

CITY OF VERONA
MINUTES
COMMON COUNCIL
June 8, 2020
Verona City Hall

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Verona Common Council held its meeting as a virtual meeting. The Common Council did not meet at City Hall, 111 Lincoln Street. Members of the Common Council and Staff joined the meeting by using Zoom Webinar. Members of the public were able to join the meeting using Zoom Webinar via a computer, tablet, or smartphone, or by calling into the meeting via phone.

1. Mayor Diaz called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.
2. Roll call: Alderpersons Kate Cronin, Charlotte Jerney, Chad Kemp, Katie Kohl, Christine Posey, Heather Reekie, Charlie Ryan and Evan Touchett were present. Also present: City Administrator Adam Sayre; City Engineer Carla Fischer; Police Chief Bernie Coughlin; Community Development Specialist Katherine Holt; and City Clerk Ellen Clark.
3. Public Comment:
 - Nat Long, 239 Ridge View Trail, Verona, spoke in support of the Black Lives Matter movement. She suggested several ways for the City Council, as well as Verona businesses and residents to show support for racial justice.
 - Jesse Charles, President of the Verona Area Historical Society, spoke regarding the New Century School. He asked that a deed restriction be placed on the building protecting it from demolition in the future, and that the building be placed on the National Register of Historic Places.
4. Approval of the minutes from the May 26, 2020 Common Council meeting. Motion by Touchett, seconded by Kohl, to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2020 Common Council meeting. Motion carried 8-0.
5. Mayor's Business:
 - A. Presentation by Chief Coughlin regarding City of Verona police data, procedures and accountability.

Diaz stated we were all shocked by what we saw in Minneapolis. He would like to believe it would never happen here, but he believes in transparency. He feels Chief Coughlin is doing a good job as Police Chief here in Verona.

Chief Coughlin presented the Dane County Chiefs of Police Association statement to the community in response to the George Floyd case and the many questions that have come about based on citizens' concerns. His personal response to the George Floyd incident was that it was troubling and difficult to watch.

Coughlin presented 2017 – 2019 statistics related to City of Verona Police Department's enforcement efforts. Data is categorized by ethnicity, race, sex, call origination, offenses charge, citations issued, victims, and top five cities in which people having contact with the police department reside. In cases in which an

individual is arrested for more than one offense, only the most serious charge is listed. Conversely, all traffic citations are listed. In 2017, far more calls originated from citizens than from officers. Of the top five home cities, the vast majority of those having contact with the police department are Verona, Madison and Fitchburg residents.

Kemp thanked Chief Coughlin and complimented him on the department's Staff and good leadership. He fully supports the police department. With respect to the data, it looks like the highest number of contacts between the police department and African American males is with those aged 17 to 19. He asked if that means most of those contacts take place at the high school.

Coughlin replied that does have something to do with the numbers. The department issued approximately 56-59 citations to high school students in 2016, and one of those incidents was reported by a police officer. Call origination is very important. Most of the police department's action is reactionary to a call from someone else. The majority of the department's interaction with black youth is related directly to the high school. The black population at the high school is at a higher percentage than that of the City of Verona.

Ryan thanked Nat Long for speaking, and encouraged more civic engagement. He thanked Chief Coughlin for being at tonight's meeting. He commented that the Madison Teacher's Union has requested removal of School Resource Officers (SROs) and replacing them with more counselors, social workers and mental health specialists. In addition, there are six security guards in Verona schools. He asked Coughlin what his feelings are about removing School Resource Officers from the schools.

Coughlin replied there have been some preliminary conversations with Administrator Sayre, and Mayor Diaz regarding this topic. In Verona, the position is titled Police School Liaison Officer (PSLO). He thinks removing the PSLO from the school would be a mistake; however, he respects that it is the school district's decision to make. The police department will provide the best service possible, whether or not a PSLO is assigned to the school. Without a PSLO in the school, the opportunity for any proactive or educational work is lost.

Ryan asked if the PSLO is a uniformed officer, and if they are armed while in school.

Coughlin replied the PSLO wears an abbreviated version of the police uniform. They do carry a firearm on their belts. Visibility of a PSLO at the school has been increased lately because of the increased violence in schools. If the shooter knows a police officer is there, there is less likelihood of violence. PSLOs are sworn police officers, with all of the responsibilities of any officer.

Ryan stated a number of communities are contemplating creating a Community Oversight Committee to review complaints toward police officers. He asked Coughlin for his thoughts about such a committee, and what the current process is for reviewing complaints toward officers.

Coughlin replied he is aware of the Community Oversight Committee movement. It is not new. He has concerns about a citizen appointed committee, as it is difficult to

determine the members' qualifications and motives. In Wisconsin, Police and Fire Commissions serve as Community Oversight Committees. The Commission handles officers that are performing below standard, those that are committing violations of the law, and those that need to be removed from their positions. Each Commissioner is appointed to a 5-year term, reducing potential bias associated with any particular elected official. In addition, Commissioners are citizens of the community in which they serve, giving them a vested interest in the outcome of their decisions. There is also a citizen complaint process in place.

Ryan stated we all have an inherent bias, and asked Coughlin what training is provided to the police force to avoid issues of inherent bias.

Coughlin replied the department already provides a fair amount of that training, and will continue to do so. However, there is always room for improvement, and he is always looking for additional training, and is hoping for the support to continue to provide more.

Ryan asked if this training is something that is provided annually, or just once.

Coughlin stated in July 2018 call origination was no longer able to be tracked because the department began using computer aided dispatch. The only way to track origination is to go into every call file and extract it. As a result, the call origination numbers began to move from citizen originated to officer initiated. Most often, a victim, teacher, or witness originates the call for help.

Coughlin explained the department's training process. The State of Wisconsin requires each officer to complete a minimum of 25 hours of recertification training annually. The City of Verona is one of five agencies in a training consortium through which this training is completed each year. Officers involved in the consortium receive a minimum of 40 hours of training per officer per year, most of which is mandatory training. De-escalation is almost always an option for training, and is incorporated in a vast majority of their in-services. In addition, each officer receives approximately 40 hours of specialized training per year. Workshops and conferences are also offered to officers throughout the year.

Diaz declared a 5 minute recess of the Common Council at 7:55 p.m.

The Common Council reconvened at 8:02 p.m.

Coughlin explained the Defense and Arrest Tactics (DAAT) System. The system is backed by two concepts: incident response and disturbance resolution. It is designed to handle every scenario that law enforcement encounters. This training is the basis of the department's defense and arrest tactics training.

Coughlin presented the Verona Police Department's Mission, Statement of Values, and Police Officer's Oath of Honor. His vision is policing in partnership with the community. He also explained the Eight Can't Wait Campaign. The eight recommendations of the campaign are: ban choke holds and strangle holds; require de-escalation; require warning before shooting; exhaust all alternatives before shooting; duty to intervene; ban shooting at moving vehicles; establish use of force continuum; and require all force to be reported. The Verona Police Department supports and conforms to all eight recommendations, as documented in the

department's Use of Force and Code of Conduct policies.

In summary, Coughlin presented a compilation of questions that were asked of him since the George Floyd incident, and the answers he provided.

Kemp stated it is good to see that the Verona Police Department focuses on training. He is interested in their support of community based policing. Departments that know the people in the community better serve the community and build trust.

Reekie thanked Chief Coughlin for his presentation. She asked what resources would be required to become accredited with the Eight Can't Wait Campaign.

Coughlin stated he and Mayor Diaz will be discussing the possibility of the department becoming accredited with the Eight Can't Wait Campaign. Verona Police Department policies are all Wisconsin Law Enforcement Accreditation Group compliant and certified. He estimates that one additional Staff member would be required to assist in policy development and standards of proof.

Diaz asked Coughlin for his opinion regarding the possibility of adding a mental health first responder to respond or aid police officers in calls related to mental health issues.

Coughlin replied mental illness, alcohol, and drugs amount to 80%-90% of their calls on a daily basis. Officers are trained in mental health issues and crisis intervention. In most cases, there is a combination of several reasons for the call or the crisis. He would prefer to see continued and improved training and seeing issues through to resolution in the end. It may also cause problems to label specific calls as mental health calls. It may be better for many resources to come together to help provide the best service possible.

Diaz stated the rules in Minneapolis were in place, but were not being followed. Accountability starts with the Police Chief. Coughlin holds his Staff accountable.

Coughlin thanked the Council members for their support.

6. Announcements:

- Kohl thanked Nat Long for speaking, and thanked citizens for contacting their Alderpersons regarding the Sugar Creek development.
- A Verona March for Racial Justice is scheduled from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 17th. The march will begin at Veteran's Park, proceed on Verona Avenue and Main Street, and return to Veteran's Park. The common desire is to include Verona voices in the current protests in support of Black Lives Matter and racial justice. Several speakers will also be involved at the Veteran's Park gathering place.

7. Administrator's Report:

- The City is interested and willing to work with restaurants and drinking establishments during the COVID-19 pandemic to allow or expand outdoor seating. Outdoor seating areas will still require fencing and limitations on hours of operations. Any amendment will require review by the Public Safety Committee and approval by the Common Council.
- On Monday, June 8th, Waste Management will resume normal curbside bulk waste collection. Bulk collections were temporarily suspended due to COVID-19. The

temporary green dumpsters located at Public Works will be removed on Friday, June 12th. Public Works will no longer accept bulk waste after the dumpsters are removed. Fee items, such as electronics or tires, are still not accepted as the Public Works offices remain closed to the public.

- Due to the elections, the August 10th Council meeting will be changed to August 12th. Please mark your calendars accordingly.

8. Engineer's Report:

- Well 6 Pumping Station Construction: The contractor is coordinating switchover from temporary to permanent electric power and installation of natural gas. Sidewalk is planned for this week and asphalt paving by late June. Startup of the well is now expected in late June to mid-July.
- Verona Area High School Construction Traffic Improvements: Outside lanes on W. Verona Avenue are closed while electrical and finishing items are completed. Asphalt paving is taking place the week of June 8th on West End Circle and North Nine Mound Road. Work is continuing on the side roads, and is planned to be completed in the next month or two. Closure of Military Ridge State Trail is complete.
- Liberty Park Phase 4 Construction
The gas main along Liberty Drive and Ambition Street was installed on June 3rd. Grading for the curb and sidewalk on the south side of Whalen Road is in progress.
- Fireman's Park Construction
The Bruce Street Basin has been seeded and erosion mat has been placed. Concrete and asphalt warranty repairs are in progress.
- 2020 Asphalt Rehabilitation Project
The asphaltic surface on Northern Lights Road between Epic Staff Park A and Park B will be replaced the weekend of June 19th. If rain is forecasted, the project will be pushed to the following weekend. Northern Lights Road will be closed from Breckenridge Road to Nine Mound Road during paving.
- 2020 Chip Seal Project
This project consists of chip sealing streets in the Westridge Estates, Thompson Heights and Cross Country Heights subdivisions. Depending on weather, the start date is planned for June 9th, with work lasting only a few days.

9. Committee Reports

A. Public Safety and Welfare Committee

- (1) Discussion and Possible Action Re: An application for a combination Reserve "Class B" Intoxicating Liquor and Class "B" Fermented Malt Beverages license from Mr. Brews Taphouse Verona, LLC, d/b/a Mr. Brews Taphouse, 611 Hometown Circle, Suite 104, Verona, WI 53593, Ryan Swanson, Agent. Motion by Reekie, seconded by Kohl, to approve a combination Reserve "Class B" Intoxicating Liquor and Class "B" Fermented Malt Beverages license for Mr. Brews Taphouse Verona, LLC, d/b/a Mr. Brews Taphouse, 611 Hometown Circle, Suite 104, Verona, WI 53593, Ryan Swanson, Agent. Mr. Brews Taphouse, LLC currently carries Class "B" Fermented Malt Beverage and Class "C" Wine licenses. If this application is approved, the Class "C" Wine license will be

replaced by a “Class B” Intoxicating Liquor license, which will allow for the service of any intoxicating liquor, versus wine only. The current licenses will be surrendered to the City before the new licenses will be issued. Motion carried 8-0.

- (2) Discussion and Possible Action Re: A temporary premises description amendment for the liquor license of Toot & Kate’s LLC, d/b/a Toot & Kate’s Wine Bar, 109 S. Main Street, to include the front stoop area. Motion by Reekie, seconded by Cronin, to approve a temporary premises description amendment for the liquor license of Toot & Kate’s d/b/a Toot & Kate’s Wine Bar, 109 S. Main Street, to include the front stoop area only, with four tables for seating, and restricted to 107 and 109 S. Main Street until October 1, 2020. Toot & Kate’s, LLC has applied for a temporary premises description amendment to include the business’s front stoop area. This will allow them to serve more customers, while adhering to required social distancing guidelines. The original request was to include some seating on the sidewalk. The Committee chose not to allow seating on the sidewalk, but instead allowed an additional table on the stoop. Motion carried 8-0.
- (3) Discussion and Possible Action Re: Approval of alcohol license applications for the 2020-2021 licensing period. Motion by Reekie, seconded by Kemp, to approve alcohol license applications for the 2020-2021 licensing period, as presented by the City Clerk, contingent upon completion of building and fire inspections, and with the exception of n+1 Coffee and Beer Bar, 507 Bruce Street. Thirty-two applications for 2020-2021 retail alcohol license renewals were received by the City Clerk. Premises inspections by the building inspection and fire departments are ongoing, as they were delayed by COVID-19 restrictions. Approval of the applications will be contingent upon completion of building and fire inspections. A list of applicants is included in the Council packet. Of those, the following has an unpaid invoice from the City for Police Department special event services in 2019:

- n+1 Coffee and Beer Bar, 507 Bruce Street

The alcohol license application for this applicant cannot be approved until the delinquent invoice has been paid in full.

Motion by Reekie, seconded by Touchett, to amend the original motion to read as follows: Approve alcohol license applications for the 2020-2021 licensing period, as presented by the City Clerk, contingent upon completion of building and fire inspections, and with the exception of n+1 Coffee and Beer Bar, 507 Bruce Street. Motion carried 8-0.

Motion by Reekie, seconded by Jerney, to approve the alcohol license for n+1 Coffee and Beer Bar, 507 Bruce Street, contingent upon completion of building and fire inspections, and payment in full of unpaid invoices to the City. Motion carried 8-0.

- (4) Discussion and Possible Action Re: Approval of cigarette and tobacco retail license applications for the 2020-2021 licensing period. Motion by Reekie,

seconded by Jerney, to approve cigarette and tobacco products retail license applications for the 2020-2021 licensing period as presented by the City Clerk. Eight applications for 2020-2021 cigarette and tobacco products retail licenses were received by the City Clerk. The list of applicants is included in the Council packet. Motion carried 8-0.

B. Community Development Authority

- (1) Discussion and Possible Action Re: Developer submissions for Sugar Creek Elementary School development project.

Sayre explained on May 18, 2020, the CDA interviewed four (4) of the six (6) RFP applications, which included Gorman and Company, Northpointe Avante, McKenzie Apartment Company, and Steve Brown Apartments. On June 2, 2020, the CDA reviewed the applications of the four (4) developers and asked various questions. At the end of the meeting, the CDA recommended that McKenzie Apartment Company and Steve Brown Apartments proposals are the CDA's top two proposals for the property. The developers are prepared tonight to give a five minute presentation regarding their proposals to the Common Council followed by questions and answers. Once a developer is selected, the selected proposals will still need to go through the development process, including but not limited to planning, rezoning, site plan review, and development agreements in addition to public hearings with the Plan Commission and Common Council. Ideally, the development review process will occur prior to the November closing on the property.

McKenzie Apartment Company

John McKenzie delivered the McKenzie Apartment Company presentation. McKenzie compared and contrasted the two proposals. He stated his company did not propose commercial mixed use space, as he thinks it is a risky proposition at this time, however if the City is interested in mixed use, they will do it. He proposed the alternative of detaching a portion of the northeast corner of the site and selling it to Steve Brown Apartments, allowing Steve Brown to develop a mixed use area, as was included in their original proposal for the site. The biggest difference between the two proposals is the inclusion of a community pool in the McKenzie proposal. In addition, McKenzie's TIF request is \$2 million, versus Steve Brown Apartment's request for \$9 million in TIF. His proposal for converting the New Century School into a skilled trades training facility will create a better use for that building that Brown's proposal of a children's museum. Both companies do a good job with housing.

Steve Brown Apartments

Dan Seeley, Joe Alexander, Brian Munson, Margaret Watson, Matt Meier, and Scott Watson delivered the Steve Brown Apartments presentation. Alexander stated their plan was built off Verona's aspirations for downtown. To address issue of TIF, they are conservative in their initial presentations, so they don't have to come back to their community partners later asking for a change in financing. Theirs is not really a TIF request; it is a financing gap to help provide infrastructure and 100 affordable housing units.

Munson stated their goal is to create a vibrant community destination. Their proposal includes all the elements of the RFP, and creates a significant tax base. Regarding the New Century School building, they are comfortable with the deed restriction, and are planning to place it on the National Historic Register. The use for the renovated building should be a public decision. A pool was not included their proposal due to the cost, permanent operating expense, large land impacts, and lost opportunities for other uses created by a community pool. The gap in financing is developed somehow.

Watson stated the Steve Brown team is the most flexible and committed team, and is passionate about this project.

Ryan asked both developers for a breakdown of the proposed number of 1, 2, and 3 bedroom units, as well as the proposed rents for both market-rate and affordable housing.

McKenzie replied at this time, they have no 3- bedroom units, but they would consider it if the City requests it. Their current rental rates are \$1,200 for 1- bedroom units and \$1,500 - \$1,700 for 2-bedroom units.

Seeley replied Steve Brown is contemplating 3-bedroom units. Meier stated the typical 1-bedroom market-rate units rent for approximately \$1,300. Affordable housing units rent for \$825-\$975 for 1-bedroom units, and \$990-\$1,175 for 2-bedroom units.

Kemp stated he likes the idea of trades training, but the New Century School building is a community building. He asked McKenzie if the building would also be open to other members of the community to use if it were used as a training facility,

McKenzie replied it is a school now, but if there is some adaptive use for the community, that is fine.

Kemp asked both developers if townhomes were considered as part of their proposals.

Meier replied for Steve Brown, stating that in terms of the affordable component, their product is similar to a townhome from the exterior, with garages facing an inner courtyard.

McKenzie replied he did not feel there was room for them on this site.

Kemp asked McKenzie if he would consider purchasing the piece of property now on the northeast corner of the site, now owned by Steve Brown, and convert it to retail. Conversely, he asked Steve Brown what their plans are for that corner of the site if they are not chosen for this project.

McKenzie replied he does not feel people will be shopping in the same way in the future. He doesn't think retail would be a prudent use of the property at this time

Watson replied for Steve Brown, stating there are a lot of people wanting commercial space in Verona. They see retail as an opportunity. Seeley stated they are developing for the long term. He is not sure a pool is a good investment at this time.

Touchett asked Brown how many properties they already own in Verona, and how many of those are developed.

Seeley replied for Steve Brown, stating they own the West End Apartments, the Market 5 project, and a couple smaller units on Main Street and Marietta Street. They own about 2,000 properties in the Dane County area. Market 5 is only ground-up property in Verona so far.

Touchett stated the City has an opportunity to create a working space that can bring people in and bring people together. He believes the City will be squandering the property if all of it is not used for the community. Fifty percent of these projects are residential. That seems like too much.

Munson replied for Steve Brown, stating they believe people will walk from the neighborhood to the retail units and the green space. In addition, their plan gives everyone reasons to come downtown, regardless of the season.

McKenzie stated his plan includes a park area with a bandstand, as well as an open space for farmers markets. An ice rink could be put there in the winter. For all of the various retail and commercial components to work, you need people living there, as well. Residences also generate tax revenue for the community, while community facilities do not.

Posey stated community feedback has been pretty much a 50/50 split regarding a pool. She asked McKenzie what alternatives he may have if it is decided that there will be no pool. She likes their concept for the school building, but is not sure that what is currently being proposed for a pool will meet the needs of the community.

McKenzie replied initial community response indicated that the community wanted a pool. If there came to be some alternate use, there would probably be a reduction of the TIF request or delivery of money to the City, because the cost of the project would be reduced.

Posey asked the Steve Brown team what they would shift to if the City asked for less retail space included in the project.

Seeley replied Steve Brown is proposing in the neighborhood of 10,000 square feet of retail space, which has an impact, but is not an albatross. It may be that the retail that is in Verona may be in the wrong form, versus there being too much retail. Watson stated they will be flexible and will work through the process transparently with the community. She agrees that density will help drive the downtown.

Posey asked what Steve Brown's retail rent will be.

Watson replied the market rate rent for retail in Verona is approximately \$18-\$22 per square foot. Properties closer to downtown will likely be slightly less to promote the right mix of retailers and activate the site as quickly as possible.

Posey asked about parking.

Seeley replied they are contemplating parking behind the retail off Marietta, as

well as street parking.

Posey asked both developers what their process is for raising rents as time goes on.

McKenzie replied they use an algorithm. Their rents usually go up a couple percent a year.

Meier replied for Steve Brown, stating the affordable housing rents are based on a percentage of the median income. Seeley stated their rent increases for market-rate units are typically inflationary and based on the market.

Jerney asked both developers how they determined the land acquisition cost.

Watson replied for Steve Brown, stating the proposal was no cost for the land acquisition, with the understanding that almost half the site would remain public, and would be contributed to the public at no cost.

McKenzie replied he valued the property at \$12,000 per market-rate unit, and \$6,000 per affordable unit.

Ryan stated his concern regarding the Steve Brown proposal is that we already have vacant retail and pockets of retail in the City; there is no contiguous downtown area. As it relates to McKenzie, this is not the proper location for a community pool or aquatic center. The two mandates he was given by the community were affordable housing and a vibrant, walkable downtown. He asked both developers how their proposals address those things.

McKenzie replied both proposals have affordable housing components. He believes this is a great central location for a pool that would be sufficient for city swim meets and appropriate for a city the size of Verona. Richard Arnesen added that Stonehouse does the nicest affordable housing in Dane County, and that it is virtually indistinguishable from market rate housing.

Watson replied for Steve Brown, stating creating this destination space may bring people into the city center. Munson stated retail has to be positioned correctly and be partnered with open space as a destination. They see this as an opportunity to be an anchor for the downtown. Meier added they have been doing affordable housing since the program started in 1986, and are some of the best in the country.

Diaz declared a 5 minute recess of the Common Council at 10:02 p.m.

The Common Council reconvened at 10:07 p.m.

Cronin stated her constituents are literally split down the middle regarding these proposals. She would like to combine the two proposals into one to make everyone happy. She has been a proponent of high density housing, but there has been some resistance to that in Verona. She does not think this is the right place for a pool; it is not big enough for what the City is looking for. She is very excited about the prospect of affordable housing in Verona.

Kemp thanked both development teams. He echoed Cronin's comments regarding taking elements from both proposals and combining them into one.

He believes the Council needs to take more time to reassess and look at these plans. He asked if the developers will still be able to meet those deadlines if the Council decides to table this tonight and vote on it at a later date.

Sayre replied he believes the timeline is the end of June. The potential is still there to be able to apply, but they may not hit the deadline for this year. At the end of the day, we want to make the right decision.

Ryan echoed Kemp's statements. He is not in favor of making a hasty decision. A pool downtown is not a good use of the space. He would like to see something that can be used more year-round. He is leaning toward the Brown proposal, though he would like to see the retail be in the form of nice restaurants and local small businesses. He is in favor of preserving the New Century School building and finding a good use for it. He agrees with Cronin and Kemp that it would be nice to combine the most desirable items from each proposal into one.

Reekie stated her constituents also supported both proposals equally. Over half that contacted her regarding the McKenzie proposal did so because of the pool included in that proposal. She believes Steve Brown has more potential for listening to the public, and willingness to change. She would like to vote tonight, so the developers can proceed with the project and submit required applications on time.

Touchett stated he is not in a position to pick one proposal or the other right now. This land is very valuable to the City of Verona, and he does not want to give up City space if at all possible. He is in favor of postponing a vote.

Jerney asked if the City can begin the deed restriction process now for the New Century School.

Sayre replied that will be part of the development agreement.

Posey stated she believes both proposals can be flexible. She does not think a six or eight lane lap pool is what the community wants. We need a facility that will meet the needs of everyone. She would like some more time to digest the financial side of these proposals.

Motion by Kemp, seconded by Touchett, to table this item to the June 22, 2020 Common Council meeting.

Diaz stated he prefers the Steve Brown proposal, as he is interested in establishing a walkable downtown district. Though he understands wanting to take some time to make a decision on these proposals, he believes it is useful to keep the process moving. There will be months of negotiation even after a developer is chosen, with a chance for more public input.

Ryan asked people to give input to their Alderpersons before the next meeting.

Motion carried 7-1, with Alder Cronin voting no.

10. New Business

- A. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Payment of bills. Motion by Kemp, seconded by Cronin, to pay the bills in the amount of \$99,007.61. Motion carried 8-0.

B. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Creation of a Sustainability Committee.

Sayre explained in April of 2019, the City adopted a sustainability resolution to help focus sustainability efforts in the City. While the City continues to direct sustainable efforts to be consistent with the adopted resolution, other communities in Dane County have sustainability committees or task forces and dedicated Staff to run these committees. Staff is requesting feedback and direction from the Council on the creation of a sustainability committee or task force. If directed to create a committee or task force, Staff will bring ideas to the Council at a future meeting.

Diaz stated it's better to fully integrate sustainability efforts into what the City is doing in general, however, he has consistently heard from members of the public that they are interested in being part of it.

Kohl stated it is important that these ideas permeate the other committees, but she would like to see a more focused effort. It would be good to create a committee that includes community members, as well.

Touchett asked how this committee would integrate with what we're doing now as a City. He agrees that citizen involvement is great, but would hate for the committee to be formed, just to have them spin their wheels.

Sayre replied several area communities have committees of various types and sizes, as well as a newly formed task force in Sun Prairie and a 501c3 group in Stoughton. Some of this is policy driven; some comes from more of a holistic planning standpoint. It depends on what the Council wants to make of this.

Ryan stated it is important that we use our voices to amplify the cause. He is in favor of this, and agrees that we do not need a large committee.

Touchett asked if we have anyone in mind for chairing this committee that already has a good deal of experience and interest in this area.

Diaz replied not as of this date.

Sayre stated we are still short staffed in the Planning Department and we have to be realistic on Staff workloads. Other communities have dedicated Staff for this sort of thing.

The Common Council took no action on this item.

C. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Lease agreement between the City of Verona and Redeemer Bible Fellowship Church.

Sayre explained the City and Redeemer Bible Fellowship Church signed an original lease in 2014. The Redeemer Bible Fellowship Church, located at 130 North Franklin Street, is proposing to create a third addendum to this lease extending their term until September 30, 2022. The two-year extension includes an increase in the lease rate from \$4,950 per month to \$5,000 per month. Staff recommends approval of the lease agreement between the City and Redeemer Bible Fellowship Church. Motion by Cronin, seconded by Kemp, to approve a lease agreement between the City of Verona and Redeemer Bible Fellowship Church. Motion carried 8-0.

D. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Ordinance No. 20-966 amending Title 7, Chapter 2

of the Code of Ordinances, City of Verona, concerning operator's licenses.

Clark explained the 2019 Wisconsin Act 166 allows a municipal governing body to delegate authority to issue operator's licenses to a designated municipal official, with no requirement for approval of the licenses by the governing body. This ordinance delegates that authority to the City Clerk or their designee. The Police Department will continue to conduct investigations of the applicants, and the Chief of Police will recommend approval or denial of the applications. Upon approval, the City Clerk or their designee will issue the operator's license. Motion by Reekie, seconded by Touchett, to approve Ordinance No. 20-966 amending Title 7, Chapter 2 of the Code of Ordinances, City of Verona, concerning operator's licenses. Motion carried 8-0.

- E. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Designation of alternate locations and extended hours for requesting and voting absentee ballots for the August 11, 2020 Partisan Primary and November 3, 2020 General Election.

Clark explained Council action is needed to designate alternate locations for requesting and voting absentee ballots. Staff is requesting approval from the Council to designate the Verona Public Library, 500 Silent Street, and the Senior Center, 108 Paoli Street, Verona, WI, as alternate absentee voting locations. Staff also requests informal approval of extended absentee voting hours. Because of possible ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, and unknowns surrounding the mailing of absentee ballot request forms to all eligible voters, no formal absentee voting schedule has been developed at this time. Motion by Touchett, seconded by Kohl, to approve alternate locations and extended hours for requesting and voting absentee ballots for the August 11, 2020 Partisan Primary and November 3, 2020 General Election. Motion carried 8-0.

- F. Discussion and Possible Action Re: George Floyd.

Diaz explained he has generally not cared for the City of Verona to weigh in on national or international incidents. However, because so many people have had something to say about this, he is concerned that not saying anything may make a statement, as well. He would like to hear the Council's thoughts.

Jerney mentioned the March for Racial Justice. She would support any statement in support of Black Lives Matter.

Ryan stated silence is complicit and unacceptable. We need to send a message to the people of color in Verona that we care about them. It is important that people know that their leaders care about them. He would like to see a resolution created for this.

Kohl agrees with Ryan regarding silence being complicit. Now is the time for Verona to stand up and say that Black Lives Matter. We have an obligation as leaders in this community to look at our policies and make them as anti-racist as possible. She believes the City needs to put out a statement and look at our policies

Cronin is in favor of the City of Verona issuing a statement that we stand in opposition of police brutality taking people's lives. The time to look away and not make statements is over. It is time to make a concrete statement that we want to make a safe community for everyone who lives in Verona.

Kemp stated he grew up in Verona and has always felt welcome here. This is a time for personal reflection. It is one thing to put out a statement, but he strongly encourages everyone to not only stand behind a political statement or phrase, but to think about what it is like to walk in someone else's shoes. He is in favor of any resolution.

Posey stated making the statement is an important thing, but we have to have some sort of follow-up, as well. We need to look at policies and have some teeth behind this. Ongoing efforts need to be made.

Reekie stated in trying to reduce and/or eliminate racism, we need some introspection. She would like to put financial resources into this; for example training all City Staff in anti-bias and offering other educational opportunities.

Touchett stated we face challenges of unintentional bias every day. He agrees with Alder Kemp that it is important to walk a day in someone else's shoes. He is in full support of a resolution or statement from the Council.

Motion by Ryan, to adopt a resolution stating that the City of Verona condemns excessive use of force towards primarily people of color, that we stand with our African American brothers and sisters and other people of color in our community, and welcome and support them here in Verona.

Sayre stated the Council can approve drafting the resolution tonight, and formalizing it at the next meeting.

Kohl doesn't feel it is appropriate to come up with something on the spot.

There was no second to the motion.

The consensus of the Council was to direct Staff to draft a resolution based on Alder Ryan's comments, which will be voted on by the Council in two weeks.

- G. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Approval of operator's licenses for the 2020-2021 and 2020-2022 licensing periods. Motion by Touchett, seconded by Kohl, to approve operator's licenses for the 2020 -2021 licensing periods. Motion carried 8-0.

11. Adjournment:

Motion by Cronin, seconded by Touchett, to adjourn at 11:16 p.m. Motion carried 8-0.

Ellen Clark
City Clerk