

**CITY OF VIROQUA  
COUNCIL MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 14, 2023**

**1. Roll call:**

The regular meeting of the Common Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 by Mayor Justin Running at City Hall and via Zoom with Alderpersons Andrew Bergum, Todd Kirking, Todd Spaeth, Cyndy Hubbard, John Thompson, Kristal Welter, and Steve Willis present. Alderpersons David Tryggestad and Tanja Birke were excused. Also present were City Clerk Lori Polhamus, City Administrator Nate Torres, Fire Chief Chad Buros, Public Works Director Sarah Grainger, Library Director Trina Erickson, Park & Rec Director Kale Proksch, Police Chief Rick Niedfeldt, Lt Robert Raasch, Lt Travis Sutton, Carson LaBelle, Angie Cina, Stacy Sanborn, and Mike Moran.

**2. Approval of the October 31, 2023 Special Council minutes** – Motion by Alderperson Welter/second by Alderperson Willis 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** – None

Council moved to agenda items eleven and twelve before finishing the remainder of the agenda.

**5. Approval of Strand Associates contract for North End Development Study (Public Works)** -this is to help with future planning with a traffic analysis with the new development on the north side of the city. Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Thompson to approve the contract for \$15,500. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**6. Public hearing on proposed 2024 General Fund budget** – the public hearing was opened at 8:04 pm. Torres reviewed the budget power point and answered questions. The proposed levy is \$2,615,015 with a mill rate of 7.643 and a 2.85% decrease in tax levy. The public hearing was closed at 8:34 pm.

**7. Approval of 2024 General Fund budget and 2023 tax levy collectible in 2024** – Motion by Alderperson Thompson/second by Alderperson Spaeth to approve the 2023 tax levy collectible in 2024 of \$2,615,015. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**8. Discussion and possible action regarding lease agreement with Wild West Days** – With the fire station project happening in 2024 we need to give a 90 day notice to the Wild West Days regarding the property. We would give them a letter to terminate the lease agreement and redo a new lease without the fire station area included. Mike Moran stated they want to work together and they may need to utilize some of the area for parking if possible. Motion by Alderperson Spaeth/second by Alderperson Bergum to terminate the lease agreement with Wild West Days and create a new lease with Wild West Days. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**9. Discussion and possible action regarding contract with GFL for Refuse and Recycling Services 2024-2026-** Vernon County has rescinded all the MOUs with the municipalities and the \$2.00 rebate is no longer available. The landfill expansion was approved by the County Board on a 14-3 vote. The tipping fee will be \$60.00/ton for 2024 at least through June but is not guaranteed after that as it will depend on volume. Keeping the language to have all waste go to the Vernon County landfill in the contract was discussed. Motion by Alderperson Kirking/second by Alderperson Welter to keep the language the same in the contract requiring all waste to go to the Vernon County landfill. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**10. Discussion and possible action regarding demolition bids, salvage, and materials for the former City Hall building** – we are on track for the demo and finalizing the bid contracts. We will need a general contractor with a hazardous materials specialist working with them. The Historical Society and Historic Preservation Commission went through the building and found seven doors, a table and three interior windows that could be used in the WPA

building project. The bid document will include those items to be removed by the contractor with the remaining items being the contractor's. Motion by Alderperson Spaeth/second by Alderperson Hubbard to have Historical Society and Historic Preservation Commission make a list of items to keep that the contractor will remove for them with remaining materials going to the contractor. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**11. Possible closed session per WI 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 – Police Lieutenants** – Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Bergum to enter closed session at 7:03 pm. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**12. Reconvene in open session with possible action on items discussed during closed session** – Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Bergum to reconvene in open session at 8:00 pm. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**13. Payment of bills (Finance)** - Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Bergum to approve the payment of bills on report date 11/09/2023 in the amount of \$13,285.79 and additional bills on report date 11/14/2023 for \$176,916.25. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**14. Second Period for Public Comment** – None

**15. Adjournment** - Motion made by Alderperson Bergum/second by Alderperson Kirking to adjourn the meeting at 9:44 p.m. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Lori Polhamus, City Clerk