

UNAPPROVED MINUTES
WATKINS CITY COUNCIL
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2014

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Dennis Loch, Jerry Hesse, Sue Unterberger, Melody Gertken, Jersey Piccerillo

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

Others present: Meeker County Sheriff Captain Jon Thoma, Kent Louwagie, Representative Dean Urdahl, Nora Rohrbeck, Marc Wirz, Steve Geislinger, Virl Leibrenz, Mike Lease, Chickie Lease, Jeff Geislinger, Scott Geislinger, Bruce Geislinger, Bryan Landwehr, Gene Asfeld, John Boeckmann, Kelly Kelley, Ben Aho, Duane Peterson, Jeff Hilsgen, Teresa Carlson, Shirley Jacklitch, and Deb Kramer

Mayor Loch noted that the Xcel Energy representative would not be present.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO APPROVE THE AGENDA, SECONDED BY GERTKEN. MOTION CARRIED.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Items on the Consent Agenda: Minutes of January 9th regular meeting, January financial report, Resolution #2014-5, Resolution Accepting Donations, Resolution #2014-6, Resolution Approving Transfers, and delinquent water bills for shut off.

Public Forum-Marc Wirz noted Mies Outland would be holding an open house for its new Indian Motorcycle showroom February 22nd from 4 to 9 p.m.

Captain Thoma presented the January sheriff's report. Piccerillo asked about a graffiti incident. Thoma replied it was still an active investigation and there has not been a repeat incident. Loch noted the city received a notice from Sheriff Norlin stating that when the contract deputy is off duty the county will no longer respond to animal complaints in the city unless it is a bite situation or obvious abuse to an animal. All other animal complaints will be referred to the assigned contract deputy when they report for duty on their next shift. This policy pertains to all cities in the county. The county needs to prioritize calls for service and expend resources in more productive ways.

Kent Louwagie with Bolton and Menk presented a report on the water tower. An evaluation of the 50,000 Gallon Elevated Water Storage Tower was completed by Bolton & Menk staff. The tower was originally built in 1919-20 by Pittsburgh-Des Moines Steel Co. The tower has had routine maintenance completed through a five year maintenance contract to prevent corrosion. Based on Bolton and Menk's evaluation the tower would need many repairs to bring it into compliance with current OSHA and MDH regulations. The cost to bring the tower into compliance is estimated at \$352,225. It is the engineer's opinion that a new tower may be a better financial option for the city based on the age and condition of the tower. The cost of a new 50,000 gallon elevated tower is estimated at \$579,000. A new tower

would also provide better pressure for the entire community if it were raised in elevation. There are two main concerns now. In the interim, the City should consider improvements to address several items on the existing tower:

Public Health Concern Category Estimated Cost \$46,000

- Repair or replace roof of the tower to prevent potential contamination of the drinking water
- Seal openings at the roof plate and shell plate connection to prevent debris and/or bugs from entering the water tower

Primary Worker Hazard Category Estimated Cost \$19,800

- Repair the existing roof access ladder to provide a safer access to the interior of the tower
- Repair the existing transition between the access ladder and balcony to provide safer access to the tower

Kent felt the life of the tower could be extended with a maintenance contract. Bolton & Menk recommends that the City apply for placement on the Public Facility Authority's (PFA) Drinking Water Revolving Funds Project Priority List (PPL). Placement on the PPL does not commit the City to completing the project, but does make it eligible for a competitive ranking in comparison to other municipal projects. There is not an application fee but there would be a fee for the engineer's time to complete the short application. Other funding sources such as Rural Development should also be considered to determine if this project is eligible for funding. The City may be eligible for low interest loans or a grant program based on the condition of the existing tower. Kent suggested that the holes in the roof could be plugged and some screening installed to take care of those concerns in the interim and probably get by for less than the \$46,000. The worker hazard concern could be handled by using a harness and tying off. The City should also consider continuing the maintenance contracts to inhibit corrosion. Kent will forward a couple of contractor's names.

Representative Dean Urdahl updated the council on last year's session and some items that may be addressed this session.

The Watkins Baseball Association was present. Watkins will be co-hosting the state amateur baseball tournament in 2015 along with Cold Spring. Mike Lease presented a plan for the grandstand at the baseball park. They have ordered the materials from Faber Building and the labor to build will all be local. Mike noted the association is hoping the city can help finance the shortfall amount of \$110,350. The association is projecting profits of \$50,000 from the tournament which would be returned to the city. They have \$30,000 cash on hand now and will be fundraising for the \$30,000 needed for a new scoreboard. They are estimating a \$50,000 to \$60,000 shortfall when done. Mayor Loch asked if they are hoping the city can pay for this. Mike replied yes. Mayor Loch noted it was not in the budget for 2014. Mike asked about using money in the General Fund this year or budgeting for it in 2015. The association has talked to the bank about a loan to pay for the grandstand. Mayor Loch noted the city is mandated by the state on what a city can and cannot do. Loch felt they should be trying to get donations. Mike noted this money would be building a grandstand at the city's park. The money would not be going to the Clippers baseball team. Mike noted the goal is to have a nice ball park. Bruce Geislinger noted Watkins was the first town selected to host the tournament after placing a bid for the first time. Bruce noted that there is a rich history of baseball in the city and every city that hosts this gets on board to help. Discussion was held on ways to recapture revenue after the tournament is over. Hesse noted that the city doesn't own the park; that it is owned by the school district. The first time Watkins could hold a state tournament again would be in ten years. Mike stated they will need 250

volunteers to hold the three weekend tournament. They are projecting the tournament will bring in 11,000 people over the three weekends. Loch asked about a plan to recoup money. Bruce noted that the only profits will be from concessions. The gate fees go to the teams. Bryan Landwehr noted that a lot of the gate money from regular games already goes to yearly upkeep of the field- mowers, etc. and that you can't plan on a lot of money from that. Loch noted that the city needs to check what kind of assistance the city may be able to provide. Piccerillo noted that the city maintains fields for other teams. The school district supplies two to three loads of agri-lime each year and every two years fixes the scoreboard. Gertken noted she contacted the League of MN Cities about financial assistance from the city and was told it was not unheard of. The League advised the city contact its attorney for his legal opinion. Gertken asked about using the city's reserves for this. Loch noted the city does have a fund balance policy to follow also. Council agreed the next steps should be to contact the city attorney and auditors and have an answer for the March meeting. Gertken also noted that the council needs to find out if the taxpayers are in favor of this. The responses from the attorney and auditor will be forwarded to all of the council. Hesse noted that the association should have come to the city before bidding the tournament. Landwehr noted that it was brought up that they wanted to work on getting the tournament and nobody told them to stop. Lease noted this grandstand would be all steel and maintenance free materials would be used. Gertken asked if the association could get more detailed accounting of the number of attendees, concession revenue, etc. Weather delays were discussed. If that happens normally they would go to a different site but they work to keep it at the host site. Bruce noted he could have a couple people from the state board attend the March meeting also.

It was decided to start the March 20th regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the Village Hall with a public forum for the baseball park improvements. The regular meeting will start at 7 p.m. All residents will be notified.

Ben Aho requested high-gloss sheet steel be installed on the wall where the Rescue Suburban is parked so they can see it better when backing in. It was noted that the wall has already been painted white with water proof paint and caulked. Loch asked if the ambulance was willing to pay for this. Piccerillo noted it was a city building and that capital outlay was budgeted for this. Aho noted that the ambulance service has paid for equipment for the rescue department. Loch asked if there was an issue charging the ambulance for the repair of the overhead door. Duane Peterson noted that there wasn't a piece of rescue equipment charged to the fire and rescue expenses because the ambulance service takes care of it. The Suburban was purchased with donated funds. Peterson noted he was promised twice that steel would be put on that wall.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY HESSE TO PUT STEEL ON, SECONDED BY PICCERILLO. MOTION CARRIED.

Aho noted that the townships have been donating to the ambulance service but they cannot rely on this. The donations are used for new ambulances and per call pay. Currently, the service gets \$75 for every billable call transferred from the general operating fund to the Relief Association Fund for the per call pay. Aho asked if that could be raised to \$150 per call. This would be for billable calls only. The service will not need to increase their service rates to cover this increase.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY GERTKEN TO INCREASE THE AMBULANCE BILLABLE CALL AMOUNT FROM \$75 TO \$150, SECONDED BY PICCERILLO. MOTION CARRIED.

Aho asked if there were any other city buildings that the ambulance service might be able to use for training purposes where they could park the vehicle and have their equipment all in one contained area. Council will explore using the garage on School Avenue for this.

The overhead door for the ambulance has been replaced and repairs were made to the door where the public works truck is parked. It was noted that there was no urgency to replace the other doors right now. It should be done but can wait until spring.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO NOT TO CHARGE THE AMBULANCE FUND FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE OVERHEAD DOOR, SECONDED BY GERTKEN. MOTION CARRIED.

Nora Rohrbeck presented two donations of \$500 each from the Watkins Lioness. The donations were designated for a sign advertising the swimming pool and for supplies needed at the pool. Nora noted the mural needs to be repainted. The Lioness did request that their years of existence be advertised on the sign.

Siren- Kramer noted that as far as Meeker County knows there is no requirement that a siren has to rotate. It is better that it does to get more coverage from one siren.

Liability Issues- The League's loss control department recommends that the city have waivers signed for any city property that is used by the public-whether there is a fee to rent it or not. Council agreed that a sign should be put up by the brush site noting the city is not responsible for any accidents or damage.

Bills for the ambulance service and pre-authorization to pay bills were discussed. Council noted that most of the bills the service pays are the same vendors the city pays after council meeting so it is not allowable for the council to give prior approval for these. Most vendors bill the end of the month and paying after approval at the council meeting allows enough time to pay them. Gertken noted she would help the ambulance service out with getting this set up.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY GERTKEN TO RESCIND THE MOTION FROM THE JANUARY 9TH MEETING GIVING PRE-APPROVAL TO PAY CERTAIN VENDORS PRIOR TO COUNCIL APPROVAL, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

The public works department requested to purchase a new gas monitor. Cost is \$985. Steve noted a grant could be applied for but didn't think you could purchase it and then be reimbursed by the grant. Council agreed this is something they need to have now but should still apply for the grant.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF A NEW GAS MONITOR FOR \$985, SECONDED BY GERTKEN. MOTION CARRIED.

Steve also requested to purchase a Waterproof Display SeeSnake Micro Camera with the city of Eden Valley. It would cost each city approximately \$206.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY GERTKEN TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF THE CAMERA WITH EDEN VALLEY, SECONDED BY HESSE. MOTION CARRIED.

Steve and Viri requested to purchase some tools for the shop. Viri thought \$5,000 would cover an air compressor and air tools along with a complete set of good tools.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF THE TOOLS, SECONDED BY HESSE. MOTION CARRIED.

Aho asked if the city could use the old rescue truck for a public works vehicle. Steve and Viri were not interested in it for their purposes. Aho noted it is 1995 model with 60,000 miles on it. Discussion followed on selling the vehicle.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY HESSE TO ADVERTISE THE VEHICLE ON CRAIG'S LIST, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Proceeds from the sale will go into the Rescue Fund.

Discussion was held on the possibility of water service lines freezing up due to the extreme cold conditions. Council agreed to handle on a case by case basis. If needed, charges may be adjusted.

Eden Valley asked about using the city's street sweeper or having Steve operate it and sweep their streets and bill them for the service. Council agreed not to provide the service.

Steve asked about allowing sump pump pipes in the curbs. He didn't feel this would be a problem as long as the city inspects the curb replacement to be sure it is restored properly. He also noted that the city wouldn't be responsible for any damage done to the pipes when plowing, etc. Council approved.

Council approved to have the crosswalk by Central Avenue South and Church Street painted by Meeker County. It was also noted to find out who is responsible for the maintenance on the ones already done.

Clearwater River Watershed District is amending its rules and regulations regarding allowable discharges to a CRWD-owned sewer system and by law had to send a notice to the city.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO TAKE NO ACTION ON THE AMENDMENT, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

The Watkins Baseball Association made a request to hold an off-site gambling event May 18, 2014 at the baseball park.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO ADOPT RESOLUTION #2014-7, RESOLUTION APPROVING OFF-SITE GAMBLING, SECONDED BY GERTKEN. MOTION CARRIED.

Building a new city website through Weebly.com was discussed. Staff has been working with this and believes it is more user-friendly than the current one and it is also less expensive. Council agreed they liked the sample website better than the current one.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY GERTKEN TO GO WITH WEEBLY.COM TO BUILD A NEW CITY WEBSITE, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

EDA update- There were eleven surveys returned in December and the board is working on a visionary session. Frilly's Place restaurant will be opening early March.

Forest Prairie Township requested to use City Hall for its elections and annual meeting March 11th.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO ALLOW FOREST PRAIRIE TO USE CITY HALL MARCH 11TH, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Council approved for the Fire Department to purchase a new computer at a cost not to exceed the \$1,000 cap.

Kramer requested to attend a 2014 election training session in St. Cloud March 18th. Cost is \$55.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY GERTKEN TO APPROVE KRAMER'S ATTENDANCE AT THE 2014 ELECTIONS TRAINING COURSE, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

The annual Board of Review meeting will be Wednesday, April 16th at 7 p.m. at City Hall.

Council concerns- Loch noted he had a complaint about snow being pushed in a yard by a neighbor. He advised the party that was a civil issue between neighbors.

Piccerillo asked why St. Cloud Overhead Door was used to replace the door. Viri noted he recommended them.

Staff Comments- Steve recommended the city continuing using Pool Products this year for chemicals but will do most of the work on their own. He also recommended staying with Voss Plumbing for those needs as they do a good job. Council advised to start getting bids now for sandblasting and painting the pool.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY UNTERBERGER TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS AS PRESENTED, INCLUDING AMBULANCE SERVICE BILLS, SECONDED BY GERTKEN. MOTION CARRIED.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO ADJOURN THE MEETING, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Submitted by

Deb Kramer,
Clerk

ATTEST:

Dennis C. Loch,
Mayor