

CITY OF GILLETT COMMON COUNCIL

Council Chambers – Municipal Building
150 N McKenzie Ave – Gillett, WI 54124

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2024 AT 6:00 PM MINUTES

1. Mayor McCarthy called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call

Present: Clerk Treasurer Chelsea Anderson, Alderpersons Irene Drake, Nanette Mohr, Jerry Luther, Ashley VanStraten, Librarian Shannon Stoner, Public Works Foreman Nate Anderson, Utility Operator Ron Anderson, Police Chief Shane Breitenbach, Ayres and Associates Engineers Craig Schuh and Alise Stadler, Deanna Smith, Gerald Wendt, James Kasten, Dennis Heise, David and Dawn Deland, Kevin Smith, Times Herald Warren Bluhm, Chamber of Commerce Chris Byars, and Jonathan Blaskowski. Mayor Josh McCarthy and Fire Chief Kurt Hicks are excused.

2. **Clerk informs the Council that the Open Meeting Law has been complied with**
3. **Public Input:** Dennis Heise asked if there was any progress on the Reimer land purchase. Mr. Riemer came to a finance meeting last week to offer the city 30 acres for \$265,000. No contracts or agreements have been made; further meetings will be scheduled and will be working with Oconto County Economic Development group to find a developer.

Cockroaches were reported at Gillett Elementary School. Mr. Heise wanted to know how we were notified. Gillett School Head of Maintenance, Mr. Henkel, notified the clerk. Oconto County Health and Human Services asked if we had an infestation ordinance, which we do. The cockroaches were transported in. The school is aware of the source of the problem. Mr. Heise asked if the roaches could further infest the city by way of the sewer. Utility operator said he is unsure. The City has hired the Bug Blaster in the past to handle a rat infection on Washington Street. The school hired the Bug Blaster to handle the infestation.

4. Discussion & possible action on minutes for January 4, 2024

MOTION: Drake/VanStraten

Motion to approve minutes from January 4, 2024

Voice Vote: All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

5. **CDA Report:** Alderperson Mohr – no report.
6. **Library Report:** Librarian Shannon Stoner- Library Director Report
February 2024- Library Director Report
 1. Annual Report has been completed and reviewed by our system. We have a board meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 8th for approval.
 2. Grants-I have to have two grants approved from my board to be submitted to NFLS.
 - a. Youth Services Grant: Randy Peterson will be at the Gillett Library to teach kids about the life cycle of the monarch butterfly as well as techniques for planting milkweed which butterflies need.
 - b. Library Services Grant: To get the Minecraft series for our Children’s Fiction section. That is very popular with kids and our circulation is very good for these. The grant will buy the entire series as well as a series on American History featuring American Colonization, American Revolution, Civil War, Space Age, and the Wild West.
 3. Spring Market- April 26 from 5-7 pm. Vendor space still available Summer Market starts June 6th.
 4. February 12th 4-5 pm: DIY Essential Oil Bracelets

5. We are making Valentine's for Serenity Gardens next week. A little kindness goes a long way to make someone feel special.
6. Summer Reading Program in Progress. Our program this year will run from Thursday, June 13 to Friday, August 30th. The theme this year is "Adventure Begins at Your Library." We have many adventures planned. These are the preliminary programs that have been scheduled for that time. Kids will be given "Explorer's Logs" to log their summer adventures. They can turn them in on August 30th for a little something. What is that something? Don't know yet.

Thursday, June 13

5-6 pm: Barb Henkel Soap Class for Father's day

June 14

10:30-11:30 am: Choo Choo Storytime with the National Railroad Museum

June 21

((SURVIVAL ADVENTURE—NOT CONFIRMED))

Thursday, June 27th

4-5 pm: Butterfly Adventure with Randy Peterson

June 28

10:30-11:30 am: Western Adventures with Wilber the Miniature Pony

July 5

10:30-11:30 am: Space Adventures

July 12

10:30-11:30 am: The Attic Trunk with Lynn Marcks

July 19

10:30-11:30 am: Safari Storytime

July 26

10:30-11:30 am: Storytime at Gillett Area Ambulance, 225 W. Park Street

July 30th

2-4 pm: Outdoor Adventure

Aug 2

Farming Adventure:4H Presentations

Tuesday, Aug 6

National Night Out 5:30-7:30 pm

Thursday, Aug 8

6-8 pm: Railroading through Oconto County with the National Railroad Museum

Aug 9

Time Travel: Gillett Historical Storytime-lemonade & cookie

Aug 16

Gillett Cub Scouts-Danielle Baumgarten-

Aug 30

10:30-11:30 am: Read To A Therapy Dog!

7. I'm taking another certification class in April: Trauma Informed Care: An Introduction to Libraries.
8. National Night Out is being planned.
9. Youth Art Exhibit. There will be some students exhibiting art. Planning is still in the works
10. Sensational Storytime starts Monday, February 5th. We're doing dragon themed activities.

7. **Tourism & Marketing Commission/Gillett Area Chamber of Commerce:** Chamber of Commerce Chris Byars stated spring will be here anytime, asking for clarification on how the city can help pick up the debris and branches from their spring cleanup day. Public Works and Chamber will work out a schedule.

8. **Financial Report:** Clerk Treasurer

a. Updated Monthly Check Register Provided

MOTION: Luther/VanStraten

Motion to approve January 2024 Check Register.

Roll Call Vote: All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

9. **Police Department Report:** Police Chief Breitenbach

a. Discussion on Training, Public Relations, and Incident Summary Report -Chief Breitenbach provided the incident report: Training and Public Relations-

From the Chief's Desk;

Gillett Police Department / 95 incidents / January 2024

With a grant provided by the State of Wisconsin, I was able to secure two FLIR Scout TKx Thermo Monoculars. The FLIR Scout TKx is a pocket-sized thermal vision monocular that can help you clearly see people, objects, and animals in total darkness more than 90 meters (100 yards) away. This versatile thermal imager features a simple, user-friendly design and can capture both images and record video. With the Scout TKx, it's easy to survey large areas and see heat signatures in low-light conditions or outside at night—making it an ideal choice for observing wildlife, home security, or public safety.

As some may not be aware, with the leaving of Officer Buettner, we are at a critical staffing level for the police department. We are providing the best quality services with the limited resources available. I would like the council to recognize Officer Zak Hoeft's efforts and his continued professionalism as he goes above and beyond my expectations that I have set for him. I have not heard of one complaint from Officer Hoeft when asked to adjust his work schedule and being asked to take on more responsibilities. Officer Hoeft's dedication to his job and the community has been exemplary.

We have received 9 applications for the open officer positions. I have begun the initial background investigation processes. Unfortunately several of the applicants have been eliminated due to lack of certification and two others for past history of issues. The remaining candidates have very limited experience. I'm hoping to start formal interview processes in the next few weeks. Finding solid, qualified individuals is proving to be a very difficult task.

On a more positive note, Gillett City Librarian Shannon Stoner and I have begun the planning stages for the 2024 National Night Out Event being held in August. Shannon has already addressed several improvement issues from last year's event. An added event for this year will be a Casserole Cook-Off Competition! If anyone has ideas, suggestions, or would just like to help out, please contact Shannon or I!

10. **Fire Department Report:** Fire Chief Hicks

a. Discussion on Training, Public Relations, and Incident Summary Report- Excused- No Report

11. **Health, Protection and License Committee Report:** Alderperson VanStraten
 - a. Discussion & possible action on Operators Licenses for Lynn Wright
MOTION: VanStraten/Drake
Motion to approve operator's license for Lynn Wright.
Voice Vote: All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

12. **Board of Public Works Committee Report: Alderperson Luther-** Alderperson Mohr said she had received some complaints of the plow not plowing close enough to the curb. Public Works Foreman Anderson stated the reason we do not plow right up to the curb is so the plow does not rub the curb, it ruins the curb and the plow. The department plows to the road pan, which is where the gutter starts. Clerk Anderson also stated she monitors Facebook Gillett Chat for concerns or complaints, including weather and ice. Please do not hesitate to use Facebook Messenger to send a message directly to the Clerk for faster service during off hours. Mr. Heise was concerned about the amount of ice of Fourth Street before Public Works was there to salt it. He asked that Fourth Street be monitored closer due to the large hill and dangerous conditions. He did compliment the department on a great job plowing.

13. **Utility Committee Report:** Utility Operator Ron Anderson stated the PSC (Public Service Commission) report was done. The Utility Department had some failures with some well parts but replaced the parts and that took care of the problems. Cyber-attacks on infrastructure and sewer plants has become a new problem around the world, the attack will put a virus in the computer and control the system from the outside. Our SCADA system is a standalone computer and not tied into the other work computers. We are going through an upgrade, and the upgrade has new precautions for cyber security. A bathroom is going in the new utility garage; the room needs many upgrades to install. Mr. Heise asked about the Washington Street Project (new road, water sewer, storm) Utility Operator Anderson stated they did a walk through with our engineers and noted that the driveways are unacceptable, there is a place on road that sags, the manholes are too low, and they will need to reseed the landscape in Spring. Deanna Smith why there are marking stakes in the lawn on Highway 22: The state did their survey work for the Highway Reconstruction project in 2026. Deanna Smith also asked when the construction would start, as to plan for the Gillett Historical Society Events.

14. **Finance and Personnel Committee Report:** Alderperson Mohr
 - a. Discussion & possible action on Hawkins Ash CPAs contract 2024-2026
MOTION: Drake/Luther
Motion to approve the audit contract with Hawkins Ash CPA's for 2024- \$22,345, 2025-\$23,460, and 2026 -\$24,640.
Roll Call Vote: All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

 - b. Discussion & possible action on paying Oconto County Economic Development Corporation \$1,500 from Tourism and Marketing for Joint Marketing
MOTION: Luther/Drake
Motion to approve OCEDC \$1,500 Joint Marketing Invoice.
Roll Call Vote: All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

 - c. Discussion & possible action on closing interim loans for water and sewer at Peshtigo National Bank- Closing will be March 28, 2024. Pre-closing will be March 21. Need public notice and public meeting to approve resolutions at March council before the interim loans can be closed.

15. **Park and Cemetery Committee Report:** Alderperson Luther stated there will be meeting next Wednesday, February 7, 2024 at 4:30. The meeting will be discussion on applying for grants for the new proposed playground in Zippel Park. It will be a completely new area with benches and walking paths. Total estimate is \$455,000. Applying for local and federal grants. Federal grant is \$350,000. Greg Sekela is willing to write grants for the City of Gillett. Citizens asked if there is going to be a zip line; a possible “zip line” could be part of the setup, but it is a feature about 30 feet long and it glides along a top metal bar. It is a part of the design that needs to be planned; it could be incorporated into the new design. The Committee will come up with 3 layouts and bring to a public meeting. Cast in place rubber would be under the equipment. During this time, the council looked at park designs and took in input from the public. Intent for project would be to pay with grants and donations. Would like to have professionals install the equipment but city departments could help with digging and prep work. The wait time is 3 months for the equipment to arrive.
16. **Planning Committee Report:** 113 W Park Street Ranks Distributing will put an addition on property. A new building to house all of trucks. Will remove block structure garage.
- a. Discussion & possible action on Certified Survey Map for Ranks Distributing
MOTION: Drake/Luther
Motion to approve the Certified Survey Map for Ranks Distributing.
Voice Vote: All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**
17. **Clerk Treasurer’s Report:** Clerk Treasurer stated first installment taxes were due yesterday- January 31, 2024, and the City audit has been completed.
18. **Attorneys Report:** Conway, Olejniczak, and Jerry S.C. Attorneys at Law- No Report
19. **Mayor's Report:** Mayor McCarthy – A message from the Mayor: Mayor McCarthy stated he resigned tonight February 1, 2024, because he moved out of the city limits. He would like to thank everyone that served on council, the employees, and most importantly, the people that had the trust in him to be their mayor. He wanted to be here tonight to thank everyone and he apologized he could not be here. Citizens asked who was running for Mayor- Jonathan Blaskowski introduced himself as the candidate running for Mayor, he was in the audience. New alderperson Ashley VanStraten introduces herself. She stated she graduated from Gillett high school, she enjoyed it here and decided to move back a year ago. She works at Gillett School and is excited to be on City Council. Citizens were worried that we had 2 open seats on council and now the mayor’s seat. They stated we need a full council to make decisions on behalf of the community members, which the council wants as well. We have put it on Facebook, the city website, the paper, and no one came forward to be approved to be on Council. Asked why meetings are at 4:30, Mr. Heise asked the council to move them to 6pm, the council answered we have meetings at all times that work for everyone. Council members phone numbers are available for all to call to voice concerns or ask for changes. The City hopes to fulfil the Tourism and Marketing and Community Development Authority committees as well. Alderperson Luther stated we are here to build a prominent community, community is key, please call any time feel free to let us know what we can do.
20. **Adjourn** at 7:30 PM
MOTION: Luther/Drake *Motion to adjourn.*
Voice Vote: All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully Submitted,
Clerk Treasurer Chelsea Anderson