

UNAPPROVED MINUTES
WATKINS CITY COUNCIL
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8TH, 2020

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, Jason Laumer

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

Others: Jody Bauer, Bonnie Holthaus, Fred Struzyk, Duane Peterson, Deputy Defries, Steve Geislinger, Deb Kramer

Mayor Eder added unlicensed vehicles to the agenda following the Sheriff's report.

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

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

Items on the Consent Agenda were minutes from September 10th regular meeting and September 16th and 23rd special meetings, September financial report, Resolution #2020-23, Resolution Accepting Donations, Resolution #2020-24, Resolution Approving Transfer, September 26, 2019 joint water board minutes and financial report.

Public Forum – none

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

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

The ambulance service requested approval to purchase a new Automated External Defibrillator (AED). The current one is 10-12 years old and will be obsolete in 2021. The quote for a new one is \$18,559.65. Forest Prairie Township is contributing \$10,000 towards the purchase, leaving a balance of \$8,559.65 for the ambulance service.

MOTION BY LAUMER TO APPROVE PURCHASE OF A NEW AED, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Fred Struzyk, owner of Hilltop Health Care Center and Garden View, asked why he should pay his water bill when the city is writing off other bills. He didn't feel this was fair. There was an issue with the irrigation meter for the baseball field earlier in the year and council approved to adjust the school district's bill to its average. The usage was then applied to the irrigation account. Struzyk asked if this was a city park and if anyone could go up there and use it. Council noted it is a city park to be used for baseball games. Struzyk asked if people can go up and play baseball. His understanding was that people

had gotten kicked off the field. Mayor Eder noted kids were causing damage to the field and the grandstand and that's why they were kicked off. It is kept locked for that reason. Council noted it's for organized events- for baseball teams to use. It was noted the city of Kimball pays for the water at its ball field. In Watkins, the amateur team provides all the equipment and labor to maintain the field and pays for the lights. Struzyk noted his water bill has increased since COVID and it's killing him. Wirz noted the water rates are the same for everyone in the city, commercial and residential alike. Struzyk asked if it was correct that when Paynesville Area Health Care owned the nursing home that they didn't pay a full water bill. Kramer noted that was not correct. Struzyk asked if the city could do something with taxes when setting the budget and the water bill. He noted he didn't come asking for anything when he put on the 2nd addition to the assisted living facility or the nursing home addition. Council advised Struzyk to check with Meeker County for a possible grant from the CARES Act funding. Struzyk asked if he has a baseball team and gets permission, could he then use the field. Council thought he could. Mayor Eder noted it is meant to be used as a baseball park. It was noted that a new meter was installed for the irrigation so hopefully the city can monitor it. Struzyk noted he would appreciate if the council could watch the taxes.

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

Laumer noted there is an unlicensed vehicle in the city alley by the city garage on School Avenue. The camper parked there previously moved but now a truck is parked there. Laumer felt it should be moved as it is on a city alley.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO SEND A LETTER TO THE OWNER TO REMOVE ALL VEHICLES OFF CITY ALLEY, SECONDED BY TSCHUMPERLIN. MOTION CARRIED.

Council reviewed the revised law enforcement contract with Meeker County. This draft includes the extra coverage from April 1 to October 31.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO RESCIND MOTION MADE AUGUST 13, 2020 APPROVING THE 2021-2022 LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTRACT WITH MEEKER COUNTY, SECONDED BY WIRZ. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO APPROVE THE NEW LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTRACT, SECONDED BY LAUMER. MOTION CARRIED.

Letter of Intent applications for Transportation Alternatives funding are being accepted through October 30th. This is a competitive grant opportunity for local communities to fund projects for pedestrian and bicycle facilities (trail) and more. The engineer's estimate for a paved trail from Glenshire Estates to School Avenue, including contingencies, engineering, administration and legal is \$197,300. Kramer was unsure at this time if the city could include anything other than construction costs in the funding request. This is an 80/20 matching grant program. Depending on what costs can be included in the funding request, the city's share could be around \$63,000. Mayor Eder noted that both the VFW and Lions Club would contribute to the cost.

MOTION BY EDER TO SUBMIT THE LETTER OF INTENT, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Council and staff discussed items to be purchased with the CARES Act funds. Items proposed were automatic door openers on City Hall door, Village Hall front door and the door at the ramp. The door at the ramp would need to be replaced with a taller door in order for the door opener to work. Other

items were auto flush toilets for the restrooms at City Hall along with touchless faucets, touchless soap and towel dispensers, sneeze guards for food service at Village Hall, turnout gear washer, respirator masks and floor decals for elections. Kramer asked about replacing the sink in the office bathroom with an ADA compliant sink if the city was going to replace the faucets anyway. Kramer also asked if it would be a good time to replace the flooring in the bathrooms at City Hall if the bathroom fixtures were going to be replaced. Council agreed it would be a good time to replace the sink and flooring in both bathrooms. Council agreed that installing automatic door openers would be needed so there is no contact on door handles and that replacing the door at the ramp to be able to have the automatic door opener was a necessary expense. Council agreed to purchase the toilets and faucets for the same reason-no contact on the handles. Sneeze guards at the Village Hall would be needed to protect food from contamination. A turnout gear washer is necessary to clean gear from public safety/emergency personnel after possible COVID contamination. Floor decals for the elections are needed to direct voters to follow the flow of traffic and keep social distance. Council also noted that respirator masks for the Fire Department are necessary so the members aren't sharing masks, thereby avoiding cross contamination.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF ALL THE PROPOSED ITEMS WITH CARES ACT FUNDS, SECONDED BY LAUMER. MOTION CARRIED.

Council discussed allowing mobile homes to be crushed in the park and hauled away. The State Building Codes division that deals with mobile homes recommended doing this by a permitted process if allowed. A permit would also be needed from MPCA. The state also suggested the city may want to require a bond to be sure all the work gets completed and cleaned up. Council suggested to contact Justice from Mid-MN Development Commission to establish a permit process. Council didn't feel a bond would be necessary. Council felt the city should keep in monthly contact with the owner for any updates and to work with the owner to get the homes removed.

MOTION BY TSCHUMPERLIN TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF RON KRAMER AS FIRE CHIEF AND CHAD UNTERBERGER AS ASSISTANT CHIEF, SECONDED BY WIRZ. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO ADOPT RESOLUTION #2020-25, RESOLUTION ADOPTING ASSESSMENTS FOR DELINQUENT WATER BILLS, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

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

Council called for a special meeting Friday, November 13, 2020 at 2:45 p.m. to canvas election results.

Planning Commission update – At a prior meeting the board discussed land use permits issued after the COVID-19 pandemic was declared that may expire before the project is completed due to material shortages caused by COVID-19. The board felt an extension could be made with no permit reissuance or penalty fees. Council approved. A resident has asked the city to use an alley for ingress/egress to a piece of property. The board referred the matter to the city attorney to see if there is anything that compels the city to allow this. The owner of the property was advised that a stand-alone accessory building cannot be built on the property.

A letter was sent to the residents at 340 4th Street North advising them they are violating the city's Blight Ordinance. Thirty days were allowed to license the vehicles stored outside and clean up the yard.

Council noted there are unlicensed vehicles on the street along with a boat and junk in the yard. Council felt to start with the unlicensed vehicles and boat and advised Deputy Defries to contact the residents and advise them. Council also advised Defries to contact the owner of the trailer parked at 160 Cedar Avenue North to move it off the street and to contact the owner of the unlicensed truck parked behind 121 Central Avenue South to move it.

Public Works Director Steve Geisinger reported that Midwest Asphalt is crack filling and should be done Friday.

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

Next regular meeting is Thursday, November 12th at 7 p.m.

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

Adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Submitted by

Deb Kramer
Clerk

ATTEST:

Frank Eder
Mayor