

The minutes of the Fairmont City Council meeting held on Monday, December 11, 2023, at the City Hall Council Chambers.

Mayor Lee Baarts called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Council Members Wayne Hasek, Britney Kawecki, Randy Lubenow, Jay Maynard and Michele Miller were present. Also in attendance: Interim City Administrator Jeff O'Neill, Finance Director Paul Hoye, Director of Public Works/Utilities Matthew York, City Clerk Patricia J. Monsen, Assistant Finance Director Julie Zarling, Economic Development Coordinator Ned Koppen, Police Chief Mike Hunter, and City Attorney Cara Brown.

Council Member Hasek made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Council Member Maynard seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Mayor Baarts recognized the following employees for their years of service: Charles Abel, Electric Department – 25 years; Thomas Hilpipre, Fire Department – 15 years; Christopher Toomer, Fire Department – 15 years; and Reed Wokasch, Fire Department – 10 years.

Economic Development Coordinator Ned Koppen gave a Fairmont Economic Development Authority (FEDA) update.

During Open Discussion, Roy Boucher talked about the Gomsurd Park Channel project and the plans to have a pollinator garden behind his house, west of the channel. Mr. Boucher would like the city to reconsider this landscaping plan.

Council Member Maynard made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Council Member Hasek seconded the motion and the motion carried. Items on the consent agenda were: Minutes from the November 27, 2023 City Council meeting; 2024 Miscellaneous License Renewals; On Sale and Sunday Liquor License for Hauschild Holdings, LLC and Declaring Excess Equipment from the Wastewater and Fire Department for sale or disposal.

Finance Director Paul Hoye presented the 2024 tax levy and budget. There was no comment from the public.

Council Member Maynard made a motion to approve **Resolution 2023-41**, adopting the 2024 property tax levy and ordering its certification to the Martin County Auditor. Council Member Hasek seconded the motion. On roll call: Council Members Hasek, Lubenow, Maynard and Miller all voted aye. Council Member Kawecki voted nay. Mayor Baarts declared said motion passed.

Council Member Maynard made a motion to approve **Resolution 2023-42**, adopting the 2024 budget. Council Member Miller seconded the motion. On roll call: Council Members Maynard, Miller and Hasek voted aye. Council Members Kawecki and Lubenow voted nay. Mayor Baarts declared said motion passed.

Council Member Maynard made a motion to approve **Resolution 2023-43**, amending **Resolution 2022-45** of the City of Fairmont relating to the softened water rates. Council Member Miller seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Council Member Maynard made a motion to approve **Resolution 2023-44**, amending **Resolution 2022-46** of the City of Fairmont relating to Public Utility Wastewater Rates. Council Member Hasek seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Council Member Maynard made a motion to approve **Resolution 2023-45**, amending **Ordinance 2015-01** of the City of Fairmont relating to the electric service rates. Council Member Miller seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Council Member Hasek made a motion to approve **Resolution 2023-46**, accepting donations to the City. Council Member Miller seconded the motion. On roll call: Council Members Lubenow, Maynard, Miller, Hasek and Kawecki all voted aye. No one voted nay. Mayor Baarts declared said motion passed.

Council Member Maynard made a motion to approve demolition assistance at 50% of the actual cost up to \$10,000 for James Johnson for property owned by him at 414 Winnebago Avenue. Council Member Miller seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Council Member Maynard made a motion to approve the temporary easement with FCIC, LLC to allow access to the Gomsrud Channel to make repairs to the gabion walls. Council Member Miller seconded the motion and the motion carried.

O'Neill gave an update on all the projects he has been working on.

Council Member Hasek reported that the Board of Zoning Appeals heard variance requests from 419 Webster Street and 501 Canyon Drive. Both variances were granted.

Council Member Lubenow reported that the HRA is looking at having a tour of Lakeview Methodist Home as a possible investment for affordable housing.

Council Member Kawecki stated that she attended the first One Watershed One Plan meeting. The Blue Earth Watershed District is the last in the state to be done. The group of people working on this project are very experienced and knowledgeable and have completed four of these projects. She stated that Fairmont will have a good chance of getting resources, as we have so much water within our corporate limits.

Mayor Baarts gave an update on events happening in the city for the next couple of weeks. He also reminded citizens that they can report potholes and any other concerns on the city's website. City Hall will be closed on December 25th and 26th. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. The next city council meeting will be January 8, 2024. Mayor Baarts encouraged citizens to get involved and apply for a Board or Commission seat. He thanked the citizens for his first twelve months as Mayor, stating that he has learned a lot. The League of Minnesota Cities had a contest for fourth

graders, "What would you do if you were Mayor for a day". He sent this to the fourth grade teachers in Fairmont and he received copies of the letters, which were fun to read.

A motion was made by Council Member Maynard, seconded by Council Member Hasek and carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:34 p.m.



Lee C. Baarts, Mayor

ATTEST:



Patricia J. Monsen, City Clerk