

UNAPPROVED MINUTES
WATKINS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 12, 2014

The regular meeting was called to order by Mayor Loch at 7:03 p.m. at City Hall.

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Melody Gertken

Others: EV-W Voice, Duane Peterson, Tri-County News, Public Works Director Steve Geislinger, Tara Donnay, Mike Lease and Clerk Deb Kramer

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

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

Items on the Consent Agenda were minutes of the May 8th regular meeting and June 2nd special meeting, May financial report, Resolution 2014-15, Resolution Accepting Donations, Resolution #2014-16, Resolution Appointing Election Judges and delinquent water bills for shut off.

Public Forum-none

Sheriff's Report-There was 52 calls for service in May. Piccerillo asked what was being done to find out who broke into the softball concession stand and who is doing the graffiti around town. Deputy Case will be contacted when he is on duty to see what is being done.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY HESSE TO APPROVE THE SHERIFF'S REPORT, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER.
MOTION CARRIED.

Steve Geislinger presented a Retro-reflectivity Policy. All agencies, including cities, who maintain roadways open to public travel, must adopt a sign maintenance program designed to maintain traffic sign retro-reflectivity at or above specific levels. "Retro-reflectivity" describes how light is reflected from a surface and returned to its original source. Traffic signs are made with retro-reflective sign sheeting material that redirects headlamp illumination back toward the vehicle, thereby making the sign visible at nighttime to the vehicle driver. Improvements to nighttime visibility of traffic signs will help drivers better navigate roads at night and thus promote safety and mobility. Improvements in sign visibility will also help older drivers whose visual capabilities may be declining. A policy must be adopted by June 13, 2014. The purpose of the policy is to establish how the city will implement an assessment or management method or combination of, to meet the minimum sign retro-reflectivity requirements in the MN Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. This policy uses blanket replacement of signs as the method. All signs in the City of a given type are to be replaced at specified intervals. The current replacement interval is 15 years. A map will be provided designating sections of the City and the year of replacement. Street name signs were discussed. Staff will verify if these are to be included.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY UNTERBERGER TO ADOPT CITY OF WATKINS SIGN RETRO-REFLECTIVITY POLICY, SECONDED BY PICCERILLO. MOTION CARRIED.

Steve noted that contractors were out to look at the water tower and now waiting on quotes for work to be done. The paint is in good condition but should get the tower on a maintenance schedule. There should be more information at the July meeting. Steve reported that he put the sewer camera in Reinert's sewer line but it broke as he was pushing it through. It is in for repairs now. There are about 10 sidewalk panels that could be jacked up. These are a safety issue. Steve noted the sidewalk by the Post Office has about 75' of sidewalk that has settled from the curb. Hesse felt the city should pay for this as the property owners were already assessed once. Steve noted that KUE Contractors is working on getting a quote for this and should have for the next meeting. Steve reported that the sewer extension permit for the Luella Street extension has been approved and contractors have been contacted for quotes. If a sidewalk would ever be installed from Hilltop Health Care Center it would come down Meeker Avenue North. At that time, a crosswalk would be needed on Fourth Street. Steve also noted that CP Rail was here to fix the sidewalk sections by the tracks and restored in the park area.

Tara Donnay requested a refund for the \$150 water reconnect fee that was paid. A shut off notice was mailed out by the city and no payment was received by the deadline so the water service was disconnected. Tara stated that she did not get a bill or the shut off notice. She later found the shut off notice inside her front door that she doesn't use, along with the notice telling residents they could stop running water to prevent freeze up. Piccerillo noted this is city policy. They would be going against policy by refunding the fee. Consensus of the council was not to refund the fee.

Mike Lease updated council on the grandstand at the baseball park. The seats are in and the netting is up. There are temporary hand rails up so the park can be used. The party deck should be done in the next few weeks.

The proceeds from the sale of the old rescue truck will go the Rescue Fund.

Centra Sota plat update- Meeker County Engineer Ron Mortenson sent a letter to the city after reviewing the preliminary plat. He stated that the preliminary plat did not show the correct right-of-way for CSAH 2. Ron also noted some changes to correct the street names. The city attorney did not have any objections or questions related to the county engineer's letter. The city attorney is requiring a few documents yet. At this time the attorney needs to complete a brief review of the final plat and consent documents. Once that is done, the plat should be ready for filing.

EDA vacancy- Council tabled until July meeting when all members are present.

Hilltop Health Care Center has formally requested tax abatement from the city for its expansion. Meeker County has also been contacted. The County EDA director is working with Hilltop on this request. Piccerillo noted this needs to be negotiated.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO WORK WITH HILLTOP HEALTH CARE CENTER ON ABATEMENT BUT NO CONCRETE NUMBERS AT THIS TIME, SECONDED BY HESSE. MOTION CARRIED.

Watkins Fire Relief Association requested an on-sale temporary liquor license for Kraut n' Wurst for August 1, 2 and 3rd.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO APPROVE THE ON-SALE TEMPORARY LIQUOR LICENSE FOR AUGUST 1, 2 AND 3RD, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

EDA Update- nothing

Piccerillo noted the Welcome to Watkins signs on the west and east sides of the city need to be replaced. He asked if this was something the EDA could do. The item will be on their next agenda.

Barrier Technology requested to extend its driveway to provide a secondary access to Fourth Street. They are proposing to extend the existing driveway through the property, around the existing storage building east of the current driveway, and then access Fourth Street from a second access point. When multiple trucks arrive simultaneously to load or unload they have to park on Fourth Street while awaiting their turn. The extension would provide more room for them to get in and avoid having to park on the street. Council reviewed the request and sketch provided. Council advised that Meeker County and Forest Prairie Township be contacted on this as well.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO ALLOW THE EXTENSION OF THE DRIVEWAY AS LONG AS FOREST PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP AND MEEKER COUNTY APPROVE, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Council approved to place a mini-biff in McCarthy Park after the parish festival is over. If there is any vandalism to it, it will be removed.

Council advised Kramer to check with Xcel Energy on getting a light nearby the new VFW Park in Faber Addition.

The city received a comment, not a written complaint, about farm animals in the city. The Animal Ordinance does not allow farm animals in the city unless the property is zoned Agriculture or is at least 10 acres in a Residential District. Council advised to put a notice in the newspaper and next newsletter. Any complaints need to be filed on the form available at City Hall.

Eldred Froehling contacted the city about possibly hooking up to city sewer in the future. Council agreed they would be willing to discuss. The property owner would be responsible for the costs and hookup fee.

Kramer noted there was a complaint on a property at 151 First Street. The city did send a notice to have the grass cut prior to this. Meeker County building inspector was out to view the property and a letter was sent to the property owner. Piccerillo noted a letter taking legal action be sent to the owner if not taken care of. Council also advised to send a letter to the owner of property at 261 Central Avenue South asking what their intentions are regarding the damaged exterior wall.

Council concerns-none

Kramer noted that Southwest Initiative Foundation sent a letter requesting \$500 in support for 2015.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO DENY THE REQUEST, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

There will be First Responder training in Watkins for some of the fire department members. The cost may exceed the \$1,000 that is allowed without getting prior approval.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO EXCEED THE \$1,000 ALLOWANCE IF NEEDED SO FURTHER APPROVAL IS NOT NEEDED, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Council denied a request for a refund on swimming lessons as city policy is no refunds.

Unterberger had a question on a reimbursement of \$70 to a member of the ambulance service. Council did not see documentation for that expense.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY UNTERBERGER TO APPROVE ALL OTHER BILLS EXCEPT THE \$70 REIMBURSEMENT BILL, SECONDED BY HESSE. MOTION CARRIED.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO RECESS THE MEETING TO JUNE 16TH, 2014 AT 7 P.M., SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Recessed at 8:20 p.m.

Reconvened June 16, 2014 at 7:04 p.m.

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

Others: Walt Donnay, Tom Unterberger, Kent Louwagie, Tri-County News, Heidi Donnay, Duane Peterson, Erwin and Darlene Huckenpoehler

Council reviewed Ordinance #2014-1, Ordinance Establishing Urban and Rural Service Districts Within the Municipal Limits of the City of Watkins.

Duane Peterson asked if this ordinance was for tax purposes only and would all other city ordinances still apply. Mayor Loch replied yes, the only thing this ordinance would do is give a lower tax rate to the property in the rural service district. All other ordinances would apply as before. The rate for this district would be 17.22% of the tax rate applicable to lands lying within the urban service district.

There was no further public comment.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY GERTKEN TO ADOPT ORDINANCE #2014-1, AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING URBAN AND RURAL SERVICE DISTRICTS WITHIN THE MUNICIPAL LIMITS OF THE CITY OF WATKINS, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

This will be published for 30 days and then certified to Meeker County Auditor.

Mayor Loch recessed the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Mayor Loch reconvened the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO ADOPT RESOLUTION #2014-17, RESOLUTION ORDERING IMPROVEMENT, SECONDED BY GERTKEN. MOTION CARRIED.

The ambulance service bill in question for \$70 was a reimbursement to a member for EMT certification. There was a copy of the bill in the packet presented.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY PICCERILLO TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF THE AMBULANCE BILL FOR \$70, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

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

Adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Submitted by

Deb Kramer,
Clerk

ATTEST:

Dennis C. Loch,
Mayor