

**ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
March 4, 2021**

A regular meeting of the Ashland City Council was held at the Ashland Community Resource Center on the 4th day of March, 2021 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 Council Member Bruce Wischmann
City Administrator Jessica Quady
City Clerk Kathleen Sliva
City Attorney Mark Fahleson

Others: Ron Styskal, Brian Whitehead, Jill Wischmann, Brad Pfeiffer, Chad Hart, Tom Johnson, Jodi Woodward, Mike Meyer, Shirley Niemeyer, Suzi Nelson, Susan Cerny, Caleb Fjone, Jen Haschenburger, Owen Jacobs, Bill Krejci and others

Notice of meeting was advertised in the Ashland Gazette on February 25, 2021. 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 Wischmann to adopt the regular agenda.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Jodi Woodward, of BerganKDV, presented the 2020 Audit and reviewed audit highlights.

Mayor Grauerholz opened a Public Hearing to Determine Existence of Public Nuisance regarding property at 2217 Ash Street at 7:07 p.m. City Attorney Fahleson clarified with property owner, Thomas Johnson, that he received the hearing notice and that he understands that the public hearing is for 2217 Ash Street. Johnson said he has started the clean-up, removed the camper, trailer and mower and ordered new windows. City Administrator Quady reviewed pictures of the property that were taken early in the day. She reminded Johnson that he will need a building permit for the other work that needs to

be done. Johnson asked what other work needs to be completed. Quady said they should walk the property and make a list. Zoning Administrator Krejci said he has not evaluated the structure. Johnson said no one is living in the structure now. Council Member Wischmann said he would like to table this item to allow time for Johnson to meet with Krejci and for developing a detailed plan of what needs to be done.

Motion by Wischmann, second by Niemeyer to postpone the public hearing until March 18, 2021.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Wischmann, second by Crnkovich to postpone consideration of Resolution 2021-6 – Declaring the Findings of the City Council regarding a nuisance at 2217 Ash Street until March 18, 2021.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Wischmann, second by Anderson to approve second reading of Ordinance 1188 – To Modify the Future Land Use Map of the City of Ashland NE.

Zoning Administrator Krejci presented a plat of the proposed Ice House Development. He said this development was influx when the process to revise the map was begun. He said he is proposing to have this development overlaid on the future's map so the development can proceed. He reviewed the Future's Map. He said the Ice House development is a Planned Unit Development with residential and commercial properties.

Motion by Wischmann, second by Niemeyer to amend Future Land Use Map to reflect changes to include the Ice House Development.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Mayor Grauerholz called for the vote on Ordinance 1188 as amended.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Anderson, second by Crnkovich to approve second reading of Ordinance 1189 – To Modify the Official Zoning Map of the City of Ashland NE.
City Attorney Fahleson read the Title of Ordinance 1189.

Motion by Wischmann, second by Anderson to amend official Zoning Map incorporating the Ice House Development.

Zoning Administrator Krejci reviewed the Cass County Zoning map, specifically the land south and east of Ashland, to show how the City zoning is meshing with Cass County's. Council Member Crnkovich asked for more information on what Cass County's different zoning areas allow.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Mayor Grauerholz called for the vote on Ordinance 1189 as amended.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Mike Meyer, Ashland Fire Chief and Rescue Captain, spoke to the Council regarding the department's ability to respond to fire and rescue calls. He said last year they made 514 rescue calls and 135 fire calls. He said each year they get three or four new people to volunteer. He said they are relying heavily on mutual aid from other departments and he has been told that other agency's do not want to continue respond in Ashland as this will leave their community's unprotected. He said he retired last year, is around during the day so he is able to respond so day time coverage has improved. He said the rescue department missed 18 or four percent of the calls last year. Discussion was held regarding creating paid positions to staff the department to work in conjunction with the volunteers. Mayor Grauerholz said leadership is very important in order for this to work. Meyer reviewed possible grant opportunities. Council Member Wischmann said he would not be opposed to funding a full-time or a couple of part-time positions as the coverage area includes the interstate and the growing lake communities. Meyer said they cover the fire calls but not with a safe number of people. He noted a lot of people didn't respond because of fear of COVID exposure. He said steps to improve the station are being made such as adding decontamination areas and clothes washers. Meyer suggested hiring one person for 40 hours a week to cover the difficult hours between 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Meyer said the cost could possible be paid for with a three way split between Rural Fire, Rescue and Fire departments. Discussion held regarding possible wages. City Attorney Fahleson said a wage survey would need to be done. Mayor Grauerholz reminded the Council that the fire department and the rescue department are separate and funded in two different ways. Meyers suggested that the departments could be combined. Grauerholz mentioned that MFO funding may need to be altered. Meyer said call charges could be increased. Council Member Niemeyer asked for a proposal from Meyer. Meyer said if the department stays on the same trend, they will miss about 8% of the calls. Council Member Anderson suggested the forming of a committee to pursue this so that the Council can act on solid information. Mayor Grauerholz noted that the number of fires in the rural district compared to Ashland is two to one and the Rural Fire District has a larger tax base too. Niemeyer said the Council needs more information from Meyer and the Council needs to do something. Wischmann concurred. Grauerholz discussed training requirements and the number of hours needed to complete the training. Meyer said he will get the numbers together.

Caleb Fjone spoke to the Council regarding the proposed Communication Committee. He said he would like to see people from diverse backgrounds on the committee including a Council Member. He agreed that he would set up the committee to get it 'off the ground' and that he would like to have it up and running in a month to a month and a half. Discussion was held on the communication platforms that could be used and the type of

items communicated. Fjone said the AAEDC Board said this was a good idea. The Council expressed support for the committee.

Brian Whitehead, owner of BWW Enterprises, appeared before the Council regarding the Keno contract renewal.

Motion by Niemeyer, second by Wischmann to authorize the Mayor to sign Keno Agreement Renewal with BBW Enterprises L.L.C.

Whitehead said he is in early discussions with the American Legion about adding a satellite site. He said his building addition is 90% done.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Mayor Grauerholz said he had been approached about adding short-term parking on main street for pick-up and drop-off situations. He said he has talked with members of the Chamber of Commerce and it appears there is support for this. He proposed that at mid block between 14th and 15th Streets to add a 10- or 15- minute parking sign on the south side of the street. Brad Pfeiffer, owner of Ashland Auto Supply and Chamber of Commerce President, said he has had customers drive to Gretna when they see the downtown parking full and he suggested this be done as a beta test, and if it works, an additional sign could be added on the other side of the street. Weston Sieck, of Edward Jones, spoke suggesting a senior citizen parking spot by the pharmacy. Pfeiffer said they do not want parking meters. Grauerholz said that enforcement will be a problem. City Administrator Quady said she will have the Public Works Director get and install a sign and after six weeks or so, the parking situation can be reevaluated. Jen Haschenburger of Breadeaux Pizza voiced her support for the parking spot and offered to pay for the signage. Quady said the City will pay for it.

Motion by Niemeyer, second by Wischmann to approve consent agenda which included approval of the February 18, 2021 City Council meeting minutes; and approval of pay requests from JEO Consulting Group Inc. for General Engineering in the amount of \$831.25; for Wellhead Protection Planning in the amount of \$720.00; for Ashland Salvage Yard Survey in the amount of \$8,400.00; and for Public School Expansion in the amount of \$4,587.50.

Council Member Anderson asked that the JEO items be removed from the consent agenda for discussion.

Mayor Grauerholz called for the vote on consent agenda items 1 and 2.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Anderson, second by Crnkovich to approve pay requests from JEO Consulting

Group Inc. for General Engineering in the amount of \$831.25; for Wellhead Protection Planning in the amount of \$720.00; for Ashland Salvage Yard Survey in the amount of \$8,400.00; and for Public School Expansion in the amount of \$4,587.50.

Council Member Anderson asked how the City will recoup expenses incurred with the Public School Expansion project. City Administrator Quady said there is an agreement with the school, yet to be approved, that covers the costs for construction. She said this pay request will be covered by the building permit.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Wischmann, second by Niemeyer to approve the second half of February 2021 Claims.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Mayor Grauerholz acknowledge Owen Jacobs, Ashland-Greenwood Civic student, who is in attendance at the meeting.

Mayor Grauerholz reported that LB 408 is coming out of committee. He said litigation has started against the project south of Mead (AltEn ethanol plant) and it is being monitored by Federal officials. He noted that Clean-Up Day is scheduled for April 17 and a tire recycling event will be held in the first part of May.

Council Member Anderson said the library landscaping will need attention this spring. He also thanked Zoning Administrator Krejci and Planning Commission Chair Cerny for their work with the Planning Commission.

Council Member Wischmann requested future planning discussion regarding landscaping on the Highway 6 corridor be held and asked Zoning Official Krejci to contact Blackstrap regarding their required landscaping.

City Administrator Quady said she would information about Clean-Up Day on the City website and Facebook page.

Motion by Niemeyer, second by Anderson to adjourn the meeting at 9:01p.m.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried



Richard Grauerholz, Mayor



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 March 4, 2021 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.