

CITY OF AU GRES
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2023
7:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Mayor Jon Sanford, Dan Heinrich, Jane Barbour, Joe Warr, John Popovich, Joe Warr
ABSENT: None
ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Dale Wiltse, Police Chief Charles Allen, Arenac County Board of Commissioner Bobbie Burke

1). CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Jon Sanford called meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2). PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor led City Council and audience into the Pledge of Allegiance.

3). ROLL CALL

Roll call noted all members present.

4). MINUTES

MOTION (Warr) to approve November 7, 2023 regular meeting minutes as presented; support (Popovich). Motion carried.

5). SET AGENDA

MOTION (Popovich) to set agenda adding 9.8 Establish City Court System; support (Barbour). Motion carried.

6). CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:

Kirk Olson was present to ask for support from City Council on bike path he is proposing from Green Drive (Au Gres Township) and continuing into town via CN Farms easement and connecting to Court Street. He would like to apply for the Rural Development Grant due January 9, 2024 for \$100,000 with \$30,000 match from City, Township or County. City Manager informed him that City Council and Park & Recreation Commission already had discussion and support the project and have included in our new Park & Recreation Master Plan. Lots of unanswered questions and total project is going to far exceed \$130,000. Suggestion would be to do in stages and to keep reapplying for this annual grant. Also, a good idea to apply for 2% grant funds to help pay for a feasibility study which is first step towards this project becoming a reality.

Warr: Supports the project but feels that Arenac County should take lead since bike path is between two municipalities. Bobbie Burke will add to agenda at Arenac County Board of Commissions Meeting December 12, 2023.

7). AU GRES CITY POLICE CHIEF REPORT

Police Chief Charles Allen presented City Council with November statistics.

8. OLD BUSINESS: None

9). NEW BUSINESS

9.1 Resolution Poverty Exemption 2024 Year

MOTION (Warr) to adopt attached resolution for poverty exemption for the 2024 year following federal guidelines; support (Heinrich). Motion carried.

9.2 Park Rate Increases

MOTION (Warr) to approve attached park rate increases as recommended by Park & Recreation; support (Heinrich). Motion carried.

9.3 Board Appointments

City Manager received application from Nicholas Onica for Planning Commission seat. Suggestion would be to add him to the list of board appointments.

MOTION (Warr) to approve board appointments as presented along with adding Nicholas Onica to Planning Commission; support (Popovich). Motion carried.

9.4 Change 2024 City Council Dates

City Manager suggested with the January 2nd City Council Meeting right after the holidays and nothing on the agenda so far; move the regular January City Council meeting to January 16. City Council already had to hold a public hearing on this date to adopt Park & Recreation Master Plan anyways. August and November City Council meeting dates conflict with elections and need to be changed. Suggest August 13 and November 7 as alternate dates.

MOTION (Warr) to approve changing January, August and November City Council meeting dates to Tuesday, January 16, Tuesday, August 13 and Thursday November 7; support (Barbour). Motion carried.

9.5 Set Public Hearing Date to Adopt Park & Rec Master Plan

It was mentioned above that City Council needs to hold Public Hearing to adopt Park & Recreation Master Plan on January 16 after the Park & Recreation meeting to finalize. This public hearing will now be done at the January 16 Regular City Council meeting. This deadline is a must since City needs an updated Master Plan adopted to apply for DNR Trust grant later in the month.

9.6 Deposit of City Funds

MOTION (Warr) to continue using Horizon Bank and Northland Credit Union to deposit city funds; support (Popovich). Motion carried.

9.7 Membership to Arenac County Historical Society

MOTION (Barbour) to join Arenac County Historical Society and pay for membership of \$250 per year as a Patron; support (Heinrich). Motion carried.

9.8 Establish City Court

John Popovich would like to look into if feasible to start a City Court/Town Justice. In New York, cities had their own court system and it was an elected position and required no law degree. Court would handle ordinances traffic tickets, small claims and crimes. Will look and see if he can find other cities in Michigan that participate.

City Manager will contact Michigan Municipal League, Arenac County and City Attorney and get an opinion on it along with what it entails. Right now, City has lots of ordinances and no fee structure.

10). CITY MANAGER REPORT

- Campground expansion- moving forward and Rick Freeman is working on design and layout
- Pavilion repairs- no response from Morton Buildings on start date
- Post Office- no news to report
- ATD property purchase- spoke with Brandon Schnettler and working out details. Wants to purchase lot from City that butts up to the Bessinger Pickle property so they have back access between ATD and Bessinger Pickle instead of going out on Court Street. Would be willing to put in deed verbiage of lifetime right-of-way for the disc golf course or 99-year lease for public recreational use only.
- City received 2 grants: \$20,000 from 2% for ADA cabin at the campground and \$4600 from Arenac Community Fund for sunshades at Riverside Park.
- Christmas Parade & Tree Lighting- nice event and thanked all who participated!
- Arenac Community Fund Holiday Auction is this Thursday, December 7 @ Ali's Restaurant.
- Au Gres Business Christmas Party this Friday, December 8 from 6-9 PM .

11). COMMENTS

11.1 Citizens:

Burke: Will be meeting Lisa Salgat and pass the information along on the bike path.

11.2 Mayor: Wanted to thank all who were involved for making the Christmas Parade & Tree lighting a success! Great turn out and many participants!

11.3 Council Members:

Heinrich: Enjoyed Christmas parade & all of our City's Christmas lights.

Warr: Enjoyed Christmas Parade. Thinks our city is the best one around for Christmas lights and displays! Visibility with City Police has been great! Just wanted to point out that Bayview Foods has their own metal fabrication department in the event City ever needs anything.

Popovich: Was involved with lifting the Christmas Park Scene and crazy it needs 14 guys to lift! Went great and up in 10 minutes! Need to come up with a daytime activity in the park since the lit trees are such a big hit!

Barbour: City looks great! Wanted to know what is going on with old Bacardi bar? City Manager said property owner wanted to put in couple apartments but has not come forward with any permits yet.

11). PAYMENT OF BILLS

MOTION (Warr) to approve payment of bills as submitted; support (Popovich). Motion carried.

12). APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

MOTION (Barbour) to approve October financial statements as submitted; support (Heinrich). Motion carried.

13). ADJOURNMENT

MOTION (Heinrich) to adjourn meeting at 8:10 p.m.; support (Popovich). Motion carried.

Jon Sanford, Mayor

LaVonne Pritchard, City Clerk