



**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF THE
CITY OF NEOGA
HELD IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MUNICIPAL BUILDING
533 CHESTNUT AVENUE, NEOGA, IL
MARCH 25, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Helm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Those present were Commissioners Williams, Schabbing, Edwards, Letizia, and Mayor Helm. Others present were City Clerk Brenda Evans, City Treasurer Diana Foor, Police Chief Andy Schabbing, Engineer Lee Beckman, Billie Chambers, and Wes Chambers.

MINUTES

After reviewing the regular session minutes from March 11, 2024, Commissioner Edwards made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Letizia. Ayes, Commissioner Edwards, Letizia, Williams, Schabbing, and Mayor Helm. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were heard.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS, MAYOR HELM

APPOINT CHAIRMAN FOR ENDO INTERNATIONAL CLASS ACTION LAWSUIT

City Clerk Evans informed the Council that they should appoint someone to be the Chairman for the Endo International Class Action Lawsuit. Commissioner Edwards said he would be willing to be the Chairman, should no one else want to. Immediately Commissioner Schabbing made a motion to appoint Commissioner Edwards as the Chairman to the Endo International Class Action Lawsuit. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams. Ayes, Commissioner Schabbing, Edwards, Letizia, Williams, and Mayor Helm. Nays, none. motion carried. 5-0.

FINANCE, COMMISSIONER SCHABBING

MONTHLY BILLS

After reviewing the bill list, Commissioner Schabbing made a motion to pay the monthly bills as presented in the amount of \$85,871.19. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Edwards. Ayes, Commissioner Schabbing, Edwards, Letizia, Williams, and Mayor Helm. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0.

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PUBLIC PROPERTY, COMMISSIONER LETIZIA

UPDATES FROM MILANO & GRUNLOH

Engineer Lee Beckman handed out the project update sheet to the Council. Beckman explained that the city has applied for the IEPA Public Water Supply Loan in the amount of \$532,727.06. Beckman said he is hopeful that the potential loan forgiveness amount will be \$159,818. Mr. Beckman said he is hopeful the IEPA funding will be in place during the second quarter of 2024.

Beckman also informed the council that Neoga received \$1,014,960 for the ITEP project with \$253,740 in leverage. Beckman said plans have been submitted to IDOT and are approved for ADA. Bidding review with a bid letting is on April 26th.

Engineer Beckman also touched base on the Lead Service Line Inventory program that all municipalities are required to complete by April 15, 2024. Beckman said that most communities are struggling with the requirements, and he is still waiting to hear if the city receives a \$20,000 grant to help defray the cost of doing the inventory.

ITEP INVOICE #29781

After reviewing the invoice, Commissioner Edwards made a motion to pay the invoice in the amount of \$835.65. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Letizia. Ayes, Commissioner Edwards, Letizia, Williams, Schabbing, and Mayor Helm. Nays, none. Motion carried.

WATER AND SEWER RATE INCREASE

As a reminder, City Clerk Evans gave the Council a chart reflecting the last ten (10) months of income and expenses for both the water and sewer accounts. Evans said that the council needs to decide if they would like to keep the water and sewer rates at the current rate for fiscal year 2025 or increase the rates by 5%. The water fund YTD income reflects \$340,755.48 as of February 2024 and expenses show \$304,261.28 for the same 10-month period. The Sewer Fund YTD income reflects \$379,240.52 as of February 2024 and expenses show \$276,406.91 for the same time (10 months).

Evans noted there is a 20-year loan payment of \$21,982 due annually for water, and there is a \$32,000 bond payment due annually for 37 years for sewer.

City Treasurer Foor added that there is \$3,000 monthly that is transferred into the water reserve account and \$5,000 transferred into the sewer reserve account. Both reserve accounts are considered savings, but these amounts are included in the expense totals as well.

Upon lengthy discussion, Schabbing said the main reason for addressing the water and sewer rates in the first place back in January was because more people had approached her about excessive costs of their water/sewer bills than anything else since she has been on the council. Commissioner Schabbing said she would like to give people a break if we can. The Council agreed to review this, and it has only been since January. Commissioner Letizia said since the city has a steady income this year and we have a lot in reserves he does not want to increase either utility this year. Mayor Helm said that this can always be revisited later, and the council can implement an increase if we see we are losing money. Commissioner Williams agreed. Commissioner Schabbing made a motion to not increase the rates in May 2024. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. Ayes, Commissioner Schabbing, Williams, and Mayor Helm. Nays, Commissioner Edwards. Motion carried. 3-1. Note: Commissioner Letizia left the meeting before the vote.

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Commissioner Letizia left at 7:35 p.m.

STREETS AND ALLEYS, COMMISSIONER EDWARDS

No report was given.

HEALTH AND SAFETY, COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS

No report was given.

DEPARTMENT HEADS

Chief Schabbing informed the Council that they received two (2) used AEDs from Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Systems, and Renee Holly will donate \$1,000 to purchase a third AED for the department as well. Schabbing also said that a camera grant has been submitted, and if it is received they should be getting back \$5,000 to \$7,000 from the State of Illinois.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Edwards made a motion to move into executive session for Personnel Section 2 (c)(1) – employee hiring, firing, compensation, discipline, and performance. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Schabbing at 7:50 p.m. Ayes, Commissioner Edwards, Williams, Schabbing, and Mayor Helm. Nays, none. Motion carried. 4-0.

RECONVENED AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was reconvened at 8:33 p.m. by a motion from Commissioner Edwards and seconded by Commissioner Schabbing. Those present for roll call were Commissioner Edwards, Williams, Schabbing, and Mayor Helm.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Edwards made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams. Ayes, Commissioner Edwards, Williams, Schabbing, and Mayor Helm. Nays, none. Motion carried. 4-0.

Brenda Evans, City Clerk