

City of Oronoco
City Council
MINUTES
May 16, 2023
Regular Meeting @ 6:30 pm
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87357004539>

I) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Eichhorst called the May 16, 2023, Regular Council meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II) ROLL CALL

Council Present: Mayor Eichhorst; Councilors Bergner, Phillips, Richards, and Krause

Staff Present: City Engineer Joe Palen; Public Works Director Cain Dolan; City Administrator Sunny Bjorklund Schultz; Deputy Clerk Ranae Rohe; Administrative Assistant Mary Solem

III) COMMENTS FROM MAYOR EICHHORST

Mayor Eichhorst provided the following remarks:

“Thank you, Council, for allowing me to share some thoughts from not only about last month’s meeting but as a reminder of good practices for our council meetings going forward.

- We need to keep decorum a top priority during our meetings.
 - o We need to be respectful of other council members’ views.
 - o Do not talk over other council members when they are speaking. Everyone will get the opportunity to share their views. Avoid starting a debate by talking over your fellow council members.

- Videoing of our meetings and posting on YouTube have allowed citizens and others to view our meetings when they are not able to attend. That is a huge benefit for them to see how our council is responding to their needs and city business in general.
 - o A typical viewing of a council meeting is usually 10-50 viewers.
 - o As of noon today:
 - The March 21, 2023, meeting has been viewed 471 times.
 - The April 18, 2023, meeting has been reviewed 205 times.
 - We are being watched very closely! Our actions, words, and discussions are important to our residents.

- We need to make sure we leave ‘personal agendas’ at the front door. Granted we have an agenda to follow at our meetings, but these items are meant for the public good of our city residents. We also need to be fiscally responsible for the use of our property taxes. It’s important to work as a team to find solutions for the city and our residents, not a personal agenda relative to one’s special needs.

- We need to have a Public Forum for our residents to share their comments. As was discussed at the April 18, meeting, City Staff was asked to look at other cities public forum policies and I believe that is being done.

- Regarding our current Public Forum criteria today, I agree it needs to be updated and protocol identified for our residents speaking.
 - o I apologize to the council, residents, and speaker at the April 18 meeting for having that speaker leave the room. Our protocol did not call for that and my reaction to the boisterous actions of council and the speaker resulted in my error of having the speaker leave. I'm sorry.
- These comments reflect on me as Mayor adhering to these comments as well as council members.

Thank you!"

IV) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Phillips, seconded by Richards, to remove Unfinished Business Item D. (1 and 2) from the agenda indefinitely.

City Administrator Bjorklund Schultz noted that there were other adjustments to the agenda that she would like to see, but Phillips stated he wanted a vote on his motion as a standalone.

Mayor Eichhorst offered a friendly amendment to remove the items to a workshop at a later time, which was accepted by both Phillips and Richards.

Voice Vote followed. Motion carried (5-0).

Attorney Mike Flaherty noted that the discovery of two Roman Numerals VII on the agenda led to some confusion during the previous action. Flaherty recommended Council action to renumber the second section VII and subsequent sections.

Motion by Eichhorst, seconded by Bergner, to approve renumbering of the agenda from the second Section VII and thereafter, thus making VII: Unfinished Business Item VIII; VIII: New Business Item IX; IX: Consent Agenda Item X; and X: Adjournment Item XI.

Voice vote followed. Motion carried (5-0).

Motion by Eichhorst, seconded by Krause, to amend the agenda as requested by the City Administrator:

1. **To move Unfinished Business, Items A and D to a workshop;**
2. **To set a date for a council workshop for these specific items; and**
3. **To add approving a temporary liquor license (for OFD/OFRA) under New Business, Item A.**

Voice vote followed. Motion carried (5-0).

Motion by Phillips, seconded by Krause, to approve the agenda as amended.

Voice vote followed. Motion carried (5-0).

V) PUBLIC FORUM (3-minute time limit per person)

Roger Wells, 140 6th Lane NE, Oronoco

Re: Street Closure

Mr. Wells expressed dissatisfaction with the road closure needed for the Phase 1A project and the distance required for his neighbors and him to travel navigating around the closures.

After three calls for additional public comment, Mayor Eichhorst closed the Public Forum at 6:48 p.m.

VI) PETITIONS, REQUESTS & COMMUNICATIONS

City Administrator Bjorklund Schultz recommended that the following items be routed to the appropriate committee for discussion and subsequent recommendation to Council at a later meeting. Council agreed making committee assignments as noted.

- A. Presbyterian Session & Congregation Letters regarding safety concerns and suggestions
Geoff Warner spoke on behalf of the Presbyterian Session & Congregation reiterating concerns cited in the two letters included in the Council packet. Councilor Bergner added that she, too, was concerned about that intersection and often worried about folks leaving the food shelf.
Safety concerns were assigned to the Streets/Roads committee, with Planning & Zoning continuing its discussion regarding Rights-of-Way (ROW) maintenance.
- B. Patricia Gesao (email suggestion routed to Twp in error) re: crosswalk in front of Post Office
Consideration of a crosswalk is assigned to the Streets/Roads committee.
- C. Laura Quest email re: 1st St NW
City Engineer Joe Palen reported that he had responded to this email and had given directions to the project contractor involved. Palen also noted that while the WWTF & Water System Improvement project includes funding for a wear coat, construction traffic and weather conditions have done significant damage to an already bad roadway. Accordingly, an effort will be made to justify expanding the project funding scope to include replacing approximately 150 ft of street.

VII) DEPARTMENTS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. **ORONOCO COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT**
 - 1. Incidents/Calls: April 2023 – Sgt. Adam Rinn
Sgt. Rinn was not in attendance but had provided his monthly report, showing 61 calls for service.
- B. **WATER & SEWER – CITY ENGINEER JOE PALEN**
 - 1. FYI: No quorum for May 9 meeting; no minutes (April minutes remain unapproved)
 - 2. FYI: Wastewater System Project Construction Open Houses May 22 and May 23
Council was reminded that Open Houses have been scheduled for May 22 (5-7:30 p.m.) and May 23 (10-noon; 5-7:30 p.m.) so that residents can stop in and learn more about the upcoming connections and possible funding resources to assist them in paying for their portion of connection. Project leadership, contractors, and others will be available to answer questions.
 - 3. Update: WWTF Contract 1 project
City Engineer Joe Palen provided an update of work performed within WWTF Contract 1. Council also received the May 5, 2023 Progress Report in their agenda packets.
 - 4. Update: Sanitary Sewer Collection System and Watermain Improvements Contracts 2-3
City Engineer Joe Palen provided an update of work performed within Contracts 2-3. Palen reviewed the utility allowances built into the contract and reminded the Council that providing gas to the WWTF was significantly more than anticipated, such that propane was considered as a temporary alternative. However, People’s Energy did come back with a figure that is still high, but not the \$100,000 rough quote given earlier. Nonetheless, private utility costs will exceed budgeted contract allowances.

Motion by Phillips, seconded by Richards, to authorize the City Administrator to sign the People's Energy Coop agreement on behalf of the City, with payment to be made by the contractor as provided for in the project contract.

Voice vote followed. Motion carried (5-0).

5. FYI: Resident Notice #21 was included in the council packet and is available to public at City Hall and on City Website & Facebook

C. PUBLIC WORKS

1. UPDATE: Skidloader replacement and trailer – both now owned by and in City's possession. Public Works Director Dolan thanked Council for that approval.
2. DISCUSSION: New pickup purchase
Public Works Director Cain Dolan was present to speak to his request for authorization to be put on a list with Carl Chevrolet for a new, fourth pickup for Public Works. Absent any documentation that might have been included in the council packet or provided at the meeting, Council moved to approve the purchase from CIP funds.
City Administrator Bjorklund Schultz expressed concern about the CIP account.

Motion by Eichhorst, second by Phillips, to approve the purchase of a ¾-ton, crew cab pickup with plow up to \$50,000 as requested.

Voice vote followed. Motion carried (4-1; Krause opposed).

D. STREETS & ROADS

1. Update: 2023 Street Condition Assessment & Proposed Maintenance
City Engineer Joe Palen provided a cover letter, project estimate, and mapping for the four areas identified by the engineer and Streets & Roads committee members Mayor Eichhorst and Public Works Director Dolan during a field review of existing street conditions on May 8 (Streets & Roads committee members Councilor Richards and City Administrator were unavailable).
The projected cost to do all four areas identified is \$253,481.26 including engineering fees of approximately 5% of project costs. Noting that this amount significantly exceeds what was budgeted, Engineer Palen recommended the Council choose one or two of the areas for completion in 2023, deferring other areas a year or two until an appropriate budget can be reserved. Council discussion regarding the four identified areas listed below ensued.
 - Area 1: 5th Street North Seal Coat with 1/8" Class A – Trap Rock + Fog Seal + Striping
 - Area 2: 2nd Avenue NW Seal Coat with 1/8" Class A – Trap Rock
 - Area 3: Lake Shady Avenue North Seal Coat with 1/8" Class A – Trap Rock + Fog Seal + Striping
 - Area 4: River Park Subdivision Seal Coat with 1/8" Class A – Trap Rock
2. ACTION: Authorize RFP for 2023 Street Repairs
Motion by Krause, seconded by Richards, to authorize the City Engineer to issue an RFP to areas 3 and 4 as presented but, by friendly amendment which was accepted, to exclude Timberline Drive SE.
Voice vote followed. Motion carried (5-0).

E. FIRE DEPARTMENT

1. FYI: Minutes of April 10, 2023
2. FYI: Activity
3 runs and \$36,820 in purchases.

F. ORONOCO FIRE RELIEF ASSOCIATION

1. FYI: Minutes of April 10, 2023

G. FIRST RESPONDERS

1. FYI May 1, 2023 Minutes
2. FYI: Activity
Runs = 12, four in city; 8 in township.
No bills.
One application for membership.

H. EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

I. PLANNING & ZONING

1. FYI: 2023 Building Permit Activity report – YTD through April
24 permits valued at \$565,234 have been issued including 1 new home
2. FYI: Minutes of April 13, 2023, Meeting – APPROVED ON MAY 11, 2023

J. PARKS & TRAILS

1. FYI: April 3, 2023 Minutes – APPROVED ON MAY 1, 2023
2. FYI: May 1, 2023 Minutes – UNAPPROVED
3. FYI: Allis Park Event – garlic mustard removal – 6pm – 9 pm on Tuesday, May 23rd
All are welcome. Council requested that Public Works staff pick up the weeds.

K. PERSONNEL/COMMUNITY CENTER

1. ACTION: Staffing Update
Administrative Assistant Mary Solem was introduced to the Council.
2. ACTION: Sign Replacement at Community Center & proposed 2nd sign on West side of 52
Mayor Eichhorst reviewed the proposals received from bidders for the proposed signage at the community center and at Memorial Park on the West side of Highway 52. Funding would come from American Rescue Plan, which has approximately \$79,000 remaining, and would be documented by resolution. Mayor Eichhorst further noted that he would like approval to place the order(s) as fulfilling the order is expected to take 10 weeks. The proposals received were as follows:

Proposal from:	Schad Tracy	LaCrosse
Single Face Monument at Community Center	\$23,866.77	\$25,775.00
Double Face Monument at Memorial Park	\$32,211.51	\$33,655.00

Motion by Krause, seconded by Bergner, to order both signs from Schad Tracy, subject to a friendly amendment which was accepted by both, to inquire as to cost, if any, to elevate the height of Memorial Park sign by two feet.
Voice vote followed. Motion carried (5-0).

L. **DOWNTOWN ORONOCO GOLD RUSH DAYS** → No report.
VIII) **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

In approving the agenda as revised at Item VI above, Items A and D below were removed for discussion at a workshop.

~~A. ACTION: Standard Policy re: Should City Consultants serve dual role in also representing private party? (i.e. Stantec Development Services (ex. Pearson))~~

B. Update: American Rescue Plan – funding and resolution (Mayor’s email w/attachment)
An update on funding spent and remaining was included in the council packet.
Given council action on the message signs at this meeting the report will be further updated and another resolution will be drafted for consideration at the June meeting.

C. Update: LMC Training for Council, Planning & Zoning & EDA
ACTION: Schedule Date
City Administrator Bjorklund Schultz noted that although LMC staff is preoccupied with the June conferenced in Duluth, City Attorney Mike Flaherty has agreed to conduct training for the City Council and EDA and Planning & Zoning Commissions. The training session is intended to cover Data Practices Act, Open Meeting Law, and Conflicts of Interest. Discussion as to possible dates ensued.

By consensus, and subject to availability of the other appointed commissioners, it was agreed the joint training session for Council, EDA and Planning & Zoning members would be from 6:30 – 7:30 PM on Tuesday, May 30, in the Council chambers.

~~D. ACTION: Continued Discussion regarding meeting etiquette, public forum format, etc.
1. Councilor Bergner memo of 4/30/23 re: info from LMC and City Code
2. Councilor Bergner memo of 5/07/23 re: sample Public Forum practice from 4 surrounding cities~~

E. Schedule Workshop for Items VIII. A and D (added in approving the agenda as amended)
During discussion regarding scheduling the Joint Training for Council, EDA and Planning & Zoning members (above as Item C), by consensus, Council also scheduled a Council Workshop for 5:30 – 6:30 PM to discuss Items A and D.

IX) **NEW BUSINESS**

A. ACTION: Approve Temporary Liquor License for Lion’s Club during Gold Rush
Approve Temporary Liquor License for Fire Relief Association during Gold Rush
Motion by Eichhorst, seconded by Bergner, to approve temporary liquor licensing for the Lion’s Club and the Fire Relief Association during Gold Rush.
Voice vote followed. Motion carried (5-0).

B. ACTION: Meet-and-Greet/Open House with Oronoco Township
Given the hour, it was agreed that this item would be revisited at another meeting.

X) **CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion by Eichhorst, seconded by Krause, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented and listed below. Voice vote followed. Motion carried (5-0).

1. *ACTION: Staab construction Pay Request #17 for \$1,199,072.90 (cover pg only in packet)
2. *ACTION: Fitzgerald Excavating & Trucking Pay Request #15 for \$690,235.93 (cover pg only in packet)
3. *APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
 - a. 03/21/23 City Council Regular Meeting
 - b. ~~04/18/23 City Council Regular Meeting~~
4. *ACTION: FINANCIALS
 - a. *Water Summary for April 2023
 - b. *Frandsen Bank & Trust – April 2023 checks 6944-6999 totaling \$645,678.81
 1. General Fund 100 \$ 52,644.69
 2. WAC/SAC Fund 410 \$ 535,748.05
 3. CIP Fund 425 \$ 48,455.05
 4. Water Fund 600 \$ 8,831.02
 - c. EFT Payments for April 2023 totaling \$ 40,237.59
 - d. *Frandsen Bank & Trust Account Summary
 - e. *Revenue & Expense Report YTD as of April 30, 2023
 - f. *Budget Comparison YTD as of April 30, 2023, w/PFY comparison


XI) **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Phillips, seconded by Krause, to adjourn the May 16, 2023, regular Council meeting at 9:17 p.m. Motion carried by unanimous consent.



Ryland Eichhorst, Mayor

Attest:



Sunny Bjorklund Schultz, City Administrator