

Mayor Diana Merdian called the Sterling City Council to order at 6:30 pm on Monday, June 5, 2023. Roll call. Present: Aldermen Retha Elston, Joe Strabala-Bright, Josh Johnson, Joseph Martin, Kaitlyn Ekquist and Jim Wise. Absent: None

Also attending were City Attorney Tim Zollinger, City Manager Scott Shumard, Superintendent of Building and Zoning Amanda Schmidt, Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader, Police Chief Alex Chavira, Fire Chief Michael Dettman, and City Clerk Teri Sathoff.

Mayor Merdian announced that item 11A – the rental inspection program discussion will be removed from the agenda. The discussion will not occur at tonight’s meeting, it will happen at a later date.

Alderman Elston made a motion to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of Minutes
- B. Approval of Bills and Payroll
- C. Resolution R2023-06-17 To Close Streets for the 70th Annual Fiesta Parade on Saturday, September 16, 2023
- D. Sterling Rock Falls Jaycees Independence Day Celebration Donation Request
- E. 2023-2024 MICA Insurance Renewal Premium
- F. Pay Request (Final) for Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation to Hoerr Construction in the amount of \$ 53,350.92
- G. Pay Request #2 for Wallace Street to Gensini Excavation Inc. in the amount of \$412,787.45
- H. Pay Request #1 for Reconstruction of Tori Pines Subdivision To Twin City Construction in the amount of \$50,530.20
- I. Change Order #2 for Sanitary Sewer System Rehabilitation 2022
- J. Obligate \$6,000 in ARPA funds to address the negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency
- K. Juneteenth Proclamation

Seconded by Alderman Strabala-Bright. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Strabala-Bright, Johnson, Ekquist, Martin and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Mayor Merdian read the Juneteenth Proclamation into the record.

Alderman Strabala-Bright made a motion to approve the Mayor’s Appointment of Allen Przysucha to the Plan Commission; Seconded by Alderman Johnson. Alderman Martin stated the Plan Commission is the second most important committee in the City, Alderman Martin stated the Plan Commission members of the should be business people or people with code knowledge. Alderman Martin felt that Mr. Przysucha is better suited for a committee that is not as important at Plan Commission. Alderman Martin recognizes it is difficult to find volunteers however he would like to have someone with better qualifications, someone that is not looking

to use the Plan Commission as a stepping stone to an Alderman or Mayoral position. Alderman Martin is concerned that Mr. Przysucha will be someone that will “rubber stamp” items.

Alderman Wise stated he is the one that recommended the appointment of Mr. Przysucha to Superintendent of Building and Zoning, Amanda Schmidt. Alderman Wise stated that he has what it takes to learn the position.

Alderman Strabala-Bright stated he respects Alderman Martin’s opinion however he agrees with Alderman Wise. Strabala-Bright stated that while the Planning Commission is very important and it is important to have knowledge of codes and ordinances, the City staff is extremely capable of bringing Mr. Przysucha up to speed on those things. Strabala-Bright commends Mr. Przysucha for his desire to be involved and feels he will be an excellent addition to the Planning Commission. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Johnson, Ekquist, Strabala-Bright, and Wise. Nays – Alderman Martin. Motion carried

Alderman Elston made a motion to approve the Mayor’s Reappointment of John Benson and Dr. Shawn Hanlon to the CGH Hospital Board; Seconded by Alderman Wise. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Strabala-Bright, Johnson, Martin, Ekquist, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried

Mayor Merdian introduced firefighter Vincent Morris and Brittney Ramos. Firefighter Morris and Mrs. Ramos presented the Garrett Ramos Scholarship to Megan Gingrich and Makayla Wolfe.

Alderman Ekquist made a motion to waive Bid Process and Accept a Quote from Sterling Chevrolet in the amount of \$35,698.00 for a Code Enforcement pick-up truck; Seconded by Alderman Elston. Superintendent Schmidt stated they requested several quotes and the only one to respond was Sterling Chevrolet. Ken Nelson did respond with a quote late and it was \$3,000 higher than Sterling Chevrolet. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Strabala-Bright, Johnson, Martin, Ekquist, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Wise made a motion to approve Ordinance No 2023-06-10 Amending Chapter 38 Relating to the Recovery of Penalties and Actual Costs Incurred by The City for Weed Removal & Mowing and Clarifying the Authority; Seconded by Alderman Martin. Superintendent Schmidt stated currently the City is allowed to issue a citation and is unable to collect the expenses that are incurred from mowing the property. This ordinance will allow the City to recoup expenses for mowing. Attorney Zollinger stated that this ordinance also cleans up language stating the Chief of Police is the authority to issue citations. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Strabala-Bright, Johnson, Martin, Ekquist, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Superintendent of Building and Zoning Amanda Schmidt reported the Building Department has applied for the second round of the Stronger Communities Grant. The grant would allow for the

demolition of ten houses and the rehabilitation of two. Schmidt stated she currently has three houses on the radar for demolition.

Schmidt gave an update on the rental inspection program. The draft ordinance is with the City Attorney. Schmidt stated she would like to have the actual ordinance in front of the Council to review and discuss it.

Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader stated the landscape work at Grandon has been finished, they are repainting the gazebo and cleaning the cannons. The water that is coming from Grandon is due to an error by IDOT. When IDOT reconstructed East 4<sup>th</sup> Street they failed to reconnect the storm drain, they stated they were unable to locate it. Schrader reported they will locate it and request IDOT to connect it. The concrete crew is currently working in Tori Pines. There are ten to twelve roads and a couple of alleys that will be overlaid this year. Mayor Merdian thanked everyone at Public Works for the work on the splash pad, the kids are loving it.

Superintendent of Waste Water Cory Bradshaw reported they have been cleaning and inspecting the wet wells and lift stations. They have been conducting their weekly and monthly maintenance, the dry weather has been great.

Chief Dettman reported they have responded to nine structure fires in the last week, 2 of the fires were in Sterling Fire District. Deputy Chief Northcutt attended Fire Officer Safety class. The crews are preparing the station floors for the flooring company.

Chief Chavira reported they have started background checks on applicants, they are hoping to get a couple of new hires off the list. They have two spots reserved at the Sauk Valley academy at the end of August. Deputy Chief Mohr is working on plans for National Night out, more information will follow.

Finance Director Cindy Von Holten advised the MICA insurance renewal was an 8 ½% increase from last year. This was actually a 12% increase but because the City is in a coop and we have had a few good years we were able to put that in our equity and apply that to a year that has a high increase and that was done this year.

City Manager Shumard reported that he and the Mayor met with Economic Growth about housing, Economic Growth has a working relationship with Sauk Valley Bank and City Manager Shumard will be following up with them at the end of the month. The RFPs for the engineers on the riverfront and shelter work will be done by the end of the week. Wednesday there is a diagnostic meeting with the railroad for the quiet zone. The draft BDD for Northland Mall that will come before the Council in August. We have CDAP grant money that has been sitting in a fund since the 1980's the requirements to qualify are very constrained. The Building Department and distributed the information on the grant money to the residents that qualified

geographically. Four of the residents that were contacted applied. The Building Department will be deciding on who will get the money and for what project they will receive it.

Alderman Martin stated the band concert on Wednesday had excellent turnout and he received several compliments on the new concession stand.

Alderman Johnson stated the splash pad looks great and is used a lot. He is excited about the one that will be installed at the riverfront as it will be much larger.

Alderman Strabala-Bright stated the Memorial Day ceremony at Grandon was very nice, he thanked everyone involved in putting that on.

Alderman Elston reminded everyone of the band concert on Wednesday as well as the ribbon cutting at the Shoppes at Grandon. The first popup market of the year will be on Thursday at Dale Park. Elston also thanked everyone for the splashpad it's great to see all of the kids enjoying it.

Alderman Ekquist congratulated Janna Groharing on the cruise night Sterling Main Street hosted on Friday, she is excited for the next one.

Alderman Wise agreed with Alderman Ekquist on the success of the cruise night. Alderman Wise also thanked Janna Groharing for the prairie grass presentation she facilitated at the riverfront. Alderman Wise stated that since this is a noted prairie grass project he would like to see the majority of it be retained with the development of the riverfront.

The meeting adjourned at 7:09pm.

Teri Sathoff

City Clerk