

(Subject to Approval)
CITY OF SWISHER, IOWA
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 23, 2023

This meeting was also held electronically. Anyone could attend in person, dial-in or connect electronically to hear the actual meeting.

Call To Order: Mayor Christopher Taylor called the Swisher Council Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at Swisher Library, Swisher, Iowa on January 23, 2023.

Council Present: Mary Gudenkauf, Kris Heims, Kody Pudil, Michael Stagg. Attended via Zoom was Rebekah Neuendorf.

Also Present: City Clerk/Finance Officer Tawnia Kakacek, Public Works Superintendent Justin Fields, Communication Coordinator Julie Persons, HR Green Engineers Joshua Scanlon and Cody Buel. Attended via Zoom: Nikki Hynek and Sarah Thompson-Director of Rural Development of the Iowa City Development Group.

Agenda: Motion by Heims, seconded by Gudenkauf to approve the Agenda. Call for vote. All ayes. Motion carried.

Apply for Catalyst Grant and Send Letter of Support: Sarah Thompson explained the Catalyst Grant and noted it is a tool for starting revitalization for a city. Nikki Hynek noted she purchased 80 Division Street NW which was originally a school in 1905 and would like to remodel and preserve local history. She would make this a small event space for showers, receptions, etc. with less than 100 people per event. Hynek asked the city council to be open and apply for Catalyst Grant. This grant awards 10 applicants up to \$100,000 each. Thompson noted this may encourage other businesses to update their buildings and 40% of the grants go to communities of population 1500 or less. This preapplication is due this Friday and if approved, the full application is due in April. Council/Mayor discussed what should be the suggested monetary or in-kind part from the city. Council asked Hynek the total cost of project which would be around \$175,000, including to add onto the building, keep elements of schoolhouse, have steeple with bell. Hynek noted this would be an opportunity zone with land development around it. She also noted she rehabilitated the Plum Creek building façade to original façade. Mayor noted this property would need to be rezoned for the intended use. Gudenkauf inquired of any other type of grants that would help with this. Thompson noted there is a derelict building grant, but the catalyst grant is a better option. Neuendorf noted the city stays away from promoting businesses and if the city is doing monetary assistance the city needs to be clear what they want to do for nonprofits and businesses. Heims noted the city should have a protocol to support businesses. Hynek said she would wait until next year to submit grant if not approved by council this time. Thompson noted City could send out notice to all businesses of grant application in August and September. Pudil noted the grant has been available for several years and Hynek is the only one that has asked for this. Thompson noted the Johnson County Downtown Walk on March 14th in Swisher will have two people in this walk who administer the catalyst grants and would be a good time to talk to them about it. She encouraged council members and mayor to attend this walk. Hynek noted she thinks her building is one of two buildings that would ever qualify to be revitalized. All council like the idea of this plan, some of the Council are uncomfortable with short time frame to make decision, not having actual pre-application and plans to review plus there are several questions to be answered. After discussion, Pudil moved to submit pre-application catalyst grant and submit letter of support. No-one seconded motion. Motion died. Stagg would like this application brought next year with more information.

PFAS Contaminants in Swisher: Heims noted there is a house in middle of town where the water was tested positive for PFAS and another one in town also tested positive. She encourages citizens to get their wells tested for safety purposes regarding PFAS. Johnson County has limited grant funds for this testing which they do the testing. It costs around \$330 which is paid for by grant; doesn't cost homeowner anything. Heims noted that Johnson County said since there are 2 in the city there are likely more that have PFAS. Scanlon went over his Power Point slide regarding PFAS. Pudil feels it is the council's responsibility to provide residents of this information and contact information for testing. Mayor noted some residents will

think this is a push for city water, but it is not; it is the city's obligation to make residents aware of safety concern. After discussion, council decided to send information regarding PFAS testing information by email, newsletter, website, and Facebook. Gudenkauf will draft notice. Council directed this to be revisited at the February 13th Council meeting.

Presentation and Format for Public Water Meetings: Scanlon noted he added slides 32-34 from what he sent earlier. Council discussed procedure of meetings. Council decided there will be no questions allowed at first meeting, but people there can email or write their down their questions to be addressed at the next water meeting. Persons will tabulate questions and submit to the engineer to address questions. At the 2nd & 3rd meetings, there will be an hour set aside for questions. Each person gets 2 minutes to ask question. Neuendorf asked if nonresidents may attend, and the answer was yes. Persons noted people in the county offered to help distribute information on water vote the weekend before the election. Mayor noted the City doesn't want to affiliate with one political party and not the other, but if Persons does this on her own as a resident she can. Council directed Kakacek to have sheriff deputy patrolling in town during the meeting.

Concept Plan for Shop Building Property: Buelt presented 3 concept plans for the shop building property on 3rd Street. Pudil noted plans 1 & 3 concept plans would both work, as similar. After review and discussion, Stagg moved, seconded by Gudenkauf to approve Concept Plan #1. Roll call vote. All ayes. Motion carried. Gudenkauf noted if the property of 322 3rd Street SW ever comes up for sale, the City could purchase it.

Council Packets on Website: Mayor Taylor noted James Rowe requested this as felt the agendas are not always clear enough about what was to be discussed and voted on. Mayor noted packet materials are all almost always public information. Kakacek presented a list of towns that have and haven't council packets on website. Mayor noted sometimes we have draft documents that may change at meeting so those need to be as draft only. Persons could add a disclaimer that residents comments included in the packets will be public. After discussion, Pudil moved, seconded by Heims, to post council packets to website after Kakacek has completed the packet to be sent to Council. Roll call vote. All ayes. Motion carried.

AARP Community Challenge Grant Program: After review and discussion, Council directed this be sent to Swisher Parks & Recreation Committee to consider.

Adjournment: Motion by Gudenkauf, seconded by Stagg to adjourn. Call for vote. All ayes. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Tawnia Kakacek, City Clerk/ Finance Officer

Christopher Taylor, Mayor