

**MORAVIA CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2024**

A special meeting of the Moravia City Council was called to order by Mayor Roy Miller at 4:30 PM on Thursday, January 25, 2024, at Moravia City Hall. In addition to Mayor Miller, those present at the meeting were Councilpersons Ken Martin, Ron Deal, Tom Kramka, John Baty, and Sheila Kirby. Sharla Stogdill, Mitch Main, Shaun Wubben, Amanda Smith, Marcia Benjamin, Bill Benjamin, A.J. Weillbrenner, and Carol Kramka were also present. The meeting opened with a prayer by Councilman Ken Martin and the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Miller welcomed the public.

Motion by Baty and seconded by Kirby to approve the agenda. Roll Call Vote: Martin-Aye, Baty-Aye, Kirby-Aye, Deal-Aye, Kramka-Aye. Motion carried.

Comments from the public – None.

City Clerk/Treasurer Sharla Stogdill reviewed a first draft of the city budget for fiscal year 2024/2025 with the City Council and Mayor. Each fund was discussed and line by line items with historical data was reviewed. A historical balance sheet showing a significant increase in the city's assets since 2015 was reviewed. The cost of employee health insurance, property insurance, and workers compensation insurance is increasing. Loans, loan balances, and payments were reviewed. The tax rates for other towns in Appanoose County were discussed, with Moravia being only the sixth highest tax rate out of eleven towns in Appanoose County. This included having a lower tax rate than one town with no city employees. The Council was reminded this is their budget and they are responsible for setting the tax rate for the city and for staying within the budget guidelines throughout the fiscal year. Remaining ARPA (American Rescue Plan) dollars must be budgeted and spent by 2026. A budget using a total property tax rate of \$12.27663 per \$1,000 of assessed value was presented for review.

Library Board member A. J. Weillbrenner and Library Director Amanda Smith discussed the library's proposed budget and accomplishments of the library in the past year. Rising costs of the library's telephone/internet service and a request for an increase in funding for accessions were reviewed. No budget requests were received from the Fire Department. Employee wage increases were discussed. Motion by Martin and seconded by Deal to accept the proposed wage increases of \$1.50 per hour for full-time employees and \$1 per hour for part-time employees, including the Library Director (an increase from the Library Board's budget request) effective July 1, 2024. Roll Call Vote: Martin-Aye, Baty-Aye, Kirby-Aye, Deal-Aye, Kramka-Aye. Motion carried.

Mitch Main discussed the need for a new city truck. A 55% grant may be available from the USDA if they are able to secure the funds and the city qualifies. Different possibilities of how to spend the city's remaining ARPA funds were discussed at length. A new truck, mower, snowblower attachment for the skid loader, message board, library ceiling repairs, and attic/roof repairs and insulation at city hall are all being considered. Franchise fees were also discussed. The City Clerk will provide information at the February 1 special meeting on the rules for spending franchise fees. The drainage ditch, tube, and road by the walking bridge at 705 West North Street was discussed. The City Council agreed by consensus that the water fund was financially sound and no need to raise water rates for FY 2024/2025. Sewer rates were discussed and an increase of \$1 per month per customer will be presented to the Council at three ordinance readings. Councilwoman Kirby requested funds for new window shades at the community building if funds are not available in the current year's budget. Mayor Miller discussed developing an "Avenue of Flags" at Hillcrest Cemetery using the funds donated to the city by the Pfannebecker Estate. Mayor Miller also noted members of the community may be interested in donating money to the project as well. The Girl Scouts have agreed to put up the flags at Memorial Day. Council agreed by consensus to budget \$10,000 for the Avenue of Flags.

A second budget workshop meeting will be held on Thursday, February 1, at 4:30 PM, at Moravia City Hall where changes and additions to the budget will be reviewed before finalization and public hearings. The workshop meetings are open meetings where the public is invited and welcome to attend.

Council Discussion Items – Councilman Baty inquired if the Betterment Committee had any projects that would need funds from the city. Marcia Benjamin stated they are applying for the ACCF grant for a pickle ball field and lights. Baty noted the batting cage at Trussell Park collapsed under the snow. He recommended replacing all lights at Trussell Park. Councilwoman Kirby stated road repairs/cement are needed and would like to consider spending ARPA funds for repairs.

Mayor Info and Discussion Items – Mayor Miller discussed the fire hydrants that are covered with snow and who is responsible for clearing the snow around them. Council agreed by consensus that it is just like sidewalks in front of a property, the owner of the property is responsible. Flags for the hydrants was discussed. Mayor Miller also told the council we have received three inquiries this week about the abandoned water meters inside houses leaking. Consensus by council that the city can provide a piece of pipe for residents to install or a plumber can bypass the abandoned meter at the homeowner's expense. If there is a large water loss due to leaking of the abandoned meter, council will approve adjustments in invoices on a case-by-case basis.

Motion by Martin and seconded by Kirby to adjourn at 6:48 PM. All Ayes. Motion carried.

/s/ Roy Miller, Mayor

Attest:

/s/ Sharla Stogdill, City Clerk/Treasurer