

**CITY OF VIROQUA
COUNCIL MINUTES
MARCH 29, 2016**

1. Roll call:

The regular meeting of the Common Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 29, 2016 by Mayor Larry Fanta with Alderpersons Marc Polsean, Mike Bankes, Mike Koppa, John Montemurno, Steve Bekkedal, Jeff Clifton, Terry Noble and Cyndy Hubbard present. Alderperson Todd Sanwick was excused. Also present were City Administrator John Severson, City Clerk Lori Polhamus, Attorney Stephanie Hopkins, Police Chief Daron Jefson, Fire Chief Chad Buros, Utility Clerk Nancy Bekkedal, Park & Rec Director Dan Stalsberg, Sondra Naxi, Gene Laschinger, Jan Rasikas, Ben Brassler, Curt Brye, Michael Link, Rose Brubaker, Nancy and Kurt Buer and Leslie Kruempel.

2. Approval of the March 8, 2016 Regular Council minutes – Motion by Alderperson Montemurno/second by Alderperson Polsean to approve the minutes of the March 8, 2016 meeting. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

3. First period for public comment – none

4. Public hearing on discontinuance and vacation of the portion of North Center Avenue lying 132 feet south of Broadway – Mayor Fanta opened the public hearing at 7:32 p.m. Jan Rasikas from the Viroqua Food Coop gave a slide presentation to the Council of the proposed expansion of their facility, background and subsequent reasons for requesting the road closure. Ben Brassler of KL Engineering reviewed the traffic study that was completed in December 2015. Comments and concerns from the Plan Commission public hearing were also discussed. The public hearing was closed at 8:25 p.m.

5. Consideration of discontinuation and vacation of the portion of North Center Avenue lying 132 feet south of Broadway (Plan Commission) – the Council weighed the pros and cons of the street closure. Alderperson Clifton stated the success of the Food Coop could be a detriment to the residents that live in the area for various reasons such as increased traffic on side streets. The Coop would not be allowed to build on the street because of the utilities but a big issue discussed was the safety of their customers who would have to cross the street to get to the parking lot. Other considerations were the Coop needs and the impact on the downtown business area and having an anchor business located downtown. It was recommended the Coop communicate with the Fire Chief, Police Chief, and City Engineer regarding the parking lot design and other traffic related issues. Severson stated the street would not close until building permits were issued, easements obtained and construction starts. Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Noble to vacate North Center Avenue lying 132 feet south of Broadway contingent on building permits, state approved plans received and obtaining all easements needed. Roll call vote six in favor, two against. Motion passes. Alderpersons Clifton and Bankes voting no.

The Council recessed at 9:00 p.m. and reconvened at 9:10 p.m.

6. Operator license approvals (Public Safety) – Motion by Alderperson Polsean/second by Alderperson Koppa to approve operator licenses for Adam Ash, Brittany Donovan, Katie-Mae Lamb, Michael Tuszyński, George Wilbur, Gaje Young and Jennifer Lane. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

7. Application for temporary Class B beer license – Viroqua Area Pullers (July 15-16) at fairgrounds (Public Safety) – Motion by Alderperson Polsean/second by Alderperson Bankes to approve a temporary Class B beer license for the Viroqua Area Pullers. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

8. Application for temporary Class B beer & wine license – Vernon County Democratic Party (Public Safety) – Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Montemurno to approve a temporary Class B beer and wine license for the Vernon County Democratic Party for April 9, 2016. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

9. Appointment of Shari Jacobson to Viroqua Housing Authority Board to fill Mark Rahr's five year term expiring 6/1/2020 (Viroqua Housing Authority) – Motion by Alderperson Bekkedal/second by Alderperson Montemurno to appoint Shari Jacobson to the Viroqua Housing Authority Board. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

10. Amendment to declaration of official intent for Wastewater Treatment Facility & Rusk Avenue project – this amendment was to add the Rusk Avenue project so we are able to reimburse ourselves from the bond proceeds. Motion by Alderperson Montemurno/second by Alderperson Bankes to approve the amendment. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

11. Resolution – Personal property write offs (Finance) – our auditors have recommended we write off the personal property tax bills that have been deemed uncollectible ranging from 2011-2014. We have made multiple attempts to collect with no success and Finance has recommended the total amount of \$267.62 be written off. Motion by Alderperson Montemurno/second by Alderperson Polsean to approve resolution 16RS003 to write off the personal property taxes totaling \$267.62. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

12. Amendment to requirements for employee retirement benefits (Finance) Severson stated there are two issues in the former union contract for retirees that are being incorporated into the new non-union handbook, which are the 2/3 payment of accumulated sick leave and the \$5000, \$4000, \$4000 health related expense benefit. This benefit currently is only available to those who retire with twenty years of service and at age 55. We have an employee who hasn't reached the age but has put in 27 years of service and considering retirement. The finance committee recommended adding the words "or 25 years" to the current language so it reads "after 20 years of service and age 55 or 25 years of service". Motion by Alderperson Noble/second by Alderperson Clifton to approve the language change adding or 25 years of service. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

13. Memorandum of Understanding between Western Technical College and City of Viroqua – connecting link (tabled from 3/8/2016 Council meeting) – Severson received the updated document, however this is not complete so will be tabled again.

14. Payment of bills. – Motion by Alderperson Noble/second by Alderperson Hubbard to approve the payment of bills on report date 03/23/16 in the amount of \$196,134.34 and additional bills report date 03/29/16 in the amount of \$109,623.80. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

15. Possible closed session per Wis. Stats 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 – Negotiation strategy for Wastewater Treatment Facility easement – Wheeler property - closed session was not needed. The Council proceeded to item #17.

16. Reconvene in open session with possible action on items discussed during closed session –

17. Wastewater Treatment Facility easement – Wheeler Property – the Wheeler's have agreed to a total of three easements at a cost of \$45,000 plus their attorney fees of \$5000 and appraisal fees of \$2000. They have two parcels of farmland that are currently zoned residential that they request to be zoned agricultural so this will go to Plan Commission. The gravity force main was agreed to along the fence line. We will remove the tree line and will not be going through the homestead land area. We will be providing gates if the fence goes back in and they have a two year appeal process for the easements. Motion by Alderperson Polsean/second by Alderperson Montemurno to approve the utility easements with the Wheeler's as presented. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

18. Additional soil borings for Wastewater Treatment Facility effluent pipeline – Gene Laschinger stated they walked the Wheeler easement and it was determined it would be beneficial to have four additional borings done. The cost for along the entrance road is \$2450 and along the tree line is \$2300. If they can do all of them at the same time it would cost \$2750 because of less mobilization costs. Motion by Alderperson Koppa/second by Alderperson Hubbard to approve the soil borings at a cost of \$2750. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

19. Second Period for Public Comment – Alderperson Bekkedal stated when large projects come up we should start on the issues earlier so the Council is not making fast decisions on them at the last minute.

20. Adjournment - Motion made by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Clifton to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 p.m. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Lori Polhamus, City Clerk