by the ad hoc committee or Mr. Wickhem's committee. Mayor O'Connor responded it is not usual to use an outside committee, but they could come to meetings and voice their opinions. Alder Moore noted Mr. Wickhem did offer sponsorships, so it would be a good idea to reach out to them. Alder Wood also responded that the Ad Hoc Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee was disbanded as their work was done.

Alder Grupe stated it will aid Lake Loop riders, not just Monona residents. Alder Goforth expressed concern about adding rider volume. Alder Thomas noted the demographics of those in the housing across Bridge Road. In addition, visiting children and grandchildren could use these and the pedal assist could be used by seniors. Mr. Conger noted riders have to be 18 years old. Alder Goforth suggests it be delayed a year after the pandemic and try to get all costs covered by businesses. Mr. Conger responded that in times of economic need, the program is even more needed to provide healthy experiences. Bicycles are sold out all over the area.

Public Works Director Stephany provided information on Resolution 21-3-2466 Award of Contract for the Stone Bridge Park Improvement Project. Three bids were received with Joe Daniels the low bid. \$356,000 grant funds for the stormwater portion will be reviewed at the March 3 Public Works Committee meeting and by the Council on March 15. The underground basin will handle a 100-year rain event and helps meet the Reach 64 phosphorus limit.

Recreation Director Anderson reported a bid alternate will be reviewed by March 15 and will have the Landmarks Pagoda portion cost. There was extensive public input and engineer review of the project. It includes the Community Center dumpster area ramp. Alder Kuhr stated this is a complex project financially; the bulk of it is stormwater. The park portion puts back dirt from the stormwater work. Work needs to be done first for DNR and Dane County grant reimbursement. Public Works Director Stephany reported the grants have already been awarded. Alder Moore reported a large portion of the park will be torn up for the needed stormwater work. Dead ash trees need to be removed. It is most cost-effective to do the park work now. Alder Goforth supports the stormwater work but timing is an issue for park redesign. The space is lovely as it is.

Public Works Director Stephany provided information on Resolution 21-3-2467 Award of Contract for the Gateway Green Storm Water Improvement Project. Three bids were received with Homburg Contractors the low bid. This will be reviewed by the Public Works Committee on March 3 and by the Council on March 15. Work will be completed by August 15 and includes storm main replacement and a storm main easement. This will mitigate stormwater flooding onto resident's property. High capacity trench grates will be installed. Water will be seen but this was done as a cost savings to utilize existing curb and gutter. Alder Thomas thanks Public Works Director Stephany for finally finding a solution after 25 years of issues; residents are very happy. Alder Wood agreed and expressed appreciation for the cost reductions as well. The City has an AA+ bond rating, the highest possible, and he is completely in favor of this investment in the community. Alder Goforth thanked Public Works Director Stephany and is glad residents are happy.

Public Works Director Stephany provided information on Resolution 21-3-2468 Award of Contract for the Water Tower Painting Project. Nine bids were received. V&T Painting was the second low bid and was chosen as the low bid did not include the required cash allowance. Bid Alternate 1 is \$5,000 for working around the cellular equipment and Bid Alternate 2 is \$2,500 for adding the City's name to the tower. Work will be complete by July 31. It includes fall protection, a two-tone color scheme, and interior spot repair only. A vacuum will be used for sanding. Paint will be applied by roller on low-wind days; the contractor will pay for any carry-over clean-up to property or vehicles. The exterior was last

painted in 1986. Alder Kuhr reported the Public Works Committee debated having the City's name on this tower as the other one already has it; she asks members for opinions.

Mayor O'Connor provided information on Resolution 21-3-2470 Establishing an Ad-Hoc Workgroup on Diversity and Equity Issues and how it works with the Nehemiah Center. Members will be solicited via committee applications, petition signers, and other avenues. Alder Moore provided information on the history of this effort and offered the following amendments:

4th Whereas

"Whereas, a small, diverse group of residents – Josh Peterson, Ben Sanders, Jayson Chung and Kevin Pellerin – proposed and worked on the formation of a permanent Truth and Reconciliation Commission to provide leadership and guidance in systemic change; and"

5th Whereas

"Whereas, the City of Monona and this diverse group wishes to advance the values of equity and justice for all as a complement to the other work already undertaken, including the contract with the Nehemiah Center for Urban Leadership, an organization that we all respect; and"

Alder Goforth requested "a minimum of 50%" be changed to "a majority" in the next amendment. Alder Moore agreed.

At the end of the Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved #1:

"A majority of the Ad Hoc appointments will be individuals of color or individuals who have otherwise been marginalized or underserved in our community."

Alder Thomas requested businesses be included in this work. Alder Moore agreed to the following amendment:

In the Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved #2.a.:

"...residents and, employees, and businesses..."

Alder Kuhr began Discussion and Consideration of Committee Meeting Recording, questioning whether a vote could be taken tonight. City Administrator Gadow responded it could if a motion is made, seconded, and approved. Members agree a vote to table this is non-debatable. Alder Kuhr stated no policy or documentation was provided in the meeting packet despite extensive discussion over more than two meetings. There is no policy or plan to hold the Council accountable and no data; this should go back to the Community Media Committee to provide concrete measures to take. Input should be collected from the Committee and constituents. Alder Goforth could ask for help on this or get information.

Alder Thomas stated it is easy to record meetings now with Zoom, but questioned whether the City has staff or funds to do that when in-person meetings resume. Alder Goforth responded that all that's required is to set a cell phone on a tripod in the corner and hit "start". City Attorney Cole has said that people have given consent to be recorded if they attend a public meeting. Alder Kuhr stated she doesn't want to discuss this now; it should go back to the Committee for a policy or Resolution. Alder Moore stated they shouldn't come back with a plan to just use cellphones. No one on the Council is fighting openness. At the Library Board it was discussed that tapes last indefinitely and could affect subsequent employment. A sign-off on images may be needed. Alder Grupe stated the City is doing the best it can now to record meetings, no one is opposing this. Alder Wood stated it is not about opposing transparency. The Council operates on a Resolution process. He supports this going back to the Committee and it is good timing as COVID-19 may be ending.

Alder Goforth provided clarification that meetings are public events, private events would require consent to allow recording. Recording meetings could be simple; other municipalities do it. City Attorney Cole should be at the Committee meeting to clarify issues and answer questions. Mayor O'Connor suggests she give him questions ahead of time so he can be prepared. Alder Kuhr responded to Alder Goforth's query that the issue isn't transparency; the issue is that nothing is in front of the Council for it to make a decision on. She asks Alder Goforth to go back to the Committee for a policy or Resolution.

A motion by Alder Kuhr, seconded by Alder Grupe to refer Consideration of Committee Meeting Recording back to the Community Media Committee until a policy or Resolution is provided, was carried.

REPORTS

Members announced meeting dates and times and provided the following:

Alder Grupe reminds the Council that bullet points were to be on agendas to discuss how the City is addressing equity across committees and asks members to think about this at their committee meetings.

Alder Moore reported that at last week's Sustainability Committee there was an open hearing on the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin decision on third-party financing for solar energy. Monona was the first community to do this. Her letter was highlighted by Renew Wisconsin in an email blast; Alder Grupe also wrote a letter. The position of the 81 utilities across the state is that if a third party sells solar panels they become a utility, so that is not permitted. The PSC ruling would double solar use across the state and it would be made more affordable. She will report back in the future; a decision will be made by June.

Alder Goforth thanked the Monona gentleman who put together the fun forest on the lake event; it will be cleaned up on Thursday. There are two seats open on the Community Media Committee and she urges anyone interested to apply. The Landmarks Commission did a Pagoda site visit to start the bid process. She asked about the Beltline Flex Lane construction; City Administrator Gadow responded he will get information out on the City's website.

Alder Wood reported the Parks & Recreation Board held a special meeting after its regular meeting regarding the mountain bike track/trail in Maywood Park. There were 50 participants and a good discussion was held. He thanks the three 6th graders who continue to support this idea. They are doing a great job and learning a lot about how government works. The MPO meets on Wednesday.

City Clerk Andrusz provided April 6 Spring Election absentee voting dates:

- Ballots already requested will be mailed out by March 16, or earlier if ballots are received
- The deadline to request an absentee ballot by mail is April 1
- In-person absentee voting in City Hall begins on Tuesday, March 23 and ends on Friday, April 2, during regular office hours/days
- Additional hours are provided on Wednesdays, March 24 and 31 until 7:00 p.m. and Saturday, March 27 from 8:00 a.m. until noon

All of this information has been published in the Herald-Independent, is posted on the City Hall bulletin Board, and is on the City's website. In addition, alcohol license renewal packets have been mailed out.

City Administrator Gadow reported on the Beltline lane closures. He will get any additional information to members.

Mayor O'Connor reported she wants to get any committee openings announced so asked members to get any openings for re-appointments to both her and Director of Administrative Services Leah Kimmell. She did a lot of work with City Administrator Gadow and got the Broadway speed limit lowered from 40 to 35 as was requested by residents. Signs will be changed soon.

APPOINTMENTS

There were no Appointments.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion by Alder Wood, seconded by Alder Goforth, to adjourn was carried. (9:20 p.m.)

Joan Andrusz
City Clerk