

Belle Plaine, Iowa

July 5, 2023

The Belle Plaine City Council met on July 5, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Belle Plaine City Hall, with Mayor Fish presiding. Present: Mary Pech, Mitch Malcolm, Lyle Morrow, Judy Schlesselman, and Garrett Landuyt. Also present: City Administrator Steve Beck, Assistant City Attorney Gage Kensler, and City Clerk Sandra Walton. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion by Pech, seconded by Malcolm to approve the Consent Agenda, Council Minutes of June 21, 2023, and bills received. On roll call vote, all voted aye, motion carried.

Resident Comments: None

Motion by Malcolm, seconded by Pech to accept the recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Board to appoint April Kressley as the Parks & Recreation Director. On roll call vote, Schlesselman, Pech, Malcolm, and Landuyt voted aye, Morrow voted nay, motion carried 4-1.

Steve Brush from Van Wert Company was present to give a presentation on Smart Meter Technology. He explained industry guidelines on the typical life of a meter (20 years) and that meters slow down with age. The City of Belle Plaine currently uses positive displacement meters. We will be running a pilot program with 5 new ultra sonic meters to see how the new meters and metering system would work. The new system, if implemented, would have alerts on high water usage and a variety of other timely alerts. It would also allow consumers direct access to their flow information. Data will be returned to the council after a several-month trial period.

Motion by Pech, seconded by Landuyt to approve a tax abatement under the Belle Plaine Revitalization Plan for Dennis and Theresa McLeod at 2004 7th Avenue, Belle Plaine, Iowa (parcel #03029160). On roll call vote, all voted aye, motion carried.

Motion by Schlesselman, seconded by Malcolm to approve the recommended changes to the billable water department charges for hourly rates and materials. On roll call vote, all voted aye, motion carried.

Motion by Pech, seconded by Morrow approving the renewal of a Class E Liquor License, Class B Wine Permit, and Class C Beer Permit with Sunday Sales for Ghotra Inc (dba Country Foods), 1206 7th Avenue, Belle Plaine, Iowa. On roll call vote, all voted aye, motion carried.

Motion by Landuyt, seconded by Pech approving a new 5-day Class C Retail Alcohol License with Outdoor Service for Valhalla Hatchets, 805 12th Street, Belle Plaine, Iowa (RAGBRAI). On roll call vote, all voted aye, motion carried.

Selection of an engineer for city engineering services was tabled until a future meeting.

City Administrator Steve Beck has met with several housing developers regarding town houses, tiny houses, and regular houses. Landuyt mentioned that the City Code would likely have to be amended to allow for tiny houses should we choose to allow them. Steve is still working with ECICOG on grants for a fire department generator and tree funding. Some businesses have approached him regarding recently implemented franchise fees. He has been working with the Newhall water operator who will be available later this month for council members to tour their treatment system in small groups. He met with Dustin VanDeHoef (Joni Ernst's director) regarding various topics and challenges.

Malcolm shared some positive feedback from former BP residents who have returned to town recently. They have noticed the efforts made with new tree plantings in the parks and rights-of-way. Pech also mentioned that the DNR has a new program for dealing with the Emerald Ash Borer. Steve said he is aware of the program.

Our wellfields are holding steady; neither plummeting nor rebounding. The mayor reminded everyone that he expects the public to receive two weeks' notice if we will need to either put water restrictions in place or if we must integrate some Well 6 water into the City's supply.

Mayor Fish reminded the Council that this would be his last meeting of July due to his scheduled surgery. He attended the ECICOG meeting. He mentioned that no one would need to cover ECICOG or Benton Development meetings in his absence, however, someone needs to attend the monthly Benton County Landfill meetings. He has requested that the agendas for the Landfill meetings be sent to the City Clerk who can forward them to whomever will be attending for him.

Malcolm commented that everyone did a great job with the 3rd & 4th of July activities.

Correspondence: None

Old Business: None

Resident Comments: None

Motion by Morrow, seconded by Malcolm to adjourn the meeting. On roll call vote, all voted aye, motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Dave Fish, Mayor

Attest: _____

Sandra Walton, City Clerk

Transcribed by the City Clerk subject to Council approval.