

The minutes of the Fairmont City Council meeting held on Monday, January 9, 2023, at the City Hall Council Chambers.

Mayor Lee Baarts called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Council Members Deb Foster, Wayne Hasek, Britney Kawecki, Jay Maynard and Michele Miller were present. Also in attendance: City Administrator Cathy Reynolds, Finance Director Paul Hoye, Chief of Police Mike Hunter, Streets and Park Superintendent Nick Lardy, City Clerk Patricia Monsen and City Attorney Mark Rahrlick, via telephone.

City Clerk Monsen administered the oath of office to Lee C. Baarts as Mayor, Jay Maynard, Ward 1 City Council Member and Deb Foster, Ward 3 City Council Member.

Council Member Kawecki made a motion to table agenda item 9.6 Gomsrud Park for more discussion and more community input. The motion failed for lack of a second. Council Member Maynard made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Council Member Miller seconded the motion and the motion carried with the majority vote.

During Public Comment, the following Fairmont residents expressed their concerns with a new community center: Sandy Meschke, Darlene Lutz, Terry Riggs, Bill Cieslinski, Richard Bradley and Marge Johnston.

Council Member Foster made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Council Member Maynard seconded the motion and the motion carried. Items on the Consent Agenda were: Minutes from the December 12, 2022 city council meeting; December 2022 accounts payable; Fairmont Fire Fighters' Officer Election; Event Permit for Fairmont Lakes Foundation, Inc. for an ice fishing contest on January 28, 2023; and License for the sale of edible products infused with tetrahydrocannabinol by Advanced Core, LLC.

Council Member Miller made a motion to approve **Ordinance 2022-14** amending Chapter 26 of the City Code regarding water-oriented accessory structures. Council Member Maynard seconded the motion. On roll call: Council Members Foster, Hasek, Kawecki, Maynard and Miller all voted aye. No one voted nay. Mayor Baarts declared said motion passed.

Council Member Foster made a motion to approve **Resolution 2023-02**, adopting the official designations of the city as follows: Mayor Pro-tem: Michele Miller, Council Member at Large; Council Secretary: Patricia J. Monsen, City Clerk; Depository of City Funds: Bank Midwest. Council Member Hasek seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Council Member Maynard made a motion to approve **Resolution 2023-03**, declaring the official newspaper for the city as the Sentinel. Council Member Miller seconded the motion. Council Member Foster abstained from discussion and from the vote due to a conflict of interest. The motion carried.

Council Member Maynard made a motion to table agenda item 9.2 City Attorney until the next meeting. Council Member Kawecki seconded the motion and the motion failed with the majority vote. Council Member Maynard made a motion to approve the selection of Flaherty & Hood, P.A. as the city attorney

and authorize the Mayor to sign a contract with Flaherty & Hood, P.A. for civil city attorney services. Council Member Miller seconded the motion and the motion carried with the majority vote.

Council Member Foster made a motion to approve the appointments to the 2023 Boards and Commissions. Council Member Miller seconded the motion and the motion carried. The appointments are as follows: Police Civil Service Commission: Paula Eppens; Park Board: Monica Shelgren and Jeff Coquyt; Public Utilities: Perry Struss and John Christ; Planning Commission: Tom Mesich, Tyler Benschoter and Angela Grafstrom; Board of Zoning Appeals: Susan Krueger, Mike Jacobsen and Jon Davis; Airport Board: Jeff Ziemer and Bill Eckles; Housing and Redevelopment Authority: Shawn Chambers.

Council Member Miller made a motion to approve the 2023 council liaison assignments. Council Member Maynard seconded the motion and the motion carried. The council liaison assignments are as follows: Park Board – Deb Foster; Public Utilities Commission – Wayne Hasek; Board of Zoning Appeals – Wayne Hasek and Jay Maynard; Planning Commission – Britney Kawecki; Airport Board – Jay Maynard; FEDA – Michele Miller and Jay Maynard; HRA - Deb Foster; CER – Michele Miller; Visit Fairmont – Deb Foster; Region Nine – Michele Miller; Martin County Library Board – Britney Kawecki; Safety Council – Britney Kawecki; Community Center Advisory Board – Britney Kawecki and Jay Maynard; Board of Equalization – Deb Foster, Michele Miller and Lee Baarts.

Council Member Foster made a motion to approve **Resolution 2023-01** requesting a local option sales tax with amending paragraphs one and seven. Council Member Maynard seconded the motion. On roll call: Council Members Kawecki, Maynard, Miller and Foster voted aye. Council Member Hasek voted nay. Mayor Baarts declared said motion passed.

Council Member Maynard made a motion that the motion of November 28, 2022 relating to the local option sales tax be rescinded; that an amount not to exceed \$2M of the local option sales tax be used for the design and purchase of the ice mechanical system and that the remainder of the \$14M be held for the construction of a community center, contingent only on the Fairmont Community Center Foundation and Fairmont Youth Hockey Association agreeing to raise all additional funding beyond that provided by the state and the city's local option sales tax needed to construct, maintain and operate the facility. Council Member Foster seconded the motion. Upon discussion, Council Member Maynard amended his motion to be that the motion of November 28, 2022 relating to the local option sales tax be rescinded; that \$14M be held for the construction of a community center, contingent only on the Fairmont Community Center Foundation and Fairmont Youth Hockey Association agreeing to raise all additional funding beyond that provided by the state and the city's local option sales tax needed to construct, maintain and operate the facility. Council Member Foster approved the amendment. On roll call: Council Members Kawecki and Maynard voted aye. Council Members Miller and Hasek voted nay. Mayor Baarts declared said motion passed.

Council Member Maynard made a motion that staff be directed to take a phased approach to work on the community center, with the YMCA first and the ice arena when funds are available. Council Member Kawecki seconded the motion. On roll call: Council Members Maynard, Foster and Kawecki voted aye. Council Members Miller and Hasek voted nay. Mayor Baarts declared said motion passed.

Council Member Maynard made a motion that we forward the list of questions from attachment B of the City Administrator's Memo to the Fairmont Community Center Foundation and request their replies in writing, and once those have been received, schedule a work session with them, the YMCA, the Fairmont Youth Hockey Association, and other stakeholders to discuss. Council Member Kawecki seconded the motion and the motion carried with the majority vote.

Council Member Maynard made a motion that staff be directed to continue work on alternative funding sources for the community center and to prepare necessary contract amendments for consultants to assist with this process; and to work with the Foundation, YMCA and the Fairmont Youth Hockey Association to develop terms and conditions for operations and maintenance of a community center, such terms to include that the City shall not be liable for any operation or maintenance costs for the facility. Council Member Foster seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Council Member Maynard made a motion that the Fairmont Community Center Foundation, the Fairmont Youth Hockey Association, and the YMCA be strongly requested to begin fundraising efforts for the full community center with the YMCA and an ice arena as soon as possible. Council Member Kawecki seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Council Member Kawecki made a motion to direct staff to work with JLG and Fairmont Youth Hockey Association to look at the compressor and mechanics and to come up with a number for the replacement and present it to the council. Council Member Maynard seconded the motion. On roll call: Council Members Kawecki and Maynard voted aye. Council Members Foster, Hasek and Miller voted nay. Mayor Baarts declared said motion failed.

Council Member Maynard made a motion to direct staff to work with JLG Contactors for an estimate for the design work for mechanicals. Council Member Hasek seconded the motion and the motion passed with the majority vote.

Council Member Maynard made a motion to table agenda item 9.6 Gomsrud Park until the next meeting. Council Member Kawecki seconded the motion and the motion failed with the majority vote. Council Member Miller made a motion to authorize moving forward with design development for the Gomsrud Park updates. Council Member Foster seconded the motion and the motion carried with the majority vote.

Reynolds stated that the AMI for the electric meters is nearing completion and the water meter installation is underway. Reynolds praised the Streets and Parks Departments for all their great work with snow removal over the holidays. Citizens are urged to not park on the streets during snow occurrences for better snow removal. Mayor Baarts reminded citizens to remember to keep fire hydrants cleared of the snow. Reynolds thanked the City Band and the Schmeckle Foundation. The City Band received a \$50,000 grant from the Schmeckle Foundation to assist with the band shell renovations.

Streets and Parks Superintendent Nick Lardy reported on the Emerald Ash Borer. He stated that the Emerald Ash Borer was discovered in June 2022 in trees at Heritage Acres. He directed citizens to the Minnesota Department of Agricultural website for more information.

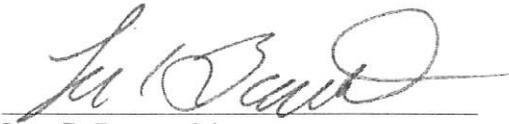
Hoye reported that the Finance Department is preparing for year end and audit. Auditors will begin work this Friday. The audit findings will be presented the first meeting in June 2023.

Reynolds reported that interviews for the Public Works Director will be held later this week. Fairmont Area Life will be holding an open house on January 12, 2023 from 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at SMEC. This will be a group effort by the City, EDA, CER, Chamber of Commerce and Visit Fairmont to promote "All Things Fairmont". This new effort will be to promote positive things in Fairmont on the website and on Facebook. Reynolds also reported that FEDA will be trying to sell the Incubator Building.

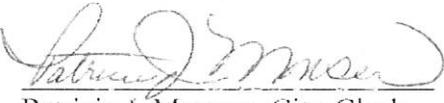
Council Member Hasek reported that the PUC discussed connection and disconnection fees.

Council Member Miller reported that FEDA is still moving forward with trying to purchase the industrial park land.

A motion was made by Council Member Foster, seconded by Council Member Miller and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

  
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Lee C. Baarts, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Patricia J. Monsen, City Clerk