

**MINUTES**  
**Plainwell City Council**  
**June 14, 2021**

1. Mayor Keeler called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 PM in Plainwell City Hall Council Chambers.
2. Steve Smail of Lighthouse Baptist Church gave the invocation.
3. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
4. Roll Call: Present: Mayor Keeler, Mayor Pro Tem Steele, Councilmember Overhuel, Councilmember Keeney and Councilmember Wisnaski. Absent: None.
5. Approval of Minutes:  
**A motion by Steele, seconded by Overhuel, to accept and place on file the Council Minutes of the 05/24/2021 regular meeting. On voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.**
6. Public Comment: None.
7. County Commissioner Report:  
Clerk Kelley provided a report from Commissioner Cain who had reported that the County recently approved the Off-Road Vehicle Ordinance. Cain noted that it shouldn't affect the city specifically, but Gun Plain Township was working on an ordinance to disallow or restrict the ORVs. Cain also reported that the County received \$23-million in American Rescue Plan Act funding and is forming a committee of citizens and community leaders to determine proper spending of those funds, with a focus on broadband extensions countywide.
8. Agenda Amendments: None
9. Mayor's Report:  
Mayor Keeler noted that the "new face of the mill" is now visible. He also noted having enjoyed the Plainwell Days Festival.
10. Recommendations and Reports:
  - A. Superintendent Pond reported annual biosolids removal and the technical nature of the work, which has been done under a contract that expires on July 1. The bio-solids are a natural by-product of the process and are removed annual for use in farming. Bids were solicited for which two firms responded.  
**A motion by Wisnaski, seconded by Keeney, to approve a new five-year contract with Bio-Tech Agronomics for annual bio-solids disposal with an estimated contract cost of \$128,094.00. On a roll call vote, all in favor. Motion passed.**
  - B. Superintendent Pond reported a necessary replacement of outdated equipment, originally installed in 1980. The methane gas accumulator and drip trap help minimize the odor levels at the treatment plant and corrodes over time due to the condensation generated by the process. Due to the specialized nature of the system, the purchase must be made from a sole source vendor.  
**A motion by Overhuel, seconded by Keeney, to approve the purchase of a replacement methane accumulator and drip trap from L&J Technologies (Shand & Jurs) at an estimated cost of \$8,550.00. On a roll call vote, all in favor. Motion passed.**

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- C. Superintendent Nieuwenhuis gave an update the city's water supply, infrastructure and staffing.  
**A motion by Steele, seconded by Overhuel, to accept the Water Quality Report and place on file. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.**
- D. City Manager Wilson introduced Gerry Bentley, owner of Dean's Ice Cream who asked Council about closing a portion of North Sherwood on Monday evenings throughout the summer to accommodate extra parking and displays of vintage vehicles at recurring community events. Currently the cars park along Sherwood and Oak Streets creating traffic bottlenecks. Closing the street would allow safer street crossings, according to Mr. Bentley. Concerns about traffic signage, neighbor input, and alternative locations were discussed. Council debated a blanket approval or a temporary approval. There were also general discussions about traffic concerns on North and South Sherwood.  
**A motion by Keeney, seconded by Steele, to approve the temporary closure of North Sherwood on Monday evenings from June 21 through July 12, 2021 for Dean's Ice Cream "Car Cruise In" events, and to re-evaluate the closure at the July 12, 2021 Council Meeting. On a voice vote, all in favor. Motion passed.**
- E. City Manager Wilson reminded Council of a discussion from an earlier Council meeting about a request from Barb Bechtel, owner of Barbed Wire Café, to purchase a portion of the vacant lot at 134 South Main, known as the Jensen Lot. Council had questions about ownership and economic viability of splitting the lot. The City Attorney reviewed the ownership and agreed the city owns the lot, not the DDA. The Attorney also provided parameters under which the Council could market and sell the lot or a portion. Council discussed ongoing concerns about DDA involvement and consideration. Community Development Manager Siegel noted the sale of a portion of the Jensen Lot could result in zoning restrictions. Council confirmed the Central Business District (CBD) has no setback requirements.  
**A motion by Steele, seconded by Keeney, to refer the request to the DDA Board for consideration and recommendation, with a confirmation of CBD Zoning requirements. On a roll call vote, all in favor. Motion passed.**
- F. Community Development Manager Siegel reported on the draft 2021/2022 BRA/TIFA/DDA budget, which was reviewed and recommended by the BRA/TIFA/DDA Board at the June 8, 2021 Meeting. The budget includes revenue and project cost estimates. Each fund has an excess of revenues over expenditures.  
**A motion by Steele, seconded by Keeney, to approve the draft 2021/2022 BRA/TIFA/DDA budget as presented. On a roll call vote, all in favor. Motion passed.**
- G. Clerk Kelley reminded Council of the necessary public hearing for adoption of the full 2021/2022 City Budget, set at the 2<sup>nd</sup> June Council Meeting.  
**A motion by Steele, seconded by Wisnaski, to set a public hearing for June 28, 2021 to consider the 2021/2022 city budget. On a voice vote, all in favor. Motion passed.**
- H. Clerk Kelley gave a report on the proposed 425 Agreement with Gun Plain Township for the acreage at the corner of Miller Road and 8<sup>th</sup> Street. There needs to be 30-day notice for a public hearing. Gun Plain Township issued its Notice of Public Hearing. Council is being asked to set a related hearing.  
**A motion by Steele, seconded by Keeney, to set a public hearing for July 26, 2021 to consider a proposed Act 425 Conditional Land Transfer Agreement with Gun Plain Township. On a voice vote, all in favor. Motion passed.**

11. Communications:

**A. A motion by Steele, seconded by Overhuel, to accept and place on file the May 2021 Investment and Fund Balance Reports. On a voice vote, all in favor. Motion passed.**

12. Accounts Payable:

**A motion by Wisnaski, seconded by Keeney, that the bills be allowed and orders drawn in the amount of \$701,189.95 for payment of same. On a roll call vote, all in favor. Motion passed.**

13. Public Comments:

Resident David Brown, 219 Cushman Street, asked whether the city wishes to continue use of its easement at 229 Cushman Street, which he also owns, for access to the Cushman Street Lift Station. Mr. Brown wishes to install a gate which would offer city ongoing access to its infrastructure on the property. City Council had no issues with that request. He also asked who owns the property to the north beyond the easement, where the train tracks used to be, for purposes of possibly acquiring the land for purposes of installing privacy fencing to discourage public access. Council referred the ownership and the fencing questions to the Administration for consideration and recommendation.

Resident Jeffery Lyons, 120 N. Sherwood, continued discussion of traffic concerns on North Sherwood, particularly on Mondays (cars "peeling out") and on the weekends parking in the grass areas. He asked about stop signs. The city agreed to add a traffic control study and will consider specific patrols as staffing allows. Mr. Lyons also asked about barriers between the "kids' park" section of Sherwood Park and the street. The Council considered alternatives and agreed to add this to the traffic control study.

14. Staff Comments:

Superintendent Nieuwenhuis noted the John Deere tractor is going for auction on June 15 and that he's working on a deal to sell the infrared machine. He asked for budget consideration for a new dump/plow truck.

Community Development Manager Siegel reported a successful Plainwell Days Festival with only minor issues. She reported several business updates.

Director Bomar reported challenges with finding viable police and firefighter candidates. He also gave Council a briefing about a break-in at the Presbyterian Church over the weekend.

Clerk/Treasurer Kelley continues to monitor proposed law changes, working with the City Manager on the budget for presentation to Council, and setting up the 2021 summer tax roll.

City Manager Wilson reported working on the budget and on the mill.

15. Council Comments:

Each Councilmember welcomed Councilmember Overhuel back. Councilmember Overhuel thanked everyone for their support.

16. Adjournment:

**A motion by Steele, seconded by Keeney, to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 PM. On voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.**

Minutes respectfully  
Submitted by,  
Brian Kelley  
City Clerk/Treasurer

MINUTES APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL  
June 28, 2021

  
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Brian Kelley, City Clerk