

UNAPPROVED MINUTES  
WATKINS CITY COUNCIL  
THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2018

Mayor Eder called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. at City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Frank Eder, Tootz Tschumperlin, Sue Unterberger, Marc Wirz, Brenda Carlson

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO APPROVE THE AGENDA, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

Items on the Consent Agenda were March 8, 2018 regular meeting minutes, March financial report, September 29, 2016 joint water board meeting minutes and financial reports and delinquent water bills for shut off.

Public Forum - Jeff Hilsgen, Watkins Ambulance, asked if the rain gutters on the north side of City Hall could be fixed. Public Works will contact the contractor.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF THE AMBULANCE BILLS AS PRESENTED, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO ACCEPT THE SHERIFF'S REPORT, SECONDED BY WIRZ. MOTION CARRIED.

The Sheriff's Department asked if Watkins would consider going to 10-hour shifts. They would like to get all deputies in the contract cities on 10-hour shifts like the rest of the department. Deputy Defries noted when he is off the city would still be covered by a county car. Discussion followed.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO APPROVE FOR THE CONTRACT DEPUTY TO GO TO 10-HOUR SHIFTS, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Defries will talk to his Sergeant about when the new shifts will start.

Discussion was held on National Night Out. This is held the first Tuesday in August. At a prior meeting it was discussed to get more community involvement and a more central location. Past years it has been at the Fire Hall and sponsored by the Sheriff's Department but not very well attended. Carlson volunteered to chair a committee if more help can be recruited. Letters will be sent to various organizations, etc. asking for participation. Laurie Schultz noted last year Eden Valley held block parties in different areas of the city for National Night Out.

Council advised Kramer to check with West Central Sanitation for a date to hold spring cleanup. Carlson and Unterberger would help out at the drop site location.

Tom and Steven Landwehr were present to discuss the agricultural lease. Discussion was held on first right of refusal language and renewal terms. The attorney asked if the city wanted to include an increase in rent in the renewal terms. Council didn't feel they could make a decision on that now due to what the market could do in five years. Kramer will contact the attorney about an option to renew at the end of this lease and first option to renew. Council wants to be able to negotiate a rate at renewal time. Neither party wants to be locked into any increase at renewal time. Council approved for Landwehr's to begin field work when weather permits.

The attorney had concerns about the agreement that Geronimo presented to the city for a subscription to the solar garden to be built just north of the city. Geronimo is not willing to negotiate the agreement with respect to the terms regarding default/cancellation. This contract states the city shall have no right to terminate this agreement for breach by operator. With the length of the contract, the attorney felt this was a significant concern. They indicated other cities executed this contract but were unwilling to provide copies to the attorney to verify this.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO REFUSE THE CONTRACT WITH GERONIMO AND LEAVE IT, SECONDED BY WIRZ. MOTION CARRIED. TSCHUMPERLIN ABSTAINED.

Council reviewed the Clear Lake Subordinate Service District rate and the city sewer rate and increases over the past years. When the agreement was developed in 2000, the service district rate was set at 110% of what the city rate is. At that time, the city rate was \$2.00/thousand making the service district rate \$2.20 per thousand. In 2004, the city increased to \$4/thousand and the service district to \$4.40/thousand, both effective 1/1/2005. City rates have since increased to \$5/thousand in 2007, \$8/thousand in 2009, \$11.83/thousand in 2010 and \$11.95/thousand in 2018. The service district has remained at \$4.40/thousand, as the city neglected to include the District in past increases. The agreement with the District is due to renew in 2020. Carlson felt the new agreement should not require the city to justify increases to the service district. [The current agreement does state that the city shall support any rate increase with evidence of the actual cost of treatment along with a pro-rata share of plant and collector system operating costs.] Kramer noted she went back to when rates were increased in the city in 2009 and 2010. In 2008 when council was looking at increasing rates effective 1/1/2009, the 2007 expenses were used to determine an increase. Based on projected revenue, the city was showing a projected deficit of \$49,570.00. The city increased rates \$3/thousand gallons at the time, which still projected a deficit. Had the city increased the District's rate in 2009 to 110% of the city rate at the time, there would have been additional revenue of approximately \$15,840.00. After review and discussion, council agreed to increase the service district rate to \$8.25/thousand gallons. The city must give a 90-day notice on any increase.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO INCREASE THE RATE FOR THE CLEAR LAKE SUBORDINATE SERVICE DISTRICT TO \$8.25/THOUSAND GALLONS EFFECTIVE 8-1-2018, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

Council also noted that when renewal negotiations begin, the city will propose that the service district rate match whatever the current city rate is.

Kramer noted the administrative search warrant request will be going before a judge May 11<sup>th</sup> for the property on First Street.

Kramer noted a loss control consultant from the League of MN Cities met with the city regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act. There were recommendations for improving playground and park

accessibility, obtaining new or modifying existing picnic tables for access by wheelchairs, parking, improvements to restrooms and accessible portable restrooms.

EDA update – The EDA would pay for lights and getting power to the new welcome signs along Highway 55 as long as it is no more than \$7,000 and the city pays the monthly utility bill. The estimate from Kramer Electric for their work and for Meeker Coop to bring the power to each sign was \$6,157.38. City council previously approved to pay the monthly bill. The board is looking at re-platting some of the townhome lots at Glenshire Addition to allow for single family homes. The board is working on a program to sell the lots for \$1 but there would be stipulations on purchasing materials locally, hiring local contractors and staying in the home for a certain number of years to qualify for the reduced price. Wirz asked if there was any discussion on what the EDA could do to help sell the lots in Faber Addition or the single family lots in Glenshire Estates Addition. Carlson noted there was not. A party is interested in the EDA lot on east Highway 55 and the board has approved to sell the lot for \$7,500 with stipulations. Jean Reinert is planning to move Backyard Garden Creations from her home to the old Arnold Chevrolet building on Central Avenue North and may be applying for a revolving loan from the EDA. The board is also trying to get another entrance into Glenshire Estates Addition.

Mayor Eder updated council on the Safe Routes to School plan. A committee meeting is scheduled for April 19<sup>th</sup>.

Planning commission update – A business is looking to lease the Watkins House property on 4<sup>th</sup> Street for opioid recovery. The city attorney is researching to see if this type of facility can operate under the existing Conditional Use Permit. The facility would be locked from the outside, but the clients can leave if they choose not to complete the treatment. If the proposed use complies with the Conditional Use Permit that was issued, there would really be no further action the city could take. The building does need to be sprinklered. Geislinger noted the water main is on the west side of the street and they will need to cross both sanitary sewer and storm sewer. They are looking at boring under the road to tie in. It was also noted that clients at the facility would not have a vehicle; however, staff would be parking on the street.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO REAPPOINT ASHLEE LUNDBERG AS POOL MANAGER, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO INCREASE POOL MANAGER'S WAGE .50 PER HOUR, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO CONTINUE TO OFFER POOL SEASON PASSES WITH THE \$25 EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT, SECONDED BY WIRZ. MOTION CARRIED.

Kramer noted new voting booths were budgeted for and requested approval to order to have by the August primary election. The amount budgeted was \$785.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE PURCHASE OF NEW VOTING BOOTHS, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO APPROVE THE DRAFT NEWSLETTER, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Anyone wanting a swimming pool filled by the fire department will need to make arrangements at City Hall and will need to pay before it is filled. Fire Department members should not be contacted directly by the party wanting a pool filled. The department will only fill pools on the first and third Monday night of the month after getting notification from City Hall.

Council discussed getting a sign to recognize the donations made for the new siren. CP Rail donated \$2,500 and Meeker Cooperative donated \$1,275 for a pole through its Operation Roundup Grant program.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO PUT UP A SIGN RECOGNIZING THE DONATIONS, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF THE BILLS AS PRESENTED, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

Kramer noted a portion of the south side of the electronic sign is out. Last year the city did get a letter stating the sign was over 10 years old and parts would be available for a limited time. Kramer contacted Scenic Sign where the sign was purchased from and they have confirmed that parts are no longer available. Scenic Sign will come out and try to arrange the mods as best they can so the message is as good as it can be. Kramer did advise Scenic Sign to get some quotes on replacing the electronic message portion of the sign for council to review.

The 2018 street project is scheduled to start in late June. Once mobilized, the contractor will be handling both the mobile home park streets and Highway 55/School Avenue intersection at once. A pre-construction meeting is planned for late May.

A few fire department members require lenses for the SCBA masks. Council approved to purchase these and charge to the Fire Protection Equipment Fund.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO PURCHASE THE LENSES FOR THE SCBA MASKS, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

Kramer noted the city was contacted by MN Department of Human Services (DHS) about a supplemental payment for the ambulance service. Legislation was enacted requiring DHS to expand eligibility for supplemental payments to all government-owned ambulance providers, excluding ambulance companies owned by Tribal governments. This is a voluntary program and Watkins Ambulance may qualify. Supplemental payments are Medicaid payments that are in addition to the payments the provider received when the ambulance service was delivered to the Medicaid patient. Supplemental payments are limited to fee-for-service payments and are paid once per year and cover all of the services delivered to Medicaid patients during that year. The payments are calculated to pay out the difference between the payment the provider received at the time of service and the maximum allowed payment amount. There is a federal share and a non-federal share. Either the city can participate using its General Fund or the Ambulance can participate on its own. If the city General Fund pays the non-federal share, the ambulance service would get 100% of the supplemental payment. None of that payment can be returned to the city General Fund. If the Ambulance Fund participates, it would get 50% of the payment. Discussion followed.

MOTION BY CARLSON FOR THE CITY GENERAL FUND TO DECLINE FROM PARTICIPATING IN THE DHS PROGRAM, AND THE AMBULANCE SERVICE MAY PARTICIPATE DEPENDING ON THE CALCULATION, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Public Works Director Steve Geislinger reported that a new water softener is needed at Village Hall. Council reviewed three options from Ertl Hardware ranging from \$449.99 to \$599.99.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO APPROVE THE FILTER HOUSE 31K MODEL FOR \$599.99, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

The windshield on the city Dodge truck is cracked. Geislinger had three quotes as follows: Glass Doctor-\$319.08, Ron's Custom Paint-\$435.40, Tri-County Auto Glass-\$209.00.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO APPROVE THE QUOTE FROM TRI-COUNTY AUTO GLASS, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Geislinger noted that KUE Contractors repaired the chimneys that were leaking at Village Hall. KUE will also be putting steel over an unused access on the east side of the building and an old platform will be removed.

Next meeting is May 10<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO ADJOURN, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Submitted by

Deb Kramer  
Clerk

ATTEST:

Frank Eder  
Mayor