

UNAPPROVED MINUTES  
WATKINS CITY COUNCIL  
THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2020  
7 P.M.

Mayor Eder called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. via teleconference due to the COVID-19 crisis.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Frank Eder, Jason Laumer, Marc Wirz, Sue Unterberger, Tootz Tschumperlin

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

Clerk Deb Kramer was present at City Hall. Public Works Director Steve Geislinger was present via phone.

Others: Jean Matua with Tri-County News, Ellarry Prentice with EV-W Voice, Jeff Hilsgen

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO APPROVE THE AGENDA, SECONDED BY WIRZ. ON A ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: LAUMER, WIRZ, UNTERBERGER, TSCHUMPERLIN. NAYS: NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY LAUMER TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. ON A ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: LAUMER, WIRZ, UNTERBERGER, TSCHUMPERLIN. NAYS: NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

Items on the Consent Agenda were March 12<sup>th</sup> regular meeting minutes and March 26<sup>th</sup> emergency meeting minutes, March financial report, Resolution #2020-10, Resolution Accepting Donations.

Public Forum – none

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF THE AMBULANCE BILLS AS PRESENTED, SECONDED BY LAUMER. ON A ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: LAUMER, WIRZ, UNTERBERGER, TSCHUMPERLIN. NAYS: NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

A member of the ambulance service asked about getting hot water to the emergency shower that is in the garage, along with a curtain, so members can shower and change clothes before going home. The request was made because of the COVID-19 crisis. Ambulance Chief Holthaus spoke with Mayor Eder about this and said only one person has asked for this. Unterberger felt most would just go home and shower. Eder suggested maybe the bathroom could be used to wash up and change clothes if they wanted. After discussion, council agreed the ambulance squad should discuss this and come with a plan if they want to pursue it.

Kramer noted the Sheriff's report was not available.

Kramer noted there were no water shut offs done in March due to the COVID-19 crisis. Kramer also noted when the March bills were calculated, there were no late fees applied to the past due accounts. Kramer noted instead of sending shut off notices, a letter could be sent to any past due accounts reminding them the bill is still due during this time and they can pay as often as they want for whatever amount they can afford. Unterberger noted that some companies are allowing 120 days to pay after the emergency declaration is done. Kramer noted no decision had to be made tonight and it could be discussed at the May meeting when the city will have a better idea of how many are past due.

MOTION BY WIRZ THAT NO SHUT OFFS BE DONE AND WAIVE LATE FEES DURING THE COVID EMERGENCY, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. ON A ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: LAUMER, WIRZ, UNTERBERGER, TSCHUMPERLIN. NAYS: NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

Staff hours - the Governor has extended the Stay-at Home order until May 4<sup>th</sup>. City staff has been taking turns working and being paid for their regular time since approved at the March 26<sup>th</sup> emergency meeting. Council noted as long as work is getting done to continue as is until the May council meeting.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO KEEP PAYING STAFF UNTIL THE MAY MEETING, SECONDED BY WIRZ. ON A ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: LAUMER, WIRZ, UNTERBERGER, TSCHUMPERLIN. NAYS: NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

Council approved to put signs up at the VFW Park, McCarthy Park and softball park notifying the public to follow the CDC's guidance on outdoor recreation and also that the tables, fences, playground equipment, etc. are not cleaned or sanitized by the city.

Pool season – Laumer noted the manager may not return if the pool can't be open for the full season. Laumer noted he felt it would be difficult to open this year due to the COVID-19 crisis. Tschumperlin agreed. Laumer didn't know how swimming lessons could be offered when there is such close contact. Laumer noted he had big reservations about opening this season. Unterberger noted that even if they lift the restrictions, people are going to go out and it will start all over again. Staff is also low this year and there are no courses being offered now to certify water safety instructors or lifeguards. Laumer noted he was in favor of not opening this year and suggested maybe some staff could help out with some maintenance things that could be done at the pool if public works could use the help. Wirz asked if this was the last year the manager would stay on. Laumer noted if it doesn't open this year, she would consider returning next year. Council was in agreement not to open this year. Staff needs to know so they can look for other employment. Unterberger noted so much is being pushed off until fall that she had no problem not opening this season.

MOTION BY LAUMER NOT TO OPEN THE POOL THIS SEASON, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. ON A ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: LAUMER, WIRZ, UNTERBERGER, TSCHUMPERLIN. NAYS: NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

Council advised to add the notice about the pool being closed to the spring newsletter.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE THE NEWSLETTER WITH THE ADDITION, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. ON A ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: LAUMER, WIRZ, UNTERBERGER, TSCHUMPERLIN. NAYS: NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

Eden Valley and Watkins have been working on the Wellhead Protection Plan, Part Two Amendment. Consistent with the Wellhead Protection Rule, a public hearing will be held Wednesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7 p.m. at Eden Valley. Laumer noted he will try to attend.

Public Works Director Steve Geislinger reported he took the swings off the playground at the softball park. The rivets in the cross beam need to be welded. Geislinger noted that Horizon Pools sent an email recommending that pools still be maintained like normal if not opened to the public, with the exception of heating them. Algae build up could be a problem for the pipes. Geislinger will check with Performance Pools to see what they recommend. Geislinger noted he would be looking at etching the

bathroom floors in the pool bathhouse and the bottom of the kiddie pool this summer to prevent people from slipping.

Unterberger asked if there was compost available through the city. It was noted this is a brush site only, no compost.

Council mentioned some potholes throughout the city. Geislinger noted the one by Louisiana-Pacific would be Meeker County's to take care of. Geislinger will talk to the county and see what can be done.

Mayor Eder noted he spoke with the new executive director at Mid-Minnesota Development Commission about the trail plan. He is hopeful to meet with the planning commission in June to go over the trail plan.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF THE BILLS AS PRESENTED, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. ON A ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: LAUMER, WIRZ, UNTERBERGER, TSCHUMPERLIN. NAYS: NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

Next regular meeting is Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.

MOTION BY LAUMER TO ADJOURN THE MEETING, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. ON A ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES: LAUMER, WIRZ, UNTERBERGER, TSCHUMPERLIN. NAYS: NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

Adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Submitted by

Deb Kramer  
Clerk

ATTEST:

Frank Eder  
Mayor