



***CITY OF RIVER FALLS, WISCONSIN
COMMON COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS***

September 11, 2018

Council President Scott Morrissette called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers located in City Hall.

City Council Members Present: Todd Bjerstedt, Sean Downing, Christopher Gagne, Diane Odeen, Michael Page, Hal Watson

Members Absent: Mayor Dan Toland

Staff Present: City Administrator Scot Simpson; Assistant City Administrator Julie Bergstrom; City Attorney Dan Gustafson; Police Chief Gordon Young; Utility Director Kevin Westhuis; Operations Director Mike Stifter; Assistant to the City Administrator Brandt Johnson; Management Analyst Fellow Jason Rohloff; City Treasurer Susan Langer; EMS Director Jason Stroud; Development Director Amy Peterson; Crystal Raleigh; Human Resources Director Karen Bergstrom

Others Present: Carole Mottaz, Ken McNiff, Judy Edgar, Gary Donath, Ed Vlack, Miranda Ailport, others

A moment of silence was held in remembrance of September 11, 2001. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

August 28, 2018, Regular Meeting Minutes

MSC Odeen/Watson approve minutes. Unanimous.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Bills: \$1,233,043.69

MSC Downing/Bjerstedt move to approve bills subject to the comptroller. Unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENT, PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

There were no public comments.

Change of Agent – WE Market Co-op dba Whole Earth Cooperative of River Falls

Council President Morrissette asked Agent Miranda Ailport the following questions: do you understand the role of an agent and what it means; do you understand that if you're not present and there is an alcohol related violation, you are held liable; and do you have your responsible bar servers license. Ailport answered yes to all the questions. **With no other questions, MSC Morrissette/Page move to approve the change of agent. Unanimous.**

EMS Board Report

Carole Mottaz, EMS Board Chair, provided a report to the City Council. Mottaz talked about staffing, EMS vehicles, calls per year, the types of calls the EMS service receives, the communities that are being served, and mutual aid responses. Mottaz thanked the Council for funding the program and spoke about the budget. She talked about the fee structure and reimbursements. Mottaz spoke about community outreach and department changes. She talked about a feasibility study which was conducted last year and the new EMS Director, Jason, who brings a different perspective. Mottaz provided other department updates. Mottaz closed by talking about River Falls' state of the art ambulance service and the EMS Advisory Board. She introduced EMS Director

Jason Stroud and board members Hal Watson, Ken McNiff, Kent Kittleson, Judy Edgar, Gary Donath, and Jeanne Wespetal. Mottaz thanked Council for its support. There were no questions.

Fire Department Presentation

Ed Vlack, Assistant Chief of Operations, provided a report for Council. He opened by remembering September 11, 2001. He talked about the department's mission, its membership, the number of calls by year, public safety education, code enforcement, the past year's highlights and accomplishments, and department goals.

Alderson Downing asked a question about inspections. Vlack provided an answer.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Resolution Accepting the Public Improvements for Villas of Sterling Ponds Phase 3→→***Pulled by Downing***
Preliminary Resolution Declaring Intent to Exercise Special Assessment Police Powers under Section 66.0703 Wisconsin Statutes for the Benefit of the River Falls Business Improvement District→→***Pulled by Gagne***

Resolution No. 6300 - Accepting the Public Improvements for Villas of Sterling Ponds Phase 3

Downing believed there was a typo in the packet. He clarified that this was Phase 3 of the project. **MSC Downing/Odeen to approve the resolution. Unanimous.**

Preliminary Resolution No. 6301 - Declaring Intent to Exercise Special Assessment Police Powers under Section 66.0703 Wisconsin Statutes for the Benefit of the River Falls Business Improvement District

Alderson Gagne wondered about the origin of this item. Assistant City Administrator Bergstrom thought it was a request that came from the businesses. It needs to be approved annually by the City Council. Gagne felt it has done a lot for business owners and has beautified the downtown. He talked about getting calls from people who aren't in favor of it. Gagne asked if a survey has ever been done for the business owners to see if they want to continue with it. He felt it would be a great measurement tool.

Alderson Odeen suggested that was a question for Ms. Larson, President of the BID Board. Gagne felt the board has done a good job, but he thought they should engage the downtown businesses. **MS Gagne/Odeen move to approve resolution.**

Alderson Watson said there really isn't any other money being spent on downtown River Falls for economic development or beautification. He felt having some type of focus on downtown is a positive thing for the economy. Watson supports this and any other efforts to invest in our downtown. He felt the businesses which are in the BID district and participate in this program are a real sign of strength for the downtown. He is in favor of it.

Council President Morrissette agreed with Watson. He talked about the different types of projects that they do. He said it is a self-policing board that has a good relationship with the downtown business owners and the chamber. It's a wonderful program. Morrissette has heard from those folks and understands their point of view. He feels it's a benefit for the good of all, and it's a relatively inexpensive levy.

Alderson Page operates a business in the district and has participated in the program since 1988. Recently, he utilized the program to upgrade the façade on his building. It was an amazing improvement. He encouraged individuals who are not in favor of the BID but are operating businesses within the BID to participate in the process - join the committee or provide feedback directly to them - write grants to receive monies for their businesses. Page thought the assessment was low. He felt it is a great program.

Gagne felt the BID has done a lot of great work. He thought it would be a good idea to reassess it. Gagne talked again about doing an anonymous survey.

City Administrator Simpson said this resolution was the preliminary notice of intent which provides a formal opportunity for any objector of the BID district to step forward. He explained the way the language appears in statute is if a certain number are not in favor, it is defeated. There needs to be a majority based on number of parcels or value of property. Simpson provided further detail. He understands the points heard but encourages

any property owners who are not in favor of the BID to use the mechanism they have in place to formally protest it.

Gagne said that some of the people who have reached out to him have used it. He spoke further and talked about doing an anonymous survey. Simpson understood but did not hear direction from Council for staff to do a survey. He hadn't planned on doing a survey. Alderperson Odeen felt that the BID Board should address that first. Council President Morrissette agreed, and said it is a self-policing organization. He would want it to start there. **With no other comments, Morrissette asked for a vote. The resolution passed unanimously.**

Ordinance 2018-13 to Amend the Official Zoning Map by Rezoning 2.5 Acres of Land in the Sterling Ponds Neighborhood from Industrial district to Traditional Neighborhood Development District-First Reading
There were no questions or comments.

REPORTS

Administrator's Report

Simpson provided important upcoming dates. Morrissette asked for more information regarding the rental inspection programs and the changes.

Simpson provided an overview saying the State has suggested that cities are either too aggressive or involved in areas where there isn't a clear public safety trade off. There are number of changes that have occurred and which we need to reflect in our ordinances that reduces our ability to do proactive inspection primarily rental inspections. The City already had a more uniform rental program meaning the City treated rentals differently than owner occupied units. The law is tending toward treating rentals like owner occupied unless there is a glaring public safety reason to be inspecting the property or if the owner requests it to be done. Simpson provided further information. It is something we are monitoring. Our strategy is not to lead on the issue. Simpson gave further details - there will be more to come.

CLOSED SESSION:

At 7:21 p.m., MS Watson/Bjerstedt move to recess into Closed Session per Wisconsin State Statutes for the following purposes: § 19.85(1)(e) "deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session, to wit: purchase of property re: public safety." The roll call vote to move into Closed Session was unanimous.

At 7:51 p.m., MSC Watson/Odeen move to return to Open Session. Unanimous. At 7:52 p.m., MSC Downing/Gagne move to adjourn. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristi McKahan, Deputy Clerk