

Proceedings of the Ironwood City Commission Meeting

A Regular Meeting of the Ironwood City Commission was held in person and via Zoom at 5:30 P.M., along with a Public Hearing at 5:25 P.M. on Monday, June 27, 2022.

1. Mayor Corcoran called the public hearing to order at 5:25 P.M.

2. Recording of the Roll.

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

ABSENT: Commissioner Semo (excused).

3. Public Hearing: To receive public comment on proposed Ordinance No. 536, an Ordinance to Amend the Code of Ordinances, City of Ironwood, Michigan by Amending Section 17-69 of said Code Entitled “Notice to remove or eliminate causes”, subsection (d), “repeat offenders”.

City Assessor/Blight Officer Jason Alonen provided information on the proposed amendment, noting, it is amending the current ordinance that went into effect six years ago. This proposed amendment would be a longer time, with less of the contacts, and to skip that initial letter step. The \$70 fee is clarified now in the ordinance. Mayor Corcoran noted in summary, it would be going back longer, and stepping up the action.

No additional comments were received.

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, and Mayor Corcoran

ABSENT: Commissioner Semo (excused).

C. Approval of the Consent Agenda.*

*1) Approval of Minutes – Regular City Commission Meeting of June 13, 2022

*2) Review and Place on File:

a. Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes of April 4, 2022.

b. Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes of May 2, 2022.

Motion was made by Andresen, seconded by Korpela to approve the Consent Agenda. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.

D. Approval of the Agenda.

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

- E. Review and Place on File:
 - 1. Revenue & Expenditure Report.
 - 2. Cash and Investment Summary Report.

Financial reports from the Agenda Packet were presented by Finance Director/Treasurer, Paul Linn for the month ending May 31, 2022.

***Motion** was made by Korpela, seconded by Mildren, and carried to receive and place on file the Statement of Revenue & Expenditures Report for the month ending May 31, 2022 and the Cash and Investment Summary Report for May 2022.*

- F. Approval of Monthly Check Register Report.

***Motion** was made by Mildren, seconded by Korpela, to approve the Monthly Check Register Report for May 2022. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

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

Bill Martell of 420 W. Francis Street addressed Item M, the purchase of 205 W. Aurora Street, Wells Fargo and 634 E. Ayer Street, Josephson's Nursing Home. He noted the City of Ironwood desires to acquire certain foreclosed properties. He further stated if the city were to only purchase those two properties and no other, it is declaring the other neighborhoods don't desire equal consideration and is not stating the reasons why they want to purchase said properties. He indicated he believes the Commissioners want to purchase the properties for future housing development. Without stating in a resolution that the City of Ironwood is seeking them for housing development, he believes the resolution will be null and void. He questioned, as written, then is it legal and binding. He requested a reply from each Commissioner, declaring this is not for housing development next year.

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

Bill Martell 420 W. Francis spoke concerning the Economic Development Corporation. He stated their agendas are not up to date on the City of Ironwood web page and questioned why.

- I. City Engineer Project Updates.

City Engineer Scott Erickson spoke to the Commission on the status of active construction projects in the City of Ironwood as well as those projects in the preliminary design stage. Approximately 51 projects are in the works. Updates on the active projects were given.

OLD BUSINESS

- J. Discuss and consider approving Resolution #022-015 Amending the General Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2021-2022.

Finance Director/Treasurer Paul Linn presented information to the Commission regarding amending the General Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2021-22

***Motion** was made by Mildren, seconded by Korpela, to approve Resolution #022-015 Amending the General Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2021-222. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

- K. Discuss and consider approval of Contractors Application for Payment No. 7 to Ruotsala Construction, LLC in the amount of \$10,000.00 for the City of Ironwood – Downtown Square Project and authorize Mayor to sign all applicable documents.

Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio presented information affirming the Engineer’s Report, stating this payment covers the rest of the Downtown City Square Project.

***Motion** was made by Mildren, seconded by Andresen, to approve Contractors Application for Payment No. 7 to Ruotsala Construction, LLC in the amount of \$10,000.00 for the City of Ironwood – Downtown Square Project and authorize Mayor to sign all applicable documents. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

- L. Discuss and consider authorizing Payment #2 to Flowtrack Mountain Bike Trails, LLC in the amount of \$24,400.20 for the MDNR Trust Fund Mountain Bike Trail Project in Miners Memorial Park.

Andrew DiGiorgio stated that FlowTrack is currently on mile 4 of 10 miles as the City Engineer noted. Request made for second payment to Flowtrack

***Motion** was made by Andresen, seconded by Korpela, to authorize Payment #2 to Flowtrack Mountain Bike Trails, LLC in the amount of \$24,400.20 for the MDNR Trust Fund Mountain Bike Trail Project in Miners Memorial Park. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

NEW BUSINESS

- M. Discuss and consider adopting Resolution #022-016 to purchase foreclosed properties from the Foreclosing Governmental Unit, Gogebic County, and authorize the Mayor and City Manager to sign the Notice(s) to Purchase Foreclosed Property.

Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio noted these properties were brought to his attention from the City Assessor’s Office. Resolution #022-016 would exercise the City of Ironwood’s right of first refusal for a local unit to purchase tax foreclosed properties. The properties listed under Exhibits A and B are 205 West Aurora Street and 634 East Ayer Street, both located in the City of Ironwood. He discussed the properties with Finance Director Paul Linn and Community Development Director Tom Bergman, and they all felt these were great opportunities to secure development and our interest. Josephson’s is being desired by another entity. This Resolution does not mandate the City

of Ironwood to purchase; it just gives the City the first right of refusal, basically to put us potentially in front of the line.

Mayor Corcoran inquired of City Attorney Tim Dean if there were any concerns in the resolution as presented. City Attorney Tim Dean stated no.

Commissioner Mildren stated the former bank property has been an eyesore and bone of contention in our town. He noted he has received more questions about why we are putting up with it. This is a step in the right direction. Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio noted there is no one interested in the bank property at the moment, but there is a strong potential for community development.

***Motion** was made by Mildren, seconded by Andresen to adopt Resolution #022-016 to purchase foreclosed properties from the Foreclosing Governmental Unit, Gogebic County, and authorize the Mayor and City Manager to sign the Notice(s) to Purchase Foreclosed Property. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

N. Discuss and consider authorizing bids for playground equipment at the Krznarich Little League Field with funding from the Neighborhood Enhancement Program.

Community Development Director Tom Bergman gave the Project Description, noting the Krznarich Little League Field is a key asset for the City of Ironwood. The Little League Fields has served hundreds of families over multiple decades. In the past 10 years volunteers have put in hundreds of hours to improve the facility. In 2019, grant dollars paid for a paved path connecting the field to the Miners Memorial Heritage Park, thanks to funding from the Gogebic Range Health Foundation and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. One of the last pieces missing at the Fields is a playground for the younger kids while the older kids play ball.

Through the MSHDA Neighborhood Enhancement Program (NEP), the City of Ironwood was awarded \$22,500 in high performer funds. Originally the intent was to use these funds to fund a pickleball court at Patterson Park. The funds are not adequate to fund that project. He noted he will continue to work towards funding a pickleball court project going forward with other funding possibilities. The City previously applied for a DNR Trust Fund grant to fund the playground at the Little League field, but it wasn't funded. This is a great opportunity to fulfill that project. The little league field is receiving donations to fill the gap so a \$25,000 to \$30,000 play structure can be developed. For this meeting we are requesting permission to go out for bid to construct the little league playground. The MSHDA NEP funds must be spent by the end of 2022.

***Motion** was made by Mildren, seconded by Korpela, and carried to authorize bids for playground equipment at the Krznarich Little League Field with funding from the Neighborhood Enhancement Program.*

O. Discuss and consider authorizing Payment #1 to Jake's Excavating in the amount of \$64,970.50 for the Drinking Water Asset Management (DWAM) Grant Project, using a combination of grant funding and local funding from the City Water Fund.

City Engineer Scott Erickson noted what a nice job Jake's Excavating has started to identify material type, and this project is underway. He recommended approval of the payment.

Motion was made by Andresen, seconded by Korpela, to authorize Payment #1 to Jake's Excavating in the amount of \$64,970.50 for the Drinking Water Asset Management (DWAM) Grant Project, using a combination of grant funding and local funding from the City Water Fund. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.

- P. Discuss and consider awarding of replacement of Oak Street storm sewer manhole to Ross Peterson Construction in the amount of \$9,800.00 using funds from the Local Street Fund.

Department of Public Works Supervisor Bob Richards explained the need, noted he searched for 4 bids and received response for 3 bids. Ross Peterson Construction came in as the low bid and stated he is a good contractor. He recommended and is asking to go with Ross Peterson Construction.

Motion was made by Korpela, seconded by Mildren to award replacement of Oak Street storm sewer manhole to Ross Peterson Construction in the amount of \$9,800.00 using funds from the Local Street Fund. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.

- Q. Discuss and consider adopting Resolution #022-014 scheduling a Public Hearing on Monday, July 11, 2022 at 5:25 P.M. to hear comment on a blight violation at 524 and 528 E. Tamarack Street (52-126-105-050 & 52-26-105-050).

City Assessor/Blight Officer Jason Alonen presented information regarding the blight violation at 524 and 528 E. Tamarack Street and the process, further stating there are six vehicles as well as debris on the property. He is requesting Commission's approval to set a public hearing.

Motion was made by Andresen, seconded by Korpela, to adopt Resolution #022-014 scheduling a Public Hearing on Monday, July 11, 2022 at 5:25 P.M. to hear comment on a blight violation at 524 and 528 E. Tamarack Street (52-126-105-050 & 52-26-105-050). Unanimously passed by roll call vote.

- R. Manager's Report.

Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio verbally gave the Manager's report noting the following items:

- * City Staff has scheduled a CodeRed meeting Wednesday, June 29th at 9:30 a.m. to plan the notification system going forward. He is asking for two commissioners who want to be part of discussion. There are numerous ways to use the system and many opportunities. He would like the Commission's input on how they envision it working. How we can best serve the citizens of Ironwood with this service.
- * First Friday is this Friday. It is a great opportunity to come out to see downtown businesses and see the parks. This has entailed very hard work by Community Development to keep this going. It will be surrounding the 4th of July holiday.
- * Civic Center Manager search update was given. Applications are open until July 1st. The civic Center is a great facility. This is a great opportunity and a great fit for an applicant to move here or for someone from this area.
- * A newspaper advertisement for applications to be a member of the Human Relations Equity Committee (HREC) – will be published this week. The plan will be to form a board in mid-

August. This is the next step for our city. Advertising for other open positions with other city boards and committees will be advertised also.

- * The façade on Al's Furniture is being completed. The contractor has secured it, and it is now open for foot traffic again.
- * The Blight Department is busy and is now adding grass notices. About 70 blighted grass notices have gone out. Work will be tackled on those over the next few weeks.

Commissioner Mildren requested an update on the Compost site, noting he felt the attendant is doing a good job. Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio noted there was a learning curve, but we are tackling it as we move forward. There are two options to purchase tickets to drop off debris. It is working well. We are educating the community. The site worker has been helpful in working with people and educating them. It is moving forward well.

Commissioner Mildren also noted that Lowell Street is still being used instead of Douglas Boulevard as the Business US 2 Route. He stated the stop lights are not long enough to cross the highway safely. He requested to schedule a time where MDOT could come to Ironwood so they can work with us to make the highway traffic flow and use Douglas Boulevard, bringing it all together. Engineer Scott Erickson and Interim City Manager Andrew have had discussions about flow of traffic and the impact of it, reaching out to senators and representatives to bring attention. Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio stated they are working on a good strategy and will attempt to put together something in the next few weeks.

S. Other Matters.

Mayor Corcoran had a follow-up suggestion from the public comment, stating she would like to see a process made to take an overview and make sure everything is current on city web pages.

T. Adjournment.

***Motion** was made by Korpela, seconded by Mildren, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:14 P.M.*

Kim S. Corcoran, Mayor

Wendy L. Hagstrom, City Clerk