

City of Vernon Center
Council Meeting Minutes
3-7-23 @ 6pm

Council Present: Emily Edwards, Adam Finney, Wendy Bennett, Lisa Peterson, Mayor Dana Ziegler
Staff Present: Clerk Diane Roelofs, PW Supervisor Mark Willette
Others Present: Resident Calvin Baarts

Mayor Ziegler called the meeting to order at 6pm.

Agenda: After review, Councilor Peterson made a motion to approve the agenda as reviewed. 2nd by Councilor Edwards, all approved, motion carried.

Consent Agenda: The consent agenda included the 2-7-23 council meeting minutes, Checks for Month report showing \$448,801.78 deposits/\$462,747.96 expenditures, City Savings & Loan report, Cash Investments report, Jan. 2023 bank reconciliations, Feb. & March calendars, Public Safety Feb. BEC call log, FD Feb. report, Res. 2023-05 Approval of Transfer from 401 General Govt. Capital Reserves Savings to 101 City Checking for iPads, Res. 2023-06 Authorizing the 403 Future Projects Savings Interfund Loan to be reduced to \$0, and Res. 2023-07 License Renewal for D Bar 169, Inc. Council wanted the minutes from 2-7-23 to read "256 GB iPads" instead of 256 iPads. Councilor Edwards made a motion to approve the consent agenda with the minute's correction. 2nd by Councilor Peterson, all approved, motion carried.

Point of Sale-Public Response: Resident Calvin Baarts addressed the council on improvements that could be made to the Point of Sale inspection forms and the Water and Sewer Ordinance to help it be a smoother transition for sellers/buyers of residential property within the city. His suggestions included to change the inspections to be valid 5 years instead of 3, would like the ordinance to read by qualified plumber taking out licensed, and if the city is requiring a licensed plumber to do the inspections, the city should pay for the inspections. PW Supervisor Willette responded with reasons why these points are important for the city and that they are put into place because of the new rules of the MPCA. Councilor Peterson thanked Mr. Baarts for giving the first feedback the council has heard. Mr. Baarts also brought up the ordinance sump pump regulations and felt that the city is not enforcing it and gave an example of a property that was allowed to pump onto a sidewalk. Mr. Baarts was informed that the city did send out letters and has given a deadline to the property owner. The council will consider and discuss the points given to them today at the next council meeting.

Fireworks: Mayor Ziegler reported that the city attorney advised the city that it would need to purchase fireworks from J&M Displays if they are going to sponsor the event. In other research, a Class C fireworks show does need a licensed shooter/operator in Minnesota. A location by the old school was presented to the property owners and they have replied to the city that they do not want the fireworks shot from their property. Council discussed other possible locations and considered on the south side of the WWTP city property. J&M Displays is checking to see if they have a shooter for the 4th of July. Lorna Wright has been on the shoot team for 4 shoots in the city of Vernon Center and would need 1 more shoot to be able to take her test. If this is accomplished, she could be the lead operator vs. J&M Displays finding a shooter. More research will be done and presented at the next council meeting.

Infrastructure Update: Mayor Ziegler reported to the council that the language change bill for Vernon Center has passed in the House of Representatives but is now residing in the Senate for action.

Public Works Report:

WTP Rushmore Equipment: Council reviewed the quote for used water treatment equipment from Rushmore and has instructed the city clerk to send an email to Eric Meester to let him know the City would like to purchase

the used equipment for \$6200. The city and the city of Rushmore will need to work together to take out the equipment.

200 Poplar St.: PW Supervisor Willette reported to council that the city had no access to video the sewer lateral in 2011, he also verified that in 2020 the engineers made notes to verify the sewer lateral at 200 Poplar St. during a project and again was stated in the DEED project plan set that all alley properties were required to be televised prior to pipe bursting. The video was not done during the DEED project in 2022 resulting in the property's sewer lateral being cut off. This caused sewer water to enter into their basement. Mayor Ziegler does not recommend paying for this and the city should confer with SEH, Inc. if any bills are sent to the city.

Summer Help: The supervisor suggested to not hire summer help this year because of the work load he expects. The topic is tabled until the city finds out if the bonding bill language passes.

Arlo Camera: The cameras no longer work at the WWTP and cannot be updated. Mayor Ziegler asked that the cost of both a dial out and cost of new cameras be presented to council next month.

Councilor Adam Finney left the council meeting at 6:58pm for an emergency FD meeting.

DEED water main shows a replacement of a water main, but valve placement is not known. Supervisor Willette should contact the engineer to find out the plans.

Clean out castings from the DEED project: Willette would like to save the city by doing the castings and tie in the cement with the park bench cement.

S Oak St. MH Casting: the manhole (MH) needs to be replaced with one that is sealed. A contractor will need to be hired to dig it up.

Garbage pickup: Mondays are not working out for the city receptacles as the garbage company is starting their pickups earlier than 7am.

Lead & Copper Revised Rule (LCRR): Council reviewed the cover letter and instruction page that the city will need to send out to identify water lines on all properties within the city. The letter should be edited by taking out the sentences about the city public works employees. The letter and instruction page can be sent out after the edit is complete.

Garbage & Recycling RFP: the council reviewed the request for proposal and made corrections. Councilor Peterson made a motion to accept the RFP with the modifications and to approve it to be posted and published. 2nd by Councilor Bennett, all approved, motion carried.

Audit by Greg Burkhardt: Auditor Greg Burkhardt introduced Luke Richards to the council and stated that he was one of the personnel at the city during the audit. The audit presented today is in draft form and will be updated when the state releases their new compliance tables--last year's tables were used in the draft. This year's audit opinion was given an unmodified "Clean" audit. In Internal control over financial reporting the city did show material audit adjustments as "material weaknesses" and significant deficiencies showing as preparation of financial statements and limited segregation of duties. These findings are a result of the city only having one employee in the city office and are commonly stated in small city offices. There were no Minnesota statute legal compliance findings. Financial trends show the city has adequate cash balances and that the city is well prepared, noting that the upcoming project may be spending some of the cash balances. The enterprise funds (water, sewer & garbage) showed the water to have a five year average of \$2,616 profit while the sewer is showing a negative \$27,994 five-year profit average. The sewer losses have a lot to do with interfund loans/transfers to the infrastructure project. The audit will need to be approved at a future month when it is in the final form.

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Miscellaneous: The council was in agreement that future meetings with residents or business owners wanting to talk with city staff should meet at City Hall.

Next meeting: Tuesday, April 4th, 2023

Adjourn: Councilor Bennett made a motion to adjourn at 8:02pm. 2nd by Councilor Finney, all approved, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by:



Diane Roelofs, Clerk-Treasurer



Dana Ziegler, Mayor

4-4-23

Date Approved