

Minutes City of Mechanicsville
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
February 14, 2022

The Mechanicsville City Council met in regular session on Monday, February 14, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at 102 N John Street, Mechanicsville. Mayor Andrew Oberbreckling called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Council members present for roll call were Amy Bishop, Denice Dochterman, Adam Paidar, Doug Weber, and Jennifer Lester. Others present included Rick Scott, Meredith Dehmer, Josh Miller, Lonni Koch, Jake Koch, and several others from the community.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Amy Bishop motioned, Adam Paidar seconded to approve the consent agenda including the agenda, the minutes from 1/10/22; the finance reports, and claims including pay application #8 for \$111,340.95. Roll call vote: Ayes: Bishop, Dochterman, Paidar, Weber and Lester. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The following claims were approved:

IRS	PAYROLL	\$2,998.56
ACCO	OTHER EQUIPMENT	\$22.80
ACE HARDWARE	MINOR EQUIPMENT	\$73.97
AGVANTAGE FS INC	VEHICLE OPERATIONS	\$923.03
ALLIANT ENERGY	ELECTRIC/GAS EXPENSE	\$9,832.23
ALTORFER INC.	VEHICLE REPAIR	\$142.69
AMAZON.COM	LIBRARY MATERIALS	\$608.95
AUTOMATIC SYSTEMS CO	OTHER PROF SERV EXP	\$587.50
AUTOWASH OF WYOMING	BLDG MAINT & REPAIR	\$450.00
BADGER METER	OTHER CONTRACTUAL SERVICE	\$7.80
BANKERS BANK	OPERATING SUPPLIES	\$209.90
BANYON DATA SYSTEMS INC	OTHER CONTRACTUAL SERVICE	\$840.00
BILL BRUCE BUILDERS INC	OTHER CAPITAL EQUIP	\$111,340.95
BLANK PARK ZOO	OTHER PROF SERV EXP	\$199.60
BRIDGE COMMUNITY BANK	OTHER CONTRACTUAL SERVICE	\$80.00
CASEYS GENERAL STORE	VEHICLE OPERATIONS	\$732.18
CEDAR COUNTY SOLID WASTE	PAYMENTS TO OTHER AGENCIES	\$1,530.00
CHALLIS ENTERPRISES	OTHER CONTRACTUAL SERVICE	\$570.00
CHASE CARD SERVICES	POSTAGE/SHIPPING	\$1,184.50
COMPASS MINERALS	OPERATING SUPPLIES	\$2,093.26
COPPESS, LINDA	TELECOMMUNICATIONS	\$30.00
ECIA	OTHER PROF SERV EXP	\$731.46
ENTWISLE, ANGIE	JANITORIAL EXPENSE	\$690.00
GRAYBILL COMMUNICATIONS	OPERATIONAL EQUIP REPAIR	\$26.00
HACH COMPANY	CHEMICALS	\$849.47
HGTV	SUBSCRIPTION & ED MATERIAL	\$12.00
HUPP ELECTRIC MOTORS, INC	MINOR EQUIPMENT	\$5,074.75
IOWA ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPAL	OTHER PROF SERV EXP	\$723.00
IOWA CODIFICATION, INC	OTHER PROF SERV EXP	\$200.00
IOWA ONE CALL	OTHER PROF SERV EXP	\$5.40
JOHN DEER FINANCIAL	BLDG MAINT & REPAIR	\$5.29
KIRKWOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE	TRAINING	\$154.00
KOCHS SERVICE & SUPPLY LLC	OTHER PROF SERV EXP	\$245.60

LEXIPOL	SUBSCRIPTION & ED MATERIAL	\$1,683.40
MECHANICSVILLE TELEPHONE CO	TELECOMMUNICATIONS	\$455.28
ODD JOBS INC	OTHER PROF SERV EXP	\$1,350.00
OVESON REFUSE & RECYCLING LLC	OTHER PROF SERV EXP	\$3,150.00
PARK PLANET	OTHER CAPITAL OUTLAY	\$17,236.00
PROFESSIONAL RESCUE INNOVATION	TRAINING	\$600.00
QUILL	OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$385.52
RADIO COMMUNICATIONS	OPERATIONAL EQUIP REPAIR	\$50.00
ROUTE 3 PRESS	LIBRARY MATERIALS	\$24.00
SCOTT, RICKY	TELECOMMUNICATIONS	\$30.00
SEEHUSEN INSURANCE AGENCY	INSURANCE EXPENSE	\$269.00
STATE HYGIENIC LABORATORY	OTHER PROF SERV EXP	\$665.50
THOMAS & CLARK LLC	LEGAL EXPENSE	\$380.00
TIPTON CONSERVATIVE & ADVERTIS	PRINTING & PUBLISHING EXP	\$403.02
UNITY POINT HEALTH	OPERATING SUPPLIES	\$54.59
US CELLULAR	TELECOMMUNICATIONS	\$116.12
USA BLUEBOOK	CHEMICALS	\$122.82
VALERIE APPLGATE	REFUND	\$71.71
VEENSTRA & KIMM	ENGINEERING EXPENSE	\$4,299.83
WELLMARK BC BS	GROUP INSURANCE	\$7,393.57
ZIPPYS SALT BARN LLC	OPERATING SUPPLIES	\$87.84
ZOLL MEDICAL CORPORATION	OTHER CONTRACTUAL SERVICE	\$510.00
PAYROLL	WAGES	\$16,850.56

Total Receipts and Disbursements for month of January by fund

Fund	Receipts	Disbursements
General	10,648.45	28,997.89
Road Use Tax	11,561.22	3,811.52
Employee Benefit	160.75	3,703.58
Local Option Sales Tax	10,063.86	
Library Trust Fund	99.89	
Ballpark Fund		22.36
Ambulance Trust	9,773.97	727.70
Tree Trust		
Debt Service	130.70	
Perpetual Care	100.00	
Water Utility	8,571.26	4,670.75
Sewer Utility	925,447.47	353,843.82
Sewer Sinking Fund		
Solid Waste	10,573.25	6,788.47
Storm Water Utility	1,025.64	19.79
Water Deposits	100.00	

REPORTS:

Ambulance Report: Ambulance had 19 calls for the month; Driver's training and Extreme Sport Injuries is planned training; provided information on 422D.6; Covid calls are still a concern.

Fire Report: Fire had 8 calls for the month. Ice Rescue training will be done in February with the new Ice Rescue Suits. Firefighters Dance March 19 with band being Atomic Cake from 8 – Midnight. Siren has been repaired, prime painted, and rebuilt. The crane company has been contacted about reinstalling.

Police Report: Police written report submitted 2 agency assists, 13 business checks; 1 civil standby; 2 domestic disturbances; 1 extra patrol; 3 follow up, 4 juvenile, 3 medical assists; 3 miscellaneous, 2 motor vehicle accident; 4 parking; 1 sex crime; 9 speak with officer; 2 traffic stops; 1 warnings; 1 arrest; 2 welfare check; 1 school dismissal, and 8 off duty call outs.

Public Works Report: Public Works reported salting/sanding streets; maintenance at well house, well #3 was taken off line; moving snow at cemetery for funerals, Roto Rooter cleaned lift station, and needed to vacuum lines on John Street due to the accumulation of wipes in the sewer pipes. Cannot stress how important it is for residents not to flush wipes, and to please put them in the garbage instead.

Administration Report: Coppess extended thanks to Kevin Frett for donating 3 flags for use at the cemetery; the annual perpetual care report was filed with the Iowa Insurance Division; Board of Adjustments will meet 2/28 at 6 p.m. P&Z Commission met with ECIA to work on the comprehensive plan; future meetings are tentatively planned for the 2nd Wednesday at 5:30; Property on E South street has not responded to the dangerous building notice, resident who protested paying the increased sewer rate and now has the associated late fees that go along with the past due balance is requesting a hearing. Resident has received assistance for some of the past due amounts, but states that “I know her situation” and that the exorbitant late fees is highway robbery. The late fees and rates are all set by ordinance and everyone is required to pay them.

Requested approval to apply for Community Foundation grant as financial sponsor with American Legion Post 309 to replace flag pole and base at the cemetery was approved with a motion by Jen Lester and second by Denice Dochterman. Ayes all. Motion carried.

Requested approval to apply for Community Foundation grant for the Children’s Walking Trail at the Mechanicsville Sports Complex and North Cedar School and to request donations from the community towards the phase 4 project at the ballfield. Jen Lester motioned, Denice Dochterman seconded to approve applying for the grant and putting notice on back of water bill. Ayes all. Motion carried.

Open public hearing on the maximum property tax dollars: Mayor Oberbreckling opened the hearing requesting oral or written comments. Clerk read a written statement that she had received from Donna Paup expressing opposition to the proposed property tax levy for 2022-2023 with the identification of instances believed to be councils imprudent spending at times including the “road to nowhere” (extension of east Cedar Street); voting to spend \$15,000 on fireworks which the money could be utilized for projects instead of lighting it off and shooting it into the air; the city had an opportunity in

May 2020 to hire an experienced and qualified police officer for \$27/hour but council wouldn't budge, but now we are paying \$33/hour; and the \$30 sewer increase that hit each household. The proposed property tax increase is for increase in fireworks liability insurance and the increase in wages. Hearing no other comments, the Mayor closed the public hearing.

Resolution 2022-3 stating Maximum Property Tax Dollars for FY23: Amy Bishop motioned, Adam Paidar seconded to approve Resolution 2022-3 whereas, the City Council has considered the proposed FY23 Maximum Property Tax dollars for the affected levy total, the notice was published as required, and the public hearing held, therefore, the maximum property tax dollars for the affected tax levies shall not exceed \$421,625 for the affected property tax levies. Ayes: Weber, Bishop, Dochterman, Paidar, and Lester. Nays: None. Resolution adopted.

Old Business discussion and possible action on:

Request for equitable pay increases: The following statement was read on behalf of the city employees: Whereas, a 39.29% pay increase being given to 1 employee with certain comments being made during the discussion has offended other employees; Whereas, comments made by family members in support of the wage increase appears to be in conflict with other residents in the community; Whereas, any employee's family member would most always support a wage increase for them; Whereas, increasing one employee at a higher rate than the rate paid to other employees unjustly discriminates against the persons receiving the lesser amounts; leads to low employee morale, high turnover, and frequent labor unrest; discourages employees paid at lesser rate from training for higher level jobs; threatens the well-being of citizens of this state and adversely affects the general welfare of the community;

Whereas, the comparison of employee wages of an accredited library personnel to one that is not accredited is not equitable; Whereas, the comparison of employee wages who have attained the Master Municipal Clerk (MMC) certification to those who have been on the job 6 months or less is insulting, offensive and not equitable; Whereas, there are 27 person's in the State of Iowa who have attained the MMC designation and 1 is employed at the City of Mechanicsville; there are 1345 in the United States and 1374 in the world; Whereas, a comparison of wages to others with similar seniority and training reflects that the MMC should have an increased pay adjustment of a 41%; from 28.35 to 40.17 (37.37+7.5% cost of living=\$40.17; data from two other MMC's reported wages at 36.64 & \$34.07 prior to 2021 Cost of living adjustments;

Whereas, the action taken at the January meeting was not made pursuant to any seniority system; was not made by any merit system; not made by using any system that measures earnings by quantity or quality of production; and was not based on any other factor; which becomes a violation of our Iowa Civil Rights; Whereas, to give one employee a 39.29% increase, give others a 10% and others a 3% increase when the Cost of Living is in excess of 7.5% is considered to be offensive, insulting and discriminatory; Whereas, the positions we hold, we are here to serve this community to

the best of our ability, we are not in a competition with the town next door or our co-workers, you should be compensating your employees for what they are contributing, not because of their "title" being the same as the one down the road, as that title is just what it is, a title;

Whereas, the volume of work and type of work varies, the other towns do not do ambulance billing, do not write the code for the city website; do not have a cemetery to care for, graves to mark, deeds to issue or file with the Iowa Insurance division, may or may not have a garbage route to do, have the school district paying a portion of their police chief wage because he is spending time as a school resource officer;

Whereas, your other employees have obtained a \$43,169 grant for an ambulance cot; saved \$4000 by coordinating ambulance purchase with Stanwood; \$9,244 grant for a BDS Laundry washer/extractor and 4 sets of Wildland Gear, \$10,000 Union Pacific grant for a 4x4, \$9500 grant for computers; \$500,000 grant for the WWTF; \$3924 grant for wastebaskets in downtown; \$2500 Monsanto Fund for the commercial refrigerator at the concession stand and several others including the Minnesota Twins grant and CF Grants for the ball field; \$10,000 from the Community Foundation for the rubber mulch in the park; \$26,832 for local Covid relief payment reimbursement of public safety expenditures; \$27,924 Firehouse Subs grant for Zoll Monitor; \$1250 St. Luke's Foundation CPAP machine; \$5000 CF grant for helmet upgrade and many others from prior years;

In addition, all of the full time employees are trained and able to respond as EMT's and drivers for medical emergencies; you have a part time employee who is able to respond as a Paramedic; you have a fully cross trained, certified back up police officer serving as your public works director, that could be utilized for vacations and other emergency's where a second officer might be needed; PW has replaced more than 130 water meters; devised a way to use the brine applicator on the plow truck; and worked through 2 disasters simultaneously (Derecho and Covid 19) and the list goes on for the ways we do more than is required for our job;

Whereas, your employees want to be treated fairly, in terms of what they are paid and how you behave towards them; paying employees fairly is good business; being equitably compensated make employees feel valued, making for a happier, more productive workplace with higher employee retention; Whereas, as an employer, the city council members, may find it difficult to understand one's legal obligations around equitable pay and more so, what is fair? Whereas, many instances of workplace inequality are unintentional and often unnoticed, but it's not news that the accumulation of these acts have adverse effects on the community and its workplace;

Whereas, the city council does not have expertise in human resource management, but that is no excuse for choosing to adjust the pay for one employee in the middle of the budget year, and call it an equitable adjustment; this is unacceptable, city government requires these expenditures to be budgeted and planned for; why was it so important to

have 1 wage increase go into effect January 1 and everyone else has to wait until July 1?

Whereas, the city council says they want to increase business in the community, but yet the actions show they push business out of town by canceling a lease with a business with 3 employees that was bringing in \$6600 per year in rent, just to move the 1 person police department into the space, this is wasteful when the city could have looked into dividing the space and had room for both;

Whereas, the city council is the body that needs to be held accountable for the communities ethical and equitable employee practices in order to help the community become more inclusive and sustainable. For the betterment of yourself, your employees and your community, the hourly employees of the City of Mechanicsville, hereby request that the compensation for the rest of our positions be increased by the same equitable 39.29% that was previously set for one position, without any justification or documentation of that position performing or completing anything above and beyond the job;

This adjustment is requested based on the accomplishments attained, the talent and the skills we bring to the community, not only to do the job we are hired to do but all of the extra things we do, to the best of our ability each and every day as a team working together to make things better for the whole not just for ourselves.

Additional comments were received from various community members present. Amy Bishop states that the police chief was "grossly underpaid". Jen Lester stated that she wants to wait for the salary survey to be completed by the Iowa League of Cities. No action taken.

New business discussion and possible action on:

Crestview Drive turnaround cul-de-sac proposal. A draft drawing from V&K showing a proposed layout of the cul-de-sac was provided to the council and it had also been forwarded to Bob reflecting that the total land needed was .17 of an acre. Bob requested to follow up with the FSA office due to part of this land being in the CRP program. City will wait for additional input.

Resolution 2022-4 on 4 lane Highway 30 rather than a super 2 & IDOT meeting:

Amy Bishop motioned, Adam Paidar seconded to approve the resolution supporting the 4 lane highway over the Super 2. Roll call vote: Ayes: Amy Bishop, Denice Dochterman, Adam Paidar, Doug Weber and Jennifer Lester. Nays: None. Resolution adopted.

Resolution 2022-5 appoint Linda Walker to Eastern Iowa Regional Housing

Authority Board, with another volunteer still needed: Adam Paidar motioned, Jen Lester seconded to appoint Linda Walker to the Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Board. Roll call vote: Ayes: Amy Bishop, Denice Dochterman, Adam Paidar, Doug Weber and Jennifer Lester. Nays: None. Resolution adopted.

Resolution 2022-6 adopting the supplemental code for Ordinances numbers 310-327: Amy Bishop motioned, Adam Paidar seconded to adopt the supplemental code pages. Roll call vote: Ayes: Amy Bishop, Denice Dochterman, Adam Paidar, Doug Weber and Jennifer Lester. Nays: None. Resolution adopted.

Resolution 2022-7 to complete budgeted transfer of funds from General Fund to Debt Service: Adam Paidar motioned, Denice Dochterman seconded to approve. Roll call vote: Ayes: Amy Bishop, Denice Dochterman, Adam Paidar, Doug Weber and Jennifer Lester. Nays: None. Resolution adopted.

Resolution 2022-8 to amend the amount within General government by \$126 for Mayor and Council function to the election activity: Motion by Jen Lester, Adam Paidar seconded to amend the amounts within the general government function. Roll call vote: Ayes: Amy Bishop, Denice Dochterman, Adam Paidar, Doug Weber and Jennifer Lester. Nays: None. Resolution adopted.

Resolution to amend the amount within Public safety by adjusting \$100 to animal control: Adam Paidar motioned, to do a public hearing and budget amendment instead of passing resolution to move budgeted funds from another public safety function to the animal control function. The budget amendment will also need to include the \$15,000 spending of Local Option Sales tax for Fireworks and the public hearing for the current year's budget amendment will be March 14. Seconded by Amy Bishop. Ayes all. Motion carried.

Resolution 2022-9 setting the date for public hearing on FY23 Budget for 3-14-2022: Amy Bishop motioned, Adam Paidar seconded to set the public hearing for the next meeting. Roll call vote: Ayes: Amy Bishop, Denice Dochterman, Adam Paidar, Doug Weber and Jennifer Lester. Nays: None. Resolution adopted.

Covid Policy: Adam Paidar motioned, Doug Weber seconded, to follow the CDC guidelines for the return to work policy; currently 5 days out; 5 days mask. Ayes: Amy Bishop, Denice Dochterman, Adam Paidar, and Doug Weber. Nays: Jen Lester. Motion carried.

Proposed prorated vacation, sick and holiday pay for part time employees: Adam Paidar motioned, Amy Bishop seconded to approve prorated benefits to part time employees. Ayes: Adam Paidar, Amy Bishop, Denice Dochterman. Nays: Doug Weber and Jen Lester. Motion carried.

Replacement of Veteran markers: Nothing for now, in the future need to know the location of the grave where it was damaged in order to go back to the proper person mowing.

Correspondence: Cedar County Solid Waste Commission annual meeting information and Waste Water inspection report was provided to council. Information on 3 different

types of housing grants that are available through ECIA are currently available for residents to apply for.

Set next meeting date: 3/14/2022 6:30 p.m. at the Memorial Building

Mayors Comments: Reported attending the conference board meeting discussed the vacancy for the assessor and deputy assessor and the auditor having to fill in.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, council member Amy Bishop motioned, Jen Lester seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. Ayes all. Meeting adjourned.

ATTEST:

Linda K. Coppess, MMC

Andrew Oberbreckling, Mayor