

APPROVED MINUTES
WATKINS CITY COUNCIL
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2022

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Chris Rowan, Sue Unterberger, Marc Wirz, Brenda Carlson.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Tootz Tschumperlin

Others: Jody Bauer, Jeff Hilsgen, Deputy Sandstrom, Nathen Derichs, Kent Louwagie, Deputy Clerk Sarah Krone, Clerk Deb Kramer, Public Works Director Steve Geislinger.

Mayor Rowan noted that Ethan Jenzen from MN DNR is unable to attend.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE THE AGENDA (LESS THE DNR REP), SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

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

Items on the Consent Agenda were minutes of August 11th regular meeting and August 30th special meeting, August financial report, Resolution No. 2022-25, Resolution Accepting Donations and delinquent water bills for shut off.

Public Forum – none

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

The ambulance was involved in an accident August 28th. There was no damage to the ambulance. The quote to repair the other vehicle is \$2,969.92. The city's deductible is \$1,000. Council agreed to check with the city's insurance and if it won't have much of an effect the city's insurance, then submit the claim.

Nathen Derichs was present on John Derichs' behalf regarding the raze and rebuild project at Jack's gas station. The corrected easement for the city's sewer main was reviewed by council.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE THE UPDATED EASEMENT AGREEMENT WITH DERICHS PROPERTIES, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Derichs also requested a lot combination to allow him to build across the line of the parcel to the north of the station, which he owns. This parcel was rezoned to B-2 Highway Commercial. The lots can be combined for planning purposes to allow him to build across the line, but cannot be combined for tax purposes. They will still get separate tax statements. Once combined, they cannot be sold separately. The Planning Commission recommended to the council to approve the combination.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO APPROVE THE LOT COMBINATION FOR PLANNING PURPOSES, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

City Engineer Kent Louwagie updated council on the lift station and forcemain improvement project. Funding applications to place the project on the Public Facilities Authority (PFA) Project Priority List (PPL) and Intended Use Plan (IUP) were submitted this past spring. PFA should be publishing the IUP later this month. This will indicate if the project is eligible for PFA funding. The Legislature did not pass a bonding bill last session. This delay has potential financial implications for the project. PFA and MPCA still recommend to move forward as normal. If the city wants to move forward, Kent recommended to authorize Bolton and Menk to begin work on the design since it would need to be done at some point. The project cost is estimated at \$3 million. Design costs would be approximately \$300,000. The city would probably look at temporary financing to fund the design costs. Kent noted if the project is not eligible for funding, it would be reviewed to see what could be done to score more points. Council agreed to wait until the IUP list comes out later this month to see where the project ranks and discuss next month.

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

The Lions Club requested a temporary on-sale liquor license for a purse bingo event at St. Anthony Parish Hall on November 5th.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO APPROVE THE LIQUOR LICENSE REQUEST FOR NOVEMBER 5TH, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Council discussed membership to the Coalition of Greater MN Cities. The city would be assessed 25% of its total dues for the first year of membership and increase 25% each year. In the fourth year of membership and thereafter, the city would pay its full dues. The assessed dues for 2023 would be \$724.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO DECLINE MEMBERSHIP, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

Council reviewed health insurance quotes. Discussion followed. Carlson suggested to table the matter to allow council time to research. The city would need to have a high deductible health plan to offer an HSA. (Health Savings Account). The HSA cannot be a stand-alone plan. Wirz noted in the private world, companies don't compensate for employees who choose not to take insurance. Council tabled discussion until next month.

Council reviewed the fall newsletter draft and Minnesota's Energy and Water Assistance Program flyer.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE THE NEWSLETTER AND FLYER, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern railroads have proposed to merge. The city has received information stating this will increase train traffic in Watkins by about 25%. The Surface Transportation Board is holding virtual hearings to solicit comments. Council discussed but no action was taken.

Planning Commission update – Derichs lot combination was recommended for approval. Fence regulations will be reviewed for an update. Approved for a property on Church Street to make a curb cut on St. Anthony Blvd. to provide for extra parking, but it must be an improved parking area, it cannot be left as grass. The property owner was also advised if they want to make the lower level a rental unit, they need to apply for a Conditional Use Permit as the property is zoned single family.

Council reviewed a corporate policy on drug and alcohol abuse.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO ADOPT THE CORPORATE POLICY ON DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

Pool manager Bella Butterfass submitted a reimbursement request for a Lifeguard Management Course she took earlier this year. Council didn't recall approving this. Council advised Kramer to check in past minutes to see if it was approved or if the council indicated the city would pay. Tabled until next meeting.

A resolution asking the Governor to declare a special session to pass a bonding bill was reviewed.

MOTION BY UNTERBERGER TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2022-28, RESOLUTION ASKING GOVERNOR TO CALL A SPECIAL SESSION, SECONDED BY WIRZ. MOTION CARRIED.

Forest Prairie Township asked about doing the fire protection costs on a value-based system rather than the per unit system. Council agreed to prepare both ways for the next fire protection meeting for discussion.

Public Works Director Geislinger reported the John Deere lawnmower is 3 years old now and it's requiring more maintenance. Midwest Machinery quoted \$21,144.24 for a new mower, same model, with a trade in allowance of \$9,672.50 for the current mower. Total price after trade in would be \$11,471.74. The current mower has 474 hours on it.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO APPROVE THE LAWN MOWER TRADE IN, SECONDED BY WIRZ. MOTION CARRIED.

Flooring estimate - Tom's Carpet Kingdom quoted \$2,582.44 for vinyl planking for the public works office and the bathroom and hallway across from City Hall office. This includes tear out of the old flooring and disposal. Kramer noted the bathroom and hallway flooring is in need of replacement also so it was quoted for consideration along with the office.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE THE FLOORING QUOTE FROM TOM'S CARPET KINGDOM FOR THE OFFICE, HALLWAY AND BATHROOM, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Geislinger presented an updated quote from A-1 Concrete Leveling. More sidewalk areas were added. The first quote was \$4,175. The add-ons are \$3,625 for a total of \$7,800. Geislinger noted no seal coating or crack filling would be done this year but should crack fill by Centra Sota next year.

MOTION BY WIRZ TO APPROVE THE A-1 CONCRETE LEVELING QUOTE FOR \$7,800.00, SECONDED BY CARLSON. MOTION CARRIED.

Geislinger noted this work would be done this fall yet.

Council reviewed a quote from TBSOA for a PBX phone system. The quote was for phones in City Hall, Public Works office and Fire Hall. Monthly charge would be \$169.77 and a one time set up fee of \$375. The phones would be leased for a 42-month term. After discussion, council declined and agreed to remain with Arvig.

2023 proposed budget – Kramer noted \$60,000 was added under the Vehicle Replacement Fund disbursements for 2023 for a new city truck per the meeting on August 30th. The proposed General Fund expenses for 2023 are \$708,569. The General Fund proposed levy for pay 2023 is \$318,204, up from \$315,231 for pay 2022. The total proposed levy for pay 2023 is \$532,421.

MOTION BY CARLSON TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2022-26, RESOLUTION ADOPTING PROPOSED TAX LEVY, SECONDED BY WIRZ. MOTION CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-26
CITY OF WATKINS
MEEKER COUNTY, MINNESOTA
RESOLUTION ADOPTING PROPOSED TAX LEVY

Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Watkins, Meeker County, Minnesota, that the following sums of money be levied for the current year, collectible in 2023, upon the taxable property in the City of Watkins, for the following purposes:

General Fund	\$318,204.00
Economic Development Tax Abatement-Hilltop Health Care Center	\$13,107.00
Economic Development Tax Abatement-Watkins Leased Housing LLC	\$15,910.00
Economic Development Authority Fund	\$10,000.00
\$4,050,000 G.O. Refunding Bonds, Series 2019A	\$175,200.00

The city clerk is hereby instructed to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the county auditor of Meeker County, Minnesota. This foregoing resolution was adopted this 8th day of September 2022 by the City Council of the City of Watkins.

ATTEST: (SEAL)

Christopher Rowan, Mayor

Debra S. Kramer, Clerk

MOTION BY WIRZ TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2022-27, RESOLUTION ADOPTING 2023 PROPOSED BUDGET, SECONDED BY UNTERBERGER. MOTION CARRIED.

Council set the Truth in Taxation discussion for Thursday, December 8th at 7 p.m. at City Hall.

Kramer noted the ordinance updates are still being worked on.

Wirz will contact the mobile home park owner to see when the contractor will start moving trailers out.

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

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

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

Adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Submitted by

Deb Kramer, Clerk

ATTEST:

Chris Rowan, Mayor