

end of December... **January 2024**

Steamboat Rock

The Valley of Friendliness

Friendly Valley Times

Steamboat Rock, Iowa

www.steamboatrockiowa.com

Happy
New Year



“Put aside all bitterness, losing your temper, anger, shouting, and slander, along with every other evil. Be kind, compassionate, and forgiving to each other, in the same way God forgave you in Christ”
~Ephesians 4:31-32

in this issue >>>

The Last Four Years as Mayor
A Wink of his eye and a twist of his head
Check your furnace filters, CO batteries, car essentials
Nollaig shona dhaoibh!
Change in the New Year
Happiest of Birthdays to You! **and Much More !!!**

Monday, January 8th City Council Meeting 6:30pm @city hall
Saturday, January 20th Steamboat Rock Fireman’s Dance/Fundraiser
Live Music by **Six Pack Jack** 9pm-1am @Happenings

Recycling January 1st, 15th, and 29th
Every Wednesday @6:30pm- SRBC Awanas Club
Check the calendar on our website @ www.steamboatrockiowa.com
Every Wednesday @6:30pm SRBC Awanas Club



STEAMBOAT ROCK COMMUNITY RESOURCES

City of Steamboat Rock
PO Box 366
Steamboat Rock, IA 50672
641-868-2240
srcityhall@heartofiowa.net

Steamboat Rock Fire & Rescue
PO Box 174
Steamboat Rock, IA 50672
641-868-2314
srchief@heartofiowa.net

Steamboat Rock Public Library
511 W. Market St.
Steamboat Rock, IA 50672
641-868-2300
srocklib@heartofiowa.net

Steamboat Rock Visionary Group
PO Box 344
Steamboat Rock, IA 50672
641-868-2182
bhutchcroft@hotmail.com

Steamboat Rock Historic Society
409 W. Market St.
Steamboat Rock, IA 50672
641-858-6085
jimkkramer@heartofiowa.net

Steamboat Rock Cemetery
19325 Z Ave.
Steamboat Rock, IA 50672
641-751-5096
50672cemetery@gmail.com

Steamboat Rock Presbyterian Church
401 Market St.
Steamboat Rock, IA 50672
641-868-2292
srpresby@gmail.com

Steamboat Rock Baptist Church
107 2nd St.
Steamboat Rock, IA 50672
641-868-2458
church@steamboatbaptist.org

A Visit from St. Nicholas

Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house,
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. The stockings
were hung by the chimney with care, In hopes that St Nicholas
soon would be there.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds, While visions
of sugar-plums danced in their heads. And mamma in her
'kerchief, and I in my cap, Had just settled our brains for a long
winter's nap. When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.

Away to the window I flew like a flash, Tore open the shutters
and threw up the sash. The moon on the breast of the new-
fallen snow Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below.

When, what to my wondering eyes should appear, But a
miniature sleigh, and eight tinny reindeer. With a little old
driver, so lively and quick, I knew in a moment it must be St
Nick. More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name!

"Now Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! On, Cupid! on, on Donner and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!"

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly, When they
meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky. So up to the
house-top the coursers they flew, With the sleigh full of
Toys, and St Nicholas too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St Nicholas came with a bound.
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot.
A bundle of Toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler, just opening his pack.
His eyes-how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow.
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.
He had a broad face and a little round belly,
That shook when he laughed, like a bowlful of jelly!
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself!

A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings, then turned with a jerk.
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose!

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, 'ere he drove out of sight,
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"

Steamboat Rock Visionary Group

*Members: Toni Nederhoff, Mary Gast, Dave Hagberg,
Mariah Schurman, Sandy Trampe, Mike Finger, & Bob Hutchcroft*

Projects: With the new year beginning, the committee is going to redouble its efforts toward completing a project or two this coming year. We are currently working with River Valley Landscaping on developing an eye-catching entryway to the bike trail. It's already amazing how many people use the trail even with its relatively short distance. We want people to remember that the trail starts(or ends depending on which way you are traveling) in our beautiful community.

Another project we would like to pursue is adding a water fountain at the park. This is one of the most-requested improvements from people who use the park. We are beginning to look into the feasibility of this.

Still another idea we have liked is for adding an area to the park for smaller kids to play basketball. The baskets there now are too high for the shorter children to reach. A small court with shorter baskets might solve this problem.

If anyone would like to add ideas to this list or add their support to one or more of these projects please talk to a member.

Happy 2024! We truly love our community and its people. Good wishes for a happy and prosperous new year from the Visionary Group.

FVT If you know anyone who has not sent their email address to hry@heartofiowa.net please encourage them to do so. Hard copies may be picked up at the library for a nominal \$1 fee.

from the Mayor

Review of Last Four Years as Mayor

When becoming Mayor, I was very clear to the City Council members that they would not always like or agree with the choices I made. That being said, I have always tried to do the right thing, sometimes visionary, but always the right thing for the City of Steamboat Rock to prosper today and forth going. It's been interesting, challenging, and occasionally fun.

With the help of the City Council, a lot of volunteers, some professional services, and the Visionary Group, a lot has been accomplished in the past four years:

When coming to the Mayor position, the Council was quick to try to fill my plate by tasking me to get distressed properties cleaned up. There are still a few (and always will be) to clean up, but there were specifically five that have been pleasantly mitigated. The process was for the City to continue to put pressure on the owners of the distressed properties that had been in a difficult state of repair, in some cases more than a decade. Fortunately, private individuals were able to purchase and improve four of the five and your City cleaned up the fifth.

Took down a couple of dead or dying very large trees that were in danger of damaging City property as pieces of the trees began to drop. Cleaned the trees out of a few ditches that were blocking the view and creating a traffic hazard. Trimmed branches and took out dead Ash trees at the lift station/ Iowa River landing providing parking for an additional dozen vehicles. Trimmed out the trees, undergrowth, and seeded grass in the triangle between the lift station and the River's Edge Trail, Iowa river bike bridge. Have noticed several wedding parties taking pictures in this area in the last two years.

Analyzed six different scenarios of what could be done with the old school house. Analyzed potential grant sources. None of either were feasible. Acquired a Brownfield Grant to do an Asbestos/ hazardous materials study in the old school house and received estimates of the mitigation cost. Several City Codes updated.

New roof and paint on the old ball diamond concession stand. Market street patched and crack sealed. Several man-hole covers replaced. Storm-water mitigation installed on East Market Street. Purchased a 30-year newer used snowplow truck. New bucket built for the end loader.

Pursued and scored a grant for an automatic standby generator for the City Well which is just now coming on-line. New state-of-the-art Pickle Ball court installed. New LED light installation in the old school gym- partially funded by Alliant Energy grant.

Successfully held three ditch clean-ups on the roads leading South and West out of Steamboat Rock. Couple of Iowa River clean-ups. Encouraged people to clean-up their own properties and help their neighbors do the same if they needed help.

Thank-you to all the many volunteers who have helped make these improvements possible.

While writing about 40 Mayor Columns over the last four years my goal was for them to be informative, occasionally humorous, encouraging, and helpful in understanding why the City made some of the decisions it made. Hope you have enjoyed them. Best of luck to the new Mayor and the primarily new City Council.

Pursue the facts, don't argue the rumor. Be careful out there.

Thanks

Tim Stearns, Mayor



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOOOUUU!!!

*May you live a long life, Full of Gladness and Health, with a pocket full of gold as the least of your wealth,
May the Dreams you hold dearest, be those which Come True, May the kindness you spread, keep returning to YOU!*

December 27th Todd Fleming

January 6th Percy Ackerman

January 8th Mark Tubbs

January 15th Rodney Sizemore

January 26th Luke Pickering and Tori (Heikens) Leigha

January 2nd Gage Silker

January 7th Lindsay Mathis

January 9th Susan Bear

January 17th Kari Rolph



Steamboat Rock Historical Society

President: Jim Kramer **Vice President:** Dennis Holmes **Secretary:** **Treasurer:** Kitty Hemmen

At Large: Keith Griffen Email: jimkkramer@heartofiowa.net

OUR Mission: “*To preserve and promote the history of Steamboat Rock and the surrounding area*”

Ideas for Christmas Gifts

Are you looking for some ideas for the perfect Christmas gift? It is not too late to place an order. I will mail it out the next day. We have a number of items for sale at the Steamboat Rock Historical Society.

Books

- The Night Riders of Hardin County by Lance Hansmann--\$16.00
- Steamboat Rock: Anchored in History by Terry Folkerts **BOOK SOLD OUT**
Only available on a disc--\$15.00
- Trouble Comes A Lookin' by Dave Folkerts--\$13.00

DVDs

- The Rainsbargers-A Lynching in Hardin County by Jon Heitland--\$20.00
- A Brief History of Steamboat Rock--\$ 6.00
- Steamboat Rock From Settlement to Centennial--\$12.00
- Our Resplendent Steamboat Rock--\$12.00
- Back to the 50's and 60's--\$12.00
- Veterans Monument Dedication--\$10.00
- Ghost Town Tour Documentary--\$15.00
- The Ghost Towns of Hardin County--\$15.00
- East Friesen German Settlement in Iowa--\$15.00
- The People of the River 2--\$15.00

Other

- Commemorative Coin--\$5.00

If you would like to purchase any of these items, please contact me at 641-858-6085 or text me at:

jimkkramer@heartofiowa.net.

Family Histories

Attached you will find the family history for Melvin Franklin Baker, of which Dennis Holmes is a descendant. The SRHS would very much like to have more of these family histories on file at our museum. Would you consider passing on to us your family history so that we can have it on file? If so, please forward a copy to me.

Jim Kramer

President—Steamboat Rock Historical Society

Cont'd on page 7

Steamboat Rock Presbyterian Church & East Friesland Presbyterian Church

As you read this, we are just days away from Christmas. Ah, yes, Merry Christmas! Happy Holidays! Joyeux Noel! Buon Natale! Frohe Weihnachten! Nollaig shona dhaoibh!

Whatever language you choose to share your holiday wishes, it just shouts joy, happiness, merry! Right? Well, maybe for some, maybe even most of us; but there are a lot of people who just don't enjoy this time of year. And there are a lot of reasons why that might be.

Someone who's just lost their job may not feel so merry, especially when we're being constantly bombarded by ads to buy new cars, diamonds, new phones and big or bigger TV's for that "perfect" gift.

There are also those who have lost loved ones. Things that once may have made them happy at this time of year now make them sad, because they bring back memories of times spent together. These are just a couple of ways Christmas might become a difficult time for some.

There are a lot of people who are in need of encouragement at this time of year.

Cont'd on page 5



Cont'd from page 4 Steamboat Rock Presbyterian Church & East Friesland Presbyterian Church

They don't need a Christmas present of yours; they need the Christmas presence of God. They need to be reminded of what this season is all about. It's not about things. It's not about presents.

For sure, these things have their place, but we need to remember the true, essential message of Christmas, which is: Immanuel—God is with us. And for the hurting person, the lonely person, the grieving person, this is the time of year to bring the gift of encouragement to them and say, "The message of Christmas is: God will be with you. God will help you. God will strengthen you."

After all, isn't that what Christmas is really all about- God taking on human form and coming to be with us. Matthew 1:22-23 says, "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the Prophet: 'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel (which means, God with us)'"

God with us. And God is with us now and He will never leave us. The author of Hebrews reminds us of that promise in 13:5, " ...for He has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you'"

So, look for the opportunities that God puts in front of you to share His love during this time, because it's a time when we seem to be more open to talking with others. Right now, today is a great opportunity for you to bring encouragement to someone who is struggling. Who needs your encouragement today?

Have a blessed Christmas and may God be with you in the New Year and always.

Steamboat Rock Fire Department

I can't believe it is December as I write this to you. This means another year is coming to an end, 365 days, where have they gone?

SRFD had Santa arrive a little early this year and was present at the lighting of the Town Tree. He handed out 55 sacks and received many Christmas wishes. Thank you for all who attended and made this event a success!!!

Many may have their Christmas tree up and may have had it up for some time now. Remember to give your tree water every day. When you hang your lights, make sure the wiring is in great condition. Granted LED lights don't get as warm, but a bad spot in the line can be a fire hazard on your tree. If you hang lights around the house or outside, these lines also need to be in great condition.

This month would be a good time to check the furnace filter and possibly change it. Not having proper filtering may have an effect on your furnace's efficiency. That efficiency is not only for heat, but also for poisonous gases that your furnace emits. IF it is not properly ventilated, these gases can be released into the home and cause health issues. Please keep in mind CO just doesn't come from just the furnace; how many of you have a gas hot water heater, how many have a garage that is attached to the home and leave the car running to warm up? Each of these emit CO just as a furnace. Are these items properly vented and exhausted from your home? This gas is a gas that is both odorless and colorless and is a silent killer.

There are numerous types of CO detectors and if you have one, is/are the batteries current?

To help prevent this have yearly inspections done on anything that uses LP or Natural gas to help power a unit in your home.

Make sure the fluids and batteries in your vehicle are at operable levels? No need to be stranded!! How is the rubber looking on your vehicle? Weather in Iowa can change within the hour. Having the proper tread on your tires will also assist you while driving on bad road conditions. Please remember to NOT over drive and pay close attention to oncoming traffic.

If you should be traveling and witness a car in the ditch, before calling in, make sure there is an occupant/s. When you do call in, give the correct location. Sending emergency crews out for no one in the vehicle puts them in harm's way; Not giving the correct location, waste valuable time for proper care. Please be responsible when making the phone call.

Last but not least, SRFD will be hosting their dance at Happenings on January 20, 2024. We will again have Six Pack Jack presenting live music. There will be a cover charge of \$5, door prizes, silent auction items and a chance for a 60" + TV. We will have free will donation for food in the back room, thanks to Marc. H.

All the proceeds raised are used for equipment replacement or purchase of new. One item we are striving to get is a new thermal imager. This new device will range from \$5,000 - \$8,500. This will allow firefighters to see through the smoke, present the images in a different color, and allow them to see where a hotspot maybe inside a wall.

Come out and enjoy a good night of music, dancing, and visiting with friends.

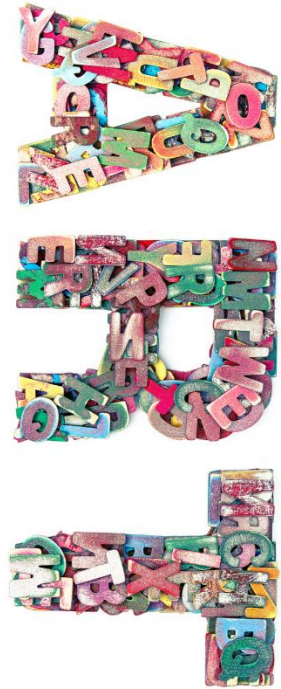
Stay Safe,
Chief Williams

Steamboat Rock Public Library

Nothing this month from the library except... to wish all a great and safe holiday from the Joan, Anna, Kim, Jackie, Dave, Melissa, and Dar.

www.youseemore.com/nile/steamboatrock
or on Facebook @SteamboatRockLibrary

SAVE THE DATE:



ART TENT
ART FESTIVAL
ART GARDEN PARTY
ART ACTIVITIES
ART TENT
ART FESTIVAL
ART GARDEN PARTY
ART ACTIVITIES

2024 ART FESTIVAL & GARDEN PARTY

Saturday, June 1

108 River RD S, STEAMBOAT ROCK
2-7 PM

2-7 pm - ART FESTIVAL featuring local and regional artists.
Garden Stroll. **FREE.**

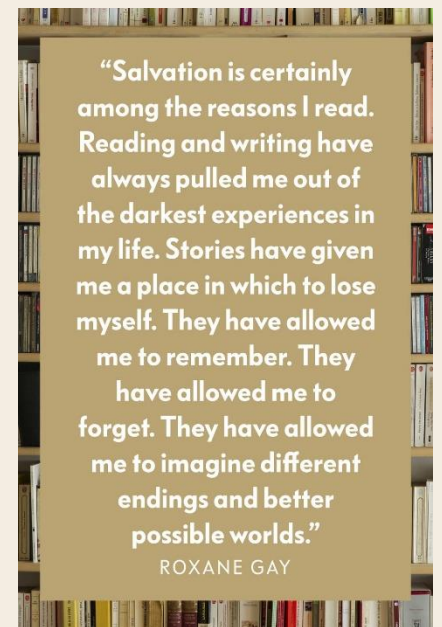
2:30 - 4:30 pm -- CHILDREN'S ART TENT AND ACTIVITIES

4-7 pm - GARDEN PARTY - \$20. Live music, charcuterie, and beverages. Advance ticket purchase guarantees charcuterie. Tickets available at area coffee shops and Steamboat Rock Library.



Tuesday 1:00-6:00 PM
Wednesday 2:00-5:00 PM
Thursday-Friday 12:00-4:00 PM
Saturday 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

511 W. Market St;
Steamboat Rock
Phone/Fax: 641-868-2300



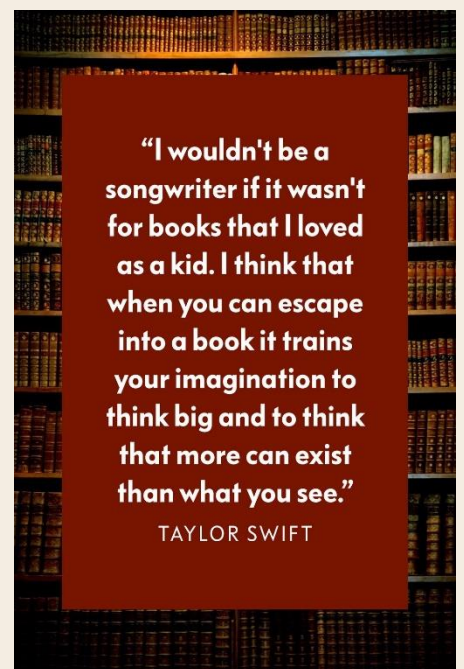
"Salvation is certainly among the reasons I read. Reading and writing have always pulled me out of the darkest experiences in my life. Stories have given me a place in which to lose myself. They have allowed me to remember. They have allowed me to forget. They have allowed me to imagine different endings and better possible worlds."

ROXANE GAY

The Guest House (641) 640-5425

202 East Market St, Steamboat Rock, IA, United States, 50672-7718

Booking for summer 2025 right now! Johnnie Ogden shouts out a BIG Thank You to the community for helping them be booked EVERY weekend from May through October so far this year. Keep spreading the word, what an awesome amenity to have in town.



"I wouldn't be a songwriter if it wasn't for books that I loved as a kid. I think that when you can escape into a book it trains your imagination to think big and to think that more can exist than what you see."

TAYLOR SWIFT

MELVIN FRANKLIN BAKER FAMILY

John Smith Baker, father of Melvin, spent forty-five years in the Eldora township community. He was born on Oct. 20, 1838, in Licking County, Ohio, the son of Charles Baker.

Charles Baker was born on May 19, 1814, in Licking County, Ohio, and remained there until 1852 farming and operating a canal boat on the Ohio Canal. On January 20, 1835, he was married to Elizabeth Smith who was born in Pennsylvania and who bore him six children: George W, John, William G, James N, Elizabeth Deliah, and Mary Catherine. He died on September 18, 1884 and was buried in the Buckner Cemetery.

John Smith Baker was married on March 23, 1876, to Alice V. Madden, who was born in Pennsylvania on December 22, 1853, the daughter of John and Elizabeth (Wert) Madden. To this union were born Melvin Franklin, Lillie Elizabeth, John Smith, Mary Ellen, Charles Clayton, Alice Valentine, Jessie Lee, and Fleda May.

On August 6, 1862, John S. Baker enlisted at Rockford, Illinois, in the 74th Illinois Infantry Company F of the Union Army. He served three years. In 1866, he came to Iowa, arriving in Eldora with fifteen cents in his pocket. The first property he owned was an old but good horse which he traded for an eighty-acre farm. This horse took the first prize at the first Hardin County Fair which was held in Steamboat Rock.

On December 14, 1904, Melvin Franklin was married to Grace Darling Bartine of Clemon, Iowa. Born to this union were five children. Helen Grace was born December 24, 1905, and married Donald Chance, one child Jared Michael was born to this union. Later on, she was married to C. Jackson Garn. Robert Elon was born July 16, 1907, and was married to Lillian Valentine Ulch and had one daughter, Shirley. Miriam Blanche was married to A.J. Marken, a widower with two children Linda Mary and Margaret Joe. They were adopted by Meriam and A.J. and Meriam had a son Alan James. Maxine Bartine was born in September 26, 1912. She was married to Russell Holmes, and they became the parents of Dennis Holmes. Meridith was born July 24, 1924, and married Glen Willig of Eldora. They became the parents of Deborah, Diane (Hart), Denise, and Donna.

Melvin Franklin Baker was born in a log cabin on a farm east of Eldora. He worked on the farm each spring and fall and attended school during the winter term graduation from Eldora High School in 1898 and from the University of Iowa Pharmacy College in 1900. He also attended medical school at Northwestern University for a short time. He also was an embalmer for a short time.

Many families recall his interest and generosity toward the children seeking an education in Steamboat Rock. He worked as a pharmacist in Clemons, Rhodes, Ogden, and Steamboat Rock. In his later years he was employed in various stores as a relief pharmacist.

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(888) 320-9487 Toll Free



Happy New Year!



MAYOR
Tim Stearns

"A valley
of
Friendliness"



COUNCIL MEMBERS
Adam Blackburn
Dave Mull
Kevin Pieters
Cory Schurman
Jon Schurman

The Steamboat Rock City Council met in regular session on December 11, 2023, 6:30 P.M. in the City Council Chambers. Present were Mayor Stearns and the following council members: Dave Mull, Kevin Pieters, Cory Schurman, and Jon Schurman. Absent was Adam Blackburn. Also, present Linda Whitt-Jensen, Jim Green, JJ Veld, Marvin Veld, Marc Havens, Michelle Kelley, Travis Hollander, and Scott Williams.

Mayor Stearns called the meeting to order. Pieters moved, seconded by C. Schurman to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously. C. Schurman moved, seconded by Pieters to approve the November 13, 2023 minutes. Motion carried unanimously. K. Pieters moved, seconded by J. Schurman to approve City bills. Motion carried unanimously. C. Schurman moved, seconded by Mull to approve employee hours as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Public comments: Approval of Livestock permit for Jim Green and Michelle Kelley. Pieters moved, seconded by Mull to approve permit. Motion carried unanimously.

Library: No report

Fire Department: Scott Williams, Fire Chief, reported that the fire association theft has been repaid; the volunteer is no longer affiliated with the Fire Department Association. 12 members in the department presently. 55 Santa bags provided to children during the tree lighting. Bill will be sent to Whitten Fire for an assist. Working on scheduling with Breda to get compartment door fixed. Scott was voted in again as Chief and Damion is the new Assistant Chief.

Public Works report – JJ Veld reported the snow plow repair will be costly and recommended pursuing other options. The Council explored various options with follow up meeting schedule for 12/14/2023 to consider options. Mayor Stearns will call Alden Diesel about options. Mull will talk to Stupp's about their willingness to take a run at doing the repair.

Distressed Properties – Waiting for IRS to sign-off on 208 3rd St. Suit being filed pending lien search on 308 6th St and 601 W Sycamore St

Nuisance reports: none

Account balances were presented and reviewed by Mayor Stearns. A budget meeting was scheduled for 12/28/2023 to start work on the FY25 budget beginning July 1, 2024.

Old Business: Dog park proposal withdrawn. Nuisance Ordinance and Municipal Infractions Ordinance – pending. Animal Control Code section 5-2-1 was reviewed. Remaining Animal Control code is still pending. Periodic State Audit has been completed and exit review scheduled with only two City Council members allowed, for Monday 12/18/23 at 10:00 am. Water code revisions are pending. Both the Affidavit Operator and Water and Sewer Superintendent hires are pending Council approval.

New Business: David Mull, Sr., Mayor Elect and council members elect Marc Havens, Travis Hollander, and Marvin Veld were sworn in with terms beginning 01/02/2024 at 12:00 PM. Marc Haven agreed to be Mayor Pro-temp. Pieters moved, seconded by C. Schurman to approve Linda Whitt-Jensen, David Mull Sr., Mayor Elect, and Marc Havens, Mayor Pro-temp elect. as signers for all accounts at Greenbelt Bank & Trust and Hardin County Savings Bank, upon commencement of term. Motions approved unanimously. C. Schurman moved and Pieters seconded the motion to approve Resolution #2023-13 to apply for USDA-SEARCH Grant. Roll call vote: J. Schurman – Aye, Pieters-Aye, Mull-Aye, and C. Schurman-Aye. Motion carried.

Mull moved to adjourn, seconded by Pieters. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Timothy A. Stearns, Mayor

Linda Whitt-Jensen, City Clerk

