

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES – DECEMBER 4, 2018

A CALL TO ORDER: The Truth and Taxation Public Hearing & Regular City Council meeting was held December 4, 2018 in the city council room of the New Germany City Hall. Mayor Van Lith called the Public Hearing/Council meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., those present were: Mayor Van Lith, Councilpersons Shirley Jaeger, Ty Turnquist, Cathy Ruschmeier and Nick Hartwig. Others present were: City Clerk – Twyla Menth. Audience members were: Steve Young with the Herald Journal, Shelly Eldridge and Jeanne Vogt with Ehlers, Joe Lemmerman, Kevin Latzig, Nick & Taylor Erickson, Shawn Bode, Fire Chief Dan Ruschmeier, Lois Jopp, Paul Engelhart, Wayne & Lindsay Woodworth, Brian Ernhart, Jake Floer and John Newman.

B. CITIZEN COMMENT: Mayor Van Lith opened the meeting introducing Shelly and Jeanne with Ehlers for the Truth and Taxation presentation. Jeanne went through the power point presentation and handouts were available for residents. Some of the key points provided by Ehlers:

- The plan over the next 10 years is to slowly decrease City tax rate by 1.30%. The city is on track.
- Maintain general fund balance of at least \$600,000 (requirement by S & P to maintain current rating).
- Breakdown of the budget was provided.
- Tax levy history was provided.
- Proposed pay 2019 is 97.452% final pay is 98.750% (down 1.30% from last year).
- Estimated Market Values (EMV) pay 2018 = \$30,788,700 proposed 2019 = \$36,471,700 increase of \$5,683,000, new construction is \$1,584,200, increase in existing values is \$4,098,800.00.
- 2019 levy is \$421,421 which is an increase of \$55,644 from 2018 (\$365,777) which is part of the fiscal disparities rollercoaster; the increase is to maintain the steady rate so there is no up/down as in years past.
- Ehlers explained the portion of other taxing authorities as seen in your property tax statement.
- Ehlers explained different situations of why you have may seen an increase in property taxes (new construction or plat, change in classification, small changes can have big impacts).
- Ehlers also gave the residents how to contest your property values – contact County Assessor's Office at 952-361-1960 or go on the County website to find additional information on how to contest and when to contest.
- Surrounding Communities comparisons were provided.
- Fire Chief Ruschmeier and Mayor Van Lith explained the fire department coverage is about 36 miles and 1200 people. By laws they are mandated to keep equipment upgraded including SCBA's among other items. If they do not keep these items upgraded this could impact your home insurance rates as well.
- Council explained the amount of budget meetings and time that goes into the budget preparation. These meetings/workshops are all open to the public, you are welcome to attend.
- Enterprise bonds which govern the water/sewer rates were explained; December 28 payment is approximately \$240,000 this is an annual payment, also operating expenses for the Water Treatment Plant. This is one of the many bonds the City has from the infrastructure project.

During the presentation Ehlers did take questions from the residents and gave explanations to the residents. Council also explained everything they have been doing to be proactive and the tough decisions that have to be made along the way. The City is going in the right direction but the impact can be large for such a small community. There was discussion if the Water Treatment Plant was large enough for growth; which it is. Council and Mayor Van Lith explained there is an issue with the phosphorus levels and capacity of the wastewater ponds that have to be dealt with for growth to continue. At this time there are no additional homes that can be built, hopefully by the year 2022 this will all be moving forward. After more discussion and questions and answers it was decided the Public Hearing would now be closed, all residents were invited to stay for the regular Council meeting. Mayor Van Lith closed the Truth and Taxation Public Hearing at 8:11 PM. The motion carried, unanimously. 5/0

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Jaeger moved and Ruschmeier seconded approving the agenda. The motion carried, unanimously. 5/0

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Jaeger moved and Turnquist seconded approval of the November 20, 2018 minutes. The motion carried, unanimously. 5/0

E. SHERIFFS REPORT: none at this time.

F. FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT:

- Chief Ruschmeier suggested a workshop date be set up for discussion of the future of hall rentals and the Fire Department; December 10, 2018 @ 7 PM. Van Lith read the two resignations from the Fire Department; Todd Lehrke and Paul Roepke over 30 years of service for each of them. They will continue on the Fire Department as Reserves. Jaeger moved and Turnquist seconded accepting the resignation of Paul Roepke from the New

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES – DECEMBER 4, 2018

Germany Fire Department with the stipulation of staying on as a Reserve Fire Fighter. The motion carried, unanimously. 5/0

- Turnquist moved and Jaeger seconded accepting the resignation from Todd Lehrke from the New Germany Fire department with the stipulation of staying on as a Reserve Fire Fighter. The motion carried, unanimously. 5/0
- Chief Ruschmeier thanked the Council for the approved purchase of the smoke machine has been a great training tool for the fire fighters.

G. TREASURE REPORT:

- The Treasury report noted that the General fund balance was \$1,410,422.69, which includes the CD's balance of \$49,013.46. Ruschmeier moved and Jaeger seconded approval of the Treasure report. The motion carried, unanimously. 5/0

H. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS: Turnquist moved and Jaeger seconded approving the claims in the amount of \$27,938.27. The motion carried, unanimously. 5/0

Note - It was later discovered there was an error in Nick Hartwig's check which would increase the claims amount to \$28,446.19.

I. WATER SEWER REPORT:

- The City is compliant by mailing the lead/copper results as tested.
- Council decided to table the handheld until December 18, 2018.
- People Service report was available for review by Council.

J. ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED:

1. Council reviewed the information on Trophy Lakes and the recommendation of the City Attorney on the proposed purchase agreement on the 12 non-lake lots at Trophy Lakes. Lemmerman stated his buyer really wanted some type of verbiage on the commercial zoning of the 11 non-lake lots and out lot G. Discussion continued on what a fair price would be per lot; Council and Mayor Van Lith discussed what would be a fair price and what are the options. Council had a discussion on the options and the amount of delinquent taxes on the property; the numbers were provided for delinquent taxes and what would be the city's portion of property tax reimbursement and what portion the county would collect. Ehlers provided financial information pertaining to the property and the best interest of the city. After a lengthy discussion on different options; including more money for the lots. Ehlers explained contract for deed, this was also suggested in memo from the city attorney. Ruschmeier gave examples of different options for the city. Jaeger mentioned all of the Council members bring different ideas and it would be better to see something rather than nothing. Ehlers provided current mortgages rates and will send something to the Clerk pertaining to interest rates. it was then decided a Special Meeting would be the best as some of this would need to be negotiated under the closed meeting law. Turnquist moved and Jaeger seconded at 9 PM to extend the Council meeting. The motion carried, unanimously. 5/0

Shelly with Ehlers explained you could always designate individuals to make the decisions if not all can be present, could also have the attorney on a conference call during meeting.

Council felt it would be best to invite the city attorney and Lemmerman will discuss with buyer on options and let the city know.

Van Lith moved and Turnquist seconded a Special Meeting on December 10, 2018 @ 8 PM, here at the city office and requested the presence of the city attorney. The motion carried, unanimously. 5/0

2. Hartwig moved and Turnquist seconded approving the 2019 operating levy \$421,421.00. The motion carried, unanimously. 5/0

3. Resolution No. 2018-24 A Resolution to Designate the Polling Place for 2019 (in the need of a special election). Jaeger moved and Ruschmeier seconded approving Resolution No. 2018-24. The motion carried, unanimously. 5/0

4 & 5. Council reviewed the information and made changes.

K. BUILDING PERMIT UPDATE: none at this time.

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES – DECEMBER 4, 2018

- L. COMPLAINT LOG: None as of meeting.
- M. PUBLIC WORKS: Van Lith reported he is still waiting on parts for the bobcat door.
- N. PARKS REPORT: Breakfast with Santa was a success, lots of kids and the Commercial Club raised approximately \$550.
- O. MAYORS REPORT: No report at this time.
- P. CITY CLERK REPORT: None at this time.
- Q. OLD BUSINESS: Turnquist asked Van Lith to attend the Township meeting and discuss with Bruce the plowing of Camden and 62nd Street.
- R. NEW BUSINESS: None at this time.
- S. ADJOURNMENT: Jaeger moved and Ruschmeier seconded adjourning the meeting at 9:23 PM. The motion carried, unanimously. 5/0

Respectfully Submitted, _____ Twyla Menth, City Clerk-Treasurer