

Belle Plaine, Iowa
January 17, 2024

The Belle Plaine City Council met on January 17, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Belle Plaine City Hall, with Mayor Lyle Morrow presiding. Present were Councilpersons Garrett Landuyt, Mitch Malcolm, Judy Schlesselman, Adam Papesh, and Charmaine Wickwire. City Administrator Stephen Beck and City Clerk Sandy Walton were also present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion by Schlesselman, seconded by Wickwire to approve the Consent Agenda, Council Minutes of January 3, 2024, and bills received. All voted aye, motion carried 5-0.

Resident Comments: None

Curtis Brown and Jacob Ehlen from the Lions were present to share that the July 4th Committee will be comprised of Lions members and BPCDC members for this coming holiday. They have had a couple of meetings so far.

Mindy Atkinson, Amber Hoover, and Heather Carl from Belle Plaine Community Development attended to answer any questions on their group's budget or activities as the city is in the Budget process for next year. The City's funding helps pay for a director and other activities. The City Council was invited to attend the BPCDC Investor's Meeting this week on Thursday at the Museum.

Police Chief Hudson handed out the December Dispatch Report as well as a written report. Officers Batcheller and Chekal are at ILEA and will finish in April. We received two new AED's last week as part of a state-sanctioned program. The two old AED's will be donated to other BP organizations. He is starting the quote process for the next patrol vehicle. The first snow emergency went well with very few tickets being issued and only two vehicles towed. The 8th and 9th Avenue railroad crossings are closed due to snow/ice build-up on the crossings making them dangerous. Following a complaint from a concerned citizen, we are looking into adding a streetlight in the 400 block of 16th Street. He will watch for any other areas needing additional lighting prior to submitting a resolution to the Council to add new streetlights.

Motion by Malcolm, seconded by Papesh to appoint Gage Kensler as City Attorney and Jennifer Zahradnik as Assistant City Attorney. All voted aye, motion carried 5-0.

Motion by Wickwire, seconded by Landuyt to reappoint Dick Wells to the Tree Board for another 3-year term. All voted aye, motion carried 5-0.

Motion by Landuyt, seconded by Wickwire to appoint Mike Coffman to the Variance Board of Adjustment (to replace deceased member James Daily) for the term that expires January 2026. All voted aye, motion carried 5-0.

Motion by Schlesselman, seconded by Papesh to approve Charmaine Wickwire to fill the required Council representative position on the Donovan Board. Schlesselman, Malcolm, Papesh, and Wickwire voted aye, Wickwire abstained. Motion carried.

Motion by Malcolm seconded by Landuyt to approve setting a public hearing for Wednesday, February 21, 2024, at 6:30 pm in Council Chambers at Belle Plaine City Hall for Amendment #1 to the current FY24 budget (mostly due to grants and the hailstorm). All voted aye, motion carried 5-0.

Motion by Wickwire, seconded by Papesh to approve the RFP for distribution for the CDBG-DR Grant Cycle #2. All voted aye, motion carried 5-0.

Council members had a discussion regarding e-mail addresses. Each member will confirm with the City Clerk what they want used and published on the website.

The City Treasurer's report and Budget report for December were presented to the City Council for their review. Information for the Solar Report was not yet available and will be presented at the next meeting.

City Administrator Steve Beck reported that he has been helping Public Works with weather and the main breaks. The wellfield is still holding steady. Nate of Fehr Graham and Steve met with Greg from the U of I on testing at the wellfield. They are creating a game plan to be ready to proceed in the spring. Steve will get with Gage regarding a possible zoning change on 13th Avenue to allow for a 3-plex. He has had discussions with several developers regarding lots that the city has available.

The City Council instructed Steve to pull together projected costs to demo the house at 1507 6th Avenue. He is hoping that the railroad crossing will get cleaned this week, but public works will need to coordinate with the railroad. He has been spending time reviewing information in preparation for the budget presentation later tonight.

Mayor Morrow has not attended any meetings recently. He explained the idea behind the grant report that was handed out. He will have the City Clerk keep this report updated and plan to distribute it monthly to the Council. The mayor also reported that Jay Hamilton will be leaving the city. His last day will be January 24th.

Correspondence: None.

Old Business: Council commented that they were impressed with how everyone was helping their neighbors through the recent snow. They commented on the hard work and long hours that the city crews have put in on snow removal. They also extended their thanks to the fire department for digging out many hydrants.

The council would like to get a City Facebook page soon. It should be for information only. Steve will coordinate getting one set up.

Resident Comments: John DeRaad and Jason Kaplan discussed the need to plan for a frontline pumper replacement soon. Of the three pumpers that the fire department currently has, all are older than NFPA standards (2010, 2000, 1995 models). Jason also spoke of the Assistance to Firefighter Grant that he is applying for. It would replace the 2006 SCBA air packs which cost roughly \$196,000. He is also looking to apply for grant money for an air compressor and cascade system.

Committee of the Whole: There was a discussion by the council regarding possible changes to the sewer forgiveness policy due to water leaks. After much discussion, the City Clerk is to draft a tentative resolution updating the policy. The council will review at a February council meeting.

Motion by Landuyt seconded by Papesch to set Budget Work Session #3 for a special session on Wednesday, January 24, 2024, at 6:30 pm. All voted aye, motion carried.

Motion by Landuyt, seconded by Malcolm to adjourn the meeting. All voted aye, motion carried 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:56 p.m.

Lyle Morrow, Mayor

Attest: _____
Sandra Walton, City Clerk

Transcribed by the City Clerk subject to Council approval.