

The Ellsworth City Council met in regular session at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall on January 28th, 2025 with Mayor Yager, and the following council present: Funk, Olson, and Phipps.

AGENDA APPROVAL: Motion by Funk, seconded by Olson to approve the agenda. Roll call votes 3-0. Motion carried.

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

- a. Motion to approve January 13 Minutes.
- b. Motion to rename South Hamilton Record News as the official City newspaper.
- c. Motion to reappoint Heidi Eckers as City Clerk.
- d. Motion to reappoint Raphael M. Montag as City attorney.
- e. Motion to pay South Hamilton Trap Team \$250 donation from Bingo.

Roll call votes 3-0. Motion carried and claims hereby made a portion of these minutes.

PUBLIC FORUM: None

DISK GOLF BINGO DONATION: Mayor Yager spoke on behalf of councilman Laube about the project update for the disk golf course in the Ellsworth City Park. Councilman Laube has found sponsors for most of the holes at \$700 each. Motion made by Funk and seconded by Phipps to sponsor a hole with a \$700 donation from Bingo. Roll call votes 3-0. Motion carried.

BUDGET DISCUSSION: City Clerk Eckers included budget work sheets for each councilperson in their packets for this meeting. The City has the EJS Police Department proposed budget for FY 25/26 in hand but is still waiting for the Ellsworth Fire Department and Ellsworth Public Library's proposed budgets. City Clerk Eckers will continue to work with the council and Mayor on proposed budget for FY 25/26.

COUNCIL AND MAYOR IPERS: City Clerk Eckers updated the chamber on current law regarding IPERS benefits. Newly appointed councilpersons are not required to pay into or receive IPERS nor are they required to "opt out" with the required form. Current elected councilpersons present have already completed and submitted the "opt out" form.

ECA: NO COMMENTS

FIRE/EMS: NOT PRESENT

LIBRARY: NOT PRESENT

CITY HALL UPDATES: City Clerk Eckers updated the council on the 2025 updated bid and quote thresholds for the city found in the Iowa League of Cities Special Budget Report document. Available to the public at city hall if requested. Clerk Eckers presented the council with available budget for current FY and quote from Peterson flooring for new carpet in City Hall. Motion made by Phipps and seconded by Funk to move forward with the \$7351.92 replacement of carpeting project through Peterson flooring. Roll call votes 3-0. Motion carried.

Clerk Eckers updated the council on progression of the new watertower project. Including an upcoming meeting with the engineers, financial advisor, bond attorney, and Ames Alliance representative. Clerk Eckers' discussed initial water rate study done by UMB bank of Des Moines, this rate study was based on a 20 year SRF loan, whereas the project is more than likely being funded by a USDA 40 year loan. The firm will rework the proposed rate increases and communicate directly with the City's bond attorney for Ordinance drafting. Clerk Eckers will keep the council apprised of all updates.

City Clerk Eckers updated the council on the decision made on January 21st by Planning and Zoning board to move forward with proposed rezoning on the corner of 175 and Ubben Ave contingent upon a developer's agreement between the City of Ellsworth and Dollar General Corp. Clerk Eckers has spoken with Schlotfeldt Engineering to pursue an initial draft of a developers agreement and discuss a traffic study through the DOT for that intersection. Clerk Eckers will keep the council updated on progress of this proposed project and will have Schlotfeldt Engineering present at an upcoming council meeting with the draft of the developer's agreement for the council to discuss and approve or amend. City Clerk Eckers discussed with the council a request by an electric customer to pursue and amend changes to the electric heat rates for those with geothermal systems in place. Clerk Eckers called Midland and was alerted to the

probable removal of these rates in the next few years. Changing the Ordinance and rates at present would not be recommended.

Clerk Eckers discussed a missing Greenwood Cemetery disbursement check, after calling several community members involved with the upkeep of the cemetery, Eckers requested from council approval for reissuing this disbursement check from April of 2024. After discussion, Mayor Yager approved the request.

Clerk Eckers updated council on the availability of Local Option Sales Tax funds which were 100% allocated by public vote effective July 1, 2022 for use on Main Street improvements. These funds are still available for use in a Main Street improvement project, currently totaling \$494,156.68. Clerk Eckers began initial conversations with a few engineering firms and will bring further information to a later council meeting. Including examples from other nearby cities of downtown improvement grants for building owners, potential grants to help with the city’s soft expenses in a new streetscape project, and programs available to municipalities for downtown visioning.

PUBLIC WORKS UPDATES: Public Works employee Lee Knickerbocker was present to update council on public works. Supervisor Vanlangen continues to gather quotes to replace reverse osmosis membranes and media filters at the water plant and also to replace one of the pumps. Both PW employees have been working to flush hydrants this week to clear the lines of any “color”. Knickerbocker updated council on updates to the lighting in the Community Center including presenting council with a quote from Short Circuit Electric to replace all the fixtures with LED lighting in the gym portion of the building with an estimated cost of \$8039.48 to be donated by the Bingo fund.

Knickerbocker brought a pricing sheet from Karl Chev in Webster City for a possible new truck to be purchased by the city for public works. Clerk Eckers mentioned that there was \$60,000 already in this 24/25 FY budget for the purchase of a new truck. Motion made by Funk and seconded by Olson to approve purchase of a GMC Sierra 2500 HD Pro Double Cab truck through Karl Chev of Webster City in the amount of \$58,425.00. Roll call votes 3-0. Motion carried. The plow and salter will be added as proposed items in the FY 25/26 budget.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Yager adjourned the meeting at 7:31 pm.

X _____

Dolorus Yager, Mayor

X _____

Heidi Eckers, City Clerk