

UNAPPROVED MINUTES
WATKINS CITY COUNCIL
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2020
SPECIAL MEETING

Mayor Eder called the special meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. at City Hall.

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

One vacancy exists on the council.

Others present: Justice Walker, Chris Rowan, Deb Kramer

The purpose of the meeting was a work session on updating the city's ordinances.

Right-of-Way (ROW) ordinance. Justice explained the city needs to define the right-of-way, draft an excavation ordinance and draft a permitting process. When there is a county road in a city, the city usually has jurisdiction. There is a federally mandated turn-around time of an application. Justice noted the city could pass engineering fees on to the permit applicant. The city can control where utilities go and can buffer some areas. Co-location agreements would require a small wireless facility to be installed on an existing pole or structure that's privately owned or government owned. The city can make the ordinance quite restrictive. Eder and Wirz felt the city shouldn't get too restrictive. If a structure has to go on a street light pole, the city could require a new street light pole be installed as part of the permit process. Setbacks from other lights, schools, playgrounds, etc. were discussed. Justice will talk with MnDOT to see what they allow. A lot of the responsibility can be put on the provider. Kramer will check with Bolton and Menk to see what they have on ROW information for the city and get to Justice. Justice asked if the city wanted to regulate excavation on ROW only or on private property too. Council didn't feel a need to regulate private property. Justice will draft a permit process. Justice will include in the ordinance that a street light pole would have to be replaced if putting a structure on it and a 35' height restriction. The excavation ordinance won't have any private restrictions. It will be a two-permit process – one to the city and one to the engineers.

Demolition permit. Justice spoke with the Meeker County and they suggested to ask for the dumping location on the permit. Utility connections would need to be checked and signed off on by the city. There should also be a notification to property owners within a certain radius. A fee would also need to be established. Some mobile home park inspections are handled through MN Department of Health. Wirz suggested an applicant be required to show proof that other permits have been received and that they have met Meeker County's performance standards. Council agreed to go with a 350' radius for notifications to others.

Land use alternation permit. The city needs to define nuisances or issues that can fall under this permit and establish a time frame. An example would be issuing a minor land use permit for rebuilding a car and giving a deadline to finish. The applicant would be told up-front that if it's not completed by the deadline it would become a violation and they will be cited. The nuisance violation would be tied directly to a petty misdemeanor or misdemeanor. Justice will try to get a catch-all in the permit to cover a wide variety of issues.

Amend Article XXII. Need to add and define blight explicitly. Thirty days will be allowed to correct the issue once notified.

Article XIII, Section 13.08. Council agreed to require a license for a trailer and boat if stored outside. The length of a trailer or boat will be changed to 28' instead of 20'.

Article XII Section 12.02. Lot coverage ratios will be added for each zoning district. This coverage ratio would include structures and anything hard surfaced.

Hours of operation in Section 13.03, Home Occupations, are currently 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday thru Saturday. No business shall be conducted on Sundays. Council agreed to change to 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., Sunday through Saturday. Currently no home business is allowed to operate out of an accessory structure. Council agreed to extend the use to accessory structures.

Article XIII, Section 13.17 should be amended to develop standards for telecommunication towers and refer to the ROW ordinance.

Residential component in Central Business District. The city currently allows for this in the ordinance, provided the owner can show a minimum of 2 off-street parking spaces per dwelling. Council can decide if they want to maintain this provision or remove it.

Article XXII, Section 22.21 will be amended to remove "public" from water body to close loop hole.

Alley setbacks were discussed. The ordinance now requires a 5' setback for accessory structures. Council questioned where the 5' starts from. Council discussed changing to 10'.

Justice noted that a survey that is official from a licensed surveyor is acceptable regardless of age of the survey.

Kramer asked about a separate permit for mobile homes. Justice will take a look at it.

Justice will have some answers to some of the questions around mid-January.

Chris Rowan asked about getting Safety Data Sheets (SDS) from lawn care companies that do business in the city. He questioned if the city should require this to be filed with the city. Justice will look into this.

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

Adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Submitted by

Deb Kramer, Clerk

ATTEST:

Christopher Rowan, Mayor