

MINUTES, REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL, CITY OF LA CRESCENT, MINNESOTA
JANUARY 22, 2024

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the second meeting of the City Council of the City of La Crescent for the month of January was called to order by Mayor Mike Poellinger at 5:00 PM in the La Crescent Community Building, La Crescent, Minnesota, on Monday, January 22, 2024.

Upon a roll call taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following members were present: Members Cherryl Jostad, Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner, Dale Williams, and Mayor Mike Poellinger. Members absent: Ryan Hutchinson. Also present were City Attorney Skip Wieser, City Administrator Bill Waller, City Engineer Tim Hruska, Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson, and Deputy Clerk Angie Boettcher.

Mayor Poellinger asked if anyone wished to take action to change the agenda as presented.

ITEM 1 – CONSENT AGENDA

At this time, the Mayor read the following items to be considered as part of the Consent Agenda for this regular meeting:

- 1.1 MINUTES – JANUARY 8, 2024
- 1.2 BILLS PAYABLE THROUGH – JANUARY 18, 2024
- 1.3

At the conclusion of the reading of the Consent Agenda, Mayor Poellinger asked if the Council wished to have any of the items removed from the Consent Agenda for further discussion.

Member O'Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Williams, as follows:

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.1 – HORSE TRACK MEADOWS NORTH – REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

City Administrator Bill Waller reviewed with City Council for consideration four (4) proposals that the City received regarding the sale of the Horse Track Meadows North property from the following:

1. Habitat for Humanity of the Greater La Crosse Region, Inc. - \$30,000
2. Berkshire Hathaway Home Services - \$300,000
3. Bluff Country LLC, Mike Sexauer - \$450,000
4. Wieser Brothers General Contractor, Inc - \$450,690

It was recommended that City Council reject the proposals submitted by Habitat for Humanity of the Greater La Crosse Region, Berkshire Hathaway Home Services, and Wieser Brothers General Contractor, and accept the proposal submitted by Bluff Country LLC, Mike Sexauer based on the following findings:

1. The proposal is responsive to the City's RFP.
2. The proposal is recognized as the overall highest value to the City.
 - A. The timing of construction will provide additional housing opportunities available in the City at an earlier timeframe.
 - B. The proposal will allow a realization of additional property tax benefits to the City along with additional benefits relating to permit and connection fees available to the City.
 - C. The developer has demonstrated capability by completing the HTM and HTM-West Developments.
 - D. Terms of Sale (\$100,000.00 down; balance due on the date of closing) are favorable to the City.

It was also recommended that City Council authorize Attorney Wieser to prepare a purchase agreement with Bluff Country LLC, Mike Sexauer, and present it at the February 12th City Council meeting, along with a recommendation regarding the request to review the existing utility easement. Following discussion Member O'Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Williams as follows:

MOTION TO REJECT THE PROPOSALS SUBMITTED BY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF THE GREATER LA CROSSE REGION, BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY HOME SERVICES, AND WIESER BROTHERS GENERAL CONTRACTOR AND AUTHORIZE THE CITY ATTORNEY TO PREPARE A PURCHASE AGREEMENT WITH BLUFF COUNTRY LLC, /MIKE SEXAUER TO INCLUDE AN UPFRONT PENALTY DEPOSIT OF \$25,000.00 TO BE MADE BY BLUFF COUNTRY LLC,/MIKE SEXAUER IN THE CASE THAT THE CONSTRUCTION TIMEFRAME IS NOT MET, WITH THE CITY REFUNDING MR. SEXAUER \$5,000.00 AFTER A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY HAS BEEN GRANTED FOR EACH DWELLING, AND ADOPT THE PROPOSED FINDINGS AS STATED WITH THE CITY ATTORNEY PRESENTING THE PURCHASE AGREEMENT FOR COUNCIL REVIEW AND APPROVAL AT THE FEBRUARY 12, 2024 CITY COUNCIL MEETING ALONG WITH A RECOMMENDATION REGARDING THE REQUEST TO REVIEW THE EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members voted in favor

thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mayor Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.2 – AMENDMENT – CRESCENT HILLS SANITARY SEWER EXTENSION AGREEMENT

City Engineer Tim Hruska reviewed with City Council an amended professional service agreement with WHKS for the Crescent Hills Sanitary Sewer connection. On October 10, 2023, the City hired WHKS to complete a feasibility study for options to serve the Crescent Hills area with sanitary sewer. As options have been elevated for sanitary service, the need to determine the presence of bedrock has become important. Presence of bedrock will affect the cost of the project and proactively identifying locations of concern will result in a more accurate estimation of project costs. WHKS received a quote for completion of geotechnical investigation from Chosen Valley Testing, Inc. in the amount of \$5,864.00. It was recommended that City Council approve the WHKS Amendment to proceed with geotechnical investigation through Chosen Valley Testing in the amount of \$5,864.00. Following discussion, Member Jostad made a motion, seconded by Member O'Donnell-Ebner as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE AMENDED PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH WHKS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$5,864.00 TO PROCEED WITH GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATION THROUGH CHOSEN VALLEY TESTING, INC.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.3 – ENGINEERING AGREEMENT – ILJS GRANT PROJECT

City Engineer Tim Hruska reviewed with City Council for approval a Professional Service Agreement with WHKS. The City received a \$30,000 grant for technical assistance to prepare a feasibility study for the

extension of a shared-use path from South 14th Street to Miller’s Corner from MnDot. The feasibility study will also provide potential IJA discretionary funding that the City can pursue in the future to fund the project. WHKS will work with MnDOT to finalize the force account procedure for the City to receive reimbursement for funds expended on this project. The WHKS Agreement for the Feasibility Study is \$29,500. Following discussion, Member O’Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Williams as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH WHKS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$29,500 TO PROCEED WITH A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE EXTENSION OF A SHARED USE PATH FROM SOUTH 14TH STREET TO MILLER’S CORNER.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O’Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mayor Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.4 – CPL GRANT – PINE CREEK RESTORATION PROJECT

City Engineer Tim Hruska and Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson reviewed with City Council the CPL Grant and Pine Creek Restoration Project. This was informational only, no action required.

ITEM 3.5 – AUTHORIZE FINAL PROJECT PAYMENT

City Engineer Tim Hruska reviewed with City Council Pay Request Number 9 for work completed by A-1 Excavating, Inc. in Horse Track Meadows in the amount of \$18,815.93. It was recommended that City Council approve the payment which will initiate the start of the two-year maintenance bond, as specified in the contract documents. Following discussion, Member O’Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Williams as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE PAY REQUEST NUMBER 9 FOR WORK COMPLETED BY A-1 EXCAVATING, INC. IN HORSE TRACK MEADOWS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$18,815.93 WHICH WILL INITIATE THE START OF THE TWO-YEAR MAINTENANCE BOND, AS SPECIFIED IN THE CONTRACT DOCUMENTS.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members voted in favor

thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mayor Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.6 – PERSONNEL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

City Council reviewed the following recommendation from the Personnel Committee for approval:

1. Attached for City Council review was the job description for the new position of City Clerk, which was discussed in the past as part of the organizational meetings that the City held earlier in 2023, and was reviewed at the December 11, 2023, City Council meeting. The description has been modified slightly with the transfer of the supervisory responsibility for the License Bureau from the Finance Director to the City Clerk. The duties and responsibilities of the City Clerk expand the duties of the current Deputy Clerk position. The position will be a department head-level supervisory position, and will not be part of a bargaining unit.

As proposed, the position will have a point value of 330-360, and a 2024 wage schedule from \$35.08 to \$41.96 per hour.

The Personnel Committee is proposing that the City Council take the following action:

- A. Adopt the job description for the City Clerk position. Following discussion, Member Williams made a motion, seconded by Member Jostad as follows:

MOTION TO ADOPT THE JOB DESCRIPTION FOR THE CITY CLERK POSITION AS PRESENTED.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mayor Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

B. Establish the point value for the position at 330-360, and adopt a 2024 wage schedule of \$35.08 to \$41.96 per hour for the position. Following discussion, Member O'Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Jostad as follows:

MOTION TO ESTABLISH A POINT VALUE OF 330-360 FOR THE POSITION AND ADOPT A 2024 WAGE SCHEDULE OF \$35.08 TO \$41.96 PER HOUR FOR THE POSITION.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mayor Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

C. Promote Angie Boettcher from Deputy Clerk to City Clerk. As proposed, Ms. Boettcher would serve a six-month probationary period and start at step one in the salary schedule beginning January 23, 2024. Following discussion, Member Jostad made a motion, seconded by Member O'Donnell-Ebner as follows:

MOTION TO PROMOTE ANGIE BOETTCHER FROM DEPUTY CLERK TO CITY CLERK WITH MS. BOETTCHER SERVING A SIX-MONTH PROBATIONARY PERIOD AND STARTING AT STEP ONE IN THE SALARY SCHEDULE BEGINNING JANUARY 23, 2024.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mayor Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.7 – AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURE – 2024 TREE PLANTING PROJECT

City Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson requested City Council approval of funds totaling \$6,419.97 for the purchase of 105 bare-root trees, tree protector tubes, and water bags. The trees will be

purchased from Bailey’s Nursery with money received from the ReLeaf Community Forestry Grant. The trees will be planted throughout the city as part of the city’s 2024 Arbor Day celebration. Leading the tree plantings will be considered in-kind for the grant. Following discussion, Member O’Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Jostad as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE FUNDS TOTALING \$6,419.97 FOR THE PURCHASE OF 105 BARE-ROOT TREES, TREE PROTECTOR TUBES, AND WATER BAGS FROM BAILEY’S NURSERY USING MONEY RECEIVED FROM THE RELEAF COMMUNITY FORESTRY GRANT WITH THE TREES BEING PLANTED THROUGHOUT THE CITY AS PART OF THE CITY’S 2024 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.8 – 2024 LICENSE RENEWALS

City Council reviewed a list of proposed license renewals for 2024. The applications appear to be in order, and it was recommended that City Council approve the license renewal applications. Following discussion, Member Jostad made a motion, seconded by Member Williams as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE PRESENTED LIST OF LICENSE RENEWALS FOR 2024 FOR THE FOLLOWING:

SHORT-TERM RENTAL – RESIDENTIAL:

Davis, Allison

MASSAGE BUSINESS:

Heaven’s Hands Inc.

MASSAGE TECHNICIAN:

Heaven’s Hands Inc.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.9 – DONATION RESOLUTION

City Council reviewed a Resolution regarding the acceptance of donations to the City for the month of January. Following review and discussion, Member Jostad introduced the following Resolution and moved its passage and adoption as follows:

RESOLUTION NO. 01-24-05

**RESOLUTION ACCEPTING DONATIONS MADE TO THE
CITY OF LA CRESCENT IN JANUARY 2024**

WHEREAS, the following donations were made to the City of La Crescent in the month of January 2024:

1. Trane Technologies wishes to donate \$200.00 to the La Crescent Fire Department.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of La Crescent hereby accepts the donations stated above.

ADOPTED this 22nd Day of January 2024.

SIGNED:

Mayor

ATTEST:

Deputy Clerk

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Member O'Donnell-Ebner and upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members present voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

6. STAFF CORRESPONDENCE/COMMITTEE UPDATES

6.1 City Council reviewed the January 16th, 2024 Agenda for the Explore La Crosse Board Meeting as well as the November 14th, 2023 Explore La Crosse Board Meeting Minutes.

8. HOUSTON COUNTY

Houston County Commissioner Dewey Severson was in attendance and gave an update.

9. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chamber of Commerce representative Jon Wilson was in attendance and gave an update.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, Member O'Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Williams to adjourn the meeting. Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members present voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried and the meeting duly adjourned at 5:46 P.M.

APPROVAL DATE: _____.

SIGNED:

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Administrator