

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

Mayor McFarland called the regular meeting of the City of Watertown Common Council to order at 7:11 p.m. on Tuesday, June 2, 2020.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed the following present by GoToMeeting or by phone: Ald. Wendt, Wagner, Schmid and present in person: Ald. Ruetten, Bartz, Holthaus, Wetzel and Kilps. Staff present: Police Chief Robert Kaminski (in person); Fire Chief Kraig Biefeld (GTM); City Attorney Rose Simon-Silva (GTM), City Engineer Jaynellen Holloway (GTM), Utilities Superintendent Peter Hartz (GTM), Recreation Director Randy Wojtasiak (GTM), and Clerk/Treasurer Elissa Friedl (in person). Also present: Tom Pasch (GTM) and Joe Kallas (in person).

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING

Mayor McFarland inquired if there were additions or corrections to minutes of the Common Council meeting held Tuesday, May 19, 2020. There being none, minutes were approved as presented.

COMMENTS & SUGGESTIONS FROM CITIZENS PRESENT

Clerk/Treasurer Friedl stated that no comments were received by mail or email.

Erin O'Neill, 209 Derby Lane, was present to speak regarding the agenda item to consider whether to open the Aquatic Center for the 2020 season. O'Neill stated that she is hoping the City will open at least one of the pools this summer whether it be the indoor or outdoor pool. She said that quality of life is just as important as the City budget and it is hard to watch programs and activities being cancelled. She said the pool is safe because of the chemicals in the water and suggested the City put up signs that certain areas are not sanitized and that patrons should use the facility at their own risk.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The following reports were received and filed: Public Works Commission 05/26/20. There were no comments or corrections to these reports. (Complete minutes are open for public inspection in the City Clerk/Treasurer's office.)

COMMUNICATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Mayor McFarland presented the appointment of Dave Lang, 617 Sweetbriar Lane, to the Airport Commission for a second term. Ald. Ruetten moved to approve this appointment, seconded by Ald. Holthaus and carried by unanimous voice vote.

Mayor McFarland presented an update on COVID-19. There are forty confirmed cases with another five probable and a hospitalization rate of 9%. She indicated thirty-one patients have recovered. She shared two graphics from the health department that displayed statistics including age range of cases. The age range with the highest number of cases in Watertown is still 20-29 years of age.

Mayor McFarland explained that City staff has been using metrics and criteria when consulted about events in Watertown. She said that meetings are occurring every two weeks to determine the status of recreational programs. Mayor McFarland confirmed the COVID 19 Emergency Small Business Grant Program began yesterday. She said that City offices opened to the public on June 1 with low traffic. Building modifications and glass installations are moving along and Doug Zwieg, Building Inspector, is leading the construction effort to save money. The Mayor reported that restrooms have opened at the parks and that City staff is cleaning playground high touch surfaces daily and that hand sanitizer stations have been installed. Ald. Ruetten inquired about Riverfest. Mayor McFarland responded that the Riverfest

organizers had a meeting scheduled with she and other City staff for the next day and a decision on the festival would likely be coming soon from the Riverfest Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

PRESENTATIONS BY CANDIDATES FOR DISTRICT 1 ALDERPERSON

Tom Pasch and Joe Kallas have applied for the vacant District 1 Alderperson seat. Both were given an opportunity to speak regarding their interest in the position.

Tom Pasch, 1301 Newcastle Court, addressed the Council first. Pasch said that he is a commercial banker and is looking to become very hands-on as an Alderperson. He said he is a problem solver and is aware the City is facing budgetary challenges with reduced revenues. Pasch added that he has strength in working with financial statements and budgets. He also said he understands the challenges businesses are facing. Pasch indicated he is not one to follow suit and is not afraid to challenge the status quo. He added that he wants to help improve the community and keep the current momentum going.

Joe Kallas, 1217 Douglas Avenue, addressed the Council next. Kallas said he has a strong desire to make Watertown a better place and has a lifelong interest in the creation of public policy. He noted the variety of experience on his resume including volunteer experience with AARP. Kallas added that he believes he has the time, energy and experience needed for the position and said he will work tirelessly for the people of Watertown.

ELECTION RESULTING IN APPOINTMENT OF DISTRICT 1 ALDERPERSON

Mayor McFarland took a vote by show of hands to appoint the District 1 Alderperson. Tom Pasch received six votes: Wendt, Bartz, Holthaus, Wagner, Schmid and Wetzel. Joe Kallas received two votes: Ruetten and Kilps. Clerk Friedl administered the oath of office to Tom Pasch and Pasch immediately assumed his role on the Common Council.

REVIEW & APPROVE PARK, RECREATION AND FORESTRY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON THE OUTDOOR WATERTOWN AQUATIC CENTER ACTIVITIES

Mayor McFarland addressed the reason this closure was coming before the Common Council and some other recreation programming decisions did not. She noted this is due to the fact that this decision would result in a complete closure and not simply an amended season. This item was presented to the Park, Recreation and Forestry Commission the previous evening and the Commission voted unanimously to recommend to the Common Council that the facility remain closed for the 2020 season.

Randy Wojtasiak, Recreation Director, listed many changes that would need to be made to operate the facility this year including providing PPE to employees, additional staffing, additional cleaning, closing changing areas, limiting capacity to 25% and more. He indicated that the typical deficit each year the City runs the pool is approximately \$70,000 and the estimated deficit to run the pool this year would be approximately \$120,000. Wojtasiak indicated that due to the time it takes to get the pool up and running, it would be at least July before the pool could open to the public.

The topic of opening the indoor pool was brought up. Mayor McFarland noted the School District owns the indoor pool, though the City helps to fund the maintenance and staffs the pool. McFarland said the indoor pool would remain closed until at least June 30 and she plans to revisit this topic with the School District at the end of the month.

Ald. Wetzel asked why the Commission voted to keep the facility closed. Ald. Bartz replied that staffing issues are a big concern as is the health of patrons. Ald. Ruetten noted that his family typically buys season passes but understands that it may not be a good idea to open this year. Ald. Wetzel said that COVID-19 was not as serious as predicted and said that sunshine kills COVID-19 as well as do the chemicals used in the pool. Ald. Wendt noted that this will be

disappointing for citizens but we can't guarantee that we can make up the larger deficit to operate a shorter season with less capacity.

Ald. Schmid asked Recreation Director Wojtasiak whether the pool would have enough lifeguards without burning them out. Wojtasiak replied that at this point, many of the lifeguards have obtained other summer employment and he is not confident that we could acquire enough staff to safely operate the pool. Ald. Schmid said he is not a fan of the recommendation but ultimately if you don't have enough trained lifeguards to run the pool safely that is the reason the pool can't open, not necessarily due to COVID. Ald. Wetzel noted the financial impact is also an important factor that is not necessarily due to COVID either. A motion made by Ald. Ruetten and seconded by Ald. Bartz to not open the outdoor aquatic center for the 2020 season passed by unanimous voice vote.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Certified accounts in the amount of \$419,101.52 were presented. Ald. Wetzel moved to pay all certified accounts, seconded by Ald. Schmid and carried by roll call vote: Yes-8; No-0; Abstain-1 (Ruetten). Complete listing of accounts payable is open for public inspection in City Clerk/Treasurer's office.

REPORTS AND MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Reports presented: Historic Preservation & Downtown Design Commission 4/15/20; Main Street Program 4/21/20 and 5/19/20; Park, Recreation & Forestry 5/4/20; Payroll Summaries 5/6-5/19/20; Senior Center Advisory Board 5/6/20. All reports were accepted as presented.

RESOLUTIONS

Exh. #9028, Resolution to honor retirement of Jennie Fox from the Senior Center. *Sponsor: Mayor McFarland.* Ald. Ruetten read the resolution and moved for adoption, seconded by Ald. Wetzel and carried by unanimous voice vote. Randy Wojtasiak indicated Jennie has been with the city for over 25 years, has been an invaluable employee and will be missed by all the seniors. Jennie Fox noted she was thankful for the opportunity to work for the city and expressed her thanks to the citizens and employees.

Exh. #9029, Resolution to approve submitting Outdoor Recreation Grant Applications wo WI DNR. *Sponsor: Mayor McFarland.* Ald. Ruetten moved for adoption, seconded by Ald. Schmid. Motion carried by roll call vote: Yes-9; No-0.

Exh. #9030, Resolution approving Memorandum of Agreement between City of Watertown and The City of Watertown Redevelopment Authority. *Sponsor: Mayor McFarland.* Ald. Wetzel moved for adoption, seconded by Ald. Ruetten and carried by roll call vote: Yes-8; No-1 (Kilps).

Exh. #9031, Resolution for extension of declaration of emergency. *Sponsor: Mayor McFarland.* Ald. Ruetten moved for adoption, seconded by Ald. Bartz. Ald. Ruetten asked for an explanation. Mayor McFarland replied that this allows emergency purchases. For example, if a first responder were to test positive and could not go home, the City may need an isolation facility. The city has a contract with an area housing provider if this should happen. The resolution also allows for emergency costs such as temporary additions to the labor force for contract tracing as the Health Department is near capacity with current staff to keep up with contact tracing. She also noted that it would allow temporary exceptions to the employee handbook such as carrying over vacation and limits on unpaid leave. McFarland said this resolution would allow the City to be more responsive during the time period covered instead of having to jump through hoops to do some of these things. Motion carried by roll call vote: Yes-7; No-2 (Schmid, Kilps).

Exh. #9032, Resolution to approve CIPP Lining Project – 2020 with Visu-Sewer, Inc. *Sponsor: Ald. Wetzel.*

From: Public Works. Ald. Bartz moved for adoption, seconded by Ald. Holthaus. Motion carried by roll call vote: Yes-9; No-0.

CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to Wis. Stat. sec. 19.85(1)(e) deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session. (potential land purchase for Wastewater Utility). Ald. Holthaus moved to enter into closed session at 8:29 p.m., seconded by Ald. Ruetten and carried by roll call vote: Yes-5; No-0. (Note: Alderperson not attending in person disconnected from the meeting at this time to enter the closed session remotely.)

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

Ald. Holthaus moved to return to open session, seconded by Ald. Bartz and carried by voice vote at 8:44 p.m.

RESOLUTIONS, continued

Exh. #9018, Resolution to approve Wastewater Utility purchase of real estate. *Sponsor: Ald. Mudler. From: Public Works.* Ald. Ruetten moved for adoption, seconded by Ald. Holthaus. Motion carried by roll call vote: Yes-9; No-0.

COMMENTS & SUGGESTIONS FROM CITIZENS PRESENT

No further comments were received in person or by mail or email.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, Ald. Holthaus moved to adjourn, seconded by Ald. Schmid and carried by voice vote at 8:48 p.m.

Elissa Friedl, Clerk/Treasurer

(Complete video of Council Proceedings on DVD.)

(DISCLAIMER: These minutes are uncorrected; any corrections will be noted in the proceedings at which these minutes are approved.)