

**CITY OF VIROQUA
COUNCIL MINUTES
FEBRUARY 27, 2024**

1. Roll call:

The regular meeting of the Common Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 27, 2024 by Mayor Justin Running at City Hall and via Zoom # 85949315332 with Alderpersons David Tryggestad, Andrew Bergum, Todd Kirking, Cyndy Hubbard, John Thompson, Kristal Welter, and Steve Willis present. Alderperson Todd Spaeth 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, Patrick Robbins, Angie Cina, Laci Sheldon, and Joe Vikemyr.

2. Approval of the February 13, 2024 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 – Alderperson Hubbard stated Thursday 2/29 is the last day to finish the bike survey and encouraged everyone to take it. Mayor Running stated that Friday is Phyllis Kirking’s last day at police dispatch after eighteen years and wished her well.

4. First period for public comment – None

5. Appointment of Emma Hood as Ward 4 Alderperson - tabled

6. Appointment of one council member to Housing Advisory Committee – Tabled from 2/13/2024 meeting - tabled

7. Reappointment of Terry O’Connor to Library Board for three-year term expiring 4/30/2027 (Library Board) – Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Willis to approve the reappointment of Terry O’Connor to the Library Board. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

8. Review and approval of special event application for Bushcraft Camp on April 26, 2024 (Public Safety) – as part of the Ridge to Rivers Book festival this event will be held in Eckhart Park. It went to Public Safety due to the concern over the fire element. They were fine with this as it is used for fire safety and education and they will have the required fire suppression available throughout the classes that day. Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Bergum to approve the special event permit. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

9. Review and approval of water quality easement on Wheeler property (Public Works) – this is being done for phosphorus trading credits. We did streambank stabilization on this property and we need to be able to access it to make sure it is being maintained. This is a 20-year easement and they are asking for the attorney fees of \$4100 for this. Motion by Alderperson Hubbard/second by Alderperson Welter to approve the water quality easement agreement. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

10. Discussion with possible action regarding Silverthorne development agreement amendment and amendment to Planned Unit Development – this is for the development on Arena Drive. The three main changes are: #1 -when the first payment will be made from the city from 2024 to 2025, #2 – changing from 22 units to 20 with duplexes instead of tri-plexes and #3 – having an owner-occupied option with possibly selling 2-4 of them. This will be brought back at the next meeting for further discussion.

11. Discussion with possible action on additional K9 officer (Public Safety) – in 2024 we budgeted for a K-9 squad car and officer and the new dog from the Check Republic will be ready mid-March. We have another dog available that could be used as a social dog in schools and for drugs. They would use the golf outing money and the food & vet are already sponsored. The only cost for the city would be for insurance and the loss of a car trade in if we keep the current 2016 squad that is equipped already. These K-9s would work opposite shifts and Officer

Vian has interest in being a canine officer. Motion by Alderperson Thompson/second by Alderperson Hubbard to approve the additional K9 officer. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

12. Payment of bills (Finance) - Motion by Alderperson Bergum/second by Alderperson Kirking to approve the payment of bills on report date 02/23/2024 in the amount of \$86,029.47 and additional bills on report date 02/27/2024 for \$72,932.57. Roll call vote all in favor. Motion carried.

13. Second Period for Public Comment – None

14. Adjournment - Motion made by Alderperson Tryggestad/second by Alderperson Kirking to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m. Voice vote all in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Lori Polhamus, City Clerk