

Strawberry Point City Council
Regular Meeting March 6, 2019

The Strawberry Point City Council met for a regular meeting on Wednesday, March 6, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. inside the Council Chambers of City Hall. Mayor Bente presided and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Council members answering roll call were Rowcliffe, Chapman, Johnson, Evans, Hansel.

Mayor Bente mentioned that the agenda needed to be amended to move the Strawberry Point Library Board Minutes from “Unfinished Business” to “Information”. Johnson made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Hansel seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Rowcliffe, Chapman, Johnson, Evans, Hansel. Nays: None. Motion passes.

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes from February 20th

Claims

Evans stated that on the second page of the minutes, first full paragraph, third sentence should read “Evans inquired what would occur should the financial plans (to be voted on at the March 6th Council meeting) not be approved by Council.” Chapman made a motion to approve the consent agenda with the changes to the February 20th minutes. Evans seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Rowcliffe, Chapman, Johnson, Evans, Hansel. Nays: None. Motion passes.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Council reviewed the second reading of Ordinance 19-03 – An Ordinance Amendment to the Code of Ordinances of the City of Strawberry Point, Iowa Article 55.12 to raise solid waste collection fees. Hansel made a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 19-03. Chapman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Rowcliffe, Chapman, Johnson, Evans, Hansel. Nays: None. Motion passes.

Evans made a motion to waive the third reading of Ordinance 19-03 – An Ordinance Amendment to the Code of Ordinances of the City of Strawberry Point, Iowa Article 55.12 to raise solid waste collection fees. Johnson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Rowcliffe, Chapman, Johnson, Evans, Hansel. Nays: None. Motion passes.

A full copy of Ordinance 19-03 is available at City Hall.

INFORMATION

Council had no questions regarding the Strawberry Point Library Board Minutes from January 24, 2019.

NEW BUSINESS

Council reviewed the recommendation from the Tree Board to appoint Duane Johnson to the Tree Board. Evans made a motion to appoint Duane Johnson to the Tree Board. Hansel seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Rowcliffe, Chapman, Evans, Hansel. Nays: None. Abstain: Johnson. Motion passes.

Council reviewed the request to send office staff spring training for the new software. Training would cover updates and upgrades to the new software. Request would require office closer on Wednesday, April 10th. Rowcliffe made a motion to approve the training request for City Hall office staff. Johnson seconded the motion. Ayes: Rowcliffe, Chapman, Johnson, Evans, Hansel. Nays: None. Motion passes.

Mayor Bente reviewed the need to open a public hearing for the FY 2019-2020 Budget. Johnson moved to open the public hearing, seconded by Rowcliffe. Mayor Bente declared the public hearing was open. Hearing no questions or concerns, Rowcliffe moved to close the public hearing. Johnson seconded the motion.

Rowcliffe made a motion to approve Resolution 19-06 – A resolution approving the FY 2019-2020 Budget. Chapman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Rowcliffe, Chapman, Johnson, Evans, Hansel. Nays: None. Motion passes.

Council reviewed the first reading of Ordinance 19-04 – An Ordinance Amending the Code of Ordinances of the City of Strawberry Point, Iowa, by amending provisions pertaining to the Park and Recreation Board. Osweiler stated she had worked with current Board President Danielle West. The ordinance proposed was drafted the same as the failed Ordinance 19-01. Brief discussion identified that there were a few in-town residents who expressed interest in volunteering but most of the people who wish to serve live in the county. Johnson made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 19-04 – an ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances of the City of Strawberry Point, Iowa, by amending provisions pertaining to the Park and Recreation Board. Evans seconded the motion. Ayes: Rowcliffe, Chapman, Johnson, Evans. Nays: Hansel. Motion passes.

Council reviewed the first reading of Ordinance 19-05 – An Ordinance Amending the Code of Ordinances of the City of Strawberry Point, Iowa, by amending provisions pertaining to permitting golf carts to be operated on city streets. Osweiler stated the change was discussed during the budget workshops earlier this year. The ordinance seeks to change permitting from a one-time fee to an annual fee. Evans made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 19-05. Johnson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Rowcliffe, Chapman, Johnson, Evans, Hansel. Nays: None. Motion passes.

Council reviewed the first reading of Ordinance 19-06 – An Ordinance Amending the Code of Ordinances of the City of Strawberry Point, Iowa, by amending provisions pertaining to permitting all-terrain vehicles to be operated on city streets. Osweiler stated the change was in the same line of thinking as Ordinance 19-05, to create an annual permit fee. Hansel was strongly opposed to the ordinance, stating that ATV registration is required in Clayton County and felt that this ordinance was “double-dipping”. Discussion continued that that fees could be used to help offset wear and tear on city streets. Also, the city does not receive any funds that the county collects through their registration process. There was also discussion that snowmobiles have caused more issues in the past few years in town that perhaps those should be permitted. It was also noted that snowmobiles are not allowed on city streets as golf carts and ATV’s are. After further discussion, Johnson made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 19-06 – An ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances of the City of Strawberry Point, Iowa, by amending provisions pertaining to permitting all-terrain vehicles to be operated on city streets. Evans seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Rowcliffe, Chapman, Johnson, Evans. Nays: Hansel. Motion passes.

Mayor Bente delivered a Keep Iowa Beautiful Proclamation, declaring April 2019 Keep Iowa Beautiful Month.

Matt Schattgen with the Strawberry Point Fire Department & a member of the new fire station building committee addressed Council. Schattgen provided two additional interest rates offered, so the Council could compare with the interest rate offered by Citizens State Bank. Fidelity Bank & Trust offered 4.5%, while Community Savings Bank offered 4.616%. Both interest rates were higher than the 3.5% offered by Citizens State Bank. Schattgen also requested tabling Resolution 19-07, in order to allow time for the bonding attorney to amend the drafted resolution to state “up to \$750,000”. There was much discussion on the topic.

Hansel suggested possibly using funds available from the Electric Fund, to pay for the electrical expenses of the building project, which are estimated to cost \$50,000. In response to this topic, concern was raised by Osweiler about reviewing fund totals prior to agreeing to this, in order to ensure the fund is not depleted and the city maintains a reserve for infrastructure repairs and maintenance. Also, a resident from town wanted the Council to keep in mind that money is still owed on our Electric Bond for the

generation plant.

Evans inquired what total does the Strawberry Point Firefighters Association have in reserves from their fundraising efforts so far. Schattgen replied approximately \$15,000 from a recent direct mailing appeal and \$3,000 to \$4,000 is typically raised during their annual breakfast. There was much discussion on fundraising. Several citizens and Council members would like to see fundraising opportunities looked into prior to a loan being pursued. Kevin Baumgartner spoke of his fundraising experiences while working on the splash pool project. Other notable points mentioned were that many grants are not available if a project is already funded. Further, it was suggested that people living outside the town will be unwilling to donate to a project that is already fully funded. Evans inquired whether the Association would be willing to share financials with the city on a quarterly basis while fundraising and the project is taking place. Schattgen stated absolutely, the Association seeks to be transparent during the entire process.

Another item that was discussed was raising taxes. While it has always been the intention for this project to not raise property taxes, because the loan the city is reviewing is considered general obligation debt, there is no guarantee that in the future, the city does not levy for it. A concerned citizen discussed that the city of Evansdale was forced to raise taxes and did not want to see that happen here. Another citizen brought up that the city of Garnavillo had a problem when their fire department building could not be covered by funds and the city had to cover the remaining balance.

With the current loan the city is reviewing. LOST funds would only cover approximately \$40,000.00, leaving a deficit of \$20,000.00. With the 2019-2020 Budget just being passed, the city covered the \$20,000 by increasing the Fire Department's budget by that amount. Discussion ensued regarding how this could be maintained over the 15-year note proposed. It was noted that at the most recent Fire Department meeting, there was a unanimous vote passed that should the city not have the funds to cover this, the Fire Department agreed to forgo all their pay for calls and meeting – currently budgeted to cost \$18,000. Many felt that they did not agree with the Fire Department going without pay.

Other concerns discussed were that the Ambulance Service was no longer included in the project, however it was identified that the Ambulance Service left the project voluntarily so that project costs could be reduced. Further, the Ambulance hoped to share the old fire station with the Police Department.

At the conclusion of this discussion, it was agreed to table the resolution until the May 1st, 2019 regular Council meeting. At the meeting scheduled for March 20th, it was agreed, the Council would review and approve final project plans & specifications. The project will then be put out to bid, with bids due approximately around April 19th. Once the bids are opened and the total project cost is known, the Council will plan to have a special Council meeting to discuss loan terms, at the conclusion, Osweiler will convey those to the bonding attorney to amend Resolution 19-07. During this time period, the Fire Department will work on fundraising, specifically meeting with individual in the fire district who may be able to donate to help the project. The results of their efforts will be discussed along with the loan terms.

OTHER BUSINESS

Evans stated that she would like the city staff to look into the cooler/refrigerator that is sitting in the civic center kitchen. Osweiler believed it was non-operational. She stated the staff would review and possibly dispose of this during the spring clean-up in May.

Evans also stated that there were some necessities that are needed in the Civic Center kitchen, especially for those individuals or groups who rent the facility. Items such as dish cloths/sponges/scrubbers. Osweiler asked Evans to provide her with a list of those items so they can be

purchased.

Oswailer asked that Hansel work with her regarding drafting a snowmobile ordinance should Hansel like to see one presented to the Council for review. Oswailer also asked if any Council has opinions on the matter to please convey those to her.

With no further business, Rowcliffe moved to adjourn at 8:51 p.m. Evans seconded the motion. Motion passes.

Alison Oswailer, City Clerk/Administrator

Jeff Bente, Mayor