

**CITY OF OWOSSO
REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF JANUARY 2, 2024
7:30 P.M.
VIRGINIA TEICH CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

PRESIDING OFFICER: MAYOR ROBERT J. TEICH, JR.

OPENING PRAYER: PASTOR WARREN DAVIS
CORNERSTONE CHURCH

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: JOSH HALEY

PRESENT: Mayor Robert J. Teich, Jr., Councilmembers Janae L. Fear, Jerome C. Haber, and Daniel A. Law.

ABSENT: Mayor Pro-Tem Susan J. Osika, Councilmembers Emily S. Olson, and Nicholas L. Pidek.

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Councilmember Fear to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion supported by Councilmember Haber and concurred in by unanimous vote.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 18, 2023

Motion by Councilmember Haber to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 18, 2023 as presented.

Motion supported by Councilmember Law and concurred in by unanimous vote.

PROCLAMATIONS / SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

CITIZEN COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Cheryl Farver, 414 Adams Street, said she is concerned about the city saying no one seems to take pride in their property any longer, that Joann Fabrics is closing and another dollar store is being proposed for that location, that taxes go up but the services don't, and that it's not her responsibility to report neighbors that violate the law. She thanked Council for taking the time to listen to her.

Tom Manke, 2910 W. M-21, said the New Years Eve Ball Drop event was wonderful, despite the dreary weather. He announced the unveiling of the Thomas Dewey historical marker on Friday at 2:00 p.m. Lastly, he said he objects to the idea that two certain property owners seem to be getting all the grant money for downtown buildings.

Eddie Urban, 601 Glenwood Avenue, said he was sad that JoAnn Fabrics is closing, he needs someone to do some mending for him, that there's good and bad in every town, and lastly, he thanked the Mayor and Councilmember Law for seeing to it the guy wire was replaced on the telephone pole near his house.

Joseph Moore, 304 Michigan Avenue, said there are new small businesses popping up in town and he encouraged the City to start a program to periodically highlight individual small businesses. He also mentioned that the parking downtown is good.

Responding to Ms. Farver's comments, Mayor Teich said that Council receives a report each month of all the calls that were reported and addressed by City employees, estimating there are 400-500 reports per month. He said the City does not have an employee dedicated solely to patrolling each and every mile of street for code enforcement violations. If a violation is reported the City will initiate the code enforcement process, but unfortunately the City will never be a perfect place. He also noted that, if in fact, Joann Fabrics is replaced by a dollar store that it would be the purview of the building owner, not the City. And lastly, he said that the City constantly works to attract new businesses to town.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Councilmember Fear to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

***Contract Amendment - Professional Services Agreement - Auditing Services Contract.**

Approve Amendment No. 2 to the Professional Services Agreement - Auditing Services Contract with Berthiaume & Co. CPAs increasing the first year of the contract by \$7,800.00 for additional/extra accounting work and authorize payment to the vendor as follows:

RESOLUTION NO. 01-2024

**AUTHORIZING AMENDMENT NO. 2 TO
THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT – AUDIT SERVICES CONTRACT
WITH BERTHIAUME & CO. CPAS**

WHEREAS, Owosso City Council approved a multiyear service contract with Berthiaume & Co. CPAs on May 1, 2023 for the provision of annual auditing services; and

WHEREAS, as is typical of a first-year audit, the firm recommended several adjustments and reclassifications which came as the result of additional accounting work over and above the original scope of the contract; and

WHEREAS, an amendment to the professional services agreement is being requested due to this extra audit and accounting work required for the annual audit/financial statement and single audit for the Fiscal Year Ending 6-30-2023.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OWOSSO, SHIAWASSEE COUNTY, MICHIGAN:

- FIRST: that the City of Owosso has heretofore determined that it is advisable, necessary, and in the public interest to improve and correct the city’s financial statements which resulted in 23 recommended adjusting journal entries and 17 recommended reclassification entries.
- SECOND: that Amendment No. 2 to the Professional Services Agreement – Audit Services Contract is hereby approved, increasing the first year of the contract by the amount of \$7,800.00, resulting in a first-year total of \$41,100.00.
- THIRD: the Mayor and City Clerk are hereby instructed and authorized to sign the amendment, substantially in the form attached.
- FOURTH: the Accounts Payable department is authorized to submit payment to Berthiaume & Co. CPAs in an amount not to exceed \$41,100.00 in the first year.
- FIFTH: the above expenses will be paid from various funds as budgeted.

***Check Register – December 2023.** Affirm check disbursements totaling \$2,468,520.10 through December 31, 2023.

Motion supported by Councilmember Law.

Roll Call Vote.

- AYES: Councilmembers Fear, Haber, law, and Mayor Teich.
- NAYS: None.
- ABSENT: Mayor Pro-Tem Osika, Councilmembers Olson and Pidek.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Warrant No. 638

City Manager Nathan R. Henne briefly detailed the grant program, noting that this particular grant has been over a year in the making.

Motion by Councilmember Fear to authorize Warrant No. 638 as follows:

Vendor	Description	Fund	Amount
Taphouse Specialty Meat Market LLC	MEDC Match on Main Grant	DDA	\$25,000.00

Motion supported by Councilmember Law.

Roll Call Vote.

AYES: Councilmembers Law, Haber, Fear, and Mayor Teich.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: Mayor Pro-Tem Osika, Councilmembers Olson and Pidek.

Election Inspector Pay Rate Amendment

City Manager Henne explained the proposed increase will raise the wage paid to election workers to \$15.00 per hour, noting this should help the City keep election workers as we move through a critical election year.

Councilmember Fear asked whether she could vote on the item as she sometimes performs election work for the City. City Attorney Scott J. Gould opined that if she is not under contract at the current time, she should be OK to vote. City Manager Henne left the matter up to the Council. No one expressed any objections.

Motion by Councilmember Law to approve increasing pay rates for election inspectors as follows:

RESOLUTION NO. 02-2024

AUTHORIZING PAY INCREASES FOR ELECTION INSPECTORS

WHEREAS, MCL 168.682 requires that election inspectors receive reasonable compensation for work performed during the course of an election; and

WHEREAS, MCL 168.682 further requires said compensation be approved by the legislative body of the municipality; and

WHEREAS, inflation rates have increased dramatically, effectively reducing the pay earned by election inspectors; and

WHEREAS, recent changes in election law have increased the responsibility levels of election inspectors; and

WHEREAS, it is essential for the City to maintain a reliable group of quality election inspectors to administer elections within the City; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary and appropriate to raise the wages paid to election inspectors so they may be fairly compensated for the work they perform.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Owosso, Shiawassee County, Michigan that:

FIRST: it has heretofore determined that it is advisable, necessary and in the public interest to increase the pay rates for election inspectors as follows:

Election Inspector	\$15.00/hr.
Election Inspector – Minor	\$13.00/hr.
Election Chairperson	\$20.00/hr.
Election Co-Chair	\$18.00/hr.
Receiving Board	\$60.00 flat rate, 4 hours or less

SECOND: the Accounts Payable and Payroll departments are authorized from this point forward to issue payment to certified election inspectors at the rates noted above.

THIRD: the above expenses shall be charged to account nos. 101-262-702.400 and 101-262-715.000.

Motion supported by Councilmember Haber.

Roll Call Vote.

AYES: Councilmembers Fear, Haber, Law, and Mayor Teich.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: Mayor Pro-Tem Osika, Councilmembers Olson and Pidek.

COMMUNICATIONS

Brad A. Barrett, Finance Director. Financial Report – November 2023.
Owosso Historical Commission. Minutes of December 11, 2023.
Historic District Commission. Minutes of December 20, 2023.

CITIZEN COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Cheryl Farver, 414 Adams Street, thanked Mayor Teich for responding to her comments, but respectfully disagreed with him. She went on to say that she feels disappointed in the way our city looks and that it will never get any better without effort, encouraging the City to find money to help neighborhoods improve. She criticized the Council saying they seemed unconcerned that a long-time downtown business is closing.

Tom Manke, 2910 W. M-21, suggested starting a neighborhood watch group to help the neighborhood. He also noted that the Joann Fabrics and Springrove Variety stores are both closing because the new owner of the building has raised the rent.

Eddie Urban, 601 Glenwood Avenue, encouraged Ms. Farver to keep coming to meetings.

Joseph Moore, 304 Michigan Avenue, said he really hoped the City would highlight a particular small business each week, saying it will encourage other people to start new businesses.

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, January 16, 2024

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS OPENINGS

Building Board of Appeals – Alternate - term expires June 30, 2024
Building Board of Appeals – Alternate - term expires June 30, 2025
Zoning Board of Appeals – Alternate – term expires June 30, 2024
Zoning Board of Appeals – Alternate – term expires June 30, 2025

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Fear for adjournment at 8:18 p.m.

Motion supported by Councilmember Haber and concurred in by unanimous vote.

Robert J. Teich, Jr., Mayor

Amy K. Kirkland, City Clerk

*Due to their length, text of marked items is not included in the minutes. Full text of these documents is on file in the Clerk’s Office.