

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. on Monday, July 25, 2022.

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 of June 27, 2022

*2) Review and Place on File: Ironwood Housing Commission Meeting Minutes of July 12, 2022.

Motion was made by Semo, 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 Andresen, 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 June 30, 2022.

Motion was made by Semo, seconded by Korpela, and carried to receive and place on file the Statement of Revenue & Expenditures Report for the month ending June 30, 2022 and the Cash and Investment Summary Report for June 2022.

F. Approval of Monthly Check Register Report.

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

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

There were none.

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

Sid Rosen of 741 Cass Avenue, Kingsford, Michigan addressed the Commission. He noted there are three (3) different types of licenses we are looking at in this city. He presented information on the retail license process and ended with the microbusiness that is selling products it grows and processes. As of March 7th, a new Class A was started. It is functioning more as a dispensary than a microbusiness. You can purchase from any wholesaler and function as a retail business, causing an almost inequity in the numbers and projections. It will cause an undue strain. He is strongly recommending maintaining the two (2) licenses. Mayor Corcoran thanked him and stated the Commission, along with the City Attorney, will be doing their due diligence and review what is going on.

Michelle Willis of 1580 North Stephenson Avenue in Iron Mountain, Michigan addressed the Commission, stating she is the training manager at RIZE. She is looking forward to being in the community and felt very strongly that anyone who does open up a dispensary holds responsibility of educating the community. There is a responsibility to focus on that part and the important medicinal value. She admitted there are construction setbacks, but she values this business and is excited for the opportunity going forward.

Myron Berry of 329 Doraland Street in Kingsford, Michigan addressed the City Commission. He did the site plan and engineering for the RIZE building here in town. In reading newspapers, he saw concerns expressed with traffic flow and people getting through the existing dispensary. They have a larger parking lot as well as a drive-thru and will be able to accommodate 35 – 40 people through the inside of the building so problems of traffic will disappear. He suggested when they open it will alleviate the congestion because there will be adequate parking.

Tom Turcotte of 87 Wisconsin Avenue stated he had a concern. Lume has eleven (11) dispensaries. They are talking about shutting down 3, possibly 4. It is too congested in little towns. They can't keep up. After the stores close, those 25-30 people are out of work, and now you have a vacant building. It would look terrible, and you should keep the numbers down.

Randy Kashich of 342 Lake Avenue stated he was present to make an official complaint regarding a recently hired public safety officer, Kevin "Roberts", noting he made an illegal traffic stop.

Mayor Corcoran along with Public Safety Director and Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio directed the conversation to the correct process of filling out a citizen's complaint form. Public Safety could then look into the complaint, or he could opt to have an outside agency look into it.

Bromley Hall of Munising, Michigan spoke *via Zoom*. He is the Contractor for RIZE. He gave a schedule update on the RIZE location in Ironwood. The exterior is close to completion, and an update on interior construction was given. He commented on comparisons between projects of the two awarded applicants. It is unfair to make a comparison, stating RIZE is far above in complexity and local investment.

Julie Wentworth of Petoskey, Michigan addressed the Commission *via Zoom* and thanked the Commission for the opportunity to speak. She noted she is the owner of RIZE. She applied for the license in Ironwood because of the limit of two (2) retail licenses, and it was built on the premise the Commission would allow two (2). Their plan would look different if she thought more licenses would be looked at. She quoted the former Mayor's comments when two (2) retail licenses were approved. She noted she has a dispensary in Marquette. She leases the building there and can pull out at any time she wants. She urged the Commission to limit the number of licenses. More is not always better. She stated she needs assurance from the Commission to continue.

Mayor Corcoran stated the Commission needs some education and will be working with the City Attorney for the correct path to take. She thanked everyone for their comments. Commissioner Mildren also thanked everyone for their comments. He requested that Ms. Wentworth's notes be sent to the Mayor and Community Development Director. He would appreciate it. Julie Wentworth did comment further to note she has emailed the Commission all her information.

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. The water treatment plant project was addressed, noting options will be discussed at the next meeting as the bids came in significantly over budget.

OLD BUSINESS

- J. Discuss and consider approval of Contractor's Application for Payment # 1 in the amount of \$21,584.43 to P K Contracting for Pavement Striping.

Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio noted information Scott Erickson had presented to the Commission during the Engineer's Project Updates. This item is to request approval for Payment #1.

Motion was made by Semo, seconded by Korpela, to approve Contractor's Application for Payment # 1 in the amount of \$21,584.43 to P K Contracting for Pavement Striping. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.

- K. Discuss and consider authorizing Payment # 4 to Flowtrack Mountain Bike Trails, LLC in the amount of \$19,951.14 for the MDNR Trust Fund Mountain Bike Trail Project in Miners Memorial Park.

Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio stated that FlowTrack continues to make progress on the bike trail project. This is the request for the fourth payment to Flowtrack. Project completion is anticipated at the end of September.

Motion was made by Mildren, seconded by Korpela, to authorize Payment # 4 to Flowtrack Mountain Bike Trails, LLC in the amount of \$19,951.14 for the MDNR Trust Fund Mountain Bike Trail Project in Miners Memorial Park. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.

- L. Discuss and consider awarding bid for playground equipment at the Krznarich Little League Field in the amount of \$25,000 with \$22,500 in funding from the MSHDA Neighborhood Enhancement Program and \$2,500 from donations and local funds.

Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio noted that two bids were received. Penchura Option 3 was the recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Committee in the total amount of \$25,000. Funds need to be spent by the end of this year, so this was put on the fast track. The playground is anticipated to be completed by this fall.

***Motion** was made by Semo, seconded by Andresen, to award a bid to Penchura in the amount of \$25,000 for installation of the playground equipment at the Krznarich Little League Field, with \$22,500 in funding from the MSDHA Neighborhood Enhancement Program and \$2,500 from donations in local funds. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

- M. Discuss and consider awarding bid on Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) for Jessieville Booster Station to Binz Brothers, Inc. for \$14,100 using Water Funds.

Department of Public Works Supervisor Bob Richards confirmed with the City Commission there was only one bid submitted for the VFD that came from Binz Brothers, Inc. He stated he knows they are qualified, and they have done good work in the past for the City of Ironwood.

***Motion** was made by Mildren, seconded by Korpela, to award a bid to Binz Brothers, Inc., in the amount of \$14,100 using Water Funds. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

- N. Discuss and consider authorizing Payment # 2 to Jake's Excavating in the amount of \$53,779.50 for the Drinking Water Asset Management (DWAM) Grant Project, using a combination of grant funding and local funding from the City Water Fund.

Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio stated this is the service line work. They are requesting payment for work done. He noted what a nice job Jake's Excavating is doing, they have started to identify material type, and this project is underway. He recommended approval of the payment.

***Motion** was made by Andresen, seconded by Mildren, to authorize Payment # 2 to Jake's Excavating in the amount of \$53,779.50 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.*

NEW BUSINESS

- O. Discuss and consider recommendation from Civic Center Board to hire Civic Center Manager.

Mayor Kim Corcoran addressed the full City Commission regarding the interviews and candidates for Civic Center Manager. She was part of the board that interviewed four candidates. It then went to a discussion with the Civic Center Board, and the Board would like to recommend hiring Jay Kivisto, who presented a great vision and ideas for the Civic Center going forward. She would like to follow through with a motion to hire Jay Kivisto.

Motion was made by Korpela, seconded by Mildren, to hire Jay Kivisto for the position of Civic Center Manager. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.

- P. Discuss and consider purchasing Michigan DNR Surplus Properties in the total amount of \$12,660.

Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio addressed the Commission regarding the surplus properties the DNR is offering for sale. Two of the parcels available are located adjacent to Phase 2 of the Southern Beltline Railroad grade acquisition and with the Water Trail Project that will stretch from Norrie Park to the City lot on Hemlock Street along the Montreal River.

At the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting on July 14th, the Committee reviewed the property locations and recommended the City move forward with purchasing the two DNR parcels described in the letter included in the Agenda Packet.

Motion was made by Korpela, seconded by Semo, to purchase the two Michigan DNR Surplus Properties as described in Item P in the total amount of \$12,660. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.

- Q. Discuss and consider approving easements with Northern States Power Company for powerline improvement.

City Engineer Scott Erickson noted the format has been re-worked and presented to the Commission. Changes were noted, and it was further stated this easement runs through Miners Memorial Park.

Commissioner Semo noted he cannot support the easements until he understands more about them. They are scattered. City Engineer Scott Erickson stated Northern States Power can come in and walk through this with everyone or come to a meeting to address it. Commissioner Semo further stated we need time to review and know what we are saying yes to.

No action was taken on this matter.

- R. Discuss and consider approving a License Agreement with Northern States Power for the installation and maintenance of fencing within city right-of-way.

City Engineer Scott Erickson noted it is a related agreement, but separate. The area they would be fencing is off of Elm Street and Scott Avenue. There is a mine shaft there that has settled and is a safety issue. Northern States Power is asking for a license agreement to put it in the city's right-of-way. It was further noted by Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio that one correction will need to be made to the license agreement document, to correct State of "Wisconsin" in the document to "Michigan".

Motion was made by Mildren, seconded by Korpela, to approve a License Agreement with Northern States Power for the installation and maintenance of fencing within city right-of-way, noting a correction to change "Wisconsin" to "Michigan" in the document language. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.

- S. Discuss and consider authorization to purchase five (5) runs of custom outdoor stair railing for three (3) entrances in the amount of \$5,756.00 for the Ironwood Municipal Memorial Building, using budgeted funds.

Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio stated that U.P. Fabricating Co., Inc. has presented a quote to create custom stair railing. This is to follow-up on the budgeted projects to update and maintain the Memorial Building. He requested authorization to purchase the custom railing from U.P. Fabricating.

***Motion** was made by Semo, seconded by Korpela, to authorize the purchase of five (5) runs of custom outdoor stair railing for three (3) entrances from U. P. Fabricating Co., Inc. in the amount of \$5,756.00 for the Ironwood Municipal Memorial Building using budgeted funds. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

- T. Discuss and consider authorizing bids for an upgrade in electrical lighting for the Ironwood Municipal Memorial Building gymnasium, locker rooms and showers using budgeted funds.

Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio noted this project has been budgeted for, and it is another capital improvement scheduled for the Memorial Building.

***Motion** was made by Mildren, seconded by Semo, and carried to authorize bids for an upgrade in electrical lighting for the Ironwood Municipal Memorial Building gymnasium, locker rooms, and showers using budgeted funds.*

- U. Discuss and consider authorizing bids for tuck pointing the top half of southwest wall and westerly front doorway of the Ironwood Municipal Memorial Building using budgeted funds.

Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio noted once again, a maintenance item to the building that has been budgeted for, and if bids are authorized, we're able to move forward

***Motion** was made by Semo, seconded by Korpela, and carried to authorize bids for tuck pointing the top half of southwest wall and westerly front doorway of the Ironwood Municipal Memorial Building using budgeted funds.*

- V. Discuss and consider authorizing bids for courtyard resurfacing of Ironwood Municipal Memorial Building using budgeted funds.

Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio noted this is another budgeted item. There is leaking in the basement. This will address this issue by maintaining outside areas.

***Motion** was made by Semo, seconded by Korpela, and carried to authorize bids for courtyard resurfacing of Ironwood Municipal Memorial Building using budgeted funds.*

- W. Discuss and consider authorizing proposal from Ahern Fire Protection in the amount of \$11,997.00 to design and engineer a new code-compliant fire alarm system for the Ironwood Municipal Memorial Building using budgeted funds.

Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio noted the City Clerk has reached out to three (3) different fire protection service companies. We need to bring a new system in and design a whole new alarm system. Ahern is charging for the design. This company is one of the few who will design. Once we receive the design, we will put it out for bid. This is a necessary step to get to the next step. They wanted to come in and do a full design.

***Motion** was made by Semo, seconded by Mildren, to authorize the proposal from Ahern Fire Protection in the amount of \$11,997.00 to design and engineer a new code-compliant fire alarm system for the Ironwood Municipal Memorial Building using budgeted funds. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

- X. Discuss and consider granting a request for a “Special Water Rate” for the Gogebic County Fair from August 11, 2022 – August 14, 2022.

Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio noted this is a past practice to offset their costs at the Gogebic County Fair, and to continue a great event.

***Motion** was made by Mildren, seconded by Andresen to grant the request for a “Special Water Rate” for the Gogebic County Fair from August 11, 2022 – August 14, 2022. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

- Y. Discuss and consider authorizing payment of Miller-Bradford Invoice in the amount of \$5,700.08 for repairs to Front End Loader #74 using funds from the Vehicle Maintenance Fund.

Department of Public Works Supervisor Bob Richards stated they had called in Miller-Bradford to repair a seal on the front-end loader, but there was more damage to the area, so the extra charge created the total price of \$5,700.08 that needs authorization to pay.

***Motion** was made by Semo, seconded by Mildren, to authorize payment of Miller-Bradford Invoice in the amount of \$5,700.08 for repairs to Front End Loader #74 using funds from the Vehicle Maintenance Fund. Unanimously passed by roll call vote.*

- Z. Discuss and consider authorization to bid for 3,000 tons of street sand.

Department of Public Works Supervisor Bob Richards asked for authorization to bid as it is needed every year and is added to salt for maintaining roads during the winter.

***Motion** was made by Semo, seconded by Mildren, and carried to authorize bids for 3,000 tons of street sand.*

- A1. Discuss and consider authorization to bid for 1,000 tons of ditch sand.

Department of Public Works Supervisor Bob Richards stated the ditch sand is used to fill utility digs for sewers, water, and product installations.

***Motion** was made by Mildren, seconded by Andresen, and carried to authorize bids for 1,000 tons of ditch sand.*

- B1. Discuss and consider authorization to bid for 1,500 tons of road gravel.

Department of Public Works Supervisor Bob Richards stated the road gravel is used for alleys and roadsides, and he is requesting authorization to bid.

***Motion** was made by Mildren, seconded by Semo, and carried to authorize bids for 1,500 tons of road gravel.*

C1. Manager's Report.

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

- * The water treatment plant project bids were well over budgeted dollars. The City Staff and Coleman Engineering have been working hard with this challenge, and hopefully there will be some positive options to continue to move forward within the next few weeks.
- * An update on the blight on Tamarack Street. City Assessor and Blight Officer Jason Alonen stated the owner is making significant progress and remediating. The process is working, and Jason Alonen will continue to monitor.
- * Finance Director Paul Linn has confirmed the city has received the final payment of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds of \$255,000.00, so that money is now available.
- * Property taxes were mailed out and are due August 10th, 2022.
- * The Lake Avenue sewer and water project has been completed. Restoration of landscaping will take place, having Jake's Excavating come back in and do the restoration work.
- * There is a request to move the City Commission meetings back into the Chambers upstairs. Complaints are ongoing regarding citizens being able to hear. The strategy in August will be to move meetings back upstairs.

D1. Other Matters.

Commissioner Semo requested an excused absence for the next City Commission meeting.

***Motion** was made by Mildren, seconded by Andresen, and carried to excuse Commissioner Semo from the August 8, 2022 Regular City Commission Meeting.*

Commissioner Mildren wanted to note that hopefully prices and costs will come down for the water treatment plant. He suggested re-bidding it all. Interim City Manager Andrew DiGiorgio stated that is an option being considered, and again noted options and recommendations will be brought back to the Commission in the weeks to follow.

E1. Adjournment.

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

Kim S. Corcoran, Mayor

Wendy L. Hagstrom, City Clerk