

UNAPPROVED MINUTES
WATKINS CITY COUNCIL
THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2017

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

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

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

Items on the Consent Agenda were March 9th regular meeting minutes, March financial report, Resolution #2017-13, Resolution Accepting Donations and delinquent water bills for shut off.

Public Forum – none

MOTION BY CARLSON TO APPROVE THE AMBULANCE FIRST QUARTER REPORTS, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

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

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

Sheriff Brian Cruze reviewed the department's 2016 activity report. The department continues to see a decline in assaults, burglaries, and criminal damage to property cases. Thefts have decreased, but there has been a slight increase in motor vehicle thefts. There was a noticeable increase in criminal sexual conduct cases and an increase in reports of sex trafficking activities in the county. Cruze noted Watkins' calls are pretty stable. The feedback he gets is that things are going well in Watkins. Wirz asked about sex trafficking and educational programs in the schools. Cruze noted they do work with the schools and talk about the evil side of the Internet. Carlson asked about 911 outages. Cruze noted these have been phone carrier outages, not county system outages. The county is updating its 911 system in May. Carlson felt the Sheriff's Department is doing an excellent job for the city.

City engineer Kent Louwagie discussed proposed street improvements in the city. The city budgeted \$80,000 for street improvements this year. Kent was preparing a report for improvements in the mobile home park and city parking lot. There is a seal coating project scheduled in conjunction with Meeker County. Estimated cost for the city is \$70,000. The city will be reimbursed 75% of the costs for the streets that were damaged from the tornado cleanup. Kent was looking for direction on how to move forward. The streets in the mobile home park would be done through the assessment process. However, Kent couldn't find a platted right-of-way for the streets. The entire abstract was gone through and there was nothing in it so it is unclear as to who owns the streets. The city has been sweeping and

clearing snow from the streets. If the city decides they are city streets, it needs to get easements. Carlson questioned if the city hadn't been maintaining them for a long time. Kent noted according to the abstract there is no dedicated right-of-way for the streets. In 1997, School Avenue in the park was overlaid as part of the city's annual street improvements. Kent recommended it be clarified who owns the streets even if the improvements are not done. Wirz noted he would like to talk to other cities and see what they do with the mobile home parks located in their cities. Mayor Eder noted he would talk to the original owner of the park as well. Public Works Director Steve Geislinger noted the park is on its own for water and sewer; however, public works has helped them out on occasion.

MOTION MADE BY CARLSON TO TABLE UNTIL MAY MEETING, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Kent questioned if the city was still considering doing anything to improve the intersection at School Avenue and Highway 55. He noted that could be lumped in with the street improvement project if the city moves forward. MNDOT had no issues with the city doing it but they do not want to include it with their 2018 project. Council reviewed a drawing of the area. Kent estimated it would be \$20,000 to \$25,000 to fix.

Council reviewed information from the League of MN Cities regarding legislation introduced this session that would restrict cities local decision-making authority.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO ADOPT RESOLUTION #2017-14, RESOLUTION SUPPORTING LOCAL DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO ADOPT RESOLUTION #2017-15, RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING NATIONAL PREGNANCY & INFANT LOSS AWARENESS DAY (OCTOBER 15TH), SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO ACCEPT CHRISTINA TSCHUMPERLIN'S RESIGNATION FROM THE WATKINS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Notice of the opening will be included in the upcoming spring newsletter.

A Notice of Interest was submitted earlier this year to the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for a new siren. The city has been informed the project is not eligible. Kramer noted the siren hasn't rotated for a long time and since the tornado it is facing more northeast. It was noted the city should consider budgeting to replace the siren.

Drontle Properties, Inc. terminated its lease with CP Railway leaving outstanding assessments against the property (PID #28-6007000) from the 2007 Street & Utility Improvement Project. The buildings that were on the site have been removed so there is nothing to assess to. The city attorney's opinion was that the city could try to assess to CP Railway but they could challenge it. It could end up costing the city in legal fees with no guarantee. There is approximately \$2,278 in delinquent assessments with a remaining balance of \$6,510. After discussion, council agreed to abate the assessments on the property.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO NOTIFY MEEKER COUNTY AUDITOR BARB LOCH TO ABATE THE ASSESSMENT ON THE PROPERTY, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

Robert Diffley, 261 Central Avenue South, attended the December 8th council meeting and guaranteed the city he would have the roof on his home fully replaced by March 31st. Council agreed to ask Mr. Diffley to attend the May 11th meeting to discuss.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO SEND A LETTER TO MR. DIFFLEY WITH A DEADLINE TO SEE NOTICEABLE OUTSIDE IMPROVEMENT AND THAT IT WILL BE DISCUSSED AT THE MAY 11TH MEETING AND TURNED OVER TO THE CITY ATTORNEY, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

City Hall received a complaint on stray/feral cats. Tschumperlin noted she also had some complaints on barking dogs. After discussion, Carlson noted she would reach out to some animal rescue people for some information on how to handle the cats.

Pool liaisons Carlson and Unterberger reported they did a performance evaluation on pool manager Ashlee Lundberg and felt she did an excellent job last season. They recommended a .50 per hour increase in wages for 2017.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO APPOINT ASHLEE LUNDBERG AS THE 2017 POOL MANAGER, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO INCREASE ASHLEE LUNDBERG'S HOURLY WAGE .50 PER HOUR, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Steve Geislinger reported the pool building roof should be repaired this year.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO GET BIDS TO SHINGLE THE POOL BUILDING ROOF, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

Council agreed to offer open swim season passes again. The manager will be returning to school August 21st so the pool will probably have to close August 20th. Council advised to note this on the passes and that the date may change at council discretion. Council agreed to stay with the pricing from last year. Individual pass: \$100; 2-member pass: \$150; 3-5 member pass: \$200, each additional family member is \$25. Members must reside in the same household. Early bird discount of \$25 will be offered again.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO MAINTAIN PRICES FOR OPEN SWIM SEASON PASSES AND CLEARLY STATE DATE OF CLOSING, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Swim lesson fees last year were \$30 for preschool and \$40 for levels 1 through 5.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO KEEP LESSON FEES AS IS FOR 2017, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

WSI course fees—Pool staff asked if the city would consider helping with the course fees for a water safety instructor course. A course at SCSU is \$285. The Lions Club was approached for a donation but it declined. After discussion, council agreed candidates would have to be recommended by the pool manager to take the course.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO PROVIDE PAYMENT FOR WSI COURSE COMPLETION FEES GIVING ONE-HALF THE FIRST SEASON AND THE OTHER HALF AFTER THE SECOND SEASON WITH A MAXIMUM REIMBURSEMENT OF \$300, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Council reviewed a Loan Resolution Security Agreement with USDA RD for the fire truck financing. The original document approved in 2015 was the incorrect version. The city attorney has reviewed and approved. This agreement amends Resolution #2015-27 that was passed on August 20, 2015.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO ADOPT RESOLUTION #2017-16, LOAN RESOLUTION SECURITY AGREEMENT, SECONDED BY WIRZ. MOTION CARRIED.

Council discussed holding a spring cleanup day in partnership with West Central Sanitation at McCarthy Park. Residents can dispose of basic trash, mattresses, box springs, tires, TV's, computers and other electronics for a fee. Appliances can be taken to the recycling trailer at no charge. Hazardous waste, business waste, agricultural waste, car batteries, paint, chemicals, fluorescent light bulbs and yard waste will not be accepted. A pickup service for elderly and disabled residents will be offered. A notice will be added to the spring newsletter along with a notice in the EV-W Voice.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO HOLD A CITY CLEANUP DAY SATURDAY, MAY 20TH FROM 8 TO 10 A.M., SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO APPROVE THE SPRING NEWSLETTER, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

The local 4-H Club would like to donate 12-15 trees and plant at the VFW Park in Faber Addition. They would care for them through the summer.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO ALLOW TREE PLANTING AT VFW PARK, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

The representative from the 4-H Club asked if there was anything else kids could do at the park. If they are interested, they could help out on city cleanup day and go around town and pick up trash. Mayor Eder noted Jean Reinert is working to get some flower pots established on Central Avenue and maybe 4-H could water them through the season.

It was noted the 4-H Club is also looking at planting trees for homeowners that lost trees in the tornado last summer. There are not any setbacks they need to be concerned with; however, the city does have a tree policy. Only certain types of trees are allowed in boulevards and city right-of-way. Getting locates before planting would need to be done as well. A note will be added to the spring newsletter to let residents know about their project.

MOTION WAS MADE BY UNTERBERGER TO ACCEPT JERRY HESSE'S RESIGNATION FROM THE WATKINS FIRE DEPARTMENT EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2017, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

League of MN Cities annual conference will be in Rochester June 14-16. There is a discount rate of \$250 for cities with populations under 1,000 if registered before May 1st. After May 1st it's \$450.

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

Clerk Kramer reported the city's pay equity is in compliance.

Kramer reported the electronic sign outside City Hall is over ten years old and limited parts for repairs may be available until June 1st. The city can upgrade to a new sign. The structure would remain. An estimate for upgrade would range from \$15,000 to \$40,000. A sign similar to what the city has now in one color would be \$15,000. A full color sign would run about \$25,000. The city can request quotes and demonstrations at no cost.

Steve Geislinger reported Performance Pool and Spas will be used again for pool supplies, etc. There is a crack that needs to be fixed. There is also a line broken under the concrete for a skimmer that needs to be located and fixed.

Carlson noted the EDA will be sending a letter to Meeker County Memorial Hospital to express the city's interest in getting a full clinic and pharmacy in Watkins. Carlson is drafting the letter. The EDA would like the city council to show its support by signing the letter along with the EDA. Carlson will forward the letter to City Hall for everyone to review and sign.

Mayor Eder noted that West Central Sanitation will be giving recycling carts to its customers in the city starting next week.

Next regular meeting will be May 11th at 7 p.m.

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

Adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Submitted by

Deb Kramer
Clerk

ATTEST:

Frank Eder
Mayor