CITY OF IRON RIVER
PUBLIC HEARING
Wednesday, January 17, 2018
2 PM
Minutes

Mayor Terry Tarsi called the hearing to order at 2 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the Iron River City Hall.

Roll Call: Rodney Dood, Jere Fritsche, Tricia Mercier, Dennis Powell and Tarsi.
Absent: None.
Also present: Attorney Mark Tousignant, Manager David Thayer and Clerk Rachel Andreski.

Public in attendance: Adam Polley, Wayne Koski, Rick Commenator, John Cimarelli, Bill LaRock, Larry Mellstrom, Paul Schuytema (ICECA) and Jerry DeRoche (Iron County Reporter).

PURPOSE OF PUBLIC HEARING: To receive public comment on the proposed Amendments to the City Charter. Tarsi explained the proposed amendments would reduce the voting precincts from four to two and Council Members shall be elected citywide, by the voters at large.

Larry Mellstrom asked if the numbers of precincts are reduced, what are the new precinct lines on the map going to be? Tousignant stated the precincts are just barriers of where you go to vote as all residents will vote on the same ballot items. He would like to be given the opportunity to vote on all items.

Adam Polley stated that each precinct is set up a certain way because of representation. He stated that the good old boys club will dictate how it will be held and that changing the lines are being done to fit an agenda.

Wayne Koski wanted to know whose idea was it to reduce precincts. Tarsi said it was his idea as it’s a cost savings for the City and that the Village of Mineral Hills, City of Stambaugh and Iron River consolidated 18 years ago and it has been one City ever since. The original amendment change was to go to one precinct, however the state limits the minimum number of precincts based on population.

Dennis Powell stated he doesn’t think it’s a good idea, but the voters will determine.

Rodney Dood stated voter turnouts at elections are poor. Each person will still have a voice, but we are all Iron River now because Mineral Hills and Stambaugh have been gone for 18 years.

Rick Commenator stated after being a city manager, you don’t just represent the precinct, you represent the City.

There being no comment, Fritsche moved to close the Public Hearing at 2:12 p.m. Powell seconded. All in favor; motion carried.
CITY OF IRON RIVER
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, January 17, 2018
2 PM
Minutes

Mayor Terry Tarsi called the meeting to order at 2:12 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the Iron River City Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call: Rodney Dood, Jere Fritsche, Tricia Mercier, Dennis Powell and Tarsi.
Absent: None.
Also present: Attorney Mark Tousignant, Manager David Thayer, and Clerk Rachel Andreski.

Public in attendance: Adam Polley, Wayne Koski, Rick Commenator, John Cimarelli, Bill LaRock, Larry Mellstrom, Paul Schuytema (ICECA) and Jerry DeRoche (Iron County Reporter).

Tarsi welcomed the new Councilmembers

PUBLIC COMMENT
Paul Schuytema, ICECA Executive Director, wrapped up the Economic Vitality Plan and delivered it to the County by the first of the year. He will be visiting planning groups to provide a copy and presentation. Schuytema wants to ensure the ICECA is in sync with needs and desires of the organizational members of County. Their goals are Asset Development (Genesee Street), reviving Business after Hours, and update and enhance member benefits. Recently, a grant was received to host a series of professional development workshops. He stressed when visitors come to our community, all people in the County are ambassadors of the County. He provided Council with their Winter 2018 Quarterly Report and Thayer the Strategic Plan in which they will meet to discuss.

Polley asked Mercier to recuse herself or resign as she has a Wisconsin license plate, and by law, she has 30 days to perform a change of address. Polley stated not only is she breaking the law, but also violating state ethics. Mercier had no comment at this time.

Koski attended a meeting in August where Council was looking for residents to sit on committees. He was approved to sit on the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), and now understands just recently, Council voted on disbanding the ZBA and having themselves perform the task. He feels the Council wants to take the power away from the people and make it a dictatorship.

Commenator stated as chair of the Planning Commission they determined and majority of communities of this size all are going to having the Council do it as can’t find people to serve on committees. Tarsi said its lack of interest from the public.

Mellstrom stated he was also on the ZBA, and at their last hearing, there were only three members seated on a five member board. Mellstrom feels the Council has a better handle on the ZBA as it is, and that it is a good idea to have Council perform the duty.
APPROVE AGENDA
Fritsche moved, with support from Mercier, to approve the Agenda as written. All were in favor; Motion carried.

APPROVE MINUTES
Mercier moved to approve the December 20, 2017 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting Minutes as written. Fritsche supported.

CONSENT AGENDA
Fritsche moved, Mercier seconded, to accept and file, the Consent Agenda which included the following:

a) DPW Report
b) Police Report
c) November 9, 2017 Regular Planning Commission Minutes (draft)
d) December 18, 2017 Regular DDA Minutes (draft)

Roll Call: Ayes – 5: Dood, Powell, Mercier, Fritsche and Tarsi. Nays – 0. Motion carried.

REPORTS
Attorney’s Report: Tousignant stated a judge has been appointed out of Houghton to hear the County Litigation case. Tousignant contacted the County’s Attorney and will have an answer to the complaint early next week. Dood moved, Powell seconded, to accept the Attorney’s Report.
Roll Call: Ayes – 5: Fritsche, Mercier, Powell, Dood and Tarsi. Nays – 0. Motion carried.

Manager’s Report: Thayer handed out a supplemental packet which included the latest draft of the Capital Improvements Plan for Council review. The Planning Commission has been working hard and passed a major milestone by approving this. Thayer will place it on February’s Agenda for consideration and if passed, utilize it as the City’s action plan for 2018.

Thayer also discussed:

- A new proposed Noxious Weed Ordinance for Council to review and comment.
- A new proposed Parks and Recreation Committee ordinance as there is currently none in place.
- In summer of 2019, MDOT will be resurfacing US-2 starting at River Avenue heading east to Bates/Gaastra Road.
- UP International negotiations are still ongoing, and Thayer is hopeful to come to terms to trade in the plow truck for a new 2018, although new information was received where it’s possible to fix the issue. He will know more for next meeting.
• The DPW installed a temporary stop sign at the intersection of Genesee and Washington Streets as a safety precaution until the possible installation of blinking lights.

• Thayer had meeting with RRC staff and gained a lot of knowledge that hasn’t been shared in past 2 years.

• The DPW is continuing to measure frost depths weekly to avoid freezing of water mains. Thayer will discuss in detail under new business.

Powell moved, Fritsche supported, to accept the Manager’s Report. All in favor; Motion carried.

FINANCIALS
City Financial Report – December, 2017: Thayer reviewed the financials monthly and estimates that there is $180,000 - $200,000 less in revenue than planned. Expenses are also less, so the two are coinciding. He stated it’s not at a point to amend or cut the budget, but is monitoring closely. Mercier moved to accept the December 2017 Financial Report. Dood seconded.
Roll Call: Ayes–5: Fritsche, Powell, Dood, Mercier and Tarsi. Nays – 0. Motion carried.

Roll Call: Ayes–5: Fritsche, Powell, Dood, Mercier and Tarsi. Nays – 0. Motion carried.

City Attorney Invoice – December, 2017: Dood moved to accept the City Attorney’s invoice in the amount of $673.75. Mercier seconded.
Roll Call: Ayes–5: Fritsche, Powell, Mercier, Dood and Tarsi. Nays – 0. Motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
Charter Amendments – Precinct Reduction and Councilperson Election: Tarsi stated that if the Council approves, this will go to the registered voters at August’s election. Thayer added TV6 News was gracious to come and do a story advertising the public hearing which aired the previous evening. If the Council chooses, they could approve a resolution at February’s meeting, send it to governor/attorney general’s office for review, and if approved, ready for the August election. Tarsi stated that when it was originally set up, the other two cities pushed for it in order to have consolidation and feels it’s accomplished what it was set out for. Now we are one City, we need to remove the precinct lines and feels this is the best thing for this City. Fritsche moved, Mercier seconded, to have Thayer draft a resolution for February’s meeting.

NEW BUSINESS
Set Meeting Dates and Times: Powell moved, Dood supported adopt the same schedule as last year of meeting no the third Wednesday of each month, with the exception of holding all meeting times at 2 p.m.
Roll Call: Ayes–5: Fritsche, Mercier, Dood, Powell and Tarsi. Nays – 0. Motion carried.
**Reaffirm Depositories of City Funds for 2018:** Thayer recommended to not make any changes to the City’s depositories. He added the City has accounts with every bank in the City. Fritsche moved, Mercier seconded, to reaffirm the depositories of City funds for 2018.
Roll Call: Ayes–5: Dood, Powell, Mercier, Fritsche and Tarsi. Nays – 0. Motion carried.

**Appoint Deputy Mayor:** Powell nominated Fritsche to fill the Deputy Mayor position. Fritsche accepted. Powell moved to appoint Fritsche to the Deputy Mayor position. Dood supported.

**Amendment to Water Ordinance on Building Owner’s Responsibilities:** Thayer provided the current ordinance that discusses responsibilities of the lateral and feels it’s not clear and needs updating. A policy was adopted in 2009 and 2014, however, the ordinance is what needs to be updated so there is no question. He added the ordinance cannot be amended unless it language is included stating Council has the authority to make/amend policy. Tousignant has reviewed for accuracy and agreed it does give flexibility.

Thayer stated the former Stambaugh has special circumstances as their shutoff’s are all on the same side of the street, meaning some run under the street. Thayer feels the City should have responsibility from the main to the shutoff, however there is no language. There is also no language that discusses water freezing. Tarsi stated he feels that he should continue drafting language. The general consensus is to have Thayer work with Tousignant to draft language and come back in February to present.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**
John Cimarelli asked if the County can revert their bad houses to the City. Thayer stated no.

**COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS**

**ADJOURNMENT**
Mercier moved to adjourn at 3:47 p.m. Fritsche seconded. All in favor; Motion carried.

Rachel Andreski, City Clerk