

UNAPPROVED MINUTES
Earlham City Council Meeting
February 8, 2021

The Earlham City Council met in regular session on Monday, February 8, 2021, 7:00 p.m. This meeting was conducted via Zoom, originating in Earlham City Hall. Mayor Lillie called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and the following answered roll: Baskin, Fredericksen, Payne, Swalla. Absent: Petersen. Staff present: Clerk Hibbs, Utility Billing Clerk Amsden, Public Works Supervisor Coffman, Police Chief Heimdal.

1. Approval of Agenda
Motion by Swalla, second by Payne, to approve agenda.
Roll: Ayes - unanimous. Motion passes.

2. Public Hearing on Max Levy for FY22 Budget
Mayor declared public hearing open at 7:02 p.m. Clerk Hibbs stated no one requested to join the virtual meeting, and there were no written or oral comments received at City Hall.
Motion by Baskin, second by Fredericksen, to close public hearing.
Roll: Ayes – unanimous. Motion Passes and public hearing closed at 7:03 p.m.

3. Public Hearing on FY21 Budget Amendment #1.
Mayor declared public hearing open at 7:03 p.m. Clerk Hibbs stated no one requested to join the virtual meeting, and there were no written or oral comments received at City Hall.
Motion by Fredericksen, second by Swalla, to close public hearing.
Roll: Ayes – unanimous. Motion Passes and public hearing closed at 7:04 p.m.

4. Public Forum
Mayor Lillie introduced the new Madison County Emergency Management manager Diogenes “Dio” Ayala.

5. Consent Agenda:
 - a. Council meeting minutes for January 11, 2021 and January 14, 2021
 - b. Treasurer’s Report for February 8, 2021
 - c. Claims and Receipts Report for February 8, 2021**Motion by Baskin, second by Swalla, to approve consent agenda**
Roll: Ayes – unanimous. Motion Passes.

6. Boards, Commission, Committee Report
 - a. Budget Committee – In the absence of Chairperson Petersen, Hibbs spoke to the progress of the budget. Final budget meeting will be in a week or so. Coffman talked about the new public works building. It was hoped the City would be able to pay for this without a loan, but it is going to cost more than first estimated. Mayor asked for more exact numbers before the next budget meeting. Swalla asked about the progress of getting a truck. Coffman stated there is nothing used out there right now. Said this is the wrong time of year for used trucks to be on the market.

7. Department Reports
 - a. Public Works - Gary Coffman, Public Works Supervisor
Coffman said they have spent most of their time plowing snow. The big truck had to be fixed. A sample valve in the new water tower blew off as Coffman was attempting to knock off some ice. The tower had to be drained and the valve fixed. Heat tape has now been installed on everything. Only thing left to be done is seeding and cleaning up paint and cables still on site. A letter is being sent to Maguire Iron regarding retainage and liquidated damages. Also, it appears someone might be living in a house where the water has been shut off. Chief Heimdal said he and Gary could possibly go the house and check out the situation. Swalla asked about when the new stop signs will be installed. Coffman said they have busy, but hopefully this week or next.

b. Police Department – Chief Jason Heimdal

Chief stated they are getting updates on their report writing software. Getting the new radios set up. Will get together with Dio Ayala on this. Has issued 4 licenses for SUVs. That number will probably pick up. Sent letter to resident regarding junk items in their yard. Was having problems with Officer Stringham’s radio which is now fixed.

8. OLD BUSINESS - none

9. NEW BUSINESS

a) Consider approval of Ordinance No. 427 Amending the Code of Ordinances of the City of Earlham, Iowa, 2017, Chapter 92, Water Rates.

Hibbs explained the new rates were based on the scheduled 4% increase plus the \$0.50/1000 gallon increase passed from the Des Moines Water Works to Warren Water Works and on to Earlham.

Motion by Swalla, second by Payne, to approve Ordinance No. 427 Amending the Code of Ordinances of the City of Earlham, Iowa, 2017, Chapter 92, Water Rates.

Roll: Ayes – unanimous. Motion passes.

b) Consider approval of First Reading of Resolution No 21-04, A Resolution Approving the Maximum Property Tax Dollars for Budget Year July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022

Motion by Swalla, second by Fredericksen, to approve Resolution No 21-04, A Resolution Approving the Maximum Property Tax Dollars for Budget Year July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

Roll: Ayes – unanimous. Motion Passes.

c) Consider approval of Resolution No. 21-05, a Resolution to Participate in the Planning and Development Programs of the Southern Iowa Council of Governments.

Motion by Payne, second by Baskin, to approve Resolution No. 21-05, a Resolution to Participate in the Planning and Development Programs of the Southern Iowa Council of Governments.

Roll: Ayes – unanimous. Motion Passes.

d) Consider approval of Resolution No. 21-06, a Resolution to Appoint a Representative and Alternate Representative to the Madison County Emergency Management Commission.

Following discussion, and decided that Fire Chief Boyle be re-appointed as the Representative, and Mayor Lillie be re-appointed as the Alternate Representative.

Motion by Payne, second by Fredericksen, to approve Resolution No. 21-06, a Resolution to Appoint a Representative and Alternate Representative to the Madison County Emergency Management Commission.

Roll: Ayes – unanimous. Motion Passes.

e) Consider approval of Resolution No. 21-07 Approval of Tax Abatement for 810 NW Spruce Avenue, Earlham Iowa

Fredericksen mentioned a typo in the fourth paragraph where it stated “820” instead of “810).

Motion by Fredericksen, second by Swalla, to approve the amended Resolution No. 21-07 Approval of Tax Abatement for 810 NW Spruce Avenue, Earlham Iowa

Roll: Ayes – unanimous. Motion Passes.

f) Consider approval of Resolution No. 21-08 Approval of FY21 Budget Amendment #1

Motion by Payne, second by Baskin, to approve Resolution No. 21-08 Approving FY21 Budget Amendment #1.

Roll: Ayes – unanimous. Motion Passes.

g) Discussion on property, auto, etc. increase - Lauren Volz. United Risk Services

Volz explained our deductible is going up to \$2,500. Overall EMC losses including Derecho, distracted driving, higher jury awards, aging workforce, and our own loss experience (hail storm and auto damage). Our premium will go up \$10,357.00 for FY2021-2022 to \$64,073.00. Volz stressed EMC is a good company and all insurance companies are going through losses at this time.

- h) Connie Terry – request for city support for summer 2021 Levitt Amp Earlham Music Series. Connie explained the 2020 Concert Series did not happen due to Covid-19 concerns. This year’s concerts will from June 6 through August 15, or June 27 through September 5 (both excluding July 4th). Earlham Chicks with Checks are asking for City help the \$25,000 grant community match which includes: custodial services, security, noise ordinance exception, transient merchant exemptions, and a \$5,000 contribution. Council said they were excited for the return of the concert series and in full support of these events. Mayor asked Hibbs to see where we budgeted for the funds requested.
 - i) Cindy Marnin-Borcherding – nuisance complaint
Marnin-Borcherding went over the contents of letter she sent to Council 01-26-21 regarding a house she believe is a nuisance. Swalla said all we can do is follow ordinances. Mayor added on car in the yard and grass/weeds ordinances. Coffman mentioned we can only act on the untrimmed bushes and trees if they are hanging over the sidewalk and/or street. Chief Heimdal will contact property owner regarding car in yard and junk in yard.
 - j) Discussion on raising Mayor and Council pay
Hibbs stated pay has not been raised for Mayor and Council since she has been with the City, almost 6 years. After comparing our pay to other cities our size, she feels \$50 per meeting for council members appears to be fair. Council consensus was that the Mayor’s pay should be \$3,000 a year. Council directed Hibbs to come back to the March 8, 2021, council meeting with an ordinance for the increase.
 - k) Discussion on water/sewer/garbage charges for vacant properties.
Amsden and Hibbs expressed confusion over how to bill equally, across the board, snowbirds and vacant houses, where water is turned off at curb-stop. Mayor asked Hibbs to check with other cities to see how they bill for these situations and bring information to the next council meeting. Amsden mentioned the Code does provide for a \$10 turn off/turn on fee, which is not currently being billed. Council felt there needs to be some maintenance fee, if a minimum bill is not charged.
 - l) Set date and time for approval of FY22 Budget Approval for Monday, March 8, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
Motion by Swalla, second by Fredericksen, to set date and time for Public Hearing on FY22 Budget Amendment for March 8, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
Roll: Ayes – unanimous. Motion Passes.
 - m) Consider motion to go into closed session per Iowa Code Chapter 21.5c, to discuss strategy with counsel in matters that are presently in litigation.
Attorney Palmer was not present so closed session did not happen. Council did agree with the proposed agreement.
10. Mayor’s Report
Mayor stated he has attended numerous committee meetings including the County budget meeting. He mentioned he was on hiring the committee for Dio Ayala and it was a pleasure to hire him
11. Clerk’s Report
Hibbs stated we are in need of Planning & Zoning Commission and Community Building Board members. Amsden will begin taking online clerk classes Wednesday, Thursday and Friday this week. Hibbs reported we received a \$500 grant from MidAmerican Energy to help replace discolored decorative light globes downtown.
12. Council comments/discussion – none

13. Adjourn

Motion by Fredericksen, second by Payne, to adjourn.

Roll: Ayes – unanimous. Motion Passes.

Being there was no further business, meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Jeff Lillie, Mayor

Attest: _____
Mary Sue Hibbs, Clerk/Treasurer