

City of Comfrey Minutes
June 11, 2024 at 6:30 PM
Comfrey Community Center

The City Council of Comfrey met in regular session on Tuesday, June 11, 2024 at 6:30 PM in the community center with all council members present. Also in attendance were S Berberich, J Seidl, J Henning, G Poortvliet, M Smith, M Juhnke, D Callanan, C Moody, L Schumann, J Schumann, N Richter, C Schleif, S Fair, S Sharp and City Attorney Paul Muske. Mayor Richter presided.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited.

The agenda was reviewed and Mayor Richter asked to add lease agreement under new business.

The May 14, 2024 regular meeting minutes were approved on motion made by Redman, second by Kastner and carried unanimously.

Total bills in the amount of \$106,188.70 were reviewed and approved on a motion made by Arnsdorf, second by Evers and carried unanimously.

A resolution expressing acceptance and appreciation for memorial donations to the first responders from the Jerry Evers family of \$95, Dennis Scholtz family of \$180 and the Roger Hoek family of \$35 and a library donation of \$40 on a motion made by Arnsdorf, second by Redman and carried unanimously.

The May financial report was reviewed and approved on a motion made by Redman, second by Evers and carried unanimously.

Berberich reported both plants are running well. The street light base has been built and plans to pick up this week. A motion was made by Redman, second by Arnsdorf and carried unanimously to do 5 additional bases which were budgeted for this year. A motion was made to bring Paige McMullen back to paint curbs at the same rate as last year of \$16.50 on a motion made by Evers, second by Kastner and carried unanimously.

Fire Chief Berberich reported the department had their physicals and all 27 firemen participated. The newest fire fighter Jeff Hennig has completed his training and passed all of his tests.

First Responder Captain Veerkamp reported they received 3 new radios through a grant applied for by South Central EMS. They will have variance training in January which she will be applying for a grant to help cover the cost.

The library board met in May. The summer reading program has started up. They have a budget meeting planned in June.

Brown County Sheriff Jason Seidl was present and reviewed the police report for the month of May. Discussion was had about the police contract for the City of Comfrey. Some questions that the council will address in the future are about additional patrol hours and the possibility of Comfrey hiring its own fulltime officer. There is a current shortage of officers in the area which may make a fulltime officer for Comfrey difficult to find.

Region 9 Development Commission representatives Sabri Fair and Sam Sharp were present and reviewed the Resiliency Plan put together by a group from the community. The community group met 6 times throughout the year and created a survey that went to the full community. The plan was created from feedback from this survey and will be used to apply for future grants for the City of Comfrey. The resiliency plan was approved on a motion made by Kastner, second by Redman and carried unanimously.

Brown County Sheriff's Department sent out letters regarding ordinance violations for blight. Several community members attended the meeting with 4 members requesting to be put

on the agenda. Chuck Schleif addressed the council about clarification for commercial properties verses residential property guidelines. The council has plans to clarify and discuss at a future meeting. Craig Moody had concerns about this ordinance being enforced at this time when others have not. The council felt the blight ordinance needed to be enforced and the County was willing to help us with it. There may not be the resources at this time to enforce every ordinance. Dick Callanan commended Sheriff Seidl for enforcing the ordinance. Gary Lingbeek was also on the agenda but needed to leave before he had a chance to speak.

The annexation of the property behind the Mike and Jennifer Redman residence has been approved by the city and township with a joint resolution. The State has verbally approved the annexation. The next step in the process is to obtain a building permit which will require a variance.

A discussion was had on police items. Currently the city is contracting with the county for 10 hours a week which is working at this time. The council has decided not sell any police department property and will review again in the future.

A hearing was set before the Planning and Zoning Commission to consider the request of Mike & Jennifer Redman to allow a variance from the maximum square footage allowable and 18' 4" sidewalls for the construction of a shop for Tuesday, July 9, 2024 at 6:15 pm in the Comfrey Community Center on a motion made by Kastner, second by Redman and carried unanimously.

The August City Council Meeting needs to be rescheduled due the election primaries being held on that date. A motion was made by Arnsdorf, second by Evers and carried unanimously to move the meeting to Wednesday, August 7, 2024 at 6:30 pm in the community center.

A quote was reviewed from MR Paving for seal coating 12,100 square yards at a cost of \$26,271.63 and patching 630 square feet at a cost of \$4,977.00 and was approved on a motion made by Arnsdorf, second by Evers and carried unanimously.

A discount on a three-day community center rate was approved when no setup or cleaning is required in between rental days. The rate gives a one-day discount and was approved on a motion made by Kastner, second by Arnsdorf and carried unanimously.

The 2024 Springfield Ambulance Service Rates were discussed and questions came up regarding how the rate is calculated. Attorney Muske will contact the Springfield City Administrator for additional information.

The council will work on a list of properties which have dead trees in the boulevard and contact will be made to see what their intentions are as many people are on a waiting list with tree removal companies.

Comfrey Bar and Grill once again would like to have an outdoor band on Saturday, July 12th. They will provide a fenced in area and hire additional security for the event. The music must also end by midnight. The event was approved on a motion made by Arnsdorf, second by Evers and carried unanimously.

Chuck Schleif proposed to have Jerney Pidde take over the Hay Lease Agreement held by the City, EDA and himself. A motion was made by Evers, second by Kastner and carried unanimously to allow Pidde to take over lease for the 2024 season.

The meeting was adjourned on motion made by Arnsdorf, second by Kastner at 8:12 p.m.