

Proceeding of the Ironwood City Commission Meeting

A Regular Meeting of the Ironwood City Commission was held in person and via Zoom for the Public at 5:30 P.M., along with a Public Hearing at 5:25 P.M. on Monday, February 14, 2022.

1. Mayor Corcoran opened the public hearing at 5:25 P.M.
2. Recording of the Roll.

PRESENT: Commissioner Andresen, Korpela, Mildren, Semo, and Mayor Corcoran.

ABSENT: None.

3. Public Hearing: To hear comment on approving Resolution #022-002, a special assessment for 420 E. McLeod Avenue, Ironwood, MI for condemnation and demolition of hazardous stairwell.

City Manager Scott Erickson noted the owner was contacted on numerous occasions regarding demolition and disposal of the hazardous stairwell. This Public Hearing is regarding the cost incurred by the City for demolition and disposal and to consider having it assessed back to the owner. The amount totals \$1,595.33 in labor, equipment, and disposal costs.

No comments from the public were noted.

4. Mayor Corcoran closed the public hearing at 5:28 P.M.

- A. Mayor Corcoran called the regular meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

- B. Recording of the Roll.

PRESENT: Commissioner Andresen, Korpela, Mildren, Semo, and Mayor Corcoran.

ABSENT: None.

- C. Approval of the Consent Agenda. *

*1) Approval of Minutes – Regular City Commission Meeting Minutes of January 25, 2022.

*2) Review and Place on File:

- a. Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Meeting Minutes of November 4, 2020, March 1, 2021, September 1, 2021, October 6, 2021, and December 1, 2021.
- b. Ironwood Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of December 2, 2021, and January 6, 2022.

***Motion** was made by Semo, seconded by Mildren to approve the consent agenda as presented. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

- D. Approval of the Agenda

Motion was made by Semo, seconded by Korpela, and carried unanimously to approve the Agenda.

E. Citizens wishing to address the Commission on Items on the Agenda. (Three Minute Limit).

Steve Frank, of 220 East Oak Street, Ironwood, MI addressed the Commission regarding Item P, related to the request for an increased number of trash cans in the City of Ironwood. Mr. Frank noted if the Commissioners have questions why he picked the designated locations he mapped out, he would be happy to answer their questions when that item is addressed. Mayor Corcoran acknowledged and thanked Mr. Frank.

F. Citizens wishing to address the Commission on Items not on the Agenda. (Three Minute Limit)

Randy Kashich of 342 Lake Avenue, Ironwood, Michigan spoke regarding actions of City Staff. He commented on the property located on Ayer Street, the former barber shop location where a fire had occurred in the past, and the inability to purchase this property. He expressed his frustration in being unable to purchase the property on his daughter's behalf. Mayor Corcoran acknowledged and thanked Mr. Kashich.

G. AUDIENCE: Republic Services, Jim Whittinghill, Municipal Sales Manager
(RE: Update on trash collection services)

Mr. Whittinghill spoke to the Commissioners regarding an update on the trash services provided by Republic Services. Two more newly hired employees are close to being ready to train on routes. At that point, Republic should be "over-staffed" and cross-trained in the next few weeks. They are heading in the right direction. He appreciates everyone's patience. He also said they are still battling COVID in their operations. They have struggled. Their goal is to meet the needs of the citizens. The City Commission thanked Mr. Whittinghill for the update.

H. PRESENTATION: Andrew DiGiorgio, Public Safety Director
(RE: Ironwood Public Safety Annual Report).

Public Safety Director Andrew DiGiorgio addressed the City Commission reviewing with them his 2021 Year End Report. Director DiGiorgio went over the high points. Engaging the community and the services offered were addressed, as well as partnering with the Western U.P. Health Department during this past year. Other partnerships and programs were discussed as well. Work with the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) group and accreditation of officers were other items addressed from the Annual Report. This year they are looking at starting the process to obtain a new fire truck for 2025. Director DiGiorgio also noted with retirements of staff coming up, he is implementing a hiring strategy to reach out to the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion group and engage different members of the community for this endeavor. The City Commission thanked Director DiGiorgio for his report and all the information provided. Additional comments were received.

NEW BUSINESS

- I. Discuss and consider approving the six-year (2022-2028) City of Ironwood Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

(**SIX YEAR (2022-2028) CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP) AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW IN THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE & ON THE CITY OF IRONWOOD'S WEBSITE AT <http://cityofironwood.org/community-development>**)

Community Development Director Tom Bergman addressed the Capital Improvement Plan and any questions the Commissioners had. Commissioner Semo had concerns that the Ironwood Theater's sidewalk improvement was not included in this plan. City Manager Scott Erickson noted that it is still possible to include this project in the Capital Improvement Plan.

***Motion** was made by Semo, seconded by Mildren to approve the six-year (2022-2028) City of Ironwood Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

- J. Discuss and consider approving Quit Claim Deed from the City of Ironwood to Eric Lytwyniuk for previously purchased property at Luxmore Street / Ayer Street.

Jason Alonen, City Assessor/Code Enforcement Officer noted this property is surplus property the City sold in the past. Only part of the legal description was on the deed at that time, and it was not all recorded. This correction deed is to legally turn over the acreage.

***Motion** was made by Mildren, seconded by Korpela to approve the Quit Claim Deed from the City of Ironwood to Eric Lytwyniuk for previously purchased property at Luxmore Street / Ayer Street. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

- K. Discuss and consider authorizing a professional services agreement with McKenna for the preparation of a Downtown Development Plan and the re-establishment of a Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) for Downtown.

Community Development Director Tom Bergman stated in 2010, a Downtown Blue Print Plan was implemented and incorporated in the 2014 Comprehensive Plan. With a new downtown development plan, starting a TIF district gives the opportunity to capture tax revenue and then re-invest it in our downtown. There would be a need to bring on a consultant to help with that process. Recommendation is to hire McKenna out of Grand Rapids, MI to put together the downtown development plan and the TIF district plan. This item is budgeted. A portion will come from DIDA and 75 percent is budgeted by the City Commission for the project. He noted it is a good time to start a TIF district as we see an increase in values. He expects the process to take 6-7 months, with public hearings so everyone is well-aware of the plan. It will become part of the revision of the Comprehensive Plan.

***Motion** was made by Semo, seconded by Andresen to authorize a professional services agreement with McKenna for the preparation of a Downtown Development Plan and the re-establishment of a Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) for Downtown. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

- L. Discuss and consider authorizing bids for a new Tractor/Mower for the City Department of Public Works and declare the 1987 John Deere Mower surplus, as well as a bid for a second Tractor/Mower for the Michigan's Western Gateway Trail Authority (second tractor to be funded by the MWGTA).

City Manager Scott Erickson confirmed the request to authorize bids, exactly as stated in Item L.

Motion was made by Semo, seconded by Mildren, and carried unanimously to authorize bids for a new Tractor/Mower for the City Department of Public Works and declare the 1987 John Deere Mower surplus, as well as a bid for a second Tractor/Mower for the Michigan's Western Gateway Trail Authority (second tractor to be funded by the MWGTA).

- M. Discuss and consider approving easement to Xcel Energy along Penokee Road & Mill Street

City Manager Scott Erickson noted that Xcel Energy is replacing lines and asking for an easement. \$1,000 is what they are proposing. Commissioner Semo had concerns, noting examples of trees planted in the past that have been cut down in other areas where Xcel was granted easements. One area on the current proposal submitted goes right over a trail. Commissioner Semo requested a better map with more visuals and to have Xcel Energy come back with more information on the project. Xcel will need to discuss more of what this entails at the next meeting or whenever they can come before the Commission to address it.

No was action taken on this matter.

- N. Discuss and consider authorizing bids of the replacement of damaged metal siding on the northeast end of the City Department of Public Works facility located at 200 Penokee Road.

City Manager Scott Erickson noted the Department of Public Works facility has damaged siding on three walls. A request is being made to the Commission for approval to bid, to get a contractor in to replace the damaged siding on the northeast end of the facility.

Motion was made by Semo, seconded by Korpela, and carried to authorize bids of the replacement of damaged siding on the northeast end of the City Department of Public Works facility located at 200 Penokee Road.

- O. Discuss and consider approving 2022 Street Seal Coat Project and authorizing an agreement with the Gogebic County Road Commission to include this work with their 2022 Seal Coat Bids.

City Manager Scott Erickson noted part of the street preservation strategy is seal coating. He recommended continuing with that process and to partner with the Gogebic County Road Commission by entering into an agreement to reimburse them for the cost. \$35,0000 is an estimate for the seal coating, and it is in the street budget for this work.

Motion was made by Semo, seconded by Korpela to authorize an agreement with the Gogebic County Road Commission to include this work with their 2022 Seal Coat Bids. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.

OLD BUSINESS

- P. Discuss update on Republic Services trash collection status and discuss citizen's request for additional public trash cans and locations.

City Manager Scott Erickson stated Item P addresses two items. The first item being Republic Services. It was noted it is a slow process to improve the trash collection issues, but they are trying. The second item is a resident request to look at other public trash can locations and discuss with the Commissioners. It is noted trash cans are currently placed downtown and along the Iron Belle Trail. Steve Frank was present to answer questions. Mayor Corcoran asked Mr. Frank where the higher concentration is that can be addressed. Steven Frank commented that his list was already narrowed down to 10 locations that cannot be overlooked. He also noted that the Hiawatha location should tie in with downtown as it will look better. Commissioner Semo noted that the area on Flink Street is unfortunately more about garbage being thrown out of car windows. City Manager, Scott Erickson noted he could bring back options and a cost estimate. The ornamental cans downtown are quite expensive. Maybe there is an alternative to purchase, but with some weight. It will also be necessary to talk to the Department of Public Works regarding what it takes to go out and collect them. Commissioner Mildren suggested the possibility that citizens could adopt the cans to offset the cost. It was also noted the heavier cans could be used at outer locations and smaller cans could be adopted by businesses for use in the downtown area. Mr. Frank stated the City crew was excellent in picking up the trash bags last year and felt it is not a real time constraint. He noted 20 cubic yards of trash last spring were picked up. Commissioners questioned the possibility of people using it to get rid of their household garbage, which was acknowledged is a reality. The issue of old tires not being properly disposed of was also brought up. City Assessor/Code Enforcement Officer Jason Alonen noted with the high cost for the tire grant last year, they could actually take tires to the Transfer Station for less cost. It was suggested to have a tire collection in the future. Mayor Corcoran would like to see what they can do and bring back garbage can styles/costs to the Commission.

No action was taken at this time.

- Q. Consider approving Resolution #022-002, a special assessment for 420 E. McLeod Avenue, Ironwood, MI for condemnation and demolition of hazardous stairwell.

Commissioner Semo questioned if this would hinder future development with the assessment. City Manager Scott Erickson stated it is hard to guess. Buildings are being purchased now, so hopefully a \$1,500 bill for doing that work is not an impediment.

Motion was made by Mildren, seconded by Semo, to approve Resolution #022-002, a special assessment for 420 E. McLeod Avenue, Ironwood, MI for condemnation and demolition of hazardous stairwell. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.

- R. Discuss and consider awarding a bid to Jake's Excavating, contingent upon the execution of Change Order #1, for the Drinking Water Asset Management (DWAM) Grant Project in the amount of \$401,350.20.

City Manager Scott Erickson noted the project is scaled back. The Change Order has changed the cost of the work itself. It has been reviewed, with the low bidder being Jake's Excavating. The project will be funded by a combination of grant funding and local funding from the City Water Fund.

***Motion** was made by Semo, seconded by Andresen, to award bid to Jake's Excavating, contingent upon the execution of Change Order #1, for the Drinking Water Asset Management (DWAM) Grant Project in the amount of \$401,350.20. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

- S. Discuss and consider approving deduct Change Order #1 with Jake's Excavating for the Drinking Water Asset Management (DWAM) Grant Project.

***Motion** was made by Mildren, seconded by Andresen, to approve deduct Change Order #1 with Jake's Excavating for the Drinking Water Asset Management (DWAM) Grant Project. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

- T. Discuss and consider setting a public hearing for 5:25 p.m. on March 28, 2022, to consider Resolution #022-005, approving a special assessment for 110 East Birch Street, Ironwood, MI, for condemnation and demolition of residential structure at this location.

City Manager Scott Erickson noted the City Commission had previously condemned this structure last summer. Public funds were used, and we now go forward with the process of putting it on the taxes. Almost \$15,000 was used to take the residential structure down.

***Motion** was made by Semo, seconded by Mildren, and carried to set a public hearing for 5:25 p.m. on March 28, 2022, to consider Resolution #022-005, approving a special assessment for 110 East Birch Street, Ironwood, MI, for condemnation and demolition of residential structure at this location. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

- U. Mayor's Appointment.

With one current vacancy and applications on file, Mayor Corcoran appointed Robert Stempihar to replace Mathew Sommer for the vacancy on the Pat O'Donnell Civic Center Board for a 3-year term (term expiring October 31, 2024).

***Motion** was made by Semo, seconded by Mildren, and carried to approve the Mayor's appointment of Robert Stempihar to replace Mathew Sommer for the vacancy on the Pat O'Donnell Civic Center Board for a 3 year term (term expiring October 31, 2024).*

- V. Manager's Report.

City Manager Scott B. Erickson verbally gave the Manager's report noting the following items:

- * Thank you to the DPW folks for blight clean-up last week at property on Cloverland Drive, which was accomplished within the court process. It went very well. He also stated a nice job was done by Jason Alonen, Assessor/Code Enforcement Officer. It worked well, with Ironwood Public Safety supporting the process. This went as well as could be expected. The City will go back on March 2, 2022 to follow-up with the Court and noted a strict stipulation can be put on it if it happens again.
- * A reminder COVID testing is going on for the next few weeks in the Memorial Building on Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- * Lieutenant Adam Clemens is retiring on February 26th. He has been with Public Safety for a long time. Commissioners were urged to stop by and wish him well.

W. Other Matters.

Commissioner Semo noted he will be out of town for the next meeting and requested an excused absence.

Motion was made by Mildren, seconded by Korpela, and carried to excuse Commissioner Semo's absence from the February 28, 2022, City Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Mildren thanked Lieutenant Adam Clemens for his years of service. He also stated West Iron County is having a welcoming parade for Olympic Snowboarder Nick Baumgartner. Congratulations to their city for a gold medal coming to Upper Michigan. Mildren asked that a congratulations be sent to their city and copy to Nick Baumgartner.

Commissioner Andresen wanted to extend a thank you to the DPW, Ironwood Public Safety, and City Staff for their efforts with the Downtown City Square ice-skating oval coming to fruition. It has been successful. He also wanted to extend a thank you to Andy Warren and Dan Finco who have been there every single day, watering and putting hoses away, which amounts to the majority of the work involved. Other volunteers are shoveling snow. He had a shout-out to his nephew, Axel Warren, the youngest volunteer out there shoveling today, at 3-years-old.

X. Adjournment.

Motion was made by Semo, seconded by Andresen, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 P.M.

Kim S. Corcoran, Mayor

Wendy L. Hagstrom, City Clerk