

CITY OF SIGOURNEY, IOWA
MINUTES OF REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2024

The Sigourney City Council met in regular session in the Council Chambers at City Hall on Wednesday, January 17, 2024, with Mayor Morlan presiding and the following Council members answering roll call: Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker, Lentz and Schultz. Others present were: Steve Shettler, Steve Shetter Media; Casey Jarmes, Sigourney News Review; Don Northup, Director of Public Works I; Kris Metcalf, Police Chief; Douglas A. Glandon, Code Enforcement Officer; Beckie Appleget, Office Assistant; and Angie Alderson, City Clerk.

Mayor Morlan gave kudos to the Street Department for the great job they did with snow removal.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Council member Conrad moved, seconded by Council member McLaughlin, to approve the tentative agenda with the deletion of items 5-1 and 5-2. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker, Lentz and Schultz. Nays: None. Motion approved.

Council member McLaughlin moved, seconded by Council member Lentz, to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda: Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of January 3, 2024; Council Accounts Payable Claims in the amount of \$12,786.51; City Clerk's Financial Reports for September 2023; payroll expenses, miscellaneous expenses, ACH and monthly transfers for September 2023; credit card report; and the time and place for the February 7, 2024 regular Council meeting is 6:00 p.m. at City Hall. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker, Lentz and Schultz. Nays: None. Motion approved.

Additional City Business: City Clerk Alderson showed the City Council a spreadsheet calculating what an eleven percent increase for the City's electrical bills could look like. Using the City's Alliant Energy invoices for January through December 2023 this could amount to \$20,000.00 for the increase alone. Using a twenty percent increase this could amount to almost \$36,500.00. This was then broken down by fund. Council member Iosbaker stated he did look at the CEDI (*Clean Energy Districts of Iowa*) website. There are 236 or 239 entries and about half or more of which are letters of resolution in the Alliant Energy districts objecting to the rate increases. City Clerk Alderson stated there is an optional request for financial support to help cover related fees. Some cities have helped financially, and some have not. Council member Conrad stated that CEDI is trying to keep the electric bill down and they would like us to pay them to help them do this. Council member Iosbaker stated CEDI is advocating a position that says that the other electrical suppliers in the state of Iowa are not hiking their rates to the same degree. Council member Schultz asked when the decision would be made. Would there be time for more review before the City decides. The City Clerk stated that if she understood correctly the first increase would take place in October 2024 and the second increase would happen in October 2025. Council member Iosbaker stated that it is worth reading and he thinks it is calculated that the average residential user would, over the two-year period, pay an additional \$560 in utility fees. The objection has to do with the fact that there are a number of low income and mid income houses in the Alliant Energy area, so CEDI wants to advocate for them. Council member Schultz stated that Alliant probably has its claim that it needs to make this increase and he is not aware of that side. Council member Iosbaker stated that the objections he has read are kind of across the spectrum. They question the efficiencies of Alliant and others outright question the rate increase in the context of the compensation that is being received by the upper-level officers in the company. There is a broad base of complaints. There is a lot to read. The City will definitely feel this. City Clerk Alderson stated she had not read there is a deadline to participate in this. Council member Iosbaker moved, seconded by Council member Schultz, to table the possible approval of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the City of Sigourney, Iowa ("City") and Clean Energy Districts of Iowa ("CEDI") until the next Council meeting. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker, Lentz and Schultz. Nays: None. Motion approved.

Council member Schultz moved, seconded by Council member Lentz, to table the possible approval of a resolution opposing Alliant Energy's electric rate increase until the next Council meeting. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker, Lentz and Schultz. Nays: None. Motion approved.

Mayor Morlan stated that Council member Iosbaker was part of a meeting last week discussing Home Base Iowa. Council member Iosbaker stated that this is for discussion only to raise awareness and to get feedback. Home Base Iowa approached Keokuk County and the Board of Supervisors several months ago and presented them with a request to execute a resolution making Keokuk County a Home Base Iowa county. Home Base Iowa is a veteran's-oriented organization. It is focused on promoting and marketing Iowa and the counties and communities therein as places where veterans could relocate and find employment, make their homes, etc. Home Base Iowa tries to facilitate matching job seekers with communities that have similar needs. Keokuk County is one of a handful of Iowa counties that are not Home Base Iowa. The Keokuk County Board of Supervisors did agree, and executed a resolution to the effect that we would become one. This is step one in the process at the county level. There are additional steps that need to be taken if a county, a community, or a business wishes to be designated as a Home Base Iowa entity. Iowa Works came and met with Keokuk County Economic Development and gave details about the processes involved. The county /

communities would need to go around and identify a number of businesses that were willing to assert that they were part of the program, Home Base Iowa businesses. The idea would be to get ten percent of the businesses in the county. Communities, counties and businesses would then be added to put together meaningful incentive packages for new residents. Examples of incentive packages are closing costs, hotel/motel fees while people are in the area looking for jobs, grants to home buyers when they purchase, etc. Council member Iosbaker stated that while he was listening to this presentation, he thought that something like this would be best addressed by the communities ideally by all or a majority of the communities in the county and it seemed like a good idea to start here. Council member Iosbaker would like to get feedback, questions and/or comments that he could take in and use in his role with economic development. Council member Lentz asked if there were jobs here for people and Council member Iosbaker stated that there are jobs available and that veterans do make good employees a good percentage of the time. He can see value in working with businesses around the county to make them aware and to encourage them to participate. Council member McLaughlin asked how many counties in Iowa were part of this program. Council member Iosbaker stated that he thought there were six counties that were not. Mayor Morlan stated that this is just something to think about as there will not be any action taken tonight. Council member McLaughlin asked if there was any paperwork involved. Council member Iosbaker stated that there would be paperwork and if communities elected to go through the process, an incentive package would be put together and marketing would be done for the community, business and/or county on the Iowa Works website. They facilitate matching with potential job seekers, signage would need to be put up and there is an expectation of a dedication ceremony. Council member Iosbaker would welcome any feedback to help give KCED some guidance and input. Council member Schultz stated that he cannot imagine this being a bad thing and Council member Iosbaker stated that this would have to be actively worked.

Council member Iosbaker, Keokuk County Economic Development, stated they are preparing for the annual members meeting at the end of February. They are always looking to recruit new members and hopefully at the annual meeting they will be able to give additional businesses a reason to join. They are also running programs to try to solicit participation from a larger group of volunteers for committees. They run four events a year and that keeps everyone busy, but they need help. You do not have to be on the KCED board, and it does not have to be a large amount of time devoted. If they could get people interested in helping with some of the events, that would be very helpful. The Child Initiative is going well. The financial model is nearing completion. The goal has been by the end of January to have this in hand so we would know what startup capital would be required and what the proper balance of revenue to expenses would be in terms of what the community can tolerate to pay for childcare versus what we will have to pay caregivers. That is going to be a challenging equation to run. They are getting support from the Sigourney school district with meals at cost, which is very generous. They would like to open in June if that can be done.

Street and Sanitation: Mayor Morlan opened the bid for the spraying at the City's parks and other property. There was one bid from TruGreen Commercial. Mayor Morlan reviewed the items in the package and the final price came to \$7,996.00. Mayor Morlan stated that this has been done once and the City Clerk thought this was \$600.00 to \$700.00, but this did not include the soccer fields. Last year the Council voted to include the soccer fields. All the licenses are included.

Council member Conrad moved, seconded by Council member Lentz, to accept the bid from TruGreen to spray the city properties. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker, Lentz and Schultz. Nays: None. Motion approved.

Street and Sanitation: A Street and Sanitation Committee meeting was set for Monday, January 29th at 6:00 p.m.

Public Safety: Council member Iosbaker reported that the Public Safety Committee spent their discussion on preparing for a meeting with Keota to discuss the terms of a 28E Agreement. They talked about what was acceptable and what was not acceptable in preparation for that meeting. The meeting with Keota was set for the same evening, but due to the inclement weather Keota was unable to attend. The Committee discussed a request from Keven Hatfield, Sigourney School Superintendent regarding a School Resource Officer. A School Resource Officer would actually be a member of the Police Department and not part of the school itself. Council member Iosbaker stated that we are not at a point where we are ready to do that, but this is something that we should keep in mind.

Council member Schultz asked if there is a camera system at the school in place currently. Mayor Morlan stated that yes there is, but only a School Resource Officer could review the footage. Because of the privacy act for the students, the Sheriff's Office nor the Police Department could review this. This is one of the reasons a School Resource Officer would be valuable as he could see what took place. This will be discussed at a later meeting.

Finance: A Finance Committee meeting is set for Thursday, January 25th at 6:00 p.m.

Public Input: Council member Lentz stated there will be a July 4th meeting to discuss the activities and events that will hopefully be taking place. This meeting will be Wednesday, January 24th at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall.

Council member Lentz moved, seconded by Council member Iosbaker, to adjourn the meeting. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker, Lentz and Schultz. Nays: None. Motion approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Jimmy Morlan, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Angela K. Alderson, City Clerk