

REGULAR MEETING (via Zoom) MINUTES

Monday, December 21, 2020

CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

The Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Olivia, Minnesota, was called to order by Mayor Hilgert at 7:00 P.M.

Council Members Present via Zoom: Suzanne Hilgert, Blanca Ferguson, Bernard Johnson, Tom Kalahar and Terry Kohout.

Others present via Zoom: Dan Coughlin, City Administrator; Christi Weidemann, City Clerk; Jason Krumheuer, Police Chief; Jon Hawkinson, Mayor-elect, Landon Padrnos and George Ebberts, Council Members-elect; Kari Klages, Finance Director; Brian Stenholm, Police Officer / Emergency Management Director; Dominique Claseman, BOLD Student / Boy Scout.

AGENDA

Motion by Johnson, second by Ferguson: to approve the Agenda as updated. Motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Kohout, second by Kalahar: to approve the presented Consent Agenda items:

- a) Regular Meeting Minutes of December 7, 2020
- b) 2021 Engineering Service Agreement with SEH Inc.
- c) 2021 SafeAssure Safety Training Contract
- d) Audit Agreement with City Auditors Abdo, Eick and Meyers to Conduct FY 2020 Audit
- e) Updated Clothing Allowance Policy (Effective Jan 1, 2021)
- f) Resolution 2020-07, Authorization of the Clearing of Uncollectible Utility Charges
- g) Board and Commission Appointments
 - Bernard Johnson: Public Utilities Commission, Convention and Tourism Bureau
 - Ron Selander: Planning Commission
- h) Adjustment of Tracey Johnson's Full-Time Start Date to 1/1/2021
- i) December Payables #2
- j) November Check Register

Motion passed unanimously.

Eagle Scout Project

Eagle Scout Dominique Claseman gave a presentation on a Veterans Memorial Project he would like to undertake at Kubesh Park. Dominique said he met with Parks Director Wayne Olson to go over the project and Olson thought the project location would work well as it would be quite visible to the traveling public, would be adjacent to proposed sidewalk extensions along Highway 71, and should not have flooding issues. Dominique said that the project would include a massive stone engraved with the insignias of the various military branches. Dominique said he would sell pavers recognizing contributors and/or local veterans, which would be incorporated as part of the overall project, for fundraiser to help with project costs. Councilmembers asked what the timeframe on the project would be. Dominique said he would like to start the project in the summer of 2021.

Motion by Kalahar, second by Kohout: to authorize Dominique Claseman to proceed with his proposed Eagle Scout Project at Kubesh Park as presented, and to authorize Public Works / Parks Superintendent Wayne Olson to coordinate plans with Dominique. Motion passed unanimously.

2021 Fine and Fee Schedule – Ordinance 2020-07, Adoption of 2021 Fine and Fee Schedule

Coughlin noted that the schedule hadn't changed since the draft was proposed at the previous meeting. No additional discussion on the proposed update was offered.

Motion by Kohout, second by Johnson: to approve Ordinance 2020-07, Adoption of the 2021 Fine and Fee Schedule. Motion passed unanimously.

2021 Fine and Fee Schedule – Resolution 2020-108, Authorize Summary Publication of Ordinance 2020-107

Coughlin said this resolution allows City Staff to put a basic summary of Ordinance 2020-07 in the paper and the actual ordinance will be available at City Hall and on the city website in order to save on publishing costs.

Motion by Johnson, second by Kalahar: to approve Resolution 2020-108, Authorize Summary Publication of Ordinance 2020-07. Motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2020-109, Approval of Final 2021 Property Tax Levy

Coughlin said the final levy is identical to the draft levy that was brought to the council at a previous meeting. No additional comments were shared.

Motion by Kalahar, second by Johnson: to approve Resolution 2020-109, Approval of Final 2021 Property Tax Levy. Motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2020-110, Adoption of 2021 General, Special & Debt Service Fund Budgets

Coughlin first mentioned that nothing in the provided documents had changed since the budget information was presented to the public during the truth-in-taxation hearing. He did note, for clarification purposes, that while Mary Jo Halliday is retiring from full-time service at the end of December, the 2021 budget does allow for Mary Jo to work up to 80 hours to provide additional opportunities to assist and mentor Jasmine Miller. Coughlin said that Covid-related restrictions at present have created a challenge when it came to providing ample time for Mary Jo and Jasmine to navigate this transition process.

Motion by Ferguson, second by Kalahar: to approve Resolution 2020-105, Approval of Meadowcrest Storm Shelter. Motion passed unanimously.

Airport Agricultural Land Lease Update

City Attorney Walton and Finance Director Klages provided the Council with an update on the status of the city airport agricultural land lease contract. It was shared that the individual who is in year two of a three-year land lease contract with the City has only paid \$2,000 towards his 2019 land rent charges; and has not paid anything towards his 2020 lease to date. The individual did reach out to Klages and suggested options for how he could get up to date with his payments. Walton explained that the Council does have the right to declare that the contract terms have been broken, seek restitution via a civil process, and seek new land lease bids for the 2021 growing season. He did, however, note that while securing a court judgement for breach of contract might be relatively easy to accomplish; the ability to collect on such a judgment might prove problematic. He advised the Council weigh the pros and cons of the matter and to provide him and city staff on what direction they'd like to proceed with.

Councilor Johnson said that with this being a matter that would continue into 2021, he did not feel that it was appropriate for him to make a decision on such a matter seeing that this was his last regular meeting serving as

a city council member. Mayor Hilgert and Councilor Kohout similarly expressed reservations at making such a decision given they too were wrapping up their respective service on the city council. Councilor Kalahar said that he was not inclined to enter into a third year of a contract with nothing but a \$2,000 payment towards the established rental agreement without some very solid guarantees that past debts would be paid in a timely manner. He said that most farmers have to secure lines of credit to cover spring planting plans and he wanted some sort of guarantee worked into such a line of credit to cover rent costs as well. Kohout and Johnson said that they felt that Councilor Kalahar's perspective had considerable merit.

Councilor Ferguson said that she knew from her law office work that it can be very difficult to collect on civil judgments so she urged the Council to consider exploring alternative ways of arranging for payment of past due amounts than going directly to a civil action. Mayor Hilgert offered that because this issue would fall squarely upon the next city council's shoulders, she asked for input from the Mayor and Councilors-elect on this matter. All three members-elect expressed concern over this past-due situation and said that they would support giving this individual until January 4, 2021 to work out a plan with the Attorney and Finance Director to quickly get past-due amounts addressed, they were inclined to terminate the contract at the next regular council meeting if a suitable solution to the present situation is not forthcoming.

Mayor Hilgert declared that this matter would be tabled until the next regular council meeting on January 4th.

Recognition of Employee Years of Service

Coughlin said that at the last council meeting of the year it is tradition to pause for a moment to acknowledge the longevity of the City of Olivia employees. He provided them with an updated list of the full-time employees in the organization and their respective years of service. Coughlin noted that Mary Jo Halliday will be departing the City at exactly 34 years of service and further highlighted the numerous individuals with double-digit years of service already logged. The Council expressed their gratitude for the employees and thanked them for their years of service.

REPORTS

MnDot District 8 ATP, Dec 11

Coughlin reported that MnDOT is waiting on a final notice from the State to see where their funding for 2021 will be but they are confident that all current projects will remain fully funded.

Public Safety/City Hall Department Building Subcommittee Meetings, Dec 14 & 15

Coughlin reported that Barbara Marks met with staff from the Fire Department, Police Department and City Hall. Coughlin said that staff worked with Marks on a list of wants versus needs. He said he felt the meetings were very productive and Marks is taking the initial feedback received and will be tweaking her draft designs ahead of future meetings with the department representatives.

Airport Advisory Committee, Dec 16

Kohout said that the 5-year plan has been readjusted. Kohout said the current runway is 3500' but it would be great to get 4500' at some point in the future when enough demand is realized for that investment. Coughlin said the capital plan for 2021 includes a request for funding for lighting upgrades, augmented safety equipment and a tractor & snow blower combo to replace the aging equipment currently in use. Coughlin said these requests, if approved, would receive a 90-95% grant funded by MnDot.

EDA, Dec 16

Hilgert said there wasn't much on the agenda. Hilgert said that there are a couple new residents at Traditions. Kohout said that they also talked about a possibility of a building downtown housing childcare.

COVID Report

Emergency Management Director Stenholm reported that there was a spike in cases which are presumed to be from people getting together from Thanksgiving. Stenholm said he personally expects to see another jump in the case numbers after Christmas. Stenholm reported that in June or July he ordered an Evaclean Cleaning Gun which he just received earlier in the week. The cleaning gun came with 1200 tablets which should last a long time even while using it to disinfect vehicles and work areas throughout the city organization.

BOLD Community Pool Report

Coughlin said the pool is currently closed and we are awaiting direction from the Governor as to when it can possibly be reopened.

Reflections/Comments from Mayor Hilgert, Councilor Kohout and Council Johnson

Hilgert said that it has been an honor to be the Mayor for the City of Olivia for the last 10 years and that it's been a privilege to work with outstanding staff both former and present. Hilgert said she's been inspired by both past and current Council Members.

Kohout said that he's been on Council for over 30 years but in many ways it doesn't seem like that long. Kohout said that Olivia is a progressive town and that Olivia is a leader in Renville County. Kohout wished the new Council and Mayor well.

Johnson said he's enjoyed his time on the Council. Johnson he's enjoyed working with the former and current staff. Johnson said he's glad to see younger people stepping up to the plate and getting involved. Johnson said he hopes that inspires more people to serve the community on boards and committees.

Resolution 2020-111, Commendation of Exceptional Public Service by City Councilor Terry Kohout

Mayor Hilgert added Resolution 2020-111 to the agenda to commend Council Member Kohout on his 32+ years of exceptional public service to the City of Olivia. Kohout has served eight consecutive 4-year terms on the City Council and has served on numerous boards and committees during his tenure.

Motion by Hilgert, second by Johnson: to approve Resolution 2020-111, Commendation of Exceptional Public Service by City Councilor Terry Kohout. Motion passed unanimously

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Johnson, second by Kohout: to adjourn the meeting 8:36 P.M. Motion passed unanimously.

Attest:


Dan Coughlin, City Administrator


Jon Hawkinson, Mayor

[Following the regular meeting, the Mayor, Council, some city staff and the Mayor and Councilors-elect participated in a 'virtual' retirement party for the departing members of the city council where written and video well-wishes offered by past and present city staff and consultant staff.]