



ELLSWORTH COMMUNITY
ASSOCIATION
APRIL NEWSLETTER

Community Association
Officers:
Presidents:
Marcy Olson
cornflower39@yahoo.com
Treasurer:
Linda Clark
Board Member:
Marv Norem
Editor:
Janet Adix
ellsworthca@netins.net

Ellsworth Extravaganza

June 29, 2024

Parade, Family Fun
Festival at the City Park
Live Music

Community Supper

Volunteers Needed for Multiple Elements
Of this event.

Contact Marcy Olson at
cornflower39@yahoo.com

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APRIL 24

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY																																																																																												
	1 Last Quarter Easter Monday (Canada)	2	3	4 Library board meet 5:30	5	6 Bingo Community Center 5:00																																																																																												
7 Trinity Lutheran Church 9:00	8 New Moon City Council 7:00	9 Community Association 7:00 Community Center	10	11	12	13 Bingo Community Center 5:00																																																																																												
14 Trinity Lutheran Church 9:00	15 First Quarter Firemen Meeting 7:00	16	17	18	19	20 Bingo Community Center 5:00																																																																																												
21 Trinity Lutheran Church 9:00	22	23 Full Moon Passover	24	25	26 Homewood Cemetery meet TLC 10:00	27 Bingo Community Center 5:00																																																																																												
28 Trinity Lutheran Church 9:00	29	30			<p>MARCH</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>31</td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30							31	<p>MAY</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
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Notices:

NEWSLETTER MATERIAL DUE: by the 25th of the month for the next month's edition. Send by email to ellsworthca@netins.net or Ellsworth Community Association, PO Box 272, Ellsworth, Ia 50075. Subscribe/ unsubscribe by email: send your request to ellsworthca@netins.net.

Opinions expressed in the Ellsworth Newsletter are those of the writers and are not necessarily those of the

Ellsworth Meals: Contact Linda Clark 515-297-3012 if you wish to have the noon meal delivered. Delivery Monday thru Friday, no holidays. Each meal \$5.00

Community Coffee - Tuesdays 9:30-?. Trinity Lutheran Church, Ellsworth. Everyone welcome.

Lord's Cupboard: Bethesda Lutheran Church, Jewell, 1st Monday of the month 1:00-2:00, 5:00-6:30, other Mondays 5:00-6:30.

Birthdays This Month

Jacob Nicholson	1st	Cory Nelson	11th	Ronda Olson	21st
Jim Hill	3rd	Dawn Hegland	12th	Brandi Nelson	23rd
Cole Berg	4th	Elizabeth Hill	14th	Mary Hill	23rd
Colton Hill	4th	Gail George	15th	Michael Eckers	26th
Jaclyn Hill	8th	Josh Angove	15th	John Lovell	27th
Kasen VanLangen	9th	Veronica Olson	18th	Davien Henderson	29th
Zachery Campbell	10th	Austin Busch	19th	Debbie Caudle	29th
Diane Holt	10th	Adalynne Hill	20th		

ANNIVERSARIES

Marcia & Danny Anderson	4th	Brain & Kristal Johnson	10th
Konni & Doug VanLangen	4th	Leah & Bob Maass	17th
Janet & Tony Lindseth	5th	Tory & Jessica Hetland	26th
Barb & Wayne Patterson	7th	Staci & Jason Thompson	27th
Linda & Dale Graham	8th		



BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

For April, the Business Spotlight is on the Ellsworth Cooperative Telephone Association. Joshua Angove living in Ellsworth is the currant manager. Josh has been with the company for 15 years. Trevor Nelson, of Garden City, Network Technician, has worked with the company for 13 years. Office Manager is Breanna Weiland with 1 1/2 years service. She lives in Jewell.

The ECTA provides Telephone, Internet and TV to residents in the Ellsworth and Garden City areas. Equipment is kept up-to-date with fiber optic installed in 2011, new switch in 2018 and upgrades in middle ware.

Being a Cooperative, the company is governed by a board of directors. Nine members make up this board, 3 from the city of Ellsworth, 3 from rural Ellsworth and 3 from the Garden City area. There are memberships for \$10.00 with dividends given. There has been over \$6,000,000 in patronage dividends given over the years. March is Annual Meeting time.

The ECTA donates to many causes including The South Hamilton school, Fire Department, American Cancer Society and local kids programs.

REMEMBERING THE PAST

TELEPHONE COMPANY

On April 19, 1902, a citizen's meeting was held at the Ellsworth City Hall to discuss the erection and operation of telephone lines south, east and west of Ellsworth. Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws were drawn. Each member was to hold equal shares and pay \$10.00 so work could be started. The company was incorporated under the laws of Iowa with capital of \$10,000.00. Nine directors were elected. Hours of service were 8:00AM to 9:00PM. Stromberg-Carlson phones were used.

In 1904, a free line to Randall was constructed and in 1905, the line to Jewell was put in. The first directory was printed in 1906. At this time the switch board was in the Hotel building. This company became known as the Ellsworth Mutual Telephone Company. The Iowa Telephone Company provided toll service to Ellsworth and all calls were limited to three minutes. It was also asked that all toll calls be paid within three days or the operator would disconnect service.

In 1910, there were 210 shareholders in the company. In 1913, a free line to Radcliffe was erected. Also Sunday service was begun. In 1930, all company money was in the State Bank when it closed and the directors had to raise money to carry on the usual business. They borrowed from the Farmers State Bank. Salaries at this time had to be lowered. A directory was printed in 1936 and at the annual meeting it was decided to build a new building, as the hotel was by now mostly torn down.

First mention of dial operation was made in August of 1962. The company changed from a mutual company to a cooperative on April 30, 1963. Land was purchased from Mrs. Nellie Olson for a new building. In April of 1964, Garden City and Concord Telephone Company wished to be included in the Ellsworth exchange. In May new Articles and By-Laws were read. The company became the Ellsworth Cooperative Telephone Association. Close to 600 subscribers were now in the system. This was the second single party system to be built in the state of Iowa.

Outstanding developments after the above: direct dial on long distance in December 1972, touch tone phones installed in 1978, and the paying of patronage capital retirement. The company franchise was renewed on November 6, 1979.



Picture is of the switch board with Ida Fjetland as Operator. She was employed by the telephone company in 1919 and continued service until 1966. Many men were 'Line men' now considered 'Managers'. In recent years, Elmer Olson 1963 to 1988, Tom Ellwood 1988 to 2011. Recent secretaries have been: Joann Miles, Marilyn Ubben, Mary Kay Thoreson, Lois Danielson, Teresa Olson and Tricia Weiland. See Business Spotlight for current employees.

MARCH CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

The Ellsworth City Council met in regular session at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall on March 11th, 2024 with Mayor Yager presiding, and the following council present: Laube, Funk, Gelder and King. Absent: Sogard. City Attorney Montag was also present.

	February Receipts	February Disbursements
General Fund	17458.09	39010.71
Road Use Fund	5231.56	7910.91
Employee Benefit Fund	21.86	3085.17
Emergency Fund	8.13	
Local Option Sales Tax Fund	6634.67	
Tax Increment Finance Area 1		
Tax Increment Finance 1 Amend	31.94	
Bingo Fund	3785.78	2505.45
Debt Service Fund	12.93	2415.00
Capital Project-Strm Water		3265.77
Capital Project-Water Tower	37069.00	37069.00
Water Fund	26062.84	14614.65
Water Sinking Fund		
Sewer Fund	7245.27	6626.12
Electric Fund	74341.07	66681.37
Electric Sinking Fund		
Storm Water Fund	4318.84	57.75
Storm Water Sinking		3058.00
	\$182221.98	\$186299.90

AGENDA APPROVAL: Motion by King, seconded by Gelder to approve the agenda. Roll call votes 4-0. Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA: Motion by King, seconded by Laube to approve the following items listed on the consent agenda:

- a. Motion to approve February 12th, 2024 council minutes.
- b. Motion to approve February payment of claims.

Roll call votes 4-0. Motion carried and claims hereby made a portion of these minutes.

PUBLIC FORUM: A residential utility customer was present to discuss their utility bill and consequential disconnection. They expressed concern that a payment had been dropped off in the payment box at the beginning of February, but was sent back with an explanation that the payments didn't match the amount past due, current owed and were twice the amount owed. The Clerk explained that due to the history with overpayments causing overdrafts, the current utility customer's pattern of coming in to ask about the balance and the amount of time before the bill was actually due to be able to reach out and confirm which checks needed to be applied to the account, both Clerks felt it was the best course of action to wait to hear from the customer. After discussing different ways to communicate how to apply payments that come in without a bill stub or any instructions on how to apply towards an account or multiple accounts, the Clerk suggested waiving the reconnect fee for this instance.

Council minutes continued on page 6

LIBRARY UPDATE: Council member Gelder was able to attend the Library Board meeting held on Thursday March 7th, 2024. During the meeting, there was discussion regarding more advertising for the Library Director position since former Director Schmitz will no longer be able to help with keeping the library open. It was agreed that an Indeed ad would be created and posted. There was discussion from the City Council that more local advertising needed to be placed as well. Motion by Funk, seconded by Gelder to place the position with the local radio station for one week and see if it generates any more interest and then revisit at the April council meeting. Roll call votes 4-0. Motion carried.

ELLSWORTH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION: There was a request from the ECA to use the shelter house in the park for the Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday March 30th. This would only be for the Easter Bunny to change in. No other members or residents would be allowed to access the building.

COMPLAINTS: The City Clerk received several more complaints regarding the number of street lights that aren't working throughout the City. This has been an ongoing issue that stems from a previous street lighting upgrade project in 2016 that was not completed properly and no warranty exists. Supervisor Vanlangen has been working with a local electrician to attempt to address the repairs, however the problems are more complicated than originally estimated. The City has purchased specialized equipment in hopes to begin working on the lights this week, weather permitting.

CHANGING COUNCIL MEETING TIME FOR APRIL MEETING: Motion by Funk, seconded by King to change the normal April 8th, 2024 council meeting time to 7:45 p.m. in order to meet the requirements of the new mandated tax levy hearing. Roll call votes 4-0. Motion carried.

SETTING PUBLIC HEARING FOR PROPOSED TAX LEVY: Motion by Gelder, seconded by Laube to set Monday April 8th, 2024 at 7:05 p.m. for the Public Hearing on the FY24/25 Proposed Property Tax Levy. Roll call votes 4-0. Motion carried.

CITY EMPLOYEE VERIFICATION AND PAPERWORK: The City Clerk reported that she had spoken to several other Clerks in the area, the Iowa League of Cities, the City Attorney and The Iowa Department of Revenue regarding employee paperwork for Fire and EMS volunteers being in compliance for payroll purposes. Over the last several months, there have been complications between the City and the Department on whether tax and personal paperwork is required to be completed. There was mention that not having information on record for insurance purposes was a liability, as well as the regulations that are set by the state for employee personnel files not being in compliance. City Attorney Montag suggested the City script a letter requesting the information be completed by April 1st, 2024 in order to complete future payroll and that anyone choosing not to comply would need to sign an opt out clause acknowledging their refusal. Motion by Funk, seconded by Laube to move forward with said letter and determine a payroll date at the April meeting. Roll call votes 3-0, with Gelder abstaining.

BUDGET DISCUSSION: With the changes in the budgeting/levying process and resulting loss in revenues, the council made the difficult determination to adjust several yearly allocation amounts for the FY24/25 budget year.

- a. **FISCAL YEAR WAGES:** Motion by Funk, seconded by Laube to approve a 3% COLA wage increase for full time employees and \$1.00/hr raise for the part time clerk employee, for the FY24/25 budget; Nick Vanlangen- \$64,272.00, Lee Knickerbocker- \$45,526.00, Amy Zeman- \$64,272.00 and Darlene Campbell- \$14.00/hr. Roll call votes 4-0. Motion carried.

Council minutes continued on page 7

- a. **LIBRARY-** The Library budget was adjusted from the previous month's approval due to an increase in wages and employee benefits and raised insurance costs that were not accounted for. Motion by Gelder, seconded by King to approve the new FY24/25 Library budget for the amount of \$45,353.00. Roll call votes 4-0. Motion carried. The council discussed in length the allocated amount of general fund revenues given to the Library each year. The City believes keeping the Library open and available for residents is a priority, but struggles to be able to continue to give the \$22,769.00 it has for the last 10 years when faced with loss of revenues and high inflation costs. After confirming with the Clerk that in fact the Library has been allowed to keep any unspent budget revenues from previous years that has accumulated to over \$40,000.00 in their savings, a motion by Funk, seconded by King to reduce the FY24/25 yearly allocation to the Library to \$15,000.00. Roll call votes 3-0, with Gelder voting Nay.
- b. **FIRE-** Motion by King, seconded by Laube to approve the FY24/25 Fire budget for the amount of \$53,036.00. Roll call votes 3-0, with Gelder abstaining. The department will use funds set aside in their savings to offset any revenue shortfalls. A motion by King, seconded by Funk was made to use the additional twenty- and one-half cents per thousand dollars of assessed valuation of the taxable property within the City, that the City currently collects to supplement EMS needs within the Department. Roll call votes 3-0, with Gelder abstaining. Motion carried.
- c. **EMS-** Motion by King, seconded by Funk to approve the FY24/25 EMS budget for the amount of \$18,428.00. Roll call votes 3-0, with Gelder abstaining. Motion carried.
- d. **BINGO-** Motion by King, seconded by Funk to approve the FY24/25 Bingo budget for the amount of \$58,042.00. Roll call votes 4-0. Motion carried.
- e. **YEARLY ALLOCATIONS:** Due to the State Auditor's advisory letter regarding public fund donations, coupled with the strain of the loss of levy revenues, there was a motion by King, seconded by Funk to reduce the yearly allocated donation requests to \$250.00 from the previous \$500.00. Roll call votes 4-0. Motion carried.
- f. **OTHER-** The council discussed the increased per capita charge addressed by the new 28E agreement with the Hamilton County Sheriff's Department beginning July 1st, 2024. In past budgets, Cities were able to levy a portion of that cost through the Emergency levy on their budgets, however the FY24/25 budget process has eliminated that particular levy and the City must now pull the funding from elsewhere. It was decided that the council would like additional time to discuss potential options before moving forward.

COUNCIL MEETING CHANGES: The council would like to add a second meeting to each month moving forward in order to address the length of current meetings and in an effort to be more proactive in future planning. The current meeting procedures are set by ordinance, so an amendment to the current ordinance will need to be done. This will be added to the next agenda.

UTILITY RATES: The City Clerk reviewed with the council a meeting she had with Midland Power regarding the City's current electric utility rates and the different rate structures the City has for its customers. Midland notified the City that there was a rate adjustment effective January 1st, 2024 and the City will need to adjust accordingly. There was discussion regarding offsetting certain costs while still allowing for the increase not to put the City in the negative when it comes to revenues. More conversation and research will be required prior to any rate changes occurring.

Council minutes continued on page 8

INVOICING TIMELINE: There were several invoices that the Clerk has questions on before sending payment. Last month the City discussed an invoice from Danko Emergency Equipment for new turn out gear. The invoice was for an additional \$528.14 over the \$12,000.00 the council approved at the May 23rd, 2023 meeting. An additional approval would be needed for the payment to be issued since it spans several budgets. After discussing spendings policies and the current budget, there was a motion by Laube, seconded by King to stay with the original approved cost of \$12,000.00. The remaining \$528.14 will need to be processed through the Fire Association with whom the cost was shared with. Roll call votes 3-0, with Gelder abstaining. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Yager adjourned the meeting at 10:29 pm.

/s/ Dolorus Yager, Mayor
/s/ Amy L. Zeman, City Clerk

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ELLSWORTH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

Send this form and yearly dues -\$20.00 to:

Ellsworth Community Association, PO Box 272, Ellsworth Ia 50075

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY the following information for our records.

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone () _____ - _____

Mobile Phone() _____ - _____

Email _____

Do you or your family wish to be included in the monthly birthday/anniversary calendar in the newsletter.

First Name

Last Name

Month/Day

B. A _____

B. A _____

B. A _____

B. A _____

Do you wish to get the monthly Ellsworth Newsletter by email? Yes _____ No _____