

**CITY OF VIROQUA
COUNCIL MINUTES
NOVEMBER 29, 2022**

1. Roll call:

The regular meeting of the Common Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 29, 2022 by Mayor Justin Running at City Hall and via Zoom with Alderpersons David Tryggestad, Joe Ahler, Tanja Birke (via Zoom) Todd Spaeth, John Thompson, Cyndy Hubbard, Steve Willis and Kristal Welter present. Also present were City Clerk Lori Polhamus, City Administrator Nate Torres, Fire Chief Chad Buros, City Engineer/Public Works Director Sarah Grainger, Park & Rec Director Dan Stalsberg, Utility Clerk Cheryl Purvis, Dallas SeEVERS, Tim Hundt, Karen Dahl, Evan Blattner, Aaron Parker, Aaron Van Loo, Mark Zettler and Christina Dollhausen

2. Approval of the November 15, 2022 Regular Council minutes – Motion by Alderperson Welter/second by Alderperson Birke to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

3. Council Announcements – None

4. First period for public comment – Pete Taylor, 311 N Washington, stated that Blue Dog Cycles is in support of restoring the bathhouse to be used for bathrooms, conference room and that a downtown tourist center is needed as they get weekly inquiries.

5. “Wisconsin United to Amend” – Karen Dahl – Dahl explained that WI United to Amend is requesting that the City Council consider putting a referendum on the April 2023 ballot for an amendment to the US Constitution declaring that only human beings are endowed with constitutional rights, not corporations, unions, nonprofits or other artificial entities and limiting political contributions and spending. Clerk Polhamus clarified that there is a cost to add the referendum on the ballot and Dahl stated that WI United to Amend would cover the costs to do so.

6. Public hearing on proposed 2023 General Fund budget – the budget hearing was opened at 7:22 pm. Torres reviewed the presentation of the budget and answered questions. The budget hearing was closed at 7:40 pm.

7. Approval of 2023 General Fund budget and 2022 tax levy collectible in 2023 – Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Ahler to approve the 2023 General Fund budget of \$5,629,727 and the 2022 tax levy collectible in 2023 of \$2,691,826. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

8. Operator license approvals (Public Safety) – Motion by Alderperson Birke/second by Alderperson Spaeth to approve operator licenses for Ron Buros and Shae McCulloch. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

9. Discussion with possible action on temporary Class B beer and Class C wine license for Pleasant Ridge Holiday Faire Adult Evening Gala on December 3, 2022 (Public Safety) – Motion by Alderperson Thompson/second by Alderperson Hubbard to approve the temporary Class B beer and Class C wine license for Pleasant Ridge. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

10. Discussion and approval for water rate increase (Public Works) – the last increase was in December 2021. This would be an inflationary increase of 4.5% effective February 2023. Motion by Alderperson Ahler/second by Alderperson Welter to approve the water rate increase of 4.5%. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

11. Discussion and approval for sewer rate increase (Public Works) – the last increase was in 2016. This would also be an inflationary increase of 4.5%. Motion by Alderperson Birke/second by Alderperson Welter to approve the sewer rate increase of 4.5%. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

12. Review and approval for update of sewer ordinance 13.20.050 – First Reading (Public Works) – this incorporates the changes to the rates. Motion by Alderperson Birke/second by Alderperson Hubbard to approve ordinance 022OR009 and waive the second reading. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

13. Approval to purchase second voting machine from Command Central (Finance) – we have had two machines in the past. A second used machine would be a one-time cost of \$6600 plus the costs for hardware maintenance yearly of \$410 and software yearly of \$228. We can split the costs between 2022 and 2023 budgets. Motion by Alderperson Spaeth/second by Alderperson Hubbard to approve the purchase of the second voting machine for \$7238.00. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

14. Review and update on process for Park & Rec Director position timeline & schedule – Torres reviewed the timeline and process. The hiring team consists of the Mayor, Administrator, Kristal Welter, Nate Noggle and Sarah Grainger. The Park & Rec committee will interview on 1/3/2023 and then interview top candidates again at Council on 1/10/2023.

15. Discussion with possible action on bathhouse project budget, use of city resources and timeline – Alderperson Hubbard introduced the project team of Christina Dollhausen, Mark Zettler, Dallas Seevers, Aaron Van Loo and Aaron Parker that were in attendance. They reviewed the four-season structure conceptual plan for the Council. There is a need for community space, visitor center, public restrooms, library programming, bike trail head and possible small bike repair center. Dollhausen reviewed the funding options that they discussed including the CDI grant, Ho-Chunk funding, historic tax credits, TIF money and a non-profit to be formed for donations. The budget of \$500,000 could be covered by the CDI grant of \$250,000 which includes a business match with \$40,000 already allocated from the City, \$10,000 from Ho-Chunk funds and would ask for an additional \$200,000 from TIF funds. A resolution for the TIF commitment would come early next year for the CDI application. The project would also need to consider another 15% for soft costs above the \$500,000 and operational costs are still a variable. Motion by Alderperson Ahler/second by Alderperson Welter to allow the Historic Preservation Commission to apply for the CDI grant and allocate \$200,000 in funding from Tid #6 as additional matching funds for the bathhouse project. Roll call vote six in favor, two against. Motion carried. Alderpersons Tryggestad and Spaeth voting no.

16. Payment of bills (Finance) - Motion by Alderperson Ahler/second by Alderperson Hubbard to approve the payment of bills on report date 11/21/2022 in the amount of \$59,379.03 and additional bills on report date 11/29/2022 for \$217,331.92. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

17. Second Period for Public Comment – Dan Stalsberg, 865 Railroad Ave stated that no taxpayer dollars were supposed to be spent on the bathhouse. Mary Henry stated the bathhouse project is a great value for needed space and a senior center. Evan Blattner, 651 E Court stated that money needs to be put into the bathhouse building. Dallas Seevers, 620 W Decker thanked the Council for their consideration of the bathhouse project.

18. Adjournment - Motion made by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Ahler to adjourn the meeting at 9:32 p.m. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Lori Polhamus, City Clerk