The Ellsworth City Council met in regular session at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall on May 13th,2024 with Mayor Pro Tem King presiding, and the following council present: Funk, King, Sogard, with Mayor Yager arriving at 8:13 p.m. Absent: Laube and Gelder.

April Receipts April Disbursements

General Fund 8029.68 77652.44

Road Use Fund 5811.29 7173.65

Employee Benefit Fund 6003.35 2993.68

Emergency Fund 2232.29

Local Option Sales Tax Fund 5487.70

Tax Increment Finance Area 1

Tax Increment Finance 1 Amend 8522.04

Bingo Fund 5672.81 2237.44

Debt Service Fund 3551.90 2415.00

Capital Project-Strm Water

Capital Project-Water Tower

Water Fund 26790.54 34625.47

Water Sinking Fund

Sewer Fund 7816.75 8865.98

Electric Fund 84253.15 59384.88

Electric Sinking Fund

Storm Water Fund 3983.62 56.70

Storm Water Sinking 3058.00

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ $245155.12 $198463.24

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

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

1. Motion to approve April 8th, and April 23rd, 2024 council minutes.
2. Motion to approve April payment of claims.
3. Motion to approve debt payment to Iowa Finance Authority for SRF Loan in the amount of $93,381.25 plus service fee of $3,537.50, due June 1st, 2024.
4. Motion to renew Kum and Go #133 Class E Liquor License.

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

**PUBLIC FORUM:** Thomas and James Marsh with RotoForm Molding attended the meeting to speak with the council regarding the invoice they received for the electrical work done in the Industrial Park to provide service to their new building at 1435 Industrial Park Road. There was question on what responsibility the City had on the installation of the new transmission line and transformer and also confusion on an original conversation that had taken place between the owners, Midland Power and the Economic Development group. No one from the council or staff was aware of the prior conversation, so an additional meeting with those entities will need to occur. It was agreed that RotoForm will be placed on the June agenda.

**ELLSWORTH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION:** Darlene Campbell and Marcy Olson were in attendance to present several requests to the council for the ECA. The ECA has provided concessions and a meal for weekly Bingo at the Community Center for a number of years and utilizes the kitchen to do so. Recently, there was concern for rusting on the floor registers in the kitchen, rust and poor condition of a serving cart that is used to store items, and leaking of the kitchen faucet spray nozzle. The ECA inquired if Bingo could purchase a new cart, floor registers and sprayer. After determining

that the floor registers and nozzle were normal wear items, the Clerk suggested that those expenses come out of the Community Center budget for general building maintenance, rather than the Bingo budget. In discussing the actual use of the cart and that it did not in fact leave the kitchen, it was determined that at this time, no cart would be purchased from the Bingo budget.

**COMMUNITY CENTER GYM REQUEST:** Pastor Rollefson was present to discuss an opportunity through the church to offer a 4-week youth basketball camp in conjunction with Upward Sports. The camp would take place in mid-July and be offered to children in the K-6 age range. He requested to utilize the Ellsworth gym for the camp, stating that they were looking at Tuesdays as a possible practice day. Once confirming that there were no week day rentals in July, the council agreed that as long as it did not affect the tables being set up for Bingo on Saturdays, the camp would be a great opportunity for the community. Motion by Sogard, seconded by Funk to approve the gym rental for 4 weeks for the camp. Roll call votes 3-0. Motion carried.

**DNR REPORTS:** Due to Supervisor Vanlangens absence, no discussion took place.

**LIBRARY:** There was no new information to discuss.

**FIRE/EMS DEPARTMENT:** Chief Evans, former Chief Thompson and Volunteer member Zimmerman were available to meet with the council regarding department matters. The council again addressed an unpaid invoice from May of 2023, stating that the original invoice from Central Iowa Tow still contained incorrect information and in order for Evans Autobody to be reimbursed, the vehicle description, year, and vin number needed to correlate to the Departments ambulance that had been towed. The Clerk stated that she had reached out to Central Iowa Tow and requested another invoice, but received the same information. After presenting that invoice to the City’s insurance provider, it was also confirmed no claim would be paid with the incorrect information. Different opinions were expressed at that time, but no resolution was met. The group also discussed the matter of members attending EMT training and the cost of the classes not being budgeted for. The Clerk explained that the Ambulance/EMS budget had already exceeded its budget by $2,349.00 and still had outstanding bills for May and June to be paid. She then reasoned that due to several unplanned ambulance repairs, the EMS account currently only had a balance of $6,029.00 and even amending the budget after the fact wouldn’t have been possible since the training cost alone was $7,996.00. The council had been informed of this shortfall at the April 23rd meeting and supplementing revenue from the Fire fund was discussed, as everyone agreed that adding additional EMT personnel was a priority for the City. The council believed that speaking with Chief Evans prior to making that decision was essential. Chief Evans agreed to the importance of the training and gladly concurred to the additional funding from the Fire fund. The Clerk and Chief will coordinate with Iowa Central Business Office to ensure the invoices are paid. Another topic of discussion was the ongoing general maintenance of Fire and EMS equipment. Several members of the council reiterated the importance of budgeting for continued maintenance of vehicles and equipment and how accounting for unexpected breakdowns and inflation costs could save last minute budget amendments or delay of repairs in the future. Council had already approved servicing inspections performed by Evans Autobody to 5 Fire/EMS vehicles at an estimated cost of $4,000.00. Chief Evans requested the use of City employees to transport the vehicles to J and T Truck and Trailer Repair in Hubbard, as Evans Autobody has chosen to no longer service City equipment. The council will speak with employees regarding their assigned workload and discuss the logistics later this week.

**AIR COMPRESSOR FOR WATER TREATMENT PLANT:** On Monday April 29th, the air compressor at the water plant began to have issues. Supervisor Vanlangen was able to temporarily use his own compressor to run the plant while he contacted a local electrician. An emergency communication began with the council regarding the decision to purchase a new compressor or continue to repair the current one. Compressed Air, whom services the equipment informed Supervisor Vanlangen that the part needed wasn’t able to be purchased due to the age of the compressor. The current compressor is over 15 years old and has had numerous repairs and service calls within the last 5 years. The cost of labor, travel and repair for each call averages between $1200-$1500. After weighing the options, including the future water tower construction, and speaking with the Clerk regarding budget revenues, it was decided that a new compressor with warranty would be the best option for the City. Motion by Sogar, seconded by Funk to approve the purchase of a new air compressor for the water treatment plant; with an initial purchase cost of $10,447.00, not including freight. Roll call votes 3-0. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC HEARING FOR FY23/24 BUDGET AMENDMENT:** Due to the several emergency repairs and unplanned expenses, the amended budget was not proposed or published as originally planned. After confirming with the Department of Management, the Clerk will make the needed amendments and propose and publish the following week and council will reschedule the public hearing for Tuesday May 28th, 2024 at 5:00 pm.

**RESCHEDULE PUBLIC HEARING FOR FY23/24 BUDGET AMENDMENT:** Motion by King, seconded by Funk to set Tuesday May 28th, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. for the FY23/24 Budge Amendment Public Hearing. Roll call votes 3-0. Motion carried.

**METER PROJECT COMPLETION:** Van Wert Inc. will be here Monday the 13th and Tuesday the 14th to complete the meter installations on those residents who were not initially included on the first and second wave of installs. In working with the Public Works Department a list of 25 properties were left to be addressed. Any residents/businesses refusing to allow the new meter installation will begin to receive the $50.00 fee beginning on their utility bill that issues May 31st, 2024.

**FINAL READ AMENDING ORDINANCE #17.04 PERTAINING TO COUNCIL MEETING DATES AND TIMES:** Motion by Funk, seconded by Sogard to pass the final reading amending Ordinance #17.04 Pertaining to Council Meeting Date and Times. Roll call votes 3-0. Motion carried. The present council members would like to wait for the full council vote prior to adopting the ordinance.

**UTILITY RATES:** Much time has been spent on discussion in regards to utility rates within the City. The council continues to battle with the loss of revenues and large budget deficits, while expenditures continue to rise due to inflation and the City’s equipment and facilities age. A suggestion was made to look into a rate study being performed by an outside company, however after discussing with the Clerk the cost and potential delay of waiting for the report, other options were weighed. Councilmember Funk was able to supply numerical statistics based on the current rates and information provided by the Clerk. Several rate adjustments were offered and discussed heavily. The council will wait until a full council is present to vote on any changes made to rates.

**COMPLAINTS:** A complaint was received at City Hall regarding a lot pin that was removed from the property located at 1625 Delphi Street during boring for a new water line to the Norm addition of the east side of town. The property owner spoke with the excavating crew and then Supervisor Anderson regarding the pin being put back upon completion of the work, however claims it was not done. The resident is now requesting the pin be replaced. After considering the length of time that has passed, as well as not having any background information on the situation, the council could not justify the expense at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Mayor Yager adjourned the meeting at 10:12 pm.

