

BROWN CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

NOVEMBER 9, 2020

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY MAYOR JULIE MILLER AT 7:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE LED BY MAYOR JULIE MILLER.

PRESENT: Mayor Julie Miller; Councilmembers: Stacy Biel, Patricia Jacobson, Christine Lee and Walter Robison; City Manager Clint Holmes and City Attorney Gregory Stremers.

ABSENT: Councilmembers Ross McIvor and Eugene Navock; City Clerk Juanita Smith.

GUESTS: Police Lieutenant Emily K. Medaugh; Kevin Burke and Mike Juip.

ADDITIONS, CORRECTIONS AND DELETIONS TO AGENDA: None.

CORRECTION & APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by CM Biel, second by CM Jacobson, to accept the Regular Meeting Minutes of October 26, 2020 as presented. Motion carried.

PAY BILLS:

Motion by CM Jacobson, second by CM Lee, to pay the bills in the following funds: **General - \$25,330.41** (10078-10122), **Payroll - \$25,906.90** (9646-9664 plus EFT), **Local Street - \$13,400.00** (4348-4349), **Sanitary Sewer - \$1,267.74** (3932-3935), **Water - \$1,058.24** (3275-3279), **Arsenic Abatement - \$10.56** (1526), **Storm Sewer - \$263.60** (1321) and **Equipment - \$1,102.48** (1735-1739). Motion carried.

POLICE REPORT: Report reviewed. No questions or concerns. Lieutenant Medaugh noted that the Ford police car had brake parts and an oxygen sensor replaced by Tubbs Brothers in Sandusky at a cost of \$1,018.87.

PERSONAL APPEARANCES: None Scheduled.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS & COMMENTS: None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None Scheduled.

PUBLIC HEARING: None Scheduled.

RESOLUTIONS: None Scheduled.

ORDINANCES: None Scheduled.

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:

1. **4432 Autumn Gold:** Construct 24' X 32' pole barn with new driveway. Will require a County Permit.

Motion by CM Lee, second by CM Biel, to approve the request for a building permit for a 24' x 32' pole barn at 4432 Autumn Gold. The building permit may be picked up at the City Hall after 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 10, 2020. The owner of 4432 Autumn Gold must then go to the Sanilac County Department of Construction to acquire the required permit. Motion carried.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

1. **Presidential Election:** The election was highly organized and went very well. Voters were polite and cooperative. The election workers were very dedicated and did an excellent job educating voters and keeping the process as efficient as possible. Special mention is directed to Stephanie Stimson for her outstanding work and for truly going above and beyond her required duties.
2. **Sewer / Lift Station Project:** The City, Spicer and USDA-RD had a conference call on October 16th to discuss details associated with applying for a SEARCH Grant to fund a sanitary sewer modeling study. The initial eAuthentication account acquisition process, to include receiving access to the USDA-RD data base, was completed. Additional application forms and access permissions must be granted by USDA-RD to continue the grant application process.
3. **Reed Street:** City staff met with engineers from Spicer on November 6th to inspect Reed Street and begin building a Request For Proposals (RFP). Plan is to bid out the project no later than mid-January so that actual construction can begin in early 2021. Since residents will be responsible for the cost of 50% of the sidewalks, a Public Hearing will need to be scheduled once the City has an idea of what the actual costs will be. Spicer recommends that only sections of curb and gutter that are in bad shape should be replaced, not all. Cost savings could be as much as \$50,000. What does the City Council recommend?

The City Council discussed whether to do a complete replacement of curb and gutter on Reed Street or just replace those sections in great disrepair. The consensus was to request bids for both so a decision can be made once relative costs are known

4. **Delinquent Utility Payments:** The State of Michigan ordered public water utilities, to include the City of Brown City, not to shut-off water service to residents for non-payment of utility bills due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, that program is expected to end soon. The City has about 20 accounts that have balances due stretching back to April. A letter was sent to each of the account holders along with their November utility bill telling them the amount due and notifying them that a payment plan is available. So far, only one resident has paid off their account.
5. **Street Parking:** Residents are reminded that there is no on-street parking within the City Limits between November 1st and April 1st between the hours of 2:00 AM and 6:00 AM so as not to impede or interfere with snow removal efforts (City Ordinance §70.06 (L)). Violators may receive a Civil Infraction ticket and could be towed.
6. **Leaf Vacuuming:** The DPW is vacuuming leaves throughout the City. However, the machine has a limited reach. Residents are reminded to rake their leaves to within 36" of the curb or road edge.
7. **Veterans Day:** City Hall, police and DPW will be closed on Wednesday, November 11th in honor of Veterans Day. The DPW will have an employee on-call.

8. **Sanilac County Historical Society:** The Society does an annual auction to raise funds. Most of their events were cancelled this year due to the pandemic. They are asking “each of the cities/villages/townships in Sanilac County to participate by donating a basket of items that reflect your town, have a minimum suggested value of \$200, and that will be auctioned off to support the SCHS.” The City Manager stated that tax dollars cannot be used for this purpose.

The City Council decided to table this request until the November 23rd meeting.

9. **COVID-19:** The City continues to closely monitor the situation. No employees have exhibited symptoms to date. The City Hall office door is being locked during business hours due to the increase in infections within the community. Customers should use mail, email, the utility payment drop box and telephone for conducting business if possible. City Hall is open to the public by appointment only, and masks should be worn and no more than one customer at a time should be in City Hall.

Motion by CM Lee, second by CM Jacobson, to close City Hall to the public until COVID-19 becomes less of a threat in the City. ROLL CALL VOTE: CM LEE – YES, CM NAVOCK – ABSENT, CM JACOBSON – YES, CM ROBISON – NO, CM BIEL – YES. CM McIVOR – ABSENT. 3 YES VOTES, 1 NO VOTES, 0 ABSTAINING, 2 ABSENT. Motion carried.

ATTORNEY’S REPORT: The Michigan Legislature approved a law allowing remote public meetings to continue. A formal policy adopted by the City would be required before remote meetings can take place.

TREASURER’S REPORT: None

CLERK’S REPORT:

1. During the November 3rd election, Brown City voters cast 648 ballots representing about 75% of registered voters in our community. Of those, 244 were absentee ballots, five were collected curbside, and 10 were retrieved from quarantined voters. Also, 15 individuals were newly registered and voted.
2. The Mayor and City Council directed that an advertisement be placed in the Sanilac County News stating that applications for City Clerk, for appointment to fill the 2020-2022 term, are available at City Hall. Applications will be accepted until December 10th.

MAYOR’S REPORT:

1. **Tree Lighting** – Main Street between St Marys and James Streets – Friday, December 4th. Main Street will be closed from 5-7 PM; Elvis will perform between 5:30-6:30 PM. The Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony will be held on December 4th in front of the City Hall at 6 PM. All are invited to attend.
2. **“Meet the Merchants”** – Jamie Daws from Brown City Town & Country Realty is planning an event where if people visit local stores and receive a stamp, they can win prizes. The start of this event, and associated details, are pending.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Building and Grounds (McIvor) – Absent.
2. Personnel (Biel) – None.
3. Police / Fire Authority (Lee) –
 - a. Fire Authority meeting scheduled for November 3rd was cancelled.

- b. The City Council needs to formally approve the police pay adjustments recommended by the Police Committee and discussed at the last City Council meeting.

Motion by CM Lee, Second by CM Jacobson, to pay Lieutenant Emily K. Medaugh a wage of \$20.50 per hour with the same percentage wage increase awarded to other employees on April 1st, 2021, and to award one week (40 hours) of vacation time effective April 1st, and to meet to discuss a wage and title adjustment at the end of her one-year probation; to hire an additional full-time officer at \$18.00 per hour with the same percentage wage increase awarded to other employees on April 1st and the same benefits as other new employees; and to set the wage for part-time patrol officers at \$16.50 per hour. ROLL CALL VOTE: CM LEE – YES, CM NAVOCK – ABSENT, CM JACOBSON – YES, CM ROBISON – YES, CM BIEL – YES. CM McIVOR – ABSENT. 4 YES VOTES, 0 NO VOTES, 0 ABSTAINING, 2 ABSENT. Motion carried.

4. Streets and Sidewalks (Navock) – Absent.
5. Tax and Finance (Jacobson) – None.
6. Water and Sewer (Robison) – None.

GENERAL CONCERNS OF THE COUNCIL: None.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS & COMMENTS: None.

CLOSED SESSION: None Scheduled.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by CM Lee, second by CM Jacobson, to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Juanita Smith
City Clerk