

Mayor Diana Merdian called the Sterling City Council to order at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, September 18, 2023. Roll call. Present: Alderperson Retha Elston, Joe Strabala-Bright, Josh Johnson, Joseph Martin, Kaitlyn Ekquist and Jim Wise. Absent: None.

Also attending were City Attorney Tim Zollinger, City Manager Scott Shumard, Police Chief Alex Chavira, Deputy Fire Chief David Northcutt, Superintendent of Building and Zoning Amanda Schmidt, Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader, Superintendent of Waste Water Cory Bradshaw and City Clerk Teri Sathoff.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Kris Noble, Executive Director of the Sauk Valley Chamber of Commerce thanked Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader as well as Chief Chavira for the assistance with the Fiesta Parade. Noble stated the working relationship between those departments and the Chamber has always been excellent. Noble said the parade would not be able to take place without their assistance. Noble also thanked the Council members that participated.

Alderperson Elston made a motion to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of Minutes
- B. Approval of Bills and Payroll
- C. Pay Request #4 for Wallace Street to Gensini Excavation Inc. in the amount of \$330,523.33

Seconded by Alderperson Strabala-Bright. Voting: Ayes – Alderperson Elston, Strabala-Bright, Johnson, Martin, Ekquist and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderperson Wise made a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-09-23 Intergovernmental Agreement Between the City of Sterling and the Sterling Township; Seconded by Alderperson Martin. City Manager Shumard stated this would allow for Public Works to contract out to the township for culvert work. Since there have been annexations from the west the City now has culverts that we do not have equipment or experience with. Alderperson Wise asked if this would help with the culverts that are clogged on Maple Lane, Shumard stated yes. Voting: Ayes – Alderperson Elston, Strabala-Bright, Johnson, Martin, Ekquist and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderperson Strabala-Bright made a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-09-21 Amending Provisions of the Liquor Code to Clarify Entities Eligible for Permit on Public Property; Seconded by Alderperson Johnson. Alderperson Wise asked about removing the years required to be a charitable organization. Attorney Zollinger stated by requiring a

charitable organization to be in existence for five years or by obtaining 501(c)(3) status shows the City the same level of commitment. This will prevent someone from developing a charitable organization for the purpose of having liquor on public property. Voting: Ayes – Alderperson Elston, Strabala-Bright, Johnson, Martin, Ekquist and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderperson Elston made a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-09-22 Authorizing Grant of Easements to the Sterling Park District for the Purpose of a Community Recreational Trail; Seconded by Alderperson Wise. Alderperson Wise asked if this would have an inlet to Wal-Mart, Shumard stated yes it would. He asked if the City could promote this as a safe way for bikes and pedestrians to get to the area without using the highway. Alderperson Strabala-Bright suggested the parcel be used as a small park or green space with a water fountain or a bicycle repair station. Voting: Ayes – Alderperson Elston, Strabala-Bright, Johnson, Martin, Ekquist and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Chief Chavira reported the Trunk or Treat event will be on October 25th from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. The two new recruits are doing well in the academy. The Police Department will be conducting testing on Saturday.

Deputy Chief Northcutt reported their new recruit is currently going through the academy and is doing well. The background process has been started on the "float" firefighter position. The Sterling Rural Fire Board has agreed to replace a complete set of extrication equipment. The main station is having some sewer issues. Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader stated there are two lines that come out of the building to the main, they believe the issue stems from the wash bays. They will be televising the lines and hopefully they will not have to dig up the new concrete.

Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader reported the street light at Locust and 5th Street has been repaired and is functioning properly. Crews are currently working on the pavilion at Platt park the frame is up and the roof will be installed next. The bleachers in the dugouts have been removed and concrete has been poured and the new bleachers will be installed.

Superintendent of Waste Water Cory Bradshaw reported the new transfer switch for the generator was installed. Bradshaw reported there are two employees in class in Rockford, they will test at the end of the week to be certified.

Superintendent of Building and Zoning Amanda Schmidt reported she met with the contractor for the CDAP grant they have the paperwork completed the next step will be to meet with the home owners to get their paperwork completed. Schmidt reported she

received an email stating the City has been awarded the Stronger Community Grant for \$257,000. Alderman Wise asked how many people received funds from the CDAP Grant, Schmidt advised there were 4 applications for the grant and three of those applicants will receive funds.

City Clerk Sathoff reported the Food Truck Ordinance is still up in the air pending a meeting with the Whiteside County Health Department officials.

Attorney Zollinger reported the property on 17th Avenue that has continued to be a nuisance went to court last week. The homeowner has requested a trial, the first hearing date will be on December 6th. During the hearing the homeowner was reminded they are not allowed to live in the residence and they are not allowed to have their animals there overnight. Attorney Zollinger also reported there will be a hearing on old Latin American Club on Wallace Street near the end of October.

Zollinger reported there will be an ordinance on the agenda in October to address a unique situation that has come up concerning the liquor code. The current code does not allow the liquor commissioner to waive the initial fee for a current license holder to add a classification in the first eighteen months.

City Manager Shumard reported he has been working with the playground equipment companies to figure out the timeline, this should be completed this week. The RFQs for engineering on the riverfront is very close within a point of each other. One more score sheet will be turned in this week. Shumard stated he gave a presentation to the Rotary in regards to the riverfront, he felt that went well. The contractor for the mini pitch court at Wallace will return to repair some minor deficiencies, once those are completed a ribbon cutting will be held.

Alderman Martin thanked the Fire Department for allowing him to ride in the Fiesta Parade, he also congratulated Mayor Merdian on being selected as the Doná.

Alderman Johnson thanked Kris Noble for the work she put into the Fiesta parade. Alderman Johnson stated the community doesn't realize all of the work she puts into everything she does.

Alderman Strabala-Bright thanked Mayor Merdian and Kris Noble for sitting on the panel at Sauk Valley Community College. Strabala-Bright congratulated everyone on the Fiesta parade, he said its great to see the two communities come together for the event. He reminded everyone of the two events that Sterling Main Street has coming up, Sip into Fall on Thursday September 28th and Hops on the Rocks on Saturday October 14th.

Alderman Elston stated she was disappointed she was not able to attend the Fiesta parade, she heard a lot of great comments about it. Elston thanked the City for allowing her to attend IML this week, she is looking forward to opportunity to learn.

Mayor Merdian thanked the fire department for attending the surprise birthday party for Merlin Kropf. Merlin was always a mainstay in the City of Sterling. The Mayor stated he was excited to have everyone from the Fire Department there. Mayor Merdian stated it's things like that that we do in our community that sets us apart from others. Mayor Merdian praised everyone that worked on the Fiesta parade.

At 6:58pm Alderperson Wise made a motion to move into close session to discuss the purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body; Seconded by Alderperson Martin. Voting: Ayes – Alderperson Elston, Strabala-Bright, Johnson, Martin, Ekquist and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.

Teri Sathoff

City Clerk