



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

March 22, 2022

Mayor Dan Toland called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at City Hall.

**City Council Members Present:** Nick Carow, Sean Downing, Scott Morrissette, Alyssa Mueller, Diane Odeen, Ben Plunkett

**Members Absent:** Todd Bjerstedt

**Staff Present:** City Administrator Scot Simpson; City Attorney Chris Gierhart; IT Specialist Jon Smits, IT Specialist Sterling Hackney; Utility Director Kevin Westhuis; Deputy Chief Matt Kennett; Finance Director Josh Solinger; IT Manager Mike Reardon; Senior Accountant Sam Hosszu; Assistant to the City Administrator Jennifer Smith; City Planner Emily Shively; Conservation and Efficiency Coordinator Mike Noreen; Human Resources Director Karen Bergstrom

**Others Present:** Tammy Pitzen, Ronna Ellis, others

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Approval of Minutes – March 8, 2022, Regular, Workshop, and Closed Session Minutes

**MSC Morrissette/Carow move to approve minutes. Unanimous.**

**APPROVAL OF BILLS:**

Bills: \$547,788.14 (Morrissette)

**MSC Morrissette/Downing move to approve bills. Unanimous.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT, PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:**

Tammy Pitzen, 953 Winter Court – along with Ronna Ellis came to speak about ARC (Assistance and Resource Center). ARC's mission is to provide short term financial assistance to River Falls and Ellsworth residents to meet their basic needs. ARC is a 501c3 non-profit organization founded in 2009. ARC is the financial resource that offers help in River Falls and fills requests that other organizations do not. She provided examples saying their biggest request is assistance with rent and utility bills.

Pitzen talked about ARC's volunteers, the intake process, the Angels on Earth giving program, and office space. She talked about the need and the dollars spent in 2022. Donations and grants make the program possible along with no overhead and the community that makes contributions. To learn more, visit [arcriverfalls.org](http://arcriverfalls.org).

Alderperson Morrissette added to Pitzen's comments. He talked about the tireless work ARC did during Covid which went largely unrecognized.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Acknowledgement of the following minutes: Historic Preservation Commission – 2/9/22; Park and Recreation Advisory Board – 2/16/22; Plan Commission Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Workshop – 2/1/22; River Falls Housing Authority – 2/9/22; BID Board – 2/8/22; Library Board – 2/7/22

Resolution Approving the General Development Plan for a 32-unit Multi-Family Building at 131 and 141 W. Cascade Avenue→→***pulled by Plunkett***

Resolution Reaffirming the City of River Falls' Commitment to Sustainability→→***pulled by Downing***

Resolution No. 6659 - Approving Letter of Agreement with SEH for Engineering and Construction Services for the North Utility Loop and Radio Road Water Main

**MSC Odeen/ Morrissette move to approve the remainder of the Consent Agenda. Unanimous.**

Resolution No. 6660 - Approving the General Development Plan for a 32-unit Multi-Family Building at 131 and 141 W. Cascade Avenue

Alderson Plunkett felt the public deserved to have some more of the information presented and discussed by Council. City Administrator Simpson said a presentation was given at the Plan Commission meeting, but City Planner Emily Shively was available. Plunkett talked about it being important for the public to understand how this project fits into the Comprehensive and long-term plans.

City Planner Shively provided an overview of the project. The proposed project is Phase 3 of the University Falls Development on West Cascade. This phase is a 32-unit, market rate, multifamily building with underground parking. Shively said a connection between the West Cascade sidewalk and trail along the Kinnickinnic River will be made. Shively provided further details saying the Plan Commission recommended approval. She stood for questions.

Alderson Downing said from his understanding there was a commitment to renewable energy, correct? Shively said the developer has proposed a flat roof on the building and are thinking about doing solar panels on the flat roof. Downing said he would like to see that commitment and thanked Shively.

Plunkett asked about runoff control. Shively said there was proposed underground stormwater treatment under the parking lot. The City Engineer has reviewed and felt it was suitable to handle the stormwater.

**MSC Plunkett/Morrissette move to approve resolution. Unanimous.**

Resolution No. 6661 - Reaffirming the City of River Falls' Commitment to Sustainability

Downing read a statement. He said one of the most important things the City and its partners have in common with sustainability is the critical and important need for taking action and having clean water regulations for our city. These are regulations which we don't currently have – making sure our community has clean drinking water and that is not just a suggestion - that it is enforced. These clean water regulations will stop the threat to our individual and collective health that poisons us.

Downing touched upon the problems of keeping the water clean and sustainable. He talked about polluted runoff, which he detailed. He said drinking pesticides, drinking fertilizer, drinking manure, and dangers of drinking liquid manure is real. Bacterial contamination of water supplies is the most common followed by nitrate pollution and potential presence of radium. When there is no regulation on high-capacity wells, radium becomes a serious threat. PFAS is another major water pollutant we need to regulate and stop. He outlined health effects due to PFAS exposure. Everyone deserves access to clean, safe water. This should be an underlying principle in decisions about Wisconsin's water management especially as it pertains to contamination from phosphorus, bacteria, nitrates, radium, PFAS and pharmaceuticals. We should all be in support of this sustainable action of having local regulations that regulate, control, and stop pollutants from poisoning our groundwater and having the city and county pass local ordinances to regulate and protect our water and encourage our state to pass them.

**The Mayor asked for a motion. MS Downing/Morrissette move to approve resolution.** Plunkett addressed Downing saying he was having trouble recalling the wisdom of the Wisconsin legislature. Currently, the impact of multiple high-capacity wells allowed to be taken into consideration when granting permits for those wells. Downing asked if that was a question. Plunkett said yes; Downing asked him to rephrase. Plunkett understood that the city is prohibited by the legislature from taking that into consideration when the DNR is granting

permits. Downing said that is why he encouraged the state to follow local ordinances that would encourage them to reverse poor and bad decision making. Plunkett said as a local community, we don't have that power right now. The legislature hasn't granted it to us. Downing said no. Plunkett said that is unfortunate and thanked Downing. Downing believed the rest could be addressed. **With no other comments, the Mayor asked for a vote. The resolution passed with all voting in favor.**

**REPORTS:**

Comptroller's Report for February 2022

Comptroller Odeen read the following: General Fund revenues through the end of February were \$3,379,047 or 29% of budgeted revenues. Revenues in February include \$1,820,201 in property tax settlement, and \$276,003 in annual payments for state facilities. Expenditures for the same period were \$1,437,875 or 12% of budgeted expenses. Net revenues over expenditures as of February 28, 2022, were \$1,941,172.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mayor's Appointment to the Bike And Pedestrian Plan Steering Committee

Appointment of Karyn Wells to replace Joe Wolf (UWRF Representative)

**MSC Morrissette/Odeen move to approve appointment. Unanimous.**

**CLOSED SESSION:**

*At 6:49 p.m., MS Morrissette/Carow move to recess into Closed Session per Wisconsin State Statutes §19.85(1)(c) for the following purposes:* "considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercise responsibility, to wit: City Administrator". **The roll call vote to move into Closed Session passed 6-0 with all voting in favor.**

**MS Morrissette/Downing move to reconvene into Open Session at 7:14 p.m. Unanimous.**

**MS Odeen/Morrissette move to approve Resolution No. 6662 Approving the City Administrator Employment Agreement.** Downing asked if it needed a roll call vote. City Attorney Gierhart said it did not. **The motion passed unanimously.**

**MSC Morrissette/Downing move to adjourn at 7:16 p.m. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kristi McKahan, Deputy Clerk