

**March 13, 2023**

**CITY OF WASHBURN COMMON COUNCIL MEETING**

5:30PM

Washburn City Hall & Remote Call-In

City Council Members:

Present, in-person:

Karen Spears-Novachek, Tom Neimes, Mary McGrath, Carl Broberg, Dave Anderson, Laura Tulowitzky, Jennifer Maziasz

Present, remote:

none

Municipal Personnel:

Present in-person:

City Administrator Scott J. Kluver, Assistant City Administrator Tony Janisch

Present, remote:

Mayor Mary D. Motiff, City Attorney Max Lindsey

Absent:

none

**Call to Order** - Meeting called to order at 5:30PM 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 February 13, 2023** - A motion was made by Neimes to approve the February 13, 2023 minutes of the City Council, second by Novachek. Motion carried unanimously.

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

**Public Comment** – Gabriel Bodine, 305 E 7<sup>th</sup> St., is applying for the Bayfield Co. Local Government Scholarship. He will be attending UW-Stevens Point, pursuing a media studies bachelors degree. He shares an interest in local government because people can come together, state their opinion and work for the best interest of the community.

Bill Scripps, 418 Fillmore St. NE, Minneapolis, also 228 W 4<sup>th</sup> St., stated that what Washburn is suffering financially is a blessing in disguise; and if your not sure what to do, don't do anything. He asked Council to look at financial planning for Yurts before making a vote and to consider maintenance costs, coordination, anticipate uninvited guests, possible vandalism, snow removal, floods & wind gusts, and consider that Holman Rd. could become a bypass once paved. He then asked to factor in and compare the net income, versus just raising the fees of the current campsites.

John Hopkins, 631 W Bayfield St., agrees that the community needs jobs and reasonable growth, with a strong tax base of diversified enterprise. The problem is how we get there. He continued that the world is changing dramatically, Washburn of 2050 is 27 years ahead of us, while Washburn of 1950 is 70 years in the past. We need to look ahead to build of Washburn of the 2050's and invite industries of the future (heat pumps, fuel cells, etc.), but its going to take time.

Wendie Libert, 217 W 3<sup>rd</sup> St., was drawn to Washburn for the quality of the natural area, particularly the lakefront, but not exclusively. With her role as a holistic nurse, there is an important connection to the natural world to support and enhance physical, emotional & spiritual wellbeing. She continued that the area between Holman Lakeview Dr. and the Walking Trail is a finite resource and important to the healing impact we experience in the area. She asked Council

to protect this area from further human encroachment. She supports suspending seasonal camping, allowing more people to enjoy the resources, as well as expanding in the current camping areas; but does not find a good use of tax money to further diminish the natural space available and to engage the community in further dialogue.

Carla Bremner, 204 Pumphouse Rd., stated that while it seems reasonable to develop the overflow lot into camping space, development of the area across the road is extremely controversial, including whether or not it will be financially beneficial. She suggests postponing a decision and involve the citizen by bringing it to a referendum.

Roth Edwards, 221 W 6<sup>th</sup> St., began by stating believe it and we'll see it. He continued that there is agreement to search out economic development solutions centered on sustainable tourism, small industry based on clean technology, and educational facilities. Development has to be sustainable, and what does Washburn have that few areas do? An increasingly rare resource municipally owned green frontage along the world's greatest freshwater lake; this is our crown jewel. He continued that they here to discuss and voting on a glamor camping development in the heart of public greenspace that a few have thought to quietly push through before the public could comment. He concluded that there is agreement on a sustainable development path.

Jane Heim, 102 E 5<sup>th</sup> St., stated that there is trouble in paradise and we all need to work together while keeping the lakefront open spaces open. She shared her concerns with the process, about bring the expansion proposal to the public and not having a cost analysis. She believes that Council is choosing not to hear the pleas of the people they represent and seems that their voices are not being heard. She concluded that yes there are problems, but not to vote for a short-term fix to a long-term problem. Think big now more than ever, and bring in a company that will not only help Washburn but the entire world.

Amanda Koch, 1300 Bratley Dr., stated that Council will make a decision, hopefully not regardless of what is being said. She is not opposed of having yurts, but opposed to the area where the yurts are being proposed. She continued that the survey of development in that area was done a decade ago, and that a new survey should be done and brought to the attention of the citizens. She suggested communities with green space are big tourism attractions.

David Bratley, 402 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. E, stated that most people he's spoken with are not in favor of developing the open space. He continued that all good intentions being made as individuals does not guarantee that right decisions are being made for future generations. The natural areas and green spaces draw people to the community.

**Mayoral Announcements, Proclamations, Appointments** – There were no mayoral announcements, proclamations, or appointments.

**Introduction of New Housing Authority Director** – Councilor Novachek, Chair of the Washburn Housing Authority, introduced Jennifer Toribio-Warren, the new Executive Director for the City of Washburn & Bayfield Co. Housing Authorities. Jennifer grew up in Washburn and graduated from Washburn High School and is excited to work in and with the community.

**Presentation & Discussion on Room Tax Collections and Expenditures for 2022 – Room Tax Commission, Presenter** – Councilor McGrath, as a member of the Room Tax Commission, gave a presentation of the 2022 room tax collection and expenditures. She began by passing around several

print marketing publications paid for with room tax dollars and mentioning that digital marketing has occurred on social media outlets. McGrath also noted that Washburn Chamber Director, Melissa Martinez, is currently attending the Wisconsin Governors Conference on Tourism where she has been nominated for the Governor's Tourism Rising Star Award. She further added that \$106,702 were collected in 2022 for room tax and identified the tourism related spending, included with the packet. The Mayor questioned the definition of a tourism entity and if 51% of the Chambers total revenue has been spent on tourism. McGrath responded that 51% of room tax was spent on tourism, with 49% being spent in support of such, as in staffing, rent and utilities. Discussion occurred. Maziasz suggested that the City Attorney, Mayor, Washburn Chamber directors and Room Tax Commission meet to discuss and clarify expectations for room tax expenditures.

**Presentation, Discussion & Action on Renewal of Lease Agreement of Thompson's West End Park Boat Ramp Area for North Coast Community Sailing- Jacob Kaiser, Petitioner – Tulowitzky moved to approve the 2023 Lease Agreement with North Coast Community Sailing, seconded by Novachek.** Alec Malenfant, Sailing Director with the Bayfield Rec Center, gave a presentation about the 2022 sailing program. He stated that last year there were 118 students, with 94 students coming from the local area (Bayfield, Ashland & Iron Counties.). Malenfant continued that a new class will be offered this year to a younger age, 5–7-year-olds. Discussion occurred. Motion carried unanimously.

**Discussion & Action on the Park Committee Recommendation for Camping Style and Design for Field East of 6th Avenue West and South of Holman Lakeview Drive –** The Mayor began with reminding that the Thompson's West End Park Plan was a three-year process involving a lot of public input, and the portion of land in discussion is for the design and development of a tiny percentage of the parkway and not effecting the lakefront path. Councilor Maziasz, Chair of the Parks Committee, presented the suggestions and concerns received at two public input sessions held in February. She also presented the recommendations of the Parks Committee for camping expansion in the Open Field based on these public sessions. These recommendations include four yurts placed along the edge of the field, native plantings and community space in the center, centralized parking with a trail to the yurts, bathhouse and walking trail. Park Committee members Jeremy Oswald & Susan Hall were in attendance and provided additional comment of the public sessions and recommendation. Neimes moved to approve the expansion design with yurts as recommended by the Parks Committee, seconded by McGrath. Discussion occurred. The Mayor asked, regarding the comments for greenspace, if the feeling was to have community space or just an undeveloped field. Maziasz responded both, having public space but also maintaining the viewshed. Broberg commented that the next step would be a business plan. Tulowitzky agreed that more financial numbers were needed, including maintenance costs and development of the green space area. Anderson added that this development would have a positive economic impact to local businesses.

Maziasz moved to open the floor, seconded by Tulowitzky. Motion carried four (4) to three (3); McGrath, Novachek, Broberg voting against. Roth Edwards, 221 W 6<sup>th</sup> Ave., commented that the Parks Committee did a first-rate job of involving the community in this discussion. He added that there has been a core group of citizens in the community giving thought and discussing Washburn development. He questions how much economic impact this will bring and is concerned about what negative impact this will bring, and the change of the feeling along the walking trail. David Bratley, 402 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. E, commented that the cost should be known before moving forward, this seems backwards. The Mayor responded the concept and design need to be determined before we know what we need costs for. It's a step in the process. Bratley concluded that if you don't do anything to the land, what will it produce in the future, but the greenspace today is what people are coming to the area for. Tracey Snyder, 21 E Grove Blvd., commented that looking at design its about people coming to the community, but what about the people living in the community. The area can be

designed for the people living here too, and the people here tonight don't want the lakefront to be taken from the community. Maziasz moved to close the floor, seconded by Anderson. Motion carried unanimously. Motion to approve expansion design with yurts as recommended carried six (6) to one (1); Tulowitzky voting against.

**Discussion & Action on Policies and Plans to Prepare for Community Development Block Grant Application for Bayfield Street Project Phase 1 –**

- **Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan**
- **Resolution 2023-005 to Enact Policy to Prohibit the Use of Excessive Force and to Enforce Applicable State and Local Laws Prohibiting Physically Barring Entrances/Exits for Non-Violent Civil Rights Demonstrations**
- **Resolution 2023-006 to Adopt the Citizen Participation Plan for the Community Development Block Grant Program**

A motion was made by Novachek to approve the Residential Anti-Displacement & Relocation Assistance Plan, Resolution 2023-005, and Resolution 2023-006, second by Broberg. Motion carried unanimously.

**Adjourn** – Mayor Motiff adjourned the meeting at 7:54PM.

Tony Janisch  
Assistant City Administrator

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING 4:30pm**

Committee Members Mary McGrath, Karen Spears-Novachek & Laura Tulowitzky reviewed monthly expenditure vouchers.