

January 8, 2024

CITY OF WASHBURN COMMON COUNCIL MEETING

5:30PM

Washburn City Hall & Remote Video Conferencing

City Council Members:

Present, in-person:

Tom Neimes, Jared Trimbo, John Hopkins, Mary McGrath,
Jennifer Maziasz, Dave Anderson

Present, remote:

Tracey Snyder

Municipal Personnel:

Present, in-person:

City Administrator Scott J. Kluver, Asst. City Administrator
Tony Janisch, City Attorney Max Lindsey, Public Works Director
Gerry Schuette, Ambulance Director Jeff Bellile

Present, remote:

Mayor Mary D. Motiff

Absent:

none

Call to Order - Meeting called to order at 5:33pm by Mayor Motiff. Roll call attendance depicted seven (7) of seven (7) members of the Common Council in attendance. Quorum of the Council recognized.

Approval of Minutes – City Council of December 11, 2023 - A motion was made by Neimes to approve the December 11, 2023 minutes of the City Council, second by Trimbo. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Expenditures – A motion was made by Neimes to approve the monthly expenditures, second by McGrath. Motion carried unanimously via a roll-call vote.

Public Comment – Linda Barnes, 5 W 3rd St., spoke against opening all of the City streets to ATV & snowmobile traffic. Expressing concerns for safety, noise, air pollution; and how this would improve the quality of life.

Kristy Jensch, 410 E 5th Ave., spoke against opening City streets to snowmobiles and disagreement to opening streets to ATV traffic. She started that children walk, bike, and play in the streets, and in the winter the snow berms are so big its hard to see snowmobiles.

Bob Mackreth, 500 Woodland Dr., expressed concern about the six (6) oak trees at Hillside Park that were taken down at the request of the tennis association. He further expressed concern about the City working with one user group, when a park has multiple users. Regarding improvements to the tennis courts, he said that it must be done right and done responsibly with all stakeholders.

Doug Ament, 212 W Pine St., spoke in support of a Bike Park with the potential of it becoming a central park; and that the Omaha property being a lawn is not progress. He continued that the City needs to charge more for Air BNB's because they are losing money, and that solar panels should be placed on the marina building, to support clean energy and that Legion Park should be sold.

Irene Blakely, 803 3rd Ave. E, spoke against snowmobiles on City Streets, stating that many streets don't have sidewalks and that many of the City's streets are quite charming and that this would change with the loud noise.

Ruth Hulstrom, 303 E 7th St., spoke in support of a Bike Park, that it would be a great enhancement to the City, and great for skills development for kids and adults.

Dave Ullman, Ashland, spoke in support of a Bike Park and that it would help with mountain biking skills development and would be one more reason to come to Washburn and support the local businesses.

Harper Hollis-Heidenreich, Ashland, spoke in support of a Bike Park and that it would encourage kids to get on a bike and to have a place to hang with friends.

Axel Swan, Town of Washburn, spoke in support of a Bike Park, that it would be a place to develop skills and hang with friends.

Dustin Long, 1402 N. Castle Dr., spoke in support of a Bike Park, that it would be a positive investment in the community, as well as intergenerational with youth, middle-aged & older users.

Charmaine Swan, Town of Washburn, member of the Bike Park Steering Committee, shared a handout with Council explaining the process so far and working the IMBA on the best locations for a bike park.

Tommy Cogger, Town of Washburn, spoke in support of a Bike Park, that it would be a great addition to the community, builds a healthy option for recreation and will increase tourism.

Carla Bremner, 204 Pumphouse Rd., spoke in support of a Bike Park and said that Council should reconsider ATV/Snowmobile traffic in the City.

Ann Christensen, 812 N Bratley Dr., spoke against opening streets to ATV/Snowmobile traffic with concerns that the year-round noise will affect the quality of life.

Elizabeth Lexau, 618 E Bayfield St., spoke against opening streets to ATV/Snowmobile traffic with concerns of increase safety risks and decrease in quality of life, damage to the streets and that along some streets they could be difficult to see.

Mike Weispenning, 22 E 5th St., spoke in support of a Bike Park, specifically at the lakeshore location, and that it would keep and attract young people to the area.

Kate Miller, 221 Washington Ave., spoke against ATV/Snowmobile traffic on City streets, and spoke in favor of a Bike Park.

Mayoral Announcements, Proclamations, Appointments - The Mayor made no proclamations or appointments and invited the Beautification Committee Chair to give an update.

- **Report from Beautification Committee** - Karen Novachek, Chair of the ad-hoc Beautification Committee, provided an update to Council. The community survey is open and online and accepting responses to January 19th. Two community meetings will be held in March to go over the results of the survey for improvements to Bayfield St.

Discussion & Action on Ordinance #24-001 Amendment #3 to the Zoning Map Changing Tax ID 32756 from R-2 to R-6 - Irene Blakely, Petitioner – McGrath moved to approve Ordinance 24-001; seconded by Neimes. Discussion occurred regarding impacts to zoning and adjacent landowners. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing, Discussion & Action on Resolution #24-002 Vacating the Unopened Triton Avenue between Grandview Boulevard and Sunrise Avenue – Darren and Tera Miller, Petitioners – McGrath moved to open Public Hearing, seconded by Neimes. Motion carried unanimously. No public comments were received. McGrath moved to close Public Hearing, seconded by Neimes. Motion carried unanimously. Snyder moved to approve Resolution 24-002; seconded by Anderson. Maziasz, noting that Triton Ave. is part of a proposed Linear Park, asked the Millers their reason for building in that location. Darren Miller answered that they would like to build a garage next to Grandview Blvd., their street access, and near their house. He then suggested that Highland Ave. could be used for this park. Discussion occurred. Maziasz expressed concern of unintended consequences when decisions are made without considering future needs. Snyder stated that Kluver mentioned that the area was platted into small lots, different than the way that development has occurred. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion & Action on Recommendation to Refer to Parks Committee Request to Update Plans Related to Linear Park in the Sunrise/Sunset Avenues to Triton/Highland Avenues Area – Discussion occurred regarding updating park plans for the linear park and when. McGrath moved to update plans when the Comprehensive Plan needs updating again, seconded by Snyder. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion on Conceptual Ordinance to Open City Streets to Snowmobiles like what is Proposed for ATVs/UTVs – The Mayor began discussion stating the purpose to allow street use would be for residents to have access the trail from their homes and to get gas or access businesses. Discussion occurred. Attorney Lindsey stated that last month Council opened all streets to ATV/UTV traffic. Kluver clarified that that ordinance had not yet been published because of the request to add snowmobiles. Lindsey added that changes to ATVs/UTVs were off the table, it could not come back to Council until after the April election. Discussion continued. The Mayor called for a consensus which was to keep the current rules for snowmobiles as is and in place. Snyder requested a new discussion regarding ATVs/UTVs after the April election.

Discussion & Action on Consideration of Future Planning for Bike Park – Snyder moved to support the concept of a Bike Park in the City at either proposed location, seconded by McGrath. McGrath commented that with the workload currently on City staff that she would expect the bike group to be engaged with future planning. Maziasz added that the Parks Committee is seeking support for the concept of a Bike Park, but in learning the lessons from the Dog Park, by sending this back to the Parks Committee without a solid location discussion could just go round-and -round and waste time and energy. And if Council is not ok with the concept or the two proposed locations, then there was no need moving forward. Charmaine Swan, bike park steering committee, added that a location would be needed for the next steps in moving forward with planning. Discussion occurred, including the site locations. Motion carried five (5) to one (1), Hopkins voting nay, Neimes abstaining. Anderson moved that Council maintain all future actions, decision and site selection with the Bike Park, seconded by McGrath. Maziasz commented that the Parks Committee makes recommendations to Council, and after a site selection is made, the Parks Committee can play a role in further planning. Hopkins added that there were issues involved with both locations. Kellie Pederson, bike park steering committee, added that a site selection was needed before IMBA could complete the current scope of work. Discussion continued. Anderson withdrew his motion. It was determined to bring the decision of site location back to Council at the February meeting.

Discussion & Action on Recommendation to Discontinue Cable Television Service in Campgrounds – McGrath moved to discontinue cable tv service in the campgrounds, seconded by Neimes. Maziasz stated that the Park Committee was in favor of discontinuing cable service. Discussion occurred, including the increased costs. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion & Action on Ambulance Department Switching to an Emergency Medical Responder Service – McGrath moved to approve the Ambulance Department switching to an Emergency Medical Responder Service, seconded by Neimes. Ambulance Director Bellile answered questions of the Council and the reasons to move to an EMR service. These being calls are still being missed because two EMT's are not always available in the evening/weekend hours. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion & Action on Resolution #24-003 For Preliminary Special Assessments for Bayfield Street Water and Sewer – McGrath moved to approve Resolution 24-003, seconded by Neimes. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion & Action on Resolution #24-004 Repealing Exemption of Downtown Area from Scenic Byway Program – Trimbo moved to approve Resolution 24-004, seconded by Neimes. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion & Action on Revisions to Social Media Policy – McGrath moved to approve revisions to the Social Media Policy, seconded by Snyder. Discussion occurred. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion & Action on Resolution #24-001 Combining Wards into a Single Polling Place for 2024 Elections – McGrath moved to approve Resolution 24-001, seconded by Anderson. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn – Mayor Motiff adjourned the meeting at 8:05pm.

Tony Janisch
Assistant City Administrator

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING 4:30pm

Committee Members Tom Neimes, and Mary McGrath reviewed monthly expenditure vouchers.