

CITY OF VERONA
COMMON COUNCIL
MINUTES
June 27, 2022

1. Call to order: Diaz called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call: Kate Cronin, Mara Helmke, Phil Hoechst, Rye Kimmett, Christine Posey, Heather Reekie, and Evan Touchett. Chad Kemp was absent and excused. Also present: City Clerk Holly Licht, City Administrator Adam Sayre, Police Chief Bernie Coughlin, and City Engineer Carla Fischer.
4. Public Comments:
 - Rye Kimmett, Kismett Books, stated that the City should be doing all we can to help residents access reproductive health care. She noted that the Police Department should not enforce abortion laws. She added that she was planning to send a letter to the state along with Alder Kemp.
 - Jesse Charles, 1234 Cathedral Point, gave an overview of the New Century School building. He stated that Steve Brown Apartments and Alexander Company stated they will seek to list the building on the national register and preserve as much of the history of the building as possible. He would love to hear an explanation about what has happened in the last 2 years to move away from listing the building on the national register of historic places.
5. Approval of Minutes from the June 13, 2022 Common Council meeting
Motion by Reekie, seconded by Helmke to approve the minutes from the June 13, 2022 Common Council meeting. Motion carried 7-0.
6. Mayor's Business
 - A. Library Board Appointments: Motion by Kimmett, seconded by Cronin to approve the appointment of Ted Bunk and Karen Spencer to the Library Board. Motion carried 7-0.
 - B. Presentation by Chief Coughlin regarding Verona Police Department Active Threat Training: Chief Coughlin stated that the department completes 40 hours of training per year. In general, 1 in-service training a year is dedicated to active shooter training. In the past couple years EMS and Fire have been involved in rapid response training. Posey asked how threats are handled. Chief Coughlin stated that they work with school district, Dane County, Department of Justice, and FBI to investigate. Helmke asked if the police department took preventive measures. Chief Coughlin stated that they offer gun locks, offer gun storage, and other preventative measures such as National Night Out.
7. Announcements
8. Administrator's Report: the administrator's report was entered into the record.
9. Engineer's Report: the engineer's report was entered into the record.
10. Committee Reports
 - A. Finance Committee**
 - (1) Discussion and Possible Action Re: Payment of bills
Motion by Posey, seconded by Helmke to pay the bills in the amount of \$560,788.69. Motion carried 7-0.

(2) Discussion and Possible Action Re: Approving a contract with Baker Tilly US, LLP for auditing services for 2022-2024

Motion Posey, seconded by Helmke to approve a contract with Baker Tilly US, LLP for auditing services for 2022-2024. Motion carried 7-0.

11. New Business

A. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Lease agreement with Redeemer Bible Fellowship for the property located at 130 Franklin St.

Motion by Touchett, seconded by Hoechst to approve a lease agreement with Redeemer Bible Fellowship for the property located at 130 Franklin St. Motion carried 7-0.

B. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Park plan design and costs for Century School Park located at 309 West Verona Avenue

Sayre stated that the proposed park design for Century School Park includes plaza along West Verona Avenue, a seasonal green space that turns into a large ice rink with a gas firepit south of the rink, a playground in the western portion of the park, a pollinator/educational plantings areas in the southeastern portion of the park, and a great lawn in the center of the park with a stage along the eastern portion of the park to contain restrooms, concessions, skate rentals, and storage. The applicant's goal is to begin installation of the utilities this fall to coordinate with other construction in the area for the apartment buildings. Century School Park could begin construction in the spring for a mid-summer opening in 2023. Presently, the City will be required to contribute approximately \$750,000 to the project. This additional money needs to be budgeted in the 2023 budget. The Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Commission voted 3-0 to recommend approval of the park plan. Sayre stated that adding the bathrooms outside would increase costs by around \$250,000. Diaz asked how the gas fireplace was secured. Sayre said he would do research and report back to the council.

Kimmett asked if there would be shade for the playground. She noted that the playground at Fireman's Park was too hot to play on in the summer.

Motion by Kimmett, seconded by Helmke to approve the park plan design and costs for Century School Park located at 309 West Verona Avenue. Motion carried 7-0.

C. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Presentation by Art House 360 regarding the former New Century School building located at 401 West Verona Avenue

The owners of Inventiva Works, BARRIO Dance, SlateBLUE Studios, and Theatre LILA presented their idea for a collective space in the former New Century school for theater, art, and dance.

Helmke asked if the intent would be that the City would own the building. Sayre stated that would be an option. He added that if the City were to contribute any money, we would need to do an RFP.

Sayre stated that the Alexander Group stated that they started the process of listing the building on the National Registry but fell short after their reviewer had concerns about recent work to the building.

Cronin stated that parking would be an issue at this site and wanted Arthouse to be aware.

Touchett said that the City should work with ART House.

Posey stated that an art space would be a great addition to the community.

Diaz asked if the City could put it on the registry. The representative from ART House stated that they love the idea and are open to it, but they need to know more about costs and processes. Sayre stated the City could talk with the state and Jesse Charles to figure out the details.

Reekie is in favor of putting the building on the national register.

- D. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Lease agreement with I.C.E. Inc for property located at 451 East Verona Avenue

Motion by Kimmett, seconded by Hoechst, to approve the lease agreement with I.C.E. Inc for property located at 451 East Verona Avenue. Motion carried 7-0.

- E. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Agreement with I.C.E. Inc. to provide \$250,000 over ten (10) years for the expansion of the Verona Ice Arena located at 451 East Verona Avenue

Posey asked what would happen if there was not \$25,000 in the fund balance to pay. Sayre stated there was language in the agreement that stated if there wasn't money available, the City would not have to pay.

Motion by Kimmett, seconded by Hoechst to approve an agreement with I.C.E. Inc. to provide \$250,000 over ten (10) years for the expansion of the Verona Ice Arena located at 451 East Verona Avenue. Motion carried 7-0.

- F. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Presentation and request by I.C.E. Inc. for \$500,000 for the expansion of the Verona Ice Arena located at 451 East Verona Avenue

Joe Marshall, executive director, stated that they have more than doubled their youth hockey program in the past couple of years. He added that the Learn to Skate program has become more popular. He said that the new rink would have a concrete floor, so they would be able to host events during the off season. Marshall stated that having 2 rinks is important for tournaments and bringing overnight guests to Verona. To date, they have raised \$4.1 million cash and pledges.

Kimmett asked they would be willing to work with the City to do programming with the Rec Department and free skate options for Verona residents. Marshall stated that they would be open to it.

Helmke asked what the risk to the City would be. Sayre stated that the City would have to borrow the money. He added that if the business failed, we would have to assume ownership of the building. Sayre stated that they are looking at a state trust fund loan with a 4.5% interest rate.

Helmke asked what would happen if the City gave the money, but the school district fell through. Marshall stated that the project would get delayed until they could fundraise.

Touchett stated that since this is a city/town property, that the Town should also contribute money.

Cronin stated she is not in favor of moving forward with \$500,000.

Hoechst stated he was in favor of it, especially since it will add other events to the City.

Posey asked what level of debt the ICE Inc organization would be willing to go into.

Marshall stated that they are comfortable going forward with \$2 million debt.

Kimmett stated she is generally in favor of moving forward.

Touchett stated that he would be in favor of using more tourism dollars. He added that he would want to ask the Town to transfer ownership of the property to the City. He added that it would be worthwhile to draft a loan agreement.

Reekie stated that she is not comfortable with asking the taxpayers to pay \$500,000 plus interest unless the city is going to see the benefit for the residents.

Helmke stated that she is generally in favor of the idea. She added that she agrees with Touchett to look at other funding sources.

11. Adjournment: Motion by Touchett, seconded by Kimmett to adjourn at 9:16 p.m.
Motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Holly Licht, City Clerk