

**CITY OF AU GRES  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2024  
7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Mayor Jon Sanford, Dan Heinrich, Jane Barbour, John Popovich

ABSENT: Joe Warr

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Dale Wiltse, Au Gres City Assessor Brandon Murphy

**1). CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Jon Sanford called meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**2). PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**3). ROLL CALL**

Roll call noted Joe Warr as absent.

**4). MINUTES**

**MOTION** (Barbour) to approve January 16, 2023 regular meeting minutes as presented; support (Popovich). Motion carried.

**5). SET AGENDA**

**MOTION** (Heinrich) to set agenda as presented; support (Popovich). Motion carried.

**6). CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:** None

**7). AU GRES CITY POLICE CHIEF REPORT**

Police Chief Charles Allen absent tonight but had January 2024 stats report for City Council. Suggestion would be to keep track of time and/or assists/calls handled for other jurisdictions/County on his stat sheet somewhere to have for future reference.

**8. OLD BUSINESS**

**8.1 ATD Property Purchase**

City Manager approached both John Rollins and ATD on the price set by City Council of \$15,000 per lot in the Industrial Park. John Rollins is fine with price and would like to continue on the purchase of his lot (unit 7). ATD would like to counter-offer with a total of \$15,000 for both lots. ATD lots (unit 2 & 3) are less appealing with no water, no sewer and no road and are land-locked property. Consensus was to accept ATD offer of \$15,000 for both lots and set public hearing date to sell all 3 lots at the same time. City Manager would like to see what ATD plans for the disc golf course since 2 holes sit on these lots.

**MOTION** (Heinrich) to accept ATD offer of \$15,000 for both lots (unit 2 & 3) in the Industrial Park and set public hearing date for the next regular City Council meeting of March 5, 2024 to sell all 3 lots; support (Popovich). Motion carried.

**9). NEW BUSINESS**

**9.1 City Assessor Brandon Murphy**

City Assessor Brandon Murphy was present tonight to discuss the upcoming 2024 assessments. With inflation rates still high, the CPI index is maxed out again at 5%. So, all property owners that did not do anything to their property during the year, will see their taxable value increase by 5% (2023 taxable value x 5% = 2024 taxable value). SEV adjusts to the market conditions/sales and does not affect your tax bill any. The 2-year sales study for this year's assessments are from the period of March 2021-March 2023 and do lag behind. So, if the housing market does come down, it will take a while to show up on your assessment going forward. The City has seen the biggest jump in neighborhood values this year in the waterfront category and Sleepy Oaks campground. City Council thanked Brandon for the presentation.

**10). CITY MANAGER REPORT**

- Campground expansion project still moving forward; have a DNR Trust Fund Meeting tomorrow 2/7. Talked to State Representative Mike Hoadley to earmark some MEDC money for this project. Will do the park expansion project in stages with infrastructure first, then lots and lastly the bathhouse.
- Au Gres Chamber of Commerce is raising funds to do a scoreboard in memory of Rick Spies at the new proposed ballfield location.

- City Park Pavilion repairs will be start soon with a change order coming through to sign.
- Post Office is working with McDonald's investors to secure that location.
- Chapel repairs: after the "Old Fashion Christmas Event" held at the Chapel; City realized how bad of shape the building is in with roof/walls sagging. The church was built in 1912 and moved in 2002 to the park location. The Arenac Community Funds has the Maser Memorial Endowment for funds to be used on this type of project. Working on making the chapel a historic building to see if it qualify for other grants.
- Getting quotes back on purchasing new Ford F-550 with utility box and snowplow for around \$90,000. This has been in the budget over the last several years and now that the big dump truck is starting to cost City money in repairs, it is time to purchase. City has been using one Ford F-550 truck with plow and salt spreader for plowing city roads and it has been working great! Plan is to get rid of big dump truck and one pick-up truck and should bring in \$25-\$35,000 towards this cost. Hoping to have all quotes for next Council meeting.
- Consumer Energy "Put Your Town on the Map" Grant is available for cultural type events. If City Council has any suggestions, please let him know since nothing is coming to mind that would qualify.
- Michigan Works is hosting a free "Show Me the Money" seminar on February 13, 2024 from 9-12 PM. Event is being put on by several local banks, Consumer Energy, Michigan Unemployment Agency and Michigan Works.
- The Lodge Hotel & Restaurant is scheduled to open April 1 and will be posting job applications shortly.

**11). COMMENTS**

11.1 Citizens:

Brandon Murphy: Will ball diamonds be built first before tearing down existing ones? City Manager stated that 2024 ball season will be on old fields while construction begins in 2024 and scheduled to be completed for the 2025 ball season. As a back-up plan, the Au Gres-Sims School did say that they would be willing to use of their fields.

11.2 Mayor: None

11.3 Council Members:

Heinrich: Milder winter so far. Any thoughts on City maintaining sidewalks? Michigan Avenue and Court Street are used quite heavily and in winter months they are forced to walk on roads. City Manager has discussed several times and problem is that we are short staffed with only 2 DPW staff and their first priority is roads. Will see if we can get a quote from local contractors on what it would cost to do; tried couple years ago and no one was interested in giving the City a price.

Popovich: Someone mentioned to him about Allen Court/Burt Street pavement messed up by a private contractor doing driveways down there this past summer. City Manager is aware and has been in contact with the private contractor on how to repair it correctly in the spring.

Barbour: doing a great job plowing!

**11). PAYMENT OF BILLS**

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

**12). APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

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

**13). ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** (Popovich) to adjourn meeting at 8:13 p.m.; support (Heinrich). Motion carried.

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Jon Sanford, Mayor

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LaVonne Pritchard, City Clerk