

UNAPPROVED MINUTES  
WATKINS CITY COUNCIL  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2018

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

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

Others: City Engineer Kent Louwagie, Steve Schmitt, Greg Jodzio-Southwest Initiative Foundation, Jason Klein, Public Works Director Steve Geislinger, Clerk Deb Kramer

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO APPROVE AGENDA, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

Items on the Consent Agenda: minutes from September 13, 2018 regular meeting, September financial report, Resolution #2018-26, Resolution Accepting Donations, delinquent water bills for shut off.

Public Forum – Steve Schmitt introduced himself and stated he is running for the Meeker County Commissioner seat being vacated by Mike Huberty, who is retiring.

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

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO APPROVE THE AMBULANCE SERVICE 3<sup>RD</sup> QUARTER REPORTS, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Greg Jodzio from Southwest Initiative Foundation (SWIF) explained the foundation's purpose. The foundation has asked the city to appropriate funds for economic development in the southwest region of the state. Business development is its number one focus. They offer loan programs for existing and startup businesses by providing gap financing. There is also a grant program for non-profit organizations, schools and government agencies. They have an early childhood initiative as well as a community foundation program to assist communities in establishing a local foundation. There are no deadlines to their programs. They have services to assist with a business plan and have business training software to determine what a business may need more help with. Greg noted he could get some information on the foundation to City Hall to get the word out on what they have to offer. Greg also noted there is a Small Business Development Center in St. Cloud that has tools available to help a business get started.

The request from SWIF was for a \$350 contribution. Mayor Eder noted Mid-MN Development Commission also has a program to help businesses with financing. Discussion followed.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO MAKE A \$350 DONATION TO SOUTHWEST INITIATIVE FOUNDATION, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Jason Klein, Watkins Fire Department, reported the department needs new extrication tools. What they have now is used equipment that came from the rescue squad several years ago. The department tested equipment from Alex Air Apparatus. The tools would consist of an Edraulic Cutter package, Edraulic 28" spreader, Edraulic Ram package, chain set for spreader, batteries and chargers. The total cost would be \$32,090. The department has \$32,649 in the Equipment Fund that they have raised through donations and grants to pay for the tools.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO RECESS THE MEETING FOR THE ASSESSMENT HEARING, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Recessed at 7:30 p.m.

Mayor Eder called the public hearing to order at 7:30 p.m. Purpose of the hearing was to consider, and possibly adopt, the proposed assessment for the improvement of School Avenue from First Street to approximately 120' north of Second Street N, Second Street N from School Avenue to Stearns Avenue, and School Avenue from TH 55 to approximately 60' north by reconstructing the street and a portion of the utilities. City Engineer Kent Louwagie reported the project is pretty much complete. The mobile home park area consisted of School Avenue from First Street to approximately 120' north of Second Street North and Second Street North from School Avenue to Stearns Avenue. The improvements in the mobile home park included adding two storm sewer inlets on the north side of Second Street N at the Western Avenue and Stearns Avenue intersections. The existing pavement was reclaimed and re-used as aggregate base for the new pavement. Drain tile was installed and 4-inches of new bituminous pavement was constructed. The School Avenue/TH 55 intersection work included removing the existing intersection and reconstructing the pavement to improve the turning movements at the intersection. The preliminary total estimated project cost was \$200,200. The project will come in about \$17,000 under the preliminary estimate. The mobile home park costs were \$159,130.50. The School Avenue/TH 55 costs were \$23,351.37. Total project costs: \$182,481.87. With the project costs coming in lower, that also lowered the assessment rate. The city's policy states that 30% of street and storm sewer reconstruction costs are assessed. Assessable cost (30%) of the mobile home park costs are \$47,731.26. Assessable footage is 2,274 ft., making the assessment rate \$20.99. The preliminary assessment rate was \$24.30, resulting in a preliminary assessment of \$55,528.20. The final assessment is \$7,526.94 lower than the preliminary. The owner of the property to be assessed was not present for the hearing. Kent noted the next step would be to adopt the assessment roll.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO ADJOURN THE ASSESSMENT HEARING AND RECONVENE THE COUNCIL MEETING, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Eder reconvened the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Resolution #2018-27, Resolution Adopting Assessment, was presented. The assessment roll consisted of three parcels making up the mobile home park. Total assessment is \$47,731.26. Term is fifteen years with an interest rate of 6%. The property owner would have the option to pay off the assessments within thirty (30) days from the adoption of the resolution at no interest.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO ADOPT RESOLUTION #2018-27, RESOLUTION ADOPTING ASSESSMENT, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Jason Klein reported the Fire Department is applying for a grant through MN Department of Public Safety for a turnout gear washer and dryer. It's a 10% matching grant. The cost estimate for equipment and install is \$18,110. The department has nothing to wash the gear with now. There are studies showing cancer is linked to the dirty turnout gear. As of now, there is a ten-year life on turnout gear. The washer should hold two sets of gear. Jason also reported the department is looking to get lockboxes to area businesses. The department would have one master key as well as the ambulance service. It would be up to the business to purchase the box. Cost would be \$135 per box or \$175 if the department installs it. This would be at no cost to the city.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF THE EXTRICATION EQUIPMENT, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO RECESS THE MEETING FOR A NUISANCE ORDINANCE VIOLATION HEARING, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

Recessed at 7:48 p.m.

Mayor Eder called the hearing to order at 7:48 p.m. for a Nuisance Ordinance violation. The hearing was regarding property at 230 Central Avenue South. A letter was posted at two locations on the property notifying the owner he hadn't complied with cleaning up the property to the city's satisfaction and that a hearing would be held on this date and he would have an opportunity to be heard. The property owner was not present at the hearing. Council noted there is trailer full of stuff yet and junk up against the garage and house. Wirz questioned who the city would hire to remove and store the items. This property has been an ongoing issue. After providing an opportunity for the owner to be heard, if in attendance, council may provide for abatement of the nuisance. A 24-hours' notice must be given via personal service prior to the abatement. If the city decides to abate without seeking a court order, the following steps should be taken. 1) Document each step of the process in detail. 2) Conduct a detailed inventory of all property collected and provide the owner notice of where the property can be reclaimed and date by which it must be reclaimed or it will be disposed of (sold or destroyed). There may be specific statutory procedures to follow depending on the property. 3) The city should keep a detailed inventory of all costs involved. Council reviewed the letter dated September 12 that was posted at the property. Council felt although there was improvement, the property did not meet the expectations laid out in the letter. Council agreed to move forward and send a letter giving seven (7) days and also notifying of the 24-hour notice. Kramer was advised to let council know when the letter was delivered so they can get new photos at the end of the seven days. Wirz will contact some area cities on what they have done for cleaning up properties.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO ADJOURN THE HEARING, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Adjourned at 7:58p.m. Council went back into regular session.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO PROCEED WITH SEVEN DAY NOTICE AND FOLLOW UP WITH 24 HOUR NOTICE, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

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

Council reviewed information on the Small Cities Development Program. Eligible projects include 1) Housing grants for rehabilitating local housing stock; 2) Public facility grants for wastewater treatment projects, wells, water towers and distribution systems; 3) Comprehensive grants which include housing and public facility activities. Comprehensive projects may include an economic development activity as well. The preliminary proposals are due November 15<sup>th</sup>. After discussion, council agreed this was a tight schedule but would be interested in looking into it during the next cycle. The EDA will also be made aware of this opportunity.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO APPROVE THE 2 A.M. LICENSE RENEWAL FOR GORDIES BAR, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO ADOPT RESOLUTION #2018-28, RESOLUTION ADOPTING ASSESSMENTS FOR DELINQUENT WATER AND SEWER CHARGES TO 2019 PAYABLE TAXES, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Council reviewed an agreement from LTD Broadband to allow them to use space on the water tower and electric in exchange for free Internet to city buildings. No other financial consideration was offered. Steve Schmitt noted Meeker County is working on a Broadband initiative. He thought after the first of the year, more companies should be offering services. Wirz noted he wasn't sure if what they were offering at this time was worth it. Discussion followed. No action was taken. Mayor Eder noted the school district is working with a company to get a tower up in town.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE THE FALL NEWSLETTER, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Kramer reported the AWAIR Policy and Safety Manual have been updated.

Council discussed rescheduling the November 8<sup>th</sup> meeting due to canvassing election results. The statutory date to canvass results begins November 9<sup>th</sup> and ends November 16<sup>th</sup>. Council agreed to hold the regular meeting on November 15<sup>th</sup>.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO CHANGE THE MEETING TO NOVEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO ADOPT RESOLUTION #2018-29, RESOLUTION APPOINTING ELECTION JUDGE, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

The elementary school has asked to get a key for the pool bathhouse to use for emergency purposes if there is a need to evacuate the building.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO GIVE A KEY TO THE POOL BATHHOUSE TO THE WATKINS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

Public Works Director Steve Geislinger reported the reservoir was inspected and cleaned. Everything looked good. The original check valve on the north pump at the main lift station has been replaced. Hydro Engineering will be replacing a panel on one of the irrigators. This is the original panel and cost to replace is \$3,493.00. This will be done either this fall or next spring. The Joint Water Board will be meeting on October 18<sup>th</sup> to act on replacing the SCADA system at the water treatment plant. Geislinger

also reported the overhead door openers at the maintenance shed need to be checked. One motor keeps running. There is also an opener at the Fire Hall that needs to be checked. Some work needs to be done with the a/c unit at the Fire Hall. Geislinger noted the natural gas was shut off at the Village Hall by CenterPoint Energy due to the gas smell there. CenterPoint's sniffer didn't pick anything up but the technician could smell it and shut it off. Voss Plumbing was out and found some leaks and repaired. A pressure test will be done and gas should be back on Friday. Replacing the gas range was discussed. Council felt the city should spend the money and get an electronic ignition model. Getting a used range was discussed. Kramer will check on this.

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

Next regular meeting will be Thursday, November 15<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.

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

Adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Submitted by

Deb Kramer  
Clerk

ATTEST:

Frank Eder,  
Mayor