

UNAPPROVED MINUTES
WATKINS CITY COUNCIL
THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2023

Mayor Rowan called the regular meeting to order at 7:14 p.m. at City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Chris Rowan, Tootz Tschumperlin, Sue Unterberger, Marc Wirz, Brenda Carlson

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS: David Tysk, Mitchell & Lynette Moe, Peter Meidal with Northland Securities, Wayne Lindberg, Public Works Director Steve Geislinger, Public Works Assistant Keith Peters, Shawny Kramer, Dave Hokanson, Deputy Clerk Sarah Jacobsen-Krone, Clerk Deb Kramer

Mayor Rowan added Mediation Settlement to the agenda after public forum.

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

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

Items on the Consent Agenda were July 13th regular meeting minutes, July financial report, Resolution No. 2023-21, Resolution Accepting Donations, Resolution No. 2023-22, Resolution Approving Transfer of Funds, delinquent water bills for shut off.

Public Forum – none

Council reviewed a mediated settlement agreement regarding David Hokanson, Plaintiff, v. The City of Watkins, Defendant. The mediated settlement is conditioned upon approval of the Watkins City Council. If accepted by the City Council, this would be a full and final settlement of all claims in this matter.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO APPROVE THE MEDIATED SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT, SECONDED BY WIRZ.
MOTION CARRIED.

Terms of the mediated settlement agreement included a payment of \$22,000 to Hokanson.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO APPROVE THE AMBULANCE SERVICE BILLS FOR PAYMENT AS PRESENTED, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Resolution No. 2023-23, Resolution Establishing Municipal Development District No. 9 and Establishing Tax Increment Financing District No. 9-1 Within the Development District and the Adoption of the Development Program and Tax Increment Financing Plan Relating Thereto, was presented to the council.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2023-23, RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT NO. 9 AND ESTABLISHING TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICT NO. 9-1 WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT AND THE ADOPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AND TAX INCREMENT FINANCING PLAN RELATING THERETO, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Council reviewed funding scenarios prepared by Northland Securities for the lift station rehab project. Peter Meidal noted the PFA (Public Facilities Authority) interest rate quoted was 2% and could end up being a little less. He noted there was not that large of a difference between the PFA funding bid and the non-PFA funding bid. There is more of a process when using PFA funding, but the interest rate is hard to beat. PFA is subsidized by the state and is designed to be cost effective to help local governments construct facilities such as this. Annual rate increases may be necessary to cover the debt service costs. The city engineer will be at the September meeting to discuss the debt repayment more in depth.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2023-24, RESOLUTION ACCEPTING BID FOR LIFT STATION PROJECT FOR BASE BID 1, 1A AND 1B FOR A TOTAL BID OF \$1,142,500.00, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

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

Council advised staff to draft a proposed ordinance to prohibit cannabis in public areas within the city to review at the next meeting.

Council approved to have two 30-mile per hour speed limit signs installed on Central Avenue with one in the northbound lane and one in the southbound lane. Public Works will check with Meeker County to see if they would install as it is a county state aid highway. Council approved for the city to install if the county won't.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2023-25, RESOLUTION APPROVING STATE OF MINNESOTA JOINT POWERS AGREEMENTS WITH THE CITY OF WATKINS ON BEHALF OF ITS CITY ATTORNEY, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE AN AGREEMENT ESTABLISHING A REGIONAL SAFETY GROUP, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Council discussed setting an agenda deadline for planning commission meetings. If there is no business to discuss, meetings are cancelled but practice has been to wait until a day or two before the meeting to cancel. If there is nothing on the agenda by the deadline, the meeting would be cancelled at that time. Anything that comes up after the deadline would go out to the following month.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE SETTING A DEADLINE OF ONE WEEK PRIOR TO PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DATE TO GET ON AGENDA, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

The pool will close for the season August 17th at 4 p.m. There is a private party booked that evening. A Water Safety Instructor course will be held at the pool August 18-20th.

Council called for a special meeting to discuss the proposed budget and levy on Wednesday, August 30th at 6 p.m.

Property violation – A property on Cedar Avenue North has weeds, tall grass and junk in the back yard. The city has mailed one letter and the Deputy attempted to deliver another. The ordinance only requires it to be delivered by US mail. Council advised to send a letter by US mail after the new ordinance is published. If the owner doesn't clean up within the time allowed, the city will hire a contractor to go in and clean it up and bill the owner.

Pool Manager Erin Geislinger noted the pool season went pretty well. Attendance was slower on days when it was below 70 degrees. There were several private parties this season.

Mobile home park – Public Works Director noted they are making some improvements. There are three lots that need to be cleaned up yet and three trailers that need to be removed. Geislinger will get photos and Wirz will follow up with the owner.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO RESCIND MOTION FROM JULY MEETING ADOPTING ORDINANCE NO. 2023-2, ORDINANCE ADOPTING ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO RESCIND MOTION FROM JULY MEETING ADOPTING ORDINANCE NO. 2023-3, NUISANCE ORDINANCE, SECONDED BY WIRZ. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO RESCIND MOTION FROM JULY MEETING ADOPTING ORDINANCE NO. 2023-4, ORDINANCE ADOPTING CITY CODE AMENDMENTS, SECONDED BY WIRZ. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 2023-2, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF WATKINS ZONING ORDINANCE, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 2023-3, ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WATKINS AUTHORIZING THE SUMMARY PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCE NO. 2023-2, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE WATKINS ZONING ORDINANCE, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 2023-4, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY CODE OF THE CITY OF WATKINS BY REPEALING CHAPTER 93 ENTITLED NUISANCES AND CHAPTER 94 ENTITLED BLIGHT AND ADOPTING A NEW CHAPTER 93 ENTITLED NUISANCES, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 2023-5, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 2023-6, AN ORDINANCE TO REGULATE THE USE OF PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY OF THE CITY OF WATKINS, SECONDED BY WIRZ. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 2023-7, AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SUMMARY PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCE NO. 2023-6, AN ORDINANCE TO REGULATE THE USE OF PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY OF THE CITY OF WATKINS, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 2023-8, AN ORDINANCE REGULATING THE DEMOLITION AND WRECKING OF BUILDINGS IN THE CITY OF WATKINS, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Council discussed group health insurance. Bill Singer from A.T. Group will be asked to attend an upcoming meeting.

CenterPoint Energy appealed to the Commissioner of Revenue the valuation assigned to their parcels for assessment years 2018 through 2022. This relates to tax statements for 2019 through 2023. The MN

Supreme Court affirmed the Tax Court's valuations for 2018 and 2019 and made value reductions that affected many counties/schools/cities throughout Minnesota, including Watkins. Based on the reduced value, the city's November tax settlement will be reduced by \$32,276.

The city will receive a one-time public safety aid payment in December. The state will have specific uses this money can be used for.

Public Works Director Steve Geislinger noted there has been no response from the contractor that damaged sidewalk on Meeker Avenue South. Council advised to send a second letter with a thirty-day deadline to repair. If not repaired, the city will repair it and bill the contractor.

Council advised Public Works to bring pricing for a new city truck to the September meeting.

MN DNR contacted water suppliers in the Mississippi Headwaters Watershed to reduce non-essential water use due to the drought conditions. Notice will be put on the marquee, FB page and website to asking users to reduce non-essential water use.

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

Next regular meeting will be Thursday, September 14th at 7 p.m.

Mayor Rowan closed the meeting at 9 p.m. for staff performance evaluations per MN Statute §13D.05, subds. 1(d), 3(a).

Mayor Rowan reopened the meeting at 9:12 p.m. Council noted city employees Geislinger, Peters, Jacobsen-Krone and Kramer were reviewed and all employees are doing a good job.

Wage increases were discussed.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO INCREASE SARAH JACOBSEN-KRONE TO \$18 PER HOUR DUE TO CURRENT MARKET RATE EFFECTIVE AUGUST 19, 2023, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO INCREASE ALL EMPLOYEES 4% FOR 2024 AND 4% FOR 2025, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

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

Adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Submitted by

Deb Kramer, Clerk

ATTEST:

Chris Rowan, Mayor