

**Minutes of the Public hearing and Regular Meeting of Bird Island City Council  
January 8, 2024 at 7:00 PM**

Council members present: Sander, Leach, Schneider, Lingl (Zoom), Prokosch (Zoom)

The regular meeting was called to order by Mayor Sander at 7:00 PM.

A motion was made by Schneider and seconded by Leach to authorize payment of the claims and to approve the minutes from the last regular meeting. Passed unanimously.

Bolton & Menk  
2024-2025 CIP

Matt Miller from Bolton & Menk was present to discuss the next steps if City moves forward with part or all of the CIP project for 2024-2025. All of the projects are listed in the Part B Fundable range. Plans and specs need to be submitted by March 31, 2024 to be certified by the State by June 30<sup>th</sup> at the latest. If we would be able to certify the plans and specs for the project by March 30<sup>th</sup> but decide to wait to construct until 2025 instead of 2024, we could be moved up to the Part A Fundable range. The Council discussed the current assessment policy and how much of this project would be able to be assessed. It was determined the storm sewer portion of the Birch Avenue project is no longer necessary because the splash pad was connected to Cherry Avenue instead. Therefore, a total reconstruct on Birch Avenue may only need a 20-foot patch over the watermain portion of the street reconstruct. The watermain on Birch was also addressed as to whether it is a private or city owned watermain and if it that portion of the project would need to be assessed. The changes on Birch Avenue will change the original project costs. The Council decided to complete the construction for the splash pad area of the CIP in 2024 and wait until 2025 for the rest of the CIP project. The plans and specs were approved at the December meeting for the watermain looping and Ranchwood portions of the CIP. A motion was made by Lingl and seconded by Schneider to approve the Environmental Report, MDH Watermain Permit, and Loan Application. Passed unanimously.

Hazardous Building  
1060 Hwy Ave

An order from the Judge to raze the house at 1060 Highway Avenue was authorized. Chris Fisher with CMF was present to make sure the Council is fully aware of full scope of work needed to take down the house. The City will likely need to take the house to a MSW Landfill and will not be able to take it to the demo landfill. The City will need to apply for and MDH Permit for demolition, determine what landfill it will be taken to, and contact the gas and electric companies to disconnect services before the house can be taken down. The council would like to get this done as soon as possible. Once a demo date has been determined, the City will notify the owner. A motion was made by Lingl and seconded by Leach to accept the low bid by CMF. Passed unanimously.

Public Works

Sanitary sewer main flushing was done and phosphorous numbers were a record high this quarter and will likely require action by MPCA. Street lights on 13<sup>th</sup> street will need to be determined where to be placed due to the Island Living facility going up and the other lots being sold. There were some issues with the rain over Christmas and the catch basins getting plugged up. Pickup proposals will be brought to the Council with options on replacing the white pickup. The restrictors in Ditch 66 have been removed.

Farm Contract

Discussion continued on the City's farm contract that has historically been with Richard Eiler. Since the O'Halloran Brothers are the ones that now farm the land, the Council thought the contract should be changed to be with them moving forward. Woelfel will work with O'Halloran's to determine a plan that works well for both parties to square up

the tillable land and hold some areas back to spread compost. A 5-year farm lease was also discussed as a possibility if the farmers would like to plant alfalfa. Action on the contract was tabled to next month so the details of the new contract can be worked out with O'Halloran's.

- Water Tower Updates A bid was received from Maguire Water for updates to correct the OSHA and AWWA compliance issues that were brought to the City's attention during the water tower inspection completed by Maguire Water in 2023. It was determined that the City should try to apply for an OSHA grant which goes up to \$10,000 to help cover the costs of the update. Woelfel is going to get a second bid for the update.
- Hazardous Building 750 Ash Avenue The building permit has since expired on the property located at 750 Ash Avenue. The City is now able to move forward with the abatement process to raze the building. Information has been sent to the attorney to begin that process again. A court date has been set for later in January.
- Fire Department A motion was made by Schneider and seconded by Leach to approve the resignation of Brennon Cooley from the fire department. Passed unanimously.
- Personnel Policy Amendment The Leave section of the personnel policy was updated to include all of the additional leaves now required by the State based off the LMC's template. This includes the ESST section that was approved in December and also changes to the vacation policy including how it is accrued, when it is available and the amount. An updated copy of the personnel policy with the amended Leave section will be given to all employees who will be required to sign an acknowledgement form stating they have received the updated policy.
- 2024 Mayor Appointments A motion was made by Prokosch and seconded by Leach to approve the 2024 Mayor Appointments. The 2024 appointments will stay the same as the 2023 appointments that were approved at the September 2023 meeting with the addition of Dave Woelfel as the City employee being added to Civil Defense.

Meeting adjourned.  
Tracey Ahl, City Administrator