CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 28, 2024 6:30 P.M.

The Milford City Council met in regular session October 28, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. in Community Center board room. Mayor Anderson presided.
Members present: Chris Hinshaw, Doug Frederick, Shane Hoffman, David Worshek and Kyle Mohni.
Absent: None
Others present: Deputy City Clerk Lissa Ballis, Linda Nase, Herman Richter, Don Brinkley, Nick Blocha, Ryan K., Dennis Clark, Chris Stein, Bethany Waltersdorf, Sarah Tracy, Jessica Felix, Steve Schallwer and George Bower.

Mayor Anderson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Hoffman second by Hinshaw to approve the agenda. Voting aye: Frederick, Hoffman, Hinshaw, Worshek and Mohni. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Hoffman second by Worshek approve the consent agenda. Voting aye: Frederick, Hinshaw, Hoffman, Worshek and Mohni. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Items on the Consent Agenda were as follows:

- Minutes of October 14, 2024 regular council meeting

CITIZEN OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMENT

ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Open discussion with DOT on 4 to 3 lane conversion

Jessica Felix, IDOT presented to the council the background of the TEAP Study, the evaluations found in the study, short-term recommendations to include the following: replace existing signs, update intersection pavement markings, adopt the use of ladder style crosswalks, utilize trained crossing guard and relocate existing school advance crossing. Long term recommendations included ADA improvements to sidewalks/curb ramps, replace traffic and ped signal equipment, install pedestrian signal at US 71 & IA 86, install emergency vehicle warning sign/beacon or traffic signal at 19th street and the conversion of US 71 from 4 lane to a 3 lane. Felix also discussed funding opportunities available to the city. Felix addressed the 4 to 3 lane conversion myths the biggest concern from several in the room is that traffic will back up with this conversion. She explained studies have consistently shown that, for roads with less the 20,000 vehicles per day, 4 to 3 lane conversions will not worsen congestion. In fact, operations and safety improve on a 3-lane road because left turns are shifted into the center turn lane, allowing traffic to flow more freely in the thru lanes. This also applies to those in the residential area who are concerned with getting out into traffic from their homes. The turning lane creates an island of refuge until they can get into the flow of traffic, the change to the geometrics calms the traffic down. This also applies to emergency vehicles and their ability to get those vehicles down the turn lane without obstructions. Other communities who have this configuration have shown it is a benefit.
Mayor Anderson commented that in speaking with staff all recommendations were a go with the exception of the 4 to 3 lane conversion. Many of the improvements are scheduled to be discussed during upcoming budget meetings for FY26. He mentioned public works would like a template for the ladder crosswalk so that could be implemented. Felix commented she could provide specifications for that but wasn't sure a template was available. She stated a grove in crosswalk would be the better choice for long term and lower maintenance.
Mayor Anderson stated all stop lights throughout town need to be replaced and that the Fire and Police Departments would like a signal at 19th street. The hold up on that project has been deciding the conversion. The city was also told in the past we were not allowed an activated beacon or signal at that intersection. Bethany Waltersdorf with IDOT stated the stance on those signals has changed in the last couple years and that she is willing to work with the city to look into what would be compliant. She stated the activated version would be the financial responsibility of the city.
Mayor Anderson asked about a speed study. Felix reminded the council in a previous discussion it came down to current geometrics in town and the driver's perception of the speed limit. It is what it is unless a change is made to the geometric to slow things down. Otherwise, you can do a speed study but it will not change the perception unless a conversion is made. A speed study at this point without making changes will just reinforce that everyone is speeding. Hinshaw asked if we could change the speed limit and Felix responded with "no" and stated it is an enforcement issue right now. She gave a few suggestions as to how to slow traffic down, the main being the 4 to 3 lane conversion and reiterated the short- and long-term recommendations from the TEAP study. Mayor Anderson asked about the speed limit at the school crossing zone and if that area could be reduced. Bethany stated that area would come with its own set of beacons, it would be activated and programed to flash only during drop off and pick up times. It would only reduce speed when flashing. She stated she would get us started with that.
Mohni asked when the IDOT had a plan to resurface Hwy 71 through town. Felix shows an improvement plan for 14th Street North to the Hwy 86 junction is slated for 2030; this doesn't mean the project can't be moved up once a decision is made. Hinshaw wanted verification that when the road was redone the parking area would be the cities responsibility, Felix verified it would be. Hinshaw wanted an estimate for the cities portion of that project for budgeting purposes and Felix stated she would have to get back to us with a number. The IDOT would pay for the road, buffer and markings. The biggest cost for the city would be traffic signals, however, she reminded those in attendance that grant programs were available to help offset those costs as well.
Hoffman asked if there was a chance to do a 3 lane downtown and then go to into a 4 lane. The DOT responded they are willing to look at a plan. Bethany stated she has been working with Chief Brevik on free drop-down speed signs that are available for each entrance to town, the IDOT will install and then it will be the cities responsibility for upkeep moving forward.
Overall, the infrastructure committee needs to meet before the next City Council meeting on November 12th to discuss the TEAP recommendations and decide what projects to include in a resolution for Council to approve and submit to the IDOT. Felix asked the council if they would like to wait until 2030 for resurfacing or to get the engineers involved earlier for a new plan. Mayor Anderson and Worshek felt we should wait until 2030 so there is time to devise a plan, infrastructure needs and discuss budget options. Hoffman commented once the city addresses short term recommendations the city will need to meet with the City of West Okoboji and Arnold Park to discuss the possibility of the 4 to 3 lane conversion.

Resolution setting public hearing on proposed amendments/additions to the zoning ordinance
Motion by Hoffman second by Mohni to approve Resolution **24-117** Resolution setting public hearing on proposed amendments/additions to the zoning ordinance. Roll call vote. Voting aye: Hinshaw, Frederick, Hoffman, Worshek and Mohni. Nay: None. Motion carried

Council to review/possibly approve applying for Immediate Safety Enhancement program for airport tree removal grant
Chris Stein, Airport Commission Chairman explained to the council the Iowa DOT recently completed an inspection of the airport. He said this is done every other year and the IDOT has now implemented a Drone / GPS survey that has found more trees that need attention. Stein stated we have three years to comply with tree removal and trimming of those the IDOT marked on a map. He feels the commission can break this up into three phases. The state provides grand funding available through the Immediate Safety Enhancement program for airport tree removal and would like to apply for this right away. It is a grant up to $10,000 with a 70% state match. Stein feels the highest priority is the Lakes Regional Healthcare property and the Bait Shop to the East of the runway. Motion by Worshek second by Frederick to approve applying for Immediate Safety Enhancement program for airport tree removal grant. All voting aye. Motion carried.

Review of city code chapters 50-57
The council reviewed city code chapters 50-57, Hinshaw would like to bring back Chapter 51 at a future meeting to discuss more, Chapter 50.02(20) make a change from six hours to twenty-four hours and revert back to original language for Chapter 55.05. Motion by Hinshaw second by Hoffman to approve updates to the following chapters except for those mentioned above. All voting aye. Motion carried.
CHAPTER 50 - NUISANCE ABATEMENT PROCEDURE – Updates and Iowa Law Updates
CHAPTER 51 - JUNK AND JUNK VEHICLES – Updates
CHAPTER 55 - ANIMAL PROTECTION AND CONTROL – Updates and Iowa Law Updates
CHAPTER 56 - DOG LICENSE REQUIRED – Remove – Repealed Ord #3-8-21B
CHAPTER 57 - DANGEROUS AND VICIOUS ANIMALS – N/C

COMMENTS BY MAYOR, COUNCIL, AND STAFF

Hoffman announced the 23rd Street agreement is almost complete, the only caveat is the requested back access from the strip mall to N Ave, they want to make sure that is part of the agreement but Hoffman would like Public Works Director Kent Eilers input first. Part of the agreement is also that the backside of the daycare property is fenced off so no one can cut through there anymore. Hoffman needs to work a little bit more with the City Attorney and then the agreement will be done contingent upon cameraing being done. Nothing will be signed until that is complete. Overall, the agreement is tentatively finished.
Mohni wanted an update on the 702 10th Street property. Ballis stated she had tried to set up an appointment to discuss a possible compromise with the garage location last week, but after initial phone conversation with Jinkinson's designer no return phone call was made to set up a meeting.
Mayor Anderson informed the council about a BOA meeting on Wednesday to discuss a sign at 1904 Okoboji Ave and if they had concerns to attend the meeting. Mohni was concerned it might affect the airport height restrictions in that area. Ballis said she would contact Chris Stein, Airport Commission Chairman with his concerns and relay the findings before the meeting.

With no other discussion, motion to adjourn by Hoffman second by Worshek at 8:25 p.m. All voting aye. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

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Steven R. Anderson, Mayor Lissa Ballis, Deputy City Clerk