

**CITY OF VIROQUA  
COUNCIL MINUTES  
OCTOBER 29, 2019**

**1. Roll call:**

The regular meeting of the Common Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 29, 2019 by Mayor Karen Mischel with Alderpersons David Tryggestad, Gregory Splinter, Terry Noble, Tanja Birke, Mike Koppa, Cyndy Hubbard, John Thompson and Sondra Naxi present. Jeff Gohlke was excused. Also present were City Clerk Lori Polhamus, Administrator Nate Torres, Park & Rec Director Dan Stalsberg, Public Works Director Sarah Grainger, Fire Chief Chad Buros, Library Director Trina Erickson, Police Chief Rick Niedfeldt, Alycann Taylor, Nancy Rhodes, Michael Corr, Tim Hundt, Kathy Hansen, Evan Blatner, Nora Roughen-Schmidt, Terry O'Connor, Lisa Henner and Jacob Hundt.

**2. Approval of the October 8, 2019 Regular and October 15, 2019 Special Council minutes** – Motion by Alderperson Birke/second by Alderperson Hubbard to approve the minutes from the previous meetings. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**3. First period for public comment** – Terry O'Connor spoke in support of and increase to the Library budget for staffing. Kathy Hansen spoke on behalf of the Library Board for an increase to the Library budget. Lisa Henner stated the Library technology budget is an educational tool that needs additional funding. Jacob Hundt stated that the building at 321 S. East Avenue is a hazard in the neighborhood and would like to see the raze order move forward.

**4. Public hearing on conditional use application for property at 741 N East Avenue for a day care center-** the public hearing was opened at 7:40 pm. They are hoping to fill a need within the community and this was a school previously. They are in the preliminary stages of this with a survey of the community next with a hopeful opening in the fall of 2020. The public hearing was closed at 7:46 pm.

**5. Possible action on conditional use application for 741 N East Avenue (Plan Commission)** – Motion by Alderperson Thompson/second by Alderperson Hubbard to approve the conditional use application for 741 N. East Avenue for a day care center. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**6. Presentation by Tourism Commission regarding increase in room tax with possible action-** Alycann Taylor updated the Council on the steps taken to this point and they are requesting an increase from 3% to 6% for the room tax that is 100% paid by the visitor and not the taxpayers. More revenue goes to the City budget and they are helping with notification and collection compliance and want to bolster their current efforts. Nancy Rhodes stated she would support as long as the website is updated and keep us consistent with other municipalities and other entities within the 54665 zip code. Alderperson Tryggestad spoke with the Midway Motel owners and they are not in favor of an increase and neither is the Vernon Inn. Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Birke to increase the room tax rate from 3% to 6%. Voice vote seven in favor, one against. Motion carried. Alderperson Tryggestad voting no.

**7. Initial Resolution Authorizing General Obligation Bonds in an Amount Not to Exceed \$835,000 for Street Improvement Projects** - tabled

**8. Initial Resolution Authorizing General Obligation Bonds in an Amount Not to Exceed \$340,000 for Park and Public Grounds Projects-** tabled

**9. Initial Resolution Authorizing \$700,000 General Obligation Refunding Bonds-** tabled

**10. Resolution Directing Publication of Notice to Electors Relating to Bond Issues-** tabled

**11. Resolution providing for the sale of \$1,875,000 General Obligation Corporate Purpose Bonds-** tabled

- 12. Appointment of Jan Rasikas to Plan Commission replacing Tonya Wagner for three-year term expiring 5/1/2020-** Motion by Alderperson Splinter/second by Alderperson Hubbard to appoint Jan Rasikas to the Plan Commission. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.
- 13. Appointment of Kris Snowdeal to Board of Review replacing Tonya Wagner for five-year term expiring 4/1/2024-** Motion by Alderperson Birke/second by Alderperson Koppa to appoint Kris Snowdeal to Board of Review. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.
- 14. Operator license approvals (Public Safety) –** Motion by Alderperson Tryggestad/second by Alderperson Splinter to approve operator licenses for Aaron Barlass, Michelle Felton, Samara Benson and Rebecca Robinson. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.
- 15. Application for Temporary Class B wine license – Viroqua Chamber Main Street Wine Walk on November 15, 2019 (Public Safety)-** Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Birke to approve the application for the Viroqua Chamber Main Street third wine walk. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.
- 16. Application for Temporary Class B beer license – Vernon County Shrine Club concert on November 2, 2019 (Public Safety) –** Motion by Alderperson Birke/second by Alderperson Hubbard to approve the application for a temporary Class B beer license. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.
- 17. Application for Temporary Class B beer and wine license – Vernon County Shrine Club concert on November 8, 2019 (Public Safety)-** Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Naxi to approve the application for a temporary Class B beer and wine license. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.
- 18. Approval of Pay Request #3 – Rusk Avenue Project (Public Works)-** Motion by Alderperson Thompson/second by Alderperson Koppa to approve pay request #3 for \$664,216.14. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.
- 19. Approval of credit card application with Citizens First Bank (Finance) –** Polhamus reviewed the card listing for each of the departments. The individual cardholder's credit is not attached to the card but rather the City's FEIN number. The credit limits were kept lower on the generic cards to help with the City's exposure. The Department Heads will be responsible for their cards and will still need to follow the credit card usage policy regarding tax exemption, receipts and direct billing whenever possible. Motion by Alderperson Thompson/second by Alderperson Naxi to approve the credit card listing and limits as presented. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.
- 20. Review of 2020 General Fund budget (Finance)-** Torres reviewed the overall 2020 budget with Council and answered questions. It was explained that one additional part-time staff and a half increase in the Technology budget was added for the Library in this budget as presented.
- 21. Authorize budget publication and set public hearing date-** Motion by Alderperson Noble/second by Alderperson Thompson to authorize the 2020 budget publication and set the public hearing date for November 26, 2019 at 7:30 pm. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.
- 22. Discussion on 2020 employee health insurance options & HRA plan with possible action (Finance)-** the renewal rates for the health insurance were negotiated from a 17.9% increase to an 8.2% increase with changes to the plan from a \$500/\$1000 plan to a \$1000/\$2000 plan and increases to the co-pays. Finance met and recommended changes to the HRA plan to help with the transition to a higher deductible. Our current HRA plan only reimburses employees for 50% of co-pays on office visits and prescriptions. It was recommended to add reimbursement of 50% of deductibles on the back end after an employee meets 50% of their deductible. Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Naxi to approve the changes to the HRA plan to reimburse 50% of co-pays and 50% of deductibles on the back-end after 50% of deductibles have been met. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.
- 23. Status update on raze order costs for 321 S. East Avenue-** This property has already been approved by Council to proceed as this is the old hospital location and the owner has received notices to fix and nothing has been done. They will be served with a 30-day raze order and if nothing happens it would go before the Circuit Court Judge to order the cleanup. The price could range in the \$50,000 plus range and would go on the property as a special charge which the City may or may not collect on.

**24. Authorization to proceed with raze order per WI Stats. 66.0413 for property at 808 Railroad Avenue (Public Property)**- this property is at the same part in the process as item #23, but still needs formal Council approval to move forward. Motion by Alderperson Noble/second by Alderperson Thompson to authorize proceeding with the raze order at 808 Railroad Avenue. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**25. Resolution setting design standards for North Side Business Park (Plan Commission)**- Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Noble to approve Resolution 019RS014 approving design guidelines for zoning district B-5 business park. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**26. Approval of name of new North Side Business Park (Intergovernmental Commission)**- the Commission met and reviewed various suggestions and Nora also did a community poll on Facebook and the majority chose Viroqua Business Park as the name. Motion by Alderperson Naxi/second by Alderperson Tryggestad to approve the name Viroqua Business Park. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**27. Payment of bills (Finance)** - Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Naxi to approve the payment of bills on report date 10/25/19 in the amount of \$144,998.27 additional bills on report date 10/29/2019 for \$169,171.78. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**28. Second Period for Public Comment** – none

**29. Adjournment** - Motion made by Alderperson Birke/second by Alderperson Hubbard to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Lori Polhamus, City Clerk