

APPROVED MINUTES
WATKINS CITY COUNCIL
THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 2023

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

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Brenda Carlson

Others: Jess Green and Peter Meidal from Northland Securities, Jody Bauer, Deputy Sandstrom, Deputy Clerk Sarah Krone, Clerk Deb Kramer

Mayor Rowan added the Pay Equity Data report to the agenda.

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

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

Items on the Consent Agenda were December 8th regular meeting minutes, December financial report, Resolution No. 2023-1, Resolution Accepting Donations, Resolution No. 2023-2, Resolution Approving Transfer of Funds, Resolution No. 2023-3, Resolution Approving Payment of Certain Monthly Bills, Resolution No. 2023-4, Resolution Approving Payment of Certain Monthly Bills for Ambulance Service, 2023 council meeting schedule, and delinquent water bills for shut off.

Public Forum – none

Kramer reported the Fire Department applied for and was successful in getting a DNR grant. This is a 50/50 matching grant. The city's share will be paid from the Fire Protection Equipment Fund. Council approved.

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

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE THE 4TH QUARTER AMBULANCE REPORTS, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Peter Meidal and Jess Green from Northland Securities presented information on tax increment financing (TIF) housing districts. A developer is interested in purchasing the townhome lots at Glenshire Estates from the EDA and developing them. The developer would apply to MN Housing's grant program and request TIF. There are income limitations in a TIF housing district. The tax revenue is derived from property tax revenue within a district. A TIF housing district needs to meet specific income requirements. If the project meets guidelines, it can be a qualified district. The steps include holding a public hearing and getting consent from the school district and county. The city needs to be sure the request is reasonable. Annual reporting is required by the state. The city would need to provide notice to the school district and county that it's going to approve the district. The county's portion and school's portion of increment would then be captured. Mn Housing's program gives priority to market rate housing projects. Tax abatement is also an option; however, the term is shorter. In a TIF district,

the property owner would pay the property taxes as usual and then be reimbursed on a pay-as-you-go method. The developer would be at risk. If taxes aren't paid, the city is not responsible to reimburse. A Development Agreement would set out terms. The income limitations would be over the life of the district. Any school district market value referenda property tax does not get captured. The TIF plan would have a budget. Assumptions are made in the budget and the amount of increment to be collected is capped in that plan. Typically, a city can retain 10% of the increment for administrative costs. Once the county and school district get notice, they have 45 days to comment. If they feel they are entitled to a portion of the increment, they can do that. Income guidelines are subject to change each year. The developer needs to certify to the city that he is meeting the guidelines. In a TIF housing district, the collection of increment can be delayed up to 4 years and the TIF plan must specifically state this.

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

Health insurance – Council tabled discussion until mid-year.

Ordinance amendments – Parking ordinance was discussed. Deputy Sandstrom noted the county would not tow vehicles unless it's critical. Wirz asked if dispatch could tell Public Works if a vehicle has been cited already. Sandstrom will check on that. It was noted that Litchfield is at \$50 for a violation. Sandstrom noted tickets are mailed out due to personal information on the ticket. They are not left on the vehicle any more. Council proposed to increase to \$50 for the first violation and then tow on any subsequent violations. Kramer will check with the League if the city can have a local company tow vehicles or if it needs to go out for quotes. Wirz will check with Jack's Companies to see if they are interested. This will be followed up on at the February meeting.

The city hasn't gotten a response from the mobile home park owner for more information on his RV parking proposal.

Cintas uniform follow up – If the city is part of the advantage program there would be no one-time charges. There are no damage fees for damaged uniforms. They have a standard price increase each year. If the city were a part of OMNIA (tax exempt), the price increases would be minimal. Cintas requires a 2-year agreement. The quote from last month stated the average monthly total would be \$36.80, including rugs. The current vendor is about \$66 per week, excluding rugs.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO SWITCH TO CINTAS FOR UNIFORMS AND SUPPLIES, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

2023 Fee Schedule- Wirz noted the fire department discussed filling pools. The department felt they could continue, but it should be only for pool filling. No other purpose should be allowed. After discussion, council proposed the fee for filling pools at non-city residences (but within the Watkins fire district) be changed from \$75 for 1st trip and \$50 for any additional trip, to \$50 per trip, plus the charge of 4,000 gallons of water (tanker capacity) at whatever the current water rate is. Open swim daily fee will increase to \$5 and punch cards will increase to \$45. Temporary seasonal intoxicating on-sale liquor license fee will be \$25. Council will adopt by ordinance at the February meeting.

2023 pool season, staff, wages - The three lifeguards from last season are planning to return at this time, however, the manager is not planning to return. Council advised to advertise for management,

lifeguards, water safety instructors and concession stand staff for the 2023 pool season. Council advised to advertise in the Cold Spring Record, EV-W Voice, Tri-County News and Litchfield Independent Review. The ad will include reimbursement for lifeguard training based on current policy. A flyer will be made up and delivered to EV-W and Kimball schools to get the word out as well. Water safety instructor wage range will be the same as lifeguard wage range. Notice will also be put on the city's Facebook page.

Lead service line inventory – The city will need to inventory all service lines in the city and submit to the state by October 16, 2024. There may be need for Bolton and Menk to be involved with this and grants for consultant assistance should be available in the spring. Ferguson sent records of service lines when they installed meters in 2011 so a majority of the inventory should be done.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2023-5, RESOLUTION ADOPTING APPOINTMENTS, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2023-6, RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SIGNATURE STAMPS FOR MAYOR AND ACTING MAYOR, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2023-7, RESOLUTION MAKING APPOINTMENTS FOR AUTHORIZED SIGNERS, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Rowan updated council on the Nature Energy presentation meeting. This would be a biogas plant. They would have about 100 trucks operating per day. They are looking for a minimum of 25 acres up to 40 acres and want to be in city limits. They aren't looking for anything from the city. Mayor Rowan will reach out to them to see if they have a flyer that could be used to mail to residents and hold a meeting to get public feedback.

SCDP grant application – UCAP would like to include a letter with the application that the EDA's Rehab loan program could be used as the matching contribution for a commercial loan. Council approved.

The annual fire protection meeting will be Wednesday, February 8th at 7 p.m. at the Fire Hall.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE THE PAY EQUITY REPORT DATA, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Council approved designating a parking spot on Central Avenue for Mandy's Family Hair Care clients Saturday afternoon during the Red Goat's clam jam.

Mayor Rowan noted the Lions Club would like to work with Bolton and Menk on designing a roof for over the skating rink facility. Expenses would be paid from the Park and Rec Fund that the Lions contribute to. Council approved.

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

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

Adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Submitted by

Deb Kramer
Clerk

ATTEST:

Chris Rowan
Mayor