

**IRON RIVER CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
Wednesday, February 19, 2025  
5:15 PM  
Minutes**

Mayor Rodney Dood called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the Iron River City Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call: Anthony Clements, Benjamin Garcia, Ronjo Leonoff and Dood. Absent: Dennis Powell  
Also, present: City Manager Rachel Andreski, City Clerk Tyana Elenbaas, Officer Jason Wicklund.  
Public in attendance: Mark Polley, Patti Leonoff, Abigal Garcia, Pete Judd, David Sankey, Donald Gasperini, Zach Elenbaas, Zach Hautala and Brett Smithson (ICECA,) and Craig Richardson (WICKWIRE.)

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

David Sankey asked if Council had done their due diligence researching funding options for the current City Hall. He asked if the building was on the historical registry and if there had been research on historical restoration grants. He also questioned if contractors had been contacted to assess both properties.

Mark Polley stated that the building belongs to the people, and they should get an opportunity to vote. He stated that the Reporter building doesn't have enough parking spaces and doesn't meet the needs of the new City Hall.

Mayor Dood stated that the move of City Hall has been a two-year long process. There was a full cost analysis done in March of 2024, which was available to the public. He noted that there aren't any grants for historical building renovation.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Leonoff moved with support from Garcia to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor; Motion carried. Absent: Powell.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Leonoff moved with support from Clements to approve:

- January 15, 2025, Iron River City Council, Regular Meeting Minutes
- February 11, 2025, Attorney Work Session Minutes

All were in favor; Motion carried. Absent: Powell.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Leonoff moved with support from Clements to receive and file the Consent Agenda items which included the following:

- DPW Report
- January 20, 2025, DDA Regular Meeting Minutes (Draft)
- February 12, 2025, Planning Commission Public Hearing/ Regular Meeting Minutes (Draft)

All were in favor; Motion carried. Absent: Powell.

## **REPORTS:**

### **IRPD Report**

Nothing to report.

### **ICECA**

Hautala passed out the new Iron County Visitor Guide, which has already been distributed around Iron County. The guide was also distributed at a sports and recreation show in Illinois, which has already led to people calling inquiring about vacationing in Iron County.

Garcia asked if the Guides were available in downstate Michigan. The furthest they are dispersed is to Saint Ignace, but there are plans to get them down state.

Hautala also added that having a historical label on a building carries no weight and municipalities are not eligible for funding.

Clements moved with support from Leonoff to accept the ICECA Report as presented. All were in favor; Motion carried. Absent: Powell.

### **County of Iron**

Pete Judd introduced himself as the new Commissioner for District 2. He noted that he is new to the role and is excited to learn and work with the City Council.

Clements moved with support from Garcia to accept the County of Iron report. All were in favor; Motion carried. Absent: Powell.

### **Attorney Report (verbal)**

Absent.

### **Manager's Report**

- Andreski thanked Mr. Judd for stepping up to serve the community and welcomed him. She noted that there were 9 other candidates that applied for the vacancy.
- Andreski noted that there was not a quorum for the DDA meeting and the Planning Commission, which has caused delays in some of the projects. The Zoning Ordinance has been pushed back, and the City will need to readvertise for the Zoning Ordinance Public Hearing and reschedule a meeting.
- Andreski stated that she is currently working on a grant for trees for the DDA Parking lots. The deadline is March 14, 2025, with a minimum request of \$10,000.
- Andreski thanked Ed Benson, Ryan LaMay, Nick Karnack, Jason Wicklund and the DPW workers for their hard work on the watermain leak on Cherry Street.

## **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

### **City Financial Report – January 2025**

Leonoff moved with support from Garcia to accept the City Financial Report for January 2025 as presented.

Roll Call: Ayes – 4: Clements, Garcia, Leonoff and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent – 1: Powell. Motion Carried.

### **Accounts Payable Report – January 2025**

Garcia moved with support from Clements to accept the Accounts Payable Report for January 2025 as presented.

Roll Call: Ayes – 4: Leonoff, Clements, Garcia and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent – 1: Powell. Motion Carried.

### **City Attorney Invoice – January 2025**

Garcia moved with support from Clements to accept the City Attorney Invoice for January 2025 in the amount of \$1,395.00.

Roll Call: Ayes – 4: Leonoff, Clements, Garcia and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent – 1: Powell. Motion Carried.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Generator – Global Response North Building**

Andreski stated that she was able to get in touch with Mr. Michael Shooster, who is the owner of the Global Response building. He is challenging ownership of the transfer switch and believes it belongs to the building, not the generator. He also noted that if the building doesn't sell by the time his contract expires with his current listing agent, he plans on donating the building to the City.

### **Proposal for Repurpose of Existing City Hall – Rocky North**

A quick update was provided with the proposal Mr. Denha had presented back in October, which stated he would like to purchase the building for possible apartments if designs would allow for or for a mixed-use building, with storage and office space. At the time, Council had table his proposal and no action was taken.

After some discussion, it was noted that the cost analysis performed by WICKWIRE for the improvements and repairs to the current City Hall have increased.

Garcia motioned with support from Clements to accept Rocky Norths, LLC proposal to repurpose the current City Hall for \$70,000, with construction beginning at the latest, 2 years from possession and a reverter clause if the construction doesn't commence in that 2-year time frame, and to allow Attorney Goodman to work out the rest of the legal details.

Roll Call: Ayes – 3: Clements, Garcia and Dood. Nays – 1: Leonoff. Absent – 1: Powell. Motion Carried.

### **City Deer Hunt**

Andreski asked Council how they would like to proceed with the City Deer Hunt. She noted that there was discussion at the Attorney Work Session where the liabilities were discussed and that the risk might not outweigh the reward. She also noted that we could always restructure our ordinance to state that guests can hunt on private property.

Dood stated that he believes something needs to be done, but he is unsure what the solution is. He noted that Krist has given some permits to take care of the Airport and perhaps that is something we should look further into.

Garcia noted that the City Hunt has been on the Goals and Priorities list and in the future, we should survey the public to get a better understanding of what the residents would like.

Clements stated that we should remind the public that it is against City Ordinance to feed the wild animals.

Leonoff stated that he didn't see a need for a City hunt.

Leonoff motioned with support from Dood to table the City Deer Hunt until a future date. All in favor; Motion carried. Absent – 1: Powell.

#### **Addition of Siding Ordinance to City Code**

Garcia moved with the support of Clements to set a Public Hearing for March 19, 2025, at 5:15 p.m. prior to the regularly scheduled meeting. All were in favor; Motion carried. Absent – 1: Powell. Motion Carried.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **Reporter Building Renovations for City Hall – Bid Award Recommendation**

Dood moved with the support of Garcia to award the bid to Ponchaud Contracting and Excavating, Inc. with the Base Bid, Alternate 1 and Alternate 2 with the changes presented in the amount of \$526,531.00.

Roll Call: Ayes – 3: Clements, Garcia and Dood. Nays – 1: Leonoff. Absent – 1: Powell. Motion Carried.

##### **Apple Blossom Trail Boardwalk – Bid Award Recommendation**

Clements moved with the support of Leonoff to award the bid to Alliance construction and Design for the base bid amount of \$447,038.16 contingent upon MDOT approval.

Roll Call: Ayes – 4: Garcia, Leonoff, Clements and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent -1: Powell.

##### **DDA Appointment**

Dood moved with support from Leonoff to appoint Jay Aldrich to the DDA for a term that expires December 31, 2027.

All were in favor; Motion carried. Absent: Powell.

##### **2024 Planning Commission Annual Report**

Andreski stated that by State Statute, the Planning Commission is required to submit an annual report to the City Council. In this report, it details what permits have been issued and overall tracks what the Commission has been working on. Clement moved with the support of Leonoff to accept the Planning Commission Annual Report as presented. All were in favor; Motion carried. Absent: Powell.

##### **MDOT Local Agency Program – Genesee Street Bridge Replacement Grant Match**

Andreski stated that this Grant happens annually and in the past two years the City has gone with a modest 5% match and had been unsuccessful in obtaining the grant. She suggested that the City reapply with a more aggressive match at 20%, which might increase our chances of being awarded the grant. The Grant would go into effect in 2028.

Garcia moved with support from Leonoff to approve Resolution 25-01 as presented. Roll Call: Ayes – 4: Clements, Leonoff, Garcia and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent -1: Powell. Motion Carried.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mark Polley expressed his thoughts on City Hall and stated that Mayor Dood and Councilperson Benjamin Garcia need to be more professional and dress up for the meetings.

David Sankey requested that the meetings continue at the new designated time of 5:15 p.m. He also requested the DPW workers start earlier on days when it snows. He asked if the stop sign on Washington Avenue can be removed and instead placed on Genesee Street. He noted that the hill is dangerous, and it is hard for vehicles to stop on that hill, especially during the wintertime.

**COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS**

Garcia noted that his and Clements recall petition had expired. He felt that since he had not been recalled, it showed that the public at large supports what he is doing. He expressed thanks for the community support, as did Clements. He added that he believes relocating City Hall is going to save the City money and that is why he voted the way he did.

Mayor Dood reiterated that time spent on contemplating the move of City Hall. He expressed his desire to see the building repurposed and noted that currently, the City only uses about a third of the building, so the Reporter Building will be a better fit.

Clements stated he was available for residents to voice their concerns over the relocation of City Hall, and out of those that did speak to him, all were understanding after hearing the financial breakdown. He also noted that this was not an overnight decision.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Dood motioned with support from Garcia to adjourn the meeting at 6:17 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried. Absent: Powell.

  
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Tyana Elenbaas, City Clerk