

APPROVED MINUTES
WATKINS CITY COUNCIL
THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 2023

Mayor Rowan called the regular monthly meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. at City Hall.

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Brenda Carlson

Others present: Public Works Director Steve Geislinger, Deputy Clerk Sarah Jacobsen-Krone, Duane Peterson, Kent Louwagie, Bonnie Holthaus, Jeff Hilsgen, Clerk Deb Kramer

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

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

Items on the Consent Agenda: minutes of February 9th regular meeting, February financial report, September 29, 2022 joint water board meeting minutes and financial report, delinquent water bills for shut off.

Public Forum – none

Nancy Schulzetenberg with berganKDV presented the 2022 audit report. There was one internal control finding - lack of segregation of accounting duties. It was recommended that council monitor operating costs in the Enterprise Funds to ensure rates are sufficient to provide continued operating income and to cover debt payment requirements.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO APPROVE AMBULANCE BILLS FOR PAYMENT AS PRESENTED, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

The 2023 ambulance service officers were presented for approval. Chief: Jody Bauer, Assistant Chief: Bonnie Holthaus, Secretary: Heidi Donnay, Treasurer: Shawny Kramer, Training Officer: Julie Hilsgen, Relief Association: Pam Loch & Abby Nistler

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE AMBULANCE OFFICERS, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Bonnie Holthaus reported Dr. Strate is retiring in April as medical director for the ambulance service as of April 10, 2023. The service is in discussion with Meeker County Sheriff's Office to see if their medical director, Dr. Jeffrey Ho, would be able to take on the position. Bonnie noted Dr. Ho would be very good for the service. Dr. Strate will be done April 10th and the next council meeting isn't until April 13th. Pre-approval of Dr. Ho was requested.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF LAWRENCE STRATE AS MEDICAL DIRECTORSHIP AND APPROVE POSITION TO DR. JEFFREY HO, SECONDED BY WIRZ. MOTION CARRIED.

Duane Peterson reported the ambulance got a price quote from Premier Specialty Vehicles for a new ambulance. The quote is for a 2023 Ford E-450 Super Duty R.V. Cutaway. Total price is \$274,177.00.

Trade-in amount for the 2019 ambulance is \$54,177.00. Net price for new the ambulance is \$220,000.00. Premier is a member of Sourcewell, so the bidding process has already been done. Delivery of the vehicle is approximately 540 days from order date. The service will have funds available to pay for the new ambulance.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO PROCEED WITH PURCHASE OF NEW AMBULANCE FOR APPROXIMATELY \$220,000.00, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

The ambulance service would like to purchase a certificate of deposit from the relief association funds in the amount of \$10,700.00. Citizens Bank MN has a special promotion for a 15-month CD at 4%.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF A CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSIT AT CITIZENS BANK MN IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,700.00 FROM THE RELIEF ASSOCIATION FUND FOR 15 MONTHS AT 4%, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

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

City Engineer Kent Louwagie reported they are nearing completion of the lift station design and are preparing bidding documents. Plans and specs will be submitted to MPCA for certification by March 31st. The corresponding loan application has already been submitted to Public Facilities Authority (PFA). PFA doesn't anticipate this project will be grant eligible. PFA loan funding does offer a lower interest rate and the city may qualify for additional rate discounts based on population and Median Household Income. Kent noted they are planning to prepare the bid documents to require bidders to submit two bids. One bid would comply with requirements of receiving PFA funding. The other bid would be for the exact same work, except without the PFA funding requirements. Once bids are received, the city can evaluate the total project cost of proceeding with a PFA loan, or financing the project on its own. If the city chooses to go with PFA funding, there may be a need to carry some project costs until PFA is funded. The city could explore interim financing to assist with the costs instead of funding them internally. Kent recommended the city proceed to bidding when the documents are ready.

MOTION BY WIRZ FOR BOLTON AND MENK TO PROCEED WITH PUTTING THE PROJECT OUT FOR BIDS WHEN BID DOCUMENTS ARE READY, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Council agreed to wait and see how bids come in before proceeding further. If and when the Governor signs a bonding bill, thing should move forward pretty quickly with PFA funding. Monthly pay requests would be submitted for materials and work completed.

Council approved to continue advertising for all positions for the pool. Holding training courses at the pool was discussed. There is someone who would travel here to do lifeguard and /or WSI courses. Council advised Kramer to find out more information from the instructor for the April meeting. The WSI ad will be updated noting a possible on-site training here if enough interest.

Council reviewed an amendment to the Liquor Ordinance to allow the sale of wine and malt liquor to an amateur baseball team. Council will act on this at the April meeting.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE RENEWAL OF KEEK'S CONSUMPTION AND DISPLAY PERMIT, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Kramer noted Forest Prairie Township will be using City Hall for its elections and annual meeting on March 14th.

Public Works Director Steve Geislinger asked to order crosswalk signs to install on Central Avenue near the Red Goat Bar and by Ertl Hardware.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE PURCHASE OF SIGNS, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Rowan noted the Small Cities Development Program preliminary grant application can move forward with submitting a full application. The program is only allowing commercial properties within the downtown area to be included. A couple businesses didn't respond to the survey so Rowan will contact them to submit the survey.

Geislinger noted six to seven mobile homes were moved out of the park late last fall. The one that was moved in earlier has been moved and set on the lot it was permitted for.

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

Next regular meeting is Thursday, April 13th at 7 p.m.

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

Adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Submitted by

Deb Kramer
Clerk

ATTEST:

Chris Rowan
Mayor