

**MCGREGOR CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 16, 2020, 6:30 P.M.**

The MCGREGOR CITY COUNCIL met in Regular Session at 6:30 p.m. on **Wednesday, December 16, 2020** at City Hall with Mayor Lyle Troester presiding. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. followed by the pledge of allegiance. Council members attending in person: Scott, Carroll, Halvorson, Echard, and Hallberg. Due to COVID 19 guidelines released by the CDC, and federal and state government the meeting was held electronically to help combat the spread of the virus. Social distancing was in place for those in attendance with public access limited to meet the prescribed guidelines. Public access was provided via Zoom.

Scott moved, seconded by Hallberg to approve the Consent Agenda by one motion a) Agenda as listed b) Regular Meeting minutes November 18, 2020 c) Bills and Claims as presented for period November 19, 2020 through December 16, 2020 - City- \$66,123.22, Library - \$789.53, November 2020 Revenues - \$206,167.17, November, 2020 Expenses - \$318,278.09 d) Treasurer's Report for November, 2020 e) Liquor License Renewals – Old Man River f) Board Appointments – Park Board – Bonnie Troester, Maria Brummel, Ryan Koeller – Terms Ending 12-31-2023, Dock Commission – John Clark, Dennis Kotz – Terms Ending 12-31-2023, Tree Board – Joe Brooks – Term Ending 11-15-2023. Roll call vote: Ayes – all. Motion carried.

Hearing of Delegations: Council person Scott brought up numerous complaints she had received that the corner of Kinney and Center have not been sanded and it is very icy for vehicles and pedestrians. Mayor Troester asked that city crew be made aware of the need to be out in even light snows to sand hills and intersections.

Police report: STEP wave starts this weekend. Year end reports are being compiled for presentation in January. The chief was asked how enforcement of alternate winter parking is being conducted. Warnings were given until the 1st of the month – tickets will now be issued when cars are parked illegally.

Neil Jones, SOO Green, was in attendance via zoom to provide an update on the status of the Soo Green Underground High Voltage Direct Current Transmission Project (HVDC). The project will provide additional transmission capacity of approximately 2100 MW of renewable energy from near Mason City, Iowa to Yorkville, Illinois. The project will be constructed in the CP Rail right of way except for an 18 mile section west of McGregor. That stretch will run adjacent to Highway 18 rather than run through the Bloody Run area. Landowner outreach has been ongoing since early this year and now phase II includes seeking franchises from 24 municipalities through which the line will be constructed. Estimated start date is early 2022 with project to be completed in 2024 when operations are to begin. A public hearing will be scheduled in the municipalities at a later date to address the franchise.

Council was provided a recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission to develop a new W-3 zoning district at the north end of the Boatels property. The new district would establish a district that would eliminate the non-conforming use, thereby allowing future replacement of the existing manufactured homes. A draft ordinance had been submitted by the

group's attorney, Anne Kruse, however, attorney Schuster had not had the opportunity to review. He asked the council if there were any concerns that they wanted to address and if he was authorized to proceed with revisions to bring to the next meeting. Several questions were raised but the group is prepared to see the revised draft in January. Halvorson moved, seconded by Scott to set a public hearing for January 20, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. to take comments regarding the proposed W-3 district. Roll call vote: Ayes – all. Motion carried.

Halvorson moved, seconded by Scott to approve expenditure of \$8,230 for repair of the Myers pump from the main lift station. Roll call vote: Ayes – all. Motion carried. Mayor Troester provided council with a copy of a letter he had sent to the Central State Bank president regarding his disappointment that CSB had not only closed their McGregor branch permanently but also that they had sold the antique bank cage from the branch without first asking the city if they were interested in it. He also informed the council that he and the city administrator have been making contacts in an attempt to recruit another bank to open an office in McGregor. Peoples, Interstate Federal and Royal are discussing. The effort will continue with follow up visits and other communication.

Halvorson moved, seconded by Carroll to approve a pledge of \$5,000 to Northeast Iowa Regional Housing Trust Fund for the year beginning January 1, 2022. Roll call vote: Ayes – all. Motion carried. The program enhances housing opportunities for low and moderate income residents. Mayor and clerk reported on a recent meeting with IDOT RR Diagnostics. The discussion are tied to the city receiving federal funding from DOT for the main street sewer project. Conceptual plans were provided that were prepared as a follow up to discussions. Crossing arms, moving the crossing north, addition of ADA sidewalk across the tracks and connecting into the riverfront walk, a retaining wall to hold back railroad rock, and widening of the boat ramp area were all discussed. These are preliminary discussions with a conference call planned to review the plan with the railroad. There are two programs that could be used for funding assistance. This will not be included as a cost with the main street project and will be a separate agreement with construction most likely moved out to 2022 if approved.

Carroll moved, seconded by Halvorson to set a public hearing date on January 20, 2021 at 6:30 to take comments regarding the proposed 2021 budget amendment. Roll call vote: Ayes – all. Motion carried. McManus provided the mayor and council with the budget timeline. McManus provided copies of email threads in discussions with Craig Wood at IDOT about reduced speed limits near the school and care center. Little progress has been made although Mr. Wood is scheduling a speed study for next fall. Council wants to continue to pursue the matter.

Halvorson moved, seconded by Scott to approve an application for the Business Enhancement Grant from the McGregor Marquette Center for the Arts for tuckpointing and painting. Roll call vote: Ayes – all. Motion carried.

Mayor Troester informed the council about a recent request from Reed Corson to construct a residence with a garage in the front on his lot on Main St. This is not an allowed use in C-2 and would require rezoning. Although the proper procedure is a request to planning and zoning, the council was not enthusiastic about the proposed concept. The mayor showed photos of the wall in front of 611 C street. The new owner had contacted city hall about cutting into the wall to

make a parking spot. The electric pole is stabilized by the wall and water mains run up the hill to the reservoir. Council did not want to allow this to happen.

City Administrator McManus reported to the council that a phone conference is scheduled next week with Chris McKee, Midwest Assistance Program. The program is funded by federal and state contracts to assist with infrastructure needs as well as many other services. USDA loan reporting is one of the services provided. The call will be to establish what the agency could assist with. Most of the services they provide are at no cost. A zoom meeting was held earlier in the month with Northland Securities would is serving as financial advisor for the main street project. City code reviews are in progress with Iowa Codification's first review nearly complete. Several items have been sent to them for inclusion. Those included: urban chickens, speed limit changes, mayor pay increase, wood heaters, transient merchants, parking fine/late fee increases, mobile food vendors, goat grazing for invasive control. Matt Tschirggie sent a spreadsheet with deer killed during the managed hunt. A total of 16 have been killed to date. The city will be included in the hunt for next year.

With business concluded, Scott moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Hallberg. Ayes – All. Meeting adjourned.

Lyle J. Troester, Mayor:

Attest:

Lynette L. McManus, City Administrator