

**CITY OF VIROQUA
COUNCIL MINUTES
AUGUST 10, 2021**

1. Roll call:

The regular meeting of the Common Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 10, 2021 by Mayor Karen Mischel via online zoom meeting #81109295212 with Alderpersons David Tryggestad, Gregory Splinter, Nathaniel Slack, Tanja Birke, Ben Wilson, John Thompson, Kristal Welter and Steve Willis present. Alderperson Cyndy Hubbard was excused. Also present were City Clerk Lori Polhamus, Administrator Nate Torres, Police Chief Rick Niedfeldt, Fire Chief Chad Buros, Park & Rec Director Dan Stalsberg, Library Director Trina Erickson, Stacey Roou, Jason Skoda, Josh Straka, Randy Skinner, Angie Cina and Tim Hundt

2. Approval of the July 27, 2021 Regular Council minutes – Motion by Alderperson Wilson/second by Alderperson Welter to approve the minutes from the previous Council meeting. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

3. First period for public comment – None

4. Proclamation declaring June Pride Month in the City of Viroqua (Diversity Board)- Motion by Alderperson Birke/second by Alderperson Wilson to approve the proclamation. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

Council moved to item eleven on the agenda before finishing the remaining agenda.

5. Approval of Pay Request #5 – Fowler & Hammer, Police Station project – tabled as they are missing some lien waivers and are still working on the punch list items.

6. Selection of 2022 budget team (Finance) – Nate reviewed the timeline for the budget process. Motion by Alderperson Splinter/second by Alderperson Birke to nominate Cyndy Hubbard. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried. Motion by Alderperson Welter/second by Alderperson Thompson to nominate Tanja Birke. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried. Motion by Alderperson Wilson/second by Alderperson Tryggestad to nominate Steve Willis as an alternate if Cyndy Hubbard is not able to accept the nomination. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

7. Creation and review of 2022 budget goals (Finance) – Nate asked Council for overall items that they want to include or be considered in the next budget cycle. Alderperson Wilson would like to keep climate change mitigation on the list for all departments. Alderperson Thompson suggested a balanced approach between service level and salaries and expenses. Alderperson Birke stated the need for a rehabilitation of old buildings fund. Mayor Mischel stated we need to look at fair comparable compensation and workload of employees. The smart bus is already on the list along with additional administrative staffing.

8. Reappointment of Roy Torgerson to Airport Commission for a six-year term expiring 9/1/2027 – Motion by Alderperson Thompson/second by Alderperson Tryggestad to approve the reappointment. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

9. Acceptance of resignation of Dan Everson from Airport Commission and appointment of Mike Sebion to finish his six-year term expiring 9/1/2023 – Motion by Alderperson Tryggestad/second by Alderperson Slack to accept Everson's resignation and Sebion's appointment to Airport Commission. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

10. Discussion with possible action on Main and Decker intersection improvements and potential inclusion in the currently awarded Highway Safety Improvement Program grant – Grainger gave an update on the HSIP grant process and discussions with the DOT regarding the connecting highways at Main & Decker that weren't originally included in the grant. They looked at cost benefit ratios and determined they couldn't use safety improvement funds because the cost was too high due to potential relocation of people living in the buildings but

they were willing to look at including improvements in the HSIP grant funding. The city would be responsible for 25% of the engineering and the DOT would cover 100% of the construction contingent on DOT approval. Josh Straka with Strand reviewed the graphic of the intersection that included bump outs on two corners of the intersection along with a three-phase signal to help with large truck turning radius and visuals for pedestrians. Motion by Alderperson Thompson/second by Alderperson Slack to include the Main and Decker improvements in the HSIP grant. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

11. Discussion with possible action on use of City parking lot by Mr. G's for special event- Stacey Rooou with Driftless Artifacts updated the Council on having a Bad Axe Vintage Flea Market on Saturday October 9th from 11-5pm. in the city parking lot. They currently have seven vendors committed and it could turn into an annual event if successful. Nate explained we haven't had an application process for this in the past, however other entities have used city parking lots. He also contacted the close neighbors and they were in support of this as well as the Chamber. Alderperson Birke is concerned about this location being so close to the Main & Decker intersection and pedestrian safety. Motion by Alderperson Welter/second by Alderperson Slack to allow the event in the parking lot as a trial and have a discussion at Council after the event on how it went for future planning. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

12. Discussion with possible action on Covid-19 protocols

a) CDC recommendation regarding mask requirements indoors – current CDC guidelines currently recommend masking up indoors even if vaccinated. We have signs that are using the CDC tracker that if in the red or orange that masking is necessary from the Viroqua Food Coop that the Council could adopt for all City buildings. Motion by Alderperson Slack/second by Alderperson Welter to follow CDC guidelines and use the Coop example signage with masking up by staff and public if Vernon County is in the red or orange category. Roll call all in favor. Motion carried. It was also suggested to ask the Chamber to do this also to have uniformity throughout the city with other businesses.

b) Transitioning to in-person meetings – with the uptake in Covid cases the consensus was to stay with Zoom meetings at this time.

13. Possible closed session per Wis. Stats 19.85(1)(c) – considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governing body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility – Utility Clerk position (Public Works) - Motion by Alderperson Welter/second by Alderperson Birke to enter closed session at 8:42pm. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

14. Reconvene in open session with possible action on items discussed during closed session- Motion by Alderperson Welter/second by Alderperson Slack to reconvene in open session at 8:47pm. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried. Motion by Alderperson Welter/second by Alderperson Slack to approve the items as discussed in closed session. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

15. Payment of bills (Finance) - Motion by Alderperson Welter/second by Alderperson Birke to approve the payment of bills on report date 08/05/2021 in the amount of \$434,896.21 and additional bills on report date 8/10/2021 for \$16,274.79. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

16. Acceptance of resignation of Ward 3 Alderperson Nathaniel Slack effective August 20, 2021- Motion by Alderperson Welter/second by Alderperson Tryggestad to accept the resignation of Nathaniel Slack. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

17. Second Period for Public Comment – Alderperson Birke acknowledged John Severson.

18. Adjournment - Motion made by Alderperson Slack/second by Alderperson Welter to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 p.m. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Lori Polhamus, City Clerk