

AMERY SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
May 17th, 2023

The Amery City Council met on May 17th, 2023 at the Amery City Center. Council President, Sarah Flanum called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Roll Call: City Clerk-Treasurer, Ben Jansen conducted Roll Call.

Present: Mayor, Chad Leonard; Council President, Eric Elkin; and Alderpersons; Sharon Marks; Mykaela Thompson; Mike Manor, and Sarah Flanum.

Staff Present: City Administrator, Patty Bjorklund; City Clerk-Treasurer, Ben Jansen; Deputy Clerk., Taylor Larson; Police Chief, Steve Hainzl; Fire Chief, Chuck Frohn; Library Director, Heather Wiarda; and Director of Public Works, Jeff Mahoney.

Others present: Attorneys Paul Mahler and Lindsey Kohls; and Representatives from the Farm Table Foundation, Resilient Northern Habitats, and the VFW.

New Business

- 1. Building Inspector Contract with REM Inspecting** – This item was brought forward from the regular May council meeting as there was a change in the fee schedule that the Council felt should be acted upon separately. Alderperson, Van Blaricom; stated that he would like to see a longer contract than 1 year as it is not entirely fair to REM to have to renew every year. Alderperson, Manor suggested that a 3-year term would be sufficient.

Motion by Alderperson, Van Blaricom; seconded by Council President, Elkin; to approve the contract with REM with a proposed term of 3 years.

Ayes – 6

Nays – 0

Motion Carried.

- 2. Hearing on Possible Revocation of the “Class B” Retail Intoxicating Liquor and Fermented Malt Beverage License of Farm Table Foundation Inc.** – The hearing was opened with a motion by Alderperson, Manor; which was seconded by Alderperson, Thompson. A roll call vote was held with all members voting in affirmative. Lynn Blomstrand, Agent for the Farm Table Foundation spoke first. She stated that the claim that the Farm Table abandoned their premises was false. Rather they were forced to vacate their location by the building owner, Resilient Northern Habitats. She stated that RNH wishes to sell the building but has indicated that they have zero interest in selling it to the Farm Table. The Farm Table is in the process of finding another building within the City but does not currently have a time table on when they will be in a new location. The timetable for the “abandonment” was also discussed. The Farm Table held their last event in February. This contradicts the claim that they abandoned the premises in January.

The next to speak was Michelle Wuellner who is the property manager for Resilient Northern Habitats. She stated that the Farm Table was alerted to RNH’s intent to sell the building last August. RNH also apparently alerted the Farm Table that they would have to vacate the building by December 31st. The formal lease ended at the end of March 2023. Farm Table did offer to buy the building but the offers were too low to accept.

Aldersperson, Van Blaricom; stated that he was comfortable with waiting to make a decision on the revocation. He also noted that even if the license were revoked there is no guarantee that RNH would be able to secure the license. Attorney, Mahler informed the Council that timing is everything on this. The license is set to expire at the end of June. If the Council does revoke the license the Farm Table would not be allowed to apply for a year. Mayor, Leonard stated that from what he understands the Farm Table really didn't abandon the premises until March 30th and the claim that they left in January is not correct.

Motion by Aldersperson, Van Blaricom; seconded by seconded by Aldersperson, Manor; to adjourn the hearing until the June Committee of the Whole date (June 21st).

Ayes – 6

Nays – 0

Motion Carried.

Motion by Council President, Elkin; seconded by Aldersperson, Marks; to close the hearing at 5:40 P.M.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes – All

Nays – None

Motion Carried.

Motion by Aldersperson, Manor; seconded by Aldersperson, Flanum; to adjourn at 5:41 P.M.

Ayes – 6

Nays – 0

Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Jansen, MPA
City Clerk-Treasurer
May 19th, 2023