

UNAPPROVED MINUTES  
WATKINS CITY COUNCIL  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2021

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

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sue Unterberger

Others: Jody Bauer, Randy Berg, Merle Anderson, Justice Walker

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

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

Items on the Consent Agenda were the January 14<sup>th</sup> regular meeting minutes, January financial report, Resolution No. 2021-10, Resolution Accepting Donations, Resolution No. 2021-11, Resolution Approving Transfer of Funds.

Public Forum – Randy Berg asked about the alley vacation. Clerk Kramer noted the city is still waiting to hear from the attorney.

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

Merle Anderson with Clearwater River Watershed District discussed a proposed solar array on property they own on the northeast edge of the city. The District was approached by One Energy Renewables to put a solar field on their property. The District's board doesn't want to proceed with this unless the city feels it's the right thing to do. The District would only rent the land to One Energy Renewable. One Energy Renewable would be responsible for any permits, etc. Council agreed they didn't have any objections and would be open to the project.

Justice Walker, Mid-MN Development Commission, discussed the ordinance updates with council. He noted the Right of Way Ordinance is being drafted and he wanted to discuss hoop-style buildings. He noted the parking on lawns would be moved to the city code so it can be enforced by law enforcement and language added to regulate items put outside for sale. A demolition permit was reviewed. When the applicant signs, they would be attesting to MN Administrative Rule 7035.0805 regarding renovation and demolition. The excavations language to be added does cover private property. Council discussed and felt they needed to find a happy medium for regulating excavations on private property. Wirz noted he didn't feel a permit would be necessary to remove and pour a sidewalk, for example. Council discussed regulating by the size of the project instead. Council agreed to a 15' setback from an alley and a \$25 fee for a demolition permit. Shipping containers used as a principal structure would need a structural engineer stamp and architect's stamp and go through the planning commission review process twice. The requirements for accessory structures made from cloth, tarp, etc. will be defined more clearly. Furniture items put outside for sale or give away will need to comply with hours allowed to be out, weather, and time limit. Nuisance and blight definitions may need more explicit definition. The use of a bow and arrow in the city needs to be addressed as a prohibited action. Holding a city logo

contest was discussed. Creating a Facebook page for the city was also mentioned. Justice noted community education on the proposed amendments would be needed. Doing a city-wide cleanup with this process could be done as well. He thought the community education piece could happen sometime in April.

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

The annual Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting will be Thursday, April 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. At this time, the plan is to hold the meeting in-person at City Hall.

COVID-19 guidelines regarding the pool were discussed. At this time, the guidelines require a 9 ft. distance between patrons in the water and 6 ft. outside of the water. Lessons also require a 9 ft. distance from one another if not from the same household. If classes run concurrently, each class would need to be 9 ft. from the other class. It is not known if the past manager will be returning this season. Council will revisit this at the March meeting.

A concerned citizen reported to the mayor that the flags at City Hall and Village Hall are not illuminated. Kramer Electric submitted estimates to install LED lights on City Hall and Village Hall. After discussion, council agreed to install a light on City Hall to light the flag pole at a cost of \$375. The flags at Village Hall are on the building and will not be illuminated.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO INSTALL A LIGHT AT CITY HALL ONLY, SECONDED BY WIRZ. MOTION CARRIED.

EDA update – The board will change to quarterly meetings – January, April, July and October. The board also discussed listing the property it owns for sale.

Planning Commission update – Scott Hesse inquired about building a storage shed. A variance would need to be applied for if it moves forward.

Council approved to get estimates on flooring for City Hall. Clerk Kramer also noted the bathroom and back office should be painted.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO APPROVE THE RELIEF ASSOCIATION PER MAN INCREASE FROM \$1,550.00 TO \$1,750.00, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO CHANGE THE MEETING TIME FOR THE ANNUAL FIRE PROTECTION MEETING TO 7 P.M., SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Council agreed to wait on setting a city-wide clean up date and coordinate it with the public education piece of the ordinance amendments. Carlson noted she would volunteer to help with a cleanup day.

Clerk Kramer reported that Mies Outland was paid its final tax abatement February 1<sup>st</sup> as per the agreement.

Mayor Rowan noted the Lions Club would like to install some Automated External Defibrillators (AED's) around town as a service project. A representative will be at the March 9<sup>th</sup> Lions Club meeting to show the product if any of the council would like to attend.

Mayor Rowan presented information on creating a quiet zone at the railroad crossing on Central Avenue. He noted the city's risk index is 44% higher than the nationwide threshold. He asked council permission to contact the city's engineer for an estimate to create the quiet zone. Council approved.

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

The next regular meeting will be Thursday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.

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

Adjourned at 9 p.m.

Submitted by

Deb Kramer  
Clerk

ATTEST:

Chris Rowan  
Mayor