

TUESDAY, JUNE 28, 2022 COLD SPRING CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Dave Heinen at 6:30 p.m. The following City Council members were found to be present: Mayor Dave Heinen and Council Members Mike Fall, Ryan Hennen, Fran Ramler, and Doug Schmitz. Others present: Brigid Murphy, Angie Mueller, Brian Lintgen, Jason Blum, Dan Weber, Laura Eysnogle, Robert Krzyzanowski, Cara Langston, Steve Dingmann, Marv Soldner, Ken Kraemer, Derek Hoium, Audrey Nierenhausen, Gary Traut, Roger Berg, Sherry Berg, Alice Schreifels, Bob Schreifels, Tim Godding, Jim Rieland, Dave Terres, Jean Terres, Mark Dockendorf, Deb Fischer, Duane Fischer, Tammy Paczkowski, Netti Heinen, Bill Molitor, Robert Schmitt, Chuck Krebsbach, Karen Dingmann, Dave Dingmann, Dan Frank, Brian Eisenschenk, Jason Kirchoff, Jean Sauer, Dennis Holthaus, Dave Hennen, Ann McGee, Katie Hunstiger, Ryan Hunstiger, Wendi Wigham, Don Schaefer, Jan Schaefer, Regina Mohs, Eric Nierenhausen, Jim Pflapsen, Darlene Dockendorf, Carol Maciej Weber, Dan Soldner, Jessica Soldner, Jon Douvier, Mike Heinen, Glenn Mueller, Adam Lubbers, Alan Bienek, Dale Anderson, Matt Hesse, Molly Buerman, Nicholas Willenbring, Katie Willenbring and Joe Jelovnick.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION WAS MADE BY FALL, SECONDED BY RAMLER, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA OF THE JUNE 28, 2022 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AS PRESENTED. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes – June 14, 2022

MOTION WAS MADE BY RAMLER, SECONDED BY HENNEN, TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Mayor Heinen opened the public hearing at 6:32 p.m. Laura Eysnogle and Robert Krzyzanowski from Wendel Architecture presented a report on the project process to date, the program and concept development, an opinion on probable costs, a conclusion and recommendation from the design committee and potential schedule. Next, the members of the construction committee gave their opinions on the project.

Fire Chief Dan Weber – Chief Weber urged the Council to make a decision soon as prices have increased dramatically over the years while the Council has been delaying making a decision. He stated that although the Sauk River Road location will require a trip back into town for most calls, he explained that for most medical emergencies the Police personnel, who are trained first responders, arrive on scene before the Fire Department and begin rendering aid. He stated that there is a benefit of shared spaces by having the Police and Fire in one building.

Police Chief Jason Blum – Chief Blum stated how an expansion project has been considered in both 2012, 2016 and the Council keeps delaying making a decision, which will never bring the costs down. He stated that he would like to utilize shared spaces by either being in a building with the Fire Department or with the City Administration Department. He stressed that space is needed to properly do their jobs. He also urged the Council to make a decision.

City Administrator Brigid Murphy – Murphy stated that she understood the concern of having two separate sites for City buildings, but that space is needed for meeting/conference rooms. She stated that it can easily be seen that more room is needed for City Council meetings as the room was completely full and overflowing into the lobby spaces.

Great River Regional Library Representative, Cara Langston – Langston stated that her recommendation is to stay in the current building as it provides the least amount of uncertainty. She stated it would not be easy to pack up a library to move it and does not want to lose the library location in Cold Spring.

Construction Committee Member, Ken Kraemer – Kraemer stated that he is the person who sent out the flyer about the meeting tonight. He stated that a lack of communication is why things have been dragging on. He stated that citizens should be aware of what is being considered and thanked the Council for allowing citizen representation on the construction committee. He stated that it has been almost 40 years since something has

been done with the current building, which has been outgrown and needs updating. He stated that the Sauk River Road location is too far away and stated growth will occur on the north and south ends of town.

Construction Committee Member, Marv Soldner – Soldner stated that the comments he would be making are some comments from Jim Kraemer who was unable to attend the meeting but is also on the committee. He stated that fiscal responsibility is needed. He stated that he is committed to more space for the Fire and Police Departments, but he is opposed to the current process and plans are too expensive. He stated that the Fire Department should start over with a more modest, free-standing building downtown. He talked about the 2007 Comprehensive Plan and that there is no strategy for growth. He stated that a budget needs to be established first, and then determine what can be built within that budget. He stated that City growth will not happen to the east and will instead expand to the north and south. He spoke about concerns with response time, and lastly about the current state of the economy, that with high inflation and a recession on the horizon, the Council should be cutting expenses and reducing debt. He stated that the facility should be decided by a vote of the citizens.

Construction Committee Member, Steve Dingmann – Dingmann stated that he is torn on the response time for a building on Sauk River Road versus a downtown location. He stated that the Council should move forward.

Construction Committee Member, Audrey Nierenhausen – Nierenhausen explained her background on why she wanted to be on the committee. She stated that space is needed for all departments and that things need to move forward. She stated that there are too many unknowns on the Granite Landing site downtown and stated that the Sauk River Road site is already owned by the city and known to fit the project. She stated that last year was the right time to start the project, and that now is the next best time to start. She stated that after discussing 13 concepts they all lead back to the original plan of Package C, which puts Police and Fire in one building on Sauk River Road and the Administration and Library in their current locations.

Construction Committee Member, Derek Hoium – Hoium stated that he preferred a modified Package A, where City Hall and Police stay in the current building, the library moves to a standalone building, and the Fire Department moves to a standalone building at the Sauk River Road site. He stated that the Sauk River Road site is not perfect but it's the best available site at this time. He stated that an independent building for the library might provide alternative funding sources. He stated he had concerns about the future growth of the city.

Construction Committee Member, Doug Schmitz – Councilor Schmitz stated that it has been an honor to serve on the committee and he appreciates all the different perspectives provided. He stated he was in favor of Package A, with the Fire Department at the Sauk River Road site. He stated he was frustrated with the increase of costs by \$2 million from delaying the project a year. He stated that he was in favor of taking a step-back and putting the project on hold for six months as he felt that prices continue to be inflated and that by waiting until the Spring of 2023 there might be better bid results. He talked about the pending recession and increased costs in the economy including food, fuel and other additional taxes that might be coming in the future.

Construction Committee Member, Fran Ramler – Councilor Ramler stated that since he was an elected official, he felt that the public had confidence in him to make decisions in the best interest of the city. He stated he was in favor of going forward with the soil borings for the Granite Landing site. He talked about the projected population for 40 years and stated he wasn't sure if the Fire Hall needed to be the planned size. He discussed being on a fixed income and related to other seniors in the community who might struggle with increased taxes. He stated he was in favor of Package A on the Granite Landing site.

Next Mayor Heinen took public comment from the audience.

Jim Pflapsen – Pflapsen stated he supported all of the comments made by Soldner. He stated that updates are way overdue and needed for Police and Fire departments. He stated that the new building should not be built between the Wastewater Plant and Pilgrims, but instead in a downtown location. He stated that the Co-Op is

the best site for a new public safety facility and that they should be asked to move from their current location to an Industrial Park. He stated that small town citizens are proud of their city facilities and that the new building should be located downtown.

Dave Terres – Terres stated more work should have been on the front end of the planning process to gather citizen input on the project. He stated that if plans have been in the works since 2012, it shows that the process has been done wrong the entire time, as it would never take that long to plan a new house. He stated that the citizens should vote on the project since they'll be the ones paying for it.

Bill Molitor – Molitor stated that if there is a need, there is always a way to get to the finish line. He recommended downsizing the building to get to a lower cost. He felt that it was being oversized with wants rather than needs. He stated that the population will not grow that quickly and that the brakes should be put on and re-planned.

Jason Spoden – Spoden talked about the scrutiny that law enforcement professionals are under and that space is needed to do their jobs. He stated that they will be setting the department back by downsizing the environment they work in. He added that relocating the building to downtown will cost more money.

Alice Schreifels - Schreifels stated that the costs for the new buildings should be shared by the service contract holders. She stated that all the facts should be given to the citizens and that they should make the decision about what they can afford. She stated that she supported the comments made by Marv Soldner.

Regina Mohs – Mohs stated that the flyer she received in the mail is the first she has heard about the potential new building. She stated she is retired and felt the public should be informed more about the subject and then it should be put to a vote. She stated that she hoped there would be financial assistance and grants for the project.

Ann McGee – McGee stated that what has been going on is not new and that the library has been wanting to expand for longer than just 2016. She stated that the best time to do the project was last year and that every year it gets delayed the costs just go up. She stated she did not want to see officers and firefighters personnel leave. She urged the Council to make a decision for the public to make things better.

Nick Willenbring – Willenbring stated that there is no disagreement that space is needed. He stated that there needs to be accountability and spending within the city's needs. He stated he was in favor of it being voted on by the people and stated that by explaining the facts in detail the project could get traction moving forward.

Chuck Krebsbach – Krebsbach stated that in 2015 he had done a drawing of what a remodeled space could look like at the current City Hall location. He stated he was frustrated that his drawings were not taken seriously back then. He stated he agreed with Marv Soldner's comments. He stated that more space is needed for police and fire but maybe not as large as presented. He stated he was disappointed that soil borings were not done at the Granite Landing site. He stated he was not in favor of the Sauk River Road site for the Fire Department but would be okay with the Police Department being located there.

Jon Douvier – Douvier stated that their vehicles and equipment are currently being held in multiple locations because there is not enough space at the current location. He stated that starting over is a theme that has been going on for years and wondered what it will take for the Council to commit to moving forward. He encouraged the Council to do it in a timely and efficient manner.

After taking public comment Mayor Heinen closed the public hearing at 8:17 p.m.

Next the Council members stated their opinions on the matter.

Councilor Fall inquired about the market valuations table in the presentation as he felt that there is a higher percentage of properties that fall within the two top tiers of home values, than what was presented. He stated

that he was in favor of Package A and felt that a \$6.5 million stand alone Fire Hall was doable. He stated he did not like the site plan for the Sauk River Road location. He stated he was in favor of moving forward in steps and that a new fire hall would need to happen first. He added that putting a \$12 million project on taxpayers right now is hard to undertake. He stated that he was concerned about approving a project when the police service contract with the City of Richmond is still being worked on. Chief Blum stated that the overall building would not be affected much by the results of the contract.

Councilor Hennen inquired whether blasting has been considered at the Granite Landing site. He stated there are many unknowns at that site. He stated that a perfect location doesn't seem to exist. He stated he did not want to take out available commercial lots that are available for development in Granite Landing. He inquired whether the building could be reduced in size. Councilor Schmitz stated that yes, more things could be cut from the building. Hennen stated he was in favor of Package C, but he would be in favor of tabling the decision for a couple weeks to further consider and discuss Package A as well.

Mayor Heinen stated that he had safety concerns with the Granite Landing site with children playing across the street and their interest in seeing the fire trucks as they leave the station when responding to calls. He stated that the Sauk River Road location is the best location that is available and liked that it was large enough to allow for further expansion if needed. He also stated that most growth is expected to the north and south, but the Sauk River Road location would still be a central location.

Councilor Schmitz stated that he believes there are spaces in the proposed building to cut back on and stated his preference to wait a couple weeks and further think about the comments received. He stated he was okay with a stand-alone Fire Department and remodeling the current building for the other departments. Councilor Schmitz asked remaining fire department personnel that were still in the audience, if they would be happy with the Sauk River Road site due to hearing some opposition from members of the fire department about that site in past meetings. Several members echoed the previous comments of wanting to be in a downtown location and having to settle for the Sauk River Road location. Other members stated their concern about response times and traffic safety getting to the building, and then leaving to respond to calls.

Councilor Ramler inquired whether annexation of other properties should be considered to add to the tax base. He stated that he was in favor of letting the citizens decide so that there is less stress and scrutiny of the Council. He stated that he was in favor of the stand-alone Fire Department on the Granite Landing site and the current complex could be utilized as is until it can't be used anymore.

Ultimately the Council agreed that moving forward would need to take place in steps, with the Fire Department being the first that they would like to further consider the options and comments presented over the next two weeks. All agreed they would resume the discussion at the July 12th City Council meeting. MOTION WAS MADE BY FALL, SECONDED BY RAMLER, TO TABLE A DECISION ON THE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING PROJECT. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

LIST OF BILLS AND ADDITIONS

MOTION WAS MADE BY RAMLER, SECONDED BY SCHMITZ, TO REVIEW AND ACCEPT PAYMENT OF THE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE ACCORDING TO THE LIST TOTALING \$762,953.25 AND SUPPLEMENTAL LIST TOTALING \$11,673.08 AS PRESENTED BY CITY STAFF. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

ADJOURN

MOTION WAS MADE BY HENNEN, SECONDED BY SCHMITZ, TO ADJOURN AT 9:16 P.M., SEEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

David Heinen, Mayor

Brigid Murphy, City Administrator