

**CITY OF VIROQUA  
COUNCIL MINUTES  
DECEMBER 12, 2023**

**1. Roll call:**

The regular meeting of the Common Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 12, 2023 by Mayor Justin Running at City Hall and via Zoom with Alderpersons David Tryggestad, Andrew Bergum, Todd Kirking, Todd Spaeth, Cyndy Hubbard, John Thompson, Kristal Welter, and Steve Willis present. Alderperson Tanja Birke was excused. Also present were City Clerk Lori Polhamus, City Administrator Nate Torres, Public Works Director Sarah Grainger, Library Director Trina Erickson, Police Chief Rick Niedfeldt, Park & Rec Director Kale Proksch, Fire Chief Chad Buros, Asst Fire Chief Glen Martin, Pam Eitland, Gary Stueland, Kurt Muchow, Aaron Parker, and Kim Hollerman.

**2. Approval of the November 28, 2023 Council minutes** – Motion by Alderperson Welter/second by Alderperson Kirking 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

**5. Review and approval of extraterritorial certified survey map – Gary Stueland (Plan Commission)** – Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Bergum to approve the survey map. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**6. Review and approval of certified survey map – Patricia Roou (Plan Commission)** – Motion by Alderperson Spaeth/second by Alderperson Willis to approve the survey map. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**7. 2022 Audit Presentation – Johnson Block & Associates** – Kim Hollerman from Johnson Block and Administrator Torres reviewed the slide presentation of the 2022 audit and answered questions for the Council.

**8. Discussion and possible action regarding Hanson Farm Master Plan (Plan Commission)** – Kurt Muchow reviewed the plan with Council that will be used as a tool to help market the property to developers and can change. In this plan there are 96 housing units with a \$16 million new tax base projection if completely built out. Motion by Alderperson Spaeth/second by Alderperson Tryggestad to move forward with the development plan as presented with possible changes. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**9. Discussion with possible action on business park farmland agreement with Vernon County (Public Property)** – we have 13.3 acres that are part of the business park that we leased to the same farmer that had the County farm land. The county is pursuing sustainability farming practices and asked if the city wanted to be included in the bidding process with separate lease agreements. We put our early termination language in our lease and it was reviewed by our attorney as well. This will be a four-year lease for 2024-2027 and will be paid in two installments. Motion by Alderperson Thompson/second by Alderperson Hubbard to approve moving forward with the park farmland agreement with Vernon County. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**10. Review and approval of transportation project plat for temporary limited easements & fees for Main Street TAP project (Plan Commission) (Public Works)** – Grainger reviewed the plat map in regards to the temporary easements needed at Court, Jefferson, Terhune and South streets for the TAP project. Plan Commission reviewed the plat and Public Works reviewed the payments for the sixteen properties that totaled \$6100.00. Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Kirking to approve the project plat map for the temporary limited easements. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried. Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Kirking to approve the fees for the TAP project as presented. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**11. Discussion and possible action on budget and financing of Viroqua Fire Station project (Public Safety)** – Torres reviewed the budget with the Council. The total project cost with interim financing will be \$9,992,281.

Offsetting revenues would include the USDA grant of \$5,250,000, \$900,000 from the Towns, sale of the fire station for \$500,000 and city long term debt of \$3,342,281. This loan projected at 4.2% interest would be a payment of \$250,306 for twenty years and add .727/\$1000 value to the tax bill. They plan to go out for bids in January but will need a firm commitment from the Towns for their portion. Motion by Alderperson Thompson/second by Alderperson Willis to approve the budget & financing for the fire station project. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**12. Discussion with possible action on transfer of property located at 321 S East Avenue (286-01718-0000) from Vernon County to City of Viroqua (Public Property)** – this is the old hospital property that was taken down and we have a special assessment of \$61,370.66 on that which was not collected. The owner passed away and the property was donated to Vernon County. They have removed the taxes and asked if the city was interested since we had the large assessment on the property. The lot is .4 acres and with the city owning it we could control what goes on the property for tax base. A neighbor was at the Public Property meeting that also expressed interest in a portion of the property as well. The County Board is meeting in December for the official approval. Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Tryggestad to approve the property transfer from Vernon County to the City of Viroqua. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**13. Review and approval of election worker listing for 2024-2025** – Motion by Alderperson Tryggestad/second by Alderperson Willis to approve the listing as presented. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**14. Discussion with possible action on park tractor replacement for 2024 (Park & Rec)** – the current 2021 Kubota tractor would be traded in. We would get the replacement from Portland Implement for \$8110.43 to be delivered in January. Motion by Alderperson Spaeth/second by Alderperson Kirking to approve the tractor replacement from Portland Implement for \$8110.43. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

**15. Discussion/action on canceling the December 26, 2023 City Council meeting** – Motion by Alderperson Tryggestad/second by Alderperson Willis to cancel the December 26, 2023 meeting. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried. Finance Chair Welter will review all year end bills prior to payment.

**16. Payment of bills (Finance)** - Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Kirking to approve the payment of bills on report date 12/07/2023 in the amount of \$401,307.05 and additional bills on report date 12/12/2023 for \$165,919.91. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

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

**18. Adjournment** - Motion made by Alderperson Tryggestad/second by Alderperson Kirking to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Lori Polhamus, City Clerk