

**ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
February 6, 2025**

A regular meeting of the Ashland City Council was held at the Ashland City Hall Council Chambers on the 6th day of February, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor James Anderson
City Council President Chuck Niemeyer
City Council Member Michelle Libal
City Council Member Jerry Lofberg
City Council Member Jim Pinkman
City Administrator Jessica Quady
City Clerk Kristina Stoki
City Attorney Mark Fahleson

Others: Heather Kennedy, Caleb Fjone, Julie Ogden, Ron Styskal, William Styskal, Dan Linke, Carol Clough, and others

Notice of the meeting was advertised in the Ashland Gazette on January 31, 2025. The Mayor and all Council Members received advance notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda as shown by the Acknowledgment of Receipt of Notice. All proceedings shown hereafter were taken while the convened meeting was open to the public.

Mayor Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll Call was taken, and a quorum was declared. Anderson noted the Open Meetings Act located on the south wall of the room.

Motion by Niemeyer, second by Lofberg to adopt the regular agenda.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Mayor Anderson provided opportunity for public comment, and no public comments were given.

Motion by Libal, second by Lofberg to approve Resolution 2025-2 Levy of Special Assessments for Street Improvement Project No. 2022-1 Dennis Dean Road from U.S. Hwy 6 to Fir Street.

Julie Ogden, Street Superintendent from JEO Engineering Group, spoke on potential reduction options of the proposed assessments. A memo was provided to The Council and others to refer to during her discussion. Option One is to adjust cost by changing from eight-inch to seven-inch thickness concrete. Option Two is to adjust cost by an average unit price of concrete at the time of the project. Ogden's recommendation was to choose a middle option which reduced the cost by

an amount which is between Option One and Option Two. The difference between the original assessment and the lower assessment option gets placed in the General Obligation Cost, to be spread out amongst all taxpayers of the city. Ogden noted that the City can always go with an amount which is more or less than anything presented tonight as well. Administrator Quady stated she sought out updated interest rates from our bond agent and the county interest rate which they charge for collection, and recommends six-and-one-half percent. Five percent is what the current bonds are, and one and one half percent for the county collection. Quady noted that the state statute delinquent interest rate is fourteen percent. Ogden mentioned they could look at additional numbers tonight as well if the Council desired.

Roll Call: Ayes: Anderson, Lofberg, Pinkman Nays: Libal, Niemeyer. Motion Carried

Motion by Niemeyer and second by Libal to go with the Middle option of \$11.25 PSY and six-and-one-half percent interest rate. Councilman Lofberg recommended going with the lowest option as a lot of hours have been spent on this conversation and not that much [difference in] money is being discussed [no matter which option]. He stated they have gone a long way to get this corrected and that the Council should go all the way in getting it corrected. Councilman Pinkman stated agreement.

Roll Call: Ayes: Lofberg, Niemeyer, Pinkman Nays: Libal Motion Carried

Motion by Lofberg second by Pinkman, to amend the amendment to strike the Middle option and insert Option Two, and keep the six-and-one-half percent interest rate.

Roll Call: Ayes: Lofberg, Niemeyer, Pinkman Nays: Libal Motion Carried

Motion by Niemeyer and second by Lofberg to approve resolution 2025-3 Authorizing Sale of Property to The City of Lincoln

Attorney Fahleson explained the Resolution is drafted the way it has been because it is a sale of property from one public agency to another, hence requirements of when a city sells rural property go away by statute. He summarized the resolution by stating it says the City does want to sell it to the City of Lincoln, the City is authorizing the Mayor to sign all relevant documents for the property transfer, fee simple title including some permanent and some temporary easements, and the Mayor can sign as long as the City Administrator and City Attorney deem it correct from the City of Ashland's standpoint. This approach alleviates multiple motions down the road and says go forth, do good, and protect the city. City Administrator Quady clarified it contains the same terms they have discussed and the Statement of Offer is on the second page of the resolution. Administrator Quady introduced Steve Owen from the City of Lincoln and displayed a map for all to see, and mentioned some of the terms possibly being flipped around. Administrator Quady pointed out the easements on the map, and Owen stated she is correct and that they can work on those items. Administrator Quady pointed out on the map for all what is being sold and the various

easements in place on the map. Attorney Fahleson stated he and Administrator Quady have talked and believe this is the easiest way to accomplish what the City Council is wanting to do. Niemeyer requested and got clarification on the property line, then mentioned several factors at hand including 48 apartment units and Runza and the very deep ditch in the area and considers it a hazard as the area is very tight. Niemeyer would like to see the ditch filled in up to a certain point, and mentioned that the water being dumped into the ditch by the City of Lincoln has caused a lot of erosion to the ditch, and believes this is a possible hazard. Owen stated it [the ditch] would be difficult to fill, but perhaps it could be improved somewhat. Niemeyer mentioned the concrete slabs in [the ditch] not necessarily being intended as rip rap but placed there because it perhaps was a dump-able spot. Owen said the City of Lincoln would be willing to take a look at what kind of improvements they can do. Mayor Anderson stated concurrence with Niemeyer's thoughts and concerns. Ogden clarified it is not all on the City of Lincoln's property either, and the drainage way mainly follows the property line. Niemeyer stated there is an opportunity now to address the problem. Owen stated that they can give this some thought, and come back to Administrator Quady with some ideas, say in a month.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Libal, second by Niemeyer to approve Change Order #10 for 2022 Dennis Dean Road Improvements Project Increase for \$10,101.60.

City Administrator Quady stated this item is for Fir Street for some unforeseen issues on the water line. She also noted a contract adjustment due to issues on this part of the project and provided a substantial completion date of February 28th, and a final payment date of March 31st. They are currently working on pressure testing and are having a few issues but are looking into why that is.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Pinkman, second by Lofberg to approve Contractor's Application for Payment #19 from M.E. Collins Contracting Co. Inc. for 2022 Dennis Dean Road Improvements Project in the amount of \$48,461.45.

City Administrator Quady noted this leaves \$52,000 left.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Niemeyer, second by Lofberg to approve Authorizing the Mayor to Sign Right-of-Way Entry Agreement with the City of Lincoln.

City Administrator Quady clarified this allows them to get onto the property to start taking trees down as they have to beat the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. It allows them to start getting in there and do that before the birds nest.

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Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

A review of Final Plans for Silver Street, Birch Street and 8th Street was held, led by City Engineer Ogden. She noted that final plans have been presented to the city and tonight is to go over highlights and receive authorization from the City to start getting bids. She stated Silver street will be paved curb and gutter with twenty-eight feet wide concrete except under the underpass where it will be replaced as well, as the railroad has given their permission, and will be twenty-two feet wide there. She stated current width varies between twenty-two feet and twenty-seven feet, but it will be twenty-eight feet everywhere [after project completion], except under the bridge. Ogden noted that Eighth Street is being called an Alternate Bid Group with this bid, and that a gap paving district has been created on Eighth Street, which will allow for construction, bonding, and assessment. Ogden stated that based on recent meetings with property owner, he is moving forward with some of his improvements, but this is being listed as an alternate, so the City is not absolutely committed in case something were to change in the next month before bidding. Ogden stated that paving will be twenty-seven feet wide (standard residential) and seven inches thick. She stated that Silver Street will be eight inches thick. She stated the estimates for the Silver Street work is eight hundred thousand and Eighth Street is two hundred and twenty thousand, so the total is one-million & twenty-thousand dollars. Ogden is looking to take this to bid.

Ogden transitioned into discussing the Birch Street project which starts at the intersection of Sixth Street, which is currently paved and will extend one block to the east towards the golf course to pave the one block that is currently gravel. She noted this is being paved as part of what was discussed when this property was being platted and to aid in ease of maintenance and also as traffic increases in the future. Ogden noted this will be twenty-seven feet wide with seven-inch concrete paving with a curb and gutter. She noted they are also looking to install a cul-de-sac on the East end to allow for emergency vehicles and normal traffic to turn around.

Motion by Lofberg, second by Pinkman to approve Consent Agenda, which includes approval of the January 16, 2025 City Council meeting minutes; and approval of Pay Request from JEO Consulting Group Inc. for General Engineering in the amount of \$587.50 and 562.50; for Ashland Birch Street Improvements \$9,600.00; for Dennis Dean Road Improvements in the amount of \$3,737.50; for Water Supply Improvements in the amount of \$861.50; for WWTF PER in the amount of \$5,025.00; for Water Distribution Hydraulic Model in the amount of \$285.00; for Silver Street Improvements 13th & 9th to 7th \$5,014.00; and for Water Main Furnas & 30th Streets in the amount of \$8,852.20.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Libal, second by Lofberg to approve the second half of January 2025 Claims.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried


Mayors Report given. He stated the street lights going from the Post Office corner to the library in

the green poles have been replaced with LED lighting and also some side street poles, which should operate ten times cheaper, per Delta Electric, than what they replaced. He stated it isn't the yellow glow like it used to be, but not bright either. Administrator Quady noted they do match the lights on the Silver Street bridge. Anderson stated that the Christmas lights being left up through January added a lot to the downtown.

Communications given by Caleb Fjone, who gave thanks to Jessica for helping with the CCCF grant and planning grant for the community center. He also stated The Council will be getting a letter from the AAEDC for a memorandum of understanding that the City will be the matching funding partner for this grant. Per Fjone, if awarded they will be matching 1:1 for the \$15,000 grant award. Fjone stated this memorandum will be signed Tuesday and given at a the next council meeting.

Councilman Niemeyer asked about the status of the Comp plan. Mayor Anderson stated a 90-minute meeting is on the calendar for the end of February at the library. Administrator Quady stated they have already had the first meeting. Anderson stated the Comprehensive plan is just getting started and a consulting firm out of Omaha has been hired to look at changes in zoning/land use, and is much needed as the current plan is ten years old, some of which was updated in 2016. There will be public hearings on this, which is needed per Mayor Anderson.

Motion by Niemeyer, second by Lofberg to adjourn 7:56 p.m.
Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried


James Anderson, Mayor


Kristina Stoki, City Clerk



I, the above signed City Clerk of Ashland, Saunders County, Nebraska hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate copy of the proceedings had and done by the Council on February 6, 2025 that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for the meeting, kept continually current and readily available for public inspection at the office of the City Clerk; that such subjects were contained in said agenda for at least twenty four hours prior to said meeting; that said minutes from which the foregoing proceedings have been extracted were in written form and available for public inspection within ten business days or prior to the next convened meeting of said body.