

UNAPPROVED MINUTES  
WATKINS CITY COUNCIL  
EMERGENCY MEETING  
TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2016

Mayor Eder called the emergency meeting to order at 2 p.m. at City Hall.

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the severe weather event of July 11, 2016.

Chief Deputy Dan Miller stated that Mayor Eder signed an Emergency Declaration. This allows for services to get started without going through the bid process and for things to get going on the cleanup of the debris from the tornado. The declaration is effective for up to 72 hours. The council would need to hold another meeting to extend it. A reason to extend it would be for cleanup. It would allow the city to bypass the bid process. The city can make emergency decisions.

Mark Marcy with Homeland Security Emergency Management team (HSEM) noted the declaration allows the city to get what it needs to start clean up. Once the 72 hours is up the city would revert back to normal operating procedures. The recommendation would be for the city to extend the declaration for up to 30 days.

Council felt it would be best to extend the declaration at its regular meeting to be held July 14<sup>th</sup>.

Kim with Kandiyohi Emergency Management noted once the declaration expires the volunteer coverage ends. The declaration can be extended up to 30 days. All volunteers must sign in. It would be best to have everyone sign in at one location so they get appropriate supervision and PPE. If they are not signed in they are not covered. The city needs to document everything.

Public Works Director Steve Geislinger noted private contractors won't go on private property. That is why they are asking residents to get debris to the right-of-way for cleanup.

Contractors coming in to the city to work on damaged properties need to sign in at City Hall so the council knows who is in town. They should leave a business card and license number, etc. Miller noted the Sheriff's office has put a notice out on Facebook about scammers.

Brush & debris removal- Chief Deputy Miller and Geislinger suggested the contractors pick up the tree and brush debris from the boulevards. The brush needs to be separated from the debris. The debris needs to go to a landfill. Options would be for the resident to be responsible for the debris removal or have them get it to the right-of-way and the city hires a contractor to pick up and haul away. The city could possibly get reimbursed from the state for expenses incurred during this disaster but nothing is guaranteed. Miller noted there is a community meeting at 3 p.m. and there have been a lot of calls on what to do with the debris. Miller suggested getting it to the right-of-way and hauling away. This will cost tax money but the taxpayers are getting the benefit. A decision needs to be made prior to the community meeting to get information out.

Miller noted Tyler Serbus from Rachel Contracting and Tim Kraemer from Tom Kraemer Inc. (TKI) were present at the meeting with a couple options but ultimately it is the council's decision on what way to go with things. Tim Kraemer suggested there be three piles. Pile #1 for trees/brush. #2 for construction materials and #3 for personal content. Construction and personal content need to be handled separately per MPCA standards. Structures should be the homeowner's responsibility as it should be an insurance issue. Everything should be separated if possible. TKI can get a list to the city of what should go on each pile. Should loose stuff be the owner's responsibility or does it get moved to the boulevard for pickup. Another waste stream would be fluorescent bulbs, tires, appliances, etc. TKI suggested not allowing this to be picked up. It was noted that appliances can be recycled at no charge with the city's program. Miller noted he was looking for council's recommendation for what will be discussed at the community meeting as far as how council want the debris removal handled. Wirz asked if the plan would be to make piles and pick up. Wirz noted he didn't want to see dumpsters setting around and everyone throwing stuff in the. Kraemer noted that would be a way to keep costs down by putting things out to the curb for pick up. Rachel Contracting would have the heavy equipment to grab the debris and TKI would be the disposal side of the removal. Tyler Serbus with Rachel Contracting noted Rachel is under contract with Meeker County EDA to clean up the town homes that were destroyed. He sent their hourly rates if the city is interested. Kraemer noted TKI's truck time would be per hour and there would be a predetermined rate for disposal. The construction and demo debris would be per yard and municipal solid waste (MSW) would be per ton. TKI could be here for as many days as needed whether it is full or half days. Kim from Kandiyohi County noted the city needs to get this information to the community. Miller noted there was a lot of flying debris. TKI noted the steel would go in with construction debris. Wirz noted there is a contractor that would take the clean steel at no charge.

Chief Deputy Miller summarized coverage in the city since the tornado hit Monday, July 11<sup>th</sup>. There is a meeting tonight to decide on coverage for tonight. Meeker County will have coverage 24/7 in the city until things are figured out.

Miller also noted that Pizza Ranch from Litchfield, Dassel Fire, Jason Tibbetts Insurance, Eden Valley Fire and Kimball Fire have all donated food, water, etc. since the tornado hit and to be sure they all get recognized for their donations. Miller felt things were going in the right direction.

There is equipment coming into the city from various volunteer contractors to clean up as well.

Miller also noted that Kandiyohi County and HSEM have been very valuable resources.

Xcel Energy is looking to have all power restored by 5 p.m. Tuesday, July 12<sup>th</sup> to everyone who is able to be energized. If a mast is bent, etc. they cannot be connected safely. The homeowner will have to get an electrician to make the repair. They can call Xcel's builder's hotline at 1-800-628-2121 to be connected once fixed. Xcel did get a lot of people restored Monday night.

Council reviewed quotes from TKI and Rachel Contracting (attached) for the removal of the debris. TKI's rate for construction and demo debris would be \$9.40 plus tax per cubic yard. MSW is \$105 per ton plus tax. Rachel Contracting's two pieces of equipment that they would use would be a 257 skid steer and 320 backhoe. There would be no mobilization fees charged by Rachel because Meeker County EDA has paid those.

TKI estimated \$300/30 yard dumpster. With hauling it would be approximately \$500. Wirz asked for a ballpark estimate. Kraemer noted \$5,000 to \$10,000 total at a minimum.

Miller noted the state could declare Meeker County a disaster area. The county would need to reach \$41,590.50 in uninsured expenses to city/county public infrastructure. This would include fire department costs, sheriff department, clean up, and damage at the city park. If that threshold is reached, 75% of eligible costs could be reimbursed to the parties. Miller recommended to the council going ahead with the city cleaning up and the city restored back to where it was as soon as possible. Wirz questioned how the city could possibly begin to decipher whose debris is what. Councilor Carlson noted that the budget is always a concern but the city needs to do what's right and get it cleaned up before there is an injury or more disaster.

TKI noted that by separating the piles by brush, construction materials, garbage and non-acceptable the city would save a lot of money.

It was noted the city needs to be very clear of what will be accepted. The city will cover the costs only for loose debris, i.e. construction material, garbage and brush. Anything like tires, appliances, etc. won't be accepted. Miller noted if the city decides to do this it could come out with a statement that can be put out at the meeting and on the website or print out and distribute so people understand the rules and regulations. It needs to be clear if not sorted, within reason, the city will not take it. Piles must be separated into brush, construction and demolition and municipal solid waste and non-acceptable items will be defined. Kraemer is able to speak at the community meeting and explain what needs to be done. He will get a detailed list of what items will be accepted and not accepted to the city. Wirz noted the Fire Department can canvas town with flyers. Serbus noted Rachel Contracting is very experienced and won't pick up what's not acceptable.

**MOTION WAS MADE BY CARLSON TO CONTRACT WITH TKI AND RACHEL CONTRACTING FOR DEBRIS REMOVAL FROM THE CITY OF WATKINS, SECONDED BY WIRZ. MOTION CARRIED.**

The brush needs to get out of the way first. The city will handle that. Council discussed a reasonable timeline for removal of debris. Asking residents to get the debris to the curb by Friday may be too soon. Kraemer suggested making a determination Thursday afternoon. If there are piles to get on Friday they can start. Wirz agreed that if there was work to do Friday to do it. Kraemer noted waiting until Monday wasn't a problem. There were no environmental concerns. This would give the residents more time to get the stuff to the curb. The HSEM team and council will be at the community meeting. TKI will get a list ready of how piles need to be separated for pickup.

TKI suggested doing the debris removal by sections in the city to manage costs. The goal would be to come through one time. This pick up will be for loose debris only. It may take 4-5 days. Geislinger thought the brush could be cleared out by Wednesday or Thursday. Fire Chief Bruce Walz noted they would need two full days yet to clear brush debris. The contractors need to stay on the city right-of-way.

Miller noted a command center has been set up at the Fire Hall. Miller is in the Incident Commander for this incident. If the city needs anything they need to get hold of him. The city was shut down Monday night and opened up Tuesday morning.

Miller will get a template ordinance to extend the emergency declaration for adoption at the regular meeting on Thursday.

A representative from Stearns County Emergency Management will be working with Meeker County on a damage assessment.

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

Adjourned at 2:56 p.m.

Submitted by

Deb Kramer  
Clerk

ATTEST:

Frank Eder  
Mayor