

**ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
April 21, 2022**

A regular meeting of the Ashland City Council was held at the Ashland City Hall Council Chambers on the 21st day of April, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Richard Grauerholz
City Council President James Anderson
City Council Member Jake Crnkovich
City Council Member Chuck Niemeyer
City Administrator Jessica Quady
City Clerk Kathleen Sliva
City Attorney Mark Fahleson

Absent: City Council Member Bruce Wischmann

Others: Ron Styskal, Heather Logston, Kim Beetison Streich, Krista Beetison Sender, Jason Sender, Jason Beetison, Laura Capp, Marilyn Wright, Thomas Judds, Tom Danahy, Cindy Danahy, Patti Schofield, Shirley Niemeyer, Steve Nabity, Bob Fricke Jr., Mary Roncka, Susan Cerny, Caleb Fjone, Susan Cerny, Suzi Nelson, Bill Krejci and others

Notice of meeting was advertised in the Ashland Gazette on April 14, 2022. The Mayor and all Council Members received advance notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda as shown by the Acknowledgment of Receipt of Notice. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the public.

Mayor Grauerholz called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call was taken and a quorum was declared. Mayor Grauerholz noted the Open Meetings Act located on the south wall of the room.

Motion by Niemeyer, second by Crnkovich to adopt the regular agenda.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Thomas Judds presented information on the new Ashland Senior Housing Project that is under construction between 29th and 30th Streets and Boyd and Clay Streets. He said they are building 20 rental units designated as senior housing for households that are age 55 and older. He said there will be 16 affordable units and four market rate units. He said the development team is Foundations Development LLC and Little Salt Development Company. He reminded the council of the 2017 housing study by Hanna

Keelan identified a need for 'baby boomer' housing. He said the units will be approximately 913 square feet of livable space with two bedrooms, one bath and a garage. He added there will be four buildings. He said they hope to have the project completed by the first quarter of 2023. Judds answered questions of the Council.

Krista Sender and Kim Streich spoke to the Council regarding the Beetison House which was recently burned. Sender expressed thanks to the Fire Department for their efforts to save what they could of the house and to the community for their support. She asked the Council what was going to be done now and why hasn't something been done in the past with Boyer Young by past City Councils in regards to the house. She said she believes the fire was arson. Council Member Niemeyer said this Council has discussed the house and the need to get something done with the property. He said he was optimistic that a resolution to save and restore the Beetison House would be found after recent discussions and a meeting with a potential owner and developer. He said what happens now is out of the control of the Council and that probably within a week the building will come down. Streich said she doesn't think the house should come down until it is found out who set it on fire and until someone is prosecuted. Niemeyer said the State Fire Marshal will say when it is time to come down. City Attorney Fahleson stated the property owner does not need to make a statement about the property to the City as the City doesn't own the property and the investigation is being done by the State and possibly by Federal officials. Streich said the house is a part of Ashland because it is a recognized symbol of the city. Building Official Krejci said he received a phone call from the State Fire Marshall that afternoon and was told they are done with the investigation aspect of the structure. He said he met with a contractor and a demo team earlier in the week and their intent is to tear it down next week. City Administrator Quady said the building is not inside the City limits, the police department does not have anything to do with the property and the property is in the one-mile ETJ which is for building permits. She said a demolition permit from the City will be needed for the house. Kim Streich said she doesn't want the stones to end up in a landfill. Quady said the family can reach out to the property owners for the stones. She added that the City has talked about using stones from the house for a monument sign or something but wants the family to get what they want first.

Caleb Fjone, AAEDC Executive Director, along with members of the Creative District Committee, spoke to the Council about the Creative District Designation Project. Fjone said this is an economic development project through the Nebraska Arts Council with the intent of bringing creative economies to Ashland. He said the five member committee appointed by the Mayor held a town hall to hear citizen suggestions for project ideas. He said a strategic plan was developed with five goals. Steve Nabity, Chairman of the Creative District Committee, said becoming designated as Certified Creative District will open up grant moneys for special art related projects up to \$250,000. He said the last step of this process is completion and submission of a 9-page strategic plan to the State. He said prior to submittal, the Council needs to approve

of the proposed projects. He added if approved there will be an immediate grant of \$10,000 along with highway signs directing people to the district. He said they started with 30 goals from the community and funneled those down to five priorities. He provided a handout listing the five goals including marketing of the creative district designation, the City flag project, the completion of the Towers of History and Sculpture Garden, building of a band shell and the hiring of a part-time Art Director. Laura Capp, Committee Member, expanded on the idea and location of the band shell and sculpture garden. She said they were considering the city lot on 13th Street. She discussed the proposal of hiring a part time art director stating this person would not come for at least a year or more and could coordinate with the school in bringing in programming for utilizing the new performing arts auditorium and the outdoor band shell facility. Mary Roncka discussed the Towers of History. Mayor Grauerholz reminded the committee that banners would need to be coordinated with the Chamber of Commerce banners. Nabity said the position of Arts Director would probably be a City position but it would be paid for using grant monies. He said if one of these goals wasn't able to come to fruition then one of the other 30 goals could be considered. Capp said they have budgeted for two years of salary for the Arts Director so there would be no guarantee of funding for year three and beyond. Niemeyer suggested this could be a position within the AAEDC. Grauerholz commented that he would like the Towers of History to be a priority on the list and he spoke in favor of the band shell. Niemeyer said the City has bricks or pavers that could be used with the project. Roncka said the cost of the tower project is approximately \$160,000 to \$180,000 with \$17,000 already raised. Fjone said the Creative District's projects will need to be coordinated with the City for the budget. He said the committee is hoping to be the first creative district in the state but the priority is to do it thoughtfully and to do it right. He added the submitted strategic plan will be graded by the Nebraska Arts Council and if it is accepted the Arts Council will visit the district and a presentation will take place.

Motion by Niemeyer, second by Crnkovich to approve and go ahead with the Creative District projects.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried.

City Administrator Quady spoke to the Council regarding replacement options for the downtown compass from Schroeder Construction. Discussion followed. Quady said she will have the Public Works Director get a bid for pouring the concrete as one solid piece and staining the concrete into the shape of the compass without doing any saw cuts.

Building Official Krejci reviewed bids for the patching and repair of the ceiling at the Carnegie Library. Council Member Niemeyer questioned if the bid from J & K is for the complete removal and plastering of the ceiling. He requested Krejci verify the bid is for the entire ceiling. Niemeyer said the project needs to get done so the building can be opened again as a museum.

Motion by Niemeyer, second by Crnkovich to approve accepting J&K Plastering's bid for replacement of the Carnegie Library ceiling after verifying that the bid includes removing the entire ceiling.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Reviewed the March 2022 Keno Report.

Reviewed the Public Works Director's Report.

Reviewed Utility Superintendent's Report.

Reviewed Police Chief's Report.

Reviewed Building Official's Report.

Reviewed Library Report.

Motion by Niemeyer, second by Anderson to approve the consent agenda which included the approval of the April 7, 2022 City Council meeting minutes.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Anderson, second by Crnkovich to approve the first half of April 2022 Claims.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Anderson, second by Crnkovich to approve March 2022 Treasurer's Report.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Mayor Grauerholz reported the work on the lighting in the pedestrian underpass has been completed as the lighting was vandalized. He said he attended the ALLO ground breaking. He said a meeting will be held with the Saunders County Local Emergency Planning Committee. He reminded the Council about the Hometown Hero Banner Program to be held on Friday evening. He said the PTO will be hosting a bike rodeo on April 28th. He added the City Wide Clean Up Day is scheduled for April 30th. He read a letter recognizing Ashland as a member of Tree City USA. He thanked Council Member Niemeyer for the donated chairs for the Council Chamber.

Council Member Niemeyer commented that restarting a cadet program for fire and rescue would be beneficial for youth and the community.

Motion by Niemeyer, second by Crnkovich to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m.

Roll Call: Ayes: All

Motion Carried

Richard Grauerholz

Richard Grauerholz, Mayor

Kathleen Sliva

Kathleen Sliva, City Clerk



I, the above signed City Clerk of Ashland, Saunders County, Nebraska hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate copy of the proceedings had and done by the Council on April 21, 2022 that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for the meeting, kept continually current and readily available for public inspection at the office of the City Clerk; that such subjects were contained in said agenda for at least twenty four hours prior to said meeting; that said minutes from which the foregoing proceedings have been extracted were in written form and available for public inspection within ten business days or prior to the next convened meeting of said body.