



## MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL

TUESDAY, JULY 11, 2023 AT 6:30 PM

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COUNCIL ROOM, MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 450 S. MAIN ST., RICHLAND CENTER, WI 53581 & VIRTUALLY

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### MINUTES

**CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting was called to order by Mayor Coppernoll at 6:30 PM. Members present were Karin Tepley, Tom McCarthy, Mark Chambers, Melony Walters, Kevin Melby, Steve Downs, and Ryan Cairns.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Motion by Chambers to approve the minutes of the June 6, 2023 Common Council meeting as presented. Seconded by Walters. Motion carried 7-0.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Mayor Coppernoll requested that appointments be moved up earlier in the agenda. Motion by Walters to approve the agenda with the Appointments being moved to earlier in the agenda. Seconded by Melby. Motion carried 7-0.

#### PROCLAMATION FOR AMERICAN LEGION

2. **Proclamation of July 21<sup>st</sup> as "The American Legion Day":** Mayor Coppernoll read the proclamation and presented it to American Legion Post #13 Commander Dan Kramer.

**CITY AND UTILITY DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS AND CONCERNS:** None

**MAYOR AND ALDERPERSONS:** Karin Tepley, reporting for the Library Board, noted that circulation is up from last month. Children Programs have been well attended. Tepley said that the Brewer Library will see a decrease of about \$13,000 in library funding based on a formula on number of items checked out. Tepley reported that the "Walk your Wheels" artwork is done and has been distributed to downtown areas. She noted that the effort involved several local businesses and community groups and called it "a project well done". Melony Walters reported that the Symons Natatorium met Monday night. She stated that Symons is like other facilities that employ lifeguards and have a difficult time finding people to serve in that capacity. Walters said that there has been legislation in other states that allows certain adult swim sessions to take place with no lifeguard on duty. She hoped that a resolution could be proposed that would be forwarded to state officials Marklein and Kurtz to encourage them to propose a bill for "adult swim" legislation. Finally, Walters reported that there are still job openings in the city including Zoning Administrator, police officer, Director of Public Works, and street crew. Steve Downs stated that he has received an inquiry about the city's dog ordinance. He said that the unclear nature of the city's ordinance on the website in relation to a kennel permit has caused hardships for people. He hoped to either allow for the kennel permits to be allowed or make the ordinance clearer on the website. Administrator Oliphant noted that the current recodification processes the ordinances are going through will hopefully get rid of redundancies and help make the ordinances clearer for people to understand. Mayor Coppernoll reported that he has spoken to our local state representatives about the recent state budget in relation to local revenue share. He said the City of Richland Center will receive an approximate \$300,000 increase in state funding in 2024.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:**

3. Motion by Downs to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Seconded by Tepley. Motion carried 7-0.

#### **PAYMENT OF BILLS:**

4. Motion by Walters to approve the bills as presented. Seconded by Chambers. Motion carried 7-0.

**APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS, BOARDS AND CONFIRM APPOINTMENTS:** Mayor Coppernoll said that two people were interested in the recent vacancy in the District 1 Alderperson seat, but one individual recently removed themselves from consideration. Coppernoll recommended Connie Hoppenjan to fill the seat for the remainder of the term and will need to be on the ballot in April 2024. Motion by Chambers to approve Connie Hoppenjan to fill the vacancy of District 1 Alderperson. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 7-0. Motion by Tepley to appoint Connie Hoppenjan to the Public Works & Property Committee. Seconded by Melby. Motion carried 7-0.

Mayor Coppernoll recommended Karin Tepley to serve as the alternate on the 2023 Board of Review. Motion by Chambers to appoint Karin Tepley to serve as the alternate on the 2023 Board of Review. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 7-0.

#### **HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:**

5. **Consider approval of designating the Albert J. Strang House at 255 S. Sheldon Street, present owner Robert Tober, be placed on the local historic register:** The application from Robert Tober was reviewed and approved at the most recent Historic Preservation Commission meeting. The home was constructed in 1894 and is considered American Foursquare style. Albert J. Strang was an early and prominent Richland Center businessman. His father, George Strang, started the local hardware store, Strang Hardware, in 1878. Albert had also studied electrical engineering and was involved in installing the first electric lighting system in Richland Center. It was noted that, while the Historic Preservation Commission is concerned with the exterior of a home only, the home's interior at 255 S. Sheldon Street remains period with much architecture. Motion by Tepley to approve designating the Albert J. Strang House at 255 S. Sheldon Street, present owner Robert Tober, placed on the local historic register. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 7-0.

#### **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION:**

6. **Richland Center Municipal Airport Flight Pattern:** Mayor met with several local pilots on Monday night regarding left-hand vs. right-hand flight pattern. Left hand is what it historically was, but was changed recently to right-turning. Markings are required on the ground if there is a right-hand pattern, which the city does not currently have. Pilot Mike Kaufman, who was a proponent of the right-hand flight pattern, stated that he would be ok with either way. Right hand would avoid the noise over the village and subdivision at Sextonville. There is also a hill in that area. Pilot Jason Perkins stated that an indicator is required for a right-handed pattern and the right-hand pattern would also conflict with the grass strip at the airport. Would not be easy to add the segmented circle. Alderperson Melby noted that it would be cheaper for the city and would get the airport back in compliance if the left-hand flight pattern is returned. In the meantime, Kaufman said that the current right-hand pattern at the Richland Airport needs to be in compliance regardless until the change back to left-hand takes place. Perkins noted that it would be costly to add that, but that could be made as a notice to airmen. It was noted that such changes in the future need to go through a committee first before any

action is taken, which the change to left-hand pattern was originally not. Cairns expressed the need to reinstate the city's Airport Commission to help deal with issues like this that arise at the airport. Motion by Downs to return the flight pattern at The Richland Airport to left-hand. Seconded by Melby. Motion carried 5-2, with Cairns and Teply voting no.

#### **FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION:**

7. **Utility Billing Error:** It was explained that a recent check and review of meters in the city resulted in the discovery of four meters that did not have a multiplier installed correctly. Three of those meters were at city-owned properties including the aquatic center and ballfield lights totaling \$32,028.28. It's likely the error went back several years, however the utility could only back-bill two years to recoup the incorrect charges. It was noted that the charges are for the electricity that was truly used and could be paid back over a 24-month period if desired. The Finance Committee reviewed the issue. It was noted that there was \$100,000 budgeted in the 2023 Contingency Fund that hasn't been used. Motion by Walters to pay \$16,014.14 out of the 2023 Contingency Fund and the remaining \$16,014.14 would be budgeted and paid out in 2024. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 7-0.
  
8. **Funding for Vernon Thomson Memorial:** Bob Bellman spoke at the last City Council meeting regarding erecting a memorial for Richland Center native and former Wisconsin governor Vernon Thomson. There would need to be some funds allocated by the city for the application for the memorial. The cost for the memorial itself is dictated by the number of characters on the display and is figured to be approximately \$2,000, however Bellman indicated that that cost could be fundraised for. The funding needed from the city for the application of the memorial for Vernon Thomson is \$250. It was noted that funds could come from Mayor Discretionary line item in 2023 budget. Motion by Walters to approve \$250 for the Vernon Thomson Memorial with the funds coming from the Mayor's Discretionary line item in the 2023 budget. Seconded by Cairns. Motion carried 7-0.

#### **DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:**

9. **Tourism – Marty Richards:** Richards said that Richland Center Tourism had a great past 12 months. He said that several indicators confirm that including website traffic and room tax dollars. He said that RC Tourism targets people who live within three hours of the community, including Milwaukee, Chicago, and Minneapolis. Advertising efforts have included digital billboards, print, social media. There is a targeted effort in the Milwaukee area for individuals with specific interests and age ranges. He said that those efforts have also been successful. Richards said that Richland County is an area where people want to come and disconnect and for serenity. He noted that 2023 as a whole is expected to be very strong, and said that the RC Tourism YouTube channel is growing very fast and has had lots of interest.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**CLOSED SESSION:** Motion by Melby to go into closed session pursuant to Wis. Stat, Sec 1985(1)(e) Deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session. The Council will discuss the topic of Land Procurement. Seconded by Chambers. Motion to go into closed session approved 7-0 at 7:44 PM.

**RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION:** Motion by Chambers to reconvene into open session. Seconded by Walters. Motion to reconvene into open session approved 7-0 at 11:13 PM. No action taken on matters discussed in closed session.

**ADJOURN:** Motion by Chambers to adjourn. Seconded by Melby. Motion to adjourn approved 7-0 at 11:14 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Aaron Joyce, City Clerk/Treasurer.